



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*

University of Chicago. Library.

The Sir Nicholas Bacon Collection / *The*

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Library of the University of Chicago April-June, 1972*



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P R E F A C E

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 compotus 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. Baskervill during the summer of 1924.

Baskervill 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 Baskervill, 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, Baskervill 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 Baskervill, 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

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

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 Hinderclay 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

Bacon 330. A portion of the Redgrave stock and grain account.
1341-1342. Item 2.

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."

<i>Terra arabilis ibidem in dominico</i>	A <i>Est ibidem in cultura vocatur Hosco subtus boscum domini in quinque wentis--xxv acras vj perticatas dimidiam j pedes dimidiam--unde super le Went abuttant super Hosco v acras ij rodas iij pertica- tas iij quarteria ij pedes dimidiam super le Went ad capitem eiusdem vocatur Apeltonestede v acras iij rodas dimidiam xix perticatas j quarterium super le Went vocatur Bertishedlond abuttant super le Lound ij acras ij rodas xxxx perticatas dimidiam et sic super le Went ex parte occidentali eiusdem vocatur Brounesgate viij acras iij rodas dimidiam xij perticatas j quarterium iij pedes</i>
Arable land here in demesne	There is here in the furlong called Hoscus under the lord's wood in 5 wentis--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 Lound 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 vij acras apud le Brech, xvij acras apud le Redyng, xj acras apud Byrum-pesheye xix acras j rodam apud Coldhokwong summa lxxvij acras et dimidiam--xxxix quarteria v busselli ordeii*

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 (*pisa*) *mynus sexto gaynerio j quarterium et j bussellum*...--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 Garcie (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.

Multones A *De remanenti cccxlviij multonibus de adjunctione lxxvj multonibus et de j multone recept' de Worlingworth ante tonsionem per j t' et de ix multonibus recept' de Rickinghall per j t' ante tonsionem et de xxxij multonibus recept' de Coneyweston ante tonsionem per j t' et de xxviij multonibus recept' de Coneyweston post tonsionem per j t' et de xxviij multonibus recept' de Culford post tonsionem per j t' pro emerio et de iij multonibus recept' de Rungeston post tonsionem pro eodem per j t' et de vj multonibus recept' de weyf post tonsionem hoc anno summa iiij iiij x multones.*
 De quibus liberata apud Cheventon ante tonsionem pro larderio domini lxx multones in morina ante tonsionem xxviij item in morina post tonsionem vij liberata' apud Rungeston post tonsionem ix multones hurtard' per j t' In venditione post tonsionem v quia dement' in venditione super computum xx summa v^{xx} xviiij
 Et remanent ccciiij^{xx} xiiij multones unde lviij 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 autumpnalis*) (A), 155 were sold; of the 161 reaping dayworks owed (*messerium dayewerk*) (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 *Redgrave in ista villa continentis 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

1349-50

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 depicts in considerable detail the *tenementum*--a property term and division 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 individual 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 Carecter videlicet j messuagium xij acras terre et j acram bosci et ij acras prati et pasture scilicet Phillipus le Barker tenet inde quaedam partem messuagii et bosci iiij acras terre et dimidiam acram prati et pasture reddunt ad iiij terminos censuales iiij s iiij d. per annum et vj 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 seminanti frumenti j pretium iiij d. et unam arruram tempore seminanti aveni pretium iiij d. et tempore seminanti ordie j arruram pretium iiij d. summa ix d. item facient tres sarclaturas sine cibo per annum pro dimidiam diem pretium cuiuslibet ob' item facient iiij messur' per annum in autumpno pro diem integrem et tunc habebunt pandum suum semel die videlicet j panum potagii et j ferculum piscis vel vj allecias inter duos et subtractus cibo cuiuslibet valet opus j d. item auxiliabunt ad pratum pro dimidiam diem et

*valet opus j ob et si dominus voluerit inuenient
j hominum ad magnam percariam ad cibum dominum et
subtracto cibo valet opus j d. summa v s vij d.*

Customary tenants of Mickelwode

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: namely 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 reapings 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 herrings 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 desires, 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 tenementum quondam Ricardi filius Huberti cum suis parcenariis videlicet j messuagium cum xij acris terre pro equalibus porcionibus ...*

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 Spure videlicet j messuagium cum xj acris terre unde Adam Ode tenet j messuagium cum ij acris terre Wilhemus le Corneyser j acram ij rodas dimidiam Simonus le Pannier ij rodas et dimidiam Phillipus le Barker j acram Ricardus Jop et j*

*acram Thomas Docke dimidiam acram Adam Pistor
dimidiam acram Robertus heres et filius Wilhemi
de Herlowe dimidiam acram Alicia le Walays iij
rodas Ricardus Ode iij rodas et inter omnibus j
acram plus*

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 Corneyser 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

1289

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.

*Finem iij s.
vj d.* A *Galfridus Kyde et Johannes Kyde venent in plena
curia et sursum reddunt in manu domini tres rodas
terre et vij perticatas terre Et dominus concessit
predictam terram Adam' filio Adam' Pistor et
heredibus suis Et dat domino pro ingressu habendi
plegius prepositus*

Fine 3 s. 6 d. 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

1315

8 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.

- xij d.* A *Herveus Carpentar venit et sursum reddit j acram terre ad opus Alicie filie Roberti Jop et dicta Alicia dat domino pro licentia intrandi et pro licentia se maritandi predicto Herveo Carpentar plegli Walterus Clericus et prepositus*
- 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.
- vj d.* B *Walterus Oky dat domino vj d pro licentia allocandi j peciam pasture de Walter Stoniland Ita quod tenet ad terminum tres annorum proxime sequentium*
- Walter Oky pays sixpence for licence to lease (*pro licentia allocandi*) one piece of pasture from Walter Stoniland and to hold it for 3 years.
- vj d.* C *Alicia filia Adam Osbern dat vj d pro licentia emendi j rodam terre Xpiana filia Semani plegius Ad Osbern*
- 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 *Postea venerunt predicti Johannes Moyse et Walterus Spyr Et finem fecerunt pro licentia vendendi et retinendi ut supra unam rodam terre*
- 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.

xij d. Heryattam A *Galfridus Kyde obiit post ultiam curiam qui tenuit die quo obiit duas partes unius messuagii et duas acras terre de villenagio domini et venient Thomas Kyde et Johannes filii dicti Galfridi et petunt admittandi ad terram predictam et dant domino pro herietta 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 socio-economic hierarchy--a European proletariat differing from the ideal peasant type of the middle ages about which so much is written.

A *Tastatores cervisae, de Botulesdale videlicet Willelmus le Haye et Robertus Symon presentant quod Johannes de Littleberry braciavit contra assisam*

B *Et Thomas Wulevyne remotus est ab officio suo et Willelmus Woluerd ponitus 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 *braciavit 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 Mabili Hicet pro licentia se maritandi Radulpho de Honton plegii Robertus de Baxstere 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 disposatur cuidem Roberto le Chapman libero--Et dicunt quod dicta Agnes tenet de villenagio domini medietatem unam acram terre custumariam Et dicunt quod dictus*

*Item quod Thomas le Noble de Hilderley dispon-
satur Annicie filie Ricardi Pyttance que tenet
unam rodam et dimidian terre et octaviam partem
messuagii Ideo preceptum est distringere*

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

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.

1331-1334

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.

xxxij d.

A	<i>Item quod Agnes Fince peperit extra matermonium¹</i> <i>Ideo childwyte</i>
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¹The phrase *quia peperit extra matermonium* is specific and is translated "because she gave birth out of marriage."

10

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 impartible 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 placito terre unde dicit quod ei deforciat unum messuagium et iiij acras terre cum pertinenciis in Redgrave unde dicit quod Adam Jop pater dicti Johannis cuius heres ipse est fuit seistus ut deforciatur sic de bondagio de ipso Adam descendit jus isti Johanne qui nunc petit in quibus idem Thomas non habet ingressum unde per Ricardum Jop qui seni illum intrusit post mortem Thomas Jop qui illud tenuit ad terminum vite ex dimissione dicti Adam patris dicti Johannis cuius heres ipse est et inde ducit sectam Et predictus Thomas venit et defendit inde etc. Et dicit quod Ricardus Jop pater suis obiit seistus de predicti tenementi post cuius mortem intravit heres et seistus est et est infra etatem Et petit iudicium 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 verificare etc. super hoc omnes homines de homagio requisunt si tali sic consuetudines petunt diem usque ad proximam et habunt Postea dicunt quod consuetudines ville est quod minor' infra etatem xxxj annorum non potest tenere de herede sue aliquam admittere nec inde debet inflactere Ideo expectet etatem*

Bacon 17

1327-1330

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.

ij s. A *Willelmus le Carter et Petrus frater eius sursum reddunt in manu domini unam acram terre ad opus Johannis Carter tenendum sibi et sequele sue pro serviciis et opera Et dat de fine plegius messor'*

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.

xxvij d. B *Johannes Carter et Willelmus Carter reddunt in manu domini quaedam partem unius messuagii*

continentem xxxiiij perticatas terre et dimidiam cum una roda terre et quartem partem unius rodæ in crofto ad opus Petri le Carter tenendum sibi et sequele sue pro serviciis et opera Et dat domino de fine plegius messor

1 s. 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.

C *Johannes le Carter et Petrus frater eius sursum reddunt in manu domini duas partes medietatem unam acram terre cum duabus partibus unius cotagii ad opus Willelmi 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 "essoining." 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 litigation was often briefly noted: e.g.; *de placito terre*, *de placito transgressionem*, etc. In general, securing a person to act as an essoin seems to have been an easy matter; repeated relationships of essoin to essoined are of interest in that they reflect on the nature of social linkages.

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

Adam Sagor versus William the Breton over a plea of trespass--essoined by Richard Barun.

Bacon 6

1290-1293

19 Pledging

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.

iiij d. B *Robertus de Ecclesia ponit se versus Willelmum de Erhfford 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.

vj d. C *De Waltero Spyrchard pro licentia concordandi cum Reginaldo Cristemesse et cum Isabella uxore sue per plegium Thomae Terry et Gilberti Manton*

Thomas Terry and Gilbert Manton pledged the agreement made between Walter Spyrchard 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 Spyrchard.

D *Matilda que fuit uxor Edwardi Cat queritur se de Adam Sagor plegii de prosequendo Adam Pistor et Adam Cat plegii de reddendo Willelmus de Brockford et Johannes Cotin*

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

ij s. 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 heredibus suis faciendum inde domino servicia et consuetudines debita et idem Johannes dat domino pro seisina habendi inde plegii Simonis Clericus et Johannes le Ferur*

In this property transaction Simon Clericus and John the Ferur have pledged for John of Ramsey and Cecilia le Mayster who have acquired a mesuage 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.

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 distringere Cristinam Wysman pro
iij 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 Reve pro licentia concordandi
cum Margera de Coneyweston de placito debiti
videlicet v solidos et vj d. et predictus Nicholas
invenit cuidem plegios de dicto debiti soluendi
videlicet medietatem ad festum Omnium Sanctorum
et ad festum Sancti Thomas Apostilli aliam medie-
tatem scilicet Simonis Osbern et Walterus Boton*
- iij d.* D *De Sarra uxore Thomae Botonn pro falsa querela
versus Simonem Osbern, Walterus le King, Walterus
Boton, Adam Boton, Nicholas le Reve, Ricardus
Stokeman de placito debiti prout attingatur pro
inquisitione etc. xviiij d. De predictis Simone
Osbern (iij d.) Waltero le king (iij d.) Waltero
Boton (iij d.) Adam Boton (iij d.) Nicholo le Reve
(iij d.) et Ricardo Folkmere (iij d.) indicerunt
pro inquisitione versus predictam Sarram Boton
de placito debiti etc. inde recuperaverunt j
quartem et ij bussellos 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.

- iiij d.* A *Alanus Kempe reddit in manu domini unum cottagium
et j acram terre cum pertinenciis in Hilderkeley
quidem cottagium et terram jacentes apud le grene
Stoneheye inter terram Radulpho de la Grop ex parte
una et Radulpho Botonn ex altera Et Agnes filia
dicti Alani dat domino pro dictis cottagio et terra
habendi sibi et heredibus suis in inperpetuum et*

soluent per annum dicto Alano patris suo ad total vitam suam iiij bussellos frumenti ad duos terminos annuales videlicet ad festum Sancti Michaelis ij bussellos et Pascham ij bussellos et dictus Alanus faciet consuetudines et opera in tota vita qua que ad dictam terram pertinentes etc. plegius 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 Stoneheye between the land of Radulphus of the Grop 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 services and works that pertain to this tenement. Pledge, Simon Osbern.

v s.

B *Agnes le Godmede sursum reddit in manu domini unum messuagium et xij acras terre in villa de Wattlesfield terram customariam Et Thomas filius et heres dicte Agnes dat domino v s. pro dictis messuagio et terris habendi et tenendi sibi et heredibus suis faciundo inde per annum ad Aulam de Hildercley consuetudines et opera ad dictam terram pertinentes Et postea hoc dictus Thomas invenit dictam Agnes ad totam vitam suam victu et vestitu prout valorem dicte terre se extendere possit Et postea hoc soluet eidem per annum vixerit ij bussellos frumenti et iiij bussellos ordeï infra festum sancti Michaelis et festum Omnium Sanctorum plegii Robertus del Grop 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 provide 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 Grop 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 suspected 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 attachiatur ad respondendum Robert filii Luciae de placito transgressione etc. Et unde queritur quod die Lune proxima post festum Sancti Laurencii anno regni regis Edwardi xviiij venit idem Walterus vi et armis cum ignotis asportaverunt de blado ipsi Roberti de terra sua locata in Redgrave de Cristina Mercatrice videlicet iiij quarteria ordeï pretium quarterium iiij s. j quarterium pisarum pretium iiij s. et j quarterium siliginis pretium iiij s. et foragium et paliam pretium xij d. Et ad hunc inuiste ei detinet ad dampnum etc. xxx s. Et Walterus venit et defendit Et quod non venit vi et armis cum ignotis bladum ipsi Roberti inuiste asportaverunt sic ei inpon' petit quod inquiratur Ideo juratores etc. Et inquisitio venet et dicit quod predictus Walterus simul cum Radulpho fratre suo asportavit de blado ipso Roberti ad valentiam iiij cumbarum ordeï pretium vj s. j cumbe fabarum et pisarum pretium ij s. et j cumbe siliginis pretium ij s. ad dampnum etc. Ideo consideratum est quod predictus Robertus recuperatur predictum bladum vel pretium predictum etc. ad dampnum etc. ij 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 combes (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 attachiatus fuit ad respondendum predicto Gilberto (Bissop) de placito transgressionis unde queritur quod die jous proxima ante festum Apostillorum Simonis et Jude anno xiiij in villa de Wortham venit vi et armis etc. insultum ei fecit et cum una tribula eum verberavit vulneravit et maletractavit contra pacem ad dampnum ipsi Gilberti xx s. etc. Et inde producit 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 dampnum vj 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 acras terre cum j messuagio ut jus suus etc. Et unde quidam Robertus antecessor eius fuit seysitus ut de jure etc. tempore etc. captus etc. De Roberto descendit etc. cuidem Alicie 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 seysinam predicti Roberti et antecessoribus etc. Et quod Alicia filia eius fuit inde seysitus sec dicit quod quidam Ricardus de Wolpet venit et disposavit dictam Aliciam et procreavit tres filios scilicet Walterus, Radulphus et Boty' et ubi dictus Phillipus dicit predictus Boty' esse fratrem predicti Ricardi ibi ipse Boty' fuit filius dicti Ricardi ut*

primus dictus est etc. Et quod ita est petit etc. Et postea concordatus fuit per licentiam etc. quod dictus Phillipos recognovit j messuagium et v acras esse jus ipsi Thome sec ut mensuratur secundum rodam ville et ea ei remisit et quietclamavit de se et heredibus suis etc. Ita quod residuum tenementi ultra predictas v acras cum messuagio post mensurationem remaneat predicto Phillippo inperpetuum quietus de Thoma et heredibus suis Et dictus Thomas de certero et heredes sui soluent domino pro dicto Phillip vj d. et allocabatur predicto Phillip etc. Et Thomas dat pro licentia concordatur plegius Phillipus Ketil et Gilbertus Manton

Philip Denewold contests Thomas Ketil for 5 acres of land and 1 mesuage 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 mesuage 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

1296-1300

THE GENERAL COURT BEFORE 1350

23 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 Crastino Sancti Gregorii Anno Domini Simonis Abbatis Sexto*

Condonatur per senescallum Cecilia relicta Galfridi prepositi in misericordia quia duxerit ij carectas de domo Thomae Prepositi ad domum Walteri Chantecler plegius ad instanciam domini Archid'

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

vj d. Andreas le Slaywrithe in misericordia pro eodem

Ad hunc preceptum est attachiare Aliciam Pyttance pro childwyte condonatur quia nichil habet plegii Eadwardus Kat et Augustinus Fox

Ad hunc preceptum est distringere Willelmum nepotatem Willelmi de Braham, Ricardum de Cumpton, Rogerus d Armiger' dicti Willelmi Galfridus famulum eiusdem Willelmi ad respondendum de transgressione

ij s Phillipus de Carletone ponit se in misericordia versus Walterum Felun plegii Galfridus filius Simon et Hugonis del Fen

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

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

Willelmus Medicus venit et optulit legem et calumpnavit tempus ideo ponitur in respectu Eadwardus Kat eodem modo

- vj d. *Baldewinus Faber dat domino pro relenio terre patris sui et facit servicia et consuetudines etc. plegii Robertus de Stiule et G. Messor*
- Loquela inter Baldewynum Osketil querens et Ricardum Lord et Gilbertum Odelyne defendens ponitur in respectu usque ad proximam curiam*
- Demanda versus dominum Egidium de Wattesham pro defalta ponitur in respectu*
- iiij s. *Willelmus del Hathe ponit se in misericordia versus Alemontum Denewold plegii Willelmus Slawe et Radulphus Walhoc*
- ij s. *Basilia que fuit uxor Johannis Warin dat ij solidos pro relennio 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 Walterum Chantecler et Ceciliam matrem dicti Thomae plegius*
- vj d. *Stephanus Hereward in misericordia pro defalta*
- Alicia Pye queritur de Johanne filio Henrico plegius de prosequendo Robertus Jop Et preceptum est attachiare dictum Johannem ad respondendum Alicie plegius ad respondendum Johannes le Messager*
- vj d. *Athelwys filiastre Wyot de Mercato in misericordia quia atinatum est per inquisitionem quod procuravit inuiste citationem Willelmi Carpenter plegius Wyot*
- v s. *Alex Docke dat v solidos pro relennio Willelmi Bricmer plegii 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 plegii dicte Emma et pro transgressione facta in Bosco domini xij d. plegius Eadwardus*
- 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 Kyppecope dat vj d. pro licentia intrandi in terra quondam patris sui plegius Hugonis Messor*
- ij s. *Johannes filius prepositus dat ij s. pro licentia intrandi in dimidiam acra terre que fuit Parvi Alurich plegius Willelmus Medicus*

*Preceptum est distringere Willelmum Ferant pro
defalta*

vj d.

*Walterus Chapsi dat vj d. pro licentia emendi j
peciam terre de Warino Molendinar' plegius*

*Eodem die venit Basilia relictia Johannis Waryn
et quietclaimavit Waltero Oky totum jus suum
nomine dote de ij acras et dimidiam terre que
dictus Walterus emit de predicto Johanne Warin*

messor'

*Eodem die electus est Ricardus Jop ad officium
messor' per totam villatam
Summa xxxij s.*

Bacon 1

1259-1265

24 General Court Business in 1343

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 tenta die Sabbati
proxima ante festum Sancti Martini Anno Domini
Willelmi Abbatis Novo*

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

*Robertus Buntynge defendens versus Thomam Lambrych
de placito transgressionem per Walterum Cobbe*

*Alanus de Shenleye defendens versus Johannem
Docke seniore de placito conventionem per Robertum
de Wortham Johannes optulit se*

*Alanus de Shenleye de communi per Stephanum Wolle-
monngere Aff'*

*Johannes Docke senior defendens versus Johannem
Felmere de placito debiti per Rogerum de Harlyng
Aff' Johannes per attornatum suum optulit se*

*Adam filius Roberti le Baxstere tenens versus
Simonem le Baxstere de placito terre unde visus
per Walterum de Kipenham Aff' et Simonis optulit
se*

*Willelmus de Dagworth tenens versus Simonem le
Baxstere de placito terre unde visus per Ricardum
atte Churchhe*

*Juliana uxor dicti Willelmi de eodem unde visus
per Nicholam atte Churchhe*

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

*visus Robertus le Barkere petit versus Walterum filium
Johannis le Messager iiij acras et dimidiam terre
et j acram prati cum pertinenciis in Redgrave unde
dicit quod quidem Simonis de Herlowe inde obiit
seisitus Et predictus tenementum descendit Agnes,
Alicie, Cecilie, filiis dicti Simonis, etc. Et
predicta Cecilia obiit post cuius mortem pars sua
descendere deberet Agnes et Alicia que nunc petunt
Et predictus Walterus venit et petit habere visum
etc. et habet etc. Ideo preceptum est*

*iiij d. De primis plegii Johannis de Makeslee quia non habet
eum ad respondendum Waltero Seman in placito conven-
tione in misericordia Et preceptum est ponere ipsum
pro melioribus plegiis*

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

*iiij d. De Johanne le redelestere et plegiis suis de pro-
sequendo quia non est prosecutus versus Johannem de
Beterynge in placito debiti in misericordia*

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

*iiij d. De Rogero Waleys, Johanne (j d.) le Mesager
juniore, Roberto le Barkere (j d.) Adam' Lewyne
(j d.) pro defalta in misericordia*

*Preceptum est attachiare Willelmum le Smyth ad res-
pondendum Adam Tomelyn in placito debiti*

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

- iiij d.* 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
- iiij d.* Compertum est per inquisitionem quod Johannes Docke inuiste detinet Adam le Carter vj s. viij d. ob. ad dampnum taxatur ad vj d. in misericordia Et preceptum est levare
- vj d.* Augustinus Sygtych sursum reddit in manu domini duas partes une acre terre ad opus Willelmi Bonde tenendi sibi et heredibus suis in villenagio per servicium et opera etc. saluo jure Et dat de fine plegius messor'
- iiij d.* 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
- vj d.* Compertum est per inquisitionem quod Simonis Garlek et Willelmus le Clerk fregerunt conventionem Ricardus Jop ad dampnum taxatur ad xij d. in misericordia Et preceptum est levare
- j d.* De Simone Garlek juniore pro falso clamore suo versus Ricardum Jop in placito debiti in misericordia
- ij d.* De Willelmo Cobbe quia inuiste detinet j bussellum frumenti pretium x d. Johannem Oky ad dampnum taxatur ad j d. in misericordia Et preceptum est levare
- xij d.* De Adam le Redere pro dampno facto in bosco domini in misericordia plegius messor'
- xvj d.* Augustinus Sygtrych sursum reddit in manu domini tertiam partem unius acre terre ad opus Alex' Sygtych tenendi sibi et heredibus suis in villenagio per servicia et opera etc. saluo jure etc. Et dat de fine plegius messor'
- vj d.* De Ammor' filio Petri et Johannis Littleberry pro transgressione facta cum carecttis suis ultra terram domini in misericordia plegius alter alterius
- vj d.* De parcerio manerii pro transgressione facta in blado domini plegius prepositus
- ij d.* De Juliana le Messenger pro transgressione facta in blado domini plegius prepositus
- iiij d.* De Mabilia le Reder (j d.) Juliana Messenger (j d.) Willelmo Tene (j d.) Rogero Walays

*(j d.) pro transgressione facta in herbagio
domini cum porciis suis plegius messor'*

*iiij d. De Johanne de Gruundesburgh quia non venit ad
averagium sicut summonitus fuit Ideo in miseri-
cordia plegius*

*iiij d. De Roberto Hicche Roberto Brychmer pro eodem
plegius Stephannus Bole*

*vj d. De Roberto Crane pro transgressione facta in
bosco domini plegius messor'*

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

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

*iiij d. Compertum est per inquisitionem quod Ricardus
Jop inuiste detinet Simonem Garlek juniorem xj s.
j d. qu' ad dampnum taxatur ad xij d. et vj d. in
misericordia Et preceptum est levard*

*Memorandum Matilda le Masonn et Robertus filius eius sursum
reddunt in manu domini tres rodas terre cum media-
tate uno messuagio ad opus Ricardi Joop Willelmi
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 vincula preterito j marcum ad fes-
tum Sancti Michaelis ulterio preterito j marcum ad
festum Purificacionem Beate Marie ulterito j marcum
et ad festum Sancti Michaelis proximam futuro xl s.
quod tunc predicti Mabilia et Robertus rehabeant
predicta tenementa etc. et si non conservent terminos
quod tunc dictum tenementum remaneat predictis
Ricardo, Willelmo, et Rogero imperpetuum pro fine
domino 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 document was called a custumal. Produced in the 1360's, it survives as a convenient summary of certain activities of the Redgrave villeins between 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 sixteenth 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.

A *Curia post festum nativitatem Beate Marie Anno
Domini Ricardi Abbatis xv*

*Presentatum est per inquisitionem quod Walterus
Leveday nativus domini obiit et tenuit de domino
iiij acras et j rodam terre t'tur cum uno messu-
agio per servicium etc. et dicunt quod Johannes
et Willelmus filii dicti Walteri sunt eius heredes
propinquiore qui venerunt et dicunt LEVEDAY
quod noluit habere dictam terram Ideo preceptum
est seisire ipsum in manu domini et postea dominus
concessit illa Matyllda et Agneti filiis dicti
Walteri tenendi de ipso in villenagio per servicia
et opera etc.*

*Item Willelmus Crane nativus domini obiit post ultimam
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 herrietum 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 jous post festum Sancti
Katerine virginis anno Ricardi Abbatis xvj*

*De Willelmo Garlek pro licentia habendi faldam
ad minimum c bidentes usque festum Michaelem viij d.
memorandum*

*Item de Cristina filia Walteri Heysselgood de fine
pro licentia se maritandi iij s. HEYSELGOOD*

*De Matylllda filia Johannis Oky de fine pro licentia
se maritandi iij s. OKY*

*Item de Willelmo Frenk quia non habet bidentes
suas in falda domini secundum deberet iij d.*

*Item dicunt quod Harlynge (?) habet xl bidentes
in falda sua ultra certum minimum Ideo in miseri-
cordia vj 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 Cristemesse 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 Messenger*
- Item quod tenentes de Humblestuftlond inuiste detinent per annum j d. ob. de auxilio vicecomitis unde collectarius respondet*
- Item quod Johannes Wyther, Adam Wyther, Wimmundus Koc, Adam Potage, Henricus filius Ade le Webistere de Norton fecerunt purpresturas super communem de Redgrave latitudine viij perticatas et ibidem foderunt turbarias ad estimationem sex carectas turbariarum*
- Thomas filius Phillipi le Brother de Lopham verberavit Galfridum le Carecter de Redgrave in domo sua et male eum tractavit*
- Item quod Radulphus Chanterel inuiste detinet iij d. redditus per annum pro terra quondam uxore sua*
- Item quod Radulphus Robertus et Johannes filii Henrici Capellani contra pacem intraverunt domum Mabilie fregerunt et ad hunc dictam tenent vi et armis inuiste*
- ij s.* *Item quod Galfridus Jumpe fecit rescussum messor' domini Abbatis de unius equo plegius Walterus Chapsi*

vj d.

*Item quod Willelmus le Wyte traxit sanguinem
de Agnes le Franceys se inuiste plegius Willel-
mus*

*Item quod Willelmus Harding cum aliis ignotis
venent ad domum Adam et postea exonerit domum et
venit ipsum in Botulesdale contra vesperam emitem
in vico et ipsum cepit et dicit quod ipsum incar-
cereret et ipsum retinuit quosque Willelmus Ode
capellanus eum deliberavit*

*Item quod homines domini Phillipi de Eya venerunt
premeditate villa de Redgrave cum quattuor carectis
et intraverunt bosco Katun' et ibidem cyderunt
viij quercos et ibidem venit ballivus domini et
distractionem per dictam tr' et ei fecerunt res-
cussum*

vj d.

*Item quod uxor Willelmi Carpentar' 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 Maystere 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 decenna Thomae Docks, 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

fecit 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 assissam, pro assissa panis fracta*.

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 Cristemesse, 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 dicunt super sacrementum 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:

- iiij d.* B *Willelmus Ode de fine amoneat extra decennam plegius messor'*
- Rex* *De Johanne le May pro defalta*
- vj d.* *De Ricardo le Warde (iiij d.) et Willelmus de Kypenham (iiij d.) in decenna Rogeri atte Stile pro defalta*
- j d.* *De Johanne Rond in decenna Johanne Huberd pro defalta*
- iiij d.* *De Ricardo Hulwyne in decenna Willelmi de Skerynge pro eodem*
- iiij d.* *De Waltero le May in decenna Johannis Stannard pro defalta*

Bacon 22

1352, 1354-55

Simon pie ⁊ pœn. tœn. f. mœ. i. p. ad cœ. lœn. f. aœn. i. dœ. de. ordond. ⁊ de aœ. dœ. de tœ. a. hœlœdœ. qœt. hœlœlœ dœ. del. fœlle. a. hœude dœ. fœmœ. tœn. mœ. ⁊ x. p. ad cœ. lœn. fœ. hœ. hœnœ. ⁊ fœ. a. ⁊ fœ. a. pie. pœ. mœ. al. aœ. dœ. ⁊. uœ. yœd. qœ. lœlœ. Gœudeœ. dœ. aœ. fœdœ. fœ. mœ. aœ. dœ. aœ. rœgœ. dœ. aœ. ⁊ yœdœ. p. aœ. uœ. dœ. dœ. lœn. fœ. gœtœ. p. oœ. lœn. fœ. fœ. uœ. yœ. dœ. aœ. p. ordond. ⁊ fœ. œ. omœ. aœ. pœ. lœ. dœ. dœ. pœ. lœ. yœdœ. p. dœ. tœ. a. lœ. dœ. uœ. dœ. dœ. de. cœ. dœ. p. aœ. ⁊ p. qœ. pœ. aœ. dœ. aœ. ⁊ qœ. lœ. fœ. aœ. ⁊ hœ. œ. i. aœ. uœ. dœ. dœ.

[illegible]

Resie fit istis curting. i. hie sui rei. m. g. i. i. m. d. al. v. de e. i. e. q. d. beane soror Robi fit agnet. i. redd
p. am. i. f. d. ad aux. i. m. i. p. d. i. i. v. e. u. d. i. f. am. b. auen. i. m. o. g. i. o. s. u. e. n. d. i. o. m. b. d. d. e. s. a. l. l. e.

Pierce ten pda pcam de qda Albrecht qm choni de la mare i pcam sup. i faat. i arin p d. apud pte diem sul abo
p. u. d. 2. i. messus i anup d. ab. p. i. d. i m ten. i rufam ai. f. de tje de mollond. reddo p am. u. d. p m
ten. i. d. an a d tje de otelond. i reddo p am. d. met. sal. i. d. m. u. b. auen.

[illegible]

Robtus colbe p. pred. ten. 1. mes. + v. 120. q. q. Ingheliam. unde. des. nob. ten. p. me. ai. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100. 101. 102. 103. 104. 105. 106. 107. 108. 109. 110. 111. 112. 113. 114. 115. 116. 117. 118. 119. 120. 121. 122. 123. 124. 125. 126. 127. 128. 129. 130. 131. 132. 133. 134. 135. 136. 137. 138. 139. 140. 141. 142. 143. 144. 145. 146. 147. 148. 149. 150. 151. 152. 153. 154. 155. 156. 157. 158. 159. 160. 161. 162. 163. 164. 165. 166. 167. 168. 169. 170. 171. 172. 173. 174. 175. 176. 177. 178. 179. 180. 181. 182. 183. 184. 185. 186. 187. 188. 189. 190. 191. 192. 193. 194. 195. 196. 197. 198. 199. 200. 201. 202. 203. 204. 205. 206. 207. 208. 209. 210. 211. 212. 213. 214. 215. 216. 217. 218. 219. 220. 221. 222. 223. 224. 225. 226. 227. 228. 229. 230. 231. 232. 233. 234. 235. 236. 237. 238. 239. 240. 241. 242. 243. 244. 245. 246. 247. 248. 249. 250. 251. 252. 253. 254. 255. 256. 257. 258. 259. 260. 261. 262. 263. 264. 265. 266. 267. 268. 269. 270. 271. 272. 273. 274. 275. 276. 277. 278. 279. 280. 281. 282. 283. 284. 285. 286. 287. 288. 289. 290. 291. 292. 293. 294. 295. 296. 297. 298. 299. 300. 301. 302. 303. 304. 305. 306. 307. 308. 309. 310. 311. 312. 313. 314. 315. 316. 317. 318. 319. 320. 321. 322. 323. 324. 325. 326. 327. 328. 329. 330. 331. 332. 333. 334. 335. 336. 337. 338. 339. 340. 341. 342. 343. 344. 345. 346. 347. 348. 349. 350. 351. 352. 353. 354. 355. 356. 357. 358. 359. 360. 361. 362. 363. 364. 365. 366. 367. 368. 369. 370. 371. 372. 373. 374. 375. 376. 377. 378. 379. 380. 381. 382. 383. 384. 385. 386. 387. 388. 389. 390. 391. 392. 393. 394. 395. 396. 397. 398. 399. 400. 401. 402. 403. 404. 405. 406. 407. 408. 409. 410. 411. 412. 413. 414. 415. 416. 417. 418. 419. 420. 421. 422. 423. 424. 425. 426. 427. 428. 429. 430. 431. 432. 433. 434. 435. 436. 437. 438. 439. 440. 441. 442. 443. 444. 445. 446. 447. 448. 449. 450. 451. 452. 453. 454. 455. 456. 457. 458. 459. 460. 461. 462. 463. 464. 465. 466. 467. 468. 469. 470. 471. 472. 473. 474. 475. 476. 477. 478. 479. 480. 481. 482. 483. 484. 485. 486. 487. 488. 489. 490. 491. 492. 493. 494. 495. 496. 497. 498. 499. 500. 501. 502. 503. 504. 505. 506. 507. 508. 509. 510. 511. 512. 513. 514. 515. 516. 517. 518. 519. 520. 521. 522. 523. 524. 525. 526. 527. 528. 529. 530. 531. 532. 533. 534. 535. 536. 537. 538. 539. 540. 541. 542. 543. 544. 545. 546. 547. 548. 549. 550. 551. 552. 553. 554. 555. 556. 557. 558. 559. 560. 561. 562. 563. 564. 565. 566. 567. 568. 569. 570. 571. 572. 573. 574. 575. 576. 577. 578. 579. 580. 581. 582. 583. 584. 585. 586. 587. 588. 589. 590. 591. 592. 593. 594. 595. 596. 597. 598. 599. 600. 601. 602. 603. 604. 605. 606. 607. 608. 609. 610. 611. 612. 613. 614. 615. 616. 617. 618. 619. 620. 621. 622. 623. 624. 625. 626. 627. 628. 629. 630. 631. 632. 633. 634. 635. 636. 637. 638. 639. 640. 641. 642. 643. 644. 645. 646. 647. 648. 649. 650. 651. 652. 653. 654. 655. 656. 657. 658. 659. 660. 661. 662. 663. 664. 665. 666. 667. 668. 669. 670. 671. 672. 673. 674. 675. 676. 677. 678. 679. 680. 681. 682. 683. 684. 685. 686. 687. 688. 689. 690. 691. 692. 693. 694. 695. 696. 697. 698. 699. 700. 701. 702. 703. 704. 705. 706. 707. 708. 709. 710. 711. 712. 713. 714. 715. 716. 717. 718. 719. 720. 721. 722. 723. 724. 725. 726. 727. 728. 729. 730. 731. 732. 733. 734. 735. 736. 737. 738. 739. 740. 741. 742. 743. 744. 745. 746. 747. 748. 749. 750. 751. 752. 753. 754. 755. 756. 757. 758. 759. 760. 761. 762. 763. 764. 765. 766. 767. 768. 769. 770. 771. 772. 773. 774. 775. 776. 777. 778. 779. 780. 781. 782. 783. 784. 785. 786. 787. 788. 789. 790. 791. 792. 793. 794. 795. 796. 797. 798. 799. 800. 801. 802. 803. 804. 805. 806. 807. 808. 809. 810. 811. 812. 813. 814. 815. 816. 817. 818. 819. 820. 821. 822. 823. 824. 825. 826. 827. 828. 829. 830. 831.

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Bacon 21. An extract from a Redgrave court roll. July 1349. Item 14.

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Fig. 11

4-84-8

PART II *Late Medieval Economy and
Society in Rural England*

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.

Bacon 351	1369-1370
Bacon 369	1390-1391
Bacon 380	1420-1421

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 iij diebus
dimidiam pro diversis reparandis et carpentandis
ibidem vx d. ... item in stipendio j coopertoris
et servientis sue pro iij 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 seignorial 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

1381-1383

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 acram iij rodas terre post mortem Thomas Cock eo quod nullus veneat et retinere de exitu

Bacon 24

1369-1377

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 cotagium quondam Walteri Balle et nuper Margeris Swalwetall' pro viij d. partem tenementi vocatur Oldetolhus et unum cotagium quondam Ade Bragge et nuper Johannis Lompman pro xxiij d. ibidem simul et integre jacentes in Botulesdale inter cotagium predictae Rosae Crane vocatur Oldetolhous ex parte orientali et*

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 iiij acras 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 Ffyssher 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 Watsledeweie versus occidentali*

Also he holds four acres of Dokkes tenement formerly belonging to Simon Manwode lying in Botulesdale field between John fitzJohn's mesuage and land formerly held by John Bradenham on the north and land of the same William Fysshier of Pedelate's tenement on the south, with one headland formerly on the common way leading from the aforesaid street to the common called Mickelwoodgrene against the east and the other headland touching on the common lane called Watsledeweie 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 Ffenstret (iiij d.), Johannes Woluward (iiij d.) in tenemento quondam Johannes Crane, Johannes Bunting (reparatur j d.), Johannes Garlek (iiij d.), Rogerus Brawe (ij d.), Johannes Ffysshier (reparatur iiij d.), et Adam Walter (iiij d.) in tenemento Mosale in Wortham fecerunt vastum in bondagio domini per mittendi domus ruinare ideo ipsi in misericordia et preceptum est reparare contra proximam curiam videlicet cuiuslibet eorum subpena dimidiam 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

37 Peasant Living Standards and The Rise of Livestock Farming

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 seignorial 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.

- iiiij d.* A *Item presentant quod Johannes Ffyssher fecit dampnum in magno bosco cum j pullano ideo in misericordia*
- ij d.* *Item quod Johannes Byron fecit similiter ibidem cum j pullano 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

38 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.

- Hogastres morina* A *Et quod xxxix hogastres in custodia Willelmi Wagecok bercarii faldae hogastrum domini moriebantur a festo Omnium Sanctorum usque hanc diem ex communi morina et non ab defectu ipsius custodis*

quia pellis dampnantur et libantur ballivi

*Oves Matrices
morina*

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

*Multones
morina*

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 Gislyngham presentant quod Johannes Coket obiit seisitus de viij acras terre native cum uno messuagio de tenemento Emme Wolwene at Burgherdes in Gislyngham post cuius mortem dominus habuit j vaccam pretium vij s. nomine herietae videlicet meliorem bestiam secundum consuetudine manerii Et quod Henricus filius eius est inde proximus heres et plenus etatis qui venit hic in curia et dictam terram et tenementum de domino recepit cui liberatus est inde seisare tenendi sibi et heredibus suis ad voluntatem domini faciendi servicii et consuetudines saluo jure etc. Et nichil dat de fine quia habet ingressum per herietam predictam secundum consuetudines manerii--Et postea predictus Henricus Coket presens in curia sursum reddit in manu domini predictam terram cum messuagio predicto cum pertinenciis ad opus Ricardi Egelyn cui liberati est inde seisina tenendi sibi cum heredibus et assignatis suis ad voluntatem domini per virgam faciendi servicii et consuetudines saluo jore Et dat de fine Et fecit fidelitatem*

Bacon 34

1423-1431

40 Population Change and the Death Rate

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.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <i>herietam j
equum pretium
x solidos</i> | <p>A <i>Juratores presentant quod Johannes Smyth de Ffenstrete obiit post ultimam curiam et tenuit de domino die quo obiit ij pightelli pasturarum cum cotagio post cuius mortem dominus habuit unum equum de herieta pretium x s. videlicet meliorem bestiam de consuetudine manerii et quod Agnes uxor Johannis Crane nepotis predicti Johannis Smyth est heres eius propinquior que venet et habet ingressum per dictum herietam</i></p> |
| <i>herietam j
equum pretium
viij solidos</i> | <p>B <i>Item presentant quod Rogerus atte Style obiit seisisitus de v acras iij rodas terre tenementi Radulphi Ffabri et dimidiam rodam bosci tenementi Stonyland custumarii post cuis 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</i></p> |

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 natus domini obiit post ultimam curiam et tenuit de domino die quo obiit unum messuagium et xvj acras terre de bondagio domini post cuius mortem dominus habere debet j vaccam de herieta pretium viij s. videlicet meliorem bestiam de consuetudine manerii Et quod Johannes filius eius est heres eius inde proximus et etatis ix annorum qui presens in curia habet ingressum per dictum herietam 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 tenendi sibi usque ad etatem predicti heredi sub conditione sustentandi predictum tenementum et soluendi domino opera et servicia et sufficienter sustentandi dictum heredem in victu et vestibus Ideo de fine nichil*

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 calumpnatus est natus domini venit in curia et fecit domino fidelitatem servilem qui quidem Adam habet duos filios videlicet Johannem etatis xxx annorum, Robertus etatis xxij annorum et tres filias videlicet Johannam etatis xv annorum Aliciam et Agnes etatis v annorum et amplius et manent cum patre eorum*
- fidelitatem servile* B *Johannes Tesses qui calumpnatur ut natus domini venit in curia et fecit domino fidelitatem Et predictus Johannes Tesses habet unum filium nomine Johannem etatis xij annorum et quinque filias videlicet Aliciam etatis xiiij annorum, Beatrice etatis viij annorum, Christinam etatis vj annorum, Marionam etatis iiij annorum et Johannam etatis ij annorum et manent cum patre eorum*

Bacon 28

1388-1392

43 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 mesuage 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 mesuage 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 acram terre cum messuagio ad opus Rogeri de Braham tenendi sibi et heredibus suis per virgam ad voluntatem domini per servicium et opera etc. saluo jure etc. et dat domino de fine pro ingressu Et predicta sursumredditio liberata est sub hac conditione quod predictus Rogerus sustentabit predictos Johannem et Agnes uxorem eium in cibis et potibus sufficienter sicut seipm' ad totam vitam eorundem Johannis et Agnetis Et predictus Johannes habebit annuatim de predicto Rogero iiij virgas pannorum laneorum pretium virge viij d. ul pretium inde ad electionem predicti Johannis habebit etiam de eo ij pares calligarum et j par pannorum linearum 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 quandocumque illis placierunt Et predictus Rogerus manutenabit et sustentabit predictam messuagium sufficienter in omnibus sumptibus propriis Et ulterius predictus Rogerus concedit pro se et heredibus suis quod si contingat ipsum aliquam convent' supradictarum infringere quod tunc bene liceat predictis Johannis et Agnetis uxori eius in predicto messuagio cum omnibus suis pertinenciis reintrare et in primo statu suo re-tinere present' sursumreditione 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.

<i>Chevagium ij capones</i>	<p>A <i>Adam tesses natus domini dat domino de fine pro licentia comorandi extra dominicum domini usque festum Sancti Michaelis proximum futuro per plegios Willelmi Clerk et Johannis Tesses qui manuceperunt habere eundem ad eandem curiam et quod si non elongabatur sub pena c solidos et fecit fidelitatem servile</i></p>
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<p>Chevage 2 hens</p>	<p>Adam Tesses, the lord's customary tenant, gives the 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.</p>
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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 departure 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 Hinderley 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 natus domini de
sanguine extra dominicum domini est manens in
Ffornsete Ideo preceptum est ipsum capere per corpus
et seisare bona et catalla*

*Item presentant quod Johannes atte Grop natus domini
est manens in Ffrostenden ideo preceptum est ipsum
capere per corpus et seisare bona et catalla*

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 Bernyngham 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 hanc curiam venerunt Johannes Salyng tailor, Willelmus Norham, Johannes Vyncent, Ricardus Claverynth, Johannes Philip neyler, Thomas Swatthefen, Willelmus Tess et posuerunt se in decenna et jurati sunt etc. . . .*

xij d.

Johannes Fysshier junior' (iij d.), Johannes Shepperde (iij d.), Willelmus Mallard (iij d.), Willelmus Had

Bacon 295

1422-1461

48 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
iij d. habuerunt ad respondendum domino de detentione unius
 bidentis abductae tempore rumoris Ideo in misericordia*
- De primis plegiis Edmundi de Wode quia ipsum non
iij d. habuerunt ad respondendum domino de detentione unius
 bidentis abductae tempore rumoris Ideo in misericordia*
- De Johanne Barbour quia abduxit j bidentem eodem
vj d. tempore per deliberationem Petri Catelyn et non
 restituit Ideo in misericordia*

Bacon 27

1384-1387

THE LATE MEDIEVAL GENERAL COURT

49 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).

Bacon 23

1361-1369

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 xvj Et anno domini Willelmi Curteys Abbatis X*

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

Inquisitionem ex officio de Geselyngham capta per sacramentum Roberti Symes, Thomae Coupere, Ricardi Egelyn, Adae Cryspyng, Johannis Corbald, Johannis Cobbe, Johannis Botte, Johannis Efullere, Willelmi Godard jun' et aliorum juratorum

*finem
vj s. vij d.*

Cecilia Wethon, Isabella Lewyn, tenentes terre Thomae Aysshman, Ricardus Brannch', Johannes Wrighte, Johannes Gyle clericus, Johannes Bokynham, Johannes Payn, Ricardus Gardyner, Ricardus Deye, Henricus Hervy, Agnes Odelyn, tenentes terre Roberti Aysshman, Walterus Crane, Johannes Taillour, pro tenemento Radulpho Smyth, Emma Pope, Edmundus Mason sen', Johannes Sansum, Johannes Lardon, Henricus Mekylwode, Johannes Smyth, Thomas And', Walterus Martyn, et Willelmus Terry dant de fine pro respectu sectae curiae habendum usque festum Sancti Michaelis proxima futuro Et tenentes terre

Johannis Argentem pro eodem

*Chevagium
iij s. ix d.*

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

finem iij s.

Willelmus Fysshare et Robertus Hose presentes in curia sursum reddunt in manu domini unam acram terre nativam de tenemento Dokkes cum pertinenciis in Redgrave ad opus Johannis Tynton cui liberatus est inde seisina tenendum sibi et heredibus et assignatis suis ad voluntatem domini per virgam et per servicium ix d. reddit per annum soluendi ad terminos usuales manerii saluo jure Et dat de fine

finem vj s.

Item predicti Willelmus Ffysshare et Robertus Hose sursum reddunt in manu domini iij acras terre nativas de predicto tenemento Dokkes cum pertinenciis in Redgrave ad opus Edmundi Sudburne cui liberatus est inde seisina tenendum sibi et heredibus et assignatis suis ad voluntatem domini per virgam et per servicium xvij d. reddit per annum soluendi ad terminos usuales manerii saluo jure Et dat de fine

finem xij d.

Johannes Smyth et Johannes Chandelers sursum reddunt in manu domini unum cotagium de feodo de Branchesernne jacens juxta Lecheslane quondam Ade Baxstere in Botulesdale ad opus Willelmi Jurdon et Edmundi Sudborne quibus liberatus est inde seisina tenendum illis heredibus et assignatis suis ad voluntatem domini per virgam faciendum inde servicii etc. saluo jure Et dant de fine Et fecit fidelitatem

vj d.

Item presentant quod Willelmus Ffysshare (iij d.) et Willelmus Page (iij d.) furnavit panem album et vendidit contra assissam Ideo in misericordia

ix d.

Et quod Johannes Slawe, Johannes Smyth et Andreus Smyth et Katerina Vale furnavit panem equinum et vendidit contra assissam

Et quod Katerina Vale, Margareta Smyth, Johanna Uxor, Andrei Smyth, Margareta Slawe, Agnes Goldfynch, Alicia Ffysshare, Alicia Hose, Mabilia Skynnere, Isabella Crane, Agnes Skynnere, Agnes Tabour, Katerina Pope et Cristina Bonde, braciaverunt cervisiam et vendiderunt contra assissam Ideo in misericordia Et quod Margareta Dayssh fecit similiter

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

- ij d. Et quod Isabella Candeler sen' gannokavit cervisiam et vendidit contra assissam Ideo in misericordia*
- iiij d. Compertum est per inquisitionem quod Rogerus Bokynham fecit transgressionem in pastura Thomae Egelyn cum porciis suis fodiendo ad dampnum xij d. quos preceptum est levare*
- Item presentant quod Adam Redere obiit et anti obituum suum sursum reddit in manu Thomae Pope unius tenentis domini per testimonium homagii unum messuigium cum ij acras terre et iiij rodas prati de tenemento Kynges cum pertinenciis in Redgrave que nuper cepit de domino sibi et heredibus suis per rotulum curie per servicium vj s. viij d. per annum ad opus Alicia uxore sue cui liberatus est inde seisina tenendo sibi ad terminum vite sue ad voluntatem domini per virgam et per servicium predictum Et post decessum predictae Alicie predictum tenementum cum pertinenciis integre remaneat Alicia filia predictae Ade et Alicie tenendum sibi et heredibus et assignatis suis ad voluntatem dominum per virgam et per servicium predictum saluo jure Et dant domino de fine tam per statum predict' Alic' ad terminum vite sui quam per statum predictae Alicie filie sue in Et postea venit Alicia filia predictae Ade post mortem Alicie matris sue et petit admittandi ad tenementum predictum prout superius specificat et liberatur ei ad tenendam per servicium*
- Item presentant quod Willelmus Fysshare vendidit Thomae Colman unum messuagium de alba firma in foro de Botulesdale sine licentia Et idem Thomas dictum messuagium vendidit Johannis Bateman sine licentia Ideo preceptum est seisare in manu domini quosque*
- xij d. De Johanne Messyon, Ricardo Skynnere, Willelmo Wrichte, et Johannis Goselyng pro defalta curie*
- iiij d. Compertum est per inquisitionem quod Johannes Thachere debet Johannis Pope iiij s. quos preceptum est levare*
- iiij s. vj. d. Willelmus Ffysshare presens in curia sursum reddit 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 heredis suis j domum de predicto tenemento Bregg' continentem in longitudine xlvj pede et in latitudine xij pedes per estimationem prout mete et bunde specificantur per servicium ij d. reddit per annum cum pertinenciis in Botulesdale ad opus Thomae Colman cui liberatus est inde seisina tenendum sibi et heredibus et assignatis suis ad voluntatem domini per virgam et per servicium ij s. iiij d. reddit per annum soluendi ad terminos usuales manerii saluo jure Et dat de fine*

51 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 Mickelwode 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).

- finem vj d.*
- A *Item presentant quod Johannes Shrag extra curiam sursum reddit in manu Johannis Smyth unius tenentis domini in presentia Thomae Smyth, Walteri Skynner et aliorum de homagio secundum consuetudines manerii cum cotagio de feodo de Blanchesferme continentem in longitudine ij perticatas et xiiij perticatas terre native de tenemento Dalec cum j domo superedificato cum pertinenciis in Botulesdale ad opus Edmundi Sudbourne et Petri Dayssh quibus liberatus est inde seisina tenendum illis heredibus et assignatis suis ad voluntatem domini per virgam faciendum servicia et consuetudines saluo jure sub conditione predicti Edmundi Et predictus Edmundus et Petrus dant de fine*
- finem vj d.*
- B *Robertus de Mikelwode presens in curia sursum reddit in manu domini j acram terre cum uno cotagio de feodo de Blancheseme quondam Johannis Symmond cum pertinenciis in Botulesdale ad opus Willelmi Bertram bastard' cui liberatus est inde seisina tendendum sibi et heredibus et assignatis suis ad voluntatem domini per virgam faciendum servicia et consuetudines saluo jure sub conditione quod predictus Willelmus soluat auc solutionem faciat presato Roberto auc attornatis suis in quinque annis proximis futuro post datum huius curie videlicet quaelibet anno ad festum Santi Michaelis Arch' xiiij s. iiij d. in sexto anno ad ulteriori sicut presentatus est quod tunc predictus Robertus in predicta terra cum cotagio cum pertinenciis per licentiam curie reintrare et tenere sicut primus tenuit present' reddit' et seisina inde liberantur et non obstantur Et super hoc predictus Willelmus 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 Aysshman, Edmundi Sudburne, Johannis Tynton, Rogerus Bokynham, et aliorum juratorum*

Inquisitionem ex officio de Geselyngham capta per sacramentum Roberti Synes, Thomae Coupere, Ricardi Egelyn, Johannis Corbald, Johannis Cobbe, Johannis Botte, Johannis Fullere, Willelmi Godard jun' et aliorum juratorum

Bacon 35

1432-1441

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.

- A Omnes capitales plegii ibidem videlicet Adam le Reder, Willelmus 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 Chandeler, Augustinus Garlek, Robertus Odeline, Benedictus Joop, Willelmus Tessard, et Johannes le Leche juratores qui dicunt super sacramentum suum quod dant de certo lete *xx* d. Et ballivus domini Regni illum habuit
- iiij d.* Item presentant quod Willelmus Crane arcavit quandem viam apud Shriphamrome 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' obstupuavit quandem cursum 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 obstupuavit quandem cursum aque apud Sabynes ad communem nocumentum Ideo in misericordia plegius prepositus Et preceptum est emendare
- ij d.* Item quod Robertus Oky obstupuavit quandem cursum apud Levedays ad communem nocumentum Ideo in misericordia plegius messor' Et preceptum est emendare
- condonatur Item quod Robertus Capellanus capellanus Sancti Johannis arcavit quandem viam vocatur Monselesweye cum dumis non amputatis ad communem nocumentum Ideo in misericordia Et preceptum est emendare
- vj d.* Item quod Cristina le Maystre obstupuavit quandem cursum aque in Lacheslane ad communem nocumentum Ideo in misericordia Et preceptum est emendare plegius messor'
- vj d.* Item quod Henricus Bercher communicavit in maresco de Botulesdale cum vaccis ubi communicare non debet Ideo in misericordia
- vj d.* Item quod Petrus Cateline vertit quandem cursum aque apud marescum de Botulesdale Ideo in misericordia plegius messor'
- vj d.* Item quod Reginaldus le Roper obstupuavit quandem cursum aque in foro de Botulesdale apud le Baxsteresbregge Ideo in misericordia plegius messor' Et preceptum est emendare

- vj d. *Item quod Rogerus levavit j warderobam ibidem ex oposito foro de Borulesdale ad communem nocumentum Ideo in misericordia plegius messor' Et preceptum est emendare*
- iiij d. *Item quod idem Reginaldus duo capitales plegii venerunt ad faciendum visum eos accedit et im'navit per eo quod latu fuerunt sibi de dictis nocumentis Ideo in misericordia plegius messor'*
- iiij d. *Item quod Rogerus Hunno fecit hamsokne super Petri Cateline Ideo in misericordia plegius messor'*
- iiij d. *Item quod Agnes Fox manupastus Rogeri Hunno traxit sanguinem de Johanne le Clerk plegius Rogerus Hunno*
- iiij d. *Item quod Margareta Ffox fecit hamsokne super Robertus Slaghe Ideo in misericordia plegius messor'*
- vj d. *Item quod idem Willelmus levavit hutesium iuste super dictum Alanum Ideo in misericordia*
- vj d. *Item quod Alanus de Shelleye communicavit in commune de Botulesdale cum vaccis et boviculis ubi communicare non debet Ideo in misericordia plegius messor'*
- j d. *Item quod Walterus de Aldewode iniuste cepit de Rogero Hunno unam peciam cuiusdem popularis pretium iiij d. Ideo in misericordia plegius messor'*
- j d. *Item quod Rogerus Hunno fecit hamsokne super Walterum de Aldewode intrando messuagium suum Ideo in misericordia*
- iiij d. *Item quod idem Walterus levavit hutesium iniuste super dictum Rogerum Ideo in misericordia plegius messor'*
- vj d. *Item quod Ricardus Salvetail communicavit in commune de Botulesdale cum j pullano ubi communicare non debet Ideo in misericordia*
- Item quod Agnes Symmond continiavit unam fymalem apud Hundormereschel ad nocumentum vicinorum Ideo in misericordia plegius messor' Et preceptum est emendare*
- vj d. *Item quod Ricardus Salvetail habet j fymalem in foro de Botulesdale ad communem nocumentum Ideo in misericordia plegius messor' It preceptum est emendare*
- j d. *Item quod Johannes le Tiller habet j fymalem ibidem ad communem nocumentum Ideo in misericordia plegius messor' Et preceptum est emendare*

- vj d. *Item quod Petrus Catteline habet j fymalem ibidem ad communem nocumentum Ideo in misericordia plegius messor' Et preceptum est emendare*
- iiij d. *Item quod Johannes Pewan fecit unum puteum in communia ubi non est communicare Ideo in misericordia plegius messor' Et preceptum est emendare*
- vj d. *Item quod Willelmus le Barker communicavit quandem communem viam obstupuatam apud Barkeresmedwe ubi facit j pontem ibidem ad communem nocumentum Ideo in misericordia plegius messor' Et preceptum est emendare*
- iiij d. *Item quod Johannes le Shapstere communicavit quandem purpresturam super communem in foro de Botulesdale vendendo j placeam ex parte occidentali domus sue longitudine xij pedes et latitudine j pedem et dimidiam ad communem nocumentum Ideo in misericordia plegius messor' Et preceptum est emendare*
- iiij d. *Item quod Johannes le Clerk fecit iniuste district-ionem super Ricardum Steynesmor Ideo in misericordia plegius messor'*
- iiij d. *Item quod idem Ricardus levavit hutesiam iuste super dictum Johannem Ideo in misericordia*
- iiij d. *Item quod Willelmus le Ray fodit turbas in maresco in ij debito loco ad communem nocumentum Ideo in misericordia plegius messor'*
- iiij d. *Item quod Johannes Reeman fecit quandem faldegate super tenementum quondam Eustachii Ode ex oposito campo de Botulesdale ad nocumentum vicinorum Ideo in misericordia Et preceptum est emendare*
- xxj d. *Item quod Walterus le Baxstere (vj d.), Ricardus le Baxstere (vj d.), Alicia Raven (iiij d.), Alicia Skynner (vj d.), pistores fregerunt assissam Ideo in misericordia*
- xxj d. *Item quod Alicia Hedemayden (iiij d.), Margareta le Mayden (iiij d.), Johannes Troghe (iiij d.), Johanna Tailor (iiij d.), Annicia Tiller (iiij d.), Margeria Salvetail (iiij d.), Margareta Walays, regratores emerunt panem et vendiderunt contra assissam Ideo in misericordia*
- vij s. ij d. *Item quod Alicia Raven (iiij d.), Alicia Skynner (xij d.), Katerina Goche (iiij d.), Margareta Taverner (ij d.), Beatrix Chanderler (vj d.), Agnes de Codham (vj d.), Cristina de Littleberri (vj d.), Agnes Rede (vj d.), Matilda Joop (vj d.), Beatrix le Reve (vj d.), Isabella Balle (vj d.), Emma le Barker (iiij d.), Margareta Fox (iiij d.), Mariota le Warner (vj 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 Traverner (j d.), Beatrix Chandelers (j d.), Agnes de Codham (j d.), Cristina Littleberry (j d.), Agnes Rede (vj d.), Matilda Joop (j d.), Beatrix 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 Camorbrigge (iiij d.), Agnes le Leche (iiij d.), Margareta le Baxstere (iiij d.), Juliana Bretoon (iiij d.), Johanna Godgrene (iiij d.), Matilda Ffairhed (ij d.), Matilda le Smyt (iiij d.), Cristina Cateline (iiij d.), Alicia Sleghe (iiij d.), Cristina Moyse, Margar Salvetail (iiij d.), ganoker' emerunt cervisiam et vendiderunt contra assissam
- iiij d.* Item quod Petrus de Derham fecit inuiste district-ionem super Thomam Gybbes de j parva lignea pretium j d. Ideo in misericordia
- ix d.* Item quod Galfridus Borman, Eustachius le Chandelers, Adam le Reder, tastatores cervisiae non fecerunt offic' in loco Borman, Edmundus Godwene electus est et est juratus
- vj d.* Item quod Henricus Cateline boucher vendidit carnes corruptes in permedione populi Ideo in misericordia plegius Petrus Cateline et Willelmus Tessard
- iiij s.* De Johanne Bessesson' (iiij d.), in decenna Thomae Gibbe, Ricardo Salvetail (iiij d.), Henrico Troughes, (iiij d.), Reginaldo Roper (iiij d.), in decenna Johannis Littlebery, Simone Cuttyng (iiij d.), Dyonisie Cuttyng (iiij d.), Thomas Ffaucener (iiij d.), Rogero Oky (ij d.), Johanne Cuttyng (ij d.), in decenna Ad' le Redere, Gilberto de Eley (iiij d.) in Willelmi le Clerk, Roberto le Turner (iiij d.), in decenna Roberti Irlande, Alanor' le Baxstere (iiij d.), in decenna Roberti Knot pro defalta in misericordia
- Datus est dies amoris pleg' usque ad proximam curiam placinus de articulis curiae
- vj d.* Johannes Oky dat domino de fine ut amoneat extra decenna Ideo plegius Johannes le Smyt
- Affuratores Johannes Crane Summa lxxix s. vj d.
Willelmus Man

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 over-grazing 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.

Bacon 41

1485-1508

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	<i>Johannes Slawe</i>	<i>Henricus Reve</i>
	<i>Johannes Randolf</i>	<i>Robertus Ffleccher</i>
	<i>Thomas Goldfinch</i>	<i>Robertus Crane</i>
	<i>Edmundus Tabour</i>	<i>de Ffenstrete</i>
	<i>Stephanus Debynham</i>	<i>Johannes Mercyon</i>
	<i>Johannes Smyth</i>	<i>Walterus Leche</i>
	<i>Walterus Dayssh</i>	<i>Thomas Anour Smyth</i>
	<i>Peter Dayssh</i>	<i>Robertus Irlande</i>
	<i>Walterus Skynnere</i>	<i>Willelmus Irlande</i>
	<i>Adam Clerk</i>	<i>Willelmus Ffysshore</i>
	<i>Johannes Pope</i>	<i>Johannes Geser</i>

Rex Ffin' xx d. Qui dicunt super sacramentum suum quod dant de certo lete ex antiquo continuo xx d. quos ballivus hundredi de Hartismere habebit

xij d. Capitales plegii presentant quod Johannes Terell miles concelavit cursum aque obstupuatam apud Dedmanescroc' et non emendatum prout habet diem Et preceptum est emendare sub pena xij s. iiij d.

vj d. Et quod Ricardus Coterell fecit ibidem similiter ad nocumentum vicinorum Ideo perceptum est emendare

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

vj d. Item quod Robertus Norton arcavit communiam vocatur Botulesdalefen elargando pightellum suum proprium ibidem in latitudine ij pedes et in longitudine quinque perticatas ponendo ibidem plantas ad nocumentum vicinorum etc. Et preceptum est emendare sub pena dimidiam marcam contra proximam curiam

- vj d. Et quod Willelmus Ffysshery et Willelmus Page furnaverunt panem album et vendiderunt contra assissam Ideo*
- vj d. Et quod Johannes Slawe et Johannes Smyth furnaverunt panem equinum et vendiderunt contra assissam Ideo*
- xij d. Et quod Katerina Vale, Margareta Smyth, Alicia Ffysshery, Caterin Pope et Cristina Bande bracia-verunt cervisiam et vendiderunt contra assissam*
- j d. Et quod Alicia Hose gannoker cervisiae et vendidit contra assissam Ideo in misericordia*
- j d. Item quod Isabella Candeler fecit similiter Ideo*
- iiij d. Et Agnes Saxteyn traxit sanguinem de Johanne uxore Augustini Cartere mordendo eam cum dentibus suis Ideo*
- iiij d. Et quod Robertus Holberughe obstupavit communem cursum aque apud Barkersbregge ad nocumentum vicinorum Ideo in misericordia et preceptum est emendare sub pena xij d.*
- iiij d. Et quod Ricardus Coterell de Burgate communicavit in communia et campo de Redgrave apud Menhaughe et Bakerysfeld cum vaccis et equis ubi communicare non debet Ideo*
- iiij d. Et quod Robertus Bethys fecit ibidem similiter cum bidentibus suis Ideo in misericordia*
- iiij d. Et quod Jacobus Shepherde fecit ibidem similiter cum bidentibus suis ubi communicare non debet*
- iiij d. Et quod Henricus Edrych de Ffenyngham fecit similiter apud Mekilwodgrene cum bidentibus suis ubi communicare non debet*
- iiij d. Et quod Andreus Brane de Wortham fecit similiter in campis de Redgrave apud Lytelfrych cum vaccis suis ubi communicare non debet*
- Electionem Item elegerunt Robertum Hose et Johannem Crane ad faciendum officia tastatoris cervisiae pro anno proximo futuro etc. Et jurati sunt*

PART III: *Aspects of Tudor and Stuart
English Economy and Society*

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 Hindercley 1556-1557 and Walsham le Willows 1572-1573 are typical of those engrossed in the Bacon Collection rolls. Hindercley'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.

Bacon 704	1555-1556
Bacon 721	1573-1574

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.

Exitus Officii Cancellariae cum proficuis Officii facultatis	A Et de cm cxlviij libris xj s. viij d. de exitu et proficuis hoc anno crescente pro executio domini Cancellariae de Thoma Cotton hanaperii receptatis videlicet in certitudine Cccclix libris xv s. et in casualitate ciiij vij li xvj s. viij d. debitis pro uno anno integro finito in ffestum Michaelis infra tempus huius computi Et de lxj li v s. receptatis de Willelmo Cooke armiger' clerico officii ffacultatis de exitu eiusdem officii hoc anno debitis Et de xvj li receptata pro denariis allocantur pro cora in officio predicto expeditato hoc anno
	Summa c ml cccxxiiij li xvj s. viij d.
Receptae fforinsece	B Et de cx li per dictum Georgium Noon hoc anno receptatis de Magistro Garnissh pro solutione cuiusdem debiti ad visum domini ex recognitione super hunc computum Et de ccli per dictum Georgium hoc anno receptatis de Edwardi Tasborough Generes pro parte perquisitionis terre vocatur Manningeslandes in Ilketshall Sancti Andree ex recognitione dicti Receptata super hunc computum Et de ccli per dicti Henrici Clerke receptatis pro exhibitione Edwardi Tyrell debita ad ffestum Annunciationem infra tempus huius computi videlicet pro prima mete

Summa cxx 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.

A	<i>Rente & farme with pfyght of woodesales receaved yn Suff' and Essex the xiiij day of October A^o Dm 1572 A^o xiiij ... Elizabeth dei rja regina due for one part at the feast of Saynt Mychaell the Archangell last past before the date hereof for one haulfe yere: A^o Dm 1572</i>
<i>Whersted</i>	<i>Receaved of John Maully for one haulfe yeres rent and fearm due at the seyd feast of Saynt Mychaell the Archangell for one part</i> xxx s. x d.
<i>Reydon Myll</i>	<i>Rec' then also of John Holmes for one haulfe yere farm of the myll then also due for one part</i> xx s.
<i>Reydon Manor</i>	<i>Rec then also of Robt Blossse farmer there for one haulfe yeres rent & farm due at they seyd feaste of Saynt Mychaell the Archangell for one pt.</i> vj f xviij d.
<i>Woodesales at Reydon</i>	<i>Rec than also of the seyd Robt for wood sould be by hym there thys yere for one parte</i> vij f ij s. viij d. ob.
<i>Morvys yn Waldyngferde</i>	<i>Rec then also of Wylllyam Syday gen't farmour these for one haulfe yeres rent and farm due at the seyd feaste for one parte</i> xlviij s. vj d.
<i>Fryars land yn Waldyngferde</i>	<i>Rec then also of Wylllyam Shitt farmour there for one haulfe yeres rent and farm of the late Fryars lande yn Waldyngsferde due to the seyd feaste for one parte</i> xviij s. viij d. ob.

Bacon 950

1562-1589

59 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 Hawstead, 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	<i>Austen Curties receyver of all my land in Suff. and Norff.</i> <i>Efrances Boleis steward of my court.</i> <i>Thomas Boldingham gent' of my rank.</i>
Redgrave	{	<i>James Vale keper of my house--there</i> <i>John Lynne baylif there</i> <i>George Dedham woodward there</i> <i>Robert Andrewes warner there</i> <i>Robert Hose baker</i> <i>Robert Brame horskeper</i> <i>Beles Brewer and Clavysteman</i>
Rykinghall	{	<i>Thomas Seman bayliff there</i> <i>Robert Bark woodward there</i>
Hindercley	{	<i>Edmund Denney bayliff</i> <i>Robert Howlet woodward there</i>
Walsham	{	<i>Rampley woodward there</i> <i>Harryson bayliff there</i>
Wiverston		<i>Bale bayliff there</i>
Ashefylvd		<i>John Southwelle gent' bayliff there</i>
Melles		<i>Priston baylif there</i>
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 Hindercley 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 paie all their rents in forme followinge that is to paie the first half yere due at our Ladye shal be paide to the lord's bailiff at the furthest on St. Markes daie then next followinge in the parishe church of Hinder-*

*cley And the last half yere rent due at Michelmas shal
be likewyse paide the lordes bailiff on St. Lukes daie
the Evangelist at the furthest And that everye man
who make defalt shall forfait to the lordes for defalt
of paiement contarye to this ordinance the some of
xij d. provided always that this ordinance shall not
extende to the paiement of rent corne.*

Bacon 140

1558-1544

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 Sheepleave'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

1601-1602

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 duetie to yor good worshipp and my good
Ladye always remembred. I am herby so bowld as to
Remember you of yor worshipfull favor in the behalf
of this bearer Robt Payn my sone in Lawe of whose
Duetyfull servyce and good behavior both to yorsel
and my said good Ladye I make no dowbt of but that*

he well Imploye himself withall good will and
 dylygance as apperteyneth And Sr Nicholas you were
 so busye at Styffkye when I brought thether my
 bookes of Rentalles towching the Rentes and dueties
 of hir Maties manor of Wighten issuying out of yor
 manor of Egmere as that you could haue no good
 Conuenient tyme to peruse the said Rentalles
 Wherefore I haue thought good herbye to certyfye you
 of the seur all parcelles of the same viz Pro daubs
 sectis et intracone earundem ii s. iiii d. Egmer pro
 Letefee ibm ii s. ix d. ob pro Di sect et intracone
 eiusdem pro terr Mr. Gigges vij d. Et pro Redd voc
 wardpound iii d. Sma per An. v s. xj d. ob. And
 ther be now this late mychelmas three yeres behynd
 vnpaid which cometh to the Some of xxvij s. x d. ob
 And syns that I am nowe levyng of myn vnprofitable
 offyce had of this hir Mates Collicture And agayn
 yor worshipp 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 paied the Arrerages aforsaid For as I tak yt
 yt is tyme syns that nowe also therewithall I gyve
 over this my Elvysh offyce which I hope in god shall
 never happ agayne to me for any Tenure of myn duryng
 my lef tyme And so I praying to the almightie for the
 Inceas of yor good worshipp I tak my leave for this
 tyme at Wighton this xxviijth of October 1599

Yor Worshippes always to comaund
 Ia Tauerner esq

Bacon 4166

1599

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 Worshipfull, Wheras we doe vnderstand, that yt hath pleased you to make choise of Mr. Andrews to be our minister, and to that purpose haue appoynted that he shall preach at or towne of Wyverston wherby we should haue triall of his giftes May yt please yu therfore to vnderstand that he hath forenoone and after noone this Saboothe day bestowed such profitable paynes amonge vs, as we haue great cause to thinke well of him and for or partes our humble desyre vnto yr worsh: is, that yu will contineu yr good liking towardes this man, not doubting both in regard of his teachinge as also of his godly lif and honest conversacon, that we shall haue amonge vs, and we shall acknowledge our selves to be bound to pray still for yr worsh: health and prservacon, as for many other fauors, towardes vs so especialy for this in shewing yr selfe a most carfull & provident Patron for vs; In witnesse of our approbacion of him*

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 Godryche
Willm X Margend his mark
The mark of X Wm Seliman
The mark of Willm X Powntys
The marke of X Robt Folsar
The marke of X Ivo Bone
John Stokes
Henry Weste
Thomas X Hawes his mrke
The marke of X John Posford
The marke of X Henry Moilker
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 sacrementum tenentum dicti manerii et examinationem ac debitam scrutationem antiquorum rentalum rotulorum curiae et aliarum evidentiarum dicti manerii quem perambulationem terrarum dicti manerii cum tenentibus eiusdem prout inferii particuli 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

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 Strangman, Gregory Ffyssher, Andrew Ffleckke, Robert Herte, John Berry, Richard Bettes and Robert Dedenham shall keepe noe more but eighte great beastes uppon the common of Redgrave uppon the payne heretofore in this courte sett downe. And that Richard Heynoone, John Gardynner, John Shepparde, John Knyghte, John Sane, Edmond Bettes, Valentyne Harte, Richard Skete, John Harnewell, Lancelot Jasper, William Barfoote and Thomas Cooke shall keepe every one of them but sixe great beastes upon the common. And that Edmond Johnson, William Martyn, Johanna Morsse widowe, John Ffyssher, Wedowe Bugge and every of them shall keepe upon the common but fyve greate beastes and none more. And all neue tennanntes but twoe greate beastes and noe more uppon the paynes heretofore in this courte lyng*

Bacon 55	1603-1612
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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 *Jurors*

Robert Debenham
John Corbold
Edwardus Saunder
Thomas Ffyssher
Robertus Sewe
Edmond Stegell
Robertus Sloe

William Debenham
Robert Crane
Johannes Cryspe
Johannes Purdy
Johannes Ffyssher senior
William Wyte
William Hoberd

*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 grantyng oute of his demeane landes in the ffelde of Redgrave by cople of courte Rolls was accustomed to kepe ccc shepe which were fedd always ffower dayes in the weke in the ffeldes and comen pasture of Redgrave Except that the said shepe were yerely accustomed to be kept owte of Southffen and Westherne ffrom the ffest of the Puryficacon of our lady untyll the ffest of All Seyntes And that the Tenantes of the said Manor had then certen shepe goyng in the said fflock they payeng to the Lord yerely for every shepe ij d.

Item the said homage do also present that aboughte xxvi yeris 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 ynhabytantes of Redgrave aforesaid have of late yeris yncloused parte of their londes as well ffre as that they hold by cople of courte Rolle 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 akers with the names
of the said person hereafter ffolowth

ffirst Thomas Bugges hath ynclosed owte of the said
ffelde iiij akers and ij Roodes of copyholde and
hath styll in the said ffeld onclosed iiij akers
and iiij Roodes

Item Robert Dewe hath ynclosed ij akers and unius
Rood of cople and ij akers of ffre lond

Item Edmond Steyell hath ynclosed vij akers of
Cople and hath styll xiiij akers enclosed

Item Margaret Chirche Wydowe hath ynclosed xvj
akers of cople londe and xix akers of cople
enclosed

Item Robert Debenham hath ynclosed xvj akers of copy
and iiij akers of ffre londe and hath styll xix
akers and a Rode enclosed

Item John Creetyng hath ynclosed ij akers dimidiam
of copeland

Item William Debenham hath xvj akers dimidiam
ynclosed of cople and ij akers dimidiam of ffre
and ij akers dimidiam onclosed

Item John Ffyssher hath xviiij akers of copy ynclos-
ed and two akers onclosed

Item William Whighte hath xiiij akers of copy
ynclosed and two Roodes onclosed

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

Item Robert Langham hath ynclosed vj akers in the
same ffelde

Item Thomas Bukkenham hath in the same ffelde
onclosed xxx akers

Item Robert Brawe hath ynclosed ij akers j Rode of
cople and hath ij akers ij Roodes onclosed

Item William Dowe hath j aker of copy ynclosed and
ij roodes onclosed

Item Edward Saunder hath ix akers dimidiam of copy
xij akers of ffre ynclosed and x akers dimidiam
onclosed...

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.

Redgrave
cum
Botulesdale

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

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

Essoniae

Nullus quia prima curia

Ad hanc curium omnes tenentes tam liberorum quam nativorum exacti fuerunt de quibus comparverunt Robertus Kene Generosus, Willelmus Dale clericus, Laurencius Stysted, Willelmus Page, Johannes Ffyssher sen, Thomas Ffyssher, Willelmus Whyte, Johannes Corbold, Walterus Nonne, Robertus Debenham, Robertus Branne, Edwardus Saunder, 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 Dewe, Lodowicus Mershe, Margareta Arburgh, Cecilis Trypp, Johannes Ffyssher, Elienora Dowe, Willelmus Dowe, Robertus Hoberd, Willelmus Hoberd, Johannes Howchyn, Alicia Cowper vidua, Willelmus Debenham, Henricus Byrde, villat' de Redgrave, Ricardus Chamberlyn, Thomas Bugg, Elizabeth Browne, Tenentes terre nuper Johannis Coppyng, Agnes Hoberd vidua, Henricus Kilyng, Willelmus Dowe de Redgrave, Johannes Smyth, Johannes Skott Scilicet atturn' domino ten et posuerunt eum in possessione reddit eum videlicet eorum singuli per solutionem unum denarii secundum consuetudines manerii

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 obituum suum extra curiam sursum reddit in manu domini per manus Thomae Ffyssher nativi tenentis in presencia Edwardi Saunder et Roberti Hoberd similiter tenentum et aliorum de homagio unam parcellam terre modo edificatam continentem in longitudine viginti perticatas terre et quinque pedes...ad opus Margareta uxoris eius modo uxor Roberti Dawe pro termino vite sue et post eum decessum remaneat inde ciudem Thomae Dale filio predicti Ricardi et heredibus suis cui presate Margarete liberata est inde seisina tenendum sibi modo et forma predicta per virgam ad voluntatem domini et per servicia et consuetudines et saluo jure Et dat de ffine Et fecit fidelitatem*
- B *Et quod Walterus Bett obiit post ultimam curiam et anti obituum suum extra curiam sursum reddit in manu domini per manus Roberti Brame nativi tenentis in presencia Johannis Cretyng et Georgii Bett similiter tenentum et aliorum de homagio tres rodas prati jacentes in le towne medewe juxta pratum nuper Willelmi Goldfynche uno capite abbutante super le Swymmyng Dyche versus australum et unum tenementum cum gardino adjacente vocatur Sewall' continentem tres rodas terre de ffeodo alba firma tenendum per servicia j d. ob. quondam Johannis Sikyes ac tres acras 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 decessum remaneat inde Willelmo filio predicti Walteri et Margerie ut heredes eius secundum unam formam et estimationem testificatam et ultius voluntatis predicti Walteris cui presate Margeris liberata est inde seisina tenendum sibi modo forma predicta per virgam ad voluntatem per servicia etc. saluo jure et dat de fine et fecit fidelitatem...*

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 concessa est seisina ut predicta Margeria habeat durante vita sua j cameram infra dictum cotagium cum libero introitu et exitu ad eandem ad haurendam aquam atque spacium ibidem ad plantandam boscum Et concedit ad disonderandam dictam cameram predictus Johannes de omnibus redditibus et necessariis reparationibus in perpetuum decetero quod extunc presens sursum reddit sit firma ad visum dicti Johannis et heredum suorum aliquorum bene liceat 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 Anno regni regis Henrici octavi duodecimo*

Essonia *Margeria Plettyng vidua de communi per Willelmum Wykys, Thomas Dedham de communi per Johannem Hert, Thomas Rugwood de communi per Johannem Ffyssher, Thomas Knot de communi per Johannem Talyur 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 plegius de prosequende Johannes Den Ricardus Roo*

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

Querela

Edmundus Steykell queritur versus Edmundum Sheppard
de placito transgressione plegii de prosequendo
Johannes Dei et Adam Ffen

Bacon 42

1509-1524

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 bequethe to the heyalter of the cherche of Walsham be forseid for tythes forgetyn destroyed or not verly wele payed xij d. and for the same cause to Ser' Walya' Mustarder xx d. Also I bequethe to the mod' of Norwych xij d. also I bequethe to the fryres of the old hous of Thetforthe for a trental for my soule and my frend sowles x s. Also I bequethe to the fryres of the Newehous of the same town for a trentell x s. also I bequethe to the fryres of Babwell for a trentell x s. Also I wish that the tewnchepe of Walsham shall have tymbyrs for a gild halle yf so be that they intende to make the said gild halle huse what with I wole have an abyll preste as far as it wele reche to synge and prey for my soule et my friend soulys in the cherche of Walsham

Bacon 4365

1504

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 message. 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. iiij d. |
| and ij balsteres | |
| Item a matteres | ij s. |

<i>Item iij coverletts of the country makyngs</i>	<i>vj s.</i>	
<i>Item ij pares of blanket</i>	<i>ij s.</i>	
<i>Item X pares of sheets</i>	<i>x s.</i>	
<i>Item ij cosfers</i>	<i>ij s.</i>	
 <i>The yarde</i>		
<i>In primis xiiij sall in loes and lethers cont' by estimat' e calfes skins and iij hydes and iij empty salls</i>	<i>vj li xiiij s.</i>	<i>iiij d.</i>
<i>Item a plough with pte of the shere</i>	<i>ij s.</i>	
<i>Item iiij ducks and viij hennes</i>	<i>ij s.</i>	
<i>Item one bore a sow and a shoke</i>	<i>vj s.</i>	<i>viij d.</i>
<i>Item ij load of wood</i>	<i>ij s.</i>	
 <i>The barne</i>		
<i>In primis ix load of old barkes</i>	<i>xxvj s.</i>	<i>viij d.</i>
 <i>In the pasture and fyllds</i>		
<i>In primis one mylche cowe</i>	<i>xiiij s.</i>	<i>iiij d.</i>
<i>Item iij yerings</i>	<i>xxvj s.</i>	<i>viij d.</i>
<i>Item ij geldyngs</i>	<i>xxiiij s.</i>	<i>iiij d.</i>
<i>Item viij gese</i>	<i>ij s.</i>	
<i>Item iij acres di of barley in the field</i>	<i>xiiij s.</i>	<i>iiij d.</i>

Bacon 1554

1558

GENERAL COURTS, COPYHOLD TENURE AND CUSTOMARY LAW

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.

<i>Essonia</i>	A	<i>Johannes Goche de communi per Georgium Dedham Thomas Wether de eodem per Henricum Peke Alicia Hervey de eodem per eundem Henricum Peke Margareta Tynton de eodem per Johannem Tynton</i>
<i>misericordia ijj d.</i>		<i>Henricus Peke queritur versus Robertum Calve de placito debiti xx s.</i>
<i>misericordia ijj d.</i>		<i>Johannes Ffyssher queritur versus Willelmus Dowe de placito debiti xx s.</i>
<i>misericordia ijj d.</i>		<i>Henricus executor testamenti pro ultime voluntate Johannis Dawe queritur versus eiundem Robertum Dawe</i>

<i>iiij d.</i>	<i>Thomas Spaldyng queritur versus Henricum Peke de placito dote</i>	
<i>Capitales</i>	<i>Georgius Dedham</i>	<i>Ffranciscus Roser</i>
<i>ibidem cum</i>	<i>Henricus Peke</i>	<i>Robertus Cawe</i>
<i>inquisitione</i>	<i>Thomas Ffysssher</i>	<i>Johannes Welles</i>
	<i>Johannes Tynton</i>	<i>Thomas Hobberd carpenter'</i>
	<i>Johannes Dale</i>	<i>Willelmus Dawe</i>
	<i>Jerran Miles</i>	<i>Thomas Andrewe</i>
<i>Alen'</i>	<i>que dicunt super eorum sacramentum quod Thomas Bolton alienavit Georgio Dedham unum tenementum nativum in Botulesdale et quod idem Thomas extra curia sursum reddit in manu domini per manus Thomae Ffysssher nativi tenentis in presencía Johannis Tynton et aliorum de homagio secundum consuetudines manerii tenendum per annum ad usum dicti Georgii et heredibus suis</i>	
<i>Obituus</i>	<i>quod Johannes Lynne senior' post ultimam curiam obiit et ante obituum suum sursum reddit in manu domini per manus Henrici Peke nativi tenentis in presencía Jerram' Miles et Roberti Dawe omniam terram et tenementum nativum ad usum suum ultime voluntate</i>	
	<i>Et quod Willelmus Page gent' Johannes Ffames sunt sectatores curiae et defaultaverunt</i>	
	<i>Ad hunc curiam venit Johannes Lynne filius Johannis Lynne et in plena curia fecit domino fidelitatem pro duabus peciis terre continentis in se ix acras parcella clauso vocatur le Breche Close et pro alia pecia terre continente in se septem acras jacente 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</i>	
<i>Essonía</i>	<i>Ad hunc curiam Jerram Miles essoniatur per Georgium Dedham versus Willelmum Cokys in placito terre</i>	
	<i>Ad hanc curiam venit Johannes Prentise et in plena curia sursum reddit in manu domini quatuor decim perticatas terre native de tenemento Dales cum una domo desuper edificata ac unum aliud messuagium de ffeodo albe firma cum gardino adjacente tenementi Dales predicti situata in Botulesdale tenentum pro serviciis xj d. reddendo per annum et sectam curiae ac etiam dimidiam acram terre native jacentes in Bakersffylld parcellam iiij acrarum et unius rodæ terre prout jacentes inter terram huius manerii in tenure dicti Johannis Tynton extra aquilone et terram huius manerii in tenure dicti Johannis Tynton et Johannis Cawe ex parte australi uno capite abbutante super terram manerii de Wortham hall versus occidentalem et alio capite abbutante super terram huius manerii nuper in tenure Ricardi Cotterell versus orientalem cum pertinenciis ibidem que nuper habuit</i>	

ex sursum redditione dicti 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 seisina tenendum heredibus et assignatis suis per virgam ad voluntatem domini secundum consuetudines manerii per servicia et consuetudines saluo jure etc. dat de ffine inde fecit fidelitatem

Ad hanc curiam venit Robertus Harvey et in plena curia fecit domino fidelitatem pro uno tenemento jacente in Botulesdale tenementum isto manerio libero per servicia reddendo per annum et sectam curiae que nuper perquisivit de Alicie Harvey matre sue

Ad hanc curiam venit Jerram Miles et in plena curia sursum reddit in manu domini dimidiam acram terre herietabilite jacentem juxta Stebbyng apud Mekylwoodgrene inter terram Thomae Goche vocatur Ralener 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 sursum 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 seisina tenendum sibi heredibus et assignatis suis per virgam ad voluntatem domini tenendum consuetudines manerii per servicia et saluo 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 admittances, 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 f 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, cropp 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, cropp and stowe and also to plant in the wayse and common every man against his own ground for and to his own commodities and profett.

Also for the common in Hallowdgrene all our lords tenants doe say that our lord of this mannor is lord of the soyle soo farr as our lands doe go and that the tenants of the said mannor by old and ancient custom time without mind of man have had therein and upon the whole common of Hallowd 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 the same 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 holden and kept within the year. And if there be no court kept within the year Then the same surrender to stand good and sufficient untill the next court to be hold.

These be the customs which have been time out of mind of men for the manor 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 divided 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 calfs 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 pygs 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.

*Communis
ffinis
xj d.* A *Capitales plegii ibidem dicunt super eorum sacremen-
tum quod dant domino regis de communis ffinis prout
ex antiquo annuatim soluit ballivo domini regis
hundredi de Hartysmere*

*Preceptum est Johanni Skett et Johanni Tynton ampu-
tare et succidere spinas et tribulos necnon ramos
arborum suarum transpudent Regale viam ducentis
usque Dedemansoke ex parte utraque eiusdem vie contra
proximam ffestum Natalis Sancti Johannis Baptiste sub
pena eorum utrusque xij d.*

*Electionem
Tastatoris* *Et eligunt Thomam Archer et Thomam Botton ad officium
tastatorum servisiae anno futuro*

*Electionem
Constabulariorum* *Et eligunt Henricum Peke et Franciscum Roser' ad
officios 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 Hinderley appear to be fulfilling these roles.

A *Hinderley 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 Lowdale, 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--iiij d.*

*And that John Dreske hath incroached upon the common
of Hinderley with his fence against the tenement of
Robert Howlett Clerke, wherefore he is amerced iij d.*

And he is enjoined to remove the same before the first day of January next upon payne of --x s.

And that Robert Howlett Clerke hath suffered his footebridge at his close called hawes Close to be in decay and wherefore he is amerced iiij d. And he is enjoined to amend the same sufficiently before the first of January next upon payne of--iiij s. iiij d.

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

And they did elect and choose Richard Ruddock to be constable for this year ensuinge for the towne of Hinderley whoe 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 afore-said 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 (*peioris conversacionis*).

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

my L. It hath been objected against me, that I should seek to get the
mastership of the Horse from my L. of Derby, to whom they pretend yt
was promised long ago when yt fell. Yet I have heard the Kings prohibition
that he was made any such promise, and I know no man living whose integrity
as a man, or as a soldier, and for my own part I am not
heard mention of any such promise given to him, nor the King first
for that place. But by the challenge yt sitt in generall that that place
should be held by one who did continually attend his person made choice of
me & ear upon whom he conveyed the command of yt could not be vnder-
stood as bringing a bar of this promise, and naturalized as well by Affection,
and merit as by law. Since there hath risen another imputa-
tion of my L. of Montaguers should be forced to compound for the posses-
sion for fear of y^e Kings Displeasure, and otherwise he would not be, with
no less vnmist. for at Hampton Court, my L. of Worcester and I spent
some of that business, and by I demand as I thought somewhat
more conditions, I told him, I was not so fond of the place, as to give
unreasonably for yt, but would rather expect you yt fell by it when
I could count my masters cross Dignity enough. Thus was I so far
from extorting his consent as that after. And yt I was negligent in
the business of the business. And all things can yet I the easier believe
because yet I know how careful I have been to preserve the Schi-
lity here rather than to move the peace of any; as in that business of
my L. Montaguers I should see Cobham Hall with y^e L. knows I
relate and relate to you of the possession of y^e proper Office, by
moving the King to make him a Baron because I would not set titles
to sale for my private ends. And as towards y^e nobility so towards all
men may I justify my self, that am the Courtiers whose hands are
not loose bonds, with partly my estate can witness with I sought rather
to prosper by moderate expense than to enrich by unjust y^e it might,
and have been content rather to suffer most by a generall restriction
than to have most by a generall contribution. And to let me prosper in
after times as I have ever in all my wayes according to my Judge-
ment. Come that was right minded to prosper some between the
King and his people, and ever to injure his, and the publique good
and used my power as much as in me lay towards y^e advancement
of worthy men, as of y^e continuance of which I am confident that when
I am yet left to, yt will stand sure betwixt me and any
man, but when I am withdrawn, or men mis-informed. I would desire
y^e L. (because many of these particulars y^e L. knows best) to
ratify them; for with paynes, I shall rest.

Respectfully y^e L. of
Northampton.

Y^r L^y to Command
W: Rochester.

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

Bacon 48

1559-1560

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. Hinderclay, 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 Hinderclay are concerned with land transactions and a few are amercements for default of court.

Bacon 151

1658-1662

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 concedimus eidem Nicholao Bacon omnia illa dominica*

*et maneria nostra de Redgrave Boddisdale et
Gislingham in Comitatu nostro Suffoci cum omnibus
et singulis eorumdem mribus membris et pertinenciis
numeris nuper Monasterio de Bury Sancti Edmundi in
eodem Comitatu nostri Suffoci modo dissolut' dudm
speciatur et pertinentur ac parcell'...*

Bacon 2440

1545

84 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.

Bacon 4371

1578

Bacon 888

1579

85 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.

Bacon 4383

1561

86 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 f 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

1571

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 f 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

1627-1628

Bacon 890

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

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 Hamond of Norwich, England, lists the property Alice inherited from her father, Benedict Barnham, a member of Parliament for Yarmouth.

Miscellaneous Manuscripts
Bacon 982-A

1621
1619

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

1595

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 wherebye you shewe 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 imposed therefore wee will submitt our selves to their LLs order and will answeere you information if you will informe agaynst us; And these shall bee 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 prevye Counsell as you wright but graunted unto at the request of Sr Arthure Hevingham neyther was that coost like to this nowe in question as yor wors knowe. And thuse cravinge to knowe wheether you mynde to certefye their LLs or not, and your favorable conscription of our Letters wee leave you to godds keepinge this xviij th of ffebruarye*

Ann dm 1599

By your wor ffrendes

Bacon 4540-A-C

1598-1600

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

c. 1591

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

1545-1554

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.

96 Sir Edmund Bacon and Redgrave Hall

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.

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.

Armes in the Armory with Pikes in the Hall	xl li
In the Parke Chamber	
Item one bedd with the beding thereto belonging	iiij li
In Harry Cookes Chamber	
Item one bedd and beding thereto belonging	iiij li
In Giles his Chamber	
Item one bedd and beding thereto belonging	iiij li xv s.
In the Coachmans Chamber	
Item one bedd and beding	iiij li
In the Groomes Chamber	
Item one bedd and beding	iiij li x s.
In the Bayliffs Chamber	
Item one bedd and beding	iiij li x s.
In the Kitchen Yard Chamber	
Item one bedd and beding thereto belonging	iiij li
In the Brewers Chamber	
Item one bedd and beding	iiij li
In the Brewers Chamber	
Item one bedd and beding	iiij li x s.
In the Butlers Chamber	
Item one bedd and beding	iiij li xv s.
In the Catours Chamber	
Item one Bedd and Beding	iiij li
In the Chamberlin's Chamber	
Item one bedd and beding	vj li
In Stegalls Chamber	
Item one bedd and beding	iiij li
In the Husbandmans Chamber	
Item two bedds and beding	v li
Item his wearing apparrell	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 Lynnen	CC li
Item Corne in the Granery	lxxx li
Item twenty and three coves	xCij li
Item three heifers	ix li
Item Fifty Steeres	Clxxv li
Item Three yearelyngs	vj li
Item Three Steeres at stake	xviij li
Item Twenty and one horses	Cx li
Item Seaven and Twenty old Sheepe	v li x s.
Item Eleaven Lambes	xl s.
Item Six Shotts	xxxviij s. iiij d.
Item Two Soves	xxvj s. viij d.
Item One Steere and Foure drye Coves	xviij li
Item two Coaches and furniture	xx li
Item two Cartes, ploughes harrowes and other vtensills of husbandry	xx li
In the Still Howse	
Item In a Chamber there one Table and Stooles and certayne Pictures	viij li

Item one great Limbecke diverse furnesses	
and certayne glasses	xv li
Item one Marble Table and Marble Bowle	x li
In the Forge Howse	
Item one Stith and bellows and other	
Lumber about the howse	xij li
Suma Totalis	vM viij C xCvj li

Bacon 897

1649

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 ijventory of such implements and householdscuse 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
 fower other tables standinge upon turned posts
 fixed in ye ground
 Item fower formes fixed in ye grounde
 Item one ould stoole at one of ye bordes ende
 Item two liverie cubbcides
 Item a haukes pearkt
 Item 3 skreenes
 Item there is some 30 quarells of glasse broken
 Item a locke and key latch and snatch

In Ye greene parler

In Ye chimney peece seeled

Item two windowes seeled belowe
 Item one portall with latch and snatch
 Item one side of ye chimney newe sealed 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 windowes glazed one doore a locke a key
 and boult

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 candell house

Item one dore 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 gloset
 Item one dore with a boulte
 Item a window glasce
 In Ye clocke chamber
 Item one clocke with two great waites and a bell
 Item one bell lent Sir Nathaniel Bacon
 In Binthame his chamber
 Item one borded bedstede without a bottome
 Item one windowe wantinge a paine of glasce
 Item one locke and key
 In my ladies chamber
 In Ye chamber seeled
 Item two subbcides and 3 drawers under Ye south
 windowe with 2 lockes
 Item one locke and key in the drawer
 Item two windowes glased wanting 4 quarells
 In my ladies closet
 Item one windowe glased
 Item on locke and key
 In Ye wardrape
 Item one dore with locke and key

Anne Bacon

Bacon 1472

1608

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.

C *An Inventorie of all householdscuse 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 redd, one blew, another redd,ould one, one other with and another greene, 9 paires of blanketts and one odd one

Hanginges
 Carpetts
 Chaires

Item 16 peeces of quilt hanging, 4 red lether carpetts, 10 Darmike curtains, 21 peeces of tapestrye hanginges, 3 blew carpetts, 9 cushions, 3 great haire collored clothchaires, 2 redd cloth chairs layed with Gould lace, 6 black and greene chaires, one great redd leather chaire, 4 little redd leather chaires, one little blacke gilded chaire

<i>Stooles</i>	<i>9 redd lether stooles, 2 bussett stooles, 25 picters,</i>
<i>Picters</i>	<i>3 mappes, one long stoole with canvis cover, 10 case-</i> <i>ments of glasse, one round box and two fives, one</i> <i>nyoll, one lute, one pistoll, one covering basket</i>
<i>Bellows</i>	<i>one frame for a skreene, 2 guilt voyders with a knife,</i>
<i>Spitte</i>	<i>one rounding block, 3 farthing gayles, 6 payres of</i> <i>tonges, 6 paires of cobirons with 4 payre of brasing</i> <i>toppes, 2 fyre paines, 2 barres of iron, one warming</i> <i>pann, one chasing dish, one pestle and morter, one</i> <i>skymmer, one basting ladle, one slyce, 2 grates, 2</i> <i>spitte, 13 curtaine rodde</i>
<i>Candlestick</i>	<i>8 pewter candlestickes, 2 wooden candlestickes, one</i> <i>fyre forke, two clivers, one goslet of prooffe, other</i> <i>head peece, one flesh forke, --puter dishes, one</i> <i>voyder, one plate, 2 pewter basons, one hayre carbo-</i> <i>nett, 12 guilt knoppes for bedd, 8 screwes for the</i> <i>redbed, 2 heigh close stooles with one paire. One</i> <i>little yellow close stooles with a paire, one box of</i> <i>wytinge, one wicker skreene, one blacker velvet saddle</i> <i>embroidered with furniture to it, one Tanony ript</i> <i>velvett</i>
<i>Saddles</i>	<i>Saddle with silver lace, one blacke velvett pade with</i> <i>sylver goulde lace with cover to them, One payre of</i> <i>sniffers, One black velvett cover embroidered, One</i> <i>black foote clothe, one payre of reynes of blacke</i> <i>ernell, one payre of reyne, one rapyr, one great</i> <i>standard with linen 5 payres of bellows, 4 sorkette,</i> <i>one lanthorne belonging to the stable, one dripping</i> <i>pann one hatcase one bandcase, one thing which is</i> <i>used to runne the ringe with one hammer, 2 kettles,</i> <i>2 skellets, 6 pales, 2 rackes, one payre of drawing</i> <i>irons, 2 trammells to hange kettles on, one great</i> <i>stulne, one griggiron, one saltboye, one frying pann,</i> <i>one great iron pot with pothook and potlead, three</i> <i>handbaskets, one coleskepp, one gallypot, 2 pypkins,</i> <i>one wooden cann, one ladle, one salt, one handsawe,</i> <i>one long iron peelee, one trenell, one cloth flaskett,</i> <i>one cup dish, one start pane, one flower pot, one</i> <i>case for knives, one fork with a waight, pully and</i> <i>lynnes, 2 trayes, one hattblocke, one oven lead, one</i> <i>pecke and the half pecke, 2 oyle potts, 2 sives,</i> <i>one cutting knive for the garden, 2 payres of</i> <i>briches bullen of blue velvet layd with gould lace,</i> <i>one blew clerke garded, 2 jerkis leather layd with</i> <i>gould lace...</i>

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.

<i>Bought of William Nicholas the 5th of February 1628</i>	
<i>iiij great salt sammons</i>	<i>01 08 00</i>
<i>The Kitt</i>	<i>00 02 00</i>
<i>iiij salt sammons</i>	<i>01 00 00</i>
<i>The kitt</i>	<i>00 02 00</i>
<i>iiij lb. of caviar and the pots</i>	<i>00 03 06</i>
<i>08 great salt sammons</i>	<i>03 10 00</i>
<i>The kitts</i>	<i>00 04 08</i>
<i>iiij lb. of Genoa anchovies</i>	<i>00 07 04</i>
	<i>06 17 06</i>
<i>Rec' in full paiement 06 17 06</i>	
<i>This 24th of February</i>	

Bacon 3138

1628

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

1785

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

1624

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 meadow	xx s.
	laide 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 clsse	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 f 30 ll s. 7 d. reflects upon the large amounts of money spent on these items and the details of particular tasks undertaken by dressmakers.

per Jn Hill	A	The right woorthippfull Sr Nicholas Bacon Knight	
		Dew to William Stone the 27th Aprill 1594	
		Item iiij yardes di and d qrter whit	
		satten	x li viij s. j d.
		Item ij yardis qrter of ash colour velvet	xlv s.
		Item a nell di rosie taff' sarsnet	xij s.
		Item a qrter of nell rosie taffitie	iiij s.
5. 10. 7		Item iiij yardis di rosie Jene fustian	iiij s. vj d.
29th May 1594	per		
Mr. Medlicout		Item a nell di black rich taffitie	xxv s. 6 d.
for a doblet			
to line it		Item a nell di taffitie sarsnet	sij s.
to face it		Item a qrter of a nell black rich	
		tafitie	iiij s. iiij d.
for pannes		Item di a yard blu cloth race	viiij s.
to line hose and			
make camions		Item iiij yardis black satten	xl s.
to line dob.			
& hose		Item vj yardis di rosie Jene ters	xj s. vj d.
to line camions		Item iiij qrters of black taffit sarsnet	vj s. ix d.
to set at Knew			
5.5.0		Item di a qrter black rich taffit	ij s.
f	s.	d.	
10	15	7	suma x li xv s. viij 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 *Gabriell I pray you fayle not to wryte a worde or to send this letter to my wyfe to daye to Culfored, that I forgott to tell her that I wold aduissime her to vse by any meanes a dyett for her spleane which I haue used euer sinse I came vp, and haue fownd much good of it which is to haue a peese of a racke of veale, boyled with capers and currans, which is very good Lykewyse for ye lyuer, and tell she be very weary of that dyet to eate nothing else at her meales, as lykewyse wher she will eate capers for a sallett, to haue them boyled a little with currans to take away ye rawnes. I wold allsoe wishe her to wryte to Doctor butler, for ye reseayte of the brothe which he prescribed to my Lord Denny, which he comendeth for ye soueraynst things for ye spleane, yt euer he tooke; Allsoe I wold haue you to send Burd presently, to looke upon all my mares, which wer coouered the laste yeere, that you may wryte me nowe word so neere as he cane gesse which are with foales. Remember yt which I writt to you ye laste weeke, conserninge hawkes 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 systre that she spend the day well & vertuously les elz whylst she seekez hure healthe she myght marre hure manerz For the amendment of healthe good dyet & conveyent exercyce ys that that must help Me thynkes yf she did bestowe euery day sume tyme to lerning to wryght amonges othere thynges yt were well doone*

*The poomp maker shall haue hys chargez alowyd
when so euer he cumes but the sooner he cumes the
better yf he shuld be bownd to performe the woork
yt wold be vnderstond whethere he be of sooche sub-
stunce As A man may trust to hys bond & what you can
lern hery sygnyfye by your next letter when he cumes
vpp for because the depthe ys xxviijty fetdone I
fere he shall hardly be Able to doo yt well*

*There remeynez in my study A booke in the
saxone language wretton in parchement conteynnyng the
bookez of Moysez thys booke I wold haue saffly sent
vpp by the next messenger with grete charge that yt
be well lookyd vnto yt lyythe lowe Amongst my wretton
bookez comend me to your mothere & to your wyff
wryton the xj 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 endyed 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 patentees 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 Fremnolls, But I well hoped I should haue receiued withall some expressions from yow and Sr Thomas Woodhouse in answer to my severall requests made formerly vnto yow, for to giue 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 bowldlie and trulie say am noe delinquent either in word or action, and haue paid all payments whatsoever as it is well known,) But it seemes the present necessitie was the cause and I hope I shall obtaine some order from the Comittie for sattisfaccion for them, But my request vnto yow and Sr Thomas Woodhouse once more is, that yow 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 Worshipfull maye it pleas you to vnderstand I rec from you fyften poundes the which I hav payd to Mrs. Ryppyn according to yor direxcion and I have sent to you herin in Closed the agrement my vncke made with hur, with hur recytt in full dich Charge for the mony. It pleaseth god to Continev his*

*visitasion vpon vs every daye more and more: I hav
sent you a Iust note and trew bref of them that dyed
this least wek with in the lybertynes of the Cyty and
in the Cyty: and I doe very belev thear dyed as many
hath out the lybertis. I praye god to be mercyfull
to vs the Riche men all for the most part are fled
the Cyty*

*Thus being very bould in trubling yor worship
I comitt you to the Lord Londn this iith of Iuly
Yor Worshipes in all duty
to Command Willem Fellgate*

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 *quietus 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 reversed 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 acte for the discovering & repressing of
recusants & the education of their children in true
religyon*
- B *An acte to prevent daungers that mate grow by popishe
popishe recusants If any reveale a priests 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 lx li certein If anie bringe in anie
papiste bookes to sell or deliver them shall for-
fett 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 comon lawe as counselle
or attorney for civill lawe as advocate or proctor
not anie such shall preactise phisicks or be an
apothecari that is a recusant uppon paine of*

*forfeiture of e li and noen having a wiffe that is
a recusant shall beare anie publique office. viz...*

Bacon 4546-4548

1606

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 witchecrafte 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 vnto me, for A pardon to be obteyned for one Morris, who was at the last Assises condemned for invocacion of Spirites as it semeth by his wrighting by somewhat to straight A proceading in Lawe, And besides he wrighteth that the prisoner is become A very repentant and sorowfull man for his Offence Nevertheless I have forborne and meane to forbear to proceade in it, untill I heare agayne from you, whether the Contry thinketh the man worthie death or no, And yf you had bene at the Assises as you shoulde have bene, If you had done well, You might have enformed me of this of your owne knowledg. But nowe in default thereof you are to speake with Mr Pooley who is best acquainted in this matter or with Mr Ashefeild yf he were at the Asises, or els with them both. And ther-vppon to advertise me immediately Because this matter canne Aske no long tyme. I mervayle it is so long sine 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 leatting of Studdie Comend me to your wief and her Mother God blesse the Children and so fare you well From my howse besides Charing Crosse this xviijth 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, ainsy participent elles de son infinité. Tellement, qu'estant esloigné de uostre presence, je sens encore vos influences, et trouue en tous lieux des belles impressions de uostre bonte. Je les ay trouue, Madame, en l'accueil, et autres faucuns, dont sont Alteze et Mademoiselle d'Aurange vos tresdignes soeurs ont esté contentes, par uostre Mediation, honorer leur pauvre servante el la vostre. Je les ay trouué dans vos lettres lesquelles iay eu l'honneur auoir de la maine de mademoiselle vostre soeur; Ainsy que par tout je trouue des representations et images do vostre bonté et presence. Mais, quand rien de cela ne m'eust arriué, ma memoire m'en fourniroit abondamment. Car encore que je [ne] suis pas capable de'estre imitatrice de uos vertus sy suis je neantmoins de les admirer, et de conserver vne perpetuelle memoire de leur fruicts et effect par de uers moj, par lesquels vous aues obligé a vne servitude eternelle

*vostre tres humble et
tres obeissante servante*

*Madame, Je vous remercie tres humblement de m'avoir
faict l'honneur de me communiquer les bonnes
nouvelles de l'auenement de Monseigneur de Bouillon,
et de la santé de vos enfans; car je participeray
tousiours de vos affections, et auray ma part en
tout ce que vous est a coeur ou a regret.*

Bacon 4202

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."

Bacon 4203

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 f 5 for the same period at Redgrave.

Bacon 3664-3665

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 f 200 for the construction of a chapel. Shown here are two receipts; one for f 5 received for the maintenance of six scholars for one quarter in 1580, and another for f 10 given to the master and fellows of Corpus Christi in 1591 by Sir Nicholas Bacon (the younger).

Bacon 3694

1580

Bacon 3698

1591

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.

Walsham Towne Le Game place	A <i>The sayd game place in the tenure of diuers men to the vse and behofe of the towne 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 growynge about the same banke, in the myddest a fayre round place of earth whythe a stone wall about the same to the height of the earth made of purpose for the vse of Stage playes doth Lie betwene the ortyard of the Last sayd tenement on the north [Margery's one-and-one-half-acre tenement] and the tenemente and ground in the tenure of John vincent called barnes on the south thone hedd thereof abbutteth vppon the hall grene towards the east the other on the sayd ground called barnes in parte and the customary close to cycelye margerye in parte on the west parte and conteynethe--di. acre x perches.</i>
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Bacon 969

1577

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