The Sources
Sir Nicholas
On English
Bacon
Society
Collection
1250-1700
An Exhibition at the Joseph Regenstein Library of the University of Chicago April-June, 1972
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A Catalogue of an Exhibition at the Joseph Regenstein
Library of the University of Chicago April-June, 1972
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The most recent phase of the history of this collection began a half century ago. The circumstances were not unlike those which made it possible for other great cultural treasures to cross the Atlantic, combining as they did their release from private hands, the generosity of a thoughtful benefactor, and the recognition of their historical value by the right person in the right place at the right time.

In 1921, the Holt-Wilson family placed the accumulated records of five centuries for sale at Sotheby's. The Holt-Wilsons were the descendants of Sir John Holt, a famed lawyer and Lord Chief Justice from 1689 to 1710, who in the early eighteenth century acquired Redgrave Hall, the seat of the Bacon family in Suffolk. Although there had been cursory attempts to describe this mass of documents, no adequate calendar existed to properly encompass its variety of court and comptus rolls, deeds, letters, and various state papers, some of which dated back to the thirteenth century when parts of the Bacon lands were held by the monastery of Bury St. Edmunds. In anticipation of this extraordinary sale, the Times Literary Supplement noted that these documents, "would doubtless throw much fresh and interesting light on the domestic history of England during the Middle Ages and up to the seventeenth century." Some inkling of the true extent of this cache can be seen in the table of contents of this catalogue.

The collection was purchased intact at Sotheby's by Messrs. Quaritch from whom the British Museum and a private collector subsequently purchased about 60 of the 227 lots as described by Sotheby's. The remaining documents were offered for sale by Quaritch in 1923 in their catalogue 380 with a few of the more prestigious items being offered as individual lots. But the greater part of the collections, some 4,500 items, were grouped in two lots, and it was these two lots which came to the attention of Professor Charles R. Baskerville during the summer of 1924.

Baskerville had gone to London to continue his own research and, at the request of John M. Manly, to make recommendations for the purchase of manuscripts which might be available on the market. This quest for manuscripts coincided with a deeply felt need, shared by Manly and Baskerville, for original documents to train students at the University of Chicago. Manly with another colleague, Edith Rickert, had recently embarked on a major scholarly enterprise, the editing of the text of the Canterbury Tales. The close continuity of the documents among the Bacon muniments offered an excellent opportunity for paleographical training for their students. Soon after his arrival in London, Baskerville viewed the documents at Quaritch's and wrote to Manly recommending their purchase. This was quickly accomplished with the assistance of Martin A. Ryerson, then chairman of the University's Board of Trustees and a man committed to the support of humanistic studies at the University. In October of that year, the documents arrived in Chicago, still in the muniment boxes in which they had been stored since the 18th century.

In 1929, through private hands, the University acquired, again with the assistance of Mr. Ryerson, some further manuscripts from Redgrave which had been omitted from the 1921 sale. Included was the important building account book for Redgrave. Since then a number of occasional manuscripts relating to the Bacons and their holdings have been added to the collection, the most recent being an account book, purchased during 1971, giving the charges for work on Stiffkey manor in 1582/3 then in the possession of Sir Nathaniel Bacon, a son of Sir Nicholas and noted amateur painter.

After the collection came to rest in Weiboldt Hall at the University, some passing attempts were made at bringing it to some formal order, but aside from serving the limited teaching purposes intended by Manly, no
extended investigations were undertaken. While well aware of its historical value, Manly and Rickert were heavily preoccupied with the completion of the text of the Canterbury Tales. The documents were used occasionally by other investigators such as Sir William Beveridge who obtained copies of those pertinent to his pioneering study of English wages and prices. After Manly's death in 1940, the collection was transferred to the University Library, still in the original muniment boxes. It was in the early 1950's that interest was revived by Professor R. Cecil Bald, with his fortuitous discovery of the holographs of John Donne among the documents. Soon afterwards, the University Library undertook the calendaring of the collection, a task which, once accomplished, opened the documents to a wide range of historical investigations.

This catalogue is a necessary guide to a complex and detailed exhibition of documents not frequently seen on this side of the Atlantic. It is also hoped that it will gain the attention of scholars and students as a permanent introduction to the variety of historical sources in the collection. The present exhibition also serves as the culmination of the efforts of two generations of Chicago scholars beginning with the initiative and foresight of Professors Baskerville, Manly, and Rickert and their early efforts to bring order to this mass of documentation. With the revival of interest in the collection by the succeeding generation of faculty, the University Library received encouragement from the late Professor R. Cecil Bald and Professor Alan Simpson. During this period the final description and ordering of the collection was accomplished at the hands of Professors Kenneth Dodd and James E. Farnell, both former students of Professor Simpson. Their effort resulted in an extensive calendar of the documents which has been distributed by the University Library to the principal research libraries and record offices of Great Britain and the United States.

For the selection of documents and writing of this catalogue the University Library has been fortunate to have the voluntary services of Mr. Richard M. Smith who came to Chicago in 1971 for the express purpose of studying the collection. In the course of events, Mr. Smith married Margaret McFadden who, as Assistant Curator for Manuscripts and Archives, had immediate responsibility for the collection. They share credit for this catalogue. Mrs. Carolyn Baldwin was responsible for editing the catalogue and shared with Mr. and Mrs. Smith the arduous task of expertly installing documents which were both extensive in number and difficult to mount. Mr. Robert Williams took on the task of designing the catalogue under difficult circumstances.

Robert Rosenthal
Curator of Special Collections

The Joseph Regenstein Library
April, 1972

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Any attempt to use the manuscript collection of one family to illustrate such a broad theme as English social and economic history from 1250 to 1700 will necessarily fail to review many of the problems that another observer might consider to be important. The Bacon collection, with its fine chronological series of manorial court and account rolls spanning, in certain localities, four centuries, allows one to view the development of English rural and agricultural society in considerable detail. Because Bacon family muniments have been dispersed to various record repositories over the course of this century, documents relating to the Bacons as individuals are rather poorly represented in the University of Chicago's collection. The final section of this catalogue is, therefore, a miscellany of items reflecting on a number of themes, often in limited detail.

To the social and economic historian the real strength of this collection lies in the chronological completeness of the manorial documents relating to Redgrave and Hindercley in Suffolk. Both are manors in the large ecclesiastical estates of the Abbey of Bury St. Edmunds which stills lacks an authoritative economic history. Documents concerned with these manors compare favorably in their continuity with those in the muniments of the Abbots of Glastonbury and St. Albans, the bishops of Winchester and of certain places within the Duchy of Lancaster. A considerable proportion of the material in this exhibition has been derived from these two manors.

In planning the structure of this exhibit and writing this catalogue I have had a good deal of help. First and foremost the support of my wife, Margaret Smith, has been inestimable. Her help is also reflected in the final section of this catalogue where she wrote a number of the commentaries on exhibited documents. I am also most grateful to Mr. Robert Rosenthal and Mrs. Carolyn Baldwin who have read and improved the clarity and style of the text. Mr. Robert Allison has also assisted on some problems with the Latin.

Richard M. Smith
PART I: Thirteenth and Fourteenth Century

Economy and Society

The economy of England in the period 1250 to 1350 was one in which an agricultural society was evolving in response to considerable growth of population. In a technologically stagnant situation the various levels in this hierarchy—the family, the village, the manor, and the great estate responded differently.

The peasant family was increasingly hard-pressed to find enough land to maintain a basic level of subsistence, since colonizable land was in limited supply. Furthermore, the rise in consumption, because of population growth and a restricted capacity of agriculture to expand production caused the price of agricultural goods to increase relative to wages. In such a situation the farms of the great estates were comfortably situated with fixed labor supplies and costs. The system, however, was precariously balanced and liable to disruption. The famines of the second decade of the fourteenth century ushered in a long period of population decline and stagnation. The plague in 1348-49 was a devastating aberration in a well-established downward trend. The characteristics of this socio-economic system are chronicled in detail by the account rolls, manorial surveys and court rolls relating to certain places in Suffolk and Norfolk forming part of the enormous ecclesiastical estate of the Abbots of Bury St. Edmunds.

THE DEMESNE AND ITS ECONOMY

1 Description of the Demesne

The manorial extent is a written description of the quantity and location of land pertaining to the manor. In this example the land in demesne (that land owned and cultivated by the manorial lord) is measured and described in exceptional detail. It is difficult to establish from this extent whether the furlong, called Hoscus, is a separate entity entirely under the lord's cultivation, or is composed of a mixture of tenants' and demesne land. A furlong is traditionally interpreted by medieval historians to be a ploughing division in the "open fields."

Arable land here in demesne

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<th>Terra arabilis ibidem in dominico</th>
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<td>A Est ibidem in cultura vocatur Hosco subitus bosawn domini in quinque ventis—xxv aeras vj pedes dimidad—unde super le Wente abuttant super Hosco v aeras ij rodas iiij perticatas iiij quarteria ij pedes dimidad super le Wente ad capitem eiudem vocatur Apeltonestede v aeras iiij rodas dimidad xix perticatas j quarterium super le Wente vocatur Bertishedlond abuttant super le Lound ij aeras ij rodas xxx perticatas dimidad et sic super le Wente ex parte occidentali eiudem vocatur Brownesgate viij aeras iiij rodas dimidad xij perticatas j quarterium iiij pedes</td>
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There is here in the furlong called Hoscus under the lord's wood in 5 wents—25 acres, 6 1/2 perches, and 1 1/2 feet—in which on the Went abutting upon Hoscus there are 5 acres 2 rods and 3 3/4 perches
and 2 1/2 feet, at the head of the Went called Apeltonestede there are 5 acres and 3 rods and 18 1/2 perches, on the Went called Schortewodewong 1 acre and 3 1/3 rods and 19 1/4 perches, on the Went called Bertishedlond abutting on the Loumd 2 acres and 2 rods and 30 1/3 perches, and on the western side of the Went called Brounesgate 8 acres and 3 1/2 rods and 14 1/4 perches and 3 feet.

Bacon 832 c. 1300

2 Demesne Cropping and Yields

The form of the account roll was much the same throughout the fourteenth century and its contents usually followed a fixed order. The roll is headed by the name of the reeve or collector responsible and the dates between which the account was rendered.

This is followed by a section dealing exclusively with receipts, including the important categories of rents collected and agricultural products sold as well as a host of petty sources of income. After listing receipts the expenses of the manor are presented. These include repairs to the plough, annual purchase of livestock and grain, the payment of agricultural labor, and the overhead costs of the manorial bureaucracy.

The verso of the account roll consists mainly of the stock and grain accounts in which were recorded receipts and expenditures on wheat, rye, barley, malt, oats, peas, beans, and mixed grains; horses, oxen, pigs, sheep, geese, capons, hares, pigeons, cheese and butter.

Finally there is a section recording the source of labor and its value to the manor for the year. It is therefore possible to distinguish the revenues and expenditures for general administration as well as the actual farming practices of the manorial estate.

This grain account shows the acreage of land sown with various crops for the year under audit. The account rolls for Redgrave are particularly detailed, indicating the acreage sown in named fields and the total volume of seed used. Barley (ordeum) is shown as an example:

A De quibus in semine super viij aeras apud le Brech, xviij aeras apud le Redymg, xiij aeras apud Brymnipesheyse miix aeras j rodam apud Coldhoksong summa lxxviij aeras et dimidiam--xviix quarteria v bus
sellì ordei

An attempt was also made by the reeve to assess the yield of that crop for the year under consideration. The source of information consists of the marginal notation beside the account for each type of grain. For example, peas (pisä) myrus sexto gaynerio j quarterium et j bushellum...--that year increased by sixfold less 1 quarter and 1 bushel.

Bacon 330 1340-1341

3 Demesne Livestock: Types and Quantities

The amount and type of livestock are recorded systematically in the "stock" account. In the document displayed here the sheep-farming
activities of the manor are evident. It records 490 multones (whethers), 393 Hoggastri (hoggats—sheep in their second year), 149 Oves (Ewes), 185 Garce (young ewes) and no Agni (lambs). There was a turnover of more than 1,500 sheep on this manor farm throughout the year.

The entry for whethers is given as an example of the information that can be derived from these accounts.

A De remanenti ccdxlviiij multonibus de adjunctione
lxviij multonibus et de j multone recept' de Worlingworth ante tonisonem per j t' et de lx multonibus recept' de Rickinghalla per j t' ante tonisonem et de xxviiij multonibus recept' de Coneyweston ante tonisonem per j t' et de xxvij multonibus recept' de Coneyweston post tonisonem per j t' et de xxvij multonibus recept' de Culford post tonisonem per j t' pro emerio et de iiij multonibus recept' de Rungeston post tonisonem pro eodem per j t' et de vij multonibus recept' de weyf post tonisonem hoc anno summa itij iiij x multones.

De quibus liberata apud Cheventon ante tonisonem pro larderio domini lxv multones in morina ante tonisonem xxvij item in morina post tonisonem viij liberata' apud Rungeston post tonisonem ix multones hurtard' per j t' In venditione post tonisonem v quaia dement' in venditione super computum xx summa v xxvij.

Et remanent ccdxlviiij multones unde lvdij multones pro larderio domini.

Bacon 331 1341-1342

4 Labor Services: Quantity and Types

The final section of the Redgrave account roll deals entirely with the labor services owed to the manor farm by the local villeins. This information is of vital significance to the medieval historian attempting to assess the productivity of the manor farm. Each year the villeins' unused services were commuted to cash payable to the lord of the manor.

In the section of the roll shown here, of 814 harvest boonworks—undesignated services or boons (precaria autuminalis) (A), 155 were sold; of the 161 reaping dayworks owed (messuerium daywerk) (B), 45 were sold; of the 186 carrying services (carriagium bladi) (C), 147 were sold.

Bacon 332 1345-46

5 The Effect of the Black Death (magna pestilencia)

The full impact of the plague of 1348-1349 on the manorial economy is difficult to gauge. It is apparent from the accounts displayed here, that the acreage sown on the Redgrave manorial farm dropped significantly in the year 1349-1350. In the early 1340's, 320 acres were generally sown with grain; in 1349-50 only 240 were sown. But by 1353-1354 the previous levels had been reached once again. Much more significant is the effect the high death rates had on the availability of land. A schedule attached to the rolls shows those holdings which reverted to
the lord because of a shortage of tenants. The schedule titled Red-
grave in ista villa continetis tenementi in manu domini causa magna
pestilencia lists the tenements with the names of the previous
occupiers: Juliana Hubert (1 acre) Robert son of John Mason (1 acre)
William Carter (2 acres) (A).

Bacon 335

THE PEASANT ECONOMY

6 Peasant Property

Thirteenth and fourteenth century extents and manorial surveys give the
names of tenants both customary and free, holding properties of
various sizes. The extents also list the services owed on the lord's
demesne and the rents owed in cash or kind. The calculus of works and
services obtainable from extents and account rolls are invaluable for a
technical description of the demesne economy, but such sources do not
go far as an introduction to the personal history of the villagers.

This particular survey is of more than average interest as it de-
picts in considerable detail the tenementum—a property term and divi-
sion peculiar to eastern England. Whether the tenement was an ancient
fiscal unit or possessed a degree of spatial contiguity is still open
to question. The tenement is usually given a title derived from the
name of a past or present holder of the land, followed by a list of
individuals actually holding land within it. In general these indi-
vidual pieces are quite small, indicating the existence of what the
contemporary student of field systems would call "sub-divided fields"
rather than the older, ambiguous terms such as "common" or "open"
fields. Whether the individual or individuals after whom the tenement
is named was responsible for the performance of the services owed is
also uncertain.

A Custumarii versus Mickelwode

Tenentes tenementi quondam Gilberti le Careater
videlicet j messuagium xij aeras terre et j aaram
bosci et ij aeras prati et pasture scilicet
Phillipus le Barker tenet inde quaedam partem
messuagii et bosci iiij aeras terre et dimidiam
aaram prati et pasture reddunt ad iiij terminos
censuales iiij s iiij d. per annum et vij bussellos
aveni pretium x d. ob. pretium quarterium xiiij d.
et j gallus ad natalem pretium j d. quadrans et
xij oves pretium quadrans et faciet tres arruras
per annum videlicet tempore seminerti frumenti j
pretium iiij d. et unam arruaram tempore seminerti
aveni pretium iiij d. et tempore seminerti ordie j
arruaram pretium iiij d. summa ix d. item facient
tres sarclaturas sine cibo per annum pro dimidiam
diem pretium ouitalibet ob' item facient iiij messur'
per annum in autumno pro diem integrem et tum
habebunt pandum suum semel die videlicet j panum
potagii et j feracium piscis vel vij allevias inter
duos et subtractus cibo ouitalibet valet opus j d.
item auxiliabunt ad pratum pro dimidiam diem et
valet opus j ob et si dominus voluerit invent
j hominum ad magnam perciam ad cibum dominum et
subtraho cibo valet opus j d. summa v s vi j d.

Customary tenants of Mickelowde

The Tenants of the tenementum formerly held by
Gilbert the Carter, namely 1 mesuage, 12 acres of
land and 1 acre of wood and 2 acres of meadow and
pasture, namely Phillip the Barker holds some part
of the mesuage and wood, 4 acres of land and 1/2
acre of meadow and pasture. And Simon Ode holds
the remainder of the mesuage and wood, 4 acres of
land and 1/2 acre of pasture and meadow paying at
4 occasions in the year 3 s. and 4 d. per annum
and 6 bushels of barley worth 10 1/2 d. (worth a
quarter 14 d.) and 1 hen at Christmas worth 1 1/4
d., and they do three ploughings per annum: name-
ly at the time of the sowing of wheat, 1 worth 3
d. and 1 at the time of the sowing of the barley
worth 3 d. and one at the time of the sowing of
the oats, 1 worth 3 d. Total worth 9 d. Also they
do three hoeings without food per annum for half
a day worth each time 1/2 d. Also they do 3 reap-
ings per annum at harvest for one whole day and
then they have their food on the same day, namely
1 pot of broth and a small dish of peas or 6 her-
rings between two. And without the food each
worth 1 d. Then they help at the meadow for 1/2
day and it is worth 1 d. And then if the lord de-
sires, they should send one man to the boonwork
paid in food and without food worth 1 d. Total
equals 5 s. 7 d.

B Walterus le Walays et Thomas frater tenent tene-
mentum quondam Ricardi filius Huberti cum suis par-
cennariis vide liet j messuagium cum xiij acris
terre pro equalibus portionibus ...

Walter the Walays and Thomas his brother have the
tenement formerly kept by Richard son of Hubert
with his co-parceners, namely one mesuage and 13
acres in equal amounts.

B shows the possession of one holding by two brothers with equal rights.
It is probably indicative of the effect on land ownership patterns of
the local custom of partible inheritance by which land was passed to all
sons. The latter form of inheritance contrasts with primogeniture in
which the holding passed to the eldest son.

C Adam Ode cum suis parcenariis tenent tenementum
quondam Rogeri Squire vide liet j messuagium cum x ij
acris terre unde Adam Ode tenet j messuagium cum
iij acris terre Wilhemus le Corneyser j aoram iiij
rodas dimidiam Simorus le Pannier iij rodas et di-
midiam Phillipus le Barker j aoram Ricardus Jop et j
Adam Ode with his co-parceners have the tenement formerly held by Roger Spure namely 1 mesuage with 11 acres of land in which Adam Ode holds 1 mesuage with 1 acre of land, William the Conerwyser holds 1 acre and 3 1/2 rods Simon the Pannier 2 1/2 rods, Phillip the Barker 1 acre, Richard Jop and 1 acre, Thomas Docke 1/2 an acre, Adam Pistor 1/2 an acre, Robert the son and heir of William of Herlow 1/2 an acre, Alice the Walays 3 rods, Richard Ode 3 rods and between them all 1 acre more.

C indicates the small scale nature of individual holdings within the tenement. It also implies some form of common ownership on the part of ten people on one acre of arable land.

Bacon 805

7 The Land Market

Only recently have medieval historians discovered the existence of widespread land marketing in thirteenth century England. The manner in which land transfers between individuals were recorded in the court rolls disguised the fact that a market transaction had taken place. Since land was held in return for a work service or rent in cash or kind, the lord was concerned that transactions should take place in such a way that he would always know exactly who was responsible for whatever was owed. In theory the seller returns the land into the lord's hands, who then grants it out again to the incoming tenant—the buyer. The transaction from the lord's point of view is profitable because the purchaser, apart from concluding a settlement with the seller, also has to pay the lord an entry fine—a payment comparable to present day "key money" in rent-controlled houses.

A

Galfridus Kyde et Johannes Kyde venent in plena curia et sursum reddunt in manu domini tres rodas terre et vij perticas terre Et dominus conoscit predictam terram Adam' filio Adam' Pistor et hereditibus suis Et dat domino pro ingressu habendi plegius prepositus

Fine 3s 6d.

Galfridus Kyde and John Kyde come into full court and surrender into the lord's hands three rods and 7 perches of land. And the lord grants the aforementioned land to Adam the son of Adam Pistor and his heir. And he (Adam) gives (pays) the lord for entry. Pledge, the reeve.

Bacon 14
Changes in the Terminology of Land Transactions

The formal and generally well-organized method of recording transactions found by 1300 on most court rolls was established progressively during the thirteenth century. Some authorities regard the creation of this standardized formula as a response to growing population and increased fragmentation (i.e., marketing) of land holdings. This regularity was intended to protect the lord's profit derived from the transactions of his villeins rather than to restrain the market for land.

The varied nature of the terminology in an earlier period is well-displayed in this Redgrave court roll of 1271, where simple land transfers, as indicated by A, B, C & D, are each recorded with different terminology.

A  Hervaeus Carpentar venit et sursum reddit j aoram terre ad opus Alicie filie Roberti Jop et diota Alicia dat domino pro licentia intrandi et pro licentia se maritandi predicto Herveo Carpentar plegli Walterus Clericus et prepositus

ij d.

A bridegroom places an acre of land in the possession of his bride-to-be, the transfer to be administered by the court as if it were a market transaction.

B  Walterus Oky dat domino vj d pro licentia allocaandi j peciam pasture de Walter Stoniland Ita quod tenat ad terminum tres annorum proxime sequuntum

vj d.

Walter Oky pays sixpence for licence to lease (pro licentia allocaandi) one piece of pasture from Walter Stoniland and to hold it for 3 years.

C  Alicie filia Adam Osbern dat vj d pro licentia emendi j rodam terre Xpiana filia Semani plegius Ad Osbern

vj d.

Alicia the daughter of Adam Osbern pays sixpence for license to buy (pro licentia emendi) 1 rod of land from Christine the daughter of Simon.

D  Poatae venerunt predicti Johannes Moyse et Walterus Spyr Et finem fecerunt pro licentia vendendi et retinendi ut supra unam rodam terre

D 1266, 1271, 1275-6

John Moyse came into court and paid for license to sell (pro licentia vendendi) 1 rod of land to Walter Spyr. In this case Walter Spyr was either a freeman or an inhabitant of another community.
9 Land Transactions and Death Entries in a Famine Year

Famine was a recurring threat to life in pre-industrial Europe with some periods faring worse than others. The economic impact of the famine years of 1315-1318 is indicated by the unusual increase in land transfers, typically in small pieces of 2 rods (1/2 acre) or less. This reallocation of land resources at Redgrave and Rickinghall is reflected in the graphs displayed. The number of deaths recorded in the courts also increased correspondingly. Heriots (usually the payment of a dead tenant's best beast to the manorial lord) and their value are recorded in the margins, but in this instance all are paid in cash. Possibly the food shortage was so severe that animals were no longer available for the taking. An example of the death entry for Galfridus Kyde is given. It is typical of the kind found in an area practicing partible inheritance.

A Galfridus Kyde obiit post ultiam curiam qui xi j d. Heryattam tenuit die quo obiit duas partes unius messuagii et duas acras terre de villenagio domini et venent Thomas Kyde et Johannes filii dicti Galfridi et petunt admittendi ad terram predictam et dant domino pro herieta plegius Willelmus prepositus

Bacon 14  
1315

10 The Assize of Bread and Ale: The Administration of a Cottage Industry

The Abbots of Bury had the assize of ale and bread on the majority of their manors. They thus had the power to enforce fixed prices for the sale of ale and bread in accordance with the general ordinance. With this jurisdictional power, the Abbots could reap the fines levied for inaccurate prices or inferior quality. Such cases were common as can be seen in the graph showing the proportions of all court business devoted to the assize. It was common court business because it was a common activity—a cottage industry which grew absolutely in importance over the last decades of the thirteenth century. "The brewing classes" were apparently a landless group, forming the lowest level of the socioeconomic hierarchy—a European proletariat differing from the ideal peasant type of the middle ages about which so much is written.

A Tastatores oerisae, de Botulesdale videlicet Willelmus le Haye et Robertus Symon presentant quod Johannes de Littleberry braviavit contra assisam

B Et Thomas Wuleyne remotus est ab officio suo et Willelmus Wolued pontitus in loco suo et fecit sacramentum

A and B refer to the ale-tasters, locally elected officials responsible for controlling the brewing activities of the village populace.

C Augustinus Clericus and Willelmus Wluard were fined because each one braviavit et vendidit contra assisam ter' ideo in misericordia 3 times,
and also because they did not use the right measures, non tulerunt mensuras suas.

D Hugonis Traype was pardoned his fine for brewing because of his poverty. The abbreviation _gdon’ q paup_ (when extended equals _condonatur quia pauper_, and translated, pardoned because a pauper) frequently occurs among the assize entries and has been understood by medievalists to indicate the progressive impoverishment of sections of rural society in the late thirteenth century.

Bacon 10

1302-1304

ASPECTS OF PEASANT FAMILY AND DEMOGRAPHY BEFORE 1350

11 The unfree tenants of the Abbot of Bury St. Edmunds in Redgrave were restricted in their activities by various means. For example, they had to pay to the lord a marriage fine, or "merchet," for permission to marry or to give their daughters in marriage. The usual merchet was two or three shillings, a sizeable sum, and in some cases higher amounts are encountered as seen below. The marriage partners (the bridegrooms) are not consistently named unless they lived outside Redgrave or its appurtenant hamlets as in B below.

A Two examples of high marriage fines -- 5 s. and 6 s. 8 d. -- for Alice the daughter of Thomas Knoth and Juliana daughter of John Oky, respectively.

B _Xs de Mabilic Hicet pro licentia se maritandi Radulphe de Honton plegii Robertus de Baxtere et Willelmus le Barkere_

10 s. from Mabel Hicet for license to marry Radulphus of Honton. Pledges, Robert the Baxter and William the Barker.

The high fine paid by Mabel Hicet probably reflects her rich-widow's status which made her a particularly eligible marriage partner. High fines for widows have been found elsewhere in thirteenth and early fourteenth century England. This case is of interest as an example of a widow remarrying -- another feature of a land-hungry society.

Bacon 16

1322-23, 1324-25

12 Marriage Dowries

The dowry accompanying a bride in a landscarce situation brought valuable additions to a family holding. The small dowries of land shown here, the most a father could afford or a self-sufficient daughter could acquire, are indicative of the pressure of people on available land resources. The cases deal with husband who, having acquired land through marriage, failed to acknowledge and do homage to the lord in the manorial court.

A _Item presentant quod Agnes le Countere desponsatur auidem Roberto le Chapman libero -- Et diont quod dicta Agnes tenet de villenagio domini medietatem unam aoram terre custumariam Et diont quod dictus_
Robertus non venit ad faciendum sectam curiam. Ideo preceptum est capere dictam terram in manu domini etc. Et distingere dictum Robertum pro pluribus defaltis et pro ingressu in feudo domini.

Item quod Thomas le Noble de Hilderaley diapson- satur Annicie filie Ricardi Pultaneque que tenet unam rodam et dimidian terre et octaviam partem messagii. Ideo preceptum est distingere.

Item quod Johannes de Barham diapsonatur Alicia que fuit uxorom Ade le Bantere que tenuit in dote septe rodas terre et medietatem unius messagii.

B Item presentatum est quod Isabella filia Johannis Wyge maritavit se sine licentia Waltero Brown de Wetherynsete et morabatur extra homagium pro septem annis ante quam se maritavit, ideo consideratum est cum domino.

Also they present that Isabell the daughter of John Wyge married Walter Brown of Wetheringsette without license and stayed outside the fee for seven years before she married.

The mobility of young women in medieval rural society is well-illustrated in this case: whether Isabell had lived with William Brown for seven years is difficult to say. The lord was not interested in any moral implications of her actions; only that she had been away from the lord's jurisdiction for a long time without his permission.

Bacon 18

13 Illegitimacy

Fines for "childwyte" are of particular interest to the student of medieval population characteristics. Childwyte payments are frequently found on the court rolls, although the exact nature of the offence remains unclear. Some authorities interpret it to mean a fine for fornication, but in the Bacon documents, it definitely refers to the birth of a bastard child.

The following entries are typical:

A Item quod Agnes Finae peperit extra matermonium. Ideo childwyte.

B Item quod Alicia Tessos peperit extra matermonium. Ideo childwyte.

1The phrase quia peperit extra matermonium is specific and is translated "because she gave birth out of marriage."

It is possible to use the data on childwyte and that on marriage to estimate the incidence of illegitimacy among the lord's unfree tenants. In medieval Redgrave, evidence from the court rolls suggest that illegitimacy was between 8 and 11 percent. Individuals fined for this offence usually came from the landless families, heavily involved in
brewing as a non-agricultural activity. Females paying childwyte only infrequently marry in later life.

Bacon 17

1327-1330

14 The Black Death

The full impact of bubonic plague on the population of medieval England is uncertain. It is likely to remain so until much more research into the manorial court roll collections has been undertaken. The July court for Redgrave shown here recorded 169 tenant deaths. Given that on normal occasions the average court would record 10 deaths at most, the increase in mortality was startling. The availability of brothers, sisters, nephews, nieces and cousins, as heirs explains why few tenements lay vacant after the plague. The dominance of death in daily life for the years 1348-1349 is difficult to deny and at least 50 to 60 per cent of the Redgrave population was wiped out.

Bacon 21

1342, 1345, 1347-49, 1351

15 Demographic Trends

The death entries in manorial court rolls can be used to establish a crude measure of the rate of population replacement by counting the number of sons per adult male who survived to maturity. By themselves these entries are an incomplete record of total male offspring. As Professor Thrupp has written in a pioneering study, "the immediate notice of a tenant's death may fail to give the total number of sons for one or more of the following reasons: the patrimony was inimicable so that there was no occasion for any son but the one marked as heir to be mentioned; the patrimony was partible but for the time being divided only among sons already of age; the father died young enough to have left a child or twins still in the mother's womb; the father was old and died after having assigned his sons their patrimony and retired to a cottage tenement." The death entries for the court session shown here provide an incisive picture of basic demographic trends among the land-holding rural populace. In only one case is the father not replaced by incoming sons. In the five cases below a minimum replacement rate of 1.6 can be measured, indicative of population growth within that land holding group.

Named heirs in death entries:
A Two sons Robert and Adam
B One daughter Cristina
C One son Adam
D Two sons John and Roger
E Three sons Adam, William and Henry

Bacon 13

1313-1321

16 Age of Majority and Rights in Land

Intra-familial conflicts concerning ownership and rights in land holdings were frequently found in the court rolls. Obviously, the land shortage of the period intensified a tendency toward conflict. The case presented here indicates the way in which land was leased within the family and also indicates the age of majority in this community. Thomas Jop, son of Richard, is considered unfit to hold his father's tenement because he is under 21. Whether this age of majority was rigorously adhered to is difficult to establish; custom may well have dictated that a youth was of
age when he was sturdy and responsible enough to work the land on his own.

A Thomas filius Ricardi Jop sumonatus fuit ad respondum Johannis Jop senior in plaesto terre unde dicit quod et deforciat unum messuagium et iij acrapa terre cum pertinenciis in Redgrave unde dicit quod Adam Jop pater dicit Johannis cuius heres ipse est fuit seistus ut deforciatur sic de bondaggio de ipso Adam descendit jus lai Johanne qui nunc petit in quibus idem Thomas non habet ingressum unde per Ricardum Jop qui seni illum intrusit post mortem Thomas Jop qui illum tenuet ad terminum vitae ex dimissione dicit Adam patris dicit Johannis cuius heres ipse est et inde ductum sectem Et predictus Thomas venit et defendit inde etc. Et dicit quod Ricardus Jop pater suis obit seistus de predicti tenementi post cuius mortem intravit heres et seistus est et est infra etatem Et petit judicium se infra etatem respondere debeat et predictus Johannes dicit quod consuetudines manerii est quod heres cuius cumque etatem sic de tenementi versus eum petit respondere debeat et hoc peratum est vereficare etc. super hoc omnes homines de homagio requirant si tali sic consuetudines petunt diem usque ad proximam et habunt Postea dico et quod consuetudines ville est quod minor infra etatem xxij anno sub sum potest tenere de herede sue aliquam admittere nec inde debit inflaoter Ideo expectet etatem

Bacon 17

17 The Effect of Partible Inheritance

Fragmentation of holdings, by the inheritance custom whereby all male heirs possessed an equal share in the family tenement, often led to regrouping of the dismembered holding. Frequently only one brother emerged as the eventual heir; the others sold to him all or part of their share, perhaps to work at another trade or as laborers for others, or even to migrate from the manor. In the case shown here three brothers agreed to an equitable arrangement for holding their inheritance by shuffling their possessions into less divided plots.

A Willelmus le Carter et Petrus frater eius sursum reddunt in manu domini unam aeras terre ad opus Johannis Carter tenendum sit et sequelae suae pro servicia et opera. Et dat de fine plegius messor

ij s.

2 s.

William the Carter and Peter his brother give up into the lord's hand one acre of land to the work of John Carter to be held by him and his offspring for services and works. And he gives the fine. Pledge, the messor.

xviii d. B Johannes Carter et Willelmus Carter reddunt in manu domini quaedam partem unius messuagii
continentem xiliij perticatas terre et dimidia
sum una roda terre et quartem partem unitis rodas
in crofto ad opus Petri le Carter tenendum sibi et
sequele sue pro serviciis et opera. Et dat domino
de fine plegius messor

ls. 6 d.

John Carter and William Carter give up into the
lord's hand part of one mesuage containing 24
perches of land with one rod of land and a quarter
part of one rod in a croft to the work of Peter the
Carter to be held by him and his offspring. And he
gives the lord a fine. Pledge, the messor.

vj d.

Johannes le Carter et Petrus frater eius sureum
reddunt in manu domini duas partes medietatem
unam aoram terre cum duabus partibus unius cottagii
ad opus Willelmii le Carter tenendum sibi et sequele
sue pro serviciis et opera. Et dat de fine pro
ingressu habendi plegius Adam le Carter

6 d.

John the Carter and Peter his brother give up into
the lord's hand two parts of half an acre of land
with two parts of one cottage to William Carter to
be held by him and his offspring for services and
works. And he gives a fine for entry. Pledge,
Adam the Carter.

Bacon 18

1331-1334

NETWORKS AND RELATIONSHIPS IN RURAL SOCIETY BEFORE 1350

18 Essoins

The act of securing an excuse from attending court on a given date was
known as "esson ing. Essoinage has some similarities with the system
of continuances in contemporary legal procedure. Court attendance might
be required to answer a charge or to "do suit"---that is, simply to
appear in court as all tenants, or at least all unfree tenants, were
bound to do whenever the court met. The recurring phrase de communi
refers to an ordinary appearance where no charge is laid. Where the
person essoined was involved in litigation, the nature of the litiga-
tion was often briefly noted: e.g., de placito terre, de placito
transgressione, etc. In general, securing a person to act as an essoin
seems to have been an easy matter; repeated relationships of essoin to
esson are of interest in that they reflect on the nature of social
linkages.

A Adam Sagor versus Willelmum le Breton de placito
transgressione per Ricardum Barun

Adam Sagor versus William the Breton over a plea
of trespass—essonied by Richard Barun.

Bacon 6

1290-1293

13
When an individual was fined, paid damages, or "waged his law," a person or persons known as a "pledge" was appointed as security for payment or carrying out the court's order. It was common to appoint pledges for both plaintiff and defendant in a case. The courts took full advantage of the system of pledging, fining pledges who did not produce their charges before the court. There may well have been professional pledges in village communities who provided financial guarantees, especially in land transactions. Equally, there were established groups of friends and social associations providing pledges for those in the respective groups who required them. From data such as this, it is possible to ascertain some understanding of the character of social relationships in village society, the rigidity or fluidity of the social hierarchy, and the relative contribution of what is known anthropologically as vertical and horizontal relationships in social and economic intercourse.

B Robertus de Eclesia ponit se versus Willelmm de Ehrfford de placito transgressione plegius Augustinus Cristemesse

In this example Augustus Cristemesse pledged the fine paid by Robert of the Church because he had trespassed against William of Ufford.

C De Waltero Spyrophard pro liceitio concorandandi cum Reginaldo Cristemesse et cum Isabella wizore sue per plegium Thomae Terry et Gilberti Manton

Thomas Terry and Gilbert Manton pledged the agreement made between Walter Spyrophard and Reginald Cristemesse. These types of pledging activities are frequent and may indicate that some financial transaction, although not stated, was involved. Thomas Terry and Gilbert Manton may well be underwriting a mortgage for Walter Spyrophard.

D Matilda que fuit uxor Edwardi Cat queritur se de Adam Sagor plegi de prossequendo Adam Pistor et Adam Cat plegi de reddendo Willelmm de Brockford et Johannes Cotin

In this entry four pledges are named, two for each party in the dispute.

E Rogerus Cutting reddit sursum in manu domini unum messuagium cum edificiis et aliis pertinentiis super Botulesdale hel ad opus Johannis de Ramesey et Cecilia le Mayester et hereditibus suis faciendum inde domino servita et consuetudines debita et idem Johannes dat domino pro seistina habendi inde plegius Simonis Clericus et Johannes le Ferrur

In this property transaction Simon Clericus and John the Ferur have pledged for John of Ramsey and Cecilia le Mayster who have acquired a mesage in Botulesdale. The document does not clarify the situation. They may be pledging the entry fine paid by John and Cecilia or they may actually be providing the mortgage.

Bacon 6 1290-1293
20 Indebtedness

A study of debt cases in medieval court rolls throws light on the functioning of medieval trade, at least at local and small-scale regional levels. Parties to debt cases can be classified as to whether they are resident or non-resident in the local community; if resident, whether they held land or not, and whether they held positions of local responsibility and so on.

The court roll employed to illustrate these matters shows a number of debt cases of various types.

A Preceptum est distingere Cristinam Wysman pro iiij d. debita domino Adam Capellano pro canabio ab eo empto etc.

B Item Alicia le Kyng pro v d. debita pro missis etc...

C De Nicholo filio le Reue pro licentia concordandi cum Margera de Conwyeston de placito debiti videlicet v solidos et vij d. et predictus Nicholas inuentit uildem piegios de dicto debiti solvendi videlicet medietatem ad festum Omnium Sanatorum et ad festum Sanati Thomas Apostilli aliam medietatem sollicitet Simonis Osbern et Walterus Boton

D De Sarra uxor Sarum Boton pro falsa querela versus Simonem Osbern, Walterus le King, Walterus Boton, Adam Boton, Nicholas le Reue, Ricardus Stokeman de placito debiti prout attingatur pro inquisitione etc. xviij d. De predictis Simone Osbern (iiij d.) Waltero le king (iiij d.) Waltero Boton (iiij d.) Adam Boton (iiij d.) Nicholo le Reue (iiij d.) et Ricardo Folkmere (iiij d.) indicariunt pro inquisitione versus predictam Sarram Boton de placito debiti etc. inde recuperaverunt ij quartem et ij bussels multure molendini etc. plegius adinvitem

Bacon 117 1289-1307

21 Maintenance Rights

The customary tenant who was too old or infirm to work his tenement could hand his land over to some more able member of his family or to a fellow villager in return for an agreement stipulating that he would be maintained for the remainder of his days. This was no doubt a common recourse for elderly people.

A Alanus Kempe reddit in manu domini unam cottagium et j aaram terre cum pertinenciis in Hildavale quidem cottagium et terram jacentes apud le grene Stonehye inter terram Radulphe de la Crop ex parte una et Radulphe Boton ex altera. Et Agnes filia dicti Alanii dat domino pro dictis cottagio et terra habendi sibi et hereditibus suis in imperpetuum et
solvent per annum dicto Alano patris suo ad total
vitam suam itij bussellos frumenti ad duos terminos
annuales videlicet ad festum Saneti Michaelis iij
bussellos et Pascham iij bussellos et dictus Alanus
faciet consuetudines et opera in tota vita qua que
ad dictam terram pertinentes etc. pliegius Simonis
Osbern

4 d.
Alan Kempe surrendered into the lord's hands one
cottage and one acre of land with appurtenances in
Hindercley which lay upon the green at Stonehaye
between the land of Radulphus of the Crop on one
side and Radulphus Boton on the other. And Agnes
daughter of the said Alan gave the lord the fine
for the said cottage and land to hold in perpetuity
and gives each year to the said Alan her father for
the rest of his life 4 bushels of wheat, namely at
the feast of St. Michael 2 bushels and at Easter 2
bushels. And the said Agnes should do all the ser-
tices and works that pertain to this tenement.
Pledge, Simon Osbern.

B Agnes le Godmehe sureum reddit in manu domini unum
mesuagium et iij acras terre in villa de Wattlesfield
terram custumariam Et Thomas filius et heres dite
Agnes dat domino v s. pro dictis mesuagio et terris
habendi et tenendi sibi et hereditibus suis faciendo
inde per annum ad Aulum de Hilderley consuetudines
et opera ad dictam terram pertinentes Et postea hoc
dictus Thomas inventit dictam Agnes ad totam vitam
suam viatu et vestitu prout valorem dictae terre se
extendere possit Et postea hoc soluet eadem per annum
vixerit iij bussellos frumenti et iij bussellos ordei
infra festum Sancti Michaelis et festum Omnium
Sanctorum plegii Robertus del Crop et Walterus Bonere

5 s.
Agnes Godmede surrendered into the lord's hands a
mesuage and 12 acres of land in the village of
Wattlesfield, customary land. And Thomas, son and
heir of the said Agnes, gave the lord 5 s. for the
said mesuage and land to have and hold himself and
his heirs doing suit at the court of Hindercley each
year and the services and works pertaining to this
land. And after this the said Thomas agreed to pro-
vide the said Agnes for the rest of her life with
clothes and food in accordance with the worth of the
land. And after this he gives to her annually 2
bushels of wheat and 4 bushels of barley at the
festival of St. Michael and festival of All Saints.
Pledges, Robert del Crop and Walter Bonere.

Some historians have used such entries to assess the contents of the
average peasant's diet. Obviously, food was obtained from other
sources; if the grain alone is taken into account, wheat appears in
both these examples to be of greater importance than previously sus-
ppected since wheaten breads are thought to have had little place in
European peasants' food supply until recent times. The case of Agnes
the Godmede is of particular interest as the court required her son
to provide her with victuals and clothes in accordance with the productive worth of the holding that she had handed over to him. This seems to suggest that some attempt was being made to maintain living standards in old age comparable to those the elderly persons had experienced in younger life.

Bacon 117

1289-1307

22 Social and Economic Friction Among the Peasants

Cases concerning petty theft, trespassing, and rights in land constituted much of the court's business. The methods by which pleas are made, defenses are offered, and verdicts are given by local juries are well-illustrated in the following examples.

A Walterus Mercator attackatur ad respondendum Robert filii Luciae de placito trangressione etc. Et unde queritur quod die Lune proxima post festum Sancti Laurencii anno regni regis Edwardi xviij venit idem Walterus vi et armis cum ignotis asportaverunt de blando ipsi Roberti de terra sua locata in Redgrave de Cristina Mercatricie videlicet iiiij quarteria ordei pretium quarterium iiiij s. ij quarterium siliginis pretium iiiij s. et foragium et paltam pretium xij d. Et ad humo inuiste ei detinet ad damnum etc. x s. Et Walterus venit et defendit. Et quod non venit vi et armis cum ignotis blado ipsi Roberti inuiste asportaverunt poste ei ipson petit quod inquiratur Ideo juratores etc. Et inquisitio venit et dicit quod predictus Walterus simil cum Radulphe fratrem suo asportavit de blado ipso Roberti ad valentiam iiiij ombarum ordei pretium xij s. j ombe fabarum et pisanum pretium xij s. et j ombe siliginis pretium xij s. ad damnum etc. Ideo consideratum est quod predictus Robertus recuperatur predictum blado vel pretium predictum etc. ad damnum etc. xij s. et Walterus in misericordia plegius Adam Jop.

Walter Mercator was summoned to reply to Robert the son of Lucia on a plea of trespass. And he (Robert) complains that on Monday next after the feast of St. Lawrence in the 18th year of Edward, the said Walter came with unknown persons and carried off corn of the said Robert from the land leased in Redgrave from Christine Mercator, namely 3 quarts of barley worth 4 s. a quart and 1 quart of peas worth 4 s. and 1 quart of rye worth 4 s. and feed and stakes (?) worth 1 s. And they unjustly withheld this to his damage 20 s. And Walter came and offered his defense. And he said that he did not come by force and armed with unknown persons and unjustly carry off the said Robert's corn. And he petitioned for an inquiry. Therefore the jurors came ... And an inquiry is made and they said that the aforesaid Walter along with Radulphus
his brother carried off the corn of the said Robert to the value of 3 combs (12 bushels total) worth 6 s. One combe of peas and beans worth 2 s. and one combe of rye worth 2 s. Therefore it was considered that the aforesaid Robert should recoup the aforesaid corn, at the aforesaid value... and damage worth 2 s. And Walter is amerced. Pledge, Adam Jop.

B

Henricus le Parmenter attachatus fuit ad respondendum predicto Gilberto (Bissop) de placito transgressione unde queritur quod die jouis proxima ante festum Apostillorum Simontis et Jude anno xiiij in villa de Wortham venit vi et armis etc. insulturn ei fecit et cum una tribula sum verberavit vulneravit et maletravit contra pacem ad damnum ipsi Gilberti xx s. etc. Et inde productit sectam etc. Et Henricus venit et defendit etc. et quod non est inde culpabilitatem petit quod inquiratur etc. Ideo inquisitio Et inquisitio venit et dicit quod verberavit ipsum Gilbertum cum dicta tribula etc. ad damnum vi d. Ideo consideratum quod dictus Gilbertus recuperatur etc. et Henricus in misericordia plegius idem Henricus

Henry le Parmenter was seized to answer the aforementioned Gilbert Bissop on a plea of trespass in which he complains that on the Thursday next before the feast of the Apostles Simon and Jude, in the 14th year of the reign of Edward, he came by force and armed into the town of Wortham and with a spade, beat, wounded and mistreated against the peace etc. and injured him to the value of 20 s. And thereupon he brought suit. And Henry came and offered his defense, namely that he was not guilty and he demanded an inquiry. And the jury came and said that he beat the said Gilbert with the said spade to damages amounting to 6 d. Therefore it is considered that the aforementioned Gilbert should recover the damages. Henry is amerced. Pledge...

C

Phillipus Denewold petit versus Thomam Ketil v aeras terre cum j messuagio ut jus suas etc. Et unde quidam Robertus antecessor eius fuit seyitus ut de jure etc. tempore etc. captus etc. De Roberto descendit etc. quidem Aliciae ut filiam et heredem de Basilie isti Phillipo qui nunc petit etc. Et quod tali sit jus suum etc.--Et Thomas venit et bene concedit seyinam predicti Roberti et antecessoribus etc. Et quod Alicia filia eius fuit inde seyitus seio dicit quod quidem Ricardus de Wolpet venit et disponavit diatam Aliciam et prooeravit tres filios socolit Walterus, Radulphus et Boty' et ubi dicitus Phillipus dicit predictus Boty' esse fratrem predicti Ricardi ibi ipse Boty' fuit filius dicti Ricardi ut
Philip Denewold contests Thomas Ketil for 5 acres of land and 1 measure as his right. And in which one Robert his ancestor was the possessor by right etc. From Robert it descended to one Alice as daughter and heir from Alice to one Walter as son and heir. From Walter to Basilia as daughter and heir and from Basilia to the said Philip who now seeks it and he says that it is his right. And Thomas came and previously concluded that the aforementioned Robert was the possessor. And that Alice his daughter was also the possessor but said that one Richard of Woolpit came and married the said Alice and she gave birth to 3 sons namely, Walter, Radulphus and Boty' and that where the said Philip had stated that the said Boty' was brother of the said Richard she said that he was son of the said Richard as was said above. And that this is her claim. And afterwards an agreement was made by licence of the court that the said Philip should recognize one measure and 5 acres of land to be the right of the said Thomas but that it should be measured according to the village rod and that he withholds and quitclaims from himself and his heirs. Therefore the rest of the tenement over and above the aforementioned 5 acres Philip alienated for ever from the said Thomas and his heirs should pay the lord for the said Philip 6 d. and they should allow the said Philip etc. And Thomas paid for licence to make this agreement. Pledges, Philip Ketil and Gilbert Manton.

These three long disputes are of interest because they show the court's involvement in cases of varying degrees of importance. Case A is concerned essentially with a substantial theft, by force, of a commodity that obviously was in great demand in peasant society—grain. Case B is concerned with assault, a matter that figures prominently in the courts; it shows the kind of compensation given to Gilbert Bissop who suffered injuries from the spade of Henry the Parmenter. Case C is of interest since it shows how evidence regarding rights in land was usually presented, presumably being established by the investigating jury through word of mouth. It also shows how on matters of inheritance, sons always took preference over brothers,
and how intra-familial relationships had to be proved in court.

Bacon 8

THE GENERAL COURT BEFORE 1350

General Court Business in 1264

Manorial general courts theoretically met every three weeks, but in practice there was no rigid adherence to this schedule. The courts at Redgrave in the early 1260's were concerned mainly with the control and mediation of disputes between tenants and with administering land transfers. The court for Tuesday, the 12th of March, 1264 makes this apparent. Throughout the last decades of the thirteenth century there was a significant growth in the number of land transfers administered by the court.

A Curia apud Redgrave Die Martis in Cramston Sancti Gregorii Armo Domini Simonis Abbatis Sexto

Condonatur per senesclatum Cecilia relieta Galfridi prepositi in misericordia quia duxerit ejc caretas de domo Thomas Preposito ad domum Walteri Chantecler plegius ad instantiam domini Archid

vj d. Willelmus Crane in misericordia quia piscavit in mariso domini sine licentia plegius

vj d. Andreas le Slayswithe in misericordia pro eodem

Ad hunc preceptum est attachiare Aliciam Pyttance pro chiladyte condonatur quia nixih habet plegii Edwardus Kat et Augustinus Fox

Ad hunc preceptum est distingere Willelmm nepotatem Willelmi de Braham, Ricardum de Cumpton, Rogerus d Armigeru diat Willelmi Galfriedus famulum eiusdem Willelmi ad respondendum de transgressione

ij s Phillipus de Carleton pont se in misericordia versus Walterum Felun plegii Galfridi filius Simon et Hugonis del Fen

xij d. Willelmus Wymer et Henricus Manton pro concordati sunt. Et idem Henricus pont se in misericordia plegii Walterus Cutting

ij s. Willelmus del Hathe dat ij solidos pro licentia emendi ij aeras terre et dimidiam terre de Gilberti Hubert plegius idem Gilbertus

Willelmus Medious venit et optulit legem et calumpnnavit tempus ideo pootur in respectu Edwardus Kat eodem modo
vj d. Baldewinus Faber dat domino pro relenio terre patris sui et facit servicia et consuetudines etc. plegiis Robertus de Stisile et G. Messcor

Loquela inter Baldewynum Osketil querens et Ricardum Lord et Gilbertum Odelyne defendens ponitur in respectu usque ad proximam auriam

Demanda versus dominum Egidium de Wattlesham pro defalta ponitur in respectu

iiij s. Willelmus del Hathe ponit se in misericordia versus Alemontum Denewold plegiis Willelmus Slawe et Radulphe Walthoc

ij s. Basilia que fuit uxor Johannis Warin dat ij solidos pro relemnio viri sui et pro auxilio habendi de dote sue recuperandi plegius Walterus Oky et Johannes le Messager

xij d. Thomas filius prepositi ponit se in misericordia versus Walterem Chantecler et Ceciliam matrem dicti Thomae plegius

vj d. Stephanus Hereward in misericordia pro defalta

Alicia Pye quiritur de Johanne filio Henrico plegiis de prosequendo Robertus Jop Et preceptum est attachiare dictum Johannem ad respondentum Alicia plegius ad respondentum Johannes le Messager

vj d. Athelwyse filiastre Wyot de Mercato in misericordia quia atinatum est per inquisitionem quod procuravit insiste citationem Willelmi Carpenter plegius Wyot

v s. Alex Dooke dat v solidos pro relemnio Willelmi Bristmer plegiis Willelmus prepositus et Walterus Cutting

iiij s. Emma le Kat dat iiij solidos pro licentia maritandi Matildam filiam suam plegius Eawardus

xij d. De primis plegiis dicte Emma et pro transgressione facta in Bosco domini xij d. plegius Eawardus

xij d. Galfridus le Carecter in misericordia pro falsa vendendi cervisiam ad opus domini

iiij s. Galfridus Sket in misericordia quia non impedivit dictam venditionem in presentia sua plegius

vj d. Johannes Kyppescope dat vj d. pro licentia intrandi in terra quondam patris sui plegius Hugogis Messcor

ij s. Johannes filius prepositus dat ij s. pro licentia intrandi in dimidiam aera terre que fuit Parvi Alurich plegius Willelminus Medicus
This July court for Redgrave is much more detailed than the court for 1264. By 1343 the courts were dealing with many more people. There had also been a great increase in low value fines of 3 d. to 6 d. and a decline in large fines of 2 s. or more. These developments are most easily explained as the response of the revenue-gathering machine to a rural society that was moving closer to the margins of subsistence. In order to maintain its income, the court found it necessary to lower the rate at which it fined persons for offences against manorial law. Accompanying these developments was a change in the components of court business. There was a significant increase in the importance of jurisdictional fines, particularly those dealing with default of court, and fines for damage to and trespass in seigneurial and communal property. The total number of fines for failure to perform labor services had also expanded.

A Curia Generalis de Redgrave tanta die Sabbati proxima ante festum Sanatii Martini Anno Domini Willelmi Abbatis Novo

Ricardus de Neketon defendens versus Johannis Moyse de placito terre per Thomam le Clerk inde visus Aff' Johannes optulit se non jacet quia postea distingatur

Robertus Buntyng defendens versus Thomam Lambraych de placito transgressione per Walterum Cobbe

Alanus de Shenleye defendens versus Johannis Docce seniorem de placito conventione per Robertum de Wortham Johannes optulit se

Alanus de Shenleye de communi per Stephanem Wollemongere Aff'

Johannes Docke senior defendens versus Johannis Pelmere de placito debiti per Rogerum de Hartyngh Aff' Johannes per attornatum suum optulit se
Adam filius Roberti le Bastrere tenens versus Simonem le Bastrere de placito terre unde visus per Walterum de Kipenham Aff' et Simonis optulit se

Willelmus de Dagworth tenens versus Simonem le Bastrere de placito terre unde visus per Ricardum atte Churche

Juliana uxor dicti Willelmi de eodem unde visus per Nicholam atte Churche

iiij d. De Cristina Wodecock pro licentia concordandi cum Johanne Bote in placito terre plegiis Walterus Alcock

visus

Robertus le Barkere petit versus Walterum filium Johannis le Messager iiij aeras et dimidiam terre et j aaram prati cum pertinenciis in Redgrave unde dixit quod quidem Simonis de Herlowe inde obit seistitus Et predictus tenementum descendit Agnes, Alicie, Cecilie, filiis dicti Simonis, etc. Et predicta Cecilia obit post cuius mortem pars sua descendere deberet Agnes et Aliciæ quæ nunc petunt Et predictus Walterus venit et petit habere visum etc. et habet etc. Ideo preceptum est

iiij d. De primis plegiis Johannis de Mokeslee quia non habet eum ad respondendum Waltero Seman in placito conventione in misericordia Et preceptum est ponere ipsum pro melioribus plegiis

De secundi plegiis Roberti Buntyng quia non habet eum ad respondendum Thomae Lambrzych in placito debiti in misericordia Et preceptum est ponere ipsum pro melioribus plegiis etc.

iiij d. De Johanne le redelestrere et plegiis suis de prosequendo quia non est prosecutus versus Johannem de Betenyge in placito debiti in misericordia

vij d. De Matilda Slawe et plegiis suis de prosequendo quia non est prosecutus versus Nicholam Slawe in placito debiti in misericordia Pauper

iiij d. De Rogero Waleyse, Johanne ( j d. ) le Messager Juniore, Roberto le Barkere ( j d. ) Adam' Lewyne ( j d. ) pro defalta in misericordia

Preceptum est attachiare Willelmm le Smyth ad respondendum Adam Tomelyn in placito debiti

iiij d. De primis plegiis Willelmi Tesse quia non habet eum ad respondendum Simonem Garleke juniorem in placito debiti in misericordia Et preceptum est ponere ipsum pro melioribus plegiis

23
De primis plegiis Rogeri Walays quia non habent eum ad respondendum Simonem Garlek in placito debiti in misericordia. Et preceptum est ponere ipsum pro melioribus plegiis

Compertum est per inquisitionem quod Johannes Docke inuiste detinet Adam le Carter vj s. viij d. ob. ad damnum taxatur ad vi d. in misericordia. Et preceptum est levare

Augustinus Sygtrych sursum reddit in manu domini duas partes une aere terre ad opus Willeimi Bonde tenendi stibi et heredibus suis in villenagio per servicia et opera etc. saluo jure. Et dat de fine plegius messor.

De Johanne Docke seniore pro falsa clamore suo versus Adam le Carter in placito debiti in misericordia

Postea venit De Mabilia le Mason pro defalta in misericordia

Compertum est per inquisitionem quod Simonis Garlek et Willelmus le Clerk fregerunt conventionem Ricardio Jop ad damnum taxatur ad viij d. in misericordia. Et preceptum est levare

De Simone Garlek juniore pro falso clamore suo versus Ricardum Jop in placito debiti in misericordia

De Willelmo Cobbe quia inuiste detinet iussellum frumenti pretium x d. Johanne Oky ad damnum taxatur ad j d. in misericordia. Et preceptum est levare

De Adam le Redere pro damno facuto in bosco domini in misericordia plegius messor

Augustinus Sygtrych sursum reddit in manu domini tertiam partem unius aere terre ad opus Alex' Sygtych tenendi stibi et heredibus suis in villenagio per servicia et opera etc. saluo jure etc. Et dat de fine plegius messor

De Ammon' filio Petri et Johannes Littleberry pro transgressione facta cum carectitis suis ultra terram domini in misericordia plegius alter alterius

De parcerio manerii pro transgressione facta in blado domini plegius prepositus

De Juliana le Messager pro transgressione facta in blado domini plegius prepositus

De Mabilia le Reder (j d.) Juliana Messager (j d.) Willelmo Tene (j d.) Rogero Walays
(j d.) pro transagressione facta in herbagio
domi ni cum porcis suis plegius messor'

iiij d.
De Johanne de Grundesburgh quia non venit ad
averagium scit summonitus fuit Ideo in miseri-
cordia plegius

iiiij d.
De Roberto Hicche Roberto Brychmer pro eodem
plegius Stephannus Bole

vij d.
De Roberto Crane pro transagressione facta in
bosco domini plegius messor'

iiij d.
De Roberto filio Willemii Shepherde pro trans-
gressione facta in pastura domini cum bidentibus
plegius messor'

j d.
De Margareta le Reve pro damnum facta in bosco
domini plegius messor'

iiij d.
Compertum est per inquisitionem quod Ricardus
Jop inuiste detinet Simonem Garleke junirem xj s.
j d. qu' ad damnum taxatur ad xij d. et vij d. in
misericordia Et preceptum est levard

Memorandum
Matilda le Mason et Robertus filius eius sursum
reddunt in manu domini tres rodas terre cum mediat-
tate uno messuagio ad opus Ricardi Joop Willemi
Tesse et Rogeri Walays sub hac forma quod si pre-
dicti Mabilia et Robertus soluerunt Simone Garlek
junior' ad terminos subscriptos videlicet ad festum
Sancti Petri ad vinula preterito j marcam ad fes-
tum Sancti Michaelis ulterior preterito j marcam ad
festum Purificacionem Beate Marie ulterior j marcam
et ad festum Sancti Michaelis proximam futuro xl s.
quod tunæ predicti Mabilia et Robertus rehaeant
predicta tenementa etc. et si non consaurent terminos
quod tunæ dictum tenementum remaneat predictis
Ricardo, Willemo, et Rogero imperpetuum pro fine
domini faciendi etc. Et dant domino de fine pro
dicto irrotulamento faciendi plegius messor'

Bacon 20
1343-44, 1346, 1350 and 1357

25 A Fourteenth Century Redgrave Custumal

It was decided at some stage that court rolls should be used as sources
for a summary statement concerning legal precedents in cases, fine rates,
individual rights in holdings, and grazing practices. The resulting docu-
ment was called a custumal. Produced in the 1360's, it survives as a
convenient summary of certain activities of the Redgrave villeins be-
tween 1260 and 1360. It apparently was part of a larger volume relating
to the whole of the Abbot of Bury St. Edmunds' manors until the six-
teneth century. When the Bacons acquired part of that estate, the
relevant sections were torn from the volume as documentary evidence
of their rights. A transcription is given of the relevant proceedings
in two courts.
Curia post festum nativitatem Beate Marie Anno Domini Ricardi Abbatis xxv

Presentatum est per inquisitionem quod Walterus Leveday nativus domini obit et tenuit de domino iiij acras et f rodam terre t'tur cum uno messuagio per servitium etc. et dicunt quod Johannes et Willelmus filii dicti Walteri sunt eius heredes propinquiores qui venerunt et dicunt LEVEDAY quod noluit habere dictam terram Ideo preceptum est setiire ipsem in manu domini et postea dominus conessit illa Matylda et Agneti filiis dicti Walteri tenendi de ipso in villenagio per servicia et opera etc.

Item Willelmus Crane nativus domini obit post ultiam curiam qui tenuit de domino xij acras et quartem partem unius messuagii per servicia et opera et dicunt Willelmus Ricardus, Thomas et Johannes filii dicti Willelmi sunt eius heredes et dominus habet herretum pretium dimidiam marcam CRANE

Item Alicia Woluard et Alicia filia Ricardi Lambrych peperunt extra matermonium Ideo pro childwyte v s. iiij d.
WOLUARD
LAMBRYCH

Curia generalis die iouis post festum Sancti Katerine virginis anno Ricardi Abbatis xvij

De Willelmo Garlek pro licentia habendi faldam ad minimum o bidentes usque festum Michaeli vij d. memorandum

Item de Cristina filia Walteri Heyselgood de fine pro licentia se maritandi iiij s. HEYSLEGOOD

De Matylda filia Johannis Oky de fine pro licentia se maritandi iiij s.
OKY

Item de Willelmo Frenk quia non habet bidentes suas in faldia domini secundum deberet iiij d.

Item dicunt quod Harlynge (?) habet al bidentes in faldia sua ultra certum minimum Ideo in misericordia vij d.

Bacon 951

1264-1360

THE LEET COURT UNTIL 1350

26 The Late Thirteenth Century Leet Court

The records of the view of frankpledge (visus franciplegii or bortrium) have survived for most manors of the Bacon Collection. This system, administered by the leet court, was intricate, and it not yet clearly understood. Bracton, the medieval lawyer, stated that every
male of 12 years or over, be he free or serf, should be included in the frankpledge or a tithing. In East Anglia, the persons subject to the laws of frankpledge were distributed apparently into groups consisting of ten or twelve persons, and known as a tithing; each tithing was presided over by one of its members who was known as the chief pledge or tithingman. The chiefpledges collectively were responsible for making presentments to the court mainly of a minor character—such as highways damaged, waters diverted, bloodshed, hue and cry wrongfully raised or not followed, and breaking of the assize of bread and ale.

From the example presented here it is clear that the structure of business in the leet court was evolving through the second half of the thirteenth century. This early court shows a concern for matters of seigneurial interest such as withholding rent and live-stock from the Abbot by his tenants and offences committed by individuals from neighboring manors as well as matters relating specifically to the view of frankpledge. Concern over non-attendance at the view is shown by entries dealing with default of individuals in named tithings.

A  Bortrium ibidem eodem die anno supradicto

xij d.  Capitales plegii cum suis decennarii presentant quod Nicholus filius Reginaldi Cristemessae traxit sanguinem Thomae Wulstan

presentant  Item quod Gunnilda Flemming traxit sanguinem de Willelmo Brunning

ij s.  Item quod Willelmus Medicus traxit sanguinem de Roberto Rolf plegius Johannes le Messager

Item quod tenentes de Humblestuition inusti detinent per annum j d. ob. de auxilio vicecomitis unde collectarius respondet

Item quod Johannes Wyther, Adam Wyther, Wimmundus Koe, Adam Potage, Henricus filius Ade le Webistere de Norton fecerunt purpresturas super comminem de Redgrave latitudine viij perticatae et ibidem foderunt turbarias ad estimationem sex carectas turbartarum

Thomas filius Phillipi le Brother de Lopham verberavit Galfridum le Carecter de Redgrave in domo sua et male eum trastavit

Item quod Radulphus Chanterel inusti detinet iiij d. redditus per annum pro terra quondam uxor suo

Item quod Radulphus Robertus et Johannes fillii Henrici Capellani contra pacem intraverunt domum Mabille fregerunt et ad hunc dictam tenent vi et armis inusti

ij s.  Item quod Galfridus Jume fecit rescussion messor' domini Abbatis de unius equo plegius Walterus Chapi
vj d. Item quod Willelmus le Wyte traxit sanguinem de Agnes le Franceys se iniuste plegius Willelmus

Item quod Willelmus Harding cum aliis ignotis venent ad domum Adam et postea exonerit domum et venit ipsum in Botulesdale contra vespem emitem in vico et ipsum cepit et dicit quod ipsum inarc- cereret et ipsum retinuit quosque Willelmus Ode capellanum cum deliberavit

Item quod homines domini Phillipi de Eya venerunt premeditate villa de Redgrave cum quattuor carectis et intraverunt bosco Katin' et ibidem ayderunt viij quercos et ibidem venit baliivus domini et distictionem per dictam tr' et ei fecerunt res- cussum

vj d. Item quod uxor Willelmi Carpenter' braciavit et vendidit contra assisam videlicet

xij d. Item quod Xpiana le Cuntesse braciavit et vendidit contra assisam et Ideo in misericordia

xij d. uxor Wydon' in misericordia pro eodem

xij d. Item quod uxor Roberti Chapman pro eodem

vj d. Item uxor' Hunno pro eodem

vj d. Item uxor le Mayetere pro eodem

xij d. Item uxor Willelmi Treype pro eodem

vj d. Item uxor Hugonis le Leder pro eodem

vj d. Item uxor Willelmi Pistor pro eodem

xij d. Item uxor Simonis Tannator pro eodem

Def' Eadwardus Cat in defalta Walterus Chantecler, Johannes filius Henrici, Petrus filius Willelmi le Cuntesse in decemna Thomaee Doke, Thomas Wygge in decenna Roberti Pedelat

Bacon 2 1266-1276

27 The Early Fourteenth Century Leet Court

By the early fourteenth century, business in the view of frankpledge was becoming more consistent and homogeneous. Increasing attention was devoted to petty assault and illegal raising of the hue and cry. The administration of pasturing in the common was taking up more of the court's time, especially matters relating to overgrazing offences. The assize of bread and ale was being broken more frequently.

Cases marked A show the increased amount of business devoted to matters of petty assault: traxit sanguinem (drawing blood), and


Feclit hamsokne (illegal house entry).

B shows similar growth in matters dealing with those fined for having the hue and cry raised against them and for those illegally raising the hue and cry: per quod levavit hutesiam inuiste.

Overgrazing offences (C) appear as follows: quia superoneravit communem.

In example D sixty individuals are listed as having broken the assize of bread and ale: quia braciavit et vendidit cervisiam contra assisam, pro assissa panis fraxta.

Bacon 11

1303-1312

28 The Tithingmen and Their Responsibilities

By the 1350's, little change had taken place in the structure of leet court activity. Details on the names of chief pledges were by then available and were recorded systematically thereafter. Individual default from the tithing had also grown significantly, so that the list of offenders was made at the end of each section. Whether this was in response to more rigid enforcement or increased geographical mobility, either long or short term, is difficult to ascertain.

The Wortham Leet Court of 1352 shows the names of the capital pledges:

A Omnes capitales plegii de Wortham videlicet
Rogerus atte Stile, Johannes Cristmesse, Robertus Cristmesse, Robertus Langhous, Johannes Bronn,
Johannes Manewyne, Johannes Huberd, Willelmus de Skeryng, Johannes filius Willelmi Stannard, Johannes de Dersham, Willelmus Wymer, Ricardus Ingold,
Johannes Flemmyng jur' qui dicient super sacramentum quod dant de certo v s. et ballivus domini
Regni habet de consuetudine

This section deals with fines for failure to be in a tithing or default of court:

B Willelmus Ode de fine ammoneat extra decennam plegius messor'

iiij d. De Johanne le May pro defalta

Rex

De Ricardus le Warde ( iiij d. ) et Willelmus de Kypenham ( iiij d. ) in decenna Rogeri atte Stile pro defalta

vj d. De Johanne Rond in decenna Johanne Huberd pro defalta

j d. De Ricardus Hulwyne in decenna Willelmi de Skeryng pro eodem

iiij d. De Waltero le May in decenna Johannis Stannard pro defalta

Bacon 22

1352, 1354-55
Over thirty years ago, Michael Postan destroyed the notion of progressive and linear, if somewhat slow, expansion of the English population. He proved that the last half of the fourteenth century and the major part of the fifteenth century was a period of population decline or, at most, stagnation. This model of demographic change with its associated decline in prices for agricultural commodities and consequent rise in wage rates in a labor-deficient economy has been repeatedly verified in a number of "estate studies" undertaken since 1945.

This then, was the era of significant contraction of, and in most cases complete withdrawal from, direct demesne cultivation by the large estates. This form of economic activity was replaced by a "rentier" economy in which the peasant increased the area of land that he farmed. With this improvement in his economic situation, the peasant also experienced a change in his legal status; the rigid serfdom of a century earlier, which included corvée labor, was replaced by the commutation of labor services and the holding of land on a leasehold basis. Against this background of improvement in the peasant's lot, the revolt of 1381 can be seen as neither the conclusion of a phase in English social history nor the advent of a new period of economic enlightenment. The possible determinants of population change, the way in which the peasants increased the area of their farm land, and the manner in which the old seigneurial government in the countryside reacted are documented in pertinent manorial records abundant in the Bacon Collection for the years from 1350 to 1500.

THE WITHDRAWAL FROM DEMESNE FARMING

29 Decline in Demesne Farming and Increase in Leaseholds

The area of land under direct demesne cultivation declined rapidly in the latter decades of the fourteenth century. The traditional interpretation of this development finds explanatory factors in population decline, a fall in agricultural prices, and a growth in agricultural wages rates. These economic trends made it unprofitable for the large, landed estates to function as they did earlier when population pressure caused rampant inflation. Direct demesne cultivation declined in favor of leasing to a tenant population. Population decline also caused large quantities of tenant land, that previously had circulated in an enclosed family-inheritance system, to revert to the lord's lands through lack of rightful heirs. This land, too, was leased. The documentary evidence to support these trends is startling.

The Redgrave account roll for 1370 at A shows 42 such leasehold entries, that for 1391 (B) shows 98, and in 1421 (C) there were 123.

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<tr>
<th>Bacon 351</th>
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<td>Bacon 380</td>
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30 The Decline of the Account Roll

The amount of factual detail found in the account rolls during this period decreases. Information on agricultural productivity that could be garnered from the stock and grain accounts of earlier years is no longer obtainable as, with no demesne land, livestock disappeared and the new farmer did not keep accounts, or if he did, no records have survived.

Bacon 381 1421-1422

31 A Temporary Return to Demesne Farming

In 1437, the demesne land for a very short period went back into direct cultivation and once again the account rolls take on their earlier appearance. In that year, 211 acres were sown with various grains; this acreage was much lower than the amount cultivated when the demesne was at its height. These temporary fluctuations from the dominant theme of the fifteenth-century—demesne leasing, have been identified on other ecclesiastical estates, such as those of Westminster Abbey and the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Bacon 392 1437-1438

32 Late Medieval Wage Rates

By 1473, the account roll was much smaller in terms of its size and factual content. On this roll there are no stock and grain accounts, only a solitary statement of total rent collected omitting any detail on tenants leasing land. However, some information on mid-fifteenth century material costs and wage rates in the building trade have survived; for example:

A item in stipendio j carpentari pro iiij diebus dimidiam pro diversis reparandis et carpentandis ibidem vx d. ... item in stipendio j cooperioris et servientis sue pro iiij diebus cooperiendis ex latere australi eiusdem pistorii ij s.

These wage rates are at least two and sometimes three times those prevailing one hundred years earlier for comparable tasks. Findings such as these have prompted medieval historians to explain high wage rates in terms of overall deficiency in population numbers and a diminished labor force.

Bacon 400 1472-1473

THE LATE MEDIEVAL PEASANT ECONOMY

33 The Redistribution of Land Resources in Late Medieval England

The process by which individual holdings increased in size can easily be seen in entries concerning land sales and leases in this Redgrave court roll for 1380. A land sale such as that made by Roger Manton to Johanna, wife of John, son of Adam Crane, of 7 acres
and 1 rod along with a cottage would have been very rare before the mid-fourteenth century (A). Another source of increment to peasant land resources came from demesne land that was going out of seigneurial cultivation to be leased in large units. For example, the lord leased at 8 s. 5 d. per annum, 11 acres and 1/2 rod plus a mesuage for 10 years to Simon Shepperd (B), and 19 acres of arable land at 10 d. per acre per annum with a pictell for 4 years to Augustinus Garlek (C).

Bacon 26

34 Population Decline and Intra-familial Property Inheritance

Professor Raftis states: "villeinage was a workable alternative to slavery because the peasant craved land. This peasant demand gave vitality to customary law; a forceful attraction to land removed the need for personal allocation of tenants by the lord.... It was of revolutionary significance for the system of villeinage, therefore that in the late fourteenth century villeins refused land."

Entries such as those on the Redgrave court roll of 1370 indicate the way in which the self-perpetuating system of intra-familial land exchange and continuity of villein status was breaking down, with the refusal of the rightful heirs to take up their land.

A Preceptum est sicut plures retinere in manu domini j rodam terre post mortem Johannes
Noble eo quod nullus veneat et retinere de exitu

Item sicut plures retinere in manu domini j acriam iiij rodas terre post mortem Thomas Cock
eo quod nullus veneat et retinere de exitu

Bacon 24

35 The Fifteenth Century Tenant and His Holding

Increased land availability permitted the enlargement of individual holdings by consolidation of the smaller units worked by the tenants in the thirteenth century. Some very neat and voluminous survey books on Bury St. Edmunds Abbey properties survive for the fifteenth century, giving in vivid detail the results of this consolidation. Information on the location of each piece of land in the possession of individuals makes it possible to construct a detailed picture of the community at this date. The holdings of William Ffyssher in Botulesdale, which amounted to 25 acres 1 1/2 rods, are shown as an example:

A Willelmus Ffyssher tenet unum ootagium quondam
Walteri Balle et nuper Margeris Swalsetaili pro
viij d. partem tenementi vocatur Oldetolhus et
unum ootagium quondam Ade Brokke et nuper Johannis
Lomman pro xxxij d. ibidem simul et integre jacentes
in Botulesdale inter ootagium predicte Rosae
Crane vocatur Oldetolhous ex parte orientali et

35
venellam vocatur Potterslane ex parte occidentali uno capite abuttante super regiam viam de vito predicto versus australi et alio capite abuttante super regiam viam de vito predicto versus australi et alio capite super communem viam ducentem ad communem vocatur Mekilhell versus aquilone. Et reddit per annum ij s. v d.

B Item tenet iiiij aeras terre de tenemento Dokkes nuper Simone Manwode jacentes in campo de Botulesdale inter messuagium et terram Johannis fitzJohanne quondam Johannis Bradenham ex parte aquilone et terram eiusdem Willemi Fyssher de tenemento Pedelates ex parte australi unto capite abuttante super communem viam ducentem de vito predicto usque ad communem vocatur Mekilwodegrene versus orientali et alio capite abuttante super communem semitam vocatur Watsledeweye versus occidentali.

Also he holds four acres of Dokkes tenement formerly belonging to Simon Manwode lying in Botulesdale field between John fitzJohn's messuage and land formerly held by John Bradenham on the north and land of the same William Fyssher of Pedelate's tenement on the south, with one headland formerly on the common way leading from the aforesaid street to the common called Mickelowdgrene against the east and the other headland touching on the common lane called Watsledeweye against the west.

Bacon 955  1434

36 Population Decline and Property Disrepair

Before the mid-fourteenth century, fines for failure to maintain tenements in good repair are scattered and rare. It was a condition of villein tenure that both buildings and land be maintained at a proper standard. By the end of the fourteenth century references to property in disrepair became frequent in the rolls; these references reinforced the notion of a countryside, if not under-populated, certainly much less heavily stocked in cultivators than a century earlier. In the Redgrave roll for 1415, the following entry occurs, typical of most years in this period:

A Et quod Johannes Crane de Estgate (ij d.), Henricus Crane de Pfenetret (iiij d.), Johannes Wolward (ij d.) in tenemento quondam Johannes Crane, Johannes Bunting (reparatur iij d.), Johannes Garlek (iiij d.), Rogerus Brase (ij d.), Johannes Fyysheure (reparatur iiij d.), et Adam Walter (iiij d.) in tenemento Mosaic in Wortham fecerunt vastum in bondagio domini permittendi domus ruinare ideo ipsis in misericordia et preceptum est reparare contra proximam curiam videlicet auibuslibet eorum subpoena dimidioum marcam.

All ten of these individuals were under penalty of half a mark to get their properties repaired before the next court session.

Bacon 32  1413-1418
Historians generally agree that the fifteenth century English rural dweller possessed a higher living standard than he was to experience for the next four hundred years. The increase in per capita land resources was only one aspect of this improvement. Another indication of the peasants' well-being was the growth in livestock holdings. Although evidence for this growth is difficult to establish quantitatively, the manorial court rolls present some illuminating indirect evidence. Trespass offences by villagers' livestock against seigneurial and neighboring peasant property were punishable in court. As a proportion of all manorial court business, this offence increased startlingly in the fifteenth century, probably indicative of considerable increases in animal numbers and also protein quantities in individual diets. At the least, those persons fined for such offences as indicated in this Redgrave court roll for 1406 possessed some livestock.

A Item presentant quod Johannes Ffyssher fecit damnum in magno bosco cum j pullano ideo in misericordia

iiiij d.

ij d. Item quod Johannes Byron fecit similiter ibidem cum j pullani ideo in misericordia

iiiij d. Item quod Johannes Tessys fecit similiter cum ij pullani ideo in misericordia

4 d. They present that John Ffyssher did damage in the great wood with 1 foal, therefore he is in mercy.

2 d. Also that John Byron did the same with 1 foal, therefore he is in mercy.

4 d. Also that John Tessys did the same with 2 foals, therefore he is in mercy.

Bacon 30 1400-1407

Livestock Farming in Eastern England

The East Anglian custom of "foldcourse," a system dictating that all sheep within the manor had to be in the lord's or his lessee's flock, is only partially understood. If sheep were folded on tenant land, some payment for the beneficial effects of the treading and manuring had to be made by the tenant. Because of the controlled grazing practices, advantages that accrued to the peasantry are questionable. What remains clear from the court roll entries shown below is that death rates among the flocks were still very high. These fifteenth century Brandon court rolls give consistent information on "morina deaths" in the flocks of the respective shepherds.

A Et quod xxix hogastres in custodia Willelmi

Hogastres morina

Wagecock bercarii faldæ hogastrum domini morie-

bantur a festo Omnium Sanctorum usque hanc diem

ex communis morina et non ab defectu ipsius custodis
**Oves Matrices**

Et quod xxv oves matraces in custodia Johannis Huelot bercairi faldae ovium moriebantur ex communi morina in le pokkes ab ultiam auriam usque ad hanc auriam et non ab defectu ipsius custodis quia pellis dampnantur et libantur ballivi domini etc.

**Multones**

Et quod viij multones in custodia Johannis Wylken moriebantur ex communi morina infra dictum terminum et non ab defectu custodis quia pellis dampnantur et libantur ballivi domini etc.

Between All Saints Day and the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, namely between the 1st of November and the 25th of March, 29 hoggets, 25 ewes and 8 whethers died of the disease.

Bacon 295 1422-1461

**PEASANT FAMILY AND DEMOGRAPHY**

39 The Family and The Holding

The continuity of a family's association with a particular land holding, which historians consider to be one of the dominating aspects of peasant life in the early middle ages, was no longer so powerful by the fifteenth century. An entry such as that below, in which the heir immediately sells his inheritance, indicates social and economic flux that is easily camouflaged by lack of population growth.

A Juratores de Gislyingham presentant quod Johannes Coket obit seinitus de viij aeras terre native cum uno messuagio de tenemento Emme Wolve in Burgherdas in Gislyingham post eitius mortem domini habuit j vascam pretium viij s. nomine herietae videlicet meliorem bestiam secundum consuetudines manerii. Et quod Henricus fillius eius est inde proximus heres et plenus etatis qui ventit hic in curia et dictam terram et tenementum de domino receptit qui liberatus est inde seisare tenendi sibi et hereditibus suis ad voluntatem domini faciendi servicii et consuetudines salvo jore etc. Et nihil dat de fine quia habet ingressum per herietam predictam secundum consuetudines manerii—Et postea predictus Henricus Coket presens in curia suruem reddid in manu domini predictam terram omn mes-suagio predicto cum pertinenciai ad opus Ricardi Egelyn qui liberati est inde seisina tenendi sibi omn hereditibus et assignatis suis ad voluntatem domini per virgam faciendi servicii et consuetu-dines saluo jore Et dat de fine Et fecit fidelitatem

Bacon 34 1423-1431
Although it is generally agreed that population declined in late medieval England, the causes of that decline are not easily established. Recurrent epidemics of plague took their toll after the great outbreak of 1345-9; other significant years for the disease were: 1361, 1369, 1375, 1390-1, 1405-7, 1439, 1478-9, 1499-1500. Professor Thrupp has shown how markedly male inter-generational replacement rates dropped in the later fourteenth century. At Thorney, a manor in the Bacon Collection, well over half the deaths between 1414 and 1422 show families childless or without male heirs. Brandon, however, showed more resilience, with a male replacement rate of unity or more between 1390 and 1430.

The difficult questions concerning age at marriage, incidence of marriage, and life expectancy require further investigation before it can be stated conclusively that increases in the death rate caused the European population decline in this period. Many suggestive court roll entries survive but their statistical relevance is without a firm base. For example, death entries in a Redgrave court roll for 1387 might suggest that a higher incidence of male infant mortality or mortality in general was causing population to decline. In the case of the death of John Smyth of Fenstrete, his niece Agnes, wife of John Crane, is the nearest heir, while when Roger atte Style dies, his only heir is Cristina, his daughter.

A Juvarotes presentant quod Johannes Smyth de Fenstrete obiit post ultiam curiam et tenuit de domino die quo obiit ij pighthelli pasturam cum cotagio post vius mortem dominus habuit unum equum de herietam pretium x s. videlicet meliorem bestiam de consuetudine manerii et quod Agnes uxor Johannis Crane nepotis predicti Johannes Smyth est heres eius propinquior que venet et habet ingressum per dictum herietam

B Item presentant quod Rogerus atte Style obiit seisites de v aeras iiij rodas terre tenementi Radulphi Ffabri et dimidiam rodam bosci tenementi Stonyland custumarii post aue mortem dominus habuit j stottum pretium viij s. de herita et quod Cristina filia eius est heres propinquior que non venit Ideo preceptum est seisare in manu domini et respondare de exitu

Bacon 27 1384-1387

41 Population Change: Marriage and Celibacy

A shorter life expectancy need not explain why in 1399 Robert Odelyn died and left his property to his son, John, who was nine years old and under age. He and the property went into the custody of Walter Chapman until John was sixteen. Such situations are frequently encountered on later medieval English court rolls. This may indicate delayed matrimony (at least by the male partner in marriage) thereby increasing the likelihood of his death before his children come
of age. These entries might also suggest that there were stronger inclinations towards celibacy in this period. There are many examples of brothers or sisters becoming heirs on the deaths of unmarried brothers.

A Juratores de Redgrave presentant quod Robertus Odelyne nativus domini obiit post ultiam curationem et tenuit de domino die quo obiit unum messuagium et eis aeras terre de bondagio domini post sui mortem dominus habere debet quia vacans de herieta pretium viij s. videlicet meliorem bestiam de consuetudine manerie. Et quod Johannes filius eius est heres eius inde proximus et etatis ix annorum qui presens in curia habet ingressum per dictum herietas sibi et heredibus suis per virgam ad voluntatem domini per servicia etc. et quia dictus heres infra etatem est tantus infirmitate detentus quod non potest defendere predictum tenementum libatur Waltero Chapman tenenti sibi usque ad etatem predicti heredi sub conditione sustenandi predictum tenementum et solviendi domino opera et servicia et sufficienter sustenandi dictum heredem in victu et vestibus Ideo de fine nihil

Bacon 29
1393–1399

42 Children and Their Ages

The solutions to many medieval demographic problems depend upon determining the age of individuals who appear in the manorial court proceedings. Unfortunately, it is frequently impossible to obtain such data, although detailed entries occasionally appear. Two such entries occur on the Redgrave court proceedings for 1388:

A Adam Crane qui calumnatus est nativus domini venet in curia et fecit domino fidelitatem servile quin Adam habet duos filios videlicet Johanne etatis xxx annorum, Robertus etatis xviij annorum et tres filias videlicet Johanne etatis xvi annorum Aliciam et Agnes etatis v annorum et amplius et manent cum patre eorum

B Johannes Tesses qui calumnatur ut nativus domini venet in curia et fecit domino fidelitatem servile et predictus Johannes Tesses habet unum filium nomine Ioannem etatis xij annorum et quinque filias videlicet Alicia etatis xiiij annorum, Beatrice etatis viij annorum, Christianam etatis viij annorum, Marionam etatis iiiij annorum et Joannam etatis iij annorum et manent cum patre eorum

Bacon 28
1388–1392
A Late Medieval Maintenance Agreement

Even when it was no longer customary for a family to retain a particular land-holding over a long period of time, complex maintenance agreements for elderly people were worked out in the courts. Although their holdings were sold outside the family, these elderly people were still provided for. In this example, John and Agnes Rede sold their messuage and half an acre of land to Roger of Braham who subsequently had to fulfill certain specific obligations: every Easter throughout their lives, Roger was to provide the couple with 4 yards of woolen cloth worth 8 d. per yard, or a money equivalent, also 2 pairs of shoes and a pair of linen clothes sufficient for their status. John and Agnes were also to have a room with a window in the back wall of the messuage and a small outhouse in the garden with free entry and exit wherever and whenever it pleased them.

A Johannes Rede sursum reddit in manu domini dimidiam aarum terre cum messuagio ad opus Rogeri de Braham tenendi sibi et heredibus suis per virgam ad voluntatem domini per servitium et opera etc. salvo jure etc. et dat domino de fine pro ingressu Et predicta sursumredditio liberata est sub hac conditio quod predictus Rogerus sustentabit predictos Johanne et Agnese uxor in oibis et potibus sufficienter siuit seipsum' ad totam vitam eorumdem Johannis et Agnetis Et predictus Johannes habebit annuatim de predicto Rogero illij virgas pannorum laneorum pretium virge viij d. vi pretium inde ad electionem predicti Johannis habebit etiam de eo iij pares calligaran et j par pannorum lineorum sufficientes ad statum suum annuatim ad totam vitam suam ad Festum Pascham et predicti Johannes et Agnes uxor eius habuerunt ad totam vitam suam unam cameram cum solario a retro bancum messuagio predicto et j parva camera in orto cum libero ingressu et egressu quotiens et quandamque illis placierunt Et predictus Rogerus manutenabit et sustentabit predictam messuagium sufficienter in omnibus sumptibus propriis Et ultimus predictus Rogerus convidet pro se et heredibus suis quod si contingat ipsum altquam ometent supradictarum infringere quod tunc bene locat predictis Johannis et Agnetis uxori eius in predicto messuagio omnibus suis pertinentiis reinvrare et in primo statu suo re-tinere present' sursumredictione non obstante Et predictus Rogerus fecit domino fidelitatem.

Bacon 29

1393-1399

PEASANT MOBILITY AND REVOLT

44 License to Reside Abroad

In the latter decades of the fourteenth century, more villagers on the manors of the Abbot of Bury St. Edmunds began to leave their native homes. An ever-increasing number of illegal emigrants are
named on the court rolls of the early fifteenth century. However, this data must be viewed with caution, for mobility may have been a common characteristic of village life as early as the thirteenth century. In order to fill his rent rolls and assure his income in a labor-deficient manorial or village economy, the lord would wish to restrain the activities of peripatetic peasants. Therefore it might be suspected that the documentary evidence only reflects a response to these changes as they affected the lord.

In theory, the serf belonged to his lord and could not move without the latter's permission. This permission could be obtained by payment of a sum called "chevage" (chevagium), which allowed the individual concerned to be away, usually for a year—permission being obtained again the next year and so on. In 1388 Adam Tesses paid the lord two hens for permission to leave the manor for one year.

A  Adam tesses nativus domini dat domino de fine pro
Chevagium licentia omorandi extra dominicum domini usque festum
ij capones Sancti Michaelis proximum futuro per plegios Willelm\nClerk et Johannis Tesses qui manuoperunt habere
eundem ad eundem variam et quod si non elongabatur sub
pena c solidos et facit fidelitatem servile

Chevage

Adam Tesses, the lord's customary tenant, gives the
2 hens

lord a fine for license to reside outside the lord's
homage until the feast of St. Michael next, by pledge
of William Clark and John Tesses who pledge to have
the same (Adam) at the same court and that he should
not stay away any longer under penalty of 100 s. and
he makes an oath of faith and service.

Here the lord's concern to discourage illegal departure is reflected
in the use of pledges and a penalty of five pounds, a hefty sum, if
Adam fails to return.

Bacon 28  1388-1392

45 Illegal Residence Abroad

Men who moved away rarely returned. It might therefore be asked why
certain individuals would bother to seek a license at all. Perhaps
the peasant sought legal approval for residence abroad in order to be
eligible to inherit land and goods on the home manor. Illegal depa-
ture usually indicated complete uprooting and a decision to start life
anew in another locality. This could well be the case with all those
listed for illegal residence away from the manor of Hinderclay in 1383.
Although the court was ordered to seize the individual emigrant along
with his goods and chattels, there is little evidence that this order
was regularly carried out.

A  Item presentant quod Ricardus Goos nativus domini de
sanguine extra dominicum domini est manens in
Ffornaete Ideo preceptum est ipsum capere per corpus
et seinsare bona et catalla

Item presentant quod Johannes atte Grop nativus domini
est manens in Ffrostenden idoo preceptum est ipsum
capere per corpus et seinsare bona et catalla

42
Item presentant quod Jacobus Ffolkmere nativus domini de sanguine fugatus extra dominicum domini est. Et manens in Weston Ideo preceptum est ipsum capere per corpus et seisare bona et catalla...

Bacon 127
1377-1387

46 Marriage and Geographical Mobility

Marriage was always a force pulling women away from their native villages. Whether this was more prevalent in the late Middle Ages is difficult to say, but entries such as those for Hindercley in 1401 when both men and women were indicted for leaving the manor and marrying without the lord's permission, suggest a broadening of the "geographical" marriage field.

A Item presentant quod Johannes Kyng manens in Walsham nativus domini de sanguine maritavit se sine licentia domini Ideo preceptum est ipsum attachiare per corpus ad respondendum domino

Item presentant quod Thomas Kyng manens in Walsham nativus domini de sanguine maritavit se similiter sine licentia domini Ideo preceptum est attachiare per corpus ad respondendum domino

Item presentant quod Isabella Wodeward filia Ade Kyng nativam domini de sanguine manet in Bermyngham extra dominicum domini Ideo preceptum est ipsum attachiare per corpus...

Bacon 129
1399-1405

47 Mobility and the Tithing System

The mobility of the period involved persons moving into communities and being incorporated into the local tithing system. Legal status was acquired at the age of twelve on manors in the Bacon Collection, from which time all males had to be in a tithing for policing and surety. The new citizen was apparently assigned to a certain tithing, no doubt determined by his place of residence, and thereafter it was the duty of the head of the tithing to keep his man in tithing. At Brandon in 1441 a list of individuals, either young men reaching age or new immigrants to the community, are shown as having been sworn into the tithing, while another list shows those fined because they are of legal age and not in a tithing. These lists have a two-fold use for the researcher, allowing him to ascertain ages of resident males and to calculate immigration to Brandon in this period.

A Ad hora curiam venerunt Johannes Salyng tailor, Willelmus Norham, Johannes Vynoent, Ricardus Claverynth, Johannes Philip neyler, Thomas Swatthefen, Willelum Tess et posuerunt se in decenna et jurati sunt etc. ...

ziij d. Johannes Fyssher junior' (ziij d.), Johannes Shepperde (ziij d.), Willelmus Mallard (ziij d.), Willelms Had
The Peasants' Revolt, 1381

The peasant revolt in the summer of 1381 is understood to have had various causes and results. The idea that it was a turning point in English history, ushering in a period of reason associated with persons such as Wycliffe and Chaucer, is now thoroughly discounted. Nor can it be considered simply a response to an oppressive feudal system, since the system was already in decay from forces related to rising wages, falling prices and decreasing population. Professor Postan (Cambridge, 1966) states: "A more sophisticated view of the Peasant Revolt would present it not as a reaction to poverty returned or to serfdom revived, but as a demonstration that men were now so far advanced on their road to freedom as to resent more than ever the surviving vestiges of old oppressions."

There is clear evidence in manorial court rolls such as those in the Bacon Collection of forces at work in improving the lot of the average peasant. Unfortunately, many muniment rooms were destroyed during the Revolt, so that a number of manorial record series begin in 1381. References to the event are few and life seems to have gone on much as before, apart from the punishment of individuals accused of criminal action during the rebellion. Such occurrences can be found in the manorial court records, but they are usually of a minor nature.

The manorial court at Redgrave was still dealing with individuals fined for stealing sheep from the lord’s flock at the time of the rebellion (in tempore rumoris) in 1384.

A  De primis plegiis Johannis Gyles quia ipsum non habuerunt ad respondendum domino de detentione unius bidentis abductae tempore rumoris Ideo in misericordia

iiij d.  De primis plegiis Edmundi de Wode quia ipsum non habuerunt ad respondendum domino de detentione unius bidentis abductae tempore rumoris Ideo in misericordia

vij d.  De Johanne Barbour quia abduxit j bidentem eodem tempore per deliberationem Petri Catelyn et non restituit Ideo in misericordia

THE LATE MEDIEVAL GENERAL COURT

The General Court in the 1360’s

The changes taking place in late medieval society were reflected in the form and the overall content of manorial court business. This Redgrave court for 1369 appears little different from many extant for fifty years earlier. The low rate of fine per offence, a feature of the early fourteenth century situation, was still evident—fines of 6 d., 4 d., and 3 d., being the most common. The pledging system still
functioned with pledges being fined for failure to bring into court the persons for whom they were responsible (A), along with occasional fines for non-performance of services (B). A large proportion of the business was still devoted to administering the land market and the assize of bread and ale (C).

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50

The Decline of Serfdom and Improved Living Standards: Their Effect on Court Business

Inevitably the breakdown in the system of the personal pledge, the decline of serfdom or its more overtly repressive characteristics such as labor services, and a limited involvement in inter-personal disputes concerned with debt and trespass, eventually led to drastic changes in the character of manorial court business. This Redgrave court for 1438 is representative of most fifteenth century courts. New entries appear related to geographical mobility and reduced necessity to do suit regularly in person in the manorial court. For example, 25 tenants paid licenses not to attend court for that year (A) and six others paid fines for permission to reside away from the manor (B). The control of brewing and bread-making continues to be of concern to the manor court, but fewer people participated in these activities than had been the case earlier in the century (C). This is partly in response to a decline in absolute population numbers. Also, a general improvement in economic well-being reduced the size of the medieval proletariat who acquired more land and no longer needed to participate in this form of by-employment.

A

Redgrave Curia generalis ibidem tenta die martis proxima post festum Santi Luce Evangeliste anno regni regis Henrici sexti post conquestum suis: Et anno domini Willelmi Curteys Abbatis X

Inquisitionem ex officio capta per sacramentum Thomae Pope, Johannis Bande, Thomas Egelyn, Roberti Crane, Simonis Crane, Roberti Hose, Ricardi Redere, Willelmi Page, Willelmi Ayesham, Andr' Smyth, Edmundi Sudbarne, Johannis Tyntton, Rogeri Bokynham et aliorum juratorum

Inquisitionem ex officio de Geselyngham capta per sacramentum Roberti Symes, Thomae Coupre, Ricardi Egelyn, Ada Cruypynge, Johannis Corbald, Johannis Cobbe, Johannis Botte, Johannis Ffullere, Willelmi Godard jun' et aliorum juratorum

finem

vj s. vij d.

Johannis Argentem pro eodem

Chevagium

Alicia filia Wilhelmi Redere manens in Bury, Stephanus filius Ade Tesses manens in Lydyngland, Simonis filius Henrici Crane, Johannes et Thomas filii Simone Cuttyng nativit domini de sanguine et Thomas filius predicti Ade manens in Lydyngland nativus domini dant domino de fine nomine chevagii pro licentia comorandum extra dominicum usque festum Sancti Michaelis proximum futuro

finem iiij s.

Willelmuus Fysshere et Robertus Hose presentes in curia sursum reddunt in manu domini unam acram terre nati- vum de tenemento Dokkes cum pertinentiis in Redgrave ad opus Johannis Tynton cui liberatus est inde seisina tenendum sibi et hereditibus et assignatis suis ad voluntatem domini per virgam et per servitium iii d. redditi per annum soluendi ad terminos usuales maneriis salvo jure Et dat de fine

finem vij s.

Item predicti Willelmuus Ffysshere et Robertus Hose sursum reddunt in manu domini iiij aeras terre nativas de predicio tenemento Dokkes cum pertinentiis in Redgrave ad opus Edmundi Sudborne cui liberatus est inde seisina tenendum sibi et hereditibus et assignatis suis ad voluntatem domini per virgam et per servitium xvij d. redditi per annum soluendi ad terminos usuales maneriis salvo jure Et dat de fine

finem xij d.

Johannes Smyth et Johannes Chandeler sursum reddunt in manu domini unum octagium de feodo de Branchesemne jacta Lecheslane quondam Ade Baztere in Botuletadale ad opus Willelmi Jurdon et Edmundi Sudborne quibus liberatus est inde seisina tenendum illis hereditibus et assignatis suis ad voluntatem domini per virgam faciendum inde servitii etc. salvo jure Et dat de fine Et fecit fidelitatem

vij d.

Item presentant quod Willelmuus Ffysshere (iiij d.) et Willelmuus Page (iiij d.) furnavit panem album et vendidit contra asissam Ideo in misericordia

ix d.

Et quod Johannes Slawe, Johannes Smyth et Andreaus Smyth et Katerina Vale furnavit panem equinum et vendidit contra asissam

Et quod Katerina Vale, Margareta Smyth, Johanna Uxor, Andrei Smyth, Margareta Slawe, Agnes Goldfynych, Alicia Ffysshere, Alicia Hose, Mabilia Skymnere, Isabella Crane, Agnes Skymnere, Agnes Tabour, Katerina Pope et Cristina Bonde, braciaverunt cervisiam et vendiderunt contra asissam Ideo in misericordia Et quod Margareta Dayesh fecit similiter

Electionem Homagiun de Gyslingham eligerit Johannem Bonde pro tenemento Bargarhdas ad faciendam officium messor' hoc anno futuro Et Robertus Synes fecit officium predictum et juratus est

46
Et quod Isabella Candelar sen' gannakovit servisiam et vendidit contra assissam Ideo in misericordia

Compertum est per inquisitionem quod Rogerus
Bokyham fecit transgressionem in pastura Thomae
Egelyn cum porais suis fodiendo ad dampnum xij d.
quos preceptum est levare

Item presentant quod Adam Redere obiit et anti
obituum suum sursum reddid in manu Thomae Pope
unius tenentis domini per testimonium homagii unum
messuagium cum xij aeras terre et iij rodas prati de
tenemento Kynges cum pertinencitis in Redgrave que
muper ceptit de domino sibi et hereditibus suis per
rotulum curie per serviciium vj s. viij d. per annum
ad opus Alicia uxor secui liberatus est inde seisina
tenendo sibi ad terminum vite sui ad voluntatem
domini per virgam et per serviciium predictum Et post
deceassum predictae Alicie predictum tenementum cum
pertinencitis integre remaneat Alicie filia predictae
Ade et Alicie tenendum sibi et hereditibus et assignatis
suis ad voluntatem dominum per virgam et per serviciium
predictum saluo jure Et dont domino de fine tam per
statuum predict' Alic' ad terminum vite sui quam per
statuum predictae Alicie filiae in Et postea venit
Alicia filia predictae Ade post mortem Alicie matris
sue et petit admittendi ad tenementum predictum prout
superius specificat et liberatur ei ad tenendam per
serviciium

Item presentant quod Willelmus Fysshere vendidit
Thomae Colman unum messuagium de alba firma in foro
de Botulestale sine licentia Et idem Thomas dictum
messuagium vendidit Johannis Bateman sine licentia
Ideo preceptum est seisare in manu domini quoque

De Johanne Messyon, Ricardo Skynnere, Willelmo
Wrighte, et Johannis Goselyng pro defalta curie

Compertum est per inquisitionem quod Johannes
Thachere debet Johannis Pope iij s. quos preceptum
est levare

Willelmus Fysshere presens in curia sursum reddid in
manu domini unum messuagium de alba firma uper ij
cotagii quorum j quondam Walteri Balle et alium
quondam Ade Bregge nepotatis eidem Willelmi et hereditis
suis j domum de predicto tenemento Bregg' continentem
in longitudine sibi pede et in latitudine xij pedes
per estimationem prout mete et bunde specificantur
per serviciium iij d. reddid per annum cum pertinencitis
in Botulestale ad opus Thomae Colman cui liberatus est
inde seisina tenendum sibi et hereditibus et assignatis
suis ad voluntatem domini per virgam et per serviciium
iij s. iij d. reddid per annum solvendi ad terminos
usuales manerii saluo jure Et dat de fine
Land Transactions and the General Court

Court roll entries concerned with land transactions in the fifteenth century became increasingly detailed as to the nature and terms of agreements. Two such entries are found on the court for Thursday before St. Mathew's Day in 1433 at Redgrave. In one case, John Shrag sold his tenement to Edward Sudborne and Peter Dayssh on the condition that he be allowed to reside for the rest of his days in one room in the tenement with right of entry and exit (A).

The other case shows Robert Mikelwode selling an acre of land and a cottage to William Bertram (a bastard). Credit has been arranged whereby William is to pay John or his attorney for the next five years on the feast of St. Michael Archangel 13 s. 4 d. (one mark) and on the sixth year, 6 s. 8 d. (1/2 mark). Such information allows one to assess the true cost of land in rural communities, values difficult to establish in earlier years where records indicated only the entry fine paid by the incoming tenants to the lord (B).

A Item presentant quod Johannes Shrag extra olim a domini
surrexit reddit in manu Johannes Smyth unius tenentis
domini in presentia Thomae Smyth, Walteri Skynere
et aliorum de homaggio secundum consuetudines
manerii cum agro de feode de Blanchesferme con-
tinentem in longitudine ij perticatas et xliiiij perti-
catas terre native de tenemento Dalea cum j domo
superedificato cum pertinencie in Botulesdale ad
opus Edmundi Sudbourne et Petri Dayssh quibus liberatus
est inde seisina tenendum illis hereditibus et assignatis
suis ad voluntatem domini per virgam faciendam
servicio et consuetudines salvo jure sub conditione
predicti Edmundi et predicti Edmundi et Petrus dant
de fine

B Robertus de Mikelwode presens in curia surrexit reddi
in manu domini j aoram terre cum uno agro de feode
de Blanchesemere quondam Johannis Symond cum pertinen-
cies in Botulesdale ad opus Willemi Bertram bastard'
qui liberatus est inde seisina tenendum eibit et
hereditibus et assignatis suis ad voluntatem domini per
virgam faciendam servicio et consuetudines salvo jure
sub conditione quod predictus Willemus solut au
solutionem faciat presato Roberto au attornatis suis
in quinquies annis proximis futuro post datum huius
curie videliet quaelibet anno ad festum Santi
Michaelis Argo' xiiij s. iiiij d. in sexto anno ad
ulteriori siuit presentatus est quod tune predictus
Robertus in predicta terra cum agro cum pertinencie
per licentiam curie reintreare et tenere siuit primus
tenuit present' reddit' et seisina inde liberantur et
non obstantur. Et super hoc predictus Willemus dat
de fine et fecit fidelitatem
52 Jurors in the Fifteenth Century Manorial Courts

A consistent and interesting addition to court records in the fifteenth century is the jury listing. The jury system of sworn inquests was introduced into the Shire and Hundred Courts by the Assize of Clarendon, 1166. The duty of jurors at this period was not to try cases, but to make inquiries and present reports on their oaths. The same system was introduced into the courts of lords of manors. It is not known whether these jurors were elected, for the names are usually listed at the top of the court proceedings. Whatever the system, it seemed to encourage self-perpetuation; the jury list for the Redgrave court of Thursday after the feast of St. Mark the Apostle in 1438 was repeated on all courts throughout that year and 1439.

A

Inquisitionem ex officio capta per sacramentum
Thomae Pope, Johannis Bonde, Thomae Egelyn, Roberti
Crane, Adam Crane, Simon Crane, Roberti Hose,
Ricardi Redere, Andr' Smyth, Willelmus Ayshman,
Edmundi Sudburne, Johannis Tynton, Rogerus Bokynham,
et aliorum juratorum

Inquisitionem ex officio de Geselyngham capta per
sacramentum RobertiSynes, Thomae Coupere, Ricardi
Egelyn, Johannis Corbald, Johannis Cobbe, Johannis
Botte, Johannis Fullere, Willelm Godard jun. et
aliorum juratorum

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THE LATE MEDIEVAL VIEW OF FRANKPLEDGE

53 The Leet Court at Its Zenith

While business in the general courts declined at least until the middle of the fifteenth century, the leet courts were busier than ever. Leet court business declined some fifty percent in overall volume after the mid-fifteenth century although its composition was essentially that of the earlier period. Late fourteenth and early fifteenth century leet court proceedings at Redgrave have a number of common characteristics encountered every year. There are, first, offences which occur regularly, for which there is little variety in the amercement imposed and for which individual names are repeated in successive rolls. Such are offences connected with breaches of the assize of ale and bread and with excessive charges for meat. Historians traditionally interpret the regularity of references to these offences as suggesting that the amercements involved were licensing fees, rather than punishments imposed in an effort to restrain the particular activity.

A second group of offences, though they recur continually, do not repeatedly involve the same individuals. Entries under the heading "assault" are of the kind one would expect in an ordinary punitive law court.

A third group of cases relates to damaging the highways, blocking and diverting the local water courses, over-stocking the common pastures, and placing dung heaps in offensive places. A final section deals with fining persons for default and swearing in new members to the tithings.

1432-1441
A Omnes capitales plegii ibidem videlicet Adam le Reder, Willielmus le Clerk, Thomas Gybbes, Walterus Prat, Johannes Littleberi, Robertus Irlande, Johannes le Reve, Johannes le Smyt, Robertus Knot, Adam Crane, Edmundus Godmere, Adam Joop, Eustachius Chandelier, Augustinus Carlek, Robertus Odeline, Benedictus Joop, Willelmus Teseard, et Johannes le Leche juratores qui dicunt super sacrementum suum quod dant de certo lete xx d. Et ballitus domini Regni illum habuit

iiij d. Item presentant quod Willelmus Crane arcavit quandem viam apud Shrihamrome cum ramis spinarum ibidem non amputatis ad communem nocumentum Ideo in misericordia plegius messor' Et preceptum est emendare

iiij d. Item quod Johannes Crane sen' obtupuavit quandem curseum aque apud Helesyerd ad communem nocumentum Ideo in misericordia Et preceptum est...

iiij d. Item quod Johannes fecit hamsokne super Robertum Irlande Ideo in misericordia plegius messor'

iiij d. Item quod Edmundus Brightmere obtupuavit quandem curseum aque apud Sabynes ad communem nocumentum Ideo in misericordia plegius prepositus Et preceptum est emendare

ij d. Item quod Robertus Oky obtupuavit quandem curseum apud Levedays ad communem nocumentum Ideo in misericordia plegius messor' Et preceptum est emendare

condonatur Item quod Robertus Capellanus capellanus Sanoti Johannis arcavit quandem viam vocatur Monselesweye cum dumis non amputatis ad communem nocumentum Ideo in misericordia Et preceptum est emendare

vij d. Item quod Cristina le Maystre obtupuavit quandem curseum aque in Lacheslane ad communem nocumentum Ideo in misericordia Et preceptum est emendare plegius messor'

vij d. Item quod Henricus Bercher communicavit in maresco de Botulesdale cum vacus ubi communicare non debet Ideo in misericordia

vij d. Item quod Petrus Cateline vertit quandem curseum aque apud marescum de Botulesdale Ideo in misericordia plegius messor'

vij d. Item quod Reginaldus le Roper obtupuavit quandem curseum aque in foro de Botulesdale apud le Bazsteres-bregge Ideo in misericordia plegius messor' Et preceptum est emendare
Item quod Rogerus levavit j warderobam ibidem ex oposito foro de Borulesdale ad communem nocumentum Ideo in misericordia plegius messor' Et preceptum est emendare

Item quod idem Reginaldus duo capitales plegii venerunt ad faciendum visum eos accedit et im'navit per eo quod latu fuerant sibi de dictis nocumentis Ideo in misericordia plegius messor'

Item quod Rogerus Hunno fecit hamsokne super Petri Cateline Ideo in misericordia plegius messor'

Item quod Agnes Fox manbspastus Rogeri Hunno traxit sanguinem de Johanne le Clerk plegius Rogerus Hunno

Item quod Margareta Ffox fecit hamsokne super Rob- ertus Slaghe Ideo in misericordia plegius messor'

Item quod idem Willelmus levavit hutesium iuste super dictum Alanum Ideo in misericordia

Item quod Alanus de Shelleye communicavit in commune de Botulesdale cum vaqcis et boviculis ubi communi-care non debet Ideo in misericordia plegius messor'

Item quod Walterus de Aldewode iniuste cepit de Rogero Hunno unam periam audiam popularis pretium iiiij d. Ideo in misericordia plegius messor'

Item quod Rogerus Hunno fecit hamsokne super Walterum de Aldeswoce intrando messugium suum Ideo in miser-icordia

Item quod idem Walterus levavit hutesium iniuste super dictum Rogerum Ideo in misericordia plegius messor'

Item quod Ricardus Salvetail communicavit in commune de Botulesdale cum j pullano ubi communicare non debet Ideo in misericordia

Item quod Agnes Symond continiavit unam fymalem apud Mondonmereschel ad nocumentum vicinorum Ideo in misericordia plegius messor' Et preceptum est emendare

Item quod Ricardus Salvetail habet j fymalem in foro de Botulesdale ad communem nocumentum Ideo in misericordia plegius messor' It preceptum est emendare

Item quod Johannes le Tiller habet j fymalem ibidem ad communem nocumentum Ideo in misericordia plegius messor' Et preceptum est emendare
Item quod Petrus Catteline habet i fymalem ibidem ad communem nocuentum Ideo in misericordia plegius messor' Et preceptum est emendare

Item quod Johannes Pewan fecit unum putoam in communia ubi non est communicare Ideo in misericordia plegius messor' Et preceptum est emendare

Item quod Willelmus le Barker communicavit quandem communem viam obstupuam apud Barkeresmede ubi facit j pontem ibidem ad communem nocuentum Ideo in misericordia plegius messor' Et preceptum est emendare

Item quod Johannes le Shapetere communicavit quandem purpusturam super communem in foro de Botulesdale vendendo j placeam ex parte occidental domus eue longitude xij pedes et latitudine j pedem et dimidiam ad communem nocuentum Ideo in misericordia plegius messor' Et preceptum est emendare

Item quod Johannes le Clerk fecit inuuste distictionem super Ricardum Steynesmor Ideo in misericordia plegius messor'

Item quod idem Ricardus levavit hutesiam iuste super dictum Johannem Ideo in misericordia

Item quod Willelmus le Ray fodit turbas in maresco in ij debito loco ad communem nocuentum Ideo in misericordia plegius messor'

Item quod Johannes Reeman fecit quandem faldegate super tenementum quondam Eustachii Ode ex oposito campo de Botulesdale ad communem nocuentum victoriorum Ideo in misericordia Et preceptum est emendare

Item quod Walterus le Bazstere (vij d.), Ricardus le Bazstere (vij d.), Alicia Raven (iiij d.), Alicia Skynner (vij d.), pistores fregerunt assiessam Ideo in misericordia

Item quod Alicia Hedemayden (iiij d.), Margareta le Mayden (iiij d.), Johannes Troughe (iiij d.), Johanna Taillor (iiij d.), Amnicia Tiller (iiij d.), Margeria Salvetail (iiij d.), Margareta Walays, regutatores emerunt panem et vendiderunt contra assiessam Ideo in misericordia

Item quod Alicia Raven (iiij d.), Alicia Skynner (ziij d.), Katerina Coche (iiij d.), Margareta Taverner (iij d.), Beatrix Chandler (vij d.), Agnes de Codham (vij d.), Cristina de Littleberri (vij d.), Agnes Rede (vij d.), Matilda Joop (vij d.), Beatrix le Reve (vij d.), Isabella Baile (vij d.), Emma le Barker (iiij d.), Margareta Fox (iiij d.), Mariota le Warner (vij d.), Juliana Cobbe, Agnes le Rede
(viij d.), braciatores fregerunt assissam cervisiae
Ideo in misericordia

xvj d.

Item quod Alicia Raven (j d.), Alicia le Skynnere (j d.), Katerina Geche (j d.), Margareta Travermer (j d.), Beatriz Chandelere (j d.), Agnes de Codham (j d.), Cristina Littleberry (j d.), Agnes Rede (vj d.), Matilda Joop (j d.), Beatriz le Reve (j d.), Isabella Balle (j d.), Emma Barker (j d.), Margareta Fox (j d.), Mariota le Warner (j d.), Juliana Cobbe (j d.), Agnes le Rede (j d.), braciatores vendiderunt cervisiam per mensuras non sigillatas ut per distos et ciphos Ideo in misericordia

iiij s.

Item quod Margareta le Mayden (iiij d.), Emma de Cambriggge (iiij d.), Agnes le Leche (iiij d.), Margareta le Bazstere (iiij d.), Juliana Bretoonn (iiij d.), Johanna Godgrene (iiij d.), Matilda Ffair-heud (iiij d.), Matilda le Smyt (iiij d.), Cristina Cateline (iiij d.), Alicia Slege (iiij d.), Cristina Moyse, Margar Salvetail (iiij d.), ganoker emerunt cervisiam et vendiderunt contra assissam

iiij d.

Item quod Petrus de Derham fecit inviiste districtionem super Thomam Cybbes de j parva lignea pretium j d. Ideo in misericordia

ix d.

Item quod Galfridus Borman, Eustachius le Chandelere, Adam le Reder, tastatores cervisiae non fecerunt offia in loco Borman, Edmundus Godwene electus est et est juratus

vj d.

Item quod Henricus Cateline boucher vendidit carmes corruptes in permedione populi Ideo in misericordia plegius Petrus Cateline et Willelmus Tessard

iiij s.


Datus est dies amoris pleg’ usque ad proximam curiam placitus de articulis curiae

vj d.

Johannes Oky dat domino de fine ut ammonet extra decemna Ideo plegius Johannes le Smyt

Affuratores Johannes Crane Willelmus Man Summa lxxix s. vj d.

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1361-1368

53
54 The Decline in Leet Court Business

By the early sixteenth century, the Redgrave leet court was dealing with a minimal amount of business; few fines were made—one for overgrazing the common with sheep, one for failure to scour a ditch, and two men were fined for selling bad meat. The election of two constables and two ale-tasters completed the business for 1506.

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55 Tithingmen in the Late Middle Ages

By the late Middle Ages tithingmen and jurors were no longer listed as two separate groups in the court proceedings. Fourteen names are listed at the beginning of court proceedings and referred to always as capitales plegii ibidem, indicating that the same group was now performing the roles that two sets previously undertook. The reasons for this change are not clear, but the system of private jurisdiction was showing manifest signs of decay and before long a rather different form of local government based on the parish emerged to replace it.

A  Johannes Slawe  
    Johannes Randolf  
    Thomas Goldfinch  
    Edmundus Tabour  
    Stephanus Debynham  
    Johannes Smyth  
    Walterus Dayshe  
    Peter Dayshe  
    Walterus Skynner  
    Adam Clerk  
    Johannes Pope  
    Henricus Reve  
    Robertus Ffleacher  
    Robertus Crane  
    de Ffenstrete  
    Johannes Mercyon  
    Walterus Leche  
    Thomas Anour Smyth  
    Robertus Irlande  
    Willelmus Irlande  
    Willelmus Ffysshere  
    Johannes Geser

Rex Ffin'  
xx d.  
Qui dicit super sacrementum suum quod dant de certo  
lete ex antico continuo xx d. quos ballivus hundredi  
de Hartismere habebit

xij d.  
Capitales plegii presentant quod Johannes Terell  
miles concelavit cursum aque obstupatum apud  
Denmanescroco' et non emendatum proit habet diem Et  
preceptum est emendare sub pena xij s. iij d.

vj d.  
Et quod Ricardus Coterell fecit ibidem similiter ad  
ocumentum vicinorum Ideo preceptum est emendare

iiij d.  
Et quod Tetishale obstupuavit cursum aque in tenemento  
suo in Botulesdale ad nocumentum vicinorum etc. quid  
duit de hundemere usque tenemento Johannis Smyth Ideo  
et preceptum est emendare sub pena xl d.

vj d.  
Item quod Robertus Norton aroavit communiam vocatur  
Botulesdalefen elargiendo pightellum suum proprium  
ibidem in latitudine iij pedes et in longitudine  
quince pertiacatas ponendo ibidem plantae ad nocumentum  
ticum vicinorum etc. Et preceptum est emendare sub pena  
dimidiam marcam contra proximam curiam

54
Et quod Willelmus Ffysshere et Willelmus Page furnaverunt panem album et vendiderunt contra assissem Ideo

Et quod Johannes Slawe et Johannes Smyth furnaverunt panem equinum et vendiderunt contra assissem Ideo

Et quod Katerina Vale, Margareta Smyth, Aliciæ Ffysshere, Caterin Pope et Cristina Bante bractaverunt cervisia et vendiderunt contra assissem

Et quod Aliciæ Hose gannoker cervisiae et vendidit contra assissem Ideo in misericordia

Item quod Isabella Candelæ fecit similiter Ideo

Et Agnes Saxteyn traxit sanguinem de Johanne uocore Augustini Cartere mordendo eam cum dentibus suis Ideo

Et quod Robertus Holberughe obstiguavit communem cursum aque apud Barkersbregge ad nocumentum vicinorum Ideo in misericordia et preceptum est emendare sub pena xij d.

Et quod Ricardus Cotereell de Burgate communicavit in communita et campo de Redgrave apud Menhaughe et Bakerysfeld cum vaccis et equis ubi communicare non debet Ideo

Et quod Robertus Bethye fecit ibidem similiter cum bidentibus suis Ideo in misericordia

Et quod Jacobus Shepherde fecit ibidem similiter cum bidentibus suis ubi communicare non debet

Et quod Henricus Edrych de Ffemyngham fecit similiter apud Mektwoodgere cum bidentibus suis ubi communicare non debet

Et quod Andreae Brane de Wortham fecit similiter in campos de Redgrave apud Lytelfrych cum vaccis suis ubi communicare non debet

Electionem Item eleguerunt Robertum Hose et Johannem Crane ad faciendum officia tastatoris cervisiae pro anno proximo futuro etc. Et jurati sunt

Bacon 35

1432-1441
Changes in the economy of Tudor and early Stuart England centered on population expansion, but the rising gross national product was not spread evenly over all sections of English society. Undoubtedly many Elizabethan yeoman farmers and the more capable of the large estate owners such as Sir Nicholas Bacon were able to take advantage of rising food prices and increased land values to expand their level of consumption. However, the size of smallholders' and laborers' holdings shrank and rigid controls were imposed on exploitation of common lands. These changes resulted in growing impoverishment and the development of a poor-law system that formed the basis for a wide range of parochial governmental responsibilities that eventually took control of village administration out of the hands of the leet court.

Manorial general courts, even as mere land registries, did a thriving business. Land was in short supply, and with the turnover in holdings and rising entry fines and rents, revenue from this form of jurisdiction grew markedly over the period. Documents similar to those that recorded comparable developments three centuries earlier were still being employed in the sixteenth century—the court rolls, the bailiff's accounts and the manorial surveys are obvious examples. However, the tremendous turnover in land resulting from the monastic dissolutions, along with the growth of a more professional landowning class, saw considerable refinements in the detail and technique of surveying. Other documents associated with new laws, such as wills and inventories, and the existence of a more literate estate bureaucracy provide us with a wider range of sources to view developments in rural economy and society.

ACCOUNTING PROCEDURES

56 Bailiff's Accounts

The student interested in the economic well-being of the English gentry between 1540 and 1640 has at his disposal two main data sources which can be interpreted with reasonable objectivity. The first bailiffs' accounts do not differ significantly in form from their medieval predecessors; they are concerned with revenues for which these officials were responsible on individual manors. In a large estate such as that of Sir Nicholas Bacon, these were usually engrossed on parchment to form one large account roll. The Bacon Collection includes a continuous series of bailiffs' accounts for the period 1556-1648.

A second type of document, the receiver's account, was drawn up by receivers who collected revenue from a number of sources, including cash sums from manorial bailiffs. Analysis of these documents produces a broader view of total income. Sixteen such accounts for Sir Nicholas Bacon survive relating to the period 1559-1575.

The bailiff's accounts for Hinderclay 1556-1557 and Walsham le Willows 1572-1573 are typical of those engrossed in the Bacon Collection rolls. Hinderclay's account is written in English while that for Walsham is in Latin. They are concerned mainly with arrears from previous years, rents from farming of demesnes, rents of assize—namely, fixed quitrents paid to the lord by copyholders or freeholders, profits of the manorial court, and profits from woods.
57 Receiver's Accounts

Receivers accounts generally list four main categories of income. First is a section listing cash receipts from manorial bailiffs; secondly, income from properties held by the lord for a number of years rather than land that had been inherited; thirdly, income from offices; and fourthly, income from the "foreign account"—a "tidying up" category of miscellaneous items. Shown in this example are payments for office and foreign accounts for 1573 to 1574.

Bacon's remuneration as Lord Chancellor that year amounted to some £961 per annum in "certainties" (his fixed salary), and £186 in "casualties"—a sum derived from fees for deeds, perpetuities, patents and exemplifications. The account also shows his income from the Office of Dispensations and Faculties—a branch of Chancery where certain grants made by the Archbishop of Canterbury were confirmed by the Great Seal. His wax allowance of £16 is also shown. Professor Simpson has used the Receiver's Accounts to establish the growth in Nicholas Bacon's income from land from a few pounds in 1540 to close to £2,500 by 1575.

A  
Exitus                          
Officii                        
Cancellariae cum proficiuis    
Officii facultatis             
Et de om æxiij libris æj s. viij d. de exitu et proficiuis hoc anno crescentes pro executo domini Cancellariae de Thoma Cotton hanaperii receptatis videlicet in certitudine Cocalio libris æx s. et in casualitate æxiij viij li æxj s. viij d. debitis pro uno integro finto in ffestum Michaelis infra tempus huius computi Et de æxj li æxj d. receptatis de Wilelmo Cooke armiger' clerico officii ffauctatis de exitu etiam officii hoc anno debitis Et de æxj li receptata pro denariis allo- cantur pro cora in officio predicto expenditatu hoc anno

Summa c ml ccxxiij li æxj s. viij d.

B  
Receptae fforinsece
Et de æx li per diatum Georgium Noon hoc anno receptatis de Magistro Garnish pro solutione cuiusdem debiti ad visum domini ex recognitione super hunc computum Et de colt per diatum Georgium hoc anno receptatis de Edwardi Tasborough Generes pro parte perquisitionis terre vocatur Manningestandes in Ilketshall Sanoti Andree ex recognitione diti Receptata super hunc computum Et de æxi per dioti Henrici Clerke receptatis pro exhibitione Edwardi Tyrell debita ad ffestum Annuaitionem infra tempus huius computi videlicet pro prima mete

Summa cxxi li

Bacon 803

1573-1574

58 Thomas Buttes' Account Book (Bound in a Fifteenth Century Service Book)

Inflation is a major theme in the economic history of sixteenth century England but its effect on landlords and tenants is a matter of some debate. An account book, such as that kept by Thomas Buttes concerning certain of his south Suffolk and north Essex properties, provides details on semi-annual receipts, at Lady Day and Michaelmas, for the years 1547 to 1589. This document indicates that in this case the landlord met the problem of cost inflation by raising rents and fines. It appears that his tenants (farmers) did not suffer severely from these increases as the accounts show the same families keeping their leases for many years.
A page from the accounts for October 14th, 1542, is shown.

Whereas the rent and farm due at the feast of Saint Michael the Archangel, the rent and farm due at the feast of Saint Michael the Archangel for one part.

Receiv'd of John Mantle for one half of the rent and farm due at the feast of Saint Michael the Archangel for one part.

Receiv'd of John Holmes for one half of the rent and farm due at the feast of Saint Michael the Archangel for one part.

Receiv'd of Robert Blase farmer for one half of the rent and farm due at the feast of Saint Michael the Archangel for one part.

Receiv'd of William Sydenham, gent., for one half of the rent and farm due at the feast of Saint Michael the Archangel for one part.

Receiv'd of William Shitt farmer for one half of the rent and farm due at the feast of Saint Michael the Archangel for one part.

Bacon 950

An Early Seventeenth Century Attempt at Formal Accounting

The accounts of the period and consequently those in the Bacon Collection rarely, if ever, allow one to compare revenue and expenditures as can be done with modern accounts. Professor Simpson notes one exception in the general account of the estates of Sir Robert Drury of Haustead, Suffolk, for 1609, found in the Bacon Collection. The steward had drawn up the account so that, in the left hand column of the upper half, income due is shown; the center and right hand columns show receipts still unpaid respectively. In the lower half on the left hand side, expenses for various every-day items such as apparel, stable charges, and household provisions are shown while the right hand columns include payments under bonds and sums delivered to his master for making journeys to London and Newmarket. Professor Simpson states: "The account is not formally balanced but the sum of the expenses, at the foot of the page coincides, within a shilling or two, with the income actually received" (Column 1).

Bacon 1511

1609
ESTATE PROBLEMS AND MANAGEMENT

60 The Estate Bureaucracy

The maintenance and administration of a large landed income required a sizeable bureaucracy of estate managers; Sir Nicholas Bacon himself was predominantly based in London because of his role in national affairs. In a book of surveys made between 1552 and 1554, Sir Nicholas drew up a list of his leading officials at specific places.

A Austen Curties receyver of all my land in Suff. and Norff.
Pfrancis Boleis steward of my court.
Thomas Boldingham gent' of my rank.

Redgrave

James Vale keper of my house--there
John Lynne bayliff there
George Dedham woodward there
Robert Andrews warmer there
Robert Rose baker
Robert Bramne horskeper
Beles Brewer and Clavysterseman

Rykinghail

Thomas Seman bayliff there
Robert Bark woodward there

Hinderoley

Edmund Denney bayliff
Robert Houlet woodward there

Walsham

Rampley woodward there
Harryson bayliff there

Wiverston

Bale bayliff there

Ashefyld

John Southwelle gent' bayliff there

Melles

Priston bayliff there

Bacon 966

1552-1555

61 Renting Paying Procedure

Rents were increasingly important sources of income on the Bacon manors in the latter half of the sixteenth century. At the same time changes were taking place in the form of rent collection. An entry in the Hinderley court roll for 1561, written in English, states that from that time, the biannual rent-paying days were to be changed from Lady Day and Michaelmas to St. Mark's and St. Luke's Days; a fine of one shilling was levied for failure to pay by those days.

A Item the homage hathe ordeyned and agreed that yerely from henceforth the tenants of this manor shall pate all their rents in forme followinge that is to pate the first half yere due at our Ladye shal be pade to the lord's bailiff at the furthest on St. Markes daie then next followinge in the parishe churche of Hinder-
aley. And the last half yere rent due at Michalmas shal be likewyse paide the lorde's bailiff on St. Lokes dale the Evangelist at the furthest. And that evey ye man who make defalt shal forfait to the lorde's for defalt of palement contraye to this ordinance the same of xijd. provided always that this ordinance shall not extende to the palement of rent corne.

Bacon 140

62 Tudor and Stuart Sheep Farming: Its Profits and Techniques

Because of its association with enclosure and forced depopulation of the countryside in sixteenth century England, sheep farming has been a favorite topic of Tudor historians. Systematic studies are, however, rare. Professor Alan Simpson employing the Culford Sheeshpeave's accounts that survive in the Bacon Collection, has attempted to assess the profitability of the activity. He considers that a flock of 1,000 sheep in 1540 might make a profit of £40 per annum while by the 1580's, it would have risen to £120 and by 1630, it would have stood at £140. Such computations are notoriously difficult and those made by Simpson have been criticized on the grounds that they do not take into account the rental value of land used, interest on capital invested, the value of feed and so on. Therefore, it seems certain that Simpson's figures over-estimate the sheep-farmer's profit. Undoubtedly the financial gains from livestock farming in Tudor England have been overstated. Large estates were involved in it precisely because they were the only economic organizations which, by dint of their size, could viably conduct such farming.

However, documents such as these Culford accounts are invaluable as they provide insight into the technical side of this farming practice, permitting us to calculate overall turnover in sheep numbers, stocking rates, lambing rates, and prices over time. Accounts concerned with the Culford flocks for 1601-1602 are shown.

Bacon 747

63 Disputes With Adjoining Landowners

Much of the correspondence in the Bacon Collection relates to matters of estate administration; letters between manorial bailiffs and members of the Bacon family, and letters between tenants and the Bacons. Letters between the Bacons and adjoining landowners in Norfolk and Suffolk, particularly after the wholesale transference of property that occurred in the area during the sixteenth century are rather commonplace. Of this type is a letter from one James Taverner to Sir Nicholas Bacon (son of Sir Nicholas Bacon). Taverner was trying to collect some outrents traditionally paid by the manor of Egmere to the manor of Wighton. Bacon replied that they had been annulled by the Letters Patent.

A My humble dutie to yor good worshipp and my good Ladye always remembred. I am herby so bold as to Remember you of yor worshipful favor in the behalfe of this beareer Robt Payn my sone in Lawe of whose Duetyfull servicee and good behavior both to yorself and my saide good Ladye I make no doubt of but that
he well Imploye himself withall good will and
dylyganse as apperteyneth And Sr Nicholas you were
so buaye at Styffkye when I brought ther the my
booke of Rentalles touchinge the Rentes and dueties
of hir Maties manor of Wighten issueng out of yor
manor of Egmere as that you could have no good
Convenyent tyme to perusse the said Rentalles
Wherefore I have thought good herbye to certifyfye you
of the nevr all parcelles of the same viz Pro daubs
sectis et intracome earundem ii s. iiii d. Egmer pro
Leteefee ilm ii s. ix d. ob pro Di sect et intracome
etuadem pro terr Mr. Gigges viij d. Et pro Redd voc
wardipound iiii d. Sna per An. v s. xij d. ob. And
ther be now this late mychelmas three yeres behynd
unpaid whitch cometh to the Some of xxij s. x d. ob
And syne that I am nowe leuying of myn unprofitable
offyce had of this hir Maties Collicture And agayn
yor worshippp having at hand yor Audytr yor Baylyis
and Farmr here I praye that they nowe at last maye
agree and determyn such good ordere herin as that I
maye be paired the Arrerages afsaids For as I tak yt
yt is tympe syne that nowe also therwithall I gyve
over this my Eluyah offyce which I hope in god shall
never happ agayne to me for any Tenure of myn duryng
my lef tympe And so I prayinge to the almightye for the
Increas of yor good worshipp I tak my leave for this
tyme at Wighton this xxviiijth of October 1599
Yor Worshippes always to comand
Ia Tauermer esq

Bacon 4166

64 The Appointment of a Parish Incumbent

The appointment of preachers and clergy was often in the purview of the
largest landowner in a parish. One such placement at least pleased the
villagers of Coneyweston who wrote their thanks to Sir Nicholas Bacon.

A Right Worshippfull, Wheras we doe understand, that yt
hath pleased you to make chocie of Mr. Andrews to be
our minister, and to that purpose have appoynted
that he shall preach at or town of Wyverston wherby
we should have triall of his gifts May yt please yu
therefore to understand that he hath forenoone and
after noone this Sabothe day bestowed such profit-
able paynes amonge vs, as we have great cause to
thinke well of him and for or partes our humble
desyre unto yr worsh: is, that yu will continuo yr
good liking towards this man, not doubting both in
regard of his teachinge as also of his godly lif and
honest conveneracon, that we shall have amonge vs,
and we shall acknowledge our selfes to be bound to
pray still for yr worsh: health and preservacon, as
for many other favors, towards vs so especialy for
this in shewing yr selfe a most carfull & provident
Patron for us; In witnesse of our approbaco of hym
we the Inhabitantes of Wyverston haue here vnto subscribed our names this 6 of June 1613

Wm: Stokes
Thomas Havell als Smyth
Tho: Wilton
Wil Godryhe
Willm X Margend his mark
The mark of X Wm Seliman
The mark of Willm X Powntys
The marke of X Robt Polsar
The marke of X Ivo Bone
John Stokes
Henry Weste
Thomas X Hasue his marke
The marke of X John Posford
The marke of X Henry Motlker
The marke of X James Walton

Bacon 4206 1613

THE PEASANT ECONOMY

65 The Sixteenth Century Manorial Survey

The manorial survey is one fundamental source for study of the peasant economy in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. John Norden, the prestigious English sixteenth century surveyor, wrote that: "the lords records and the tennants informations are the pillars of a survey." The surveyor made use of all earlier surveys of the manor, court rolls, court and field books. The tenants came to him to present deeds and copies of court rolls stating their right to hold that land. The manorial survey was not, therefore, a field survey because the land was not measured. As Eric Kerridge writes: "for the surveyor the badge of truth was in antiquity." This Elizabethan survey book for Walsham, in Suffolk, made in September, 1581, is an example. The method of survey is stated in the preface.

A tum per saeoreamentum tenentum dicti maneri et examinationem ac debitam scrutinationem antiquorum rentalum rotulorum curiae et aliarum evidentiarum dicti maneri quem perambulationem terrarum dicti maneri cum tenentibus eiusdem prout inferri particular patet

It may be noted that the boar in the illuminated capital "S" was an emblem of the Bacon family.

Bacon 968 1581

66 The Growth of a Small Holding Class

The Redgrave tenant populace between 1542 and 1714 is analyzed in an unpublished University of Chicago Ph.D. thesis by Kenneth Dodd, who suggests that significant changes were occurring in the social structure of the community. On considering the three surveys/rentals

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shown here for 1542, (A), 1605 (B), and 1682 (C), he observed that there was a decline in the total amount of rent paid over the period, even though there was an increase in the number of tenants. The explanation for this anomaly is that the number of cottagers or poor peasants (those holding less than 5 acres) increased from 23 per cent to 66 per cent of the total tenant population, while those which Dodd called middle peasants, holding 5 to 20 acres, decreased. The story was a similar one for the richer peasants, those holding over 20 acres.

From hearth tax evidence, it can be seen that by 1674 the largest taxpayers in the community were not necessarily the largest landowners, indicating perhaps the development of significant cottage industry in response to a land-scarce situation.

Bacon 964 1542
Bacon 980 1605
Bacon 826 1682

67 Grazing Stints on the Commons

Sixteenth century meadowland consisted of two sorts: dry upland meadows or low river-valley meadows. Generally, both types existed and functioned as common meadows or pastures. On all commons, whatever their size, restrictions on unlimited grazing were imposed, since no one was supposed to keep more stock in summer than he could support on his farm in winter. The number of animals which each tenant was allowed to graze on the common was related to the size of his holding, and the seasons at which stock could be grazed were agreed upon in the manorial courts. These measures did not prevent over-grazing, however, for large increases in stock numbers were taking place everywhere in this period. In some cases, the commoners met the difficulty by introducing stints for the first time, or by reducing old ones.

Whether some such situation had arisen in Redgrave by the beginning of the seventeenth century is difficult to say. In 1607, an ordinance in the leet court stated the grazing stints on the common for respective persons, the larger tenants having the greater pasture rights.

A item it is ordered that the Tenantes videlicet John Purdy, John Straungman, Gregory Ffyssher, Andrew Fflecke, Robert Herte, John Berry, Richard Bettes and Robert Dedenham shall keepe noe more but eights great beastes uppon the common of Redgrave uppon the payne heretofore in this courte sett done. And that Richard Heynoone, John Gadyner, John Shepparde, John Knight, John Sane, Edmond Bettes, Valentyne Harte, Richard Skete, John Harnewell, Lancelot Jasper, William Barfootre and Thomas Cooke shall keepe every one of them but sixe great beastes uppon the common. And that Edmond Johnson, William Martyn, Johanna Morsse vidowe, John Ffyssher, Wedowge Bugge and every of them shall keepe upon the common but fyve greate beastes and none more. And all newe tennanees but twoe greate beastes and noe more uppon the paynes heretofore in this courte lyng

Bacon 55 1603-1612

64
The usual form of enclosure in sixteenth century England was by express consent or agreement. Permission was granted for some kind of piecemeal division of the previously subdivided fields, provided that they were thrown open after harvest, or as in the case of eastern England, that the enclosure did not interfere with the sheep courses operating in the community—be they those of the lord or of his farmers. The manorial court had a part to play in the ratification of such actions, especially if customary land was involved. As to the effects of such changes on the lives of the poorer tenants or cottagers in the community, one could assume that they were not deprived of resources necessary for sustenance as they rarely held livestock that would have suffered from reduced pasturage. Depopulation, sometimes the partner of enclosure in Midland England, did not occur in association with these developments in eastern England. Far from losing people over the period, the population of eastern England grew in absolute numbers.

In the Redgrave count of 1549, the richer tenants of the time undertook a review of the progress of this type of enclosure.

A verdict of certain instructions given to the homage by the lord

The homage of the lord on the parte of Redgrave do say uppon their othes that the lord of the said Manor before granting oute of his deman landes in the ffelde of Redgrave by copye of courte Rolls was accustomed to kepe coc shepe which were fedd always ffower dayes in the weke in the ffeldees and comen pasture of Redgrave Except that the said shepe were yerely accustomed to be kept oute of Southffen and Westtherme ffom the ffest of the Puryficaeon of our lady untill the ffest of All Seyntes And that the Tenantes of the said Manor had then certen shepe goyng in the said fflook they payeng to the Lord yerely for every shepe ij d.

Item the said homage do also present that aboughte xxi yeres nowe paste John Harvey gent, Edmund Purdy, William Sterre and John Hemmyng did the Warren of the Lord to fearme and payd therefore to the lord by yere vj s. viij d.

Item they say that dyverse of the tennants are ynhabitantes of Redgrave aforesaid have of late yeres ynclosed parte of their londes as well ffre as that they hold by copye of courte Rolles of this
manor owte of the grett ffelde of Redgrave and also
lefte some of their said londes lying in the said
ffelde enclosed The number of akeres with the names
of the said person hereafter ffolowyth

ffirst Thomas Bugges hath ynclosed owte of the said
ffelde iiij akeres and iiij Roodes of copyholde and
hath styll in the said fffeld enclosed iiij akeres
and iiij Roodes

Item Robert Dewe hath ynclosed iiij akeres and unus
Rood of copye and ij akeres of fffre lond

Item Edmond Steyell hath ynclosed viij akeres of
Copye and hath styll xiiij akeres enclosed

Item Margaret Chirohe Wydowe hath ynclosed xvij
akeres of copye londe and xix akeres of copye
enclosed

Item Robert Debenham hath ynclosed xvij akeres of copy
and iiij akeres of fffre londe and hath styll xix
akeres and a Roode enclosed

Item John Creetyng hath ynclosed iiij akeres dimidiam
of copyeland

Item William Debenham hath xvij akeres dimidiam
ynclosed of copye and iiij akeres dimidiam of fffre
and ij akeres dimidiam enclosed

Item John Fflyssher hath xvij akeres of copy ynclos-
ed and two akeres enclosed

Item William Whighe hath xiiij akeres of copy
ynclosed and two Roodes enclosed

Item Thomas Bukkenham hath viij akeres of lond
ynclosed in the Woodffelde

Item Robert Langham hath ynclosed vj akeres in the
same fffelde

Item Thomas Bukkenham hath in the same fffelde
ynclosed xxx akeres

Item Robert Braue hath ynclosed ij akeres j Roode of
copye and hath ij akeres iiij Roodes enclosed

Item William Dowe hath j aker of copy ynclosed and
iiij roodes enclosed

Item Edward Saunders hath ix akeres dimidiam of copy
xij akeres of fffre ynclosed and x akeres dimidiam
ynclosed...
THE PEASANT ECONOMY

69 The Oath of Allegiance to a New Lord of the Manor

Although many of the more onerous elements of medieval feudalism were gone by the sixteenth century, certain aspects remained of the old relationship between landlord and tenant. Typical was the "recognition," whereby tenants were obliged to appear at the first court of the new lord, paying a small sum (usually one penny) and swearing their allegiance to him. The first manorial court at Redgrave held after Nicholas Bacon acquired the manor, shows this event.

A
Prima curia Nicholae Bacon Armigeri Solicitoris
domini Regis curia sue Augmentationis reventi Corone
dicti domini Regis cum Attun' Omn'

Redgrave
cum
Botulesdale

Tenentes tam liberorum quam nativorum ibidem tenta
die veneris proxima post festum Epiphanie domini
anno regni dicti domini Henrici octam dei gratia
Angliae Franciae et Hibernie Regis fidei defensoris
et terram superiam capitis Anglicane et Hibernie
ecclesiæ post conquestum Angliae Tricesimo Septimo

Essoniae

Nullus quia prima curia

Ad hanc curiam omnes tenentes tam liberorum quam
nativorum exacti fuerunt de quibus comparuerunt
Robertus Kene Generosus, Willelmus Dale clerics;
Laurencius Stusted, Willelmus Page, Johannes
Ffyssher sen, Thomas Ffyssher, Willelmus Whyte,
Johannes Corbold, Walterus Nomne, Robertus Debenham,
Robertus Branne, Edwardus Saunter, Walterus Bett,
Johannes Purdy, Johannes Shepperde, Robertus
Shepperde, Robertus Lanham, Margereta Chirche vidua,
Margareta Dale, Johannes Hemmyng, Johannes Harte,
Edmundus Stegell, Johannes Cretyng, Johannes Cryspe,
Robertus Saie, Johanna Aloo, Maria Dey vidua,
Robertus Ffyssher, Nichus Walton, Robertus Dowe,
Lodowicus Mershe, Margareta Arburgh, Cecelis Trupp,
Johannes Ffyssher, Ethelena Dowe, Willelmus Dowe,
Robertus Hoberd, Willelmus Hoberd, Johannes Howchyn,
Alicia Cooper vidua, Willelmus Debenham, Henricus
Byrde, villat' de Redgrave, Ricardus Chamberlyne,
Thomas Bugg, Elizabeth Browne, Tenentes terre nuper
Johannis Coppynge, Agnes Hoberd vidua, Henricus
Kilyng, Willelmus Dowe de Redgrave, Johannes Smyth,
Johannes Skott Scilicet attun' domino ten et
posuerunt eum in possessione reddid eum videlicet
eorum singuli per solutionem unum denarii secundum
consuetudines manerii

Bacon 44

1536-1547

67
Limited Surrender of Land

Custom generally allowed the copyholder (see Item 76) to surrender his holding to the use of another party for a term of years or for the term of the life of this second party, the copyholder reserving it on that party's death to his heir or heirs. This form of limited surrender was a convenient means by which copyholders might provide for a widow or ward. Two examples are in the court proceedings of 1545.

A  Et quod idem Ricardus Dale obiit post diversos annos iam revolutus et anti obitum suum extra curiam sursum reddit in manu domini per manum Thomae Ffyssher nativi tenentis in presencia Edwardi Saundcr et Roberti Hoberd similiter tenentum et aliorum de homaggio unam parceallam terre modo edificatam continentem in longitudine viginti pericatas terre et quinque pedes...ad opus Margareta uxoris eius modo usor Roberti Davie pro termino vite sue et post eum deceasum remaneat inde iudem Thomas Dale filio predicti Ricardi et heredibus suis cui prestat Margarete liberata est inde seissima tenendum sibi modo et forma predicta per virgam ad voluntatem domini et per servicia et consuetudines et salvo jure Et dat de fine Et fecit fidelitatem

B  Et quod Walterus Bett obiit post ultiam curiam et anti obitum suum extra curiam sursum reddit in manu domini per manum Roberti Brame nativi tenentis in presencia Johannis Cretyn et Georgii Bett similiter tenentum et aliorum de homaggio tres rodas prati jacentes in townes medewe justa pratum super Willelmi Goldfynche uno capite abstante super le Syymynge Dyche versus australium et unum tenementum cum gardo adjacente vocatur Sewall continentem tres rodas terre de ffeodo alba firma tenendum per servicia j d. ob. quondam Johannis St kyes ac tres acres et dimidiam terre nativarum jacentem in crofto dicti tenementi cum prato in Redgrave que nuper habuit ex sursum redditione Johannis Hudson et Agnetis uxoris suis de anno regis Henrici viij patet ad opus Margeris uxoris eius pro termino vite sue et post eius deceasum remaneat inde Willelmo filio predicti Walteri et Margeris ut heredes eius secundum unam formam et estimationem testificatam et ultius voluntatis predicti Walteris cui prestat Margeris liberata est inde seissina tenendum sibi modo forma predicta per virgam ad voluntatem per servicia etc. salue jure et dat de fine et fecit fidelitatem...

Bacon 44

1536-1547
71 Widow's Rights

Frequently the widow did not hold the land for the entire portion of her remaining years, but handed it over to her son and heir in return for a room and sustenance. Agreements comparable to maintenance agreements found three hundred years earlier occur in the court rolls of the sixteenth century. The widow Margery Stekele handed over her cottage to John, her son, but she was allowed a room in the cottage for the rest of her life.

A ...sub ista tamen conditione in forma predicta conosseca est seisina ut predicta Margeria habeat durante vita sua j cameram infra dictum octagium cum libero introitu et exitu ad eandem ad haundam aquam atque spatium ibidem ad plantandam bosoum Et consedit ad disonderandam dictam cameram predictus Johannes de omnibus redditius et necessaritis reparationibus in perpetuam decetero quod extunq presens sureum reddit sit firma ad visum dicti Johannis et heredum suorum aliquorum bene locat dicte Margeriae licentiam curiae in easdem terras reintrare possidere et gandere ut in suo pristino statu

Bacon 43 1525-1526

72 Vestiges of the Pledging System

During the sixteenth century the court roll becomes less useful as a means of assessing social and economic networks, apart from those in the land market. It is not clear exactly what the court deals with, since it appears that certain procedures were not recorded. If the Redgrave court proceeding for July, 1521, can be considered representative of the period, it would seem that the essoin and pledge were still employed by individuals. A list of essoins and four debt cases, although for unspecified objects or amounts, with the plaintiff's pledges precede records relating to tenure and land exchange.

A Redgrave cum Curia generalis cum leta ibidem tenta die lune proxima ante festum Sancti Botulesdale Jacobi Apostoli Arno regni regis Henrici octam duodecimo

Essonia Margeria Plettyng vidua de communi per Willelmum Wykye, Thomas Dedham de communi per Johannem Hert, Thomas Rugwood de communi per Johannem Ffyessher, Thomas Knot de communi per Johannem Tallur junior, Johannes Lane de communi per Edmundum Shepperd, Robertus Debenham de communi per Thomam Purdy et Willelmus Wykes de communi per Bartholomeum Andrewe

Querela Thomas Dedham queritur versus Stephanem Sabare de placito debiti plegiis de prosequende Johannes Den Ricardus Roo

Querela Edmundus Sheppard queritur versus Edmundum Steykell de placito debiti plegii de prosequendo Adam Pye

69
73 A Sixteenth Century Yeomen Farmer's Will

In recent years, wills and inventories of possessions of the deceased have been systematically employed to gauge the wealth of certain sections of Tudor and Stuart society. The will of Lawrence Reynberd of Walsham, a substantial yeoman, shows the bulk of the property going to his wife, a smaller portion to his eldest son and very little to his daughter. Note how Lawrence Reynberd provided for peace of mind and the good care of his soul by means of various gifts and endowments.

A  ...also I bequeathe to the heyalter of the cherehe of Walsham be forsetid for tythes forgetyn destroyed or not verly wele payed xij d. and for the same cause to Ser' Walya' Mustarder xx d. Also I bequeth to the mod' of Noroych xij d. also I bequeathe to the fryres of the old hous of Thetforthe for a trental for my soule and my frend sowles x s. Also I bequeathe to the fryres of the Newehous of the same town for a trentell x s. also I bequeathe to the fryres of Babwell for a trentell x s. Also I wish that the townehepe of Walsham shall have tymbrys for a gild halfe ye so be that they intende to make the said gild halfe huse what with I wolde have an abyll prest as far as it wele reche to syrge and prey for my soule et my friend soulys in the cherehe of Walsham

74 A Tanner's Goods and Chattels

Manorial rentals and surveys of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, useful as they are in allowing us to calculate land holdings of the rural populace, rarely allow insight into the domestic well-being of these persons. The probate inventory listing a dead person's goods and chattels provides us with valuable information. For example, the surveys of Botulesdale show only that Robert Browne held some 3 1/2 acres of land along with his messuage. We know, however, from his inventory that he was a tanner and much of his wealth was derived from that trade. Undoubtedly he, like many of the poorer smallholders of East Anglia, was driven into this by-employment to supplement his meagre agricultural earnings.

An extract from the inventory:

A  The chamber
    In primis ij fether beddes     xiiij s.  iiiij d.
    and ij balsters
    Item a matteres               ij s.
Item iiij coverletts of the country makynge
Item ij pares of blanket iij s.
Item X pares of sheets x s.
Item ij cosyers iij s.

The yarde
In primis xiiij small in loes and leathers
cont' by estimat' x califes skins and iiij
hydes and iiij empty sellis vj lii xiiij s. iiij d.
Item a plough with pte of the shore
Item iiiij dukes and viij hennes iij s.
Item one bore a sow and a shoke vj s. viij d.
Item ij load of wood iij s.

The barne
In primis ix load of old barkes xxiij s. viij d.

In the pasture and fylds
In primis one mylhe cowe xiiij s. iiij d.
Item iiij yerings xxiij s. viij d.
Item iiij geldynge xxiij s. iiij d.
Item viij gese iij s.
Item iiij acres di of barley xiiij s. iiij d.
in the field

Bacon 1554 1558

75 Revenue from the General Courts in the Sixteenth Century

Income from the Bacon manorial courts varied a good deal from year to year during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Evidence in the account rolls indicates that at Redgrave, it ranged from £ 4 15 s. Od. in the year 1597-1598 to £ 111 1 s. 1 d. in the year 1644-1645. Kenneth Dodd has shown that over the period as a whole, there was an upward trend in the takings of the manorial court.

A transcription of part of a typical general court, such as that shown for 1557 indicates that fines for land constituted the only significant source of income. It was, therefore, as a registry for land transfer that the court became an increasingly profitable institution.

A Johannnes Goche de communi per Georgium Dedham
Essonia
Thomas Wether de eodem per Henricum Peke
Alicia Hervey de eodem per eundem Henricum Peke
Margareta Tynton de eodem per Johannem Tynton

misericordia
iiij d.

Henricus Peke queritur versus Robertum Calve de placito debiti xx s.

misericordia
iiij d.

Johannes Ffyssher queritur versus Willelmus Dowe de placito debiti xx s.

misericordia
iiij d.

Henricus executor testamenti pro ultime voluntate
Johannis Dowe queritur versus eundem Robertum Dawe
iiij d. Thomas Spaldyng queritur versus Henricum Peke de placito dote

Capitales
Georgius Dedham
Henricus Peke
Thomas Ffyshker
Johannes Tynton
Johannes Dale
Jeram Miles

ibidem cum
Francisco Roser
Robertus Cawe
Johannes Helles
Thomas Robberd carpenter
Willelmus Dawe
Thomas Andrewe

inquisitione
Alen'
que dicunt super eorum sacramentum quod Thomas Bolton alienavit Georgio Dedham unum tenementum nativum in Botulesdale et quod idem Thomas extra curia surseum reddid in manu domini per manus Thomas Ffyshker nativum tenentis in presencia Johannis Tynton et aliorum de homagio secundum consuetudines manerii tenendum per annum ad usum dicit Georgii et hereditibus suis

Obituae
quod Johannes Lynne senior post ultiam curiam obiit et ante obitum suum surseum reddid in manu domini per manus Henrici Peke nativum tenentis in presencia Jeram Miles et Roberti Dawe omnium terram et tenementum nativum ad usum suum ultime voluntate

Et quod Willelmus Page genti Johannis Ffames sunt sectatores curiae et defaltaverunt

Eseonia
Ad hunc curiam venit Johannis Lynne filius Johannis Lynne et in plena curia fecit domino fidelitatem pro duabus pecis terre continentis in se ix aeras parcella clauso vocatur le Brehe Close et pro alia pecia terre continentis in se septem aeras jacentem per Holwey que nuper Don' cepit cum dicto Johanne Lynne patre suo ex concessione domini ut in rotulam curiae de anno xv Regis Henrici viij patet

Ad hunc curiam venit Johannis Prentise et in plena curia surseum reddid in manu domini quatuor decim perticatas terre native de tenemento Dales cum una domo desuper edificata ac unum aitum messuagium de ffeodo albe firma cum gardino adiacente tenementi Dales predicti situata in Botulesdale tenentum pro serviciis xiij d. reddendo per annum et sectam curiae ac etiam dimidiam aoram terre native jacentes in Bakersfylde parcellam xiij aorarum et unius rodos terre prout jacentes inter terram huus manerii in tenure dicit Johannis Tynton extra aquilone et terram huus manerii in tenure dicit Johannis Tynton et Johannis Cawe exparte australi uno capite abutente super terram manerii de Wortham hall versus occidentalem et alio capite abutente super terram huus manerii nuper in tenure Ricardi Cotterell versus orientalem cum pertinentiis ibidem que nuper habuit
ex suorum redditione dioti Ricardi Coterell ut in rotulam curiae de anno quinto Regis Edwardi sexti ad opus et usum Willelmi Dawe et heredum suorum cui liberata est inde seisin a tenendum hereditibus et assignatis suis per virgam ad voluntatem domini secundum consuetudines manerii per servicia et consuetudines salvo jure etc. dat de fine inde fecit fidelitatem

Ad hanc auriam venet Robertus Harvey et in plena curia fecit domino fidelitatem pro uno tenemento jacente in Botuledale tenementum isto maneriio libero per servicia reddendo per annum et sectam curiae que nuper perquisivit de Alicie Harvey matre sue

Ad hanc auriam venet Jerriam Miles et in plena curia suorum reddit in manu domini dimidiam acron terre herietabilite jacemt juxta Stebbyng apud Meckylwoodgrene inter terram Thomae Goche vocatur Ratener ex parte orientali et horsewey ex parte occidentali et abbutante super Stebbynglane versus australi et super terram nuper Johannis Dawe versus aquilone que nuper cepit inter aliam terram ex suorum redditione Roberti Cok ut in rotulam curiae de anno sexto regis Edwardi sexti pr' ad opus et usum Thomae Walter et heredum suorum cui liberata est inde seisin a tenendum sibi hereditibus et assignatis suis per virgam ad voluntatem domini tenendum consuetudines manerii per servicia et salvo jure et dat de fine et inde fecit fidelitatem

Bacon 46

1553-1558

76 Copies of Court Roll

The majority of manorial tenants held land by customary law. By the sixteenth century most customary tenures were copyholds—the copy of the court roll entry of admission to the holding serving as the tenant's title deed. A debate has raged among modern-day historians concerning the security with which tenants held land by copyhold tenure. Professor Tawney asserts that the right of the copyholder to be considered under common law was a privilege slowly acquired over the course of the sixteenth century. Recently Eric Kerridge has argued that to all intents and purposes the difference between customary and common law was minimal and that the average copyholder was secure in his tenure. The material in the Bacon Collection does not contribute significantly to this debate. However, it clarifies the process by which the copyholder obtained and held his land. In eastern England, the usual customary tenure was copyhold of inheritance, a form of copyhold in which the habendum was to "him and his heirs".

Some customary tenants of inheritance did not hold by copy, although their rights were the same as copyholders of inheritance. The tenants by the verge, as the others were called, were given seisin by the handing over of a verge, rod or staff; thereafter their admissions, surrenders and conveyances were recorded in the court rolls, copies of which they received. A and B below are of this type.
A is a copy of a court roll entry for 1618 by which William Bente held his land. B is a copy of a court roll entry for 1493 showing that Robert Terry held half an acre. C is a copy of a court roll entry whereby William Rought sold back land worth £85 to Sir Nicholas Bacon in Redgrave and Botulesdale.

Bacon 1182  1618  
Bacon 1163  1493  
Bacon 1141  1620

77 Customs of the Manor

Customary law was the one "legal" structure that recurrently made its presence felt in the lives of the local tenants. Much of that law, present in the thirteenth century, was still applicable in the seventeenth. An early seventeenth century custumal prefacing a court of survey of the manors of Walsham in Suffolk is shown here. These customs deal with matters ranging from gathering and grazing rights and definitions of local measurements to inheritance laws and tenurial rights. It is interesting to note that in this one township, two customs of inheritance existed with respect to copyhold land: gavelkind (equal division among all sons) and primogeniture.

A section of the custumal relating to the "chiefe manor" of Walsham is shown here.

A ...Also it is our custom and hath been time out of mind for every tenant to shred, fell, copp and stowe all manner of fewell for our own use upon our copyholds and customary holds and also to sell them att our pleasure.

Also it is our custom and hath been time out of mind for every tenant to shred, fell, copp and stowe and also to plant in the wayse and common every man against his own ground for and to his own commoditie and profett.

Also for the common in Halowdgrene all our lords tenants doe say that our lord of this manor is lord of the soyle so farre as our lands doe go and that the tenants of the said manor by old and ancient custom time without mind of man have had therein and upon the whole common of Halowd Greene feeding by the mouths of their cattell and cowthings as intercommons with other towns.

Also our custom is for the measuring of land and pasture the laying of the pole is sixteen foot and an halfe.

Also for the great meadow commonly called or known by the name of the Micklemeadow the custom thereof is fourteen foot and a halfe to the pole.

Also the wood measure is eighteen foot to the pole.

Also it is our custom of this manor that if any tenant die seised of his copylands and tenements then to be equally divided and parted amongst all his sons according to the law of gavelkind.

Also it is our custom that if one tenant or more doe surrender his lands and tenements into the hands...
of one copyhold tenant in the presence of another copyhold tenant that surrender to remain and continue good for one year and a day, although there be diverse courts held and kept within the year. And if there be no court kept within the year Then the same surrender to stand good and sufficient until the next court to be hold.

These be the customs which have been time out of mind of men for the manner of the Church House as followeth.

If any tenant of this manor die seised then the custom of this manor is that the eldest son is his heire to his copyhold lands and tenements holden of this manor, if he have daughters and no sons, then the same is to be equally devided between them...

Bacon 1266 1577, 1578

78 The Burden of Tithing Payments

In England, until the middle of the nineteenth century, all lands within a parish were subject to tithes payable to the local incumbent. Of common right, tithes were payable only on such things as yielded an annual increase by the act of God. In general, as far as the average parishioner was concerned, he had to render to the local clergy a tenth part of his possessions derived directly or indirectly from the land. In many communities, tithes were commuted to money payments. Part of a Walsham custumal deals with this matter.

A ...And if a man have ten calfe he must pay one for the tythes and if he have but seven he must pay one for the tyth and the parson must allow him three half pence. And if he have but six calves he must pay for every calf a half penny.

Also for our sheep in like manner if a man have ten lambs he must pay one for the tyth and also if he have but seven lambs he must pay one for the tyth and the parson must allow him three half pence and if a man have but six lambs he must pay one half penny for every lamb.

And if a man do rear up or keep hefkers for Milch Keyne he shall pay noe tyth for them.

And if a man have ten pugs he must pay one for the tyth and if he have but seven he must pay one for the tyth and the parson must allow him three half pence and if he have under seven he must pay for every Pyg an half penny.

Bacon 1268 c. 1650

LEET COURTS AND THE RISE OF PAROCHIAL GOVERNMENT

79 The Sixteenth Century Leet Court

The sixteenth century saw considerable change in the character of English local government. With the growth of the Poor Law system and
its administration at a parochial level, the parish acquired certain tools of coercion and jurisdiction such as the registration of baptisms, burials and marriages. With these developments certain tasks performed by the leet courts, for instance highway maintenance, were removed from their purview. The early and middle sixteenth century leet courts of Redgrave are barren of information.

For example, the leet court of 1541 relating to the Botulesdale section of Redgrave is exceedingly brief.

A Capitales plegie ibidem dicunt super eorum saacerumen-
tum quadr dant domino regis de communis ffinitis prout
ex antiquo annuatim soluit ballivo domini regis
hundredi de Hartymere

Preceptum est Johanni Skett et Johanni Tymton ampu-
tare et succidere spinas et tribulos neonon ramos
arborum suarum transpondent Regale viam ducentis
usque Dedemansoke ex parte utrque eiusdem vie contra
proximam ffestum Natalis Sancti Johannis Baptiste sub
pena eorum utrueque xij d.

Electionem
Tastatoris
Et eliquent Thomam Archer et Thomam Botton ad officium
servisiae anno futuro

Electionem
Constabulariorum
Et eliquent Henricum Peke et Franciscum Roser' ad
officium constabulariorum Anno futuro Et jurati sunt

This court deals only with the following: the payment of the fixed common fine; two men are ordered to clear the lane they have blocked by felling trees; and two alestasters and two constables are elected.

Bacon 44 1536-1547

80 A Renaissance in the Activity of the Leet Court

In the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the leet court again took on a positive role in the control of the agricultural life of the community. This tendency has been discovered elsewhere in England, and Joan Thirsk suggests that the growth in population made necessary some systematic supervision of such matters as pasturing (stints), drainage systems, and gathering rights. The seventeenth century leet courts of both Redgrave and Hindercley appear to be fulfilling these roles.

A Hindercley As yet of the generall court with the leet there holden the Eighteenth Day of October 1655.

Who say upon their oathes that Joseph Chamberlyn, Robert Lowdall, Stephan Smyth and William Piper are resiants and inhabitants within the precinct of this Leete and at this court did make default. Therefore every one of them are amerced—iiiij d.

And that John Dreske hath incroached upon the common of Hindercley with his fence against the tenement of Robert Howslett Clerke, wherefore he is amerced iiij d.
And he is enjoyned to remove the same before the first day of January next upon payne of --x s.

And that Robert Bowlett Clerke hath suffered his footbridge at his close called haves close to be in decay and wherefore he is amerced iiij d. And he is enjoyned to amend the same sufficiently before the first of January next upon payne of--iiij s. iiiij d.

And it is ordered that noe inhabitant shall keepe or dispasture upon the Common of Hinderale after the first day of March next, upon payne to forfeit, for every week he shall see keepe any sheepe there after that tyme.

And they did elect and choose Richard Ruddock to be constable for this year ensuinge for the town of Hinderale whose for the due execution of the said office in full court was sworne and they doe nominate and agree that Thomas Smyth one of the former constables shall continue the said office for this year ensuinge.

Bacon 149  
1649-1656

81 The Leet Court and Vagrancy In the Late Sixteenth Century

The authority to control immigration into communities was vested in the Leet Court by a statute of 1589. Another by-law of 1605 was the forfeiture of all rights of common by persons who harbored strangers without license. The forces which caused enactment of these new laws were evident in the proceedings of the manorial courts. The Redgrave Court Roll for 1560 shows the leet court as a law-maker and as a body for controlling the moral conduct of the local populace. The translation below was made by John P. Dawson in A History of Lay Judges (Cambridge: 1960).

A It is ordered by the homage and chief pledges aforesaid that in future no tenant or occupant of any house shall take into his house any persons suspected of vagrancy or known to be of evil conversation (petoris conversationis).

It is likewise ordered by the whole homage that no one intentionally or knowingly shall engage in evil conduct (male gesture utentur) or frequent houses or places that are suspect or of ill fame, by night or at other unsuitable times (on penalty after warning from the bailiff of 10 shillings "pain").

Likewise the homage say that John Marten and his wife and Richard Chapman and his wife are of ill fame and bad conversation and lead their neighbors into obloquy and humiliation by their suspect conduct (so that they are in mercy 3 pence and are
To L. It hath been objectted against ye, that ye have so great a trust in the
ministrer of the Church, and so little of him to whom ye should be
more humble and more subject. I have heard that the ye are disposed
to do as ye have said. But, as to my part, I shall not be
perswaded that it is fit or meet that the Church should be put by
any one that does not most strictly observe the person that is
rightfully appointed by God. I have been so great a
trustee of the Church that I am not the person to
put over any one. I believe that it is fit and meet that
the Church should be put by God, and that the person that is
rightfully appointed by God should be put over it. I have been
so great a trustee of the Church that I am not the person to
put over any one. I believe that it is fit and meet that
the Church should be put by God, and that the person that is
rightfully appointed by God should be put over it.

...
ordered to leave the vill by the feast of St. Edmund next on pain of £ 3.6.8).

Bacon 48

82 The Court Baron

In theory, manors had two separate courts as well as those concerned with leet matters: the General court dealt specifically with the customary tenants of the manor and the Court Baron was concerned with free tenants. These differences are not reflected in the early court rolls in the Bacon Collection and even in the seventeenth century, these are not evident on all manors. Hindercley, however, does display this division. In the general court, the lord's steward was the judge, while in the Court Baron, the freeholders themselves are judge and jury. In appearance there seems to be little to distinguish one form of court roll from the other. Most entries in the 1659 Court Baron at Hindercley are concerned with land transactions and a few are amercements for default of court.

Bacon 151

PART IV The Bacon Family and Contemporary Affairs

Nicholas Bacon, 1510-1570, son of a Suffolk yeoman wealthy or influential enough to start his son in legal training, studied at Cambridge and the Inns of Court. In 1537, Nicholas became Solicitor of the Court of Augmentations and in 1545, Attorney of the Court of Wards. Even earlier he began building the estate which provided for four of his five sons. The fifth, Francis, was to far overshadow both his father and his brothers even without a land inheritance.

One of the "new men" of the Tudor age, Nicholas Bacon was made Lord Keeper of the Great Seal upon the accession of Queen Elizabeth; he held the office until his death. The bulk of the Bacon Collection came to the University of Chicago after some of its most interesting individual items had been sold elsewhere. Therefore, material relating to Nicholas Bacon as a national figure is sparse. What remains, however, is a rich array of documents relating to the effect of death and marriage on the acquisition of property; tastes in housing, food and clothing, and reactions to some of the outstanding events of the age, such as religious intolerance, plague and civil war.

THE ACQUISITION OF LAND

83 Original Royal Grant of Redgrave

In 1545 for the sum of about £ 1191, Nicholas Bacon purchased from the crown the manor of "Redgrave, Boddisdale and Gislingham." The property was officially conferred by the Letters Patent shown here, dated 21 April, 36 Henry VIII. The equestrian side of the great seal is displayed. This extract from the document relates to the actual handover of the properties and their location, along with a statement that property had previously belonged to the monastery of Bury St. Edmunds from whom it was confiscated by the crown.

A ...dedimus et concessimus ac per presentes demus et conseadimus eadem Nicholao Bacon omnia illa dominica
Sir Nicholas Bacon's Will and Extent

As early as 1574, Sir Nicholas began preparations for his tomb in old St. Paul's Cathedral. The tomb no longer exists, although the torso of Sir Nicholas' statue can be found in the crypt of the current St. Paul's. This engraving shows the tomb as it was originally built for Sir Nicholas and his two wives.

When Sir Nicholas died in 1579, his funeral truly befitted a man of his national importance; among the many people for whom black mourning cloth was provided were 68 paupers, one for each of his years. Professor Alan Simpson in his study: The Wealth of the Gentry (Chicago: 1961), begins his account of Sir Nicholas with details of the funeral, shown here. In 1578, Sir Nicholas had drawn up the document pertaining to his estate after his death—his will (A); and an extent of his holdings (B), was drawn up in 1579.

Marriage in the Formation of the Bacon Estates

Among the paths open for augmentation of wealth in the sixteenth century was the acquisition of land by marriage. In 1561 when his oldest son, Nicholas, was about to come of age, Sir Nicholas chose as his son's bride the only granddaughter of Sir William Butts, court physician and favorite of Henry VIII. Anne Butts, whose mother, Anne Bures Butts, is the subject of the brass rubbing displayed across the room, was heiress to the estate of her grandfather and of her mother, once the latter's co-heiresses (all without issue) died. Two sets of agreements had to be drawn up for these two inheritances, providing escape clauses for potential competing heirs and providing lifetime incomes for all intermediary principals. The negotiations were extremely intricate. It was assumed, by the way, that if Nicholas should die before the marriage, his place would be taken by Nathaniel, the second son of Sir Nicholas.

Shown here are the Articles of Agreement between William Butts and Sir Nicholas, both of whom have signed each page. These articles, plus those between Sir Nicholas and the heiresses of the Bures estate, were the basis for the splendid indenture in which the final terms were embodied. The Bures estates finally passed into the possession of the Bacon family in 1609 when Anne Bures Butts died.

Income from Wardship

Although land was Sir Nicholas' primary source of income, he did participate in other income producing activities. A wardship purchased from
the crown entitled the owner to the income from the ward's lands and to the right to settle the ward's marriage. In return, the ward was maintained and educated and frequently benefitted from the arrangement. The indenture displayed here, dated 12 March 13 Elizabeth (1571), is between Sir Nicholas and Sir Valentyne Browne and the latter's servant, Christopher Cocker. The ward, Edward Turell, son and heir of Richard Turell, had been previously granted by the Queen to Cocker to the use of Sir Valentyne. The annuity for Edward's upbringing was £ 20.

The indenture was a document for bipartite agreement, the diplomatic form of which was relatively constant throughout the medieval period. The terms of the contract were copied twice on one piece of parchment with space left between the two copies; these were then cut apart by wavy (or indented) line. This particular half of the indenture is signed by Valentyne Browne and Christopher Cocker.

Bacon 4401

THE SONS OF SIR NICHOLAS BACON

87 Nicholas Bacon, the Younger

The eldest son of Sir Nicholas inherited Redgrave; he was a member of Parliament for Suffolk and in 1611, was made premier baronet of England. His marriage agreement is number 85. In the church at Redgrave is his tomb, somewhat less elaborate than his father's, but still splendid. From the bill shown, signed by his son, Edmund Bacon, we learn that the tomb is of Petworth marble, white and black (A).

The 1626 Extent of the estate of Sir Nicholas is also shown here, with manors in the counties of Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex, attesting to the still great size of the Bacon estates. His personal estate at his death was £ 6400, and his children were well provided for. Edmund, heir to Redgrave (whose final inventory is number 93, Bacon 897), succeeded him as second baronet of Redgrave (B).

Bacon 3130
Bacon 890

1627-1628
1626

88 Sir Francis Bacon, Baron Verulam and Viscount St. Albans

Of Sir Nicholas' youngest and most famous son, the collection contains very little. His name hardly appears in the Calendar. The two documents shown here were not part of the Bacon Collection when it was purchased.

The Humble Submission and Supplication of the Lord Chancellor

Francis Bacon's brilliant career as Lord Chancellor ended abruptly in 1621 when he was accused and found guilty of bribery. On April 22, 1621, Bacon submitted a statement to Parliament of which this document is a copy (A). The version printed by James Spedding in The Letters and the Life of Francis Bacon (London: 1874) differs slightly. At this time, Sir Francis hoped to be let off with "Penitent submission...and the losse of my seale...." By April 30, however, he was required to submit the details of the particular charges of corruption; he was eventually "imprisoned in the Tower during the King's pleasure" from

82
May 31 to June 4, 1621. He never recovered his political power or prestige; in 1626 he died heavily in debt.

The Lands and Possessions of the Right Honorable Francis Lord Verulam

At Sir Nicholas' death in 1579, Francis was left without an inheritance in land. After his brother Anthony's death in 1601, the manor at Gorhambury, Hertfordshire, did come to Francis, but it was not until 1606, when he married Alice Barnham, that he obtained the means he needed. This book (B), presented to the Library in 1959 by Captain Anthony Hammond of Norwich, England, lists the property Alice inherited from her father, Benedict Barnham, a member of Parliament for Yarmouth.

Miscellaneous Manuscripts
Bacon 982-A

89 Anthony Bacon

None of Anthony Bacon's own papers are found in the Bacon Collection. Sir Nicholas' fourth son and full brother of Sir Francis, Anthony was an able diplomat. He was loyal to Robert Devereaux, Earl of Essex, and died soon after the latter's execution. Shown here is Thomas Birch's An Historical View of the Negotiations Between the Courts of England, France, and Brussels, from the Year 1592 to 1617 (London: 1749) in which the author acknowledges the usefulness of Anthony Bacon's papers for his work.

90 Sir Nathaniel Bacon

The second son of Nicholas Bacon, Nathaniel, inherited the manor of Stiffkey in Norfolk; the manor house he built is pictured with number 95. While he never achieved the national stature of his father, Nathaniel enjoyed a prominent position in Norfolk local administration. As early as 1576 he was a Justice of the Peace in Norfolk; although the title may have been honorary for certain Justices, it is obvious that Nathaniel did administer his duties. In addition, Nathaniel was singled out for a number of the special commissions which were set up during the period.

Nathaniel Bacon, several times member of Parliament for Norfolk, was knighted in 1604. He apparently engaged in collecting and was also an amateur painter, "the only truly native painter of real distinction of the generation before Van Dyck." His daughter Anne married into the Townshend family; most papers relating to Nathaniel and his family are among the Townshend Papers, some of which are still in the family, some in the British Museum and some in the Norfolk and Norwich Archaeological Society. With item 95 is the 1915 publication by the Royal Historical Society of: The Official Papers of Sir Nathaniel Bacon (London: 1915). The University's Bacon Collection contains relatively few references to Nathaniel; the documents shown here were purchased in 1971 to help fill that gap.

91 Commissioner for the Restraint of the Exportation of Corn

Policies relating to corn and grain transportation fluctuated during the sixteenth century. Norfolk was heavily committed to the production of these commodities, so it was essential that they be controlled; early
corn legislation favored the consumer, while later policies, the producers. In the document shown here, the Privy Council, which directed local administration, sends instructions to Nathaniel Bacon, among other Commissioners, to conduct inquiries to prevent illegal transport and overcharging.

Bacon 4538-A

92 Irish Muster Documents

Few muster documents are published in The Official Papers, but these three were among the 1971 purchase. As Commissioner for the Muster, Bacon shared responsibility for the system of enlistment for the militia, which, from these documents, seems to have consisted of requesting men from the municipalities. In 1598-1600, Robert, Earl of Essex, went to Ireland with a great army, but accomplished little. Shortly thereafter, Sir George Carew managed to quell the Irish rebellion; due to this feat on the part of her loyal subject, Queen Elizabeth is credited with conquering Ireland. These documents show some of the coordination problems presented by the Irish muster.

A Right now wee have receyved your letter whereby you shew that wee cannot be discharged at this tyme of the three souldiers which you have charged our towne with all not withstandinge our requests before sett forth unto you and therefore for that wee fynde by our Charter granted to us by Kinge Phillip and Queene Marye that wee should be exempted as wee take yt from charges so oft musters soe impos-ed therefore wee will submitt our selfes to their Ll's order and will answere you information if you will informe against us; And these shall be further too sente ye you that the matter which you wright of concerning the monye paide to the settinge forth of the light house the last yeare was not ordered against us by the right honorable Lls of her maties most honorable preyve Counsell as you wright but granted unto at the request of Sr Arthure Hevingham neyther was that coost like to this nowe in question as you wrighte knowe. And those cravinge to knowe whether you mynde to ceretfye their Lls or not, and your favorable conscription of our letters wee leave you to godde kepinge this xvitij th of ffebruary
Ann dm 1599
By your wrr ffrendes

Bacon 4540-A-C

93 Christ's Dole

In pre-Tudor times, it became customary for fishing boats to pay to the parson of the port a fish-tithe, known as Christ's half-dole. The payment was unpopular, for the fishermen also had to pay a tithe of their earnings to their own parsons, but the custom was made law and the fishermen paid this double-tithe until the early nineteenth century.

The petition shown here, addressed to Nathaniel Bacon, complains that the fish tithe is paid twice over. It was an attempt by the sea-
men of Norfolk and other towns to dispute the payment to the rector of Wells; it apparently failed.

Little is known of the custom of Christ's Dole; this document was published in Norfolk Archaeology (Norwich: 1945) by Percy Millican who owned it at that time.

Bacon 4440-A

THE HOUSES OF THE ELIZABETHAN AND STUART GENTRY

94 The Great Age of Rebuilding and Redgrave Hall

The latter half of the sixteenth and first part of the seventeenth centuries provide us with substantial visual evidence for what the English local historian W. G. Hoskins calls, the "great age of rebuilding." Redgrave Hall was begun by Sir Nicholas Bacon in 1545 and completed about 1554. It may be compared with other homes built during the reign of Elizabeth by the high officers of state, such as Lord Burghley's house near Stamford and Sir Christopher Hatton's at Oldenby. They reflected the consumption standards and money-spending tendencies of these men, who derived a great deal of their wealth from monastic spoils or estates built up from purchases of such property in the post-dissolution era. They fall into a common category in the history of the English house.

A 430-page account book records in considerable detail wages paid to building construction workers during the years 1545-54. The book was organized in yearly accounts running in the same fashion as manorial bailiffs' accounts, from Michaelmas to Michaelmas. Each was divided into trades. The accounts generally begin with the brickburners, then proceed to the carpenters, sawyers, laborers, roughmasons, and so on. Altogether there are 38 separate trades mentioned in the account for the ten years during which the house was built.

The account book is open to pages relating to the payment of free- and roughmasons in 1552. At Redgrave, the freemasons were artisans in free stone, whereas the rough masons worked with brick (this was not normal, however, as freemasons were responsible for working the stone and the rough masons for laying it in the walls). Stone used by the freemasons was of secondary importance in the overall construction, most coming from spoiled monasteries in the neighborhood. Brick, a new and growing feature in sixteenth century building, was overwhelmingly important. Over 700,000 bricks were used in the building of Redgrave Hall, most being made on the site. Altogether, some 52 rough masons (bricklayers) are mentioned in the accounts.

Bacon 990

95 Nathaniel Bacon's Norfolk Home

Stiffkey Hall in north Norfolk, built between 1576 and 1579 in the last years of Sir Nicholas Bacon's life, was to be the home of his son, Sir Nathaniel Bacon. Stiffkey was designed in the basic U-shape—a central entrance dividing the house in half with family rooms on one side, kitchen and service area on the other. A distinctive feature of its design was the construction of six round towers—one at each corner and two within the courtyard.
An account book for 1582-1583, belonging to Nathaniel and dealing with his second year in residence, has recently been added to the collection. Even at that date, considerable construction was still in process judging from purchases of lime and payment to brickburners. The document’s main interest in the information it provides on wage rates in north Norfolk at the end of the sixteenth century.

Bacon 991-A

96 Sir Edmund Bacon and Redgrave Hall

Sir Edmund Bacon, after his inheritance of the Hall at Redgrave and its appurtenant property, lived the life of what Professor Simpson has called "a cultivated dilettante." He was a confidant of Sir Henry Wotton, the diplomat and poet, a considerable portion of whose correspondence, in which Redgrave is frequently mentioned, was written to Sir Edmund. These letters have been published in Reliquae Wottonianae, (London: 1672).

97 Household Inventories of the Gentry

By a statute of 1529, probate of a will required that a detailed inventory of the "goods, chattels and cattle of the deceased" be produced. Responsible friends or acquaintances capable of evaluating the true worth of the dead person's possessions drew up these inventories.

The inventories deal with household goods and possessions of persons ranging from the gentry and the yeoman farmer to the laborer and the pauper (see the inventory of a Botulesdale tanner, item 74). Listing as they do, furniture, plate, jewellery, glassware, and frequently clothing, kitchenware, tools in barns and workshops, the inventories are now a vital source for the study of furniture, domestic crafts, agricultural techniques and general consumption patterns through a period that displayed considerable changes especially in terms of agriculture and its role in the economy. Inventories of Redgrave Hall, Thornage Hall and Robert Drury's house in London, shown here, are all documents relating to the households of the gentry.

The hall at Redgrave remained in the Bacon family throughout the seventeenth century. In 1701, it was sold to Sir John Holt, Chief Justice of the King's Bench and in 1763, Rowland Holt commissioned Capability Brown to remodel the house. A Palladian veneer was placed over the Tudor house and the park was landscaped (see the photographed engraving of the Georgian Hall). The park was a prisoner of war camp and an ordnance dump during the Second World War, and the house was demolished in 1946.

One document survives that allows us to reconstruct in detail the hall and its contents a century after it was built. An inventory survives, made in 1649 upon the death of Sir Edmund Bacon, grandson of Sir Nicholas Bacon. The inventory enumerates the rooms and indicates that the contents were worth about £6,000 at that date. The final section of the inventory dealing with outhouses and the farm is shown here.

A In the Dayry
   Item one Cheeseresse, one Lead, and other dayry Vessells  vj li xiiij s. iiiij d.

In the Brewhouse
   Item two Coolers, Three Fatts and other Vessells  xx li
Armes in the Armory with Pikes in the Hall  xi li
In the Parke Chamber
  Item one bedd with the bedding thereto belonging iiij li
In Harry Cooke's Chamber
  Item one bedd and bedding thereto belonging iiij li
In Giles his Chamber
  Item one bedd and bedding thereto belonging iiij li xv s.
In the Coachmans Chamber
  Item one bedd and bedding iiij li
In the Grooms Chamber
  Item one bedd and bedding iiij li x s.
In the Bayliffs Chamber
  Item one bedd and bedding iiij li x s.
In the Kitchen Yard Chamber
  Item one bedd and bedding thereto belonging iiij li
In the Brewers Chamber
  Item one bedd and bedding iiij li
In the Brewers Chamber
  Item one bedd and bedding iiij li x s.
In the Butlers Chamber
  Item one bedd and bedding iiij li xv s.
In the Carters Chamber
  Item one Bedd and Beding iiij li
In the Chamberlin's Chamber
  Item one bedd and bedding vj li
In Stegalls Chamber
  Item one bedd and bedding iiij li
In the Husbandmans Chamber
  Item two beds and bedding v li
  Item his wearing apparell C li
  Item in ready money and Jewells devised to severall Legatees iiij M vX li
  Item in white and Gilt plate M li
  Item in Lymmen CC li
  Item Corne in the Granery lxxxx li
  Item twenty and three oowes xClj li
  Item three heifers ix li
  Item Fifty Steerees Claxo li
  Item Three yearelynges vj li
  Item Three Steerees at stake xvij li
  Item Twenty and one horses Cx li
  Item Seaven and Twenty old Sheepe v li x s.
  Item Eleven Lambes xl s.
  Item Six Shotts xxxiiij s. iiij d.
  Item Two Sowes xxxvj s. viij d.
  Item One Steere and Four ore drye Cowes xvij li
  Item two Coaches and furniture xx li
  Item two Cartes, ploughes harrowes and other utensills of husbandry xx li
In the Still House
  Item In a Chamber there one Table and Stooles and certayne Pictures viij li
Thornage Hall came into the possession of the Bacon family when Sir Nicholas Bacon's oldest son, Nicholas married Anne Butts. The inventory of the Hall taken in 1608 shows what was essentially an empty building devoid of fittings and furniture and in disrepair when it finally came into Sir Nicholas Bacon's ownership on the death of Anne Butts, his mother-in-law.

B An inventory of such implements and householdsoeue as were lefte and delivered to Henry Bewers gen' the third of October 1608 belonging and beinge in Thornage Hall and are to be redelivered to Sir Nicholas Bacon knight upon demand as followeth...

In Ye Hall
Item one soult table
Item Ye hall in sealer
four other tables standinge upon turned posts
fixed in ye ground
Item four formes fixed in ye grounde
Item one ould stoole at one of ye bordes ende
Item two liverie cubboides
Item a haukes pearkt
Item 3 skreenes
Item there is some 30 quarells of glasse broken
Item a locks and key latch and snatch
In Ye greene parler
In Ye chimney peece seeled
Item two windows seeled belowe
Item one portall with latch and snatch
Item one side of ye chimney newe seeled and ye other partly seeled
Item ye windowe well glazed but some 3 or 4 quarells
In Ye inwarde chamber to Ye same
Item Ye windows glazed one doore a locke a key and boulit
In ye seller by Ye parler
Item one beere stoole one locke and key
In Ye garden entrie
Item one glasse windowe havinge a quarell broken
Item one doore going into Ye gardin
In Ye candeill house
Item one doore locke and key
In Ye chamber at Ye slaytis heade next to my ladies chamber
Item one glasse windowe having 4 quarells broken
Item one dore locke and key
Item on little glosset
Item one dore with a boult
Item a window glasce
In Ye clocke chamber
Item one clocke with two great waite and a bell
Item one bell lent Sir Nathaniel Bacon
In Binhame his chamber
Item one borded bedstede withe out a bottome
Item one windowe wanting a pane of glasse
Item one looke and key
In my ladies chamber
In Ye chamber seeled
Item two subbboides and 3 drawers under Ye south windowe with 2 lockes
Item one looke and key in the drawer
Item two windowes glased wanting 4 quarelles
In my ladies closet
Item one windowe glased
Item on looke and key
In Ye wardrape
Item one dore with looke and key

Anne Bacon

Bacon 1472

Anne, the eldest daughter of Sir Nicholas Bacon (the younger) married Sir Robert Drury. The Drurys had risen through the legal profession and politics to become one of the leading Suffolk families in the sixteenth century. Sir Robert (1575–1614) was a soldier, a knight of the shire and a noted patron of John Donne, the poet. Besides his properties in the country, he owned a house in London. The inventory, an extract of which is shown below, is detailed as to household effects, perhaps typical of the large London house at the beginning of the seventeenth century.

An Inventorie of all householdsoe of Sir Robert Drurye his house in drurye lane made this 18 of July Anno Domini 1614

Beddinge

In primis 12 ffetherbeddes, 2 wollbedds, 3 fflockbeddes, 13 ffetherbolsters, 2 fflockbolsters, 8 pillows, 4 coverlets, 7 rugges one white and blue, one greene, one red, one blew, another redd, ould one, one other with and another greene, 9 paires of blanketts and one odd one

Hanginges

Item 16 pieces of quilt hanging, 4 red lether carpettes, 10 Darmike curtains, 21 pieces of tapestry hanginges, 3 blew carpettes, 9 cushions, 3 great haire colored clothchaires, 2 redd cloth chaire layed with gould lace, 6 black and greene chaires, one great redd leather chaire, 4 little redd leather chaires, one little blacke guilded chaire
Stooles  
9 redd letter stooles, 2 bassett stooles, 25 pisters,  
3 mappes, one long stoole with aarnis cover, 10 case-  
ments of glasse, one round box and two fives, one  
nyoll, one lute, one pistoll, one covering basket  

Picters  
one frame for a skreen, 2 guilt voyderes with a knife,  
one rounding blocke, 3 farthing gayles, 6 payres of  
tonges, 8 payres of cobirons with 4 payre of brasing  
toppes, 2 fyre paines, 2 barres of iron, one warming  
pann, one chasing dish, one pestle and mortar, one  
skymur, one basting ladle, one slyce, 2 grates, 2  
spitte, 13 curtaine rodds  

Bellowes  

Spitte  

Candlestick  
8 peuter candlestickes, 2 wooden candlestickes, one  
fyre forke, two clivers, one goalet of prooffe, other  
head piece, one flesh forke, --puter dishes, one  
voyder, one plate, 2 peuter basons, one hayre carbo-  
nett, 12 guilt knoppes for bedd, 6 screws for the  
reded, 3 heigh close stooles with one paiere. One  
little yellow close stoole with a paiere, one box of  
syttinge, one wicker skreen, one blanker velvet saddle  
embroidered with furniture to it, one Tanony ript  
velvett  

Saddles  
Saddle with silver lace, one blacke velbett pade with  
sylver gould lace with cover to them, one payre of  
niffers, One black velvet cover embroidered, One  
black foote clothe, one payre of reynes of blacke  
ernell, one payre of reyne, one rapyr, one great  
standard with linen 5 payres of bellowes, 4 sorkette,  
one lanthorne belonging to the stable, one dripping  
pann one hatcase one bandcase, one thing which is  
used to runne the ringe with one hammer, 2 kettles,  
2 skellets, 6 pales, 2 rackets, one payre of drawing  
irons, 2 trammells to hange kettles on, one great  
stulme, one griggiron, one saltboye, one frying panc,  
one great iron pot with pothook and potlead, three  
hanbaskets, one coleskepp, one gallipot, 2 pypkins,  
one wooden cann, one ladle, one salt, one handcase,  
one long iron peele, one trenell, one cloth flasket,  
one cup dish, one start pane, one flower pot, one  
case for knifes, one fork with a weight, pully and  
ynees, 2 trayes, one hatchloke, one oven lead, one  
pecke and the half pecke, 2 oyle pottes, 2 sives,  
one cutting knive for the garden, 2 payres of  
briches bulb of blue velvet layd with gould lace,  
one blew clerke garded, 2 jerkins leather layd with  
gould lace...
ASPECTS OF SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURY DOMESTIC LIFE

98 Salmon and Caviar

The Bacon Collection contains a number of receipts and bills conveying some impression of the general living standards and tastes of an upper class family in Tudor and Stuart England.

People with comfortable incomes ate well over this period. In the diary of Samuel Pepys it is apparent that meat and fish figured prominently in seventeenth century diets.

A bill concerning Sir Edmund Bacon's purchases of fish in 1628 is informative. Salmon was undoubtedly an expensive "luxury fish" by 1600, although it is surprising to find three pounds of caviar being purchased for a mere 3 s. 6 d. Anchovies were essential in most diets as they provided much-needed salt.

\begin{verbatim}
Bought of William Nicholas the 5th of February 1628
   iiiij great salt sammons 0l 08 00
   The Kitt 00 02 00
   iiiij salt sammons 0l 00 00
   The kitt 00 02 00
   iiiij lb. of caviar and the pots 00 03 06
   08 great salt sammons 03 10 00
   The kittes 00 04 08
   iiiij lb. of Genoa anchovies 00 07 04
   06 l7 06

Receiv'd in full payment 06 l7 06
This 24th of February
\end{verbatim}

Bacon 3138

99 Tea Drinking in England

The tea bill of Rowland Holt, who was resident in Redgrave Hall in the late eighteenth century, reflects a custom which by that date was firmly entrenched in English life. The price of tea dropped slowly through the course of the eighteenth century so that by the date of this bill, it was a common drink amongst all social classes.

Bacon 4053

100 An Early Tobacco Bill

Tobacco and the art of tobacco smoking were brought to England by Sir Walter Raleigh and Sir Francis Drake. The habit of pipe smoking became firmly established among Elizabethan courtiers and spread slowly at first, down the social ranks. Tobacco was imported chiefly from the Spanish colonies and after 1616, from Virginia and Bermuda; very soon a considerable proportion was grown in England itself. This bill for tobacco purchased by Sir Edmund Bacon for 15th of December 1624, reflects the habit which by that date was firmly established. However, its use was not confined to the court aristocracy. The Privy Council referred in 1622 to its sale "by great or retayle by pype in the ale-houses in and about London." By 1640, it had become a commodity in general use in all parts of England and among all classes of the people.

Bacon 4001
101 The Deer Park

The deer park--a large, enclosed and informally organized area that may have once been manorial demesne, decorated with a herd of grazing deer--was commonly found around the larger sixteenth century houses. In many respects, it was the precursor of the eighteenth century landscape garden. Redgrave was no exception. Two bills shown here deal with minor expenses in the upkeep of such an area. These relate to 1598 and 1599.

A

...Received for the gres in the pke medow xx s.
lade ought for my dears xx s.
Received for cattell putting into pk v s. ix d.
laid out for carting of a deck up against my pall caled the dand clise iiij s.
for my livery xv s.

Bacon 3121

1598-1599

102 A Dressmaker's Bill

A trousseau bill such as that paid by Sir Nicholas Bacon (the younger) on 27th April 1594, amounting to £ 30 11 s. 7 d. reflects upon the large amounts of money spent on these items and the details of particular tasks undertaken by dressmakers.

A

A right worshipful Sr Nicholas Bacon Knight

per Jn Hill

Dew to William Stone the 27th April 1594

Item iiij yarides di and d qrter wht
sattan x li vij s. j d.

Item ij yardis qrter of ash colour velvet xlv s.

Item a nell di rosie taft' sarenct xiij s.

Item a qrter of nell rosie taffittie iiij s.

Item iiij yardis di rosie Jene fustian iiij s. vij d.

5. 10. 7

29th May 1594 per

Mr. Medlicout

for a doblet

to line it

to face it

for pannes

to line hose and
make camions

to line dob.
& hose

to line camions

to set at Knew

5.5.0

f s. d.

20 15 7

Item a nell di black rich taffitie xxv s. 6 d.

Item a nell di taffitie sarenct siij s.

Item a qrter of a nell black rich
taffitie iiij s. iiij d.

Item di a yard blu clotth race viij s.

Item iiij yardis black sattan xl s.

Item vij yardis di rosie Jene tere xj s. vij d.

Item iiij qrteres of black taffit sarenct vij s. ix d.

Item di a qrter black rich taffit iiij s.

summa x li xv s. vij d.

Bacon 3102

1594
103 A Diet for the Spleen

This letter from Robert Drury, husband of Anne Bacon, to his servant, Gabriel Cashpole at Hawstead in Suffolk, mentions a number of "home remedies" for stomach ailments. Stomach ailments caused by dietary imbalance were perhaps the commonest cause of ill health at the time.

A Gabrieill I pray you fayle not to wryte a worde or to send this letter to my wyfe to daye to Culford, that I forgott to tell her that I wold advise her to use by any meanes a dyett for her spleane which I have used ever since I came up, and have found much good of it which is to have a peese of a racke of veale, boyled with aapers and currens, which is very good lykewise for ye lyuer, and tell she be very weary of that dyet to eate nothing else at her meales, as lykewise wher she will eate aapers for a sallett, to have them boyled a little with currens to take away ye remaes. I wold alsoe wishe her to wryte to Docto butler, for ye reseyayte of the brothe which he prescrbi to my Lordbenny, which he comendeth for ye soueraynest things for ye spleane, yt ever he tooke; Alsoe I wold have you to send Burd presentely, to looke upon all my maeres, which wer discovred the late yeere, that you may wryte me nowe word so neere as he came gesse which are with foales. Remem ber yt which I wripte to you ye laste wecke, consen inge hawke wood, and ye 10 combe bullmonger from Mr brabin Drury howse, the fryday after my oother letter.

Your loving master
R. Drury

Bacon 4210 1614

104 The Education of Sir Nicholas' Daughter

A substantial expansion of education took place in England between 1560 and 1640. The Bacon family was one that contributed considerably to this trend. The forces that created administrators and professional men such as Sir Nicholas Bacon in the sixteenth century were at work in the families of these individuals also. As Professor Lawrence Stone has stated: "a child began to be regarded less as a piece of property of the father and more an individual whose potentialities should be developed." Such an interest is manifest in this letter written by Sir Nicholas Bacon to his son, Nicholas, about a volume containing the five books of Moses which he was having sent to him, and concern for the progress of his daughter in learning to write.

A You shall doo well to cause soome care to be taken of your syster that she spend the day well & vertuouly les esas whilst she seekes hure healths she myght make hure maners. For the amendment of healtthe good dyet & convenient exeroyce ys that that must help. Me thynkes yf she did bestowe every day some tymale to lemering to wyght amonges othere thinges yt were well doone
The poomp maker shall have his charges alwayd when so ever he comes but the sooner he comes the better yf he should be bound to performe the worke yt wold be understand whethere he be of sooche substance As A man may trust to his bond & what you can lern herly sygnfyfe by your next letter when he comes vpp for because the depthes ye xxvijty fethdone I fere he shall hardly be Able to doo yt well

There remeyne in my study A booke in the saxone language wretan in parchement conteynyng the bookes of Maysen thys booke I wold have saffly sent vpp by the next messenger with grete charge that yt be well lookyd vnto yt lyythe lowe amongst my wretan bookez comend me to your mother & to your wyff wryton the xxij of Marche 1565 by

Your Fathere
N Bacon C. S.

Bacon 4071 1565

NATIONAL AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS

105 Sir Nicholas' National Position

Sir Nicholas Bacon was appointed privy councillor and Keeper of the Great Seal on December 22nd, 1558. Although he fully exercised the duties of the Lord Chancellor, he was never granted this high office, probably because Elizabeth did not wish to elevate a commoner to the nobility or to pay him the salary of Lord Chancellor. His duties were essentially threefold: he had charge of the Great Seal, he was chief official in the Court of Chancery, and he played an important part in the House of Lords, chiefly as a spokesman for the Crown. Some indication of the money accruing to him in his official positions can be obtained from these acquittances, specifying sums of money received from the clerk of the Hanaper.

In the year 1559-1560, he received £ 420 18 s. 0 d. for his "dyette for three hundreth threscore and syx days" (A), £ 200 for "his attendance in the Sterr Chamber for one hole yere" (B), and £ 40 for "his Robes for one hole yeare endyd at Michaelmas" (C). As Lord Keeper, Bacon collected various fees in the course of affixing the seal to certain instruments. For example, in the year 1560-1561, he received £ 131 16 s. 0 d. "for his fees of one thousand three hundreth and eightene patentes at ij s. the pece sealyd within the said tyme" (D).

Bacon 3400 1561
Bacon 3401 1561

As advisor to the queen through his privy council position, he was requested to undertake a variety of jobs and to acquaint himself with a multitude of problems. One of Bacon's first tasks after he was made a councillor was to sit on the Commission for the Sale of Crown Lands, to obtain funds for financing military policies. Bacon's commission to grant royal lands and receive money (with the royal seal affixed) is shown below.

Bacon 4522 1570
106 Horses Commandeered for the Civil War

A few duties fell upon Sir Edmund Bacon in the Civil War. From his will, it can be ascertained that he was captain of a Parliamentary company in Hartismere Hundred. Since he was a deputy Lieutenant, he was involved in activities of the County Committee. The primary function of that body was to raise money and troops for the parliamentary cause. Professor Alan Everitt states that apart from the payment of troops, the raising of horses probably occupied more attention than any other single task. Horses were begged, borrowed or requisitioned all over the countryside.

This letter from one Richard Humphrey in 1643 to Sir Edmund Bacon explaining his failure to pay his rents valued at £50 gives as one overriding reason the fact that the Parliamentary Committee had taken away all his horses and he was, therefore, unable to work his farm.

A I haue rec'd yor letter wherin yow write for yor rent due for Fremnoills, But I well hoped I should haue receiued withall some expressions from yow and Sr Thomas Woodhouse in answer to my several re- quests made formerly unto yow, for to give me some ease in my to extreame hard bargaine which was to deere by 50 li a yeare when times were at the best, (judg then what it is now the farme consistinge most of Tillage, and I haue had all my horse taken away, whoe can bouldlie and trulie saie am noe delinquent either in word or action, and haue paid all payments whatsoever as it is well known,) But it seems the present necessitie was the cause and I hope I shall obtaine some order from the Comittie for sattisfaction for them, But my request unto yow and Sr Thomas Woodhouse once more is, that you will take into Consideracon the Damages I sustaine in howlding the farme...

Bacon 4261

1643

107 The Plague

Plague persisted in making life a hazardous affair until the latter part of the seventeenth century, although it was not as frequent as in the two previous centuries. Particularly severe outbreaks were experienced in the years 1513, 1531-32, 1563, 1603, 1625, 1665. Plague in general was more severe in the larger towns because of the crowded and unsanitary conditions; therefore those who could, fled to the country. Queen Elizabeth moved her court to Windsor in the plague year of 1563 and made it a hanging offence for plague-ridden individuals to come to this country retreat.

A letter from one William Fellgate in London to Lady Anne Bacon at Redgrave reflects upon the situation in the summer of 1603.

A Right Worshipsfull maye it pleas you to understand I rec from you fyfteen poundes the which I hav payd to Mrs. Ryppyn according to yor direcxtion and I have sent to you herin in Closed the agrement my uncle made with hur, with hur recytt in full dish Charge for the mony. It pleaseth god to Continev his
visitasion upon us every daye more and more: I hav
sent you a Just note and trew bref of them that dyed
this last weke with in the lybertynes of the Cyty and
in the Cyty: and I doe very belew their dyed as many
hath out the lybertis. I praye god to be mercifull
to vs the Riche men all for the most part are fled
the Cyty

Thus being very bould in trubling your worship
I committ you to the Lord

London this 4th of July

Your Worships in all duty

to Command Willem Pellgat

Bacon 4175 1603

108 Recusancy under Elizabeth I

Not all of the English conformed to the Anglican Church set up by
Henry VIII and revived by Elizabeth; recusancy, the refusal to attend
Anglican services especially by the Catholics, was permitted by the
Queen, although she expected outward conformity. In 1559, the Act of
Uniformity required an oath acknowledging the Queen's dominant role in
the church; in 1593, further legislation to suppress the "sectaries"
who attended private conventicles (Puritan meetings) was passed.

The roll exhibited here of 1595-96 is a quiets est roll produced
by Nicholas Bacon in his capacity as high sheriff of Norfolk. The roll
shows the fines of the 13 recusants listed.

Bacon 900 1595-1596

109 Acts for Controlling Recusancy

After initial leniency of the laws against the Catholics, James I re-
versed his policy and reinforced the laws. In 1604, Catholic priests
were banished. After the Gunpowder Plot of 1605, Parliament passed a
severe law requiring a new oath of allegiance to the king.

Shown here are contemporary copies of two pieces of legislation
aimed at suppressing the recusants.

A An aact for the discovering & repressing of
reucants & the education of their children in true
religyon

B An aact to prevent daungers that maie grow by popishe
popishe recusants. If any reveale a priestes or a
masse viz within 6 daies he shall not onelie be
freed himselfe but have for his notice given
the third parte of the goods forfeitted not exceedinge
6 li if above 1a li certein. If anie bringe in anie
papiste booke to sell or deliver them shall for-
feitt for anie book xl s. Justices of peace are
authorized to search their houses viz and the house
of anie protestants whose wives be recusants. No
recusant shall practise the camon lawe as counselle
or attorney for civill lawe as advocate or proctor
not anie such shall praectise phisicks or be an
apotheceari that is a recuesant uppon paine of
forfeiture of a li and noon having a wifffe that is 
a recusant shall beare ante publique office. viz...

Bacon 4546–4548

110 The Invocation of Spirits

An Act of 1563 laid down the death penalty for the "Invocation of evill and wicked spirites, to or for any Intent or Purpose, and for using witchcrafte Enchantment Charme or Sorcerie whereby any person shall happen to be killed or destroyed." The study of witchcraft and associated activities figures prominently in historical research of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Alan Macfarlane's recent study of the problem suggests that reasons for increasing fear of witches and persons supposedly possessed of supernatural powers can be associated with the breakdown of traditional structures, such as the manor and the church, and the growth of a pauper-class. He considers that in many instances, the village loathing for an accused individual was an expression of inner-guilt at having previously denied him or her neighborly help in time of need.

A letter from Sir Nicholas Bacon in 1572 to his son Nicholas deals with the question of "one Morris" who was condemned at the County Assize for the "Invocation of Spirits." Sir Nicholas had been informed that the case was not absolutely proven against him and that his subsequent behavior warranted a pardon. His son was chastised presumably for failing to note this and for not attending the Assizes.

A Sonne, Sr Ambrose Germyn hath written unto me, for A pardon to be obtayne for one Morris, who was at the last Assises condemned for invocation of Spirites as it semeth by his wrighting by somewhat to straight A proceeding in lawe, And besides he wrighteth that the prisoner is become A very repen-tant and sorrowfull man for his Offence Nevertheless I have forborne and meane to forbeare to proceade in it, untill I heare agayne from you, whether the Contry thinketh the man worthie death or no, And ye you had bene at the Assises as you should have bene, Ye you had done well, You might have enformed me of this of your owne knowldg. But nowe in default thereof you are to speake with Mr Pooley who is best acquainted in this matter or with Mr Ashfeld if ye were at the Assises, or els with them both. And ther-uppon to advertise me immediatly Because this matter canne Aske no long tyme. I mervayle it is so long since I hard from you. In the begynnyng of the next Tearme I loke to se you here for the fynysshing of thinges and to knowe what is done for the lettynge of Studde Comend me to your wiffe and her Mother God bless the Children and so fare you well. From my house besides Charing Crosse this xviiijth of Marche 1572

Your Father
N Bacon C S

Bacon 4125

1572
111 John Donne

The erratic career of John Donne brought him into contact with Sir Robert Drury, who was married to Anne Bacon, daughter of Sir Nicholas (the younger). By virtue of the latter connection, a few letters in Donne's hand have survived in the Bacon Collection. The relationship of Donne to the Drurys is well-explored in the work Donne and the Drurys, by R. C. Bald (Cambridge, 1959). When Elizabeth Drury, the only child of the Drurys, died in 1610, Donne wrote "A Funerall Elegie" for the parents. The elegy was published with "An Anatomie of the World", shown here in Poems, with Elegies on the Authors Death (London: 1633). Soon thereafter, the Donnes were offered an apartment in the Drury's large London house.

These three letters are all in Donne's hand. They were written for Sir Robert and Lady Drury, probably during a trip to France in 1611-1612, where they were accompanied by John Donne.

Drafts of letters to two of Sir Robert's more important acquaintances at court, Robert Carr, Viscount Rochester and Sir Davis Murray, are transcribed here in Donne and the Drurys, (A & B).

Bacon 4199 1611-1612

The travellers visited the Palatinate and the Elector's Court at Heidelberg, after which Lady Drury wrote to the Duchesse de Bouillon to thank her. The draft of the letter, in French, is the only extant piece of writing that shows Donne's command of French; according to Bald, "his characteristic style reveals itself".

C Madame

Come vos vertus sont douées des autres qualités de
nostre bon dieu qui vous les a données, ainsi parti-
icipent elles de son infinité. Tellement, qu'estant
esloigné de vostre presence, je sens encore vos in-
fluences, et trouve en tous lieus des belles im-
pressions de vostre bonte. Je les ay trouvée, Madame,
en l'accueil, et autres faucons, dont sont Alteze et
Madamoiselle d'Alrange vos trestaignes soeurs ont esté
contentes, par vostre Mediation, honorer leur pauvre
servante et la vostre. Je les ay trouvé dans vos
lettres lesquelles iay eu l'honneur avoir de la maine
de madamoiselle vostre soeur; Alinay que par tout je
trouve des representations et images de vostre bonte
et presence. Mais, quand rien de cela ne m'eust
arrivé, ma memoire m'en fournirait abondamment. Car
encore que je [ne] suis pas capable de'estre imitat-
rice de vos vertus sy suis je neantmoins de les
admirer, et de conserver une perpetuelle memoire de
leur fructs et effect par de vostre moj, par lesquels
vous avez obligé a une servitude eternelle
votre tres humble et
tres obestante servante
Madame, Je vous remercie tres humblement de m'avoir fait l'honneur de me communiquer les bonnes nouvelles de l'avenement de Monseigneur de Bouillon, et de la sante de vos enfants; car je participeray toustours de vos affections, et auraie ma part en tout ce que vous est a coeur ou a regret.

1611-1612

112 Intrigues at the Court of James I

John Donne, along with Sir Robert Drury and many others, sought his fortune and livelihood in the royal court. His interest in the rivalry between the Earl of Northampton and Robert Ker, Viscount Rochester, probably led to the letter shown here, which is a copy in Donne's hand, presumably for Sir Robert Drury, of a letter from Rochester to Northampton, October 8, 1612. According to R. C. Bald: "the letter alludes to a proposed re-shuffling of the major offices under the Crown which never took place."

1612

113 The Bacon Family as Benefactors of Education

Formal schooling in sixteenth century England took on a number of guises, from the lowly village free schools providing rudimentary instruction in reading English to the various forms of grammar school that at least educated their pupils to a higher level in English along with a limited amount of mathematics and account keeping. The higher grammar schools had a curriculum generally dominated by classical linguistics and grammar. Sir Nicholas Bacon was the chief benefactor of two grammar schools at Redgrave and Botulesdale as can be seen from surviving records concerning payment of the teachers' salaries. In 1589, Richard Holt was paid 40 s. for the last quarter of that year for his work at Botulesdale and Thomas Hoggen £ 5 for the same period at Redgrave.

1589

Professor Stone states that "in the middle years of the sixteenth century, the propertied classes began demanding University education for their children, and seized upon the college system as a convenient instrument for this purpose.... The result was a flow of charitable gifts to increase the capital assets and buildings of the colleges and a sharp rise of the emoluments of dons, who now made a comfortable living by the supervision of these well-heeled pupils." Sir Nicholas Bacon was intensely interested in the welfare of his own college, Corpus Christi, Cambridge. Just before he died, he endowed six scholarships in the college for boys from Redgrave Grammar School, although his most important gift was a sum of £ 200 for the construction of a chapel. Shown here are two receipts; one for £ 5 received for the maintenance of six scholars for one quarter in 1580, and another for £ 10 given to the master and fellows of Corpus Christi in 1591 by Sir Nicholas Bacon (the younger).
Kenneth Dodd has recently identified in a Field Book of the Suffolk village of Walsham-le-Willows, a detailed and early description of what he considers to be an open air theater. The description, made as part of a broader survey of the community, is presented below. Unfortunately, the remaining documents in the collection do now reveal what was actually performed on this stage. It could have been used for many things from morality plays and pageants to sports and athletic games. A conjectural reconstruction by Dodd of the Walsham-le-Willows open-air theater in 1577 is also displayed.

A The sayd game place in the tenure of divers men to the use and behoife of the town of walsham aforesayd is customarye ground holden of the sayd manor of walsham and a place compassed round with a fayer banke cast vp on a good height & havinge many great trees called populers growyng about the same banke, in the mydde a fayre round place of earth whythe a stone wall about the same to the height of the earth made of purpose for the use of Stage plays doth Lye betwene the ortyard of the Last sayd tenement on the north [Margery's one-and-one-half-aere tenement] and the tenemente and ground in the tenure of John Vincent called barnes on the south thone held thereof abutteth vppon the hall grene towards the east the other on the sayd ground called barnes in parte and the customary close to oycelye margerye in parte on the west parte and conteynethe--di. aere x perches.

Bacon 969

1577
BIBLIOGRAPHY

The following books and articles have been found useful in producing this catalogue.

Published works—books


Published works—articles


Unpublished works
