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THE OLD POOR LAW IN EAST KENT, 1606-1834:

A SOCIAL AND DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS.

A. E. NEWMAN, M.A.

Thesis presented for the degree of Ph.D. to the University
of Kent at Canterbury (Faculty of Social Science) 1979.

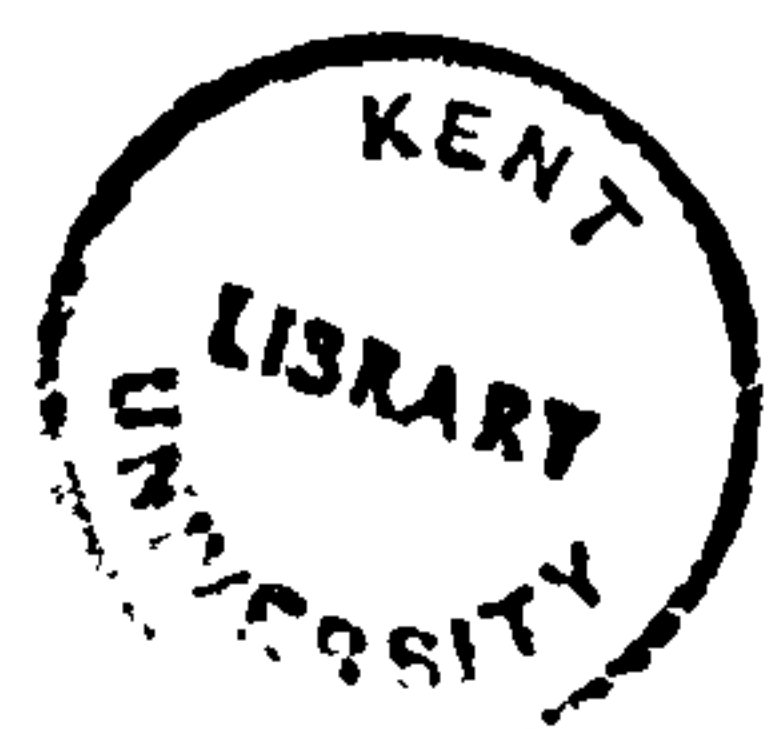
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A B S T R A C T

Within East Kent, the development of the old poor law from 1601 to 1834 has been examined in a number of parishes of differing characteristics. The amount of the rates raised for the relief of the poor has been taken as the indicator of the size of the problem; both in absolute and real terms increases during the eighteenth century draw attention to difficulties existing at least a generation before the Speenhamland meeting in 1795. Administrative strategies by which parishes sought to meet their responsibilities at minimum cost have a similar chronology. Many experimented with a workhouse with varying degrees of success - the importance of the workhouse test in the early eighteenth century should be emphasised. The laws of settlement and removal, another aspect of the administration, have been found to have had rather more significance than is usually accorded them.

The relationship between social structure and the development of the old poor law is important. Three lines of enquiry have been followed: into the distribution of wealth, demographic experience, and occupational and family structure. Critical changes occurred in the distribution of land in the area. These have been traced through rating assessments, but this source needs careful evaluation. An aggregative analysis of parish registers shows considerable natural increase, but also outward migration from rural parishes. Changes in mortality had much to do with changes in family size, and the apparent occupational and family structure influenced the attitudes of poor law officials. In the nineteenth century a point of equilibrium was passed, so that the old poor law became subject to abuse. There was, however, an interplay between economic structure and the relief system, while agricultural depression exacerbated the problem.



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A B S T R A C T

This study seeks methodologically to set an examination of the development of the old poor law in East Kent from 1601 to 1834 in the context of both social structure and demographic experience, without which, it is argued, it cannot properly be understood. A long time perspective is most important in delineating each of these aspects of society.

Through the analysis of poor law costs over the long time span from the 17th to the 19th century, emphasis is directed away from Speenhamland and the Napoleonic War period, and instead is placed on a slowly creeping increase in costs throughout the 18th century. The chronology of parishes' administrative stratagems supports this emphasis. At the same time a long perspective shows changes of particular importance in the social structure of the area. After 1700 there was a fall in the number of small farmers, while the number of labourers with access to the land also decreased substantially. Simultaneously the proportion of the population categorised as poor increased more than commensurately. Finally attention is also drawn to the contrast between previous centuries and the 18th century in respect to demographic experience, which in East Kent reveals falling levels of mortality as the major thrust behind population growth. The increasing numerical preponderance of labourers consequent on these social changes and on the restrictions of the settlement laws was a powerful influence on contemporary opinion. In the 19th century, partly due to agricultural depression, a point of equilibrium was passed which made the long-ingrained methods of the old poor law subject to abuse.

These developments are traced in a number of parishes of differing characteristics in the East Kent region. The sources used are carefully evaluated. The testimony of a 19th century local vicar adds much graphic comment to the more usual administrative records.



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CHAPTER ONE

THE OLD POOR LAW: A CONTINUING CHALLENGE TO INTERPRETATION

The last years of the old poor law and the first years of the new have been the focus of a considerable amount of research.¹ This is partly perhaps because of the quantity and wide dispersal of the original source material but more because of the fundamental questions about society which poor law policy raises. "The 'laws relating to the Poor', as they used to be called, relate to more than the relief of destitution. They constitute, in fact a history of the relations between what Disraeli termed 'The two nations' over which the kings and queens of England ruled, namely 'the rich and the poor'; or, at least, a record of the collective and public relations between them."² It may be argued that poor law policies and administration before 1834 were as many and various as the characters of parish administrators, so that each case study adds a little more to a national synthesis. Indeed, the multiplicity of studies reflects the continuing challenge to interpretation which the old poor law poses. Beneath the variety, however, there is a search for the basic social determinants acting on all the 15,000 and more parishes in England.³ The interest in the old poor law can be stated even more widely: the editors of the Poor Law Report of 1834 comment that the debate is "fundamental because it involved taking up positions on social discipline " They go on to suggest that the Report "throws out a dual challenge to understand the situation out of which it arose and, by contrast, to try and make explicit the assumptions that lie behind our own views on the poor to-day."⁴ Hence the Institute of Economic Affairs initiated The Long Debate on Poverty.⁵

1. See Bibliography for some of the works directly on the poor law. A considerable amount of published material has been listed in Oxley (1974) 141-152.
2. Webb S. & B. (1927) vi.
3. Checkland S.G. & E.O.A. (1974) 13. From the 1640's they point to "an extraordinary diversity in the 15,535 parishes of England."
4. Ibid 9-10.
5. I.E.A. (1972).

The early years of the 19th century, divided ostensibly into two contrasting periods of administrative practice by the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834, provide an opportunity to examine past social conditions, and evaluate the relative importance of factors such as social policies themselves compared with changes in industrial and economic organisation, population growth, social structure, and wage structures. Data is available nationally from the census and numerous parliamentary enquiries. Yet a thoroughly satisfactory analysis of the old poor law has remained elusive. "The topic is, therefore, one of primary importance in English Social History. It is also one which has been subject to widely differing emphases in interpretation, and which, as regards general agreement, has found no consensus even at the present time."¹

The salient feature of the old poor law requiring interpretation is simply the large increase in its cost in the 19th century. Summarised briefly, national expenditure quadrupled between 1775 and 1816, and thereafter fluctuated about the post-Napoleonic War level. Contemporaries noted that the amount when expressed in grain and related to the population, still showed in real terms a doubling of expenditure.²

	£ million	Expressed in wheat (Quarters) at current prices	Quarters per head
1775-6	1.5	680	0.09
1783-5	2.0	862	0.11
1801-3	4.1	1500	0.17
1814-16	5.8	1700	0.15

Parliament had first shown concern over poor relief as early as the 1690's; detailed returns of expenditure were requested in 1748, 1775-6, 1783-5, 1803 and 1813-15. From 1813 onwards annual figures were compiled and "hardly a

1. Marshall (1968) 9. In reprinting Blaug's essay on the poor law (1963) the editors of Essays in Social History, M.W. Flinn & T.C. Smout (1974) 150 comment that that "illuminating reconsideration.....has not sparked off the extensive local research that such a reappraisal calls for."
2. Pollard & Crossley (1968) 186 quoting the calculations of J.R. McCulloch in 1837.

year passed without either the Lords or the Commons appointing a Committee to investigate some aspect of poor relief."¹

Contemporaries were by no means agreed about to what to attribute the rise, and in their investigations elicited a mass of information on wages, employment, and most importantly, poor law methods of relief. The Poor Law Commission's Report in 1834 was the culmination of such investigations. The Commissioners were convinced that the practice of giving out-door relief to the able-bodied was pernicious, and resulted in the pauperisation of the agricultural community. They appear to have been unsympathetic to the plight of the agricultural labourer, whose extreme poverty in the south of England had been described graphically by other commentators.²

In out-door relief to the able-bodied the Poor Law Commissioners included both relief in kind and in money, and noted five main expedients by which money was afforded: Relief without Labour, The Allowance System, The Roundsmen System, Parish Employment, The Labour-Rate System.³ All these expedients were effectively similar in the Commission's view in interfering in the direct wage relationship of labour with employer. They involved giving relief to a man while living in his own home, rather than within an institutional framework. The first two systems did not demand that the recipient of relief perform any "work" for the parish in order to earn, as it were, the right to relief; the last three did, and were variations in methods of organising such work and distributing its benefits and responsibilities equitably round the parish's rate-payers.

As they believed, many routes led to the same situation. For example, a man could be employed for six days a week at substandard wages and have a wage supplement from the parish. Alternatively he could work one, two, three, four, five or half parts of five days a week and be paid a full wage

1. Oxley (1974) 24-5.

2. Most particularly by Rev. David Davies in The Case of the Labourers in Husbandry Stated and Considered (1795).

3. P.L.Report (1834) (1974 edition) 88. All references are to the edition of Checkland S.G. & E.O.A. (1974).

for those days. If the daily wage was one sixth of the weekly amount necessary for subsistence, then the labourer needed the supplement from the parish for the amount of time not worked. This case would not appear to be directly in aid of wages. A further variation was the alternation of periods of full employment with periods wholly out of work and so on relief. Finally a labourer could be mainly in employment, and receive help from the parish in indirect ways, notably by payment of rent (and sometimes rates), gifts of clothes or cloth, repair or purchase of boots and shoes, medical care for his wife when "lying-in", an allowance in respect of numbers of children, and in all the multifarious ways that overseers employed which have been documented from overseers accounts.¹

All these methods of practical assistance were fundamentally "in aid of wages". They all presupposed that the labourer did not receive an amount of money adequate to maintain himself and his family. It was in the long tradition of poor law practice, dating at least from the Elizabethan Poor Law of 1601, to try and extract work from the recipients of relief, and hence the Roundsmen, Parish Employment and Labour-Rate systems described by the Commissioners and their respondents were to some extent a natural continuation of earlier practice. Additionally there was an appreciation of the debilitating moral effect of unemployment and a fear that the discipline of work would be destroyed. The poor law commission's contention was simply that relief to the able-bodied was an abuse of the purposes of the poor law. Relief should be applied to the indigent, that is those unable to labour or unable to obtain, in return for their labour, the means of subsistence. It was not for those in poverty, that is those who had to labour in order to maintain "a mere subsistence."²

The burden of the Poor Law Commission's Report was thus an attack on all wage supplements, summarised conveniently to-day as the "Speenhamland" system. In the classic instance, the magistrates for Berkshire met at Speenhamland in 1795, when prices of bread and corn were exceptionally high, and devised a

1. Marshall (1969) Chapter 3 surveys a wide range of "out relief" methods.
2. P.L.Report (1974) 334.

scale of subsistence standards for a man, his wife and family. According to the price of corn and the number in his family, a man needed either a certain sum of money or a certain quantity of bread per week. Overseers in Berkshire were thus given guidelines on how to assess if a man's wage was not adequate and how much relief to give him. The scale was not unique, and was quickly copied elsewhere.¹ It formed the basis of the structure of wage supplements (no matter what particular expedient the parish adopted) which the Commissioners found in existence when they investigated.

More recent investigators of the old poor law have been critical of the Commissioners concentration on relief to the able-bodied. The Webbs for instance said that only "a few stray suggestions" were made on other matters;² the Hammonds said that "the Commissioners, in their simple analysis of that system, could not take their eyes off the Speenhamland goblin and instead of dealing with that system as a wrong and disastrous answer to certain difficult questions, they treated the system itself as the one and original source of all evils."³ It is true that the Commissioners did not consider the crux of the problem to be relief to the old, the sick, the very young and similar groups of the Elizabethan "deserving" poor, or as they termed them the truly "indigent". (They did, however, spend time on the question of bastardy). The more serious failing implied by their concentration on Speenhamland is that, as the Hammonds suggested, they failed to investigate "certain difficult questions" which lay behind parishes adopting these expedients. Recent research has addressed itself to these questions.

MODERN STUDIES OF THE OLD POOR LAW

Many studies of the old poor law have been concerned with the whole period for which records survive, and have examined the detail of parish administration, supplying much to expand and corroborate the classic history of

1. Neuman (1969) 317-22.
2. Webb S.& B. (1910) 3.
3. Hammond J.L.& B. (1966) 230-1.

the Webbs.¹ They have emphasised the variety and individuality of poor law practice, but have not attempted to measure or explain the variation in the incidence of poverty from parish to parish. The social background of those responsible for administration - the overseers - has been examined and the growth in the practice of employing a paid overseer in the later 18th century. Overseers have been portrayed as "intimate and sympathetic",² and their ways of administering relief described. The obvious rise in money expended and in the numbers on relief at the end of the 18th century in individual parishes is clear; in Essex and Norfolk it has been suggested this was related to the decline in local domestic industry.³ Much information, therefore, exists to answer the question "how did the old poor law work?" This is vital in understanding the critical period in the 19th century. However, more recent work on the old poor law has followed the Royal Commission in its concentration on the last years; and has also examined the effects of the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834.⁴ It has, therefore, been largely concerned with the "Speenhamland system". The thrust of recent argument has been critical of the Poor Law Report in its insistence on administrative causes of the steep rise in expenditure.⁵ Criticism has been directed to it in a number of ways.

A particularly serious criticism is that it condemned the whole poor law on the basis of a biased selection of evidence.⁶ For example, an enormous quantity of material was collected through the Urban and Rural Queries, that is in the answers to the questionnaires sent out to certain towns and villages; but the principles on which the places were selected is not known, and the Commissioners, it is suggested, hardly undertook any analysis of the replies. Even more damaging, the evidence was ignored. "It is impossible to tell whether the replies constitute anything like a representative sample. The Commissioners never attempted to summarise their findings, and in the Report

1. Webb S. & B. (1927), Emmison (1933), Lloyd-Pritchard (1949), Thomas (1956).
2. Thomas (1956) 64.
3. Ibid 83 writing of Essex and Lloyd-Pritchard op cit 37 in respect of Norfolk.
4. Blaug (1963) reprinted in ed Flinn & Smout (1974), Body (1965), Hopkin (1968), Digby (1971), Huzel (1975).
5. Blaug and Huzel particularly are very critical.
6. Oxley (1974) 27.

itself they offered a few graphic examples of the Allowance System drawn from parishes in both the South and the North, thus conveying the impression that what they admittedly called 'the abuses of the South' were to be found throughout the country."¹

Blaug has attempted to rectify the Commissioners' failings by himself analysing the replies to a questionnaire circulated by the Select Committee on Labourers' Wages in 1824. Although the basis of these returns too may not be representative,² he showed that the countries where "most" parishes subsidised wages were concentrated in the midlands and East Anglia. Notably, Kent is not a "Speenhamland county" in this analysis. Blaug stressed also that each parish followed its own rules in giving relief, and that "all parishes admitted giving allowances to large families as a matter of course."³ Comparing per capita poor expenditure in Speenhamland and non-Speenhamland counties, categorised on this basis, Blaug showed that both series rose and fell in sympathy, though per capita relief was at a higher level in the Speenhamland counties. More importantly, he showed that poor relief in agricultural and non-agricultural counties also moved in step.

In fact, categorisation of whole counties as Speenhamland or non-Speenhamland is of doubtful value where practice can vary so much from parish to parish, and contrary examples to any generalisation can always be found.⁴ Although not a Speenhamland county in Blaug's analysis, nonetheless there were numerous parishes in Kent using the scale or one similar to it.⁵ The assistant commissioner responsible for the area thought the system "fully established in many parts of Kent."⁶

More recently, Blaug's conclusions have been confirmed at a parish level by Baugh, who examined Kent, Sussex and Essex. He found levels of real per capita expenditure in Speenhamland parishes moved in complete sympathy with

1. Blaug (1974) 128. Baugh (1975) 67 repeats this criticism.
2. Blaug (1974) 129; he notes that "in the slapdash manner of the day, the Committee failed to indicate what proportion of the parishes responded to the questionnaire."
3. Ibid 130.
4. For example in the East Riding of Yorkshire as pointed out by Marshall (1969) 21.
5. Melling (1964) 109-10 discusses the distribution of bread scales in Kent.
6. PP1834 XXXVIII Appendix A 218A.

variations in non-Speenhamland parishes. He concluded also that "the Speenhamland system did not matter much at any time either during or after the war."¹ Instead, he sought the major explanation of movements in poor expenditure in economic conditions : high prices during the Napoleonic war and depression after the war.

An alternative way of scrutinising the validity of the poor law report is to examine at the parish level what factors (including administrative ones) seem to be significant in relation to levels of expenditure. A study of the whole of Kent has been undertaken with this purpose.² Variables of an economic nature have been found to be most important in explaining levels of relief: proximity to London, availability of employment alternative to agriculture, labour demand within agriculture, wage levels, land use and the structure of land ownership. None of these aspects of the situation were considered by the Poor Law Commissioners, though they seem to have been correct in identifying the problem as largely an agricultural one. For, where 75% or more of males aged 20 and above in a parish were employed in agriculture, the poor rates were notably higher.³ Availability of alternative employment was thus accompanied by lower poor rates, as was proximity to London, which also encouraged market gardening. Parishes comprising small farms fared better than parishes where the ratio of agricultural labourers to farmers was high. Swing Riots in 1830 were also more liable to occur in parishes characterised by large farms. Nonetheless corn lands were not found to be correlated with poverty; marsh parishes with relatively small acreages of arable land were amongst those with the highest per capita poor rates.

Here Huzel challenges the interpretation vividly epitomised by Cobbett and accepted in essentials since. "The more purely a corn country, the more miserable the labourers."⁴ The connection is usually thought to have been

1. Baugh (1975) 62-67.

2. Huzel (1975).

3. Ibid 200, Table 28.

4. Cobbett (1822) (1973 edition) 248, makes this remark when describing his ride through Thanet in East Kent.

through the "natural periodicity of arable farming found in the wheat-growing counties." For three or four winter months workers were thrown entirely on the parish rates. "Seasonal unemployment was much less of a problem in the West, where no wheat was grown."¹ Indeed, farmers have been described as greedy for the maximum of labour in the peak spring and harvest periods, sacrificing the well-being of the labourers for it.² However, marsh parishes, despite smaller proportions of arable land, were also distinguished by very high proportions of agricultural labourers. Their populations thus had less variety of occupation open to them than in other areas of Kent. It could be that this was the controlling factor in the correlation between marsh and high poor expenditure. It could be also that arable farms within these areas were large, and were thus of the type which seems to have generated poverty rather than as might seem the case, the pasture farms.

A complicated economic relationship is implied between parishes nearer London and the capital itself, reflected to a smaller extent in the relationship between other urban centres of population and their agricultural hinterlands. Partly, London and the towns acted to draw off the natural increase generated in the countryside, without requiring an unusual distance of migration. Partly the towns supplied a large market for produce and thus encouraged more intensive cultivation. Even so, all the largely agricultural parishes grew less fast than those with more varied occupational profiles and lower poor rates; so they did experience considerable migration in practice. The attractive power of London economically does not explain the structural poverty in more rural areas. For what reasons did population either remain in the agricultural parishes when surplus to labour requirements, or if there was no labour surplus, become pauperised? Huzel's analysis of numbers of variables in the 19th century thus leaves further problems unresolved, in particular, the question of what factors acted on all parishes alike in the 19th century to raise poor expenditure, while relative levels remained the same.

1. Blaug (1974) 138-9.
2. Thompson (1974) 244.

There is, finally, a way of approaching the findings of the commissioners on the old poor law through the failures of the new. It is argued that after 1834 the new poor law generally failed to abolish relief to the able bodied. It met not only the obstructiveness of local administrators but also the overwhelming problem of large-scale and fluctuating unemployment in the industrial centres. The inappropriateness of the Poor Law Commission's diagnosis of poverty was, as it were, proved posthumously.¹ However, the Poor Law Amendment Act did not exactly follow the Commission's recommendations, so to that extent their analysis was not fully put to the test.² It is true that in agricultural areas poverty did seem to diminish after 1834 and "much of the conspicuous rural labour surplus" dried up,³ and this may seem to support the Commission in its insistence that relief methods created the apparent unemployment and low wages which they were obliged to relieve. On the other hand it may also be the result of the general upturn in economic conditions, with railway building, industrial expansion and agricultural revival all contributing to an increased demand for labour.⁴ In this case it places the search for explanatory models outside the old poor law itself, and requires the examination of economic factors, particularly the post-Napoleonic War depression and deflation, as briefly alluded to by Baugh.

In resting their case on the evils of relief to the able bodied, the Poor Law Commissioners were, it is suggested here, concentrating on a more deeply-rooted aspect of the old poor law than is always clearly apparent.⁵ There may, in fact, have been rather too much emphasis in recent studies on Speenhamland per se. Overseers may not have pinned a copy of a breadscale

1. Edsall (1971), Digby (1971).

2. Checkland S.G. & E.O.A. (1974) 42.

3. Collins (1969) 467. Blaug (1974) 144 also says that after 1834 "the Commissioners were to discover to their grief that the bulk of relief recipients were, indeed, not the able bodied, but rather the helpless and dependent sick, aged and infirm."

4. Collins op cit 467.

5. Poynter (1969) 32 notes that "the indictment of the old poor law has long been uncritically accepted, but economic historians have done little to include an analysis of the implications of the system among the variables they weigh."

inside their relief books¹ or the vestry have resolved explicitly to adopt one; nonetheless they must always, throughout the history of the old poor law, have had in mind a mental scale of the "cost of living" and a subsistence standard by which to judge the proper amount of relief to be given to applicants. In drawing up the Speenhamland scale, the Berkshire magistrates were merely advising local overseers of reasonable amounts of relief to give in a period of exceptionally high prices. The habit of making such a calculation was not an innovation.² The alternative was no doubt to specify a minimum wage, but this was not politically acceptable.³ Nor has it since become so.

THE SETTLEMENT LAWS

One aspect of the old poor law which has received little recent consideration is the effect of the laws of settlement on rural population.⁴ These laws defined which parish any applicant for relief could apply to, and tended to place the responsibility on the parish where a person had been born or had worked in the early years of his life. Consequently they appeared to prevent movement once family responsibilities were acquired. As with the larger subject of relief to the able-bodied, contemporaries were not unanimous in their views. Eden and Howlett both thought the effects of the laws were annoying but not severe, but others were of the opinion that the settlement laws considerably obstructed the freedom of movement of labourers. Adam Smith's

1. In the 19th century ledger books for the recording of relief payments were printed with scales like ready reckoners.
2. Melling (1964) 109-10 shows early lists of the poor for Shorne (1598) and Headcorn (1691-1715) in Kent where "relief was probably being given as a form of family allowance.....to supplement low wages." Hampson (1934) 46 also came to the same conclusion: "the smallness of the sums allowed seems to imply that the recipients were not entirely destitute of other means of livelihood. Allowances in aid of wages must in fact often have been given in certain cases long before the practice became systematised and applied regularly to the able-bodied at the end of the 18th century."
3. Webb S. & B (1927) 173-6.
4. Marshall (1968) in his account of the old poor law, for example, does not mention the settlement laws at all. Taylor (1976) has recently asked for a reconsideration of the effects of the laws.

opinion is the most weighty and is often cited: "There is scarce a poor man in England, of 40 years of age, who has not, in some part of his life, felt himself most cruelly oppressed by this ill-contrived law of settlements." He regarded the law as a "violation of natural liberty and justice" and attributed to it the sudden and unaccountable difference in wages from one parish to the next.¹ His opinion was thus unequivocally that the settlement laws hindered movement. Coode, after a very thorough investigation of the subject 75 years later, came to the same conclusion: "15,535 parishes were made the gaols of their own poor people and fortresses against all others."²

The Poor Law Commission did not minimize the effect of the laws, and spoke of the particular evils arising from the Act of 16⁶/~~2~~³ and the "greater and more extensive evils" arising from the mere existence of a law of settlement.⁴ The mobility of persons who could not be "profitably employed" was in their view hindered, and so parishes shared out to all a bare subsistence as they might to slaves or cattle. They concluded that the settlement laws should be abolished. The Poor Law Amendment Act failed to take such decisive action.

Historians of the old poor law, however, have discounted the importance of the settlement laws. It has been concluded that "they did not stop the flow of labour,"⁵ and there is certainly much evidence of mobility generally in pre-industrial England.⁶ The special procedure of the removal order, forcing people to leave the parish where they were resident, was invoked on average only about once every two years by each parish;⁷ while the "examinations" made into the lives of the poor to determine their settlements also illustrate the extent to which labour was mobile. The other feature of the

1. Smith (1776) (1964 edition) 1,128.
2. Webb S.& B.(1927) 348 quoting the report by G. Coode to the Poor Law Board in 1851.
3. 13 & 14 Car II c 12 which specified the grounds for settlement.
4. PL Report (1974) 256-7.
5. Hammond J.L.& B.(1966) 111. Hampson (1934) 125 and Styles (1963) 62 came to the same conclusion.
6. Buckatsch (1952) 62-9, Laslett (1965) 147, Holderness (1971).
7. Body (1965) 128.
8. Hampson op cit 140.

administration of the settlement laws was the use of certificates, which were acknowledgements by one parish to another that those named were accepted as parishioners should they ever be in need of poor relief. Rather more of these documents were issued than removal orders; 5,000 have survived for Bedfordshire alone.¹ In any village, therefore, there may have been a number of people residing "with certificates", and a few who had been removed there because it was their parish of settlement.

In interpreting the evidence that has survived, the problem is to know what proportion of any parish's population was affected by the settlement system. It obviously applied to those who could be identified as "risks" - that is without regular employment or sufficient income. It would be expected that the least skilled would be those most likely to be without regular employment. Coode concluded that the laws provided "the means of oppressing and fettering the industrious poor" and he included artisans as well as labourers in this category.² However, a recent investigator estimates that only one in ten of those examined by the justices to determine their settlement was an artisan, and the vast majority were labourers.³ Insufficient income was usually linked with family responsibilities. Married couples were the largest group, and then women, named in removal orders; single men were the subjects much less frequently, as their chances of employment were good and their burdens few.⁴ The married male labourer in his twenties with one or more children was also the typical subject of examinations.⁵ The problem of those burdened by children was recognised at least as early as 1579 in a decree issued by Sandwich Corporation against "such as harbour and farm houses to such as are or shall be burdenous to this town.....being both besides their poverty burdened with a great number of children for whom, God calling away the parents, charity requireth and the bonds of nature

1. Tate (1969) 202.

2. PP 1851 XXVI 225.

3. Taylor (1976) 57.

4. Webb S. & B. (1927) 342. Adam Smith notes the same features of the settlement laws (1964) 1,128.

5. Taylor op cit 57.

compel each good person to provide."¹ Here is an obvious precursor to the more formalised system of the settlement laws.

Potentially the settlement laws thus applied to a good proportion of any village's population, and their major effect may have been in a concealed tendency to discourage free movement rather than in the actual numbers removed or residing with certificates. Obviously a majority of migrants to new, expanding industrial towns, or to London, were likely not to be settled there,² but this does not mean that rural populations were similarly mobile and unfettered. The case of the Essex parish of Toppesfield described by Howlett was quoted by the Webbs to show the extent of immigration: one sixth of the 240 families of mechanics and labourers belonged to other parishes;³ it seems more noteworthy that such a high proportion as five sixths of the residents of one parish could be legally defined as also "settled" there. The settlement laws may have been too easily discounted in recent analyses of the old poor law, and there are aspects of their operation which still need investigation.

LONG TERM TRENDS WHICH MAY RELATE TO THE OLD POOR LAW

Much longer-ranging and more general explanations of rising poor law costs have been seen in two parallel but external developments of the period: enclosure and population growth. With enclosure should be considered the comparable process known as "engrossing," whereby numbers of small farms were combined into a larger holding. "The forty, or sixty acre farm was wanted to complete a holding such as a substantial and intelligent yeoman might occupy; and Hodge being unceremoniously dismissed, his house was rased to the ground, or became converted into cottages. Then might be seen a very different class of tenants, - spruce, neat, well-dressed, dandy gentlemen; with yellow-top boots, made by the Hoby of the day, and blue coats with bright metal buttons, dashing to market on their bits of blood, or driving their

1. Melling (1964) 49. (Spelling modernised).
2. Webb S.& B.(1927) 340.
3. Ibid.

ladies in green gigs, picked out with orange."¹ Thus did a thoughtful parson in Kent in the early 19th century epitomise in a fictional narrative the process of engrossing, and he went on to demonstrate how the displaced small holder's family was driven to apply for poor relief. Kent was a county of early enclosures, so that the calamitous effects of the 18th century movement which have been described elsewhere² are not applicable. The figure of the engrossing farmer, or landlord, on the other hand, was a commonplace of contemporary comment.

"There was undoubtedly a long-term tendency in favour of the consolidation of farms into larger and more efficient units."³ It is difficult to measure the effects of this on the agricultural labourer. In as much as large farms were more heavily capitalised, they might have provided rather more employment than the small farms or family holdings. On the other hand engrossing, like enclosure, often extinguished the waste or rough pieces of land and the one acre or so which the labourer cultivated. "A quarter of an acre of garden-ground will go a great way towards rendering the peasant independent of any assistance."⁴ A little land could make all the difference between poverty in the face of rising prices and comparative economic security. For the farmer, though, more than a quarter of an acre might "transform the labourer into a petty farmer.....the farmer can no longer depend on him for constant work."⁵ Cobbett certainly thought farmers squeezed out the labourer's apparently unproductive use of the land. Where ground was valuable, the labourer "has not a stick of wood, and has no place for a pig or cow to

1. Gleig (1835) 1, 12.

2. Hammond E.L. & B. (1966), Hoskins (1965). The Hammonds make the major part of their argument concerning the condition of the village labourer rest on the effects of the enclosure movement, and Hoskins similarly describes in Wigston Magna the "end of a peasant society" and a calamitous rise in poor rates following enclosure.

3. Chambers & Mingay (1966) 92.

4. The Commercial & Agricultural Magazine in 1800, quoted by Thompson (1974) 243. Hoskins (1976) 63, points out that cottagers and labourers with perhaps one, two or three acres were far from an "agricultural proletariat." In this respect the 16th and 18th centuries are comparable.

5. Thompson op cit 243.

graze, or even to lie down upon." In Thanet, "every inch of land is appropriated by the rich. No hedges, no ditches, no commons, no grassy lanes: a country divided into great farms."¹ These "petty rights of villagers, such as gleaning, access to fuel, tethering of stock in the lanes or on the stubble, which are irrelevant to the historian of economic growth, might be of critical importance to the subsistence of the poor."² Although it is wrong to talk of the disappearance of the family farm in the 18th century,³ there may have been significant changes in land-holding which had a bearing on the growth of poor law expenditure.

Population growth is the second long-term factor which it has been suggested correlates with increasing expenditure on poor relief.⁴ A general outline of population growth shows a doubling 1700 to 1801 and a doubling again 1801 to 1851.⁵ A simple economic model suggests that unless all the extra population generated were absorbed into industrial employment or more extensive agricultural cultivation, there must have been a surplus labour force. Surplus labour could result in lower wages because of the competition for work, accompanied by outright unemployment, or in methods of work-sharing such as increased use of casual part-time labour. Here is a satisfyingly simple explanation of all the employment stratagems of old poor law overseers.⁶ The lower levels of poor relief in industrial counties support the position, since there employment opportunities kept pace with rising population.⁷ Yet however inexact the estimates of county populations (and Deane and Cole unassumingly hoped merely that they expressed the right direction of movement) they do suggest that counties classified as generally "agricultural" experienced substantial outward migration.⁸ From 1701 to 1751 these counties hardly grew at all; and in the next 80 years (to 1831) more than a quarter of the natural increase of population migrated, resulting

1. Cobbett (1973) 248.
2. Thompson (1974) 239.
3. Chambers & Mingay (1966) 156.
4. Ibid 103.
5. Mitchell & Deane (1971) 5.
6. Chambers & Mingay op cit 146.
7. Blaug (1974) 136, Marshall (1969) 23.
8. Deane & Cole (1969) 108-10.

in a slower rate of growth than in the non-agricultural counties.¹ Since higher per capita levels of poor expenditure already characterised these counties before 1795, the small population increases were evidently sufficient to cause problems.

But here county aggregative figures may once more be misleading. Within each county were many small towns, and the population leaving the agricultural parishes would have tended to move to them rather than out of the county altogether.² There are no reliable statistics and few trustworthy estimates of urban populations before 1801.³ If agricultural counties, therefore, show slower rates of growth than non-agricultural counties, the same may be true of agricultural parishes. Population growth at the parish level may not correlate directly with rural poverty.

THE PROBLEM OF SURPLUS LABOUR

In pre-industrial England, it has been suggested, there was always chronic under-employment and a pool of casual labour.⁴ In such circumstances, small holdings could well have been significant in keeping the labourer from total poverty. Rural domestic industry too could have been important, taking up labour when agricultural demand was slack. Like the small holdings and waste patches of land, this source of supplementary earnings often seems to have disappeared in the 18th century.⁵ With no other sources of income or food supply, the labourer needed higher wages and was wholly dependent on them. Alternatively he was forced to have recourse to the poor law authorities. In the 18th century also, population growth was adding to the country's total labour force and the settlement laws were perhaps discouraging free movement. By the 19th century it is therefore assumed that there must have been a surplus of labour in agricultural parishes.⁶ This was certainly implied throughout the Poor Law Commission's discussion of the subject of

1. Marshall (1969) 40.

2. Saville (1957) 88 shows that this was certainly the case in the 19th century.

3. Deane & Cole (1969) 99.

4. Coleman (1962) 300.

5. Blaug (1974) 140 suggests that the decline in domestic industry "is rarely given its proper due in accounting for the increased burden of poor relief.

6. Blaug op cit 138 for example talks of a "pool of surplus manpower."

settlement and in their conclusion that as a result of the laws parishes had more population than could be "profitably employed". When in relation to the expediency of encouraging emigration the Commissioners specifically considered the question of surplus labour, they stated that "the excess in some districts of labourers beyond the actual demand must be taken to be established beyond dispute."¹ At the same time the Poor Law Commissioners have been criticised for suggesting that much of the apparent surplus was the result of the poor relief system itself, and would disappear when it was reformed. They were themselves anxious, however, that the surplus might not all disappear in response to administrative change. They only hoped that demand in the economy would be stimulated by the reduction of poor rate burdens, thus creating expansion in employment, even though it might not be in those same parishes that were supporting the pauperised labourers.² "A careful reading of the Report shows that the Commissioners, in some parts of it at least, were a good deal less flatly spoken than their critics have implied."³

It is most difficult, indeed, to assess what constituted a labour surplus. There was obviously a minimum amount of labour required for a farm, and below this level essential work would not have been done; there was also the possibility of considerable expansion in amount of labour employed in improving standards of husbandry. Arable farming was more labour-intensive than pasture, and changes in farming practice would have affected the normal size of the labour force; more labour, too, might have been absorbed in achieving the increased productivity of agriculture in the 18th and 19th centuries.⁴ Furthermore in arable farming, seasonal requirements varied. Testing the validity of assertions of surplus labour is thus difficult. In the available national statistics there is little evidence of any great change in the overall

1. PL Report (1974) 486.

2. Ibid

3. Checkland S.G. & E.O.A. (1974) 40.

4. Chambers & Mingay (1966) 34-5. Collins (1976) 38 estimated that the Norfolk four course rotation increased labour inputs by more than 40%.

numbers employed in agriculture. Ratios of labourers to occupiers perhaps increased in the period between Gregory King's estimates at the end of the 17th century and the 1831 census. Clapham estimated that the ratio was 1.75 : 1 at the earlier date and 2.75 : 1 (for England and Wales) in 1831.¹ At the same time over this period the numbers of households occupying land certainly fell, from 330,000 in 1688 to 225,000 in 1831. The total number of families in agriculture, however, seems to have remained roughly constant.² Such calculations do not automatically indicate the existence of a large pool of surplus labour, particularly also as the area cultivated increased over the same period.

The modern approach, however, is to assume that most of the surplus labour was in fact only seasonally unemployed, in arable areas, and that this was an inevitable structural feature of the economy.³ In this respect the old poor law made a rational attempt to maintain physical efficiency so that work could be accomplished when required. The old poor law had, indeed, always met seasonal unemployment, which in itself was economic for the farmer if personally unfortunate for the labourer. It may be, however, that this factor fogs the wider issue raised by the Poor Law Commission. By the 19th century large sections of the labour force were receiving relief all the year round. In effect the Commission suggested that farmers had ceased to be responsible for their workforce. The alleged decline in the boarding of agricultural servants might be seen as support to this view: "Why do not farmers now feed and lodge their work people as they did formerly? Because they cannot keep them upon so little as they give them in wages. This is

1. Clapham (1926) 1, 114. Clapham allowed one quarter of Gregory King's category of "cottagers and paupers" to be urban; if they were all agricultural then the ratio of labourers to occupiers goes up to 2.3 : 1.
2. In 1831 there were 961,000 families in agriculture in Great Britain. A deduction of 25,000 was made by Clapham for occupiers in Scotland. Gregory King's labourers (364,000) farmers (330,000) and cottagers and paupers (400,000 less one quarter) total 994,000.
3. Blaug (1974) 138-9 assumes that because the Speenhamland system was most prevalent in corn counties, therefore it was a response to seasonal unemployment, which he then equates with structural under-employment. An alternative viewpoint is that pauperised labour was "slave labour" and therefore inherently uneconomic. Thompson (1974) 248.

the real cause of the change."¹ Boys' comment on the difficulty of finding servants on the East Kent coast at the end of the 18th century and the contemporary decline in hiring fairs both lend colour to Cobbett's assertion.²

The evidence of farmers' lack of responsibility in this respect is not strong. The number of households maintaining servants may have declined in the 18th and 19th centuries proportionately, but how far the regular farm labour force was thereby diminished is not clear.³ In the rural areas of Lancashire and East Yorkshire agricultural servants were still a significant proportion of the labour force in mid-19th century,⁴ and the same proportion of Lancashire rural households had servants as in 66 pre-industrial communities.⁵ Similar continuity of farming practice may be true of southern counties, and literary evidence be misleading. The resident agricultural servants and the independent specialist labourers (waggoners, shepherds and others) constituted the regular and minimum farm labour force at all periods, and it may be doubted whether any decline in servant keeping was significant in the much larger question of a casual labour force.

In the short term, there is another economic explanation suggested for a sudden appearance of labour surplus in the 19th century, and that is the post Napoleonic War depression. E.L. Jones has said that economic disruption had much to do with the poor relief problems of agricultural areas, and that farmers sought to cut wages.⁶ The inevitable readjustments following from the ending of wartime conditions were exacerbated by the resumption of cash payments, partially in 1819 and completely in 1821.⁷ During the war farmers

1. Cobbett (1825) The Political Register, 20 October, quoted by Hobsbawm & Rude (1969) 45.
2. Boys (1796) 165; Hobsbawm & Rude op cit 43.
3. Hobsbawm & Rude (1969) 43 suggest that the supply of suitable young men to live-in was diminished because they were found amongst the children of small yeomen farmers who as a class were disappearing.
4. Anderson (1971) 85: 43% of the agricultural labour force in a sample of rural Lancashire villages was living-in, and 28% of households contained servants. In East Yorkshire 33% of the agricultural labour was living-in. Sheppard (1961) 48.
5. Laslett (1969) 219.
6. Jones (1964) 325.
7. Court (1967) 100-1. The monetarist explanation of depression was hotly contested at the time by for example Thomas Tooke. Adams (1965) 67.

had profited from high prices and lack of competition.¹ A fall in wheat prices started in 1814 and became more definite in 1821; wartime price levels were not reached again.² General price indices also show a fall in 1815 and a further fall in 1821,³ indicating a considerable change in the economic situation. Lower prices might have helped the labourer whose wages had not risen proportionately with wartime inflation; on the other hand if falling farm profits led farmers to reduce their labour force, then lower prices would have reflected adversely on the position of the labourer. In June 1817 the government was sufficiently concerned with the general discontent evident in the country to pass the Poor Employment Act authorising loans for public works, with the avowed intention of creating employment,⁴ and a number of parliamentary committees were set up to investigate the depressed state of agriculture. While this explanation for the crisis of the old poor law has not been examined in detail, it has been suggested as relevant, indeed perhaps the only explanation necessary.⁵

There are thus many ways of approaching the old poor law, each capable of making a contribution to general interpretation. It is such a fundamental aspect of society that the possible inter-relationships requiring attention are many and various. Because of the focus on Speenhamland, largely the result of the Poor Law Commission's own concentration on this point, these inter-relationships, social, demographic and economic, have been examined most intensively in the period 1795-1834. If Speenhamland should now be seen as a response to pre-existing conditions of low wages, seasonal unemployment and surplus labour, the investigation of the old poor law needs to be pursued before 1795 with these points in mind.

1. Chambers & Mingay (1966) 117.

2. Mitchell & Deane (1971) 488.

3. *Ibid* 469.

4. Flinn (1961) 82-92.

5. Baugh (1975) 66-7.

The major question which needs answering is the long-term effects of old poor law methods themselves. There are many specific questions which can contribute to this assessment. What changes did engrossing, in addition to enclosure, make in the social structure of the agricultural villages? To what extent was there structural under-employment in rural pre-industrial England? How significant were small holdings and domestic industries? Did the populations of rural communities grow at the same rate as urban centres, and what were the mechanisms of growth? Should the part of the settlement laws in discouraging mobility be reassessed? Information on all these aspects would assist in the re-evaluation of the old poor law, and help to place in perspective the Poor Law Commission's contention that the old poor law had a deleterious effect on the employment position of agricultural labourers.

Underlying all these questions is the more fundamental conceptual problem of the definition of poverty. Perceptions of what constituted poverty and society's responsibilities in that regard may have changed over the long period of the operation of the old poor law. The Poor Law Commission's distinction between indigence and poverty is an interesting one in this respect. It might place them in a position which has echoes of Gregory King's distinction between the minority of householders increasing the wealth of the kingdom and the majority decreasing it. Were the Commissioners right in sensing that the old poor law had slipped from the relief of indigence to the relief of poverty, and so to a supporting role for a majority of the population? Alternatively they are more usually seen, especially through the key roles of Nassau Senior and Edwin Chadwick, as formulating a Benthamite theory having as its principle a drive for efficiency. Their toughness in refusing subsidies to the poor, but attempting to limit relief to the indigent, might mark the transition to a new economic outlook; the moral obligations of a paternalistic society whose last manifestation has been seen in the Speenhamland system,¹ were finally overthrown.

1. Thompson (1974) 244.

"Grass roots research" on the original parish documents is necessary to advance further in answering these questions. Local parish records have mainly been used to illustrate the humanitarian and even quixotic methods of poor relief, rather than to examine changes in administrative stratagems against a background of the whole social, economic and demographic life of a parish. The old poor law thus continues to challenge the aptness of historians' interpretations.

CHAPTER TWO

SOURCES

1. Poor Law sources at local and national level.

Many of the sources bearing on a study of the old poor law are very well-known and have been widely and frequently exploited. It is unlikely, indeed, that discoveries will be made of new material which can affect in any significant way the general outline of the cost and administrative practices of the old poor law. Where new material is found, as in the case of the House of Lords Returns for the years 1800 to 1816¹ they duplicate to a large extent what is already documented, though they may supply a more convenient source from which to work, and even some finer detail in parts.

(i) Local sources

The old poor law has been studied so often partly because it remains difficult to generalise and draw satisfactory conclusions on the subject because it includes in effect such a large area of social enquiry; but partly also because the sources are by definition largely local in origin and provenance, and extremely bulky. They thus form natural starting points for locally defined enquiries. Administration of the old poor law was on a parish basis, so that potentially there are records from a large proportion of the 15,000 parishes of England and Wales. They may comprise the overseers' accounts of expenditure, or "disbursements", rating lists for the collection of income, vestry minutes of decisions and discussions, and settlement certificates and removal orders; there may also be miscellaneous material which is ancillary to a bureaucratic social welfare system, such as papers relating to workhouses, scales of relief and so on. Some of this material relates to unions of parishes rather than individual parishes.²

Much of the surviving material has been deposited in record offices, but much too is still in local custody, where it can be made available for study

1. Baugh (1975) 52.

2. A considerable amount of material on the characteristics of poor law administration has been conveniently drawn together recently in Oxley (1974). A summary of legislation is to be found in Tate (1964) chapter 8.

by agreement with the local incumbent of the church. In the East Kent area, more such records were found than could be studied.¹ At the same time there is no consistency in the survival of all the possible types of administrative record over the whole of the long period of the old poor law. An attempt was made in this study to use such records where the period of time they covered was long enough to give the required perspective, and where other sources were also available to study possibly related variables.

It is usual to trace the genesis of the old poor law from the 1601 Act of Elizabeth I's reign², which was a codification of earlier acts.³ These had laid on the parish the duty of maintaining the poor and setting them on work; they had also authorised the collection of a rate from all occupiers of property within the parish to provide both money to furnish the stock for the poor to work on, and other necessary moneys, and had required the annual appointment of local officers, to be called overseers of the poor. Magistrates were made responsible for supervising local administration.⁴ The Privy Council attempted to bring pressure on local administrators through instructions sent to magistrates⁵, and occasionally records illustrating this survive, as in the case of the "Charge" from the justices in one East Kent division to the overseers and churchwardens of Chislet, which is preserved in the parish's archives. In this instance the charge predates the 1601 Act. While it was the task of the magistrates to check on local financial proceedings and to make the appointments of parish officers, in practice local officers were to a large extent autonomous, the magistrates giving a purely formal approval of the annual accounts of the overseers and agreeing to appointments made in parish vestry meetings. Acts passed after the great poor law of 1601 added definition to parts of it, or amended it, but in all essentials it remained unaltered until 1834.

1. A list of the parishes included in this study and the provenance of the source material is given in the Bibliography.
2. 43 Eliz I, c 2.
3. Oxley (1974) 15.
4. Tate (1969) 190-1.
5. Webb (1927) 71-79.

As a result of the great Elizabethan Poor Law, a bulky class of records was generated. The overseers of the poor had to present their accounts to the justices annually at Easter; often they seem to have kept rough books and a tidy copy was written up for the annual audit.¹ Customarily they recorded every item of petty expenditure, though some gave fuller explanations than others of each sum spent. A parallel series of books (or sometimes the same book) recorded the rating assessment of each occupier in the parish, and this too had to be "allowed" by the justices. Rates might be collected as frequently as monthly (in towns) or at various less frequent intervals. Together these form a bulky series of financial records, apparently amenable to quantification, but in practice not always easy to handle. As observed by another historian in this field, they yield "a body of data both difficult to obtain and perplexing to digest."² This is because accounting practices were not standard. For instance, different overseers would have different ways of recording debts or credits from previous years. Also, the poor rate was often used for expenditure other than strictly poor relief, as for example for the maintenance of militia men's families, payment of county rates, or of constables' expenses.³ Which of the two series, rates or disbursements, to use in examining poor law expenditure has therefore to be carefully weighed.

In addition to financial records, there may be various other records of local administration, such as lists made for special purposes, records of vestry decisions, bread scales and so on. Of such evidence, much the most informative is usually vestry minutes, containing the record of quite explicit changes in policy, and sometimes indicating the reasons; but much about policy can be deduced from careful analysis of other poor law material. Survival of such local records from 1601 is not infrequent, as in the parish of Ash in East Kent where the series is almost unbroken to 1834. For five

1. Justices no doubt relied on complaints to indicate where they should scrutinise more carefully. In general this procedure was a formality.
2. Baugh (1975) 53.
3. Ibid.

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1603

Exemplar of Elizabeth Omers, Robert
Atward late Churchwardens of Agh and
of Thomas Bybbs Humphreys and
of Thomas Harlowe late Overseers
for the ward here made and yedde the
the fifth day of June in the second
year of his maj^{ties} reign 1604

It is said amongst some of
the wiser of this some of
merry judgment by their books of case
for the poor as

That the said exemplar do
paye allowance as followeth

1603 June

- Imprimis to oute mote to relieve him 2 1/2
- It is paid for paper 2 1/2
- It is given to Thomas Collyer to relieve him in sickness 1/2
- It is to Widowe Coole to relieve her 2 1/2
- It is to Widowe Wills to relieve her 2 1/2
- It is to John Willinglyde to relieve him in sickness 2 1/2
- It is given to Thomas Hones for relief 2 1/2
- It is to mother Jones to relieve her 2 1/2
- It is to William Sayre for relief 2 1/2
- It is to Thomas Hones to relieve him 2 1/2
- It is given to John Warren for relief 1/2
- It is to Thomas Hones to relieve him 2 1/2
- It is given to Thomas Collyer when his wife laye in 1/2
- It is to Stephen Wunthys for relief in sickness 1/2
- It is to John Post to relieve him in his sickness 1/2
- It is to Thomas Hones for relief in sickness 1/2
- It is to oute mote for relief 2 1/2
- It is to Thomas Hones for relief 2 1/2
- It is to Widowe Sampson for relief in sickness 1/2
- It is to John Post for relief in sickness 1/2
- It is to ...

Julye

August

other parishes, too, records start in the 17th century, and early in the 18th century for all but one of the remaining parishes in this study.

Another type of poor law record was generated as a result of the amendment and definition of the 1601 Act in later years. The most important of these subsequent acts was passed in 1662,¹ the Settlement Act, and further legislation bearing on the same question was passed in 1685,² 1691³ and 1697⁴. As a consequence of the original decision that parishes should be the units responsible for poor relief, it became necessary to define who "belonged" in each parish. When it seemed that the criteria for settlement were so constricting that the poor dare not ever move, a liberalising act of 1697 allowed parishes to issue "certificates", acknowledging that the bearer belonged in a named parish, so that if poor relief became necessary, the host parish would not be liable.⁵ Many parish chests which contain poor law records have numbers of these certificates, mostly the printed forms which were introduced soon after 1697. Following an Act in 1795⁶ their use was abruptly discontinued, except in the case of pregnant single women. A complementary series of documents is the removal orders, which gave legal sanction to the physical removal of the pauper from the parish of residence to the parish of settlement. These also survive in considerable numbers.⁷ Both types of document were issued by justices of the peace, but were carefully stored by parish officers. (Record of the issue of the documents may therefore exist in minutes of petty sessions or in parish overseers' collections). Survival is geographically uneven, and may be related either to the amount of use made of the system or to the convenience of storing the records.⁸ One

1. 14 Car II, c 12.

2. 1 Jac II, c 17.

3. 3 W.& M, c 11.

4. 8 & 9 W.& M, c 30.

5. Tate (1964) 192.

6. 35 Geo III, c 101.

7. "Numerous parishes in all parts of the country accumulated files of certificates between 1697 and the reforms of 1795. They also accumulated similarly bulky files of removal orders....." Oxley (1974) 40.

8. Taylor (1976) 71-2 comments on the significant concentrations of documents remaining today in parishes along main roads. The bulk of record which could be amassed is shown by the 73 volumes of examinations preserved by St.Martin-in-the-Fields, London. Other London parishes would presumably have handled similar numbers. In Derbyshire small towns and large villages most often have collections. Here the numbers were significant but not overwhelming.

sizeable collection for the parish of St. Dunstan's, Canterbury, has been studied in detail, and three other parish collections also used. The procedure of removal and settlement gave rise to considerable litigation, so that occasionally other records survive in the parish chest, such as examinations, legal judgements and solicitors' accounts.

In 1723¹ an act authorised parish officers to buy or rent workhouses² and from this date numbers of parishes in East Kent set about taking advantage of this permission, even though before this date it was quite common for parishes to have provided poor houses of one sort or another. Separate records of the administration of the workhouse occasionally survive; more often the record was incorporated into the overseers' general accounts.

As would be expected poor law records display variations typical of all manuscript sources of this kind. There are variations of individual style, of handwriting, and in the conscientiousness of record keeping, which overlay the further variations in administrative practice from parish to parish. Some studies have emphasised the variety and uniqueness of each parish just because of the idiosyncrasies possible in the system, others emphasise overall similarities. Where a series of records has been preserved, it suggests at least a careful attitude to record-keeping; but the literateness of overseers and clerks, even so, need not have been of a very high standard. Thus spelling can be so difficult as to impose a barrier to quick comprehension of the record, accounts can be written but not totalled, and other difficulties in presentation are encountered. Where relevant, the particular characteristics of the records used are discussed, where they form the major basis of a section of the study, and an evaluation of the source material is made.

(ii) National sources

From local poor law records, a picture of the costs of its administration and the details of its operation in individual parishes can be drawn.

1. 9 Geo. I, c 7.

2. Tate (1964) 193.

For the later 18th and early 19th century, however, a national record is available in the printed parliamentary papers.

The printed returns of poor law expenditure have frequently been exploited, and are relatively easy of access. Those from 1748 were published in 1821;¹ the 1775-6 and 1783-5 returns were published in 1803² as well as returns for that year;³ those for 1813-15 were not published until 1818.⁴ After 1813 annual totals of expenditure were collected, but not a more detailed breakdown of expenses.⁵

Although never printed, another series of parliamentary returns of old poor law expenditure has recently been found.⁶ These are the House of Lords returns for the years 1800 to 1816. Prepared in response to a questionnaire, the replies seem never to have been called in. For Kent the returns are in the Archives Office, with the records of the Clerk of the Peace.⁷ Similar returns have been located in Essex, Dorset, Lancashire, Kesteven and Sussex.⁸ Since they cover some of the early 19th century period not included in the printed series, these are valuable. They also provide information under more sub-headings than the major printed series. The parish of Eastry kept amongst its poor law records a copy of its return, but this is the only copy found locally. It is unfortunate that these returns do not exist for the Kentish boroughs, which were outside the administrative county.

Comparisons between returns are not altogether easy, since the questions were slightly different on each occasion. They also give a spurious impression of accuracy because of the effect of the clean printed page.⁹ Whole

1. PP 1821 VI.
2. PP Old Series 1803 IX.
3. PP 1803-4 XIII.
4. PP 1818 XIX.
5. 1816-21: PP 1822 V; 1822-4: PP 1825 IV;
1825-9: PP 1830-1 XI; 1830-4: PP 1835 XLVII.
6. Baugh (1975) 52.
7. KAO/Q/CR2. This is probably because the counties were supposed to present summaries to the House of Lords.
8. Baugh op cit.
9. As Baugh op cit 53 comments, "the manuscript returns and the overseers' accounts expose their frailty, while the frailties of the parliamentary abstracts lie hidden behind the clean singular figure on the printed page."

sections, covering numbers of parishes, are missing for certain years, and errors which could be clerical or typographical have been noted when the printed returns are considered at the level of the individual parish. It is not suggested that the printed returns can cause major errors of interpretation on a national scale; clearly they show the main outline of poor law expenditure for the period they cover. However, where particular characteristics of individual parishes are being correlated with poor law expenditure, it is as well where possible to compare sources and check on discrepancies.

As well as figures of expenditure in parishes, the printed parliamentary papers also provide a second major source for study of the old poor law, in the Report of the Poor Law Commissioners and the appendices to the report.¹ Here there is a great range and volume of material. For any particular region, the coverage is necessarily not comprehensive and it is not clear on what principle certain parishes were selected as the sample to be examined. Ashurst Majendie was the assistant commissioner who covered Kent, most of Essex, East Surrey and East Sussex.² Within East Kent he reported on the towns of Canterbury, Dover, Deal, Sandwich, Ramsgate and Margate, and the two villages of Ash and Eastry. Kent is counted as a "non-Speenhamland" county by historians on the basis of the evidence in the 1824 Select Committee on Labourers' Wages.³ Majendie, however, concluded that in Kent the relief of the able-bodied was casual in the towns, but constant in the agricultural districts. Clearly such comment is of great value, but the contradictory conclusions which may be deduced from literary evidence are also illustrated. One man was not, in the course of a journey round the area, able to assimilate, or even appreciate, all the variations

1. S.G.& E.O.A. Checkland (1974) have made the Poor Law Report of 1834 very readily available, but not the replies to the Commission's urban and rural queries, nor the reports of the assistant commissioners, and other communications.. PP 1834 XXVII-XXXVIII.
2. PP 1834 XXVIII. Appendix A 165 ff.
3. Blaug (1963). PP 1824 VI.

in tradition and practice over a period of time. The Commissioners were biased too. "They approached the problem with pre-conceived ideas and, having selected their evidence on a partial basis, they analysed it in an unstatistical and prejudiced manner."¹ Historians, however, should appreciate their difficulties in generalising satisfactorily from such a large field of minutely differing practices. This evidence, therefore, needs careful evaluation.

Many other parliamentary papers also give random pieces of information on the poor law, and on other aspects of parish life such as rating procedures, wages, the economy of towns, the numbers of vagrants and many other topics and use is also made of these comments, where appropriate.

1. Oxley (1974) 27.

2. Sources for the study of population growth and social structure.

It is unlikely that old poor law administrative methods are in themselves sufficient to explain the problems encountered in the late 18th and early 19th century, and that social structural variables, such as population growth or decline, occupational structure, the distribution of wealth and the household and family structure of the community need also to be plotted and correlated with poor law expenditure. Sources other than those generated by the poor law must therefore be used.

(i) Census Returns

For the early 19th century, the national decennial censuses, starting in 1801, form an essential basis for examining these social variables. Only limited information was gathered between 1801 and 1831, and summaries printed generally on a parish basis; the working papers were later destroyed.¹ These printed volumes provide figures of parish populations, a simple occupational breakdown by family, and age data for administrative units larger than parishes.

There has been criticism of the first censuses, on the grounds that the early efforts of bureaucracy are likely to be less efficient than later and more experienced ones; and also because poor law overseers, considered to be unlettered, were in charge of the enumeration. Rickman himself noted that "I have some experience in the gross amount of the dullness of all probable overseers."² These doubts seem exaggerated, and the overall reliability of the census is impressive.

In East Kent, in 1801 particularly, under-enumeration certainly occurred, but because returns for certain areas were not made at all, rather than because the enumeration was faulty. There are no returns for the parish of Elham in 1801. The city of Canterbury also provides a particularly apt example, since

1. Drake (ed. Wrigley) (1972) 31. The original returns were destroyed in 1931.

2. Ibid 11.

in each successive census more of the quite numerous extra-parochial parts of the city were brought within the enumeration. Presumably responsibility for enumerating the non-parochial areas was not easily assigned.¹ As for the quality of the enumerators, Rickman himself admitted that their knowledge of their own areas was a counter-balancing advantage in employing them. They could answer "plain questions with much sincerity."² In the course of their poor law duties, the overseers were responsible for deciding which poor warranted relief moneys and in what respects. They also regularly listed all the householders and occupiers of land within the parish for rating purposes. Rating assessments were made several times a year, and incoming and outgoing inhabitants kept track of. On this basis their information on numbers of inhabitants is probably in the main very accurate. It would be wrong to assume that the habit of "counting the people" was inaugurated in 1801; it was the nation-wide and systematic nature of the census which was unique.

In some cases, listings made by enumerators in order to fulfil their census duties have survived.³ They show the care and thoroughness with which they tackled their task. In Eastry, for instance, a house by house list was made out showing all the relationships of the members of each family and their occupations. One head of a family was noted as "counted in Canterbury."⁴

The greater reliability of petty local officials, who were closer to the people over whom they had authority than the more literate and articulate "gentleman", is interestingly demonstrated in a letter addressed to Arthur Young and published in the *Annals of Agriculture*.⁵ The writer, R. LeGrand, asked the parish clerk and the master of the workhouse of Ash to collect for

1. Rickman recognised this source of deficiency, but did not attempt to calculate the error involved. Glass P.I.H.(1965) 223.
2. Drake (ed Wrigley) (1972) 24.
3. L.P.S.5 (Autumn 1970) 43 and 7 (Autumn 1971) 65 lists some of these.
4. I owe a copy of this listing to Mr J. Bones of Eastry.
5. Annals of Agriculture XI (1789) 363-6. This reference was given me by Dr. A. Armstrong.

him material mainly relating to the poor law. "The facts are to be depended upon," he wrote, "the conjecture of the number of inhabitants is erroneous. I believe two thousand is near (and not exceeding) the truth." The date of the letter is 1789. His informants estimated the population at 1362 "according to the proportion of 5 to a house." In 1801 the census return was 1575. R. LeGrand's guess of a minimum number of 2,000 could only be right on the unlikely assumption that 1789 to 1801 saw a big fall in population in this parish. It is, perhaps, a nice illustration of the impression which a gentleman had of the teeming numbers of poor, quite out of proportion to the reality. It also lends support to the likely accuracy of the early censuses.

In 1841 the system of distributing and completing householders schedules was introduced, and the books into which the enumerators copied the schedules have been preserved in the Public Record Office. They form a comprehensive data base at the end of the period studied. Limited use has been made by historians of the first householder schedules. "The lack of any indication of relationship to the head of the household, the less precise statements of age, the omission of localised birth-places, and other features, make them incapable of such sophisticated interpretation as is possible for 1851 onwards. They are, moreover, very much less easy to handle, being poorly written for the most part and less systematically arranged. From every point of view it is the greatest pity that this should be so, for most historians of the nineteenth century would agree that the early 1840's are a key period in the history of industrial and rural communities alike."¹ It seems that the 1841 census has been dismissed in unnecessarily cavalier a fashion. For the purposes of this study, 1841 is close to the reorganisation of the poor law undertaken in 1834; it also catches rural society when it had just passed the apogee of its population expansion, but before the rural exodus which was to become very obvious in the following decades.

1. Tillott (ed. Wrigley) (1972) 82.

It is true that the 1841 enumerators were instructed to use pencil in writing their books, and in some cases this has become very difficult to read. In East Kent, however, no books were encountered which were unusable for this reason. More difficulty was encountered with poor handwriting, especially in the parish of Chislet, but this can be true of any manuscript source. A second weakness is that ages were not exactly recorded, but were rounded down to the nearest five for all ages over 16. This is certainly the origin of some errors, and introduces a difficulty in cross-matching 1841 and 1851 census persons or households. A man stated to be 35 in 1841 could be 45 to 49 in 1851.¹ In practice, however, the majority of links can be made reliably between groupings of people in households,² and other information such as names and occupations can also be used to support links. "Ages were often uncertain (comparative studies of the 51 and 61 returns show them to have been so) and some were intentionally obscured."³ This may exaggerate the weakness in later censuses, but the same weakness in 1841 data does not seem a sufficient reason for not using it at all.

The third and most cogent objection is that the schedules do not include information about family structure. Names, ages, and order of listing, have to be used to deduce relationships in each household. In 1851 a precise question on "relationship to head of household" was included. It is interesting that the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys has recently experimented with omission of this question, and has used surnames to identify family groups. It found that the numbers of families so identified parallel closely the numbers achieved by the relationship data.⁴ Even with the more

1. Razzell (1972) 122-6 found that between 1851 and 1861 censuses the stated ages of 91.6% of all people traced agreed within 3 years. In Preston the same matching process indicated 96% of all stated ages to be reliable within 2 years. Checking 1851 census ages against parish registers, Razzell found 93.9% agreed within 3 years.
2. For the same reason, Wrigley (1975) 299 argues for the greater accuracy of comparisons between family reconstitution forms and 1851 census than of individual baptism records and the census.
3. Tillott (ed. Wrigley) (1972) 84.
4. L.P.S. 14 (Spring 1975) 8 "The Census of 1976 Cancelled."

precise 1851 census, uncertainty can arise as to the proper use of the concept "head of the household", and the structure of complex households therefore be doubtful. The conventions adopted for analysis will to some extent influence the outcome.¹

It is fair to say that sophisticated analysis of family and kinship structures is not, therefore, possible from 1841 census enumerators' books, but a valuable delineation of social structure is still quite feasible. The same is to an even larger extent true of pre-census nominative listings, while the advantages of the information outweigh the defects of the source. "All in all, the abiding impression after examining a large number of enumerators' books is admiration for the skill of nineteenth century administration, coupled with faith in the accuracy of the results."² There seems no reason why this verdict should not be applicable to the 1841 enumerators as well as to their successors. A sample of parishes, drawn because of the availability of other source material, has been studied in 1841, and all households within those parishes have been included.³ Only limited use has been made of 1851 census enumerators' books, to provide some indications of persistence within communities over the decade of the 40's, which can perhaps suggest trends for earlier decades. The 1851 census has also been used to examine the birthplace data not available in 1841.

(ii) Listings of inhabitants before 1801

For earlier decades, it has been possible to make use of listings of inhabitants for certain East Kent communities. Most notable are the listings made in 1705 under the Marriage Duties Act of 1696,⁴ for the Wingham Division of Kent. Amongst the 46 parishes for which listings have survived are a number where poor law documents are also available. Only a few of the 1705

1. For discussion of the problems in 1841 and 1851 and the conventions adopted see Appendix VIII.
2. Tillott (1972) 84.
3. See Bibliography, where the parishes studied and the P.R.O. references are given.
4. KAO/Q/CTZ. The Act was 6 & 7 W.& M. c 6. Glass, P.I.H. (1965) 236-7 discusses the Act briefly, and more fully in the introduction to London Inhabitants within the Walls (1966).

listings give occupations and some are difficult to analyse for household structure. The enumerator failed to divide the list of names into household groups, or to list all inhabitants by name (from which families could at least be deduced) or to indicate the status of single names (which might be servants or single person households). In fact there were a variety of ways in which even in this small group of listings information was presented.¹ However, a number of the more precise listings have been used by Laslett as part of the data for his study of household structure in England in pre-industrial times,² making possible some useful comparisons with 1841 census data. In addition to the 1705 documents, a few listings for the parishes included in this study which were made in connection with the later 17th century Poll Tax have been located;³ and also a listing which formed the basis of an 1801 census return for the parish of Eastry, which has already been mentioned.

Particularly valuable is the information which listings made before 1801 can provide of the size of the population, to be set against census population figures. Growth rates can be examined, and demographic factors in different communities compared. Listings can be collated with other local information to allow a more detailed analysis of the community. Comparison of the population totals derived from the listings and from the more often used and more comprehensive Compton Census of 1676 can also be drawn. These prove to be at once illuminating or in some cases baffling, revealing discrepancies which are hard to explain. When two or more sources of this kind are placed in juxtaposition, there is no one source which can be accepted as definitive.

One problem is that the boundaries of the communities concerned varied

1. Laslett (1972) 88 suggests a set of "Rules for presumption in use by the Cambridge Group for the Study of Population and Social Structure," to deal with this non-standard information.
2. Laslett (1969) 199 ff.
3. KAO/Sa/RTZ 4. Of interest in this connection is the listing for the Vill of Sarre, and for St. Clement's Sandwich.

according to the different administrative units. Some of the 1705 listings, like the earlier Hearth Tax returns,¹ followed the ancient administrative divisions of Kent called "boroughs". Boroughs were equivalent to tithings in other counties. Often borough and parish boundaries coincided, but in numbers of cases there were several boroughs to a parish, and sometimes borough boundaries ran across parish boundaries. When this happened, the larger administrative districts of the "hundreds" also fragmented parishes. Thus in Eastry parish, according to Hasted,² there were two boroughs: Hardenden, which was in the upper half hundred of Downhamford; and Eastry Street, which was in Eastry hundred; but part also of the borough of Felderland was in Eastry parish, and part in Worth, both being within Eastry hundred. Many of these anomalies survived into the early 19th century censuses, and then were gradually rationalised. No doubt such divisions had their origins in manorial estates; the boroughs or tithings were groupings of people responsible for a certain fixed amount of tax. When parish boundaries were drawn, it was on a later, seigneurial basis.

In the 1705 listings, not every parish has been clearly returned by borough. In the Hearth Tax too there appears to have been "indiscriminate" use of parish or borough division.³ The variation was perhaps based on the parishes' own individual administrative practices. Thus Ash habitually used the two boroughs, Chilton and Overland, for all parish lists, for example rating lists, whether for poor relief or for the upkeep of the church. In some parishes the borough divisions were inconvenient, as in Eastry, and were not used. Such discrepancies make it more difficult to compare sources, or to establish population figures which can be used in conjunction with

1. KAO/Q/RTh. The enrolled assessment for 1664 in the Kent Archives office has been used. It is said to be "very complete" and contains about 26,000 names. It includes lists of "not chargeable" as well as "chargeable" hearths. It does not, however, contain returns from any of the Kentish liberties. Guide to the Kent County Archives Office (1958) 34.
2. Hasted (1800) X 98.
3. The indiscriminate use of parish or borough divisions and other boundary problems in the Hearth Tax are discussed by Coleman (1951) 386-392.

ecclesiastical records such as parish registers. Nonetheless the information to be gained from the comparisons is of considerable interest.

(iii) Estimating parish population totals before 1801: the Compton Census and other sources.

At the instigation of Archbishop Sheldon of Canterbury, returns of "persons, or at least families" were made to Compton, bishop of London, in 1676, to provide evidence of whether or not the established church had lost ground to dissent since the restoration. They are usually regarded as returns of numbers of communicants within each parish, with separate figures for non-conformists and for papists; Archdeacon Parker stated specifically for the Canterbury diocese that children under 16 were omitted. As these returns were made for individual parishes, they form a useful basis for the study of population, and have been used for example in studies of 17 Shropshire parishes,¹ or for trends in population distribution and growth in Bedfordshire.² The returns relating to Kent have been published. The editor shows that they are a poor guide to the real extent of dissent; variation in the interpretation of the question "how many persons or at least families inhabit your parish?" has not however been demonstrated.

In the original text of the Canterbury diocesan returns, the figure for Ash-next-Sandwich is stated to be for "families", for the parishes of Monkton and River to include children, and for two other parishes outside East Kent to exclude servants. Apart from these exceptions, it is assumed that to arrive at a total population figure, the Compton Census should be inflated to allow for young persons, non-communicants under 16 years of age. Chalklin made a spot check with other sources and concluded that under 16's were excluded from the returns.⁴ Systematic comparison with the 1705 listings, however, indicates that this is an unreliable assumption.

1. Sögner (1963-4) 126 ff.
3. ed. Chalklin (1960) 153-174.

2. Marshall (1934) 11.
4. Ibid 154-57.

What proportion of the population was under the age of 16? Hoskins suggests 40%¹ and this seems a reasonable average figure. Some of the 1705 listings for East Kent designate children clearly (though they do not state their ages). In Wingham they formed 36% of the total, in Preston 49.5%, in Buckland 36%. Thus the proportion varied considerably. In the 66 communities for which Laslett was able to calculate the proportion of children, they accounted for 42.6% overall;² Gregory King indicates an estimate for England and Wales at the end of the 17th century of 39% under 16 in London, 42% in towns and 45% in the country.³ To establish the ground for comparison, the Compton Census figures have accordingly been inflated by 40%.

In view of the approximate nature of the population estimates calculated from the Compton Census, exact agreement with the figures derived from listings would not be expected. Furthermore, the two sources being compared are a generation apart. Some growth or decline in population could have occurred,⁴ so that small differences will not invalidate either of the population estimates. Large differences, on the other hand, do point either to boundary anomalies, or some incorrect assumptions. In 18 parishes, the two sets of figures agree quite closely, and these are set out in table 2.1. Section 1. For 22 of the 1705 communities, however, there is no fit with the Compton Census on the basis so far discussed. In 14 of these cases, set out in Section 2, the best consistency is achieved if it is assumed that children are included in the Compton Census. These parishes include Monkton and River, where this is stated explicitly to be the case. (Even so, Monkton shows a fair growth of population in the 30th years; perhaps boundary differences are also involved). There remain 8 parishes listed in Section 3 when a

1. Hoskins (1959) 145.
2. Laslett (1969) 217. For individual communities, the average was $41.5 \pm 9.8\%$.
3. Glass P.I.H. (1969) 212.
4. Harvests were good for the majority of years in the period (Hoskins (1968) 29-30) and there were no major epidemics, though according to Creighton (1965)II 44-6 mortality was high in London. Even so the "seven ill years" of the end of the century were mainly experienced in Scotland.

variety of reasons are necessary to explain discrepancies, or where explanations are difficult to find.

In Ash, the 220 families in 1676 can be easily reconciled with the 1181 persons listed in 1705, by assuming a family size of 5.0. The 1705 listing itself however gives an average family size of 4.5. Perhaps it should be assumed here that in 1676 the population was nearer 1,000, and some growth occurred. It seems clear that the incumbent of St. Lawrence also returned families in 1676; exactly comparable calculations to those for Ash, using a multiplier of 4.5 in 1676, make the two population estimates agree reasonably while suggesting some population growth in this parish also in the interval to 1705.

Goodnestone presents an interesting case study. The listing compiled by the Rector in order to make his return to the Archbishop has survived.¹ It shows 62 households and 277 persons. In the final return, the total is given as 281. Thus the Rector presumably added in his own household, and returned a total count of all persons, another instance of children being included in the final figure. In 1705, on the other hand, the listing shows only 27 households and 76 persons. The explanation perhaps lies in the loss of a listing for some part of the parish.²

Wickham points up the problem of the boroughs. The 1705 listing is presented under the title "North Borough". Hasted only recorded one borough in the parish, but the Hearth Tax had North Borough (26 names) and South Borough (32 names). The total of 58 chargeable and non-chargeable hearths multiplied by 5 for an approximation to total population, produces a figure (290) close to the Compton Census figure inflated by 40%. It seems possible to conclude that Wickham should perhaps be added to the list of parishes where the Compton Census returned a figure of communicants. It

1. Laslett (1965) 64. The return is in Canterbury Cathedral Library.
2. Hasted records only one borough in Goodnestone, and in the Hearth Tax there were 47 hearths in Goodnestone borough. The 1705 listing is thus clearly defective.

remains difficult to explain the 1705 listing, which does not match either of the two boroughs in Wickham, but is too small in relation to the Compton Census.

This discussion leaves unexplained four parishes listed in Section 3: Womenswold, Woodnesborough and Wootton for which the Compton Census figures bear a relationship of approximately a third to the 1705 listings, and Nonnington where the relationship is less than half. There are 46 separate parishes for which 1705 listings have survived. For four there are no Compton returns: Barfrestone, Poulton, Stonar and Westcliff. At Barfrestone the incumbent was said to be in hiding because of his poverty. The 1705 figure of 50 persons is consistent with the count in 1722 of 58 persons (and in 1640 there were 40 communicants);¹ at Westcliff in 1705 there were 36 people and in 1640 there were 20 communicants.² For these two parishes other evidence supports the reliability of the 1705 listing. Other 1705 listings are obviously incomplete: for "part of Hougham", and "part of Northbourne (Ashleyborough) and Little Mongeham" which are listed together. No useful comparisons can be made here. This completes the total of 46 parishes covered in 1705.

It seems fair to conclude that the Compton Census, so very useful because it gives a figure for each individual parish, has in practice to be used very cautiously, because of considerable variation in the basis of the figures returned. Straightforward inflation of all the returns by 40% can lead in some cases to quite large errors. Listings can provide more reliable evidence of population size, especially if used in conjunction with other records.

1. Hasted (1799) IV 201-2.
2. Ibid 32.

Table 2. 1. Comparison of Compton Census 1676 and 1705 ListingsSection 1Parishes where Compton Census excludes children

<u>Parish</u>	<u>Compton Census</u>	<u>Inflated by 40%</u>	<u>Listing 1705</u>
1. Barham	287	480	(480) ¹
2. Buckland	60	100	106
3. Chillenden	53	88	77
4. Denton	60	100	92
5. Elmstone	32	53	54
6. Great Mongeham	86	143	154
7. Guston	60	100	82
8. Ham	14	23	23
9. Ickham	140	233	258
10. Knowlton	16	27	29
11. Littlebourne	188	313	274
12. Minster	253	421	(444) ²
13. Preston	144	240	264
14. St. Nicholas, Thanet	160	267	245 ³
15. Shepherdsweil	110	183	160
16. West Langdon	45	75	76
17. Whitfield	69	115	131
18. Wingham	300	500	580

Notes.

1. In Barham, the 1705 listing mentions but does not count children and servants, and the 293 persons (minimum) have been inflated by 40%.
2. In Minster, the 1705 listing appears to omit children and wives, but to include servants and the 111 persons named have been multiplied by 4.
3. There is no 1705 listing for the Vill of Sarre, as for civil administration it was not part of the Wingham Division but a limb of the Cinque port of Sandwich. For ecclesiastical purposes, however, Sarre was joined with St. Nicholas, and would probably have been included in the Compton Census. In 1689 there were 52 inhabitants (KAO/Sa/RT2 4).

Section 2Parishes where Compton Census includes children

<u>Parish</u>	<u>Compton Census</u>	<u>1705 Listing</u>
1. Adisham	120	125
2. Bettshanger	20	17
3. East Langdon	102	(110) ⁴
4. Eastry	540	464
5. Ewell	70	74
6. Eythorne	77	73
7. Monkton	154	207
8. Ripple	50	69
9. River	100	121
10. Stodmarsh	48	54
11. Sutton	56	65
12. Tilmanstone	96	119
13. Waldershare	31	35
14. Worth	150	118

Note.

4. In East Langdon no children are apparently included in the 1705 listing, and the 66 persons named have been inflated by 40%.

Section 3Doubtful or anomalous cases

<u>Parish</u>	<u>Compton Census</u>	<u>1705 Listing</u>
1. Ash	220 families	1181
2. Goodnestone	281	76
3. Nonnington	140	305
4. St. Lawrence	120	613
5. Wickham	169 (+ 40% = 281)	213
6. Womenswold	40	106
7. Woodnesborough	145	428
8. Wootton	35	85

(iv) Parish Registers

The exploitation of parish registers is a growing field of historical research, and the methodology has been carefully described.¹ The technique of aggregative analysis, which counts year by year or month by month the total number of registered vital events (baptisms, marriages and burials) was pioneered by Rickman in the early censuses. His published parish register abstracts have formed the major quarry for historical demography of the 18th and early 19th century. Recent historical work has looked more closely at individual parishes or at regions.² While both the location and timing of population growth in the 18th century are matters of argument, the overall increase in the population of England and Wales from around 5.5 million in 1698 to 9 million in 1801 seems to offer an obvious economic explanation for increased poor law costs over the same period.³ Thus the poverty of agricultural labourers at the turn of the 18th century has been seen as a result of over supply of labour, and not attributable to the poor law or to the farmers. "Among the various factors affecting poor law expenditure.....we see now that the fundamental factor was the great upswing of population.....expanding the labour force at a rate faster than agriculture could absorb it, and the growth of numbers, of landless and sometimes unemployable labourers was observable both in enclosed and the still open villages."⁴ On a local scale, it seems that in East Kent the timing of the rise in population may not coincide with the rise in poor law expenditure; furthermore in the 18th century the home population of some of the parishes which experienced escalating relief costs did not alter at anything like a comparable rate. Population rise was notable in the early 19th century, just as a mammoth attempt was under way to hold or even reduce relief costs. This

1. Eversley (chapter 3) describes aggregative analysis and Wrigley (chapter 4) describes family reconstitution in ed. Wrigley I.H.D.(1966); ed. Wrigley (1973) describes recent intensive effort at computer analysis of parish registers.
2. The two most influential studies have been of the Vale of Trent by Chambers (1957) and of Colyton by Wrigley (1966) and (1968).
3. Glass P.I.H.(1965) 203-4. Glass would reduce Gregory King's estimate of 5.5 million for the population of England and Wales to 5.2 million; the 1801 census count was increased by Rickman to 9.2 million. Ibid 223.
4. Chambers & Mingay (1966) 102.

incongruous evidence therefore needs more careful and detailed examination. Aggregative analysis of particular parish registers can provide some information on the timing and extent of population change within each community, which can be set beside the figures of poor law expenditure.

The weaknesses of parish registers and of the parish register abstracts have been frequently discussed. When Rickman asked for returns of numbers of registered events, he failed to get replies from all parishes, and at that date many registers were missing. Rickman recognised that the registers themselves were also defective, because of peoples' failure to use the church, or because of the poor record keeping of clerk or clergy. But after making adjustments for deficiencies he concluded that the Registers "were found to be in a state sufficiently correct for any general Purpose." He did not consider that their deficiencies had altered during the 18th century.¹

Modern historians doubt the efficiency of all incumbents in making the returns from the registers in their charge, and also place more emphasis on the factors making for deterioration in levels of registration in the later 18th century: the growth of towns and of dissent would both have tended to discourage or even make it impossible for many people to use the sacraments of the established church.² For large urban centres, experiencing considerable population mobility, it is obvious that parish registers will understate the true numbers of baptisms, marriages and burials.³ In smaller towns and country villages the accuracy of parish registers may be much greater. In Colyton, for example, "Anglican registration held up well" and the total deficiencies of the baptism registers have been estimated at 11%.⁴

1. Glass P.I.H. (1965) 222-3.

2. Krause P.I.H. (1965) 379 ff. Razzell (1972) 121 ff. has supported Krause's argument as far as baptisms are concerned, using estimates of Church of England register deficiencies based on a cross-matching with 1851 census information. The baptisms of persons stated in the census to be born in a particular parish were checked against the registers of that parish. This procedure is open to substantial errors due to misleading census statements (of name, age and birth place) or a genuine difference between place of birth and place of baptism. Wrigley (1975) 299 ff.

3. Razzell *op cit* 128 shows steady deterioration with size of place.

4. Wrigley (1975) 307-9. Of this 11%, 6.3% of the missing baptisms took place in the Nonconformist chapels.

The registers used in this study are mainly for smaller urban or rural communities, and thus will be less likely to be substantially defective. There is one common defect, however, in the Commonwealth period. Often there are complete lacunae from the mid 1640's to the mid 1650's. Even where a register continued through the civil war period, as at Eastry, it shows a lower level of registered events, suggesting incompleteness. Apart from the civil war period, the registers which have been used are without substantial gaps. Between 1653 and 1660, on the other hand, the level of registration is sometimes higher than in the preceding or post-Restoration periods. Variability of coverage like this, when a form of record is maintained, is much harder to detect and allow for than complete gaps. During the period when information was required for returns under the Marriage Duties Act (1696-1704) incumbents sometimes seem also to have kept their registers more carefully. At St. Dunstan's, Canterbury, occupations and familial relationships were recorded and the level of registration was higher.¹ There was a slow run-down from the date of expiry of this legislation. Perhaps the registration implications of the Act drew into the church's orbit temporarily some who left again when it was repealed, or perhaps it merely made the record keeper more conscientious in his duties. Record keeping in East Kent seems also to have improved in the later 18th century. Age and familial relationships were more often recorded, though not universally. The introduction of the printed form of register for marriages in 1754 may have encouraged this. After 1813 printed registers standardised the form and content of burial and baptism entries also.

With these limitations, six rural parishes have been analysed aggregatively, using the original registers; the printed register of one urban parish has been analysed also, supplemented with the original registers as necessary. Published work provides the material for study of another urban parish.

1. Glass P.I.H. (1965) 237 suggests this might well be so.

Aggregative analysis was inappropriate for four very small parishes: Chillenden, Knowlton and Waldershare, and the Vill of Christ Church where the parish church is also the cathedral, although other relevant material on these parishes has been used. The printed parish register abstracts provide material for Canterbury, Dover and Sandwich.¹ For one parish, a much more detailed study of the parish registers has been made through the technique of family reconstitution. Such small scale parish studies may be one way of meeting the charge that historians try to make bricks without straw from 18th century parish register statistics.² Certainly insight into the demographic history of the parishes and into some of the mechanisms of change cannot be obtained in any other way.

1. See Bibliography for full list of parishes and sources.
2. Chambers (1972) 107.

3. Rate books as sources for the study of the distribution of wealth.

Increasing use is being made of rate books as a source, particularly those for urban communities in the 19th and 20 century.¹ Standardised, printed books were used then as for example by the Poor Law Unions after the reorganisation of administration set in train by the Poor Law Amendment Act in 1834. A very considerable quantity of similar material, though less standardised, exists on a parish basis for earlier periods. Rate books generated by the old poor law administration have already been mentioned; they indicate the amount of money raised to meet poor law expenditure, and show how the burden was allocated between the parish's inhabitants. They usually consist simply of lists of names with the amount of the rating assessment shown against each name. Occasionally, particularly in the 19th century, descriptions of property are given, and more often throughout the series both landlords and tenants are listed.² Exactly comparable rating records were compiled for purposes other than poor law.

The practice of levying rates is an ancient one; examples can be found as far back as the 13th century,³ and by the 16th century, when several statutes authorised their collection, the practice was widespread. In 1843 George Coode, reporting to the Poor Law Commission, found nearly 200 different purposes for which rates were raised.⁴ As far as parish administration was concerned, three rates were most regularly raised: for the maintenance of the highways, for the poor and for the church, all of which are closely comparable in form though not necessarily identical. Many records of these assessments from the 16th to the 19th century have survived. Of the three, the poor rate was certainly the most important.

1. For example Daunton (1974) for the study of Cardiff and Holmes (1976) for Ramsgate.
2. Sometimes there may be doubt about the recording of owners, especially where one owner compounded for a number of small tenants and paid for them all. However, parish officers were normally careful to record where a payment was not made by the occupier, such information perhaps being required in any dispute about assessments. Daunton (1976) 22.
3. For example Romney Marsh "Scots". Tate (1969) 26.
4. PP 1843 XX 19. Hereafter referred to as Coode (1843).

A Cess granted the 27th of June 1830. by Thomas Coleman, and George Puxted, Churchwardens, Michael Becker, Henry Winter Ridden, William Ralph, and Richard Southce, Overseers of the Parish of Ash with the consent of the other Parishioners for the Relief of the Poor after the Rate of One Shilling in the Pound on all the Lands and Houses in the Parish.

Chilton Parochial		Property	Rated at	Rate
Occupiers	Owners		£ s d.	£ s d.
Adkins Henry	Mess ^{rs} Adkins	House & Land	8 10	8 6
Do	Do	Orchard	1 10	1 0
Do	Heimself	Do	.. 10	.. 0
Do	Do	Land	1 10	1 0
Andrew Thomas	John Train	House	2	2
Ansell James	John Woodward	Do	2	2
Appleton Charles	Mess ^{rs} Adkins	House &c	3	3
Allen James	M ^{rs} Kingland	Do	2 10	2 6
Belsey Thomas	M ^{rs} Burckman	Stair &c	131 10	6 11 6
Do	Do	Oast	2	2
Beerling James	Killy Nazer	Cottage	3	3
Baker Thomas	Heimself	House & Land	5	6
Bassenden M ^{rs}	Heimself	Stair &c	1 8	2 8
Beer James	John Kelson	House &c	2 10	2 0
Beerling Henry	John Appleton	Do	3	3
Becker Moses	M. W. Baker	Do	3 10	3 6
Late Birch Stephen	M ^{rs} Foster Compt ^{rs}	Do	2 10	2 0
Bird John	Lech Hudson	Do	1	1
Bird Richard	John Laver	Do	3	3
Branford John Jun ^r	Heimself	House & Land	13 10	13 6
Brett Richardson	Heimself	Plantation	1 10	1 6
Do	Do	Land	2 10	2 6
Do	Do	Stair &c	3 5	1 15
Brewer William	J. M. Hector Esq ^r	House &c	2	2
Burton John	M ^{rs} Hammond	House & Land	11 10	11 6
Burton James	Mess ^{rs} Adkins	House &c	3	3
Banks Thomas	John Kingsford	Do	2 10	2 6
Bushell John	M ^{rs} Fisher	Do	23 10	1 3 6

Elizabeth I's Poor Relief Act of 1597-8 gave the first statutory authority for the collection of a poor rate, and its provisions were repeated in 1601. "The comparative largeness of the burden excited at all times more than ordinary attention to it, and therefore caused more than ordinary care to be used in its adjustment."¹ The poor rate was often taken as the basis of later rates, for example for the purposes of a Paving Act;² yet the manner in which it was assessed was not uniform but largely based on local custom.

Rates are a form of local taxation, whereby a required amount of revenue is apportioned according to some criterion of wealth.³ The Elizabethan drafters of the Poor Relief Act wished rates to be levied on persons in accordance with their ability to pay, and theoretically a man's commitments - wife, family, business - could have been taken into account.⁴ Early "cess" or assessment lists could be made by common agreement and estimation, as in St. Peter's, Sandwich in 1598, and examples of this method could still be found in use in 19th century London.⁵ But generally real property was the most obvious indication of ability to pay. Early rating lists in East Kent, such as those for Chislet in 1604 and Ash in 1605, show assessments on numbers of acres of land occupied.⁶ In Chislet upland and marshland were differentially rated. Some payments were also made on the basis of a sum of money written down for "ability". In 1704 in Ash those paying for "ability" were a brickmaker, 2 carpenters, a surgeon, a shoemaker, a tallow-chandler and 3 maltsters. "Ability", particularly as represented by moveable goods and chattels or stock-in-trade, was not very easily or satisfactorily measured.⁷

1. Coode (1843) 19.

2. For example Canterbury's Act for Paving 1738-9 (12 Geo.II C29) empowered the collection of a rate on the basis of the poor rate.

3. Cannan (1912) 4.

4. Ibid 79. A decision was made in the court of King's Bench as late as 1698 that "there ought to be regard 'ad statum et facultates'" in levying rates.

5. Ibid 79.

6. The information on farm sizes derived from this rating information can be compared with that from the tithe surveys of the 1830's and 1840's.

7. The Select Committee on the Poor Laws in 1817 reluctantly came to the decision that it was impossible to collect a rate on stock-in-trade. PP 1817 VI 5.

Before the end of the 17th century "rents" had been very generally substituted for all other methods of assessment,¹ being a money sum which provided a more flexible but simple basis. Payment was made at so much for every pound of assessed rent. Chislet had made the change before 1658; in Ash the changeover can be witnessed in 1704-5.

It is not always clear how each parish arrived at a figure for "rent" as set down in the record - whether it was the actual figure paid for the property (or in the case of owners the notional rent for which the property could be let), whether inclusive or exclusive of taxes, whether subject to deductions for repairs,² whether revalued to keep pace with changes in "the sum at which the land will let", and so on. It is clear that the final valuation represented the lowest that the occupier concerned could secure in the face of close personal knowledge of other parishioners, all anxiously watching lest they should be over-taxed. When it is realised that new rating lists were frequently drawn up at monthly intervals, the basis on which it could be said that everyone in a community knew everyone else's business becomes very intelligible. Parish rating lists represent a carefully considered allocation of the relative wealth of the parish amongst its inhabitants.

The majority of assessments were on individual inhabitants, though exceptional items such as the Sandwich ferryway, and after 1819 the market tolls, and in Dover the harbour and wharves, were also rated. It had been established in 1589 that the parishioners and inhabitants liable to be rated should be defined as all those who occupied land and therefore could theoretically dwell in the parish.³ This decision had been incorporated in the 1597 Poor Relief Act. Rating lists usually distinguished between those who actually did live in the parish, the "in-dwellers" and those who only occupied land in the parish, the "out-dwellers". This is an important distinction. It shows

1. Coode (1843) 33.

2. Ibid 35, concluded that it was usual in practice for parishes to reduce actual rents by a proportion for repairs to arrive at an assessment. One third, half, five ninths are three fractions by which valuations were reduced in East Kent. Some parishes worked on full or "rack" rents.

3. Cannan (1912) 24.

the proportion of the parish's land farmed by those living outside its bounds, especially significant where there was a large amount of marshland; it also enables a realistic comparison to be made between the rated inhabitants and other population information.

Even so, not all inhabitants of a parish were rated, and the proportion of those who were varied over time. An early poor relief rating list survives for St. Peter's, Sandwich.¹ It was clearly made in response to the 1597 Poor Relief Act, and lists sums "to be leavyed and gathered monethly by thes men appoynteyd by the parishioners according to statute." It was accompanied by "A view of the poor people in St. Peter's parish." None of the 24 families described as poor appears to have been assessed for rates. At the same time "Mr Manwood's bread given to 40 poor people whereof there is more than are before named." This list contains a further 40 single names.² It seems likely that St. Peter's was following the same type of instruction as that contained in the "Charge to the Churchwardens and Overseers of the Poor" of Chislet, dated April 1598, issued by the Justices of the Peace.³ It asked for "convenient money to be raised by indifferently rating every inhabitant according to ability and every occupier of land according to quantity of his sayd occupying as much money as necessary not comprehending the poorer sort."

Cross-matching of rating lists and other listings of inhabitants confirms that "the poorer sort" continued to be generally not rated. In Ash in 1705, typically, 46% of the listed households were not rated,⁴ and this proportion increased to at least 56% by 1762. At the end of the 18th century similar

1. CCL/U3/12/11.

2. It is difficult to weigh exactly the proportion not rated, because the rating list, which was arranged alphabetically, is no longer complete. Only letters A-R are extant.

3. CCL/U3/55.

4. Other 1705 listings compared with parish rating lists show similar proportions:

Chillenden	12 rated	7 not rated	(plus Rector)		
Wickhambreux	26 "	23 "	"	"	"

proportions were not rated in Chislet (between 46% and 48%).¹

In the early 19th century there is evidence of an attempt in numbers of parishes to bring rating valuations into line with current economic realities and also to extend the rating burden to all households in the community. It was suggested that the practice of not rating the poor was injurious, because as their pockets were not affected, they were not vigilant over the conduct of their neighbours.² Thus in the Urban and Rural Queries sent out by the Poor Law Commission there was a question on whether cottages were liable to rates.³ Despite this, when 1841 census households are compared with parish rating lists close in time⁴ there is still evidence of a considerable number of households not rated.

Table 2.2 1841 Census households not rated

Parish	% households not rated	No.
Ash	17.0	68
Eastry	7.1	16
St Clements, Sandwich	14.0	23
St Nicholas	25.6	33
Sarre	35.7	15
Wickham	35.1	34

There are, therefore, as with any historical source, limitations to the comprehensiveness of rate-book information. Rating lists may have intrinsic homogeneity, but they are not comparable in money terms from parish to parish, or even from one period to another within one parish. Changes in procedure,

1. Calculated by comparing lists of labourers owing statutory highways service with rating lists (Ash parish chest and CCL/U3/55).
2. PP 1843 XX 42.
3. PP 1834 XXX-XXXVI Qs 21 and 52.
4. Churchwardens Rates not more than 1 year away from the census have been used. With this time interval, mobility will have caused some census households to appear not to be rated. The convention adopted for the definition of a census household may also affect the comparison in a small degree, if sub-tenants do not pay rates but appear in the census to be independent households.

as in substituting rents for acreage, revaluations, and simple administrative changes, have to be taken into account. Often such changes reveal by implication something valuable about the general economic life of the parish and its inhabitants. Coverage of the population of the area varied too, from parish to parish and over time. Nonetheless a mass of material survives, sometimes in almost unbroken succession from 1601, which reveals aspects of the communities studied which it is impossible to derive in any other way, and which is of great interest in considering social changes which may be of relevance to the old poor law.

4. Literary Sources.

Finally, it is possible to note some unusual source material relating to East Kent. This is the writings of a local vicar in the early 19th century, G.R. Gleig. His interest in the area and in the lives of his parishioners led him to write about the locality on more than one occasion, the most remarkable being a book entitled "Chronicles of Waltham". This was a set of 6 self-contained tales, ostensibly fictional, published in 1835.¹ Much later in life, when an old man, Gleig wrote again about the period of his incumbency in Ash, in his book "Personal Reminiscences of the Duke of Wellington" (1904). His portrait of the area, descriptions of persons, and direct analysis of the old poor law in operation are an unusual supplement to the more conventional source material.

G.R. Gleig was born in 1796, the son of a Scottish bishop, and after attending Balliol College he went into the army and fought with the Duke of Wellington in the Peninsular War. It seems to have been as a result of a personal acquaintance with the Duke of Wellington that after entering the Church Gleig was given the living at Ash, which was a perpetual curacy.² He stayed in Ash from 1821 to 1834, critical years for the old poor law. He was then offered the Chaplaincy of Chelsea Hospital, and as he tells us left Ash with some regret. He could write half a century later of the farewell dinner at the Ship Inn, and the silver epergne, purchased with the subscriptions of "the labouring people and small shopkeepers" which he hoped would always remain in his family. He claimed to have known all his 2,000 parishioners by name "and greeted them on every occasion, whether in their own houses or elsewhere, as if they had been connected with me by some tie of kindred."³ The year after his departure from Ash the Chronicles of Waltham was published, though as his obituary in Blackwood's comments, his

1. Published in 3 volumes, each volume containing 2 tales.
2. The Duke of Wellington was Warden of the Cinque Ports and often stayed in his official residence at Walmer Castle, where Gleig sometimes visited him.
3. Gleig (1904) 116-7.

novels "never attained any great success."¹

"The tales themselves are to be regarded as nothing more than a vehicle by means of which I have judged it expedient to describe, partly, scenes that have to a certain extent passed under my own observation, partly my own opinions with reference to points, on which all men will and do form judgements for themselves." This declaration in the preface makes clear the direct application of the tales to a real situation, though Gleig begs "distinctly to disclaim every thing like an allusion to individuals" and makes some attempts to obscure the exact location of "Waltham".²

Each tale begins with a chapter of general social and economic reflections, before moving on to the illustrative fictional story. Gleig describes an agricultural village, and discusses its social and economic situation. He presents an analysis of farming conditions during the Napoleonic Wars, which of course cannot be based on first hand experience; his first tale hinges on the displacement of a small tenant farmer because "small farms won't answer." Subsequent tales follow through the fortunes of the hero's own career and that of his family. The situation of the labourer and the administration of the poor law form an integral and important part of the stories and this was written from first hand knowledge. Gleig was responsible for making replies to the Rural Queries on behalf of the parish of Ash, and his comments there reflect succinctly the views he develops in the Chronicles of Waltham. His evidence supports the Poor Law Commissioner on the prevalence of allowances in Kent, to which he too attributed most deleterious effects.

The events leading to the Swing Riots are vividly described. In many details the account was repeated 50 years later, and clearly made a deep

1. Blackwoods, August 1888 - from which obituary notice biographical details have been drawn.
2. Nonetheless when the Chronicles of Waltham were published, one prominent family in Ash took legal advice on a libel action and a later generation of the same family was able to identify many of the characters "alluded to." (Letter, in private possession, from George Solley, 1937, in which he states he "felt it to be a small duty to posterity to place on record what I learned from my father" in respect of Gleig. His father was seven years old when Gleig became vicar of Ash.)

impression on Gleig's mind. "All that followed is as fresh in my memory as if events which occurred 60 years ago had occurred but yesterday."¹ He related his own part in the two outbreaks in Ash. In his opinion vain attempts were then made to remedy the problem of unemployment. The only tangible result of the riots was the humbling of a proud overseer.

Gleig's local testimony is certainly not to be disregarded. Like other vicars of country parishes he stood outside the immediate agricultural world, and felt impelled to comment on the condition of the agricultural labourer. Davies² collected budgets and revealed the unrealistic as well as inhuman attitude of those campaigning for the poor to "manage" on a pittance by making best use of their resources to cook "nourishing broths." Howlett³ wrote of the poor "Their exigencies.....from the advanced price of provisions of every kind.....have stripped the cloaths from their backs, torn the shoes and stockings from their feet, snatched the food from their mouths." Gleig, in his fictional tales, adds his voice to the contemporary expressions of dismay at the effects of the old poor law.

For the East Kent area, a good range of sources has been found to be available. The particular character of this study is in the juxtaposition of such sources, so that demography, social structure and the old poor law can all be seen within one perspective, instead of in isolation from each other, as is frequently the case in existing studies. It is also seen to be important, in understanding the 19th century poor law, to have a long time perspective; sources which allow the development of each feature of a community to be traced throughout the 18th century and even back into the 17th century, are particularly valuable. East Kent may be fortunate in the number of records which have been preserved, particularly from an early date. They alter considerably the perspective from 1795 in which the old poor law is customarily viewed.

1. Gleig (1904) 34.

2. Davies (1795).

3. Annals of Agriculture XXIII (1795) 161.

CHAPTER THREE

THE REGION DELINEATED

It is not always easy to find all the required records for any one parish, but for East Kent there is fortunately a wealth of material for the period of the old poor law, much of which is unexplored. A number of communities have therefore been studied, each with variations of economic and social structure and geographical location contributing to the general picture of the region.

1. The region generally described.

East Kent can indeed be called a region. A long eastern promontory terminating in the North and South Forelands has a pattern of communications which circle the area and link the extensive north and east stretches of coast with Canterbury. There are only weak links with other parts of Kent, no doubt historically the result of the natural barriers of Marsh and Weald. Canterbury is clearly the focal point of the area, with communications extending inland to the rest of Kent and England. On any definition of the region, therefore, the area east of a line drawn to include Canterbury will form East Kent. This was the boundary selected by Patrick Abercrombie and John Archibald, for instance, for "East Kent - Regional Planning Scheme."¹ The geographers, following the sheet sections of the Ordnance Survey, push the boundary a little further west, but essentially the same area is included.²

"It is an area that delights the geographer by its clarity of precisely delineated sub-regions: the islands of Thanet and Sheppey, the Wantsum, Swale and Romney Marshes, the Weald, the North Downs and the Blean. These were all as distinctive to the men who settled and named them as to the academic geographer."³

1. Abercrombie and Archibald (1928).
2. Coleman and Lukehurst (1967).
3. Ibid 3.

Much of the more narrowly defined area of East Kent, that is east of Stone Street, is today classified as first class agricultural land.¹ The Isle of Thanet and the East Kent horticultural and agricultural areas are loams, excellent for arable cultivation, with exceptionally fertile brick-earths on either side of the Little Stour valley. These areas are also said today to have a "very good farm structure."² The remoteness of East Kent has kept it virtually free of any largescale urban development, but around the Thanet coast there has been considerable urban expansion which today presses on the agricultural land. North of Canterbury the land is heavy, badly-drained clay with extensive woodland, while the downland area, mostly 400-600 feet above sea level, is much less fertile, is remote, and has a poor farm structure.³ The majority of the agricultural parishes studied come into the East Kent area of first class agricultural land, and one is on the brick-earth of the Little Stour (Wickhambreux) but two of the larger parishes are in the less good clay or downland areas. Maps 1 and 2 illustrate the area and parishes studied.⁴

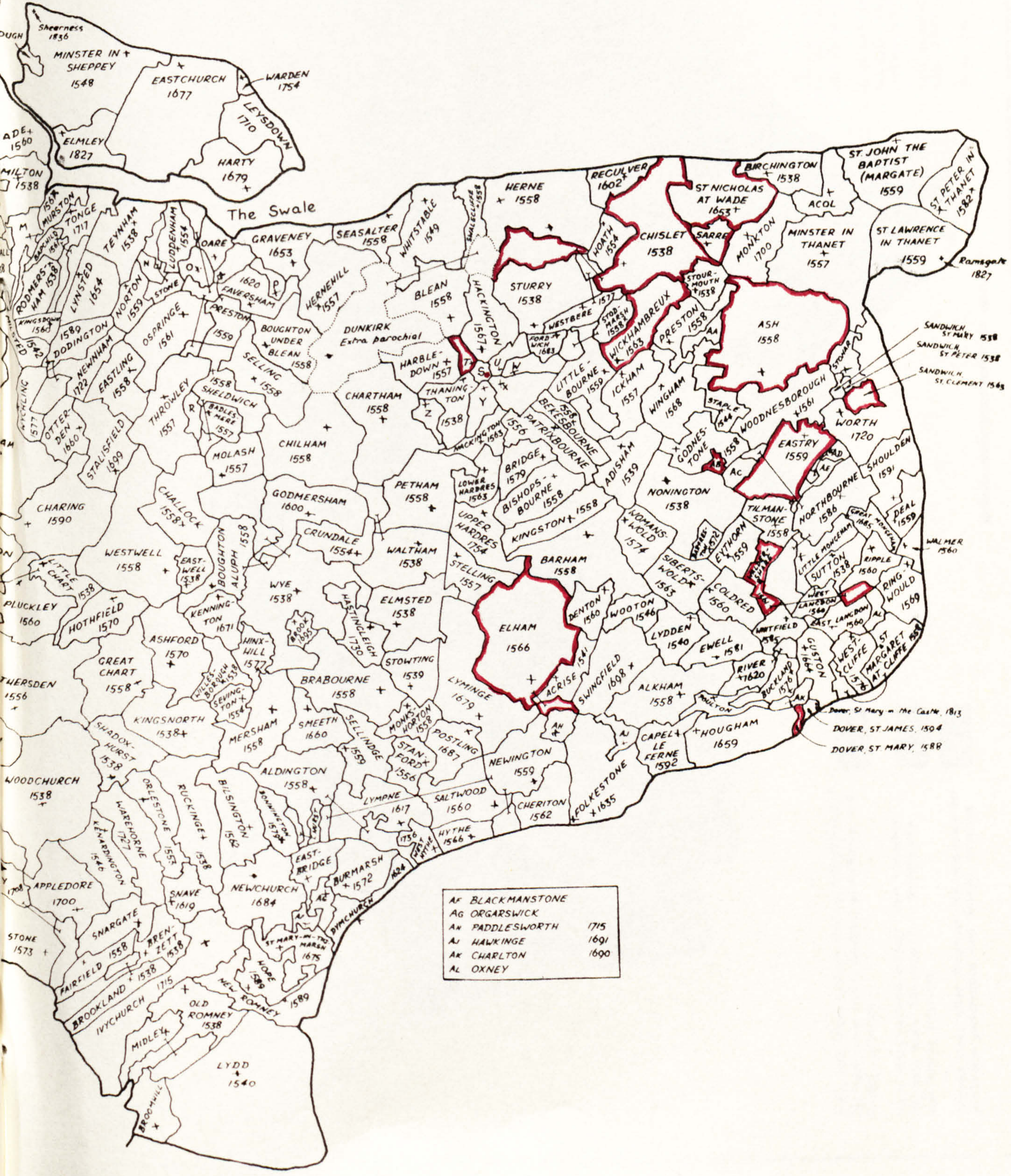
Administratively most of East Kent was in the Lathe of St. Augustine, though to the west the Lathe of Shepway included Romney Marsh and its hinterland, while the Lathe of Scray included land to the west of Canterbury. Lathes were the ancient administrative divisions of the county of Kent, and were used in the first censuses for some tabulations.⁵ Judicial divisions were sub-divisions of lathes, and a number of parishes studied were in the Wingham Division of the Lathe of St. Augustine, for which listings of inhabitants made in 1705 have survived.

1. Kent Development Plan Quinquennial Review (1963), part 3. This paragraph is based on the Review.
2. Ibid 14. (Areas M and N).
3. Ibid 12 and 14. (Areas L and H).
4. Map 1 is reproduced from the map of Kent (showing dates of commencement of registers for each parish) published by the Institute of Heraldic and Genealogical Studies, Northgate, Canterbury.
Map 2 is reproduced from Abercrombie and Archibald (1928).
5. See Chapter Two, 38 for discussion of the Kentish administrative divisions.

**TEXT BOUND
INTO
THE SPINE**

M	SITTINGBOURNE	1561
N	BUCKLAND	(1562)
O	DAVINGTON	1549
P	GODNESTONE	1569
R	LEAVELAND	1553
S	CANTERBURY	
	ALL SAINTS	1559
	CATHEDRAL	1564
	HOLY CROSS	1563
	ST ALPHEGE	1558
	ST ANDREW	1564
	ST GEORGE	1538
	ST MARGARET	1653
	ST MARY BREDMAN	1558
	ST MARY MAGDALEN	1634
	ST MILDRED	1558
	ST PETER	1560
T	ST DUNSTAN	1559
U	ST MARY, NORTHGATE	1640
W	ST MARTIN	1662
X	ST PAUL	1562
Y	ST MARY BREDIN	1633
Z	MILTON	1688

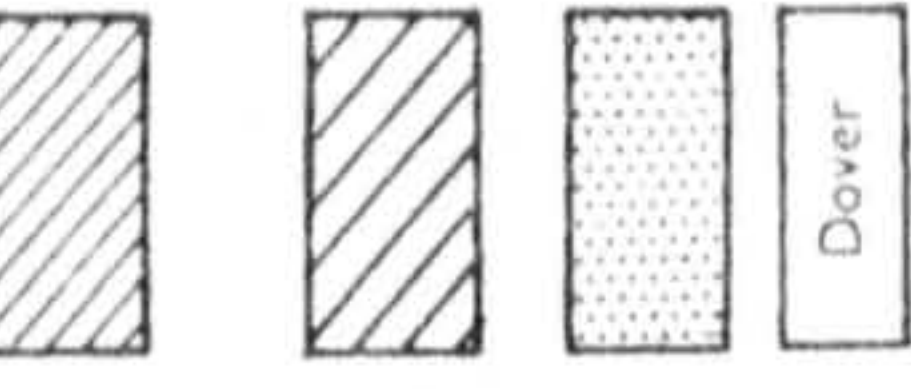
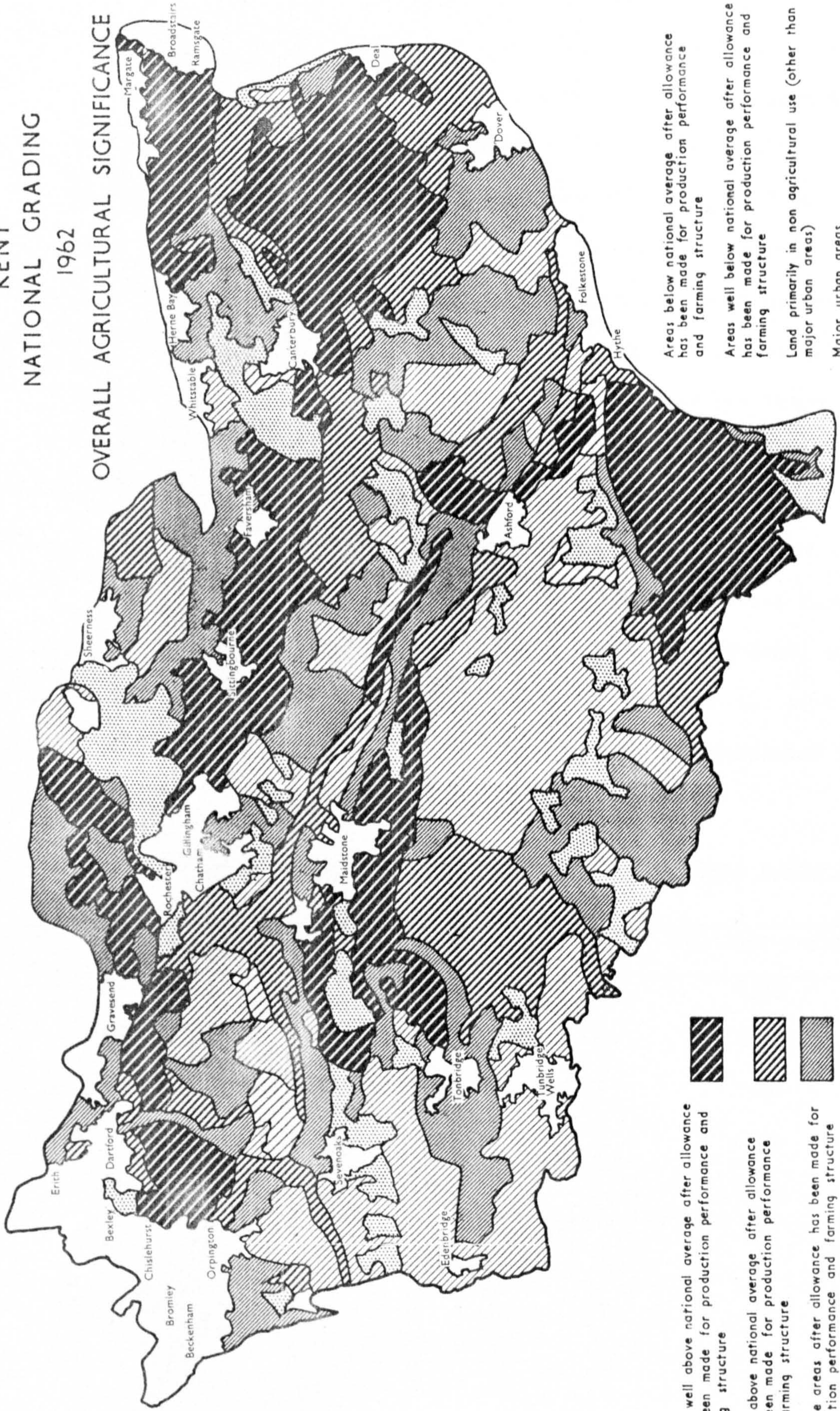
AA	ELMSTONE	
AB	CHILLENDEEN	1559
AC	KNOWLTON	1711
AD	HAM	1552
AE	BETTESHANGER	1562



AF	BLACKMANSTONE	
AG	ORGARSWICK	
AN	PADDLESWORTH	1715
AJ	HAWKINGE	1691
AK	CHARLTON	1690
AL	OXNEY	

AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION KENT NATIONAL GRADING 1962

OVERALL AGRICULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE



Areas below national average after allowance has been made for production performance and farming structure

Areas well below national average after allowance has been made for production performance and farming structure

Land primarily in non agricultural use (other than major urban areas)

Major urban areas



Areas well above national average after allowance has been made for production performance and farming structure

Areas above national average after allowance has been made for production performance and farming structure

Average areas after allowance has been made for production performance and farming structure



In Domesday, East Kent and Romney Marsh were the most densely populated parts of the county, with a second smaller area of dense population round Maidstone;¹ this partly reflected the proximity of East Kent to the Continent, with the successive waves of invaders and settlers coming to East Kent ports, and partly the fertile and easily cultivable nature of the soil. Canterbury was the largest town in Kent, and remained so until the end of the 17th century. By then, the steady tilting of the balance of population westwards and towards London was becoming evident, with Deptford, East Greenwich, Rochester and Maidstone all as large or perhaps larger than Canterbury, while the position of Romney Marsh had undergone a comparative revolution, sharing with the marshes of the Thames-side the lowest population density in the county.² By the end of the 17th century settlement was in fact very much more uniform over the whole county than it had been in earlier periods. In the early 19th century it is possible to see from the censuses that East Kent was gaining population rather less fast than the London side of Kent, even though there were a number of rapidly growing towns, for instance the port of Dover and the Thanet seaside towns. Its relative decline has continued to the present day.

Table 3.1 Annual average growth rates of urban and rural communities in Kent 1811-1831.

Lathe	Urban	Residual rural
St. Augustine	1.58	1.32
Aylesford	1.80	1.32
Scray	1.22	1.00
Shepway	0.07	0.72
Sutton-at-Horne	1.04	1.40

1. Jessup (1966) 27.
2. Chalklin (1965) 28.

From table 3.1¹ it appears that in the early 19th century the rates of growth of urban and rural areas were closely related to each other. Towns in the marsh Lathe of Shepway grew even more slowly than the rural area, and in other Lathes rural rates lagged only a little behind urban. Thus the Lathe of Aylesford, including Maidstone, Rochester, Chatham and Gillingham, as well as other small towns, had the highest rural as well as urban rates of growth. This suggests a tight connection between the economics of urban and rural communities at this date, so that rural population growth should be examined within a general framework of the area's economy. In 1811, just over half of Kent's population was town-dwelling (as defined in Table 3.1) i.e. 51%; in 1831, the proportion was 46%.

The 17th century economy of East Kent was based on agriculture and its service trades and also on ports and travellers. At the same time Kent was considered exceptionally urbanised, and East Kent was no exception, with Cinque Ports and Canterbury within the area.² The textile industry had no doubt encouraged the growth of towns, but probably since the Restoration this was declining,³ thus removing one of the main non-agricultural sectors of employment. The more enterprising Canterbury silk-weavers for instance had moved to Spitalfields at the turn of the 18th century (though there remained some silk and worsted manufacture in Canterbury until the 19th century).⁴ Defoe noted two to three thousand French protestants in the city, chiefly employed in broadsilk weaving, though "the number decreases daily."⁵ In 1675 there had been 2,500 engaged in both silk and

1. National censuses. The urban population has been defined as all towns separately enumerated by the census itself, and in addition all places which in 1831 had a population greater than 2,500.
2. Coleman (1951) 11, suggests that 56% of the population in the 17th century lived in towns, albeit smaller communities than towns today.
3. Chalklin (1965) 121.
4. Power (1972) 243 and 251-2, shows that Spitalfields was developed late in the 17th century as an area of tidy suburban planning with a relatively low housing density and an above average number of hearths per household. This suggests that the more prosperous must have moved there from Canterbury.
5. Defoe (1724) (1971 edition) 134.

worsted trades; by 1710 there were 334 looms in the city;¹ when Defoe was writing in 1724 he was informed "there were not twenty broad looms left in the city, of near three hundred, that had formerly been there." The decline was attributed to "printed callicoes and chintz."² While some proportion of the poverty of East Kent in late 17th century may be attributable to it, the decline in the textile industry affected East and West Kent alike. Goudhurst and Cranbrook, two centres of the Wealden cloth industry, had the highest numbers of "not chargeable" hearths in 1663 of any parish in Kent.³

Agriculture in the 17th century accounted for about half the employment of East Kent,⁴ a similar proportion as in the 19th century.⁵ At the end of the 17th century the Canterbury marriage licences (1661-1676) show nearly 50% occupied in agriculture, with victualling the next most frequent occupation at 9%.⁶ The Lathe of St. Augustine in the early 19th century was less dependent on agriculture than the other lathes, probably because of the large service sectors in coastal towns (see Table 3.2).⁷ In the 20th century East Kent has reversed its occupational position; in 1966 the percentage in agriculture was twice the national average, there was an above average service sector and correspondingly weak manufacturing and construction

1. Chalklin (1965) 127. The figure of 2,500 employed in textiles must of course have included both the head of the household and all his family. It represents about half the total population. Defoe states that his estimated numbers of French protestants includes men, women and children.
2. Defoe (1724) 135. Everitt noted a decline in the proportion of urban craftsmen from 47% in 1790 to 40% in 1830 which he attributed "almost entirely to the collapse of the city's old staple industry of silk-weaving." Everitt (1971) 34. In the 1851 census one silk manufacturer was still to be found amongst Canterbury's inhabitants.
3. Coleman (1951) 398-401.
4. Chalklin op cit 45 shows that 69% of wills in the Canterbury diocese 1640-50 and 44% of the inventories in the Rochester diocese 1687-1710 were of farmers. This will probably understate the numbers in agriculture because of the many labourers not making wills. In Penshurst between 57% and 64% were employed in agriculture c.1700 and 69% in Ash in 1705.
5. The early censuses tabulated the occupations of "families". The figures do not therefore indicate the disposition of the whole labour force, both because more than one member of a family was often working and because it was still the practice to board agricultural servants in the farmhouses.
6. Coleman (1951) 143.
7. National Censuses. The lathes exclude the nine Kent towns separately enumerated by the census authorities.

sectors. (These figures are set out in Table 3.3).¹ The proportions in agriculture in earlier periods are significant, because poverty was regarded as primarily an agricultural problem.

Table 3.2 Proportions of families employed in agriculture: 1811 and 1831.

Lathe	1811	1831
St. Augustine	42	37
Aylesford	53	47
Scray	49	52
Shepway	49	50
Sutton-at-Hove	48	41

Table 3.3 Proportions of employed males in agriculture and service sectors: 1960 and 1966.

Region	Agriculture		Service	
	1960	1966	1960	1966
Canterbury	11.2	7.6	51.5	54.9
East Coast	6.5	5.5	54.4	50.6
Great Britain	3.7	2.6	40.2	41.8

Commentators on the agriculture of the area, around 1800, like Arthur Young or John Boys, the writer of the Kent County Agricultural Report, emphasised the efficiency and modernity of East Kent farms. Young thought East Kent and the Isle of Thanet had a good claim to be the best cultivated land in England. He found it astonishing that such numbers of "common" farmers drilled crops rather than broadcast. "Notions of spirited management" he thought were due to the cultivation of hops; as a result crops out

1. South-East Economic Planning Council (1969) Table 6,72.

of the usual sphere of husbandry like madder and canary were grown. Such good husbandry existed in an area where rents were high, tithes gathered, and "with extravagant poor rates." These charges could only be supported by "unremitted industry".¹ Boys was himself an East Kent farmer. He suggested there were as many rotation practices as there were farmers, but that the husbandry was extremely neat. Boys' impression was that poor rates varied enormously: "It is a general complaint that these expenses are annually on the increase,"² but he also thought that there was a shortage of labour in the area. Cobbett in his more colourful way spoke of the rotten borough of Sandwich surrounded by "some of the finest land in the world," and waxed eloquent at the contrast in the Isle of Thanet between the corn lands of "this beautiful island.....where every inch of land is appropriated by the rich" and the miserable state of the poor labourer.³

The impression gained from these writers is of a carefully and intensively cultivated area (as indeed it is today) where good soil and husbandry produced high profits and high rents. In terms of agricultural prosperity East Kent had enjoyed the lead over the rest of Kent in the past. "In the 1640's half of the county's wealth was concentrated in St. Augustine and Shepway, the two easternmost and smallest of the county's five lathes."⁴ Its agricultural pre-eminence did not disappear, but other sources of wealth led to East Kent losing its lead to West Kent from the later 17th century. Yet despite agricultural prosperity, in the 17th century East Kent may have contained rather more poor households than the rest of the county. In the hearth tax returns of 1663 there were more households excused payment of the tax and fewer hearths per household on average in East Kent than elsewhere (Table 3.4)⁵ both indicating a relative lack of prosperity.

1. Young (1771) 108-11.
2. Boys (1796) 39.
3. Cobbett (1822) (1912 edition) 247.
4. Everitt (1966) 27.
5. Coleman (1951) chapter 10.

Table 3.4 Poverty from the Hearth Tax: 1663.

Hundreds	Hearths not chargeable (%)	Average hearths per household
13 North & West	26	2.6
12 Mid-Kent	32	2.5
9 Wealden	36	2.5
9 East Kent	38	1.9
All Kent ¹	34	

The proportions of households excused from payment of the hearth tax may be compared with national estimates made by Gregory King at the end of the 17th century. He calculated that 29% of all householders were "cottagers and paupers" and 27% were labouring people and out-servants, who together with common soldiers and sailors were categorised as "decreasing the wealth of the kingdom."² King also calculated that 50% of households were not paying church or poor rates, or else were in receipt of alms, and so were not assessed to the Poll Tax in 1691. The hearth tax excusals therefore probably understate the absolute amount of poverty;³ but they give a fair indication of its relative incidence in the different parts of Kent. On this evidence East Kent was not the most prosperous part of Kent at the end of the 17th century.

The relative poverty of East Kent at this period is further supported by Quarter Sessions records of requests by heavily burdened parishes for rate aid for poor relief. Ten of the 15 parishes asking for help in the period 1660-81 were in East Kent - three of them in Canterbury itself.⁴ The considerable number of poorhouses and workhouses established in the

1. Canterbury and the Cinque Ports were separately recorded, and are not included in this return.
2. Pollard and Crossley (1968) 154.
3. The problem in the hearth tax is whether all households who in practice did not pay the tax were listed as "Not Chargeable". It seems likely that only those technically liable to pay (because contributing to church and poor rates) were listed as exempt, and the households not paying parish rates were ignored.
4. Coleman (1951) 363.

area in the early 18th century is also significant. The disparity between East and West Kent increased during the 18th century. There were constant disputes about the burden of the county rate, and about the de facto division of the county into east and west, with the charge on West Kent only for the salary of the Maidstone jailor. East Kent refused to contribute to this charge and in 1797 a test case was finally brought. The justices held that while there was no legal justification for only half the county being rated, the burden was in practice fairly distributed. The Kent Equalisation Act of 1807 called for returns of parochial valuations, and finally an Annual General Session was set up by Act of Parliament to deal with levying county rates.¹ With population growth in West Kent continuing into the 20th century the imbalance is now more acute than ever. Yet in 1803 aggregate per capita expenditure in the rural parishes within the two divisions of the Lathe of St. Augustine was lower than elsewhere in the county, excepting only those divisions near the large urban centres of north Kent; by contrast in Elham division it was the highest in Kent.² Relative levels of per capita expenditure remained constant until the re-organisation of 1834. Taking geographical rather than administrative units as the basis of comparisons, East Kent together with the whole downland region similarly had low per capita levels of expenditure in the early 19th century, only the northernmost edge of the county having lower rates.³

East Kent therefore presents an interesting case for detailed examination. While agricultural wealth in the 17th century may have been considerable, and the soil of acknowledged fertility, in many ways East Kent seems to have contained more poverty than West Kent; by the 19th century the disparity in wealth between east and west was clearly recognised. Paradoxically, however, per capita levels of poor relief were lower than elsewhere

1. Guide to Kent County Archives Office (1958) 2-3.

2. Huzel, private communication. The four north Kent towns are Blackheath, Rochester, Bromley and Dartford, all clearly developing in connection with London. The two divisions in St. Augustine's had per capita expenditure of £17; the other divisions ranged from £6 (Bromley) to £30 (Elham).

3. Huzel (1975) Table 23, 177.

in the county. There had been no industrial development in the 18th century, rather the reverse, but some urbanisation, and in the early 19th century slower rates of population growth were experienced than elsewhere in the county. At that time there was a slightly smaller agricultural sector. Nonetheless at the parish level, despite the overall regional pattern, there were per capita poor rates as high as any nationally.

2. The parishes individually described.

The parishes studied range from the purely agricultural to the completely urban. A simple indication of the economic variation between individual parishes is the proportion of families employed in agriculture, as set out in early census reports.

Table 3.5 Percentage of all families engaged in agriculture.

	1811	1831
Rural parishes:		
Ash	75	70
Chillenden	64	68
Chislet	82	85
Sarre	60	83
St. Nicholas-at-Wade	71	77
Waldershare	85	73
Wickhambreux	82	65
Market villages:		
Eastry	64	69
Elham	82	61
Urban parishes:		
Canterbury: St. Dunstan's	27	16
Vill of Christ Church	0	0
Dover: St. Mary's	3	1
Sandwich: St. Clement's	19	18

No urban parish had as much as one third of its population engaged in agriculture. (In St. Dunstan's, Canterbury, which had a sizable agricultural sector in 1811, the proportion fell rapidly between 1811 and 1831, from 27% to 16%). The rural parishes all had two thirds or more employed in agriculture. Neither of the two villages categorised in an intermediate position on the basis of their historic possession of markets,

had employment structures at this simple level different from the rest of the rural parishes. Of course differences of social structure are not fully revealed by a measure which compresses farmers, small holders and labourers into one category. In many characteristics indeed each parish had, and still has, a particular individuality.

(i) Urban parishes.

The fourteen parishes which comprised the ancient liberty of Canterbury were united for poor law purposes into a union in 1728;¹ the Receiver for the union supplied answers to the Urban Queries of the Poor Law Commission. Apart from these replies, no series of poor law documents seemed to be available for the City;² records have survived, however, for one of the several extra-parochial places, the Vill of Christ Church, and for one of the suburban parishes outside the walls, St. Dunstan's. From these sources, something of the history of the old poor law in the regional capital could be deduced.

The Vill of Christ Church is in the very heart of the city, being in the precincts of the cathedral itself. In the 18th century the precincts did not have quite the appearance they have today; the prebendaries of the cathedral of course had their residences there, but the old wall on the south side was hidden by shops and houses, "the place being well-situated for trade and particularly to such as are not freemen of the city."³ Between Gostlinge's first edition of 1774 and a later one in 1825 "the number of shops in this part has gradually decreased, and it is now by no means considered so eligible for general business as when the above was penned." An overt policy of clearing the precincts had commenced. Although the Court of Guardians invited the Vestry to do so, the Vill never joined the Canterbury Union, "the number of Poor persons Annually relieved not being so great

1. 1 Geo II, 2-c20.

2. See Chapter Two. Since completing this research the records of the Canterbury Union have been found.

3. Gostlinge (1774) 91.

as to make it necessary."¹ Some light can be thrown on the operation of the old poor law by the administration of this very tiny community.

The suburb of St. Dunstan's, however, may be more characteristic of the city generally, and would certainly have shared more definitely in the city's economic fortunes. St. Dunstan's has been described as the "archetypal suburb, clustered about Canterbury's Westgate, but nominally within the jurisdiction of the county."² Like the Vill, St. Dunstan's preferred to maintain its own poor independently; after the reorganisation in 1834 it became part of the Blean Union, not the Canterbury Union. In the 16th century

"this no man's land drew together the submerged classes of both town and countryside - poor tradesmen, destitute labourers, pregnant serving girls, runaway apprentices and professional criminals. In time of prolonged distress such an area probably suffered an acute population influx, compounding its habitual problems of over-crowding, malnutrition and disease."³

Applied to the suburb of St. Dunstan's, this portrait is not entirely apt. The parish included a substantial amount of farmland (altogether it comprised 385 acres), a considerable proportion growing hops in the 18th century.⁴ At least a quarter of the population was employed in agriculture throughout the 18th century. It was not, therefore, a wholly urban parish. The built-up area consisted of a single row of houses and shops strung out along the road to Whitstable and London. Hasted described the street in 1790 as unpaved but "very broad and sightly, and the houses are, many of them, though small, very neat and modern."⁵ In the 19th century St. Dunstan's experienced a building boom, the agricultural land being steadily

1. September 1806, Vill of Christ Church Vestry Minutes.

2. Clark (1976) 374.

3. Ibid.

4. The hopgrounds were first rated in the parish rate books in 1720, and accounted for 1/9th of the rateable value of the parish. Defoe in 1724 reported a "surprising increase" of hopgrounds all round Canterbury within living memory, and there had been "great wealth and increase of the city of Canterbury" as a result. (1971 edition, 135).

5. Hasted (1800) 1X 33.

consumed by the suburban housing terraces which are still standing. From 707 persons in 1801 the parish's population expanded to 809 in 1831, and 1209 in 1841; its growth continued steadily during the century to top 2,000 in 1901.

The occupational structure of the parish was quite varied. The extra-mural settlement, did, perhaps, provide opportunities for those excluded for some reason from the city. In the 18th century there was a Jewish community there, with a synagogue and burial ground.¹ At that time, and probably earlier too, there were also a number of French silk-weavers. Between 1699 and 1711 the parish registers record many of the occupations of the 155 persons passing under the notice of the vicar. In addition to silk-weavers there were others in the textile industry, making up in total 15% of those with specified occupations. Comparison with an intra-mural parish, St. Peter's, at the same date, shows up the more rural character of St. Dunstan's parish.

Table 3.6. Percentage distribution of occupations from the parish registers 1699-1711 of St. Peter's and St. Dunstan's, Canterbury, and 1790-1830 from Canterbury Poll Books.

	1699-1711		Canterbury		
	St. Peter's	St. Dunstan's	1790	1818	1830
Gentry	3	1	8	5	10
Professions	10	1	3	6	5
Innkeeping	2	3	8	8	9
Processing	14	7	3	2	4
Retail	9	1	15	20	21
Crafts	42	47	47	43	40
Land	10	32	4	5	2
Servants etc.	10	8	12	10	10

1. In the rating lists for the parish, in 1780 and 1790 nine households are specifically listed as Jewish. It is not clear why the overseers of the poor should have so distinguished these households. When the synagogue in St. Dunstan's was demolished in 1847 to make way for the South Eastern Railway, date stones indicated that it was built in 1762. The burial ground served the Jewish community in East Kent at least until mid-19th century. J.Jacobs (1851) Narrative of the erection of the New Synagogue, from a copy in the Kent County Library, Canterbury.

The occupational character of the city as shown in the Canterbury Poll Books is also much less agricultural than St. Dunstan's.¹ In 1801 agriculture was still the employment of more than a quarter of the inhabitants of St. Dunstan's. After this date, with the increasing urbanisation of the parish, the importance of agriculture declined, and its occupational structure approached that of the city more closely.

The economy of the city of Canterbury generally was based on services to the region. The Municipal Corporation's Commissioners found that

"There is little or no trade within the town, beyond what is required for the supply of the town and neighbourhood. The manufacture of silk and cotton, for which Canterbury was at one time celebrated, has entirely ceased. The markets for all kinds of agricultural produce are well kept up; large quantities of hops, wool and flour are sent to London..... Some persons stated the town had gone down, in point of wealth, within the last few years; but this representation seemed to have been made from a comparison of it with its state during, or shortly after, the war, when a large body of military was always stationed there, and when nearly the whole communication with the continent took place through Dover."²

The position of the poor was no doubt affected by the war-time boom and post-war recession, and Canterbury and Dover were interestingly linked together. On the other hand the Guardians of the Canterbury Union in 1834 drew attention to seasonal unemployment - scarcity of work and weather both contributing to the need for relief of able-bodied men, mainly "labourers, bricklayers, plasterers etc."³ The basic similarity between Canterbury and

1. Everitt (1971) 33. The categories used by Everitt have been used also for the parish register data set out in Table 3.6. Entries in the registers at different dates for the same person have not been counted again.

2. PP 1835 XXIV 49.

3. PP 1834 XXXVI Q.30.

Dover can be seen in Table 3.7¹ which compares the employment structure of the two towns in 1831. The building trades provided a significant quantity of employment in both towns, while the services provided by Canterbury to its region are reflected in the larger proportion of men engaged in crafts of great variety.

Table 3.7 Canterbury and Dover in 1831: Males of 20 years and above employed in retail trade and handicraft.

	Canterbury	Dover
Land	1.4	1.5
Building	9.6	11.4
Crafts)	48.2	44.9
)		
Processing) Manufacturing	7.6	6.2
)		
Sea)	-	4.6
Service & transport	6.1	7.5
Innkeeping)	4.6	5.7
) Dealing		
Retailing)	21.3	18.9

In Dover, the main part of the town was included in the two parishes of St. Mary's and St. James'. Some poor law records have survived for St. Mary's, which was rather larger than St. James'; in 1801 its population was four times bigger and by 1831, as both parishes had nearly doubled their size, the disparity was greater.

	1801	1831
St. James'	1,327	2,169
St. Mary's	5,757	9,753

1. National Census. The categories used in the table are drawn from the industrial classification in Armstrong (1972) 284-310. A comparison can be made with Table 3.6, though status categories such as gentry and professions are not used. In 1841, 7.2% of males and females over 20 years of age were returned as of "independent means" but less than 3% of the males were. In this respect Poll Books will tend to over-estimate the upper classes of society.

In this period Dover began to swallow some of the surrounding villages, expanding along the line of the road leading to Canterbury.¹ The town has since been affected by numerous boundary changes, but the unit of the parish obviates such complications. St. Mary's "comprehends most of the old and densely peopled parts of the town," it was stated in 1835, and its poor rates were somewhat above those for St. James'.² Dover's long-established function was as a cross-channel link; commercial contacts expanded considerably in the 19th century, especially once steam-ships were introduced.³ In 1805 it was claimed that "the money spent by passengers is the chief support of the town"⁴ and it was estimated, perhaps wildly, that the population of the town was doubled by the military garrison and the visitors.⁵ "Dover is not a port of much trade; it is principally a port of passengers and passengers' baggage."⁶ The presence of increasing numbers of visitors clearly brought money into the town, but at the same time the coming of the steam-ship was a mixed blessing. The first paddle-steamer was built in 1818, the first steam packet in 1820, and the last sailing packet in 1825.⁷ "The shipwrights, sailmakers and artisans of this kind, have no doubt suffered much from the change, as have also the sailors of the town, the steam vessels requiring much fewer hands." To the change-over to steam was attributed the "great poverty and want of employment in the old part of the town amongst that class of the population which depends upon the shipping." By 1835 the sailing packets were almost entirely disused.⁸

The focus of Dover's life was thus the harbour; "upon this, no doubt, the prosperity of the town very much depends."⁹ Between 1805 and 1819 there was considerable expenditure on harbour works, 40 - 50 men being employed,

1. PP 1835 XXIV 289.

2. Ibid 291. Poor rates at that date were stated to be:-
 St. James' 8 or 9 shillings in the £ a year.
 St. Mary's 12 or 13 " " " " "

3. Whyman (1969) 108.

4. Whyman (1970) 35.

5. Ibid 50.

6. Ibid 44.

7. Philpott (1965) 82; Bavington-Jones (1920) 164.

8. PP 1835 XXIV 295.

9. Ibid 295.

though some were only employed in the summer. In 1820 there was a severe cutback in harbour expenditure,¹ adding to the post-war difficulties. A garrison and various companies of militia had been stationed in Dover during the war, and £50,000 spent on fortifications.² The withdrawal of men with the ending of the war no doubt affected the general prosperity of the town.

Among other factors singled out for particular mention in an account of Dover to the Commissioners for Municipal Corporations in 1835 was the decline of corn grinding, since with "the introduction of steam to mills of this kind, this has been done in London or its neighbourhood." There were on the other hand some large paper mills in the town.³ Overall it is difficult to assess from such comment the likely prosperity of the town, but the expansion of the built-up area argues for general improvement, though certain sectors of the population might well suffer increasing hardship at the same time.

The census, however, shows that as in Canterbury, more people in Dover were engaged in the craft occupations (particularly tailoring and shoe-making) than anything else. (See Table 3.7). Less than 5% of the males 20 years and above in 1831 were employed in boat-building or sail making, though in addition some of the 104 carpenters (8% of males included in tabulations) were probably ship's carpenters. In 1841, when the census authorities tabulated occupations rather more fully, 12% of males of all ages were seamen and pilots (396 seamen and 28 pilots) and another 1.7% were in trades connected with the sea.⁴ If there were substantial unemployment in this sector it is likely it would have had a noticeable effect on total poor law costs.⁵ The paper mills were at Buckland, a parish outside the boundaries of the town at this date, and no one is returned from Dover in that trade. There were only three millers in 1831.

1. PP 1822 V 438, 504-5.

2. Whyman (1970) 42.

3. PP 1835 XXIV 295.

4. Anchor maker (1) block and mast maker (1) boat builders (4) marine store dealer (1) rope makers (10) ship builders (36) ship's chandlers (2).

5. Deal in its replies to the Urban Queries commented that able-bodied boatmen were "frequently" unable to support their families and so needed occasional relief. PP 1834 XXXVI Q.30.

By contrast, the port of Sandwich a little further along the coast, had by the 18th century lost its medieval pre-eminence and was contracting rather than expanding. There were three parishes in Sandwich, all fairly comparable in size: St. Clement's, St. Mary's and St. Peter's. St. Clement's has a good run of poor law records, but there is some information on the other two parishes also. St. Mary's and St. Peter's combined in the 18th century for poor law purposes, while St. Clement's retained a separate administration until 1834. The church of St. Clement's today serves the whole town; solidly constructed in early Norman times, its decorated tower can be seen from some distance, and testifies to the greater affluence of the parish in earlier times. In the 17th century this was reflected in the larger amount of tax the parish was responsible for,¹ and the relatively superior wealth of St. Clement's was perpetuated into the 19th century. In 1830 the rateable value of the parish was estimated at £3,000, of St. Mary's at £2,500 and of St. Peter's at £2,000.² St. Peter's was the lowest despite the fact that it comprised the urban centre (especially Market Street) and had the highest population. All three parishes experienced modest population growth in the 19th century (Table 3.8).³ St. Clement's had an area of open land within its boundaries (496 acres in total) much of it sea marsh, but despite this in 1811 a smaller proportion of its inhabitants ^{was} were engaged in agriculture.

Table 3.8

Sandwich population 1801-31

	Population		% families in agriculture	
	1801	1831	1811	1831
St. Clement's	731	912	19	18
St. Mary's	641	952	33	11
St. Peter's	1,031	1,220	29	10

1. St. Clement's paid £11 out of a £100 aid raised from Sandwich and its "limbs"; St. Peter's paid £9 and St. Mary's £8. KAO/Sa/RTZ4.
2. KAO/Sa/JP4.
3. National censuses.

At one time Sandwich had been second in importance to Dover as a shipping centre; by 1700, it seems, its overseas trading position had been destroyed, partly by the silting-up of the haven and partly by its "inferior" location, though coastwise traffic was not affected.¹ Defoe in 1724 found it "an old, decayed, poor, miserable town."² (Cobbett's opinion a hundred years later was that it was a villainous hole).³ However at the end of the 18th century, Boys was able to list a substantial variety of goods passing through Sandwich haven.⁴ Exports were corn, grain flour, feeds, hops, wool, malt, apples, pears, leather, oak-bark, ashes etc: the typical products of a pre-industrial economy. Imports were grocery, furniture, linen, woollen and other shop goods from London, iron, planks, spars, timber, lead, Scotch and Welsh coal, salt, wine, spirits, porter, glass, grindstones, portland and other stone etc. from Wales, Scotland, Sweden, Norway and the Baltic. Sandwich's function as a port thus continued modestly into the 19th century. A member of the Corporation replied to a question in 1822 "Have you much trade at Sandwich?" "Not so much as we had; still there is a good deal of coasting trade and some foreign."⁵ To the assistant poor law commissioner, Ashurst Majendie, the town presented a far from thriving picture:⁶

"Sandwich: This place has fallen off even more than Deal since the peace; and in St. Peter's parish, 24 houses are now empty; the ship-yard is broken up, the malting business abandoned, and such is the general poverty, that they are not able to do even what they wish for the poor."

The evidence to the Municipal Corporations' Commission generally confirmed this sombre picture:

"the town is very dull and has little or no trade of any kind. The

1. Chalklin (1965) 170. The silting-up of the haven had been a matter of concern since at least the mid-fifteenth century, and for 250 years the townsfolk struggled against the natural forces involved. Gardiner (1954) 195.
2. Defoe (1724) (1971 edition) 136.
3. Cobbett (1822) (1912 edition) 246.
4. Boys (1792) 788.
5. PP 1822 V 443.
6. PP 1834 XXXVIII 218.

best houses are let for about £35, and many of them are uninhabited.

There are two or three tanyards in full employ, and in the course of the year a good deal of wool is sorted and sent off to various parts."¹

It might, therefore, be deduced that Sandwich was losing its maritime function. In 1803 some guide to the occupations followed in the town can be found in the returns of males liable for military service made under the National Defence Bill,² and set out in Table 3.9.

Table 3.9 St. Clement's, Sandwich in 1803: Occupations of males.

	%
Gentry	4.4
Professions	7.9
Land (including labourers)	20.6
Building	2.6
Crafts)	17.1
)	
Processing) Manufacturing	-
)	
Sea)	11.8
Service & transport	11.0
Inn-keeping)	6.1
) Dealing	
Retailing)	5.7
Unknown	12.7

Unfortunately no census tabulations were published for Sandwich in 1831 which would have enabled a precise comparison to be made with Dover. On the basis of the 1803 returns, however, it seems probable that a larger proportion of the population of Sandwich was dependent on the sea than in Dover. (Both sets of figures exclude the carpenters, some of whom were perhaps connected with ship-building). In the nature of the evidence, the

1. PP 1835 XXIV 395.

2. KAO/Sa/AL.

1803 returns are more nearly comparable with the results of occupational analysis of parish registers or Poll Books (see Table 3.6). The comparison is illuminating. It suggests that Sandwich had a very minor function within its area, for craft, retailing and inn-keeping sectors were all comparatively small. The large numbers of labourers, undifferentiated as to precise occupation have all been allocated to the land, but should no doubt be distributed amongst a number of trades like building; they would be subject to seasonal unemployment. Sandwich thus had few sources of prosperity other than the haven; its decline could very much affect the economic success of the town.

(ii) Rural parishes.

The rural parishes studied include a wide range of size and character and in some ways are more varied than the urban parishes. Those bordering the Stour are in general very large physically, since they include marshland once flooded and part of the Wantsum channel, but successively drained and taken into cultivation. Marshland may once have served the function of common land elsewhere, and enabled cottagers to graze small numbers of sheep and cattle. But marsh pasture was very valuable; in 1604 in Chislet it was rated at twice the amount of the arable "upland" for example.¹ It was often therefore leased by farmers from some distance away, so that it may not have contributed significantly to the economy of the parish. Thus 60% of Chislet was accounted marsh in 1604, and of this area 55% was in the hands of "out-dwellers" or occupiers not living in the parish. This characteristic has left its mark on the parish to this day - the village has no real centre and few middling farm houses. St. Nicholas-at-Wade and Ash-next-Sandwich also have large tracts of marshland, but in contrast with Chislet, have strong nucleated centres as well as several out-lying hamlets.

1. Haslewood (1887) 126-9. The high rental of pastureland is seen as a symptom of the over-extension of arable cultivation. Postan (1972) 60.

In these parishes there is a larger proportion of arable land, with a resident population consequently requiring village amenities. There are many middling farmhouses and evidence of a boom in brick house-building in the early 18th century. Another marshland settlement, Sarre, owed its existence to the bridge linking Thanet and the mainland; it is still no more than a bend in the road with several places of refreshment. Finally, of the Stour parishes, Wickhambreux shows some of the characteristics of a "closed" parish, with a few large houses and a mill grouped round a green, while control of cottage building seems to have existed to confine the settlement to a single street. Hasted commented unfavourably on the situation of several of the marsh parishes, noting that Wickhambreux was in a "low, flat and unpleasant situation, and lying so near the marshes cannot but be unhealthy."¹ Chislet "lies both unwholesome and unpleasant, in a lonely unfrequented part of the country."² Sarre he described as "exceedingly unhealthy," due to "the continued fogs and damp vapours occasioned by the vast quantity of marshes inned from the decreasing waters."³ Huzel found that marsh parishes also shared the characteristic of high per capita poor rates.⁴

Although a large village, both in physical size and population, the occupations followed in Ash in 1705 (Table 3.10)⁵ demonstrate its fundamentally agrarian structure, and probably typify the structure of the other parishes for which no comparable information exists. Nearly 70% of all those whose occupations were specified were engaged in agriculture, a proportion very similar to that indicated in the early 19th century censuses. The sector engaged in crafts and trades, which served the village and its surrounding hamlets, was quite small.

1. Hasted (1800) IX 158.
2. Ibid IX 101.
3. Ibid X 248.
4. Huzel (1975).
5. Chalklin (1965) 247.

Table 3.10 Occupations in Ash in 1705 and Eastry in 1801

	No.	%	No.	%
Gentry and professional	3	0.8	11	3.9
Farmers	59	16.3	14	4.9
Tradesmen	47	12.9	59	20.8
Day labourers	96	26.4	91	32.2
Servants to farmers	94	25.9	44	15.5
Servants (including domestic and apprentices)	64	17.6	64	22.6
Total	363	99.9	283	99.9

The two market villages of Eastry and Elham are situated away from the Stour valley on the downland. Hasted found them both "healthy and pleasant" though Elham contained mainly "unfertile red earth."¹ By the time that he was writing at the end of the 18th century, neither any longer had a market; the Cross in Eastry and the present-day market square in Elham are reminders of their former existence, while there were still in Hasted's time three cattle fairs a year in Elham. Proximity to the expanding port of Dover may have destroyed the viability of Elham's market, whereas Eastry was in competition with the declining port of Sandwich. Eastry retained some of its regional functions: although smaller than the nearby village of Ash it sustained a larger craft and trade sector. Altogether 53% of the population were engaged in agriculture in 1801 (Table 3.10)² as compared with 70% in Ash.

Two other parishes situated on the downland, for which some poor relief material is extant, can be categorised as examples of the "closed" parish. Both are small in area and in numbers of inhabitants. The use of the term "closed parish" may date from the 19th century, (in 1852 Caird made the distinction) but it describes a situation which existed much earlier than

1. Hasted (1799) VIII 95 and (1800) X 98.

2. Based on 1801 enumeration, and using the same categories as Chalklin for the Ash data.

that.¹ A closed parish was one where poor relief obligations were kept to a minimum in two ways: firstly by restricting the numbers of inhabitants, so that the less regularly employed part of the labour force was not resident within its boundaries; and secondly by avoiding as far as it was able making settlements. In reply to rural query number 51, "Can you suggest any and what alteration in the settlement laws?" the respondent from Eastry replied:

"They might be much improved: at present, they are as bad as bad can be. A plan would be beneficial to make those parishes whose work is done by the labourers of the adjoining parishes contribute to the maintenance of those labourers. It too frequently occurs that those parishes contrive to avoid making any parishioners by settling them in the adjoining parishes."²

Thus a closed parish had a labour deficiency, at any rate at certain times of the year. Within the parish control had been possible because land ownership was largely concentrated in one person's hands;³ there was therefore no land available for cottage development. More than two thirds of the land in Waldershare in the 19th century tithe survey was owned by the Earl of Guilford; in Chillenden, which was the village dominated by the big house at Knowlton (constituting a separate parish in itself) Sir Brook

1. Holderness (1972) 126-139 suggests that the terminology dates from the 19th century but that the reality should be traced to the Elizabethan Poor Law. He discusses the distribution of such parishes: in North West Kent there were significant numbers, but the Weald is noted as "largely exempt". East Kent is not specifically discussed.
2. PP 1834 XXXIV Q.51.
3. Holderness suggests the origin of the closed parish was in depopulation, either at an early date or in late 18th century. It should rather perhaps be sought in the "estate" and "manor" of much earlier times. Where land was not already settled, an estate could be carved out in Saxon times with unified economic and social control. This became the classic "manor" and later the closed parish, always provided the will and enterprise to maintain the estate were present. Postan (1972) 109. In the fertile valleys of the Great and Lesser Stour the "manorial gentry probably clustered more thickly than in any comparable area of England." Everitt (1966) 37. Hence perhaps the plaintive comment from Eastry which was ringed round with closed parishes.

William Bridges owned 60% of the area and William Hammond another quarter.

The closed parish is in fact visually evident, and forms an immediately recognisable settlement type, with a large house dominating the scene. It is frequently distinguished by 19th century estate architecture, as in Chillenden. This indirectly confirms the importance of the settlement laws, because the Union Chargeability Act of 1865¹ removed the individual parish's poor quota, so making the artificial restriction of housing unnecessary.

Such in outline are the characteristics of the parishes for which appropriate source material exists and which offer a range of features representing the East Kent region. Geographically there is variety of soil type in downland and marsh situations. There is a range of size, from the smaller rural settlement to the large populous village, and from rural to urban communities.² Some were thriving and some declining in economic fortunes at the start of the 19th century, and occupational profiles were varied. At this time also population grew fast, but not uniformly. East Kent is a satisfactory region with clear definition. Its position in relation to West Kent changed considerably, particularly after 1700, when both population density and wealth shifted to the west. In the 17th century it had a greater problem with respect to poverty, yet paradoxically the faster growing western half of the county in the 19th century had higher per capita poor rates. Through detailed examination of the course of poor law expenditure and administration in relation to other social structural features, light can be thrown on the determinants of policy in each parish, and so in the region generally.

1. Holderness (1972) 127 suggests that cottage building commenced as soon as the Act was passed, from the evidence given to the Royal Commission in 1867.
2. See Appendix I, where population and area of each parish is tabulated.

CHAPTER FOUR

EXPENDITURE ON THE OLD POOR LAW: THE PROFILE OF THE PROBLEM.

1. National Sources.

The essential framework for a discussion of the old poor law must be the figures of its actual cost to the community year by year and area by area. The main weight of interpretation has been borne by the statistics of annual costs collected in parliamentary returns.¹ Until 1813 these were required only in certain isolated years, which can provide merely points of comparison,² though also providing the detail of figures for counties and individual parishes. However much these figures are reworked, there can be no reasonable doubt that in the half-century before the Poor Law Amendment Act there was a strong upward movement of expenditure, which provoked the great amount of time then spent examining and writing about the subject. From a little over £½m. in 1748-50, £1½m. in 1776 and £2m. in 1783-5 the cost of the old poor law rose to £4m. in 1802-3, £6½m. in 1812-13 and reached a peak of nearly £8m. in 1818. Thereafter the annual amount fluctuated around £6m. for the ½ decades until the passing of the 1834 Act. These amounts are of course related to a fast-growing population; but in per capita terms they still represent considerable growth: from 2.4/- in 1748-50, 5.2/- in 1783-5, 9/- in 1802-3, to a peak of 13/- in 1818, and thereafter, following the trend of absolute amounts, fluctuating around 9/- in the 1820's and early 1830's.³

At its peak poor law expenditure represented a redistribution of rather less than ⅓% of the national income. Despite the growth in national income in the 18th century, (Deane and Cole estimate it at £48 million in 1688 and

1. Mitchell and Deane (1971) 410. Since the accounting year ended on 24 March annual figures relate to 9 months of one year and 3 months of the next. In consequence there can be confusion over which year the expenditure should be attributed to. Mitchell and Deane use the year in which the 3 months occur; Marshall (1968) uses the year in which the 9 months occur, and this seems the more logical. Other series, such as for prices, will relate more closely to the year in which the major part of the expenditure fell. Overseers themselves sometimes became confused, and did not know which to count the first rate of the year - the one after 1 January or after 25 March. (St. Dunstan's).

2. See Chapter Two.

3. Marshall (1968) 26.

£232 million in 1801) poor law expenditure absorbed a slightly larger percentage; approximately 1% in the first half of the 18th century, 1.5% in 1770, 1.8% in 1801, 2.2% in 1811, 2.3% in 1821, 1.9% in 1831.¹ The 18th century figures can only be extremely approximate, since the estimation of the national income itself is open to question, but they provide an indication of probable levels, while in the early 19th century the figures are better substantiated. Moreover because administration was localised to the parish unit, the burden on the national income was not evenly distributed; agricultural areas where income was less expansive (agriculture's share of national income fell from 32.5% in 1801 to 23.4% in 1831)² bore a rather larger proportion of the increased poor law costs.³ It is reasonable to assume that by the early 19th century, the increase in the poor rates was perceptible, even to the individual ratepayer, and that whatever the merits of their analysis, the Poor Law Commissioners of 1834 did not exaggerate the significance of the problem to contemporaries.⁴ An indication of the increasing national awareness of poor law expenditure is the cut-back over the decade before the Poor Law Amendment Act, leading to a slight fall in its proportion of national income from the high point of 2.3% in 1821 to 1.9% in 1831. This cut-back is evident in per capita terms too.

National aggregative figures give basic information about relief expenditure; some refinement of the picture can be introduced by grouping counties according to some broad socio-economic or geographic classification. If for instance per capita levels of poor expenditure are examined by counties

1. My calculations based on Deane & Cole (1969) 156-167; the 1748-50 return of poor relief expenditure related to 1688 national income represents 1.44% - hence the guess of about 1% in the early 18th century. The 1783-5 returns are related to estimates of national income in 1770. The other figures are close in time. Clapham (1926) 363 calculated for 1830 that poor relief took 3.3% of national income. Both the direction of change and the order of magnitude is probably reliable, though exact figures are difficult to arrive at.
2. Deane & Cole op cit 166.
3. Marshall (1968) suggests the fall in prices made the larger drain of poor expenditure "even more galling" and helped lead to the hardening of attitude after 1821. See Chapter 6.
4. Even in 1913 all the welfare services together only spent 3.2% of the national income. Clarke (1937) 147 & 232. Clapham op cit 364 further estimated that more than one fifth of the average agricultural labourer's minimum needs was met by the amount of poor relief.

grouped into four broad regions - North East, North West, South East and South West, the southern groups of which can be categorised as largely agricultural and 'low wage' and the two northern as industrial and 'high wage' (following Caird's analysis) some significant relationships are revealed. Over the period 1750 to 1834 the four areas consistently maintained the same rank order: the South East showed the highest levels throughout, followed by the South West, North East and then North West.¹ These rankings persisted into the period of the new poor law. While expenditure rose to a peak in 1812 in all areas, the two northern groups increased approximately ten times, the South West seven times, and the South East six times from 1750-1812. On this argument the southern counties restrained the growth of poor law expenditure, but it needs to be remembered that they started from a higher base-line.

Kent of course is in the South East grouping with the highest rate of relief. The parliamentary statisticians who calculated per capita figures for 1812-13 (related to the 1811 population) and for 1822-23 (related to 1821 population) placed Kent fourteenth in rank order at the first date with a level half that of the highest (which was Sussex at £1.12s); but by 1821 Kent had moved to fourth place, even though its per capita amount was unchanged.² This reflects the cut-back in expenditure which had been found possible elsewhere, though one does not know at what cost in individual privation. As a county with a large urban population, and containing a sizeable proportion of greater London within its boundaries at this date, this result is interesting. The opportunity of employment outside the agricultural sector would seem to account for the lower rate of the northern counties, yet in the south, London with its immense attractive powers for population, apparently was an insufficient counterweight.

1. Huzel, contribution to Mingay and Higgs (forthcoming), (courtesy of Dr. A. Armstrong).
2. PP 1824 VI, 381.

While the main outline of expenditure at national and county levels is thus to be found in parliamentary statistics, there are limitations in this source. Most important is the lack of a time series for the 18th century. It is not possible from the isolated bench marks to know how far they are typical or representative of the century. In 1780 for example there had been moderate reductions in the price of wheat, though some price increases in other commodities. Three years later a substantial price rise was registered.¹ Were the 1780 levels of poor law expenditure typical, and did expenditure vary in sympathy with prices? In 1802, prices were receding from an astronomical leap in 1800-1; poor relief returns no doubt reflected these exceptionally bad harvests. The base-line for a continuous comparison of annual expenditure is 1812, but this was the peak year of war time inflation and the second consecutive year of high wheat prices. Was it also a peak year for poor law expenditure? A continuous series of figures over a long period of time would not only put in perspective the years 1812-34, but would also help an examination of how far factors such as harvest failures or population growth were related to the movements in poor relief costs.

1. Mitchell & Deane (1971) 468-9: Schumpeter-Gilboy price indexes .

2. Sources of inaccuracies in poor relief statistics.

There are a number of inaccuracies in the printed parliamentary returns, inevitable in a compilation of such an extensive kind from local sources. Omissions are one source of inaccuracy and occurred for a number of reasons. Sometimes it was because of the unwillingness of local authorities to co-operate. In October 1776 Dover Vestry¹ resolved not to reply to the Questions and to indemnify the parish officers from payment of the fine. Returns sometimes were destroyed, as for example those from Sandwich and district for 1830 and 1833, as stated in the printed papers. Consequently St. Peter's, Sandwich complained that its allotted contribution to the Eastry Union was too high, since the missing years would have lowered the average of the four years which had been used as the basis of the calculation.²

Printed returns are also subject to clerical or typographical errors. In the case of the parish of Waldershare, the amount of poor rate for 1802 was given as £183, which for this small parish with a population of 65 in 1801 works out at 56.3/- per head. Clearly there is an intrusive "1" in the hundred column. Similarly for St. Dunstan's, Canterbury, for 1831 two figures have been transposed, which makes a big difference in the annual cost. Average expenditure in this parish between 1831 and 1834 assessed from the parish records, was in excess of £700 a year. This figure is confirmed in the first report of the Poor Law Commissioners. But the printed returns give expenditure of £273. The return for 1832 is missing, and for 1833 expenditure of £421 is given. It is difficult to see how this last figure arose, unless a manuscript "seven" was mistaken for a "four".

Other weaknesses were inherent in the practice of the administrators involved, both local and national. It was not altogether clear exactly what information parliament required. The wording of the 1802 parliamentary return was certainly ambiguous, stating at the head of the column "Total Money Raised by the Poor's Rate and other Rate or Rates within the year

1. CCL/U3/30.

2. CCL/U3/12.

ending Easter 1803." But the "other Rate or Rates" could add up to substantial sums of money raised for such parish charges as the maintenance of the church or of the highways.¹ More difficult to disentangle was the practice of using the poor rate to cover numerous other items of parish expenditure, such as gaol rates and county rates, or payments made for the support of the families of those serving in the war. This last charge could sometimes be considerable, so that in Ash in 1803-4 and 1804-5 a special militia rate was even raised, and £700 disbursed on this account. Contemporaries complained that it was difficult to arrive at accurate estimates of actual poor expenditure for this reason.² "I met with very few instances in which I could make the accounts in the overseers' books correspond with the printed returns to Parliament that year or ascertain what description of items had been deducted from the gross amount" lamented one Poor Law Commissioner.³

The returns for the years 1802 and 1812-14 are declaredly of the amount of the poor rate and subsequent returns are of expenditure. This is an administrative point which has been overlooked in commenting on the parliamentary series. It may mean that before 1815 levels of poor relief were in practice lower than the returns state, since the rate was often levied to cover other expenses; this might imply a more marked rise in 1815 which has been obscured by the administrative change.

The overseers may have been unable to make uniform returns therefore because of ambiguities in instructions. There were also problems because of the book-keeping methods of overseers. In one year the parish may have run up a debt to the overseer to be discharged the following year by an extra levy on the rates. Alternatively the overseer may have accumulated a favourable balance which could be used to reduce the following year's

1. Mitchell & Deane (1971) 410 suggest these were included up to and including 1815.
2. PP 1822 V 521-8; PP 1823 V 350-1.
3. Hampson (1934) 200.

rates. "Book debts" which appear to inflate totals of expenditure may also include loans to the parish, perhaps to establish a workhouse. This is the case for instance in the overseers' accounts for the parish of St. Nicholas-at-Wade. In Ash a loan to build the workhouse was recorded in the Vestry minutes and only the interest appeared in the accounts. Such loans could be re-entered in the accounts each year, accurately reflecting the capital situation but greatly inflating each year's expenditure. In making their returns some parishes may have corrected for these possible distortions and others not. At the same time it must also be said in the overseers' defence, that when making the returns they were far more conversant with their own methods of accounting than we today.

Even a careful scrutiny of the parliamentary returns for any particular parish cannot show up all the possible errors. Comparisons between different sources, however, can support strongly an interpretation. Comparisons have therefore been made between the parliamentary returns for St. Nicholas-at-Wade and the parish rate books which illustrate the astonishing variations between the two series. (Table 4.1).¹ If non-poor law expenses had been deducted from the figures returned, then the amount of the rate ought to be equal to or higher than the amount in the parliamentary return. On the contrary, however, the amount of the rate is often lower than the amount of the return. St. Nicholas' accounting practices are not easy to follow. It must be said that of the parishes studied, this is the only one to display figures so contrary to expectation.² All the others do indeed show in most years the rate levy to have been larger than the returns of poor relief expenditure. Similar comparisons if made for other parishes, might further illuminate the bases of the parliamentary returns.

1. PP 1818 XIX 188; 1822 V 627; 1825 IV 138; 1830-1 XI 227; 1835 XLVII 185; and CCL/U3/18.

2. When totalled, it may be pointed out, the rate book expenditure is £18,967 and the parliamentary returns £19,249.

Table 4.1St. Nicholas-at-Wade: Comparison of expenditure

<u>Year</u>	<u>Parish rate book</u>	<u>Parl. Papers</u>
1812	807	1253
1813	1205	1173
1814	644	1131
1815	1209	547
1816	966	789
1817	967	625
1818	968	646
1819	1129	956
1820	969	981
1821	646	876
1822	807	829
1823	726	831
1824	726	777
1825	726	898
1826	803	1081
1827	971	1157
1828	968	877
1829	970	984
1830	649	780
1831	975	921
1832	1280	missing
1833	1136	1137

The parliamentary returns and the parish overseers' books can in some instances both be compared with a third series, the House of Lords' returns.¹ These cover the years 1800-1816. They were prepared by parish officers in response to an House of Lords' questionnaire which was rather more detailed than that used by the House of Commons, and seems to indicate that their Lordships were alert to the problems of obtaining comparable data. Thus overseers had to distinguish charges not strictly attributable to the relief of the poor, such as county rates, law expenses, highway, church and constables' rates, and militia payments. As with the other returns, overseers could nonetheless misinterpret the requirements of some sets of information, or merely make arithmetical errors.² Despite the itemising of various heads of expenditure, the totals in the various columns still do not always add up to the "Nett amount of Money paid for the support and relief of the poor" of the final column. There were perhaps further non-poor law charges which the Lords had not thought of but which were met from the poor rate.

Sometimes, since returns were made in 1817 for the previous 16 years, books were missing. The Waldershare overseer, for example, returned only the total amounts for 1800-10. "I cannot give any other account how the Money is spent as the accounts are lost." Today, the accounts for 1809-15 are missing, and those which the overseer could not find are available. It appears that he made a not unreasonable guess at the missing amounts, but the actual rate book shows rather more variation. (Table 4.2).³

Comparison of all three sources, House of Lords returns, printed parliamentary papers and parish rate books, (made for 1802 in Table 4.3 and for 1812-1816 in Table 4.4)⁴ does serve to confirm in most cases the evidence drawn from extant rate books, as to the total amount raised by the poor rate. In one instance, the parish of Elham, where the Lords' return gives a higher figure than the parish rate book, it looks as though there may again have

1. See Chapter Two.
2. Baugh (1975) 52.
3. KAO/Q/CR2 and KAO/P/380
4. Sources as for Tables 4.1 and 4.2.

been a typographical or clerical error. The House of Lords' Returns also tend to confirm that the printed returns for 1802 and 1812-14 included other rates, and do therefore overstate the cost of poor relief.

Table 4.2 House of Lords' returns 1800 to 1816 for Waldershare

	<u>Lords' return</u>	<u>Parish rate book</u>
1800	57	114
1801	57	114
1802	57	85
1803	57	57
1804	84	85
1805	57	85
1806	84	43
1807	84	57
1808	84	86
1809	84	
1810	84	
1811	84	missing
1812	125	
1813	130	
1814	98	
1815	140	
1816	119	95

Table 4.3 Three sources for poor rates in 1802

<u>Parish</u>	<u>Lords' return</u>	<u>Parl. Papers</u>	<u>Parish rate book</u>
Ash	1189	1585	1189
Chislet	858	858	858
Chillenden	64	96	64
Eastry	533	679	missing
Elham	1054		1004
St. Dunstan's	270	278	234
Vill of Christ Church	140		125
Waldershare	57	184	85
Wickham	199	368	missing

Table 4.4 Three sources for poor rates in the 5 years 1812-1816

<u>Parish</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Lords' return</u>	<u>Parl. Papers</u>	<u>Parish rate book</u>
Ash	1	1994	2419	1994
	2	1994	2355	1994
	3	2526	2970	2526
	4	2393	1585	2393
	5	2664	2093	2664
Chislet	1	2001	2241	2001
	2	1719	2028	1719
	3	1581	1749	1581
	4	1699	1348	1699
	5	2265	1872	2265
Chillenden	1	81	100	
	2	81	89	
	3	81	96	
	4	75	67	
	5	81	75	
Eastry	1	677	977	
	2	655	784	
	3	658	871	
	4	613	492	
	5	712	492	
Elham	1	844	1387	757
	2	819	1161	796
	3	884	1219	874
	4	965	791	887
	5	981	904	967
St. Dunstan's	1	487	509	423
	2	453	471	416
	3	422	424	310
	4	441	350	425
	5	557	464	527

Table 4.4 contd.

<u>Parish</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Lords' return</u>	<u>Parl. Papers</u>	<u>Parish rate book</u>
Vill of Christ Church	1	223	278	
	2	283	283	
	3	287	286	290
	4	293	250	290
	5	229	211	228
Waldershare	1	125	173	
	2	130	138	
	3	98	133	
	4	140	95	
	5	119	77	95
Wickham	1	650	683	
	2	660	750	
	3	596	621	
	4	525	610	
	5	457	276	

There is no mistaking the sharp drop in amounts in the printed series after 1814, nor the coincidence in rate book and Lords' return.

Which of the various series to use as the basis for study has to be decided taking into account the weaknesses of all three sources. The House of Lords' returns do not cover a sufficiently long period to stand on their own. The great advantage of the parliamentary papers is that they are available for a very wide range of parishes in a clear and readily accessible form. They must indicate something of the order of magnitude of poor relief, though needing careful scrutiny at the level of each individual parish. Local overseers' accounts are the basis of both series, but are much more difficult to handle. They are physically cumbersome, and vary considerably in the quality of the accounting. Nonetheless they have great advantages in the primary nature of the information they contain and the much longer time span for which such information is often available.

Within the local overseers' records there are then two classes of information: the rates raised and expenditure. Expenditure on poor relief was what parliamentary enquiries sought to ascertain after 1815, but was even at the time not easily arrived at. While the amount of the poor rate raised covered other items of expenditure, as a series it offers advantages to historians which outweigh this. In East Kent, the poor rate was normally a separate assessment from highway and church rates, which obviates that particular problem. The amount of the poor rate automatically excludes other sources of finance, such as loans¹ or the earnings of the poor (frequently offset against the cost of providing work but sometimes the result of labour rates or other "make-work" schemes) which complicate expenditure accounts. But most important, the poor rate was the burden actually laid on the inhabitants, the amount they had to find out of their income. The rates would have been raised only in response to real pressure on expenditure. It may be suspected that the more the rates were inflated by county levies² militia charges or other expenses not readily controlled by the parish, the more expenditure which was controllable, that on poor relief, would be cut back. It would have been the total burden which impressed, and which controlled policy. Moreover, poor relief made up the major part of the expenditure, and varied more than other charges, at any rate after 1815 when the militia ceased to be significant. The poor rate is the amount of the money that the parish felt absolutely obliged to raise.

The poor rates are subject to one further minor objection: the amount assessed might not be the same as the amount actually collected; in other words some people rated might not be able to pay. In practice this appears to be only a small problem as the amount not collected on empty houses and from those unable to pay, is usually recorded. It represents only a small

1. If the parish's expenditure exceeded income, and it went into debt not extinguished by the following rate, then this would not appear; in this case the rate raised would not accurately reflect expenditure until the loan or debt was paid off. On this basis Baugh (1975) 54 decided to plump for an expenditure series.
2. County rates were assessed on the returned rateable value of the parish and bore no relation to population or poor relief. Where poor relief costs were low, these county levies would obviously inflate the rates proportionately more than where poor relief costs were high.

percentage of the total raised. More important, the calculation as to how much was required was presumably made on the assumption that all paid, and deficits if significant would have to be met by increased rating levies the next time. The information on those unable to pay is indeed a valuable by-product of the examination of rating assessments, affording much indirect evidence on the incidence of poverty and the periods of financial strain.

The amount of the poor rates taken from the overseers' accounts, rather than the data given in either the House of Lords' returns or the parliamentary papers, is therefore presented as the best guide to real levels of poor expenditure. Taken all in all, it will provide a consistent and comparable source of information, with the understanding that it does not represent an absolute total of poor law expenditure. Indeed such a concept may not really exist. The social functions of the poor law were so various that much of the expenditure would be classified differently today. But it was the burden of the poor rates which provoked the complaints.

3. The course of poor rates in particular East Kent parishes.

(i) The 17th century.

A few parishes have records which enable a picture to be formed of levels of poor expenditure in the early 17th century. Where such records exist, the sums involved seem tiny. Ash for instance spent an average of £28 per annum in the first decade of the 17th century, a sum which may be related to a population in the region of 825. It represents a per capita amount of just over 6d. Either the number of poor or the amount of relief given was very small at this time. Yet it was the period immediately following the last great Elizabethan enactment on the poor, which by its very existence suggests that the size of the problem had been growing or at least becoming more pressing in the late 16th century. In Chislet a book of "disbursements" for 1624-33 gives an average amount of £6 spent each year on the poor, though the accounts are difficult to follow. Again, with a population around 300, this was only 2d per head, and if the population was larger, as is possible, then the per capita amount was even smaller. The amount is consistent with the sums evidenced in Ash a generation earlier.

The scale of individual relief payments can be gauged from the overseers' explanation. "Item paied unto George Richardson a poore man toward keeping of his children for one month 18d." ¹ In Ash, one John Omer "a poor lame youth" for whom medical care was vainly procured, seems to have been boarded with different people at a charge to the parish of 3/4d a week. Widow Williams, who supplemented her income by fostering poor children, received 1/- per week per child. Despite changes in the value of money, such sums are not greatly different from the amounts given in relief in the late 18th century, and indicate that for the total amount of the rates to have risen so dramatically at the latter date there must have been many more people on relief for much longer periods than two centuries earlier.

1. This could have been an allowance or supplementary wage payment, but may also have arisen because the man paid someone to look after his children. It illustrates well the difficulty of interpreting poor relief expenditure.

By the second half of the 17th century there had been a significant increase in amounts of poor relief. In St. Clement's, Sandwich, where the population may have been about 650, relief sums of £10⁴ per annum represented a per capita sum of 3/- in the last three decades of the century. In Ash the per capita level at the same period was 3/6, rising to 5/6 in the last decade of the century. In both an urban and a rural parish there was therefore some consistency in levels of poor expenditure at the end of the 17th century. In Chislet, relief perhaps represented rather more per head, though an unsure population base means that the figure of 10/- must be treated with caution. Certainly in this parish either population or relief to the poor had risen fairly sharply in the second half of the century.

These increases may in part be related to the price rise: over the whole century prices rose by about 40%,¹ but this is not in itself a wholly adequate explanation. There was probably also some population growth, which seems to have increased the numbers of poor rather than distributed the same relief burden more widely. In the first half of the century there had been an attempt by the Privy Council to encourage a conscientious care of the poor, but this broke down in the period of the Civil War, so that government pressure can hardly account for the increased costs of the 17th century.²

(ii) The 18th and 19th centuries.

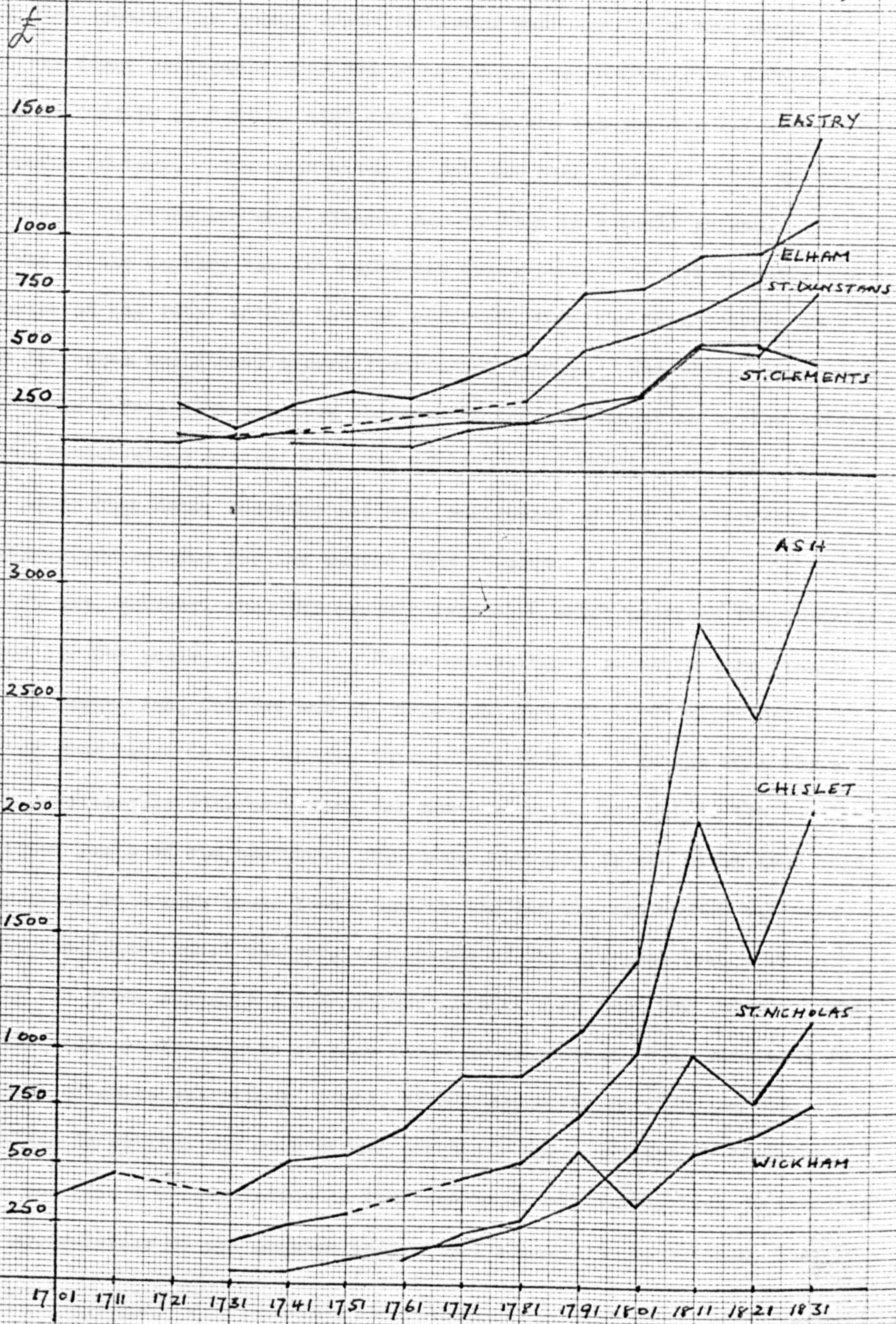
(a) Actual amounts of rates. The increases of the 17th century, however, appear quite insignificant when seen against the experience of the 18th and 19th centuries, and it is here that the major test of any explanation must be made. Poor rates in eight individual parishes by decades are displayed graphically in two sets: entirely agricultural parishes and market villages and urban parishes. (Graph 4.1).³

1. Outhwaite (1969) 10.

2. Webb, S.& B. (1927) 99 and Hampson (1934) 16.

3. For the figures on which the graphs are based see Appendix II. The figures represent decadal means, plotted against the first year of each decade.

GRAPH 4.1 ACTUAL POOR RATES IN 8 PARISHES
 (MEANS PER DECADE PLOTTED AGAINST FIRST YEAR OF DECADE)



In the 18th century, in terms of absolute amounts of money raised by the poor rate, the trend throughout is for each decade's rates to be higher than the last. Between 1710 and 1740 rates were perhaps held steady, but from 1741 onwards the upward trend is almost unbroken. In the parish of Ash, the first noticeable rise had occurred in the 1690's, from £185 per annum in 1681-90 to £323 in 1691-1700. This set the pattern for the following century. The population of Ash was over 1,000 in 1700, so that the trends in rates are more clearly marked than in a small parish. By the end of the century the Ash rates had quadrupled. If the dramatic experience of the 19th century had not occurred, then the 18th century poor rate increases would have seemed significant enough. The steady rise in poor rates before 1795 has been obscured by the concentration on the effects of the Speenhamland system, with the consequent examination of poor relief only after that date, and this has been emphasised by the availability of parliamentary returns for the period 1813 onwards.

It was, however, the 19th century increases which provided the justification for the panic of 1832-4. Three agricultural parishes move remarkably in step: Ash, Chislet and St. Nicholas, and all three experienced soaring poor rates in the decades 1811-20 and 1831-4. In the 20's there was a considerable fall-back from the previous peak, but not to the level of the first years of the century. The urban parishes on the other hand held their rates to a much lower level, and so too did the two market villages, Eastry and Elham, until the very last years of the old poor law, when in Eastry the rates suddenly increased much faster than they had before. The parliamentary papers series of poor rates or expenditure thus commenced in a decade of quite exceptional costs, with bench marks in 1776 and 1802 revealing in outline how much higher the level was. Naturally therefore there has been a concentration on the crisis period, rather than on the long slow accumulation of the problem before that time. In essentials, the

East Kent parishes fit the national picture of rising costs 1813 to 1819, a fall in the mid 1820's and an upturn again 1826 to 1834.¹ The same general outline is true for the 25⁴ Kentish parishes studied by Baugh.²

(b) Per capita rates. Where population can be ascertained with any degree of certainty, then the calculation of per capita rates for the 18th century indicates that at its beginning urban and rural rates were not very different from each other. They varied from 3 shillings (St. Clement's and St. Nicholas), 5 shillings (Elham, Eastry and probably Chislet) to 6 to 8 shillings (Ash). But as the century went on, they diverged more and more, rural rates advancing from at least mid-century, and more strongly from 1770. (Graph 4.2)³ Thus in the last two decades of the 18th century, the range was from 6 shillings in an urban parish to 18 shillings in a rural one.

Table 4.5 Per capita poor rates 1781-1800 (shillings)

	1781-1790	1791-1800
Ash	14	15
Chislet	13	18
St. Nicholas	11	14
Elham	11	-
St. Clement's	6	6
St. Dunstan's	-	8

In the 19th century the same pattern as for actual amounts of rates is generally observed. The decade 1811-20 was the one of most difficulty, and rates increased faster than population. Per capita figures again underline the difference between the four purely rural parishes (Ash, Chislet, St. Nicholas and Wickham) and the urban and market village parishes. In the

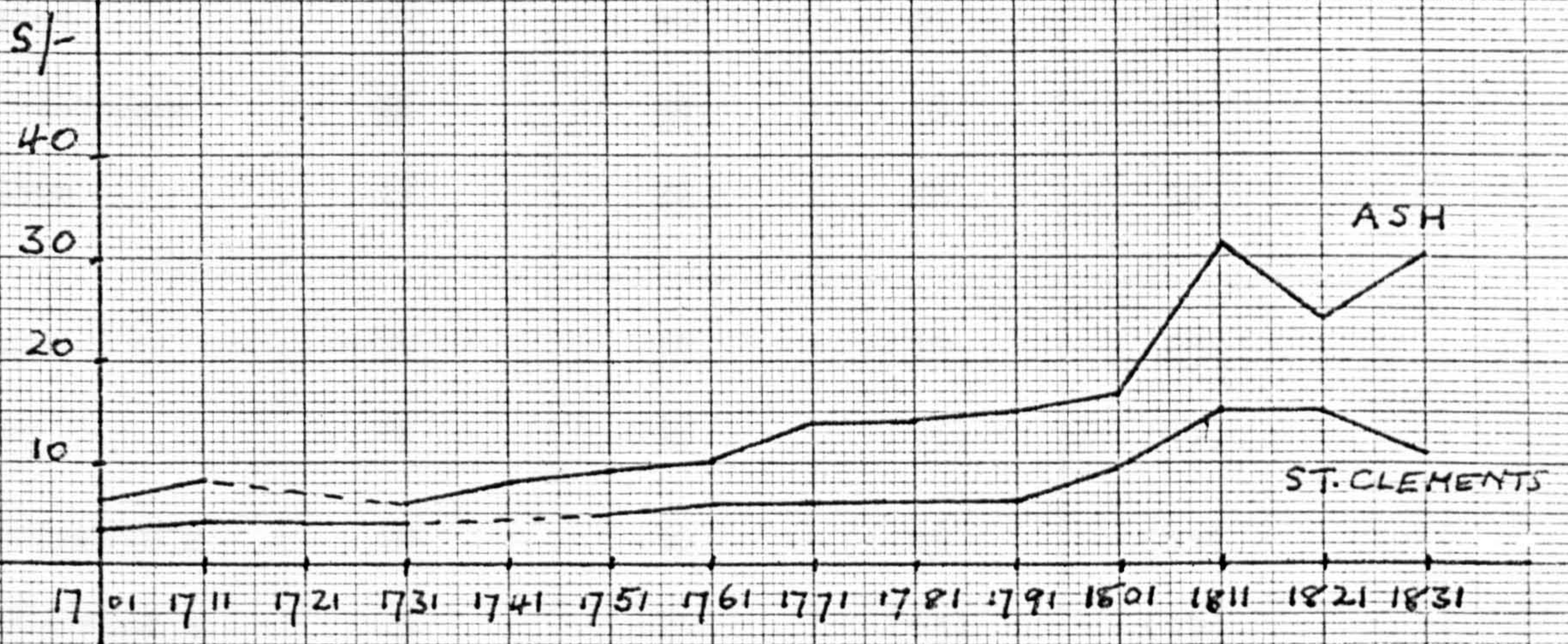
1. Marshall (1968) 26.

2. Baugh (1975) 55.

3. Decadal means are again plotted against the first year of the decade.

GRAPH 4.2 PER CAPITA POOR RATES

(MEANS PER DECADE PLOTTED AGAINST FIRST YEAR OF DECADE)



latter, rates were always lower and also steadier in the 19th century.

(Table 4.6).¹ Nationally, per capita costs rose between 1802 and 1812, and the peak was reached in 1818, after which there was a decline, so that by 1834 they had returned to the levels of 1802.² As Blaug shows, this was generally true of counties designated by him as Speenhamland as well as of non-Speenhamland counties.³ Baugh's examination of annual per capita figures in three counties based on Lords' returns as well as parliamentary papers, shows that in Kent the peak reached in 1818 merely equalled that of 1801.⁴ In Sussex and Essex the 1801 peak was never again equalled.

Table 4.6 Per capita poor rates 1801-1834 (shillings).

	1801-10	1811-20	1821-30	1831-34
Ash	17	32	24	30
Chislet	23	40	25	36
St. Nicholas	22	35	18	32
Wickham	17	26	28	32
Eastry	14	14	17	23
Elham	18	18	(15)	(17)
St. Clement's	10	15	15	(11)
St. Dunstan's	9	15	(13)	(19)

(c) Relationship with prices.

(i) Up to 1760. Just as rising poor rates moved to some extent in step with population growth, but also moved faster, so they moved in the same general direction as prices. The first half of the 18th century was

1. Figures in brackets are of expenditure drawn from parliamentary papers. Population is calculated for mid-decade.
2. Marshall (1968) 26.
3. Blaug ed. Flinn & Smout (1974) 145. Kent's per capita costs in four selected years were: 1802 - 13/6d; 1812 - 17/1d; 1821 - 18/5d; 1831 - 14/5d.
4. Baugh (1975) 55.

a period of stable prices, apart from the two years 1710 and 1711.¹ Taking 1701 as the base line (= 100) the prices of consumers' goods were in most years below 100 in every decade until 1760. Adjusting the amount of the poor rate to take account of annual index values does not therefore materially alter the picture. The slow rise in poor law expenditure after 1740 remains.² These early decades have been described as "pudding time", with a buoyant home market as a result of the general if modest prosperity perhaps helping to support the early thrust of industrialisation.³ Yet at any rate from mid-century some pressure on a section of the rural population must have been felt. Significantly the first parliamentary returns of poor expenditure were called for in 1748-50, so that a national awareness of a rising trend of expenditure in the previous years is thereby suggested.

In terms of annual fluctuations, there is a lack of correspondence between the years in which individual parishes experienced higher than average rates.⁴ Harvests might be taken as the major factor in prices and poor rates alike. Years of bad harvests sometimes appear to explain a rise in rates in one parish, but leave no trace in another. The "great winter" of 1709-10 led to deficient harvests in 1710 and 1711; in Ash in those two years poor rates were 25% above the mean for the decades, but in St. Clement's they left no trace. The bad harvests of 1739-40 also appear to be reflected in St. Nicholas in 1739 and Elham in 1740 but leave no mark in five other parishes. In 1756-7 there were food riots in some parts of the country; out of seven parishes for which annual figures are available, only one experienced higher than average rates, this time St. Clement's.⁵ On the other hand a rise in poor rates could occur when harvests nationally were good, for instance in Eastry 1729-31 and Ash 1741-2.

These last instances may in fact be a delayed response to the previous

1. Mitchell & Deane (1971) 468: Schumpeter-Gilboy index.
2. See Appendix for decadal means of poor rates, both actual and corrected for annual index variation.
3. Eversley ed. Jones & Mingay (1967) 208.
4. Higher than average is defined as 25% above the mean for the decade.
5. Classification of harvests taken from Hoskins (1968) 15-31.

years of bad harvests (in 1727-8 and 1739-40) and illustrate a tendency for parish rates to "overswing". Officers were no doubt reluctant to raise rates until forced to do so; in a bad year they may have hoped to be able to balance the books after a better year. On the other hand, rates were levied more than once a year, so could quickly respond to exceptional circumstances. The effects of harvest failures would in any case take some time to become fully apparent: the shortage of food and presumably also of liquidity grew greater as the harvest year advanced. A close correspondence between poor rates and prices would tend to indicate a particular function of the old poor law. In times of bad harvest, not only might there have been need for a supplement to meet high prices, if wages were fixed, but also bad weather led to casual labour being "stood off", so having no wage at all, and falling into the safety net of the poor law. The lack of very close correspondence does not invalidate this particular relationship but suggests that other factors were more important in shaping the course of poor rates, at any rate up to 1760.

(ii) 1760-1834. From 1760 prices began to move upwards at first slowly and then gaining momentum. In the 1770's, the index stood almost entirely above 110, in the 1780's in five years it exceeded 120, in the 1790's in seven years it exceeded 130. This price rise occurred despite only three harvests between 1760 and 1800 being classified as "bad" by Hoskins. At the turn of the century there was a major crisis, with soaring bread prices in 1800 and 1801 because of bad harvests. In the first two decades of the 19th century the index continued to rise: in the 1800's nine out of ten years stood above 160, in the 1810's seven years above 180, and the peak was reached in 1813 when the index value was 243. After that there was a sudden fall, starting in 1820, with prices remaining at a much lower level throughout the rest of the years of the old poor law.¹

1. Deane & Cole (1971) 470 - Gayer, Rostow and Schwartz index continues the picture after 1823 when the Schumpeter-Gilboy index terminates.

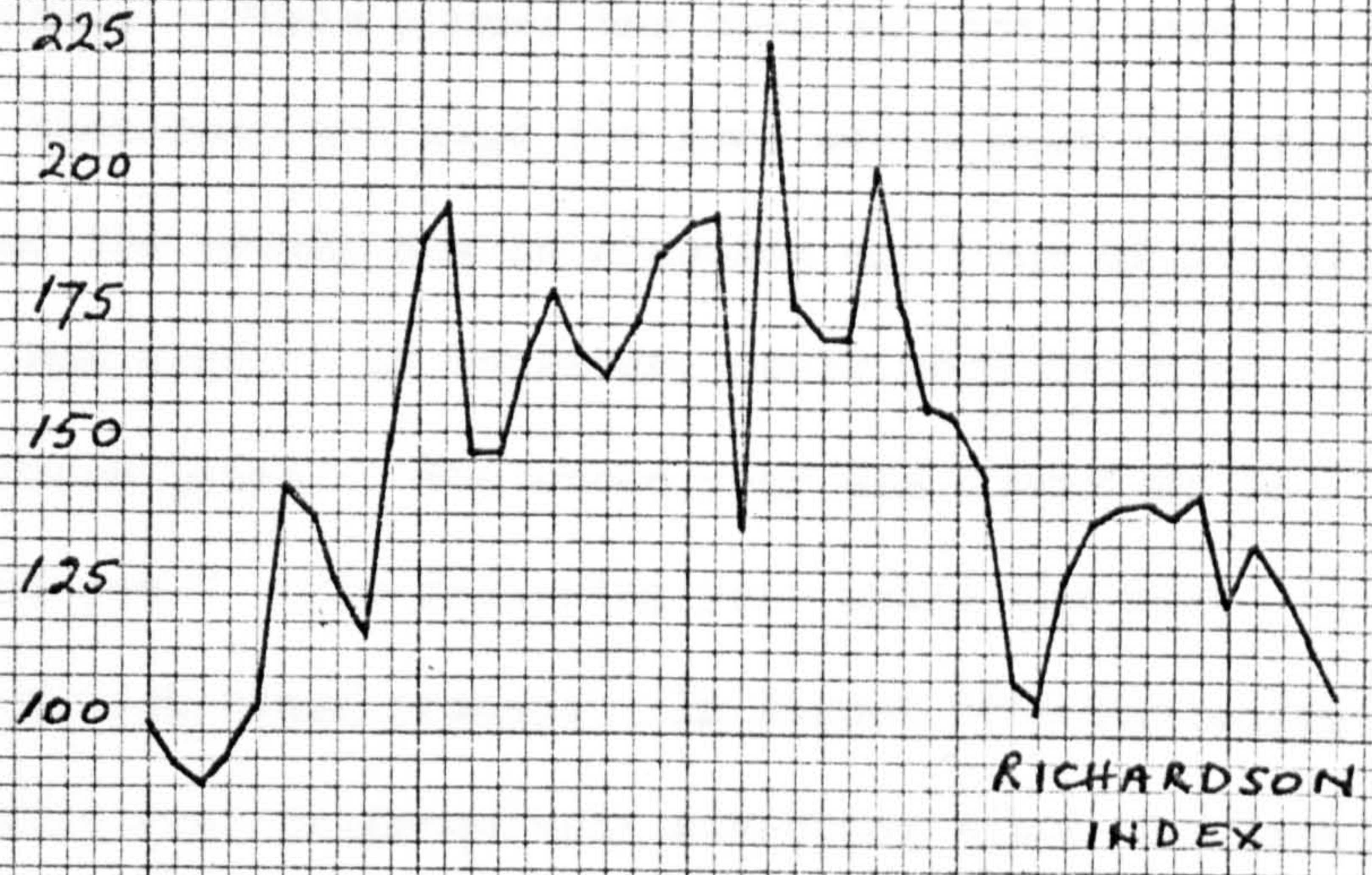
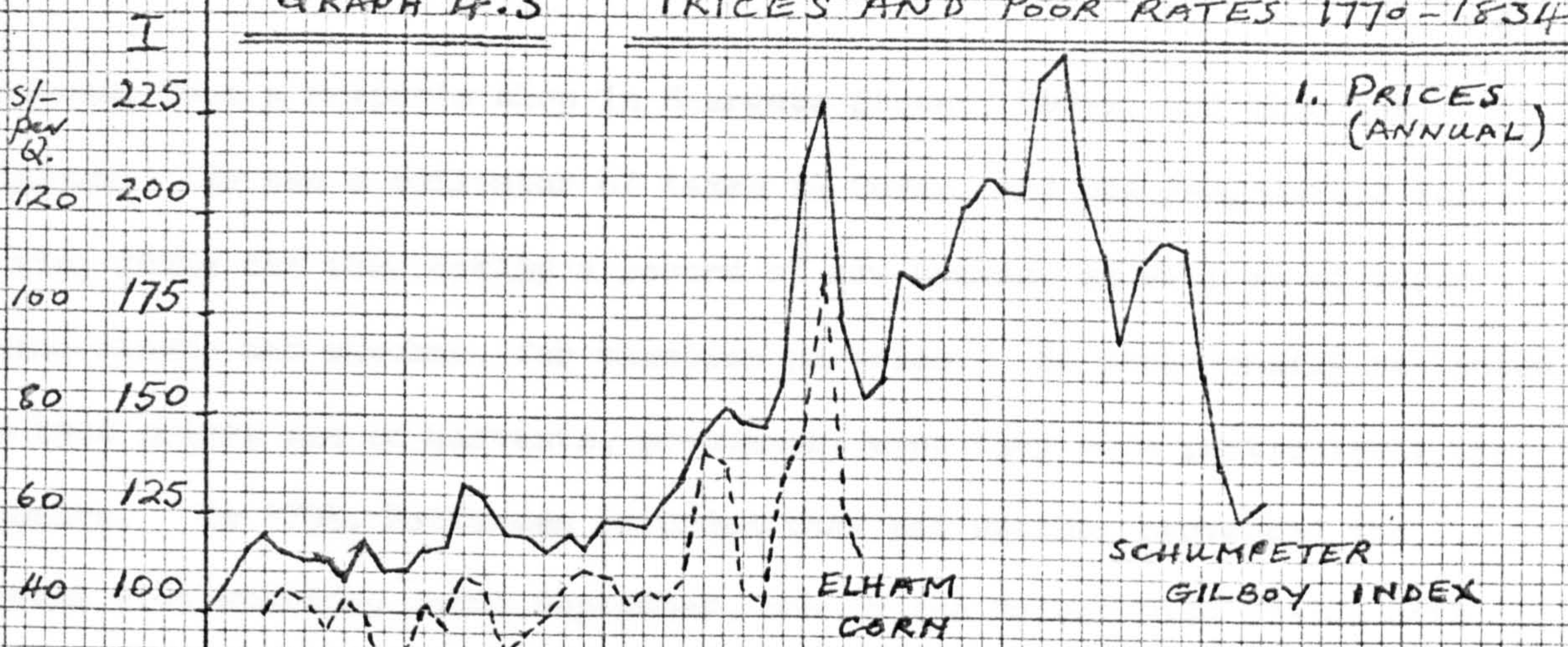
How far is a national price index applicable to East Kent, bearing in mind the saying "When England wrings, Thanet sings"?¹ Local conditions might vary from national, especially in the matter of weather, though it would be surprising if they varied enough to create a great difference.² An index of food prices constructed from Kentish material for the period 1790-1834 shows a good fit with the national indexes, with the one exception of 1812, when Kentish prices fell and the national indexes rose. A peak in 1795 is also more evident in Kentish than in national data.³ For an earlier period, 1773-1802, a local series of wheat prices for the parish of Elham further confirms the appropriateness of the national indexes to measure price changes affecting East Kent. This series of corn prices has been calculated as a yearly average from the monthly figures recorded in the Vestry minutes. The Elham Vestry purchased wheat and distributed it to the poor and to the workhouse. Samples were brought by local farmers and put in a box at the Vestry meeting; the best was then chosen and the required amount purchased. The tendency is for Elham prices to be slightly lower than national figures, but this may be attributable either to the nearness of the supply, the quality of the grain or the size of the measure, and should not necessarily be considered significant.⁴ This long-established practice (operating at least from 1773 when the Vestry minute books commence but conceivably started earlier) was discontinued abruptly in 1802. The Schumpeter-Gilboy index, the Kentish cost of food index and the Elham corn prices are displayed in Graph 4.3 together with annual poor rates for Ash and Chislet.⁵

There is some tantalising because fragmentary evidence on local prices also in Thomas Pattenden's Diary,⁶ which he kept from 1797 until 1808. Thomas

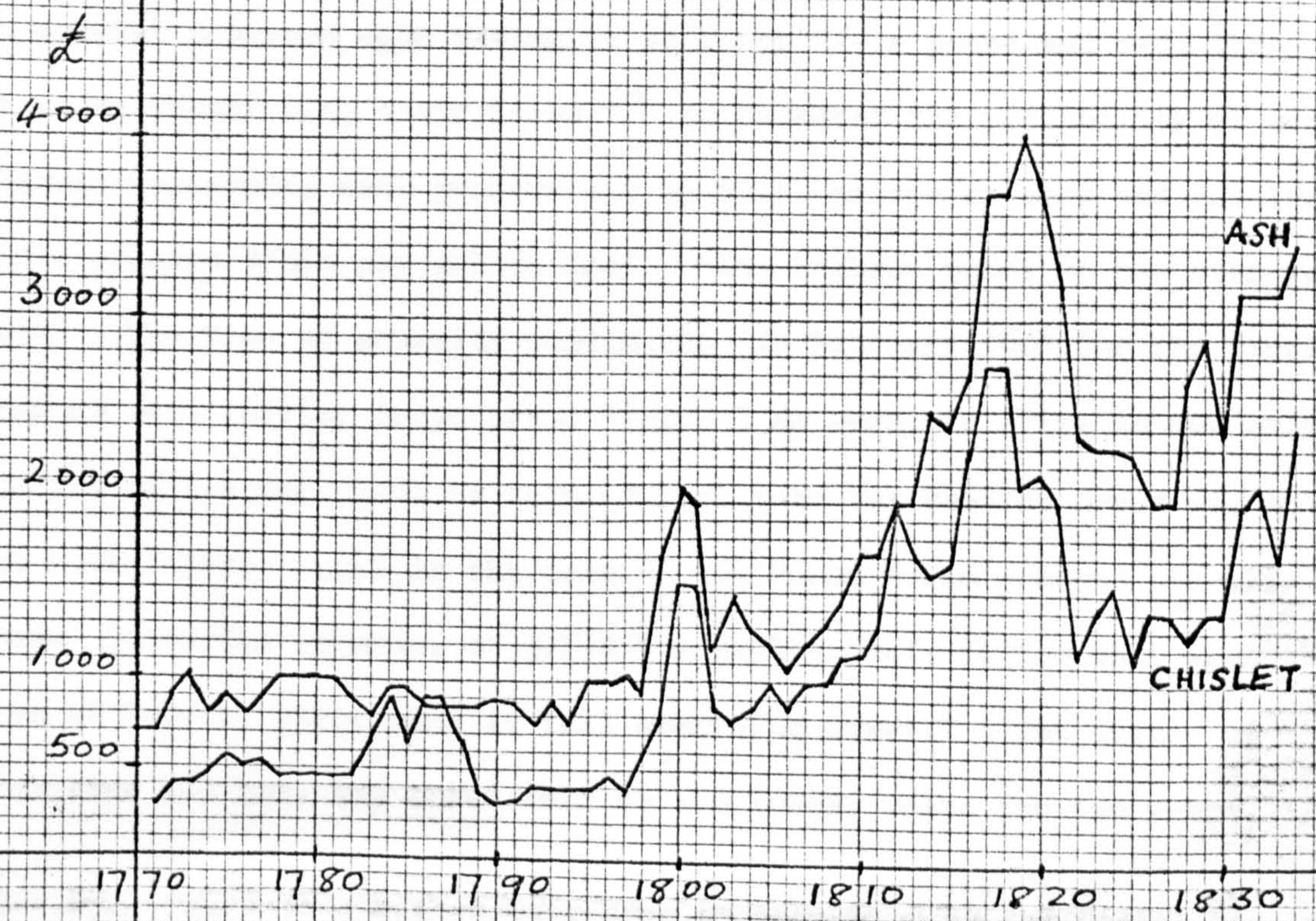
1. Lewis (1736) 12.
2. Granger & Eliot (1967) 257-262, suggest long term fluctuations in wheat prices were closely connected in all parts of the country.
3. Richardson, using workhouse accounts from a scatter of parishes all over Kent and a weighting derived from the typical budget in Davies, The Case of Labourers in Husbandry. Huzell (1975) 446-7; Richardson ed. Oddy & Miller (1976) 103-111.
4. Granger & Eliot op cit 261 show Eton prices lagged one year behind other series, perhaps because they were retail prices.
5. See Appendix III for data on which the graphs are based.
6. Dover Public Library.

GRAPH 4.3

PRICES AND POOR RATES 1770-1834



2 POOR RATES (ANNUAL)



Pattenden kept a draper's shop in Snargate Street, Dover, and also let lodgings. He was a collector of taxes in Dover, and was responsible for walking round the town making a record of new houses, as well as of those owning clocks and watches, for taxation purposes. He occasionally reflected on food prices and on harvests, presumably when they were particularly impressive. In 1799, Pattenden recorded that bad weather prevented the harvest even starting until September, and in the Maison Dieu fields oats and barley were ready together. "This summer has been so little warm weather and we have had so much rain and wind for some weeks past that the wheat all about this part of the county now is standing and none of it yet cut down." Even the bees had died. In December, coals were becoming scarce, and fetched an enormous price. The whole year was summed up in retrospect as "very cold and wet." The following year until the next harvest was naturally one of high bread prices. In August 1800 Pattenden noted "the Bread has been this year progressively advancing since the last harvesting to the price lately of $2/11\frac{1}{2}$ d per gallon. This day (1 August) it has took a turn and fell two pence on account of the prospect there is of an abundant harvest from the fine weather we have had this six weeks." Even so, in September there was a riot in the Court Hall over the butter "the people present insisted upon having it sold for 1/- a pound and made the market women comply with their terms."¹ In December the probability of war with Russia commencing made grocers put up their prices of soap and candles, and bread reached $3/3\frac{1}{2}$ d per gallon loaf - "the highest price it has ever yet been at." The time of scarcity continued; in February 1801 for the first time bakers were selling brown bread "which I am sorry to write is now sold at $3/2$ d the gallon loaf which is only $\frac{1}{2}$ d less than the Wheaten Bread was sold for the week before: such is the case." In March bread reached its all-time peak, Pattenden records, of $3/7\frac{1}{2}$ d the gallon loaf, "after that when the supplies of foreign wheat came it fell something lower." The summer of 1801 was fine and hot, and bread fell to its lowest price for two years, $1/10$ d

1. Thompson (1971) 76-136 sees this type of behaviour as the "moral economy of the crowd," the focus of the old economy being the market place.

per gallon loaf. Such were the extreme fluctuations of price, not all of which it seems were entirely related to quantity available.

In 1805 and 1806 Pattenden again recorded bread prices quite often; in early August 1805 it was 2/7d, but then some fine, hot weather brought the price down to around 2/- per gallon loaf. By December it had fallen lower, to 1/9d per gallon. In 1806 the price seems always to have been more than 2/- per gallon, and in 1807 the price was generally lower.

Pattenden's observations serve to emphasise the responsiveness of bread prices to anticipated as well as actual harvest and market conditions, and to show the fluctuations possible from month to month. Compared with London bread prices,¹ Dover prices seem to be higher, and thus underline the severity of the crisis faced by the poor at certain times during these years.

Average Price of Bread in London 1799-1807

	<u>shillings per gallon loaf</u>
1799	1/7
1800	2/7
1801	2/7
1802	1/7
1803	1/5
1804	1/7
1805	2/2
1806	1/11
1807	1/9

The relationship between the price rises 1760-1834 and the movement of poor rates is complex. While prices rose gently 1770-1790, poor rates remained steady, though with a responsive temporary increase in some parishes in 1783. The year of Speenhamland was not particularly remarkable in poor rates in East Kent, but the crisis of the turn of the century was certainly

1. Based on Mitchell and Deane (1971) 498. The prices given are double those for the quartern loaf as quoted by Mitchell and Deane.

felt strongly. Here index and rates move sharply in sympathy. Thereafter the rising trend of prices to 1813 is matched by poor rates, which apparently moved faster. After 1813 while prices declined, poor rates continued to rise to 1818/19, fell for a decade in harmony with prices, but up-turned markedly once more in the last six years of the old poor law. The period between 1813 and 1818 is therefore a critical one, when prices fail to explain at all the movement of rates.

The result of correcting annual poor rates according to the index value for the year¹ is to flatten the rises, but to distinguish the decade 1811-20 as the one of most considerable increases, while in terms of falling prices the up-turn in costs of poor relief 1830-34 is further magnified. Indeed in some parishes which had maintained relatively stable costs until then, like Eastry and St. Dunstan's, there was the first large rise in those four years.

1. Schumpeter-Gilboy index has been used for period up to 1823, and Gayer, Rostow and Schwartz, adjusted to compensate for a different level, for the period 1824-1834.
See Appendix II.

The detailed examination of the movement of rates thus raises several questions of interpretation. Two main periods can be distinguished: the 18th century up to 1760, and the period 1760-1834. Up to 1760, the main issue is what explains the slow upward creep of poor rates especially since prices seem to have remained stable? After 1760 there is a change of pace. The timing of the turning point seems justified from a number of points of view. In Essex, A.F.J. Brown notes a "keener" atmosphere in agriculture, and in that county also poor relief bills start to increase from this date.¹ Nationally, Britain passed about this date from a corn exporting to an importing country.² The years before 1760 were "fat" years, those after, "lean" years. Between 1760 and 1834 the three main parameters: prices, population and poor rates, can all be seen to interrelate, but the implications of each relationship are difficult to establish.

Obviously a relationship between poor rates and prices must have existed; at the simplest level, the cost of a standard provision for pensions, homes for the old, and other basic welfare items would have risen with rising prices. A responsiveness of rates to prices would be expected. But the relationship to prices was not constant over the whole period. The real value of poor relief rose sharply from 1815, reaching a peak in 1823, notably because actual poor rates rose while prices began to decline. There is, therefore, a complicating factor in that poor rates rose more than was required for a mere maintenance of the status quo. In periods of exceptional crisis, such as 1800-1 and perhaps 1817³ near-famine conditions probably required the poor law overseers to help two classes of poor - those without work because of bad weather conditions, and in the manner of Speenhamland to supplement the income of the casual labour force, whose wages were not

1. Brown (1969) 29 and 151.

2. Pollard & Crossley (1968) 175.

3. Post (1976) 16-17 claims 1816-17 as the last European pre-industrial famine. Prices failed to rise as steeply in Britain as on the Continent because of massive cereal imports. Ibid 25. The epidemic of typhus seems also to have failed to make so much impact on British mortality.

sufficiently responsive to prices. At other times, prices have to be used as indirect evidence of economic situations. Thus in the Napoleonic War period, and perhaps before, high prices probably meant high agricultural profits, and a transfer of income to landlords, farmers, rentiers and capital owners.¹ Farmers could then afford to employ more labour at higher wages - or could afford high poor rates to transfer some of the rewards to labour. At the same time the absence of many men in the armed forces left employment opportunities for women and children on the land in harvest time.² When prices fell and agricultural depression was experienced, farmers might well have altered their requirements for labour and a surplus have thereby been created, while returning soldiers swelled the labour force.

The farmers themselves, when questioned in 1821 by the Select Committee investigating the condition of agriculture, certainly maintained that the fall in prices of farm produce was the cause of widespread distress and unemployment amongst agricultural labourers;³ this was the explanation favoured by at least one East Kent respondent also in 1828.⁴ There were various contemporary explanations of the price fall itself. One was a monetarist theory, attributing the depression to preparations by the Bank of England for the resumption of cash payments, 1815-16, followed by Peel's Act 1819 which arranged for complete convertibility by 1821. Many country banks failed.⁵ An alternative explanation was in terms of supply; two good harvests in 1813 and 1815 and generous imports of corn in 1814 before

1. Pollard & Crossley (1968) 189.
2. It is not at all clear that real wages did advance in the Napoleonic War period. (Gourvish (1976) 141). Wages may have been held even in conditions of labour shortage, because custom dictated that the labourer should have the minimum, or he would become "saucy". (Jones (1964) 332). There seems no reason, however, why poor rates should have remained high in these years if there existed an all-the-year-round shortage of labour. It was the desire to get the harvest in as quickly as possible once ready that created a bottomless demand for labour for a short time, and so complaints of shortage.
3. Adams (1932) 114-5. See Chapter 6 for further discussion of this in the light of poor law administrative stratagems of the 19th century.
4. PP 1828 IV 137.
5. Adams *op cit* 67-9. Although grain prices fell more than other agricultural products, in Kent the marsh and pasture areas had the highest levels of per capita poor rates. Huzel (1975) 177.

the Corn Law was passed had fatally depressed the price of corn. Grain prices had fallen more than those of meat and wool. Neither of these explanations matches the timing of the steady rise in poor rates from 1806 to 1818, though no doubt these economic factors much exacerbated the difficulties being experienced by rural communities.

The relationship between prices and poor rates fails to explain the variations at all periods, so that another variable has to be sought. Such might be population growth. The rise in expenditure per capita is much less dramatic than in absolute terms. But per capita rates might to some extent confuse the picture. Some of the population increase was in younger age groups, due to falling infant and child mortality and perhaps to increased fertility also.¹ The dependency ratio was thus certainly greater; perhaps if wages were very close to subsistence, a small increase in family size was insupportable. Moreover, at a time of labour shortage, such as is suggested for the Napoleonic War period,² per capita rates should have fallen. As they did not, it argues either that there was still enough labour generally available, or that levels of poor relief were not at this period primarily determined by levels of unemployment.

After 1815, on the other hand, about 400,000 men were demobilised into civilian life,³ approximately 40 per parish. This and the reversal in agricultural profits may well have created a labour surplus. Baugh finds insufficient demand for labour an adequate explanation for the low wages, so that most men needed help from the poor law authorities.⁴ As far as the total cost to the community was concerned, a few men on good wages and many unemployed and on poor relief cost the same as more men on part wages and part poor relief. However, the costs in the two cases were distributed differently within the community. This was one of the Poor Law Commission's

1. See Chapter Nine.

2. Jones (1964) 323.

3. Ibid 325. Adams (1932) estimated 300,000 returning soldiers.

4. Baugh (1975) 66.

accusations, that necessary labour was not being properly supported by the employer, and aggregate statistics cannot reveal the truth or otherwise of their assertion.

With regard to administrative practice, two hypotheses can be advanced; the first is that the framework of the old poor law remained the same throughout the critical period 1760-1834, and that economic or population factors acting on society generally made the difference in costs. Poor law practice merely responded to economic conditions. This is the interpretation put forward most recently by Baugh and Huzel. The second hypothesis is that administrative policies acted positively on the economic condition of the labourer. This was the view of the Poor Law Commissioners. The way in which the relative movements of prices, poor relief and population are held to interact on each other can be made to support either interpretation. An examination of evidence on administrative practices over the whole of the 18th and early 19th century needs to be set alongside the quantifiable data, and the concept of surplus labour more carefully examined.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE ADMINISTRATION OF POOR RELIEF IN EAST KENT: (A) URBAN PARISHES.

In order to handle the mass of minute detail in the overseer's accounts, and describe the operation of the old poor law, some categorisation of the material is essential. One method is based on administrative mechanisms - for instance matters connected with the settlement laws, or with vagrants, or with the collection of rates and appointment of parish officers. Another method of categorisation is based on the nature of the poor themselves: bastards, widows, orphans, the sick, the aged, the able-bodied. The ways in which relief was actually given provide a third organising principle for the material: in cash or in kind, doles or pensions, medical relief, payment of house rents, institutional relief. Poor law administration in a number of counties has been described from these standpoints; in Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, Essex, Dorset, East Yorkshire and Warwickshire¹ methods of relief have been found to be very similar. In general, the impression gained is of overseers having carried out their tasks to the best of their abilities and usually humanely, within the administrative framework of the parish.

From a different standpoint, a further series of questions has been posed focussed upon the Speenhamland system. It has been the objective of recent research to test how far the administrative method of a wage-supplement linked to a bread scale was significant in shaping relief costs.² In this form the question has been shown to be irrelevant,³ but the force of the parliamentary commission's views and the availability of evidence has prevented a longer perspective on the same question. The Speenhamland system should perhaps be seen as one administrative expedient amongst many.

1. Emmison (1933), Hampson (1934), Lloyd Pritchard (1949), Thomas (1956), Body (1965), Hopkin (1968), Lane (1970).
2. Blaug (1963), Baugh (1975), Huzel (1975).
3. See Chapter One, 5-11.

Instead of Speenhamland, the administrative methods of the old poor law generally need to be examined, with the question in mind particularly of what they reveal of the perception of poverty and of its incidence. From the varying methods of poor relief over the 17th and 18th centuries, attitudes to poverty can be deduced. More important, from the timing of policy changes and decisions, some of the social determinants may also be indicated. Coincidence of timing between certain old poor law strategies and other social changes, for example population growth or changes in social structure, may throw light on some of the shifts in poor law levels of expenditure.

In the next three chapters, the main outline of parish policies is examined with particular reference to chronology. Urban parishes will be discussed first. Here levels of expenditure were lower and rose less than in agricultural parishes, though this may have been because of more stringent attitudes rather than structural differences.

1. Sources

In Dover, St. Mary's, the only evidence available for study of the old poor law administration is in Vestry minutes, extant from 1660 to 1834. As the record of the decisions of a large urban parish, the minutes are strictly formal, and do not itemise separate cases for relief as rural parish minutes often do. However, they do afford some insight into policy and the timing of difficulties. For the parish of St. Clement's, Sandwich, a series of poor law accounts survive, but only scattered memoranda of Vestry discussions and decisions. The neighbouring town parish of St. Peter's, however, has a set of Vestry minute books, and from these two sources the main lines of development in Sandwich can be plotted. In Canterbury, for two independent units, the Vill of Christ Church and St. Dunstan's, both overseers' accounts and Vestry minutes are extant from mid or later 18th century. In addition, the minute books of the Guardians of the Fourteen United Parishes of Canterbury from the date of incorporation in 1728 have been briefly scanned.¹

1. Where information has been drawn from the parish poor law records the source has been located by reference to the name of the parish (Eastry) and the date (1716). A full list of the provenance of each parish's archives is given in the Bibliography. Other sources have been indicated in the usual way.

2. The importance of the workhouse in urban administration.

One of the most significant aspects of poor relief administration was indoor relief in the workhouse. The effort required to build or rent a workhouse, and to administer such an institution, with its regular requirements for supplies and equipment, the supervision of a master or mistress, rules respecting admission and general running, would have precluded the operation being undertaken unless there was seen to be a pressing need and some notable advantages. The development of the workhouse in the urban parishes thus indicates much about the growth of the poor relief problem.

A common feature of the administration in all three towns was indeed the early institution of a workhouse. In 1722-3 an Act¹ authorised parishes to buy or rent workhouses, and to refuse relief to those declining to enter. If necessary parishes could unite together.² Dover Vestry discussed the question in 1725, and agreed "that certain building at the pier in Dover.....commonly called the Town Storehouse shall be hired by the parish and the same converted into a workhouse for the Reception of the poor of this parish." Inserted into the resolution was a significant afterthought: that the house be converted not only for the reception but also the employment of the poor. In Sandwich also in 1725 all three parishes combined to hire a house "for the employment and maintenance of the poor people" and "to fit the said House for the Conveniency and Reception of the poor People." The fourteen Canterbury parishes obtained a local act in 1728³ and set up a workhouse as part of the combined re-organisation of poor relief in the town, on the pattern of Bristol⁴ and other towns. Poor persons refusing to be placed in the workhouse were not to receive relief. When the record in St. Dunstan's commenced in 1740, there was a workhouse already in existence there too.

1. 9 Geo I c 7 - Knatchbull's Act. It has been estimated that less than 200 such houses were set up, in a minute proportion of the total number of parishes. Checkland S.G. & E.O.A.(1974) 15.
2. Tate (1969) 193.
3. 1 Geo II c 20.
4. Bristol's Act was obtained in 1696.

The workhouse movement has been seen as a response to the great problem of poverty in towns,¹ and from its inception seems to have been intended as a deterrent as well as an asylum. Parishes had certainly operated residential institutions of a somewhat similar nature in the 17th century, under the provisions of the 1601 Act relating to setting the poor to work, but it seems that they did not feel they had sufficient legal authority to impose the workhouse test until 1722-3. This was a critical aspect of the general enabling Act.² Once in operation, workhouses claimed a good deal of administrative time, and quickly needed to be enlarged. There was always difficulty running workhouses with minimal expenditure. Both humanitarianism and bureaucracy led to the expense periodically rising beyond what was conceived to be absolutely necessary. Moreover it never proved possible to make the poor earn their keep. Inevitably the workhouse degenerated into an asylum, holding mainly those who were incapable of playing any independent role in the workforce.³ Even the very well-organised Canterbury Union could be told that "waste and profusion were universally prevalent in every department of the House, and are of a magnitude that imperiously calls for a speedy and effectual Reform."⁴ This was the flavour of much comment on workhouses before 1834.

The Sandwich workhouse was seen to need enlargement and improvement in 1735, ten years after its inception. St. Peter's Parish Vestry resolved to build one "for the better employment and Regulation of the Poor" with or without the co-operation of the other two parishes. St. Clement's decided to act independently, and hired a house in Fisher Street. In 1772 this proved unsatisfactory in some way, and the workhouse was moved to premises

1. Oxley (1974) 36. On page 81 he lists 12 towns which hastened to follow Bristol's example in the next 16 years.
2. Webb S.& B. (1927) 244 suggests that the 1723 Act may have been framed because of the success of one Buckinghamshire man in reducing pauperism through use of "the workhouse test".
3. Hampson (1934) 97 & 113. Webb S.& B. op cit 218 "it was always crumbling back into what the 20th century terms the General Mixed workhouse, in which all destitute persons.....are indiscriminately housed and maintained."
4. Report of Cyprian Rondeau Bunce and Edward Hambrook, Minutes of Canterbury Guardians (1800).

in the High Street. St. Peter's also found their earlier arrangements inadequate, and in 1778 resolved to sell the two messuages used as a workhouse and use the money to purchase and erect another "convenient building and premises." Their intentions were not fulfilled, for in 1798 the existing buildings were auctioned, and St. Peter's and St. Mary's jointly considered new premises in Moat Sole. The expense of this last venture proved unexpectedly heavy, so that money had to be borrowed in 1800 to complete the project. In 1810 another loan was taken up to set up a manufactory. The two parishes appear to have found co-operation difficult; there was obvious room for friction in the management of the house and in its financing. Two years after the manufactory was set up, St. Mary's wished to separate the workhouse operation and St. Peter's agreed to divide the premises into two. In 1816 St. Mary's again pressed for complete separation, but St. Peter's thwarted action merely by doing nothing. They finally capitulated in 1817, a new master was appointed, and until 1836 when the parishes were all incorporated into the Eastry Union, they each ran their own workhouse. Their only continued co-operation was in jointly appointing someone to deal with travelling paupers.

Once on its own again (in 1819), St. Peter's set limits to the amounts to be given in out-relief, and resolved that certain cases were not to be relieved "out of the house." It also experimented with "farming" the poor. A contractor undertook to care for the inmates of the workhouse either for an annual sum as set out in the contract or at so much per head per week.¹ Such a system apparently saved the Vestry or the overseer the detail of workhouse administration, and protected the parish from inefficiencies. In a period of inflation, however, it inevitably led to contractors progressively reducing standards to try and make the system pay. St. Peter's found contracting unsatisfactory and instead reverted to the direct

1. Oxley (1974) 100 gives examples of parishes or unions employing both methods of contracting, mainly dating from the late 18th century. Cheltenham (1755) is the earliest cited. Webb S. & B. (1927) 289-298.

purchase of necessary supplies. Like the history of the Speenhamland scale, some parishes were giving up "farming" just as others were experimenting with it.

The scale of operation of the Sandwich workhouses was comparatively small. In St. Clement's, particularly, there were only some half dozen inmates in the late 18th century, and judging from 19th century records most were short stay families or individuals. In St. Peter's in 1834 there were 25 people in the house which they said could accommodate 50, but had as a maximum taken 59. They were able to make the matron also the administrator of the workhouse. By contrast, in 1834 the Canterbury Union workhouse contained 237 inmates, a very different scale of operation. Nonetheless the assistant poor law commissioner noted in his report on Sandwich "There are two workhouses; it is obvious that incorporation would be most desirable."¹

In Dover, the workhouse was not the occasion of any discussion in Vestry until the late 18th century. The earlier resolution to employ the poor must have been implemented, for in 1770 a surplus of linen and woollen stock was noted, "The Manufactory of the Poor." After this date, however, it seems to have fallen into disuse, and in 1830 it was again deemed expedient to set up a manufactory for making nets, sacking, sheeting and hop bags; it was noted that this would promote 'Industry' and reduce the number of paupers. Dover, it was suggested, possessed many advantages over other places where a manufactory was carried on, "both as regards a ready market and also the number of Fishing Vessels sailing from this port who might be supplied with Nets at a cheaper rate than at present, and which they are now obliged to obtain from the neighbouring workhouses." Thus were other workhouse enterprises undercut.

At the end of the 18th century, it appeared that "the state of the said workhouse is very bad and by no means intended as an asylum either in point of situation, size or convenience. That in consequence thereof the Poor

1. PP 1834 XXXVIII 218.

therein are much neglected and their morals greatly corrupted." This confirms the breakdown of the manufactory and led to the resolve to build a new workhouse "in a way comfortable (to the Poor) and more for the preservation of Morality and Good Manners." The poor state of the workhouse points to the failure of the strategy of farming the poor with which Dover had also experimented. The first contract had been made in 1785, and was renewed in 1792, at that time at 2/6d. per head per week, but the arrangement was terminated in 1793 in favour of building a new workhouse.

There is little evidence of the operation of St. Dunstan's workhouse. It was used in some spirit of deterrance, as is seen in the case of Joseph Moon. The Vestry discussed (in 1779) what was the best policy towards this man: should he be given relief or should two of his children go into the workhouse? Out-relief was decided by one vote. Nonetheless subsequently "such of his family as he can't maintain shall be taken into the workhouse." Three years later he was still a problem. It was resolved that "Joseph Moon is not an object of charity." Perhaps he was workshy. In the early 19th century St. Dunstan's considered the erection of a united workhouse, and in 1806 borrowed money to enlarge and improve the "general workhouse." Several parishes co-operated to run this workhouse, though they did not set up a Gilbert's Union; the Blean Union enterprise was wound up in 1834 and formed into a larger union under the terms of the Poor Law Amendment Act.

Two points seem of particular significance in considering Vestry policies with respect to workhouses. The first is the use of the workhouse test. This seems to have been the reason why numbers of parishes erected or hired workhouses after 1723. The initiative was connected with attempts to use the workhouse to discriminate between the idle and the truly indigent. But it was obviously very easy to allow this resolution to fade, so that repeated attempts to re-impose the test had to be made. Canterbury Guardians for instance in 1751 and 1780 resolved to employ the test, but in

practice found it impossible to avoid out-relief. In Sandwich too the test was re-imposed, as in St. Peter's in 1819. Moreover, Vestry resolutions may not tell us all the occasions when attempts were made to tighten up this aspect of administration.

The second point of importance concerning the workhouse is the indications it provides of the chronology of poor relief pressures. The 1723 Act met an immediate need, for an institution which was not just a hospital, old people's home or asylum, but which provided a test of the real indigence of the poor relief applicant. Even the tiny Vill of Christ Church found it advantageous to make use of a workhouse, though it would not have wanted to run such an institution itself. It arranged to send paupers to neighbouring parish workhouses - Sturry, then the Westgate, then Ash, and at the very end of the 18th century finally made the obvious arrangement to use the Canterbury Union workhouse. In the mid-18th century workhouses attracted little attention, but from the last quarter of the century there is evidence of attempts to revitalise the institutional solution to the problem of the poor - building new, larger, better-designed workhouses and setting up manufactories there.¹ At the same time "farming" the poor in the workhouse also emerges as a symptom of a problem becoming more pressing. Although contracting may have been authorised by the 1723 Act,² all that was found necessary at that date seems to have been a master or mistress to oversee the house. Employment of the contract system indicates dissatisfaction, and an attempt to control expenditure; it is notable that, in general, examples of contracts have been found only from the late 18th century. Eden indeed thought the system "the greatest improvement of modern times respecting the care of the poor."³ Like other poor relief experiments, contracting failed to remove the problem, but some parishes were embarking on the experiment as others abandoned it.

1. Oxley (1974) 84 dates this trend from 1760, without attributing to it any special significance.
2. Webb S.& B. (1927) 289-298.
3. Webbs ibid suggest the contract was employed all through the 18th century, but provided only 19th century examples. They were more concerned with its effectiveness as a system of administration than with the timing of its adoption.

3. The Provision of Outdoor Relief.

There were in practice many ways under the old poor law in which the poor were given help without being required to enter the workhouse. In the first place their financial obligations were often reduced, for example by excusing the payment of rates, or by simply not assessing them to rates, and by paying in whole or in part their house rents. These practices were common. Secondly the poor were frequently given help with other quite ordinary items of household expenditure: purchase of clothes, shoes and fuel, and the mending of shoes. Thirdly the heavy but exceptional charges for medical care were often met, and perhaps for self-interested motives, inoculation and then vaccination was provided for the poor en masse. Finally the form of relief that has achieved most notoriety was the provision either of bread or of money according to a bread scale. The old, the disabled and the sick benefitted from these forms of relief, which in their cases were felt to be unexceptionable,¹ but so too did the able-bodied, whether unemployed, underemployed or badly paid. To those who clearly could be seen for good reason not to be able to support themselves, the parish also gave a regular weekly dole of money or pension, with the other forms of relief supplementing these apparently very meagre sums. The children of the poor, or their orphans, were frequently bound as apprentices. Urban parishes employed all these methods of giving relief from an early date.

(i) Housing.

In the 17th century, both St. Clement's and St. Peter's, Sandwich, paid house rents. In 1824 St. Peter's resolved to give up paying rents. It is probable that the practice had continued unbroken since the 17th century, nonetheless the parish blandly replied to the Poor Law Commissioner some years later that relief was not given in this form. In the 18th century both St. Dunstan's and the Vill of Christ Church, Canterbury, paid rents. This only involved the Vill in an occasional transaction but in St. Dunstan's

1. PL Report (1974) 114.

it was a more important form of relief. St. Dunstan's owned several houses; the poor were moved in and out of these tenements quite frequently, presumably as their financial or family circumstances made it possible to make more economic use of the accommodation. They could not have been very salubrious premises, since in 1835 they were all sold as "dilapidated". As to the other method of reducing financial burdens, the practice of excusing rates, this need not always be explicit in the records, and requires careful analysis to deduce whether it was usual, and whether at different times the numbers not rated altered.¹ It is certainly clear, however, that by no means all householders paid rates. Thus in 1819 St. Dunstan's Vestry resolved not to excuse any rates, and again in 1821 resolved positively to collect rates from everyone, a vain resolution but an attempt to make sure that the responsibility for poor relief costs was shouldered by all inhabitants.

The excusal of rates was a practice condemned by the Poor Law Commissioners,² and Questions 50 to 57 of the Urban Queries³ were designed to elicit information on this topic. In Canterbury Union, it appears from the replies, there were a great many small houses or cottages on the outskirts of the City, mostly owned by mechanics, labourers and disorderly females. Only in cases of extreme poverty were these properties exempted from payment of rates, but the landlords were rated for all tenements assessed at £4 or less. Generally such landlords compounded for the rates. However, to the question about whether the occupiers of small properties failed to pay their rates, the Guardians replied that with very few exceptions the rates were actually paid. The Guardians estimated that only 3½% of the assessed amount of the rates failed to be collected, and this was because of empty tenements as well as because of poor who had been excused. By 1834 it seems likely that there had been a considerable tightening up in respect of overseers' payments for house-room.

1. See Chapter Eight.
2. PL Report (1974) 82-88.
3. PP 1834 XXXVI 56.

(ii) Other forms of relief in kind.

Where the overseers' accounts give sufficient detail to see on what the many small sums of money recorded were spent, as in St. Dunstan's, there is evidence of regular provision of items of household expenditure, such as clothes, and the purchase and repair of shoes.¹ In St. Dunstan's the parish's shoemakers were employed on a rota basis. But often the accounts record the payment of bills with no hint of what the bills were for, or of small sums of money to this or that person, again with no indication of for what particular purpose. The Poor Law Report concluded that the provision of basic household requirements was widespread. "The outdoor relief of the able-bodied, when given in kind, consists rarely of food, rather less unfrequently of fuel, and still less unfrequently of clothes, particularly shoes; but its most usual form is that of relieving the applicants, either wholly or partially, from the expense of obtaining house-room."² This generalisation seems to be confirmed, as far as the evidence allows, as to the urban parishes in East Kent.

(iii) Medical care.

Medical attention was commonly secured for the poor by the overseers, often on a contract basis. This was regarded as relief to the "impotent" by the Poor Law Commissioners and was therefore acceptable, though in practice it extended to medical services for the able-bodied too. By mid-18th century St. Peter's and St. Clement's, Sandwich and St. Dunstan's, Canterbury were all paying doctors' expenses, though one does not know what cases were considered deserving of such assistance. In St. Dunstan's the doctor was paid a regular annual stipend for the care of the poor. When the records of the Vill of Christ Church commence, there too doctor's bills were being paid. Parishes within reach of the Kent and Canterbury Hospital (opened in 1793) also often took out a subscription enabling them to gain

1. At the beginning of the 20th century the Ash cobbler estimated that a pair of working men's boots cost a full week's wages.
2. PL Report (1974) 82.

treatment for one or more parishioners. Dover, St. Mary's, noted when they resolved to subscribe in 1804 that "many of the Parishioners have and do receive great benefit therefrom." St. Dunstan's, Canterbury, also subscribed, but the Sandwich parishes appear not to have taken advantage of this local facility. In 1829¹ 145 parishes were paying subscriptions each of between two and four guineas, two guineas buying treatment for one in-patient or two out-patients. The Hospital report advertised that "The Poor may be Inoculated with the Cow Pock, at the Hospital, Gratis, on Wednesdays, bringing a proper Recommendation." As there was a weekly clinic, it seems that many must have taken advantage of it. Some aspects of medical care were directed at protecting the whole community, some at maintaining or restoring the able-bodied so that they could work. On the other hand a poor woman in the Dover St. Mary's workhouse whose leg needed to be amputated was removed to her parish of settlement first rather than pay the surgeon's bill.

(iv) Bread and Bread Scales.

The provision of bread was treated as one part of the question of relief in kind by the Poor Law Commission; they separated it from the larger question of money relief to the able-bodied, even though in practice this probably involved use of a bread scale. Direct evidence of the distribution of bread in these East Kent urban parishes is of 19th century origin.² One Mrs Chambers in St. Dunstan's was allowed to have 2/6d. in money in lieu of bread, and it was resolved in July 1819 that "No bread to be given without orders from the parish officers." At the same time the money allowance was reduced, to a chorus of complaint, but the Vestry refused to alter its decision. This seems to hint at the misuse of relief money, since giving bread instead of money was one way of ensuring that the family concerned received the food that was intended. Alternatively it may have

1. 1829 Report preserved in Staple parish records.

2. It was customary, however, in the 16th century for towns to make arrangements for cheaper corn or bread for the poor in times of dearth.

been considered cheaper to provide relief in kind, perhaps through bulk purchase and contract arrangements. Interestingly, in the Canterbury Union applicants for relief who were of dissolute habits and character were given their relief in bread, whereas if they were of "fair character" half was given in bread and half in money.¹ Just as the old poor law administration was being wound up, St. Dunstan's was experimenting with giving relief half in money and half in provisions and clothes. In Sandwich also, according to St. Peter's replies to the Poor Law Commission's questionnaire, relief was paid to a man at the single man's rate of 7/6 per week "with an addition in bread or provision in proportion to the number of his family." Thus the direct provision of bread is one aspect of the whole question of relief to the able-bodied according to a subsistence scale, just as were other forms of relief in kind, and should not be seen as distinct from it.

At the same time it is clear that the direct provision of bread in the early 19th century was linked with a particularly acute crisis of unemployment or inadequate wages, of which the poor law records furnish unequivocal evidence. One example is in the imposition of degrading tasks on the recipients of relief, who were obviously without regular work. St. Peter's, Sandwich said in 1834 that the able-bodied poor were given relief in money and some were given tasks such as stone-breaking. In St. Dunstan's at the same time as bread was being given instead of money (in 1819) able-bodied men were also being paid 1/6d a day for working in the gravel pit which the parish hired. Despite the money and bread allowances, there were numerous complaints in this parish of "not enough to maintain family." In the next three years there were a number of references to men "out of employ", to inadequate wages and to seasonal unemployment.² As early as 1793 in the Vill of Christ Church allowances were paid "till hopping time" and from

1. PP 1834 XXXV 29.

2. For example, Mrs Andrews with nine in her family claimed not to have sufficient wages, so the amount was made up to 18 shillings a week; Keys was given 2/6d per week "until harvest or such time as he gets full work"; "no relief to be given in hopping time."

1809, even amongst that very small community, there are some references to men "out of employ". In 1800 because of the "present scarcity" the Vestry of the Vill organised a subscription and ran a daily soup kitchen.

In the urban Queries the commissioners attempted to explore the problem of allowances. Their somewhat unsympathetic questions met with a polite but firm rebuff from the Canterbury Guardians. To the question whether allowance or regular relief was given to the able-bodied out of the workhouse, the Guardians replied that it was, at the rate of about 3/6d in the winter when able-bodied men were out of employ either on account of the weather or scarcity of work. Labourers, bricklayers, plasterers etc. were indicated as the recipients. Relief was not on a fixed scale but according to the means of the applicants to support themselves. The commissioners suggested that relief might be given under the impression that the magistrates would order it; the Guardians' implied rebuke was that relief was given "from a conviction of its being necessary to the applicant's support. Where that is apparent, relief is never withheld." Earlier they had stated that the "persons and wants" of applicants were always investigated before relief was given.¹ Mr Mielle, the Receiver of the Canterbury Union, making the replies, gave it as his opinion that to stop allowances or partial relief would in the end be ruinous, and "productive of a great increase of expenditure." Moreover in Canterbury relief was rarely given without requiring work from the able-bodied, usually in agriculture, shoe-mending and scavenging. Ashurst Majendie in his report amplified this information:² "The Commissioners of Pavement contract with the Guardians to employ the paupers to cleanse the streets; 33 acres of land adjoining the city are cultivated by the spade and afford labour, and part of the produce is consumed in the workhouse." Thus the Guardians could not be accused of too easy an attitude

1. Being familiar with the circumstances of those receiving relief probably helped keep expense down. Thomas Pattenden in his Diary in 1806 noted of the minister, The Rev. Lyons, "how much money he has been the means of saving to the parish while he has acted in the management of the poor." This was presumably because he visited his parishioners and knew them.
2. PP 1834 XXVIII 217.

to dispensing relief, and must have recognised a considerable amount of unemployment in the city, which although perhaps largely seasonal was nonetheless not directly linked with arable cultivation. No doubt this was as applicable to extra-mural parishes like St. Dunstan's and other towns in the area as to Canterbury itself. In 1804, after a "Call" of the Poor it was noted "The Poor are, excepting a few, in health, and those who are in health in constant Employ. Laus Deo."

Other urban queries sought information on low wages, the thriftlessness of the poor and which groups were most often in need of casual relief.¹ In Canterbury the Guardians' assessment was that shoemakers, tailors, bricklayers and other labourers were most often given out-relief, and that carpenters, bricklayers and shoemakers were most subject to distress. "As there are no manufactures in this city, the employ for women and children is almost nominal." Asked whether a family could subsist on the average earnings available, Mr Mielle replied "I consider the family could not subsist on these earnings and certainly could not lay anything by."

(v) Numbers of casual poor.

It is difficult to estimate how many persons or families were in receipt of out-door relief, except from the figures supplied in the urban Queries. In Canterbury there were 816 women, 604 men, 412 girls and 303 boys and infants who had received out relief in 1833, that is 14% of the 1831 census population. The estimate for casual and able-bodied poor was five to six hundred in a year, that is about 20% of the number of census families.² Although St. Peter's, Sandwich does not appear amongst the towns whose replies to the urban Queries were printed, there is in the Vestry minute book a copy of a set of replies to a short questionnaire of only 12 items. This shorter urban questionnaire seems to have found no place in the final evidence presented to Parliament. However, it supplies estimates of the numbers of

1. PP 1834 XXXV Q25; XXXVI Qs 37, 39, 40 and 41.

2. PP 1834 XXXV Q25; XXXVI Q33.

out-poor relieved in St. Peter's in 1833. An exactly similar proportion of the population to Canterbury, that is 14%, had received out-relief in this Sandwich parish; because of the detail of the return, the proportion of families is probably more accurately calculated as 12% of 1831 census families.¹

Table 5.1. Return of numbers relieved out of the workhouse in St. Peter's, Sandwich in 1833.

Males above 16		Females above 16		Total
Able-bodied	23		14	
Infirm	2		7	
Totally disabled	8		15	
	33		36	69
Children under 9		Children 9-16		
	33		23	56
				125

In St. Clement's a register of weekly payments in 1826 shows 17 in receipt of regular out-relief and 7 receiving casual relief. If these were all heads of families, then here also about 12% of the 1831 total of census families was receiving some out-relief. By the 1830's the accounts indicate an increase in the casual poor such that they cost the parish as much as the regular poor. Ashurst Majendie only commented on the numbers of casual poor in St. Mary's parish:² "Out of 900 persons, 600 receive constant or occasional relief." He went on to comment that the wide franchise in the town encouraged the granting of indiscriminate relief, in order to buy votes. If this was true of St. Mary's, it does not seem applicable to the other two Sandwich parishes.

(vi) The relief of vagrants.

Vagrants were always a problem in urban parishes; the great Elizabethan

1. Able-bodied males and females only have been assumed to be heads of families.
2. PP 1834 XXXVIII 218.

statutes on poor relief had devoted considerable attention to the prevention of vagrancy and begging. In 1739 a request was made to Dover, St. Mary's Vestry, to appoint a Beadle "to be aiding and assisting to the Churchwardens and Overseers and Constables of the said parish in taking up Beggars, removing persons and passing Vagrants out of the said parish and so forth." This request was agreed to. In mid-18th century also, Sandwich, St. Peter's, paid an overseer to cope with the removal of paupers. Although there is no further mention of vagrants in Dover, in Sandwich in the 19th century special arrangements had to be made. It was the Mayor's impression that although no register of vagrants was kept, the numbers were increasing very fast.¹ He said they were frequently disorderly and unwilling to work, but at the same time if they were permitted to hawk their own manufactures without a licence he suggested it would help. The returns to the 1834 Poor Law Commissioners, he added, "afford no correct estimate of the amount of street begging and vagrancy in Sandwich." A system of bread tickets had been adopted, and a reception centre established where large and numerous itinerant families received a night's lodging and food. The "evil of vagrancy exists to an alarming extent." In St. Peter's replies to the short questionnaire, a figure of 220 vagrants relieved during the year was given. If similar numbers were dealt with by the other two Sandwich parishes, it explains the need to appoint a joint officer specifically to deal with vagrants. Canterbury too established a reception centre sometime before 1834, where clean straw, and bread and water was supplied to the able-bodied, and "broth and requisite nourishment" to the sick. 2,611 vagrants were handled by the Canterbury Union in 1833.² This may be taken as an indication of the extreme difficulty which many poor experienced in the last years of the old poor law.

1. PP 1834 XXXVIII Appendix E.

2. Ibid.

4. Other responses to the problem of urban poverty.

There are other indications in Vestry minutes of periods when poor relief seemed to be posing a more intractable problem. The Dover St. Mary's Vestry noted in June 1751 "In regard to the great Increase of Expense of maintaining the Poor of this Parish it is ordered that an Inquiry be made into the Cause thereof and the State of Affairs of the Parish in regard to the maintenance of the Poor and a Report thereof made to the Parish." No discussion of the report was recorded. A few years later (in 1767) the Vestry had to make special arrangements to deal with the indebtedness of the parish. Several hundred pounds were owed "and upon hearing the Debates thereon it is ordered that the Churchwardens and Overseers out of moneys by them collected by and with the Poor Rate shall go to market and purchase provisions and other necessaries for the use of the poor of this parish with ready money." Bills already incurred were gradually to be paid, meantime accumulating 5% interest. This decision seems to indicate that the Vestry thought it could reduce expenditure if it gave relief in kind, or could obtain goods at wholesale prices.

When the parliamentary enquiries of 1776 were made, Dover St. Mary's refused to answer them; the timing of this enquiry, however, points to a national concern. In 1786 (following the experiment of "farming" the poor in the workhouse) an attempt was made to control the population of the parish. "Printed Notices had been published and delivered to many inhabitants of this parish who make it a common practice of unlawfully taking into their Houses and Apartments Inmates and Lodgers who do not belong to this parish but frequently become chargeable hereto." It was decided to prosecute any who allowed people to "take shelter in his or their House, Barn or outhouse or Building."¹

There are few references to poor relief matters in Dover St. Mary's

1. Such action against inmates was more common in the 16th and early 17th century (Webb, S. & B. (1927) 317).

Vestry minutes up to this date, apart from the occasional disputed settlement cases. After 1795, however, the subject became more pressing, and there were several reports and resolutions between then and 1834. In March 1795 it was impossible to collect the rates "owing to the Distressed Circumstances of many of the Parishioners occasioned by the present state of public affairs." It appeared that the parishioners, or at any rate "the Poorer Part thereof" could not contribute to the building of the workhouse in consequence. In 1818 it was resolved that "the state of the out-poor be considered" though, as before, there is no record of the report. In December the following year the distressed state of the lower classes was noted, and a voluntary subscription instead of a rate was taken out to pay the Minister's rent. In December 1828 yet another attempt was made "to take into consideration the Reasons for the present burthen of the Poor Rate upon the Parishioners." This time an examination of neighbouring parishes' plans and principles of conduct was made.

The chronology of distress in Dover is clear. Before 1725 there were enough poor to warrant the experiment with the workhouse. By mid-18th century the Vestry was noticing the much increased expenditure. After 1770 the workhouse and the general problem of the poor engaged more of the Vestry's time, 1795 and 1818-19 being times of particular difficulty.

In St. Peter's, Sandwich, a broadly similar pattern emerges. As early as 1711 a double assessment had to be raised in order to clear the parish's debts on poor relief accounts, and the poor were badged. The workhouse figured as the main topic of concern until the early 19th century. Then several references were made in Vestry minutes to "the embarrassed Circumstances of the parish" and money had to be borrowed. A special meeting was called in 1816. It was agreed that "there was no immediate prospect of decreasing the present rates." An attempt to control levels of expenditure was made in 1824, when the Vestry resolved to discontinue paying Rents. In 1826 there is record of a discussion about arrears in rates, and how many

were adjudged actually able to pay. The parish refused to pay for the emigration of a family in February 1831 because of its embarrassed state. Thus from 1816 the situation was causing real concern to the local Vestrymen.

In their attempts to find ways of controlling poor expenditure, Vestries turned to administrative reforms. The Select Vestries Act¹ of 1819, for example, was implemented in St. Mary's Dover, both as regards establishing a standing committee to deal with poor relief and also appointing a salaried collector of the poor rates, or assistant overseer. There was a suspicion of money being misappropriated, and a lament that whereas in 1601 it appeared that poor rates were used to set the poor to work, now they were too often used "in supporting the Idle and Drunken." Sandwich St. Peter's Vestry too considered adopting the Select Vestries Act in 1819, but it was not agreed. In 1822 a salaried assistant overseer was elected, and this practice continued until 1834. St. Dunstan's Canterbury decided to appoint an assistant overseer in 1820. These organisational reforms were an attempt to remedy the weaknesses of 'amateur' overseers, particularly in respect of money. Such failings were occasionally openly lamented by St. Peter's, as when in mid-17th century it was noted that overseers' accounts were sometimes muddled and less than simple to follow; several times the Vestry experienced difficulty through overseers collecting money from rates, not disbursing it all, but then being unable to hand over the balance to the parish. A notable example was in 1820, when the overseer, Thomas Kirby Curling, refused to make up his accounts but offered £80 in settlement, which was refused. Finally he offered to sell two houses in The Chain in Sandwich. The Vestry did agree to accept this settlement of his accounts. Similarly the St. Clement's overseer had £169 of the parish's money in 1822. In effect overseers 'borrowed' the rates.

With so many small units of administration this kind of financial misdemeanour was no doubt inevitable, though it provided the poor law commission

1. 59 Geo III, c.12 51. Sturges Bourne's Act.

with grounds for thinking that parish administration was always inefficient. But in general the office of overseer offered little scope for peculation, for the source of their funds was not a distant society, it was neighbours and fellow parishioners who were in close contact, and also in control of the amount of the rates granted each time. They could refuse to grant another rate if they were dissatisfied in some way. For example St. Dunstan's ordered in 1821 that no further rate was to be granted, and the overseer, Mr Swain, was to collect immediately the last rate and deliver the full amount. In this case Mr Swain may not have appropriated the money personally, but have been trying to shield the poorer members of the parish, who had newly been included in a fresh rating valuation (made in 1821) by not collecting the rates from them; nonetheless the parishioners had control through their power of withholding further moneys. The overseer had in fact to be of sufficient estate to cope with the banking function. Money was collected once, twice, four or even twelve times a year; but the overseer paid out small sums nearly every day. The great advantage of acting as overseer was thus as with the land tax¹ in the opportunity it afforded of holding large capital sums over a period of time. It is perhaps a neglected source of liquidity amongst farmers and business men who normally filled the office and who could thus tide over periods of cash shortage (early winter, while waiting for the best time to realise on the summer's harvest, or early summer before harvesting),² and hope to put the books straight later. Considering the large sums of money handled, overseers were no doubt out of pocket as often as in pocket.

The much larger and more carefully organised Canterbury Union, on the other hand, was a model of efficient organisation. Seven committees or boards had been set up to deal with different aspects of poor law

1. Wilson (1971) 152-3. Insurance moneys seem also to have given local agents the same advantages. Beresford (1976) 11.
2. Poor relief funds may thus have contributed to the rise of the country banks. For example Ash and the Sandwich parishes deposited poor relief money in the Sandwich Bank.

administration: the workhouse, appeals on rating assessments, surveys for rating, examining removals and settlements, manufactures and agriculture.¹ No doubt each could develop a fair degree of expertise. There was also a salaried receiver who acted for the Guardians. Such a bureaucratic organisation could not, however, know its people as the small individual parish overseer could, and despite the Poor Law Commission's strictures there was something to be said for the small and less formal individual parish organisation.

In Canterbury, Dover and Sandwich, there are thus significant pointers to poor relief problems becoming, for the administrators of the day, more serious and pressing at certain times in the 18th century. The immediate response to the 1722-3 Act on workhouse provision is striking. In Dover and Canterbury there was a coincidence of particular concern about poor relief in 1751, in Dover focussed on expense, in Canterbury on an attempt to re-impose the workhouse test. In the last quarter of the 18th century there are more scattered indications: in 1780 Canterbury again attempted to impose the workhouse test, in the 1770's Sandwich parishes attempted to improve their workhouse operation, in 1785 the workhouse was costing more in Dover and was rebuilt in 1792. The turn of the century was a time of further difficulties. But the most striking coincidence of chronology is in the post-Napoleonic war period, particularly from 1818 and 1819.

In the early 18th century, strains on the old poor law evidenced by rising costs cannot easily be equated with bad harvests or high prices.² Overall it was a period of low corn prices, though there was a small and short-lived price rise in 1751. In the later 18th century the year of Speenhamland, 1795, was marked by a considerable price rise, and 1801 was nationally a year of peak poor relief costs, clearly responsive to exceptional price levels. However in 1818 and 1819 the very high level of poor relief costs in East Kent occurred during a period of declining price levels. Administrative strategies thus confirm the evidence of poor relief costs:

1. PP 1834 XXVIII 217.

2. See Chapter Four.

a creeping increase in the 18th century, a dramatic crisis from 1818.

Rather than seeing poor relief methods as themselves the cause of distress, this seems to put the onus of explanation on economic factors, especially of depression. From what is known of the economics of the three towns,¹ there was apparent to observers some decline in prosperity after the Napoleonic Wars. In Canterbury the loss of the military's presence, and of the communications through the town to Dover, was seen as a contributory factor. In Dover a technological development, of steam-driven packet ships, was blamed for some of the sharpest poverty in the town and in 1820 there was a drastic cut-back in expenditure on the harbour. Nonetheless Dover was in general expanding and thriving. Of Sandwich, the consensus of opinion was that it had been declining over centuries; much of the population depended on the coasting trade, and there seems to have been a considerable degree of depression noted in the town. There was little industry in any of the three towns; Dover to some extent and Canterbury particularly were reliant on supplying regional services and marketing functions. Thus general economic conditions in the area were more significant than the fortunes of any particular industry. The position of agriculture in the area could have been the critical factor, and the turning point in some respect was 1818-19.

1. See Chapter Three.

CHAPTER SIXTHE ADMINISTRATION OF POOR RELIEF IN EAST KENT: (B) RURAL PARISHES.1. Sources.

Records of administration of the old poor law tend to be more plentiful and detailed for rural parishes than for urban parishes. This may be because the communities were smaller, the life of their members more face to face and intimately known, and the Vestry could supervise at the level of individual decisions. On the other hand it may indicate the more important part played by poor relief in parish affairs.

For two agricultural parishes, Vestry minutes are extant covering a longish period of administration: for Ash, where the minutes commence in 1704 and continue unbroken into the 19th century, and for Elham, where very similar detailed minutes are available from 1773 onwards. The Vestry minutes in their recording of discussion and policy decisions are particularly valuable. For Chislet, Eastry and St. Nicholas-at-Wade, minutes of only the last few years of the old poor law are extant. However, many hints of methods used can be perceived in parish overseers' accounts; early 18th century evidence of this kind has been found for Ash, Chislet, Eastry, Elham, St. Nicholas-at-Wade and Wickhambreux. For the last named parish, the accounts reach back into the 17th century, and for Ash and Chislet back to the early part of the 17th century. Whilst it is often the case that the records only allow a statement that certain features were in existence by a certain date, the administration of the old poor law in the agricultural parishes can be much more completely described than in the urban parishes.

2. The importance of the workhouse in rural administration.

(i) The case of Ash.

Long before the general enabling Act of 1722-3, rural parishes were involved in an institutional provision for the poor. References to "poorhouses" in the earliest accounts probably indicate something closer to an almshouse than the quasi-penal establishment of the 19th century. If the parish was concerned in finding accommodation, either through "boarding out" the poor, or through paying rents, it made sense to run a hostel of some sort for the reception of homeless or really indigent poor. Thus the early Vestry minutes in Ash, from 1704 to 1725, are largely concerned with decisions about boarding and paying rents, and this seems to be the background to the decision in March 1725 "to build or hire at the charge of the parish a house for the use of the Poor." A crisis in the provision of accommodation rather than the opportunity to impose the workhouse test seems to have motivated the speedy response to the Act. This could be taken to illustrate the sympathetic and knowledgeable attitude of the rural parish administrators, whereas the urban parish needed some discriminatory test as substitute for first-hand knowledge. Nonetheless Vestry minutes continued to record decisions about boarding out various individuals, so that the workhouse by no means solved all the parish's problems in that respect.

At the same time the workhouse was intended to live up to its name, as the agreement with Henry Eastman and his wife the same year shows. For £10 a year and also meat, drink and lodging, they were to look after the poor of the parish, and also keep them at work "as the officers and major part of the parish shall think convenient." Next time the Henry Eastman enterprise was referred to it was called a workhouse, and a doctor was engaged to look after the poor therein (1730). The work provided in the new workhouse, "tow and spinning", was the same as previously had been done by the poor in their own homes.¹ The products had been both sold and

1. Overseers' accounts before this date had included "Account of tow and how much the poor have in spinning."

distributed free amongst the parish poor. Thus two threads of the previous century's record of poor law administration, the provision of accommodation and "setting the poor on work" were brought together.

Account of work in the workhouse at Ash 1742

	lbs.
fine work	380
tow	620
fine work spun	80
tow spun	56

There are no indications of how many people were accommodated in this first workhouse, nor of their ages or sex. Occasionally there are Vestry decisions to put this or that person into the workhouse; thus Simon Prichard, his wife and family were put into the house in 1739. There are also interesting contrary decisions: "it was agreed that the Widow May and Abraham Prior shall be put out of the Work House. And what Remains in the House, at any time, without ye Masters or Mistresses Consent Not to go out of the House." This seems to imply easy movement in and out. The house was used sometimes to accommodate children, either because a man had more than he could support, or perhaps because he was a widower. Thus Robert Brown allowed the parish 4/- a week for the maintenance of his children in the workhouse, the money "to be left in his Master's hands" - that is deducted from his pay at source (1754). This may have been merely a day nursery arrangement. Similarly the Widow Curling's girl was taken into the house and 1/- taken off Widow Curling's pay (1760), and John Elvery's three children were taken in, he contributing 2/- a week for them (1777). The workhouse provided a flexible resource for the parish to use in solving some of the more intractable personal problems of poor relief.

The success of the institution depended absolutely on effective supervision by the Master. At various times the Ash Vestry experienced difficulty

here. In the 1740's one Leonard Bedo refused to leave despite various Vestry resolutions exhorting him to amend or go. Finally a despairing resolution was taken to "throw up" the workhouse, and at this point he admitted defeat, though continuing to fight a running battle for money he felt was owing him for some considerable time after his departure. Again in 1767 there was apparently some embezzling of goods which were sold, leading to a detailed agreement with the next master about keeping his own and the workhouse goods clearly separated. This pair, John Home and his wife, were "to look out for work for the Poor Men and boys", to take account of their earnings and give them to the overseer, to keep the Poor clean and to look after the house "with all the frugial (sic) care and industry he and she can." They were also only to eat the same food "as the House affords." The fact that the master was to look out for work for "men and boys" is significant. It implies in 1767 a measure of unemployment in the parish. Despite these occasional difficulties though, the house appears to have served the parish's purposes well enough, and to have required relatively little expenditure of the Vestry's time or effort until the later 18th century.

In August 1773 a resolution was passed in Ash Vestry "to build a large Convenient work Shop for the Weaving Manufacture" but "there not being Many at the Vestry it was not fully Determined, but was left to the Approbation of the next Vestry." Approbation was not forthcoming, and the idea lapsed for a while. Nonetheless the general question of poor relief continued obviously to exercise the Vestrymen's minds. In 1774 there was the first overt decision to impose the workhouse test: "and the Parish have Agreed for the future not to Allow any person anything weekly but to go into the Workhouse." Decisions at about this time were also taken not to pay house rents and to make a general check on the possession of certificates by the non-settled poor in the parish (1771).¹ Hence the decision in 1778 to build a new workhouse obviously came as the culmination of a decade of

1. See Chapter Seven.

discussion amongst overseers and Vestry. The decision was still not implemented for another year, and then the Churchwardens and Overseers were empowered to buy some ground and build "a House Convenient and Sufficient for the keeping, Maintaining and Employing the Poor of this Parish (No House or Houses in this Parish suitable for those purposes being now to be purchased)." Money was borrowed from parishioners (£2,600),¹ a committee was formed, land was purchased at the end of the main street, one acre in all, and buildings were erected, consisting of house, brewhouse, wash-house, workshop, and wall round the garden.

The new workhouse opened in 1780; immediately the workhouse test was reiterated and it was resolved that henceforward no rents were to be paid. From the Vestry's point of view the new workhouse was initially successful. The rates were reduced and no time at Vestry meetings was spent discussing the minutiae of the individual relief cases, which were now left to the Master of the workhouse who was also the Overseer of the Poor. The overseers' accounts show substantial quantities of work accomplished: weaving, hemp combing, hopbagging; enough was sold to pay the costs of providing the materials. R. Le Grand was able to report in 1789 with great satisfaction -

"Before building the house, everything was discordant, with a prospect of increasing poverty and consequently increasing cesses. Since the establishment of the house, the most perfect harmony has prevailed, and we have before us the cheerful prospect of supporting the poor, in the most eligible and comfortable manner, at half the former expense."²

At the date of writing this letter, Le Grand said there were about 80 people in the house, and the average earnings for "sacks, hop-bagging, hop-tying

1. When the workhouse became redundant in 1835 (Ash became part of the Eastry Union following the Poor Law Amendment Act) it was sold, and a special enabling Act of Parliament had to be passed to allow these moneys to be repaid, instead of remaining in the new Poor Law Commission's hands.
2. Annals of Agriculture (1789) 11, 363-6.

and what the poor earn besides on husbandry, is about £470 a year." The master's salary had been £15, "but the parish have advanced the salary to £20 for his good conduct, and executing the office of overseer."


"The house is built upon an excellent principle, is roomy, airy and convenient; has a garden, of an acre of ground, walled in; well-cultivated; is exceedingly productive, and the most possible made of it. There is throughout the whole economy of the house, such a degree of neatness, regularity, and constant application to business, that, at the same time the welfare of the parish is promoted, the comfort of the little community, in the house, is established."

The overseers' accounts show that from modest amounts of £200 the first year and £400 the second year after the new building was opened, the manufacturing enterprise expanded to a peak, judged by monetary figures, in 1803, when income of nearly £3,000 was obtained from the sale of workhouse products. Until 1813 receipts remained over £2,000, but thereafter declined. Thus for a generation after its erection the workhouse functioned satisfactorily, although it could make no contribution to reducing the rates in years of extremely high prices. Following the Napoleonic Wars, however, the picture was drastically changed. The receipts from the manufactory had been falling since 1813; in 1816 only £234 was made. In May 1817 the Vestry drew up the first scheme which wrestled with a problem of unemployment, apportioning labourers to different employers within the parish. Simultaneously alterations and extensions to the workhouse were undertaken. A new weaving shop was adapted from the workhouse, the Dutch barn was enclosed for a spinning shop, a room was fixed up for the convenience of certain families, the weaving shop was converted to sleeping rooms, and a further loan taken up to finance the work. The provision of accommodation at the workhouse was further expanded when in 1819 seven cottages were built on the workhouse garden. Despite this effort the profits of the manufactory remained meagre, at about the level of 1816, until in 1822 it

was given up, and remaining goods were sold off by auction.

An account book for 1818-19 shows the character of the provision made for the workhouse: wheat, flour, meal and potatoes formed the bulk of the purchases, with five pigs (purchased in May) and three barrels of fish. These are the only itemised accounts. However much larger sums of money were paid for the "contract", the details of which we do not know, but which may have been regular supplies of bread, flour, potatoes etc. When the manufactory was given up in 1822, the parish experimented with "farming" the poor in the workhouse. Tenders were invited for feeding and clothing the poor, and for several years the contract was made at 2/10d per head per week; in 1824 it was varied so that when the price of wheat was 55/- per quarter or more (according to the return in the Gazette) an extra four pence per head was allowed. This scheme continued until 1828, when the Vestry once again decided "to take the poor house in hand and carry on the Manufactory." This was six years after selling it up. The contract was discontinued for a few years, but was re-instituted in 1832. Thus the Vestry searched desperately for some solution to the cost of maintaining the "indoor" poor.

The scale of production in the workhouse at this date was surprisingly ambitious. An account book for 1827-9 shows both the goods made and to whom they were sold. The most frequent items were hop pockets, hop bags, green bags, flour sacks, coal sacks, and other sacking for local use. Quite a range of household linens were produced, table cloths of various sorts, brown sheets, mats, carpeting and bed-sacking. The great majority of items were sold within the parish, but some went as far afield as Colchester in Essex, probably through a personal contact. Mill sail was supplied to Deal. Yarn goods, French codilla, jute, hemp, bleach etc. were all purchased from London. The receipts were always less than expenditure, but nonetheless the attempt to run a manufactory continued until 1835, when the workhouse was closed. In 1834 there were only 29 men and 18 women in the



house, their ages ranging from one to 90 years.¹

The Ash workhouse was typical of many such enterprises. It always seemed difficult to run efficiently and economically. It failed to solve the problem of providing work for all the able-bodied when in need, and the products of the manufactory were subject to the same fluctuations in demand as general economic conditions imposed outside the workhouse. The post-war depression thus seems to have cut off the profitability of the enterprise just as it also created more need for poor relief.²

There is some discussion of the workhouse and manufactory in Gleig's fictional tales.³ In the fourth tale, the villagers are described debating for a long while the problem of the unemployed. They resolve to set up a manufactory, but only in what Gleig sees as a half-hearted manner - not large enough or advanced enough in concept to be really successful, while some of the Vestry are against any such scheme at all, favouring instead the provision of allotments for agricultural labourers. In the sixth tale, the same point is pursued further. The manufactory is represented as unsuccessful, as might have been foreseen, because agricultural labourers were fitted neither constitutionally nor by their education to the work required. The master of the workhouse, appointed specifically to carry out the scheme, sees £1,000 spent on adaptations to existing buildings and purchase of machinery. The workhouse test is then imposed. In despair at ever getting work out of his unpromising recruits, more money is spent to appoint skilled assistants to teach the children, while other schemes of outdoor work are mooted for the men. Riots in the workhouse lead to some being punished on the treadmill, but even this fails to discipline the labour force. Finally a fire in the store room puts paid to the manufactory. The sequence of events described

1. PP 1834 XXXI Q22.

2. The workhouse manufactory was also in competition with the much increased scale of production, fineness and cheapness of the products of the Lancashire cotton industry, which in the 1790's began taking over the home textile market of the working and middle classes. Edwards (1967) Chap.3. However, the dramatic fall in workhouse receipts in 1816 points mainly to the effect of post-war depression.

3. Chronicles of Waltham (1835).

fits closely with the bare outline deduced from Vestry minutes. The re-fitting of the workhouse echoes the Vestry decisions of 1817; significantly no hints of riots or a ^{fire} ~~workhouse~~ are found in them, yet this "fictional" incident explains the abrupt discontinuance of the manufactory in 1822, and the sale of all remaining products. The Tales further emphasise the difficulty of the workhouse operation, and its important relationship overall with poor law administration.

(ii) Other rural parishes.

The Ash workhouse can be described in considerable detail, but such an institution was by no means confined to similarly large and populous parishes; it may be seen as typical of many smaller and less well-documented workhouses. Where evidence survives from the 17th century it is clear the attempt was made by numbers of parishes to provide "stock" for weaving and spinning, and also housing for the poor, and as in the urban parishes, there seems to have been widespread and speedy response to the 1723 Act. In Chislet as well as Ash the earliest overseers' accounts show the purchase of stocks of hemp and flax. However, once such enterprise was channelled through the workhouse, the "giving-out" of flax and tow, the provision and mending of spinning wheels and so on died out. In Eastry, Elham and St. Nicholas as in Ash there is no evidence of any provision of work outside the workhouse once instituted. In Eastry, a workhouse was in existence at least by 1724, when the accounts show spinning, combing and weaving carried out there. Some of the goods produced were sent to London; the sale of work and also the labour of poor men formed some part of the income of the overseers. The costs of running the workhouse in 1729 were very nearly the same as the costs of the "out poor", i.e. £120 was spent on the house and £106 on the out poor.

In Chislet the first account book shows a workhouse in existence, and called such, by 1735 and its provisioning was a substantial item; St. Nicholas had a poor house at least by 1753. The Elham workhouse seems to

have been set up in 1747, when all the poor were removed into it, and various items of equipment purchased for brewing and for weaving. In 1752 an agreement was made and recorded in the overseers' account book for "putting up the workhouse", so probably the first building was hired and quickly needed replacing by a purpose-built one. At this time a workhouse "test" was imposed: "Agreed not to pay any person out of the house any more than 1/- per week nor to pay rent nor wood nor to be at any more charge for any person than 1/- per week upon any Pretence whatsoever and any person refusing the said sum be obliged to come into the workhouse." However a rider was added to this firm statement of intent: the officers were not empowered to give more than 1/- per week without the consent of the major part of the parishioners. Although wishing to maintain tight control over relief payments, the Vestry even so had to envisage circumstances in which more might reasonably be allowed "out of the house". Thus by mid-18th century a number of rural parishes were administering workhouses, which often at least attempted to live up to the name, and not be merely asylums.

In the later 18th century, rural parishes seem to have found their workhouses increasingly ineffective, and they turned to alternative administrative arrangements in their efforts to revitalise the concept. Eastry became the nucleus of a Gilbert's Union,¹ set up in 1793,² with nine participating parishes. The Union workhouse was built the following year.³ In Eastry, workhouse costs were fairly well-contained, as it was not an institution designed to meet every contingency of poor relief but only to accommodate the aged, and disabled and orphaned. In 1818, 1819 and 1820 it cost approximately £200 a year, and thereafter a little less. Fewer than 20

1. 22 Geo III c.83 (1781-2). Gilbert's Act allowed parishes to combine to provide poorhouses for the accommodation of sick, infirm and aged people and children. This no doubt reflected the actual practice of such parishes as Eastry. Tate (1969) 230. The Union did not over-ride the parish's responsibility for its own poor. Union chargeability was not accepted until 1867.
2. PP 1844 XL 331.
3. Under the Poor Law Amendment Act Eastry remained the centre of an enlarged union, and another new workhouse was built in 1836, a building which survives to the present day.

Eastry parishioners were cared for in the house at this date. In 1834, of the total of 32 inmates, 13 were over 60, (one aged 92) and 10 were under 10 years old. Nonetheless, though apparently small-scale and well-organised, the Eastry Vestry was considering withdrawing from the Union in 1834, but the vote was lost, and quickly became irrelevant to the new poor law scheme. Chislet too joined in a Gilbert's Union, the Whitstable Union, when it was formed in 1821. Elham had co-operated with the parish of Swingfield in the first establishment of the workhouse, but here too co-operation was not always easy or seen as advantageous to all the parties concerned. So Elham wished in 1776 and again in 1789 to separate from Swingfield, but did not do so. In 1808, however, a Gilbert's Union was formed with Elham as its focus, with five member parishes. In 1825 a further five parishes joined the Union. The Vestry minutes are missing between 1801 and 1821, but when they resume, there is little reference to the workhouse, but instead a considerable amount of attention was devoted to the problem of unemployment in the parish. It may be concluded that the workhouse caused little controversy when accepted as a simple asylum.

For small parishes, co-operation with a larger one in a joint venture was a practicable workhouse scheme. Thus the little evidence there is for the tiny parish of Chillenden shows it co-operating in the Eastry Union. Waldershare too was part of the same Union, though here evidence shows a poorhouse within the parish from at least 1776. Such a poorhouse was more in the nature of an almshouse no doubt, and led naturally to co-operation in a Gilbert's Union. Nonetheless some small parishes, like St. Nicholas and Wickhambreux, chose to maintain their own separate institutions. Again in the later 18th century the old system was proving inadequate. In St. Nicholas, a new part of the workhouse was built by the parish in 1785, and a loom was purchased. Repairs to the old part of the workhouse were undertaken at the same time. Small amounts were earned by the people in the house, but they were also employed on outside jobs like weeding, and the

children on crow-keeping. (One child shot himself accidentally while keeping crows). From 1814 the relief of the able-bodied labourers became so much more of a problem that here as elsewhere the workhouse was no longer very relevant, and became merely one recognised area of poor provision dealt with as a matter of routine. In Wickhambreux too there was a poor-house in mid-18th century (there are references to a parish house in 1684) but in 1786 a new house for the poor was purchased and equipped, which continued in operation until the implementation of the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act.

As well as providing work to try and make the poor in the workhouse self-supporting to some degree, the workhouse was also used as a means of relieving poverty of large families by providing inexpensive accommodation for some of their children. The Elham workhouse must have contained a fair proportion of children; a school was provided and books and primers purchased. In 1781 all the children in the house were inoculated. Here, as in Ash, small weekly payments were made by the father towards the maintenance of his children in the workhouse, and the practice continued until the early 19th century. It was referred to in one of the Rural Queries:

"Would it be advisable that the Parish, instead of giving Allowance to the Father, should take charge of, employ, and feed his children during the day? and if such practice has prevailed, has it increased or diminished the Number of Able-bodied Applicants for Relief?"¹

Although the replies from Ash and Chislet were against such a scheme (the workhouse being a "wretched school for the rising generation" according to the Ash respondent) the accommodation in Elham seems to have been attractive enough for young girls to refuse to leave the workhouse to go out into service. In this respect too, urban and rural parishes were alike; however the accommodation of children was not generally the major feature of the workhouse system.

1. PP 1834 XXXII Q42.

The establishment of workhouses was thus certainly a common feature of the administration of poor relief in the area.¹ From very early 17th century the problem of accommodation for the poor was being tackled by parish Vestries, leading often to the acquisition of a property in which they accommodated and maintained the poor as they required. The enabling Act of 1723 was quickly taken up; probably the purchase or renting of an existing building was general in parishes of any size before the middle of the 18th century. The significant point of development was between 1770 and 1790, when a number of Vestries borrowed money and either built new or enlarged existing structures, to set up more organised workhouse conditions. Rural areas matched urban ones in this indication of increasing problems. At the same time attempts were made to impose a workhouse test; in some cases this had also been attempted earlier. In the face of the problems encountered after 1814 the workhouses became less important. Between 1814 and 1834 many different stratagems to relieve men out of work were tried. Another generation then returned to the idea of the workhouse and the test, as a means of dealing with the problems as they saw them.

1. In 1771, Kent with Essex and Sussex had the largest number of workhouses of any county. Clapham 1 (1926) 355.

3. The Provision of Outdoor Relief.

Preserved in the Chislet parish records is the "Charge" from the local justices of the peace to the parish officers outlining their duties as a result of the 1598 Poor Relief Act.¹ Apart from administrative duties like listing the poor and considering what work or amount of alms was suitable to each, the Charge reviewed the parish officers' duties in two areas of outdoor relief - the provision of housing and of food. If there were insufficient dwelling places for the poor, the justices wished to be informed as to the availability of houses in which they might be placed as inmates, and failing that, what waste or common existed on which suitable dwellings could be erected. As to food, it was envisaged that relief might be wholly in victuals; in this case the parish officers had to say when, where and how the poor could get them "so they do not wander out of your parish." The duty thus laid on parish officers of accepting responsibility for housing the poor after two centuries had become, in the eyes of the Poor Law Commission, a general relief from the expense of obtaining house-room, or indiscriminate rent allowance, and was the most usual form of outdoor relief.² The provision of food on the other hand was not apparently often undertaken directly; it argues, indeed, an extreme poverty. Nonetheless relief in kind was a general feature of old poor law practice, at any rate until the later 18th century, and then relief tended to be given simply in money, which perhaps usually was used for food. In this early poor law "Charge" therefore were adumbrated all the major features of administration up to 1834: money payments, housing responsibility, the provision of work, relief in kind.

To the deserving poor, or those worthy of alms, a weekly dole or pension was paid. There was no real disagreement about the necessity for this part of relief costs. The amount of weekly pay was very small, and it must have been expected that it would be a supplement to the occasional earnings possible

1. Similar orders have been preserved in Essex. Webb S.& B.(1927) 73.

2. See Chapter Five on urban parishes.

through spinning, looking after other sick members of the community, knitting stockings, boarding poor children, casual field work, and all the host of small paid tasks which the women or the old could undertake.¹ Where the overseers' accounts group weekly payments tidily together, an estimate can be made of the numbers receiving this form of relief. In Ash in the 17th century about 20 names were listed; by early 18th century this number had doubled. In early 19th century there were 31 widows and 68 others receiving weekly pay. Some of the others were the mothers of bastard children. By this date there were thus in Ash 100 people, together with their dependents where appropriate, needing permanent relief, and costing the parish from £500 to £600 a year. In Chislet, in the 1730's, there were seven people receiving a pension, rising at mid-century to 17 (including 11 widows) and later to 27. In Eastry 18 were receiving weekly pay in the 1730's; later in the century this figure had risen to 30. In Elham too numbers were modest: in the early 18th century 22 people (half of whom were widows). St. Nicholas' accounts only allow the trend to be deduced from the total amounts paid - in the 1770's £50 a year was spent this way, in 1819 £79 and in 1821 £161. It is also noticeable that the amount could fluctuate widely in a short span of years, so that the £49 of 1778 fell to £19 in 1787.

Weekly pensions formed a relatively small proportion of total relief costs. In Chislet, where the accounts were very systematic in the early 19th century, the following breakdown illustrates this clearly.

Six months poor relief payments: Chislet

	<u>1808</u>	<u>1814</u>
Rents	£32	£14
Weekly pay	£101	£197
Wood & coals	£41	£36
Grocery, meat & meal for poorhouse	£170	£207
Clothing	£104	£137
Cash	£82	£374

1. Hampson (1926) 46 drew attention to this point.

While the weekly pay is not negligible, it is only 19% and 20% of relief expenditure. Though this aspect of poor relief costs had increased in the 18th century, it was not a major factor in the late 18th and early 19th century crisis and the explanation probably lies outside the poor law itself. It seems likely that more people were surviving into old age, of which a proportion were without support. It may be relevant also that the parish ceased to help individuals with the purchase of work or homemade products, as it had done in the 17th century in the many small payments in out relief to be described in another section. Money doles were simpler to administer.

(i) Housing.

As in the urban parishes provision of accommodation was a major concern of old poor law administrators, and had clearly been so from an early date. The obligation could be met by boarding out the poor, renting rooms for them, or even by the erection of cottages and these practices preceded any workhouse institutions. In the 17th and early 18th centuries boarding out was frequently arranged, mainly for children. The earliest Ash accounts show this in operation:

Item to Wyddowe Paramour for keeping of a poore mayde childe till she might be placed.

Item to Wyddowe Yong toward the keeping of the daughter of Ellen Yonge. (1601-4).

Here the payments to Widows Paramour and Yonge probably helped them, too, maintain their independence. The Vestry minutes in Ash, commencing in 1704, record numerous decisions as to who should take this or that child. Apprenticeship was also arranged for children of a suitable age, and presumably took over from boarding arrangements appropriate to younger children. When a child was sent into service or apprenticed, clothes were provided and in some instances it was stipulated that the child should go to school for some part of each year up to a certain age. In Elham a special annual

meeting arranged apprenticeships.

If payments were made for boarding out children, it was only a short step to paying the rents of rooms for the accommodation of older persons. Paying rents arose naturally from the obligation to provide housing. A further step was for the parish itself to rent a house or even to purchase or build houses. Again, the early Ash accounts show rents being paid, often distinctly recorded under a separate heading. Thus in 1601-2:

Item given to Wyddowe Featherstone 4 October for her house rent.

Item payed to George Snode for half yeeres ferme for a house hired for the poor.

In the later 17th century the bill for rents was approximately half that for weekly pensions.

With the commencement of the Ash Vestry Minutes, a fascinating series of decisions concerned with housing can be followed. Payment was made, for example, towards the erection of a house by one William Prior, carpenter, for his mother to live in (1707). A number of times arrangements were made which involved the Vestry agreeing to pay towards the housing of a relative. "It was agreed to pay to Robert Smith the sum of 15/- per year towards his Rent in Consideration of his daughter's living in with him." (1731). John Price was paid £1. 5. 0. a year, "his mother being with him." (1776). Such examples could be multiplied.

Housing which was rented by the parish was used as economically as possible. The wife of John Fennell junior could request another house (the one she was provided with presumably not suiting her) but "nothing was granted her." (1708). The widow of Robert Andley was removed from the Widow Eastland and made to be "inmate" with Mary Jones instead (1708). One property, belonging to Lias Barton, it was resolved to keep tenanted no longer. Isaac Muns was moved out of the house he occupied and was provided with another at the same rent from the parish (1774). Isaac Pay was allowed to have the house his mother lived in, and his sister was to keep

his house and have "part of the goods that was her Mothers to use, and the Overseer is to have a list of the goods that none of them is made away with." (1776). This last decision reflects the fact that the pauper's belongings went to the parish after death. A number of times discussion and dispute arose concerning such forfeited goods as clothes and beds, and relatives could not assume that belongings would be theirs in due course. This must have acted as a powerful deterrent to accepting parish relief. Sometimes it appears that arrangements made for paying rents owed more to pressure from landlords than to relief policy. Thus it was agreed that the parish "be engaged" for the rent of Mr Kingsford's house, for John Hammond, "if Hammond cannot pay the Rent himself." (1778); and resolutions to pay rents are presented in a form which implied that the money was paid direct to the landlord, his name always being recorded as well as the tenant's.

Ash Vestry not only rented property, it also arranged and paid for alterations to divide a property into three for the use of the poor (1708) and in the 19th century took the bigger decision to build seven cottages at the back of the workhouse garden (1819). There were two attempts at halting the tradition of paying rents, but both were short-lived. In 1772 the parishioners agreed they "would not pay Rents for the Poor as hath been paid for some time past, but only such Rents as where people have had a long illness that the parishioners shall judge it Necessary." This resolution coincided with a strenuous effort to check that all non-parishioners resident in Ash had certificates, and the following year with the first abortive resolution to build a "Large Convenient Workshop for the Weaving Manufacture." In 1780 the Vestry again resolved not to pay rents, following the erection of the new workhouse, so that both actions can be seen as part of a general campaign to contain poor relief expenditure.

Housing policy in Ash was typical of other East Kent parishes, as their more fragmentary evidence indicates. In 1668 Chislet was purchasing planks for "ye poores house", and payments of rents were regularly listed.

Eastry and Elham too paid rents. In Elham where men were deemed unable to pay house rents because of large families, some of their "extra" children as has been seen were boarded in the workhouse. Here, as in Ash, in 1823 cottages were built specifically for the poor; the Vestry then resolved to pay no rents. The resolution was quickly forgotten and the following year cottages were hired for the poor. Similarly in St. Nicholas in mid-18th century there were payments for rents and for houses for the poor. In 1818 this parish Vestry built four cottages, and the following year two more. Evidence for Chillenden, though only available in mid-18th century, indicate there too rents were paid. Similarly Wickhambreux in 1684 was making payments out of poor rates for a parish house, and in mid-18th century as elsewhere was paying rents. There is widespread evidence therefore that responsibility for housing the poor was commonly assumed by parish Vestries, and had been since early 17th century. In the 19th century this had even led to parishes building cottages for the poor.

Malthus specifically attacked the clause in Whitbread's bill in 1807 empowering parishes to build cottages, because he thought "the difficulty of procuring habitations" restricted the poor's ability to marry and have children, thus containing their numbers and counteracting the more general tendency of poor relief to allow the poor to increase. He envisaged that no matter how much accommodation was provided, there would always be further need. "We should in time see the greater part of our villages consisting of parish tenements."¹ He ignored the fact that for parishes to build cottages, regardless of statutory authority, indicated an already existing very severe and obvious pressure on accommodation. Sir F. Eden too had commented that there did not seem to be much danger of cottages becoming too numerous. "I know several parishes, in which the greatest difficulty the Poor labour under is the impossibility of procuring habitations."² Since it cost ratepayers' money, this aspect of parish poor relief administration

1. Malthus (1807) ed. Glass (1953) 197.
 2. Eden (1797 - 1966 edition) 361.

was only embarked upon to meet a real crisis.

The other aspect of the provision of housing, payment of rents and exemption from rates, together or separately, came to be regarded in the 19th century as one of the major abuses of the poor law, and parliamentary commissions sought information on the prevalence of the practice. Mr Henry Boyce, the overseer of Waldershare for 25 years, was questioned in 1828 by the Select Committee on the Employment or Relief of Able-bodied Persons.¹ He claimed wide knowledge of the area, and spoke of a number of parishes besides Waldershare. To the question "Do you pay cottage rents?" he replied "They all pay cottage rents." Question 21 of the Rural Queries also explored the practice. Gleig for Ash replied that cottages with no gardens or very small gardens were exempt from rates, but rents were paid only in cases of long-continued sickness, yet the longer perspective demonstrates that this had certainly not always been so, and that centuries of practice was being made more restrictive in operation in the 19th century. For Chislet T. Neame replied that labourers were exempt from rates, and in many instances rents were paid by the parish. The Eastry respondent (who was anonymous) said cottages were always exempted from rates. "It would be a most beneficial act to exempt all Cottages inhabited by Labourers. Exempting in some Parishes and not in others causes an unjust expence on that Parish that makes a general exemption." He forebore to reply with respect to rents.² Eastry was surrounded by "closed" parishes, and this explains to some extent the comment that parishes behaved unfairly. The Poor Law Commission concluded rightly, as far as East Kent was concerned, on the generality of this form of out-relief.

(ii) Other forms of relief in kind.

In the rural parishes there is considerably more evidence of the extensive distribution of relief in kind than in the urban parishes, although here too the tendency is for relief to become merely money doles sometime during

1. PP 1828 IV 160.
2. PP 1834 XXXI Q21.

the 18th century. The very earliest accounts in Ash, starting in 1601, already list on page after page, a multitude of payments for all the paraphernalia of daily living in intimate detail. Small sums of money were given for clothes, bodices, stockings, shoes, shoe-repairs, even hats, fuel, medical services, medicine, attendance during childbirth, coffins, funeral expenses, beer and spirits to ease the passing, loans of money to purchase tools, materials of work, cows, the provision of corn and bread, beans to fat the hog, the redemption of all sorts of goods from pawn, from coals and coppers to clothes, the provision of beds and bed linen, soap, wells for houses owned or rented by the parish, well-ropes and buckets - in addition to suits of clothes for boys or girls being bound apprentice or going into service, and innumerable other small items. The parish itself frequently bought from poor women little services which were given to other parish poor, thus no doubt helping some to maintain a precarious independent existence.

These are typical of overseers' accounts of this sort:-

Paid Goody Fennell for nursing Widow Moss.

Paid Widow Dixson for nursing Goody Smith.

Paid Susan Knock for vaumping a pair of stockings.

Paid Goody Roberts for kneting of two payer of stockings for

Burton's children.

Paid M. Joans for helping old Beech more than usual.

Paid Deborah Solly for watching with and laying forth Fennell's child.

Paid Mary Baily for nursing her mother she herself being not well also.

(1709-10)

Until the middle of the 18th century the Ash overseers ran a considerable second-hand and new clothes business: items ranging from changes and handkerchiefs through to boot shoes and breeches, and the recipients' names were carefully listed under a separate heading in the accounts. In the first enthusiasm of record-keeping in the Vestry minute book which starts in

1704, individual requests were noted:-

"Goody Young requests an under petticoat and was Granted and Given." (1708)

"Goody Hutson junior Requested a Gown and petticoat for her girl; and if she get a Service it was Granted, and a pair of breeches for their boy forthwith." (1707)

Clothes were sufficiently valuable for the Vestry sometimes to give those of a deceased person in lieu of money payments. Thus "was sold to Humphrey Bedo the Jacket formerly belonging to Thomas Wells deceased for writing ye Next poor Sess, Gratis." Thomas Laslett was allowed his mother's clothes in return for half a load of wood for which the parish owed him. Such details soon ceased to be minuted, but the accounts show clothes being given out, presumably at the discretion of the overseer, until mid-18th century. Thereafter only the inmates of the workhouse were directly clothed by the parish.¹ The multiplicity of small itemised payments generally tended to cease in the later 18th century, to be succeeded by mere money sums, listed without further explanation.

Other parishes in East Kent also handled relief in kind of this sort, some into the 19th century. In Elham parish tradesmen were given regular contracts in rotation. "The bills for wearing apparel for the poor shall be kept apart, and be removed from one Shop to another when the Bill amounts to £4, the Bills for the poorhouse to change as usual." (1776). Shoes were made by shoemakers in turn, and also mended. Only in the last few years of the old poor law in this parish was money being substituted for relief in kind, and fewer and fewer gaberdines, shoes and changes figured in the accounts. Clothing in Chislet too remained a clearly distinguished item in the accounts, as much being spent on it as on the weekly pensions. St. Nicholas, like Ash, provided shoes and clothes in the early 18th century but as the century advanced substituted what was clearly an easier, and perhaps cheaper, solution to the relief of poverty, the simple money dole. In

1. 1820 - Paid for 125½ yards of Drugget at 8½ pence for Gowns for the Poor in the House £4. 8.10½.

Waldershare gowns were made for the poor at the very end of the 18th century, which is as far as the evidence extends. It was a very paternalistic method of relief, though also arguing the extreme poverty of the recipients. Money payments were simpler, more impersonal and more easily standardised.

Fuel too was another common item of poor relief in kind. The early Ash Vestry minutes record many requests for "burning":

"Goody Butcher requested somewhat to buy some burning, 2/6d was requested and was Granted." (1708).

"Goody Walker Requested then some burning, And half a load of wood was granted to ye family's use." (1708).

"Coales" were mentioned in the earliest Ash accounts, and in the later 18th century carriage was being paid from Sandwich for the coal to be distributed to the poor. Coal was valuable enough for one poor Ash woman to pawn her supply. In Elham similarly in the 18th century wood or faggotts were given regularly; in 1793 no one not resident in the parish, even if receiving weekly relief, was allowed wood. In the 19th century coal was being purchased for the poor and fetched from Hythe, even though Elham parish contained large areas of woodland. St. Nicholas was buying coal in the early 18th century; Chislet accounts in the 19th century show wood and coal being purchased, and the one Chillenden account book also shows wood was one item of expense. There was comparatively little wooded ground in East Kent for winter fuel supplies, but there was easy access to the sea for cargoes of coal.

(iii) Medical care.

There was a very long tradition of parishes accepting responsibility for medical care in East Kent. It is surprising to find in 1601 payments being made to a doctor in Ash, and also some suggestion at that early date and by implication at an earlier date still of a regular contract for the care of the poor and chronically sick. In 1605 an agreement made with John Gray, Surgeon, referred to an earlier agreement between overseers and churchwardens

and the doctor,¹ by which he was paid 20 shillings yearly "in respect of his pains taken and to be taken in surgery with Silvester Musredd." Now "in regard of his poverty and wife's being both blind and himself so blind as that he cannot now get sufficient thing towards his maintenance" a further sum of 40 shillings a year was to be allowed to him. In the course of a year payments for medicine and for medical treatment were quite often made in Ash. The first unambiguous reference to a comprehensive contract for the medical care of the poor appears in 1680, at which time one Dr. Carder was paid "for cures made by him for the poor of Ash", and from this date the practice was continuous. A contract covered inmates of the workhouse once this was established (1725) and all those on regular weekly parish "collection".

Exceptional cases received special mention in the Ash records. In 1772 two women were sent to London hospitals for treatment "to be cured of the Itch and the Venereal Disease." Stephen Cleveland was allowed £1.11.0. for his daughter to be cured of the Leprosy by the Italian doctor at Sandwich, and Thomas Couzins was allowed £1.1.0. for his daughter to be cured of her Deafness by the same doctor (1766). A man was nursed after being badly hurt by a kick from a horse (1762) and another treated by the Ash doctor for a wound received by horses running away with harrows (1773). Smallpox was sometimes the reason why families needed money relief. Inoculation was first mentioned in Ash in 1806,² when tenders were invited for the "medical attendance of the poor of this Parish" and half the cost of inoculation was part of the contract. (The doctor received £50 a year). In 1820, when renewing a contract with Dr. Spencer, inoculation was then included. Subscriptions were taken out to the Kent and Canterbury hospital sometime after its

1. The appointment of overseers of the poor was required for the first time by the Act of 1598 (39 Eliz c.3) and overseers and churchwardens were made jointly responsible for the relief of the poor. (Webb S.& B.(1927) 64).
2. Regular inoculation organised and paid for by the parish can be found from at least 1771. (Oxley (1974) 71). It only became popular after about 1765 when an improved method became available and was practised almost universally by the beginning of the 19th century. In Ireland at any rate parents objected to the newer technique of vaccination, and continued to inoculate until at least mid-century. (Razzell (1967) 263-272).

opening in 1794. Renewal in 1819 was the opportunity to double the subscription from four to eight guineas, but the first decision to subscribe was not recorded.

Again, the fuller Ash evidence is corroborated as typical of the area generally. By 1722 when the record begins a doctor was being paid for medicines for the poor in Eastry. All the poor were inoculated by the parish in 1818. In Chislet, a doctor from Hearn was being paid in 1742 to look after the poor for a sum of six guineas a year. Evidence of Chillenden and Waldershare also buying medical care dates from 1768 and 1776 respectively. The children in the workhouse at Elham were inoculated in 1781, and Elham was one of the first subscribers to the Kent and Canterbury hospital. Although there is no evidence of a medical contract in this parish, this could be due merely to the silence of the record on a commonly accepted practice. In Wickhambreux overseers paid for women "lying-in" and from 1819 at least subscribed to the hospital. Only in 1833 is there a hint of similar arrangements in St. Nicholas, when the Vestry Minute book recorded "Cases in which the overseers may allow medical attention at the parish expense." The rules then listed were stated not to supersede the usual allowance for midwifery, and this provides the only hint that medical attendance was a customary service for the poor. There is thus sufficient evidence to support the generality of practice in this respect in East Kent. In the 17th century it was perhaps mainly humanitarian, whereas the provision of inoculation was a prudent preventive measure, which seems to have been widespread by the early 19th century.

(iv) Bread and bread scales.

The 1598 Charge to the Chislet overseers and churchwardens suggested that relief might be given simply in victuals, and this could be significant as an antecedent to the Speenhamland scale of the late 18th century. However, there is only very sporadic indication in poor law records of the direct provision of either bread or corn until late 18th century, or even of money

relief specifically for the purchase of food. It does not seem to have been common practice in East Kent to give relief in kind in this way. In Ash in 1603 three men were given relief to buy wheat; in the early 18th century wheat was purchased for the use of the poor. Money was occasionally lent to allow someone to pasture a cow or to fat a hog. There are few and scattered references to food, apart from the provisioning of the workhouse, until the 19th century. Even the 1795 shortages and high prices left no mark in the Ash Vestry minutes, though visible enough in the amount of money needing to be raised by the rates at that time.¹ Only in 1822 did direct provision of food become a concern of the Ash overseers. In March 1822 the Vestry decided to enter into a "contract for the supply of the Poor with good Wheaten bread". At the same time a scale of relief was agreed:

	<u>Shillings</u>	<u>Bread (lbs)</u>
"For a man and his wife	6	AND 1
" " " " " " with 1 child	6	6
" " " " " " " 2 children	6	12
" " " " " " " 3 "	6	18
" " " " " " " 4 "	6	24
" " " " " " " 5 "	6	30
" " " " " " " 6 "	6	36

For the further encouragement of Industry, every Labourer shall be furnished with Bread at the Contract Price, not exceeding six pounds per week for each Member of the Family." In relating relief to size of family and its bread requirements, this scheme is comparable with the Speenhamland Scale.² How long it was used is not clear; it was certainly superseded by employment schemes which used scales of money relief only.

In the other parishes too there is little evidence of the direct provision of bread until late 18th century. In Elham, wheat was purchased for

1. Boys (1796) 161 however commented that the recent scarcity of labour and high price of provisions had led some parishes to allow corn at a low rate, others to give money relief, and some to raise wages.
2. See Appendix IV for the original Speenhamland Scale.

the use of the poor from 1773, and its price was regularly recorded in the Vestry minutes.¹ The millers of the parish took turns at grinding the poor's grist, so it may be that each household made its own bread. In this parish the 1795 crisis was met by raising a subscription which was spent on bread, meat, cheese and flour, distributed in addition to money. Wheat continued to be purchased from local farmers until at least 1803. When the record recommenced in 1821, there was no further evidence of the practice continuing, but much discussion instead, as in Ash, of employment schemes. In Waldershare in 1791 money was being spent on meat, yeast for the poor's bread and peas, but the record does not continue after 1798. Chislet accounts only refer directly to the provision of bread in exceptional years. From 1811 to 1813, weekly allowances at 6d per head for the children of the poor were given "on account of the high price of wheat." 37 families were listed, catering for numbers of children ranging from one to seven. (The median was four). In 1823 charity money was spent on 220 quartern² loaves of wheaten bread, distributed to 104 people in the parish; in 1819 soup had been distributed from the same fund. Despite the charge to the Chislet overseers, therefore, the accounts do not reveal the direct provision of food.

From the very sporadic references to bread it is hard to know whether its distribution was so common as not to need mention, or whether it was indeed only an occasional and exceptional event. This latter seems more likely. Experiments with the direct supply of bread were probably stimulated by the unprecedented price of provisions and hence of poor relief; wholesale prices and bulk purchase could lower poor relief costs for the parish. Failure to find reference to relief in bread is not really significant: the majority of the simple money sums recorded in overseers' accounts were certainly used to purchase food. Indeed the Speenhamland Scale implies this was the case, with its systematised calculations of the amount of money required by a family according to the price of bread. (It did not obviously

1. See Appendix III.

2. The quartern loaf was 4 lbs. In total therefore only 8 lbs of bread was distributed to each person, a very small amount compared with the consumption indicated in bread scales.

provide for the distribution of bread itself). Relief lists were always markedly shorter at harvest time. At times of no wages or low or irregular earnings, relief bought food.

**Copy of Resolutions passed at an adjourned Meeting in the Vestry
of Ash, on the second day of January, 1834.**

- 1st. That for the space of six months from this day, each occupier of Land shall employ as regular Labourers, one man for every thirty Acres of Arable Land in his occupation.
- 2nd. That each occupier of Marsh and Pasture Land shall employ one man for every portion of such Land varying from sixty to one hundred and twenty Acres.
- 3rd. That the occupiers of Tithes shall employ one man for each £150. Rental, as assessed to the Parochial Rates.
- 4th. That the surplus Labourers be distributed by the Overseer among the different occupiers, in proportion to their Rental, and be paid by the said Overseer according to a fixed scale.
- 5th. That such surplus Labourers shall not be transferred by one occupier to another.
- 6th. That all portions of Grass Land under sixty Acres, shall be classed for the employment of Labourers.

	DAYS.	s.	D.
<i>A married Man without a Family, to be allotted</i>	4	1	8
<i>Ditto, having one Child,</i>	ditto	4	½
<i>Ditto, having two Children,</i>	ditto	5	½
<i>Ditto, having three Children,</i>	ditto	5	½
<i>Ditto, having four Children or more,</i>	ditto	6	½

That for every £4. Rental, one supernumerary Labourer be allotted for one day's labour.

That there be no restriction whatever from any description of work,--the employers being at full liberty to employ the supernumerary Labourers in any way they may please.

That the supernumerary Labourers be allotted to the occupiers of small Rentals for the full time in each week, to which they may be liable, as shown in the foregoing table or scale; and that every day's work performed, beyond what such occupiers may be entitled to, be considered a second, third, or fourth portion of time or labour.

That the supernumerary Labourers shall have no claim for any payment whatever, beyond the above rate of daily allowance; but, that as an inducement to be at once punctual in going to and leaving work, and industrious when employed, as well as correct in their general conduct, the occupiers be requested to reward those who conduct themselves well, by paying them such additional sum, as will make their daily wages, during the period for which they may be allotted in each week, the same as the wages of the permanent Labourer;--such extra payment, however, to be entirely optional.

That no occupier be entitled to a second portion of labour, except in the instances already provided for, until each shall have had his full allotment, or the option thereof, according to the several Rentals throughout the Parish.

That the supernumerary Labourers be allotted for two weeks at a time, and be paid by the Overseer every week, according to the table or scale above stated.

That if any supernumerary Labourer be discharged for misconduct by an occupier, the same be notified to the Parish Officers.

That the system detailed in the foregoing Resolutions, be adopted forthwith.

4. Other responses to the problem of rural poverty.

At certain times in the 18th century relief lists lengthened dramatically, with no explanation further than the simple word "given" against the names. It was not necessary for the overseer to describe to fellow parishioners the reasons for relief which would have been apparent to all, and which were largely related to the weather. Moreover these crises passed again. In the 19th century, however, an exceptional problem of much increased numbers requiring relief which continued from year to year forced itself on the attention of parish vestries. It was described by them as "the problem of supernumerary labourers" and called for exceptional relief measures.

With its full set of Vestry minutes, Ash provides the most continuous evidence of this crisis, but other parishes advanced similar remedies to similar predicaments. Ash also seems at this time to have been in some ways a leader of the local vestries. Much of Mr. Henry Boyce's evidence in 1828 related to Ash not his own small parish of Waldershare,¹ and resolutions passed in the Ash Vestry were printed and circulated locally - copies have been found filed, for instance, amongst the Chislet parish records. (See illustration).

The first crisis in Ash observed from Vestry minutes occurred in 1817. In April of that year there was comment on the "great increase of Paupers" in consideration of which the agreement with Dr. Spencer was varied. In May there was unanimous agreement on a scheme for the guaranteed employment of a certain number of men. Any parishioner working a team was constantly to employ two labourers belonging to the parish, and so in proportion to any number of horses kept. The lessee of the tithes was to employ four labourers. Defaulters were to pay the correct amount in wages to the overseer. Any gentleman not employing his full complement was to give notice to the

1. He occupied land in the parish of Ash. He was called to give evidence to the Select Committee on Unemployment and Relief of Able-bodied Persons. PP 1828 IV 137-161.

Poor House on Thursday mornings, the men being sent to work on Friday mornings. The men to be employed were to be drawn by ballot. It was also agreed that the poor in the House should be sent to work for the parishioner offering the best price per day, such offers also to be submitted to the master of the workhouse on Thursday mornings. This set of resolutions was affirmed six days later after "the sense of the Parishioners was generally taken." This scheme provided effectively for the employment of 68 men, there being 34 teams or equivalent in the parish, operated by 25 farmers.¹ The lessee of the tithes, Michael Becker, who as overseer was to figure prominently in events provoking the Swing Riots in Ash, had his number of men reduced from four to two. The number provided for in this scheme represented about a quarter of the parish's labourers.² Its purpose must have been primarily to compel occupiers, or farmers, to employ a reasonable number of labourers.

Between 1817 and 1834 the problem of unemployed labourers was discussed by Ash Vestry many times, and various schemes were tried. In November 1817 the Vestry decided to enlarge the workhouse. At the same time the offer of Mr. Tomlin of Moat Farm to have a sand pit filled up "for the benefit of the labourers out of employ" was accepted. In March 1818 again the parish officers and parishioners met "to consider the necessity of employing the labouring poor." They resolved to pave the yards at the poorhouse. However, to carry out this work men were sent to Stonar to fetch beach stones. The magistrates prevented this "on account of the number of other Parishes the Men had to go through." For a few years after this the minutes are silent on such special schemes. Then in 1822 the problem again became pressing - a bread scale was adopted,³ and in December another plan considered

1. The Vestry's own list of teams is the source. In 1831 there were 44 occupiers employing labour returned in the Census, but in this market gardening area some of them would not have kept a plough team.
2. Between 1821 and 1831 the numbers of families in agriculture increased by 37 from 265 to 302, most of whom may be presumed to have been labourers, and in 1831 there were 244 labourers in agriculture. It is therefore assumed that there were about 230 labourers in 1817.
3. See previous section.

"for the better employment of the poor." This time labourers out of employ were to be distributed among the several occupiers as Roundsmen, being paid by the overseer for their work. For every £4 of rateable value an occupier could claim one day's labour from one man, but could if he wished reject the roundsman's services. Significantly the roundsman was not to be employed on regular farm tasks such as threshing, carting manure, ploughing etc. If such work were required, then it had to be paid for directly by the employer at the proper rate. There was to be no selection of labourers. As before, the week began on Friday. On Thursday afternoon the roundsman had to call on the occupier, apprise him of the allotment and be allocated work. Formal discipline was maintained as far as possible, by asking occupiers to require their labourers to be punctual and industrious. A weekly account was sent to the overseer as a voucher for payment. No occupier was entitled to a second portion of labour until each had had their full allotment according to rental. This was a carefully worked out scheme, with the possibility for abuse clearly in the forefront of the Vestry's mind. It does not seem to have been a success, nor have been in use for very long, for in March 1824 yet another scheme was formulated.

The 1824 scheme remained, with minor amendments, the basis of Ash poor relief to the able-bodied labourer until 1834. Its main principle was that "each Pauper should be disposed of at the least Premium for one Month. No occupier shall be entitled to a Premium for the Employment of such Man except he has in his Employment one regular Man." A scale was laid down for the employment of "regular" men.

Scale of Employment of Regular Men: Ash 1824

"1 man for	40-60 acres of arable land	
2 men	60-100	"
3 "	100-140	"
4 "	140-180	"
5 "	180-220	"

and so on in proportion for any greater quantity of Arable land.

1 man for every 100 acres of grazing land.

1 " " the tithe of every 400 acra of arable and 1,000 acres of grazing."

This scheme is a variation of the Roundsman system,¹ though not giving relief in aid of wages indiscriminately to the entire labour force, but only to those not regularly employed by the farmers. It obviously made careful provision against the temptation it might present to employers of obtaining all their labour at a subsidised rate. A particular clause seems to have envisaged the tithe lessee (Michael Becker) trying to evade its provisions.

A number of amendments were made to the scheme in the next year. In June 1824 the time for which the men were let was reduced from a month to a fortnight. The following year the plan was reconsidered, and improvements to it invited. As a result, the fortnightly routine and the scale of regular men to be employed were continued, but one additional clause was added which allowed the occupier to show that he had spent 15/- per acre instead of employing the regular number of men. The purpose of this seems a little obscure, unless it shows that some mechanisation or investment reduced the number of men reasonably required on a farm. It might, therefore, indicate the presence of the threshing machine and its effect on the employment of labour. In December that year (1825) the resolutions were referred to again, to "be adopted and acted on forthwith, and it was further unanimously resolved that married Men working with Horses, and going regularly with the team, are not to be included in the number of Labourers which will enable a person to take a man on premium." This seems to be further indication of the tendency to abuse the poor rates.

In 1826 the acreage of arable per man regularly employed was revised upwards, and additionally one man per 200 acres of marshland was specified. The acreage of grazing land rendering tithes per man was doubled. (See

1. P.L.Report (1974) 102.

AT A VESTRY MEETING,

Held the Nineteenth Day of May, 1826,

PURSUANT TO PUBLIC NOTICE,

It was unanimously agreed,

That each Pauper shall be found employment by the Occupiers, at the least premium, for a fortnight.

But that no Occupier shall be entitled to a premium for the employment of such man, except he has in his employ one regular man, or produces a voucher to the Overseer, at the Committee, that he has expended 15s. per acre in proportion to his occupation, grass land excepted.

And that every parishioner shall employ one regular man for every 40 acres of arable land, and not exceeding 80; exceeding 80 and not 120, two men; exceeding 120 and not 160, three men; exceeding 160 and not 200, four men; exceeding 200 and not 240, five men; and so in proportion for any greater quantity of arable land.

And for every 200 acres of marsh land, one man; and so in proportion for any greater quantity of marsh land.

And that every tithe owner shall employ one man for every 400 acres of arable land, and for every 2000 acres of grazing land, and so in proportion for a greater quantity during the year.

And in case of his not employing the men as above, he shall not be entitled to the premium after discharging such men.

GEORGE QUESTED }
JOHN BUSHELL } *Church Wardens.*

H. M. RIGDEN
ISAAC READ
THOMAS SOLLY
WILLIAM RALPH

} *Overseers.*

W. FRIEND, JUN.
I. KELSY

T. M. TOMLIN
T. COLEMAN

SMITHEYT SPAIN
W. PETLEY

H. MINTER
T. SPAIN.

A S H, May 19th, 1826.

illustration). Boyce made reference to this scheme in his evidence to the Select Committee in 1828. "In the parish of Ash there is a regular meeting every Thursday and the paupers are put up to auction."¹ The best man fetched 12/- a week. If less were bid, the parish made it up to 12/-. This did not, however, apply to a "great portion" of men who were in employ. If there was no bidder, then the men "go upon the roads, or are paid for doing nothing." With all its faults, this scheme remained in operation until 1834.

Within a few years Ash Vestry was seeking additional solutions to the problem of supernumerary labourers. The parish had been given a farm in 1721 as an endowment to pay a schoolmaster's salary. In desperation the Vestry decided in 1829 to take back the lease of School Farm in order that "the Overseer may Employ the Paupers of the Parish rather than have them kept in idleness." Gleig's second tale, "The Village Oracle," in the Chronicles of Waltham described in vivid detail the events which followed this unpopular decision, in such a way that its authenticity can hardly be doubted. The superintendent of the parish farm, "a gently old womanish man who was also the assistant overseer", responsible for collecting the rates, warned the Vestry that there was trouble brewing but they took no notice. The overseer, indeed, decided to punish grumblers, and reduced the rate of pay for a week on the parish farm from 12/- to 9/-. The men appealed to the magistrate but were advised to accept what was offered. On their return, however, the pay was reduced further to 8/-. Next market day saw the overseer's barns and stack yard on fire. "You were right gentlemen.....The odds against me were fearful, and I am beaten." He walked amidst the blazing remains of his property "like one that walks in his sleep." He was taunted with his brave remarks about having a double-barrelled shot gun ready for trouble-makers, and also with the molasses beer he had ordered for the workhouse.

When Gleig came to write his reminiscences of the Duke of Wellington

1. PP 1828 IV 157.

many years later, the Swing Riots in Ash were again described, and in very similar terms. There were in fact two outbreaks in Ash: the first involving the destruction of threshing machines in the outlying district of the parish called Westmarsh, which Gleig himself managed to contain by personally facing the rioters and persuading them to disperse;¹ and the second the burning of Becker's barns. In his account Gleig recalled again the taunts about Becker's molasses beer and his supposed threats to use his double-barrelled shot gun. He noted that "the overseer of Ash for that year was a harsh taskmaster. If no better employment could be found for able-bodied paupers, he caused them to dig holes in the ground, and fill them up again." A clerk to the magistrates in Kent also wrote a letter about the riots which confirms the general truth of the attack on Becker.² He reported an incident in which Becker made an unemployed shepherd from Margate, 13 miles away, walk each day to Ash to collect a daily dole, until after nine weeks he collapsed. These events left no mark whatsoever in the Vestry minutes.

While the Poor Law Commissioners were engaged in their national inquiry, fresh efforts were made in Ash to deal with the unemployed. In 1833 the Vestry decided "The Paupers shall be employed according to the following scale:

A married man without children - $3\frac{1}{2}$ days a week at 2/- per day.

For every child $\frac{1}{2}$ day extra at 1/- per $\frac{1}{2}$ day."

At the same time the "utmost extent of Parish allowance to be 12/- per week." This was the scheme described by assistant commissioner Ashurst Majendie.³ He understood that it applied only to those working on the parish farm, about 25 men, after the apportionment of labourers had been made, according to the scheme which by this time had been in operation for nearly 10 years. He noted that "the system of allowance to those in farmer's employ.....is here unknown."

A further revision occurred in January 1834. As an experiment for six

1. Gleig (1904) 34-6.
2. Hammond, J.L. & B. (1966) 180.
3. PP 1834 XXVIII 218.

months the allocation of men per acre was increased, to one regular man per 30 acres of arable and 60 - 120 acres of marsh and meadow.

"The said Parishioners request those of the Parishioners who were not present as also those Gentlemen non-resident Parishioners to co-operate with them in carrying fully into effect, those measures they consider as a means to reduce the rate for the Poor And at the same time support the Labourer by his own industry Also that the occupier of tithes be requested to employ a Labourer for each £150 rental as assessed for the Parochial rates."

A number of clauses were drafted but then crossed out which provided for surplus labourers to be allocated to occupiers in proportion to rentals, to be paid by the overseer on a fixed scale, that labourers so allocated should not be transferred from one occupier to another, and that less than 60 acres of grassland should also be classed for the employment of labourers. In November "every occupier of Land who shall dig one or more Acres of Arable or Pasture land for the sake of employing the superfluous Labourers shall be paid one half of the cost thereof by the Overseer." But the parish's responsibilities were nearly finished - in September 1935 the parish farm was given up. Although business relating to the sale of the redundant workhouse occupied the Vestry's time thereafter, the emigration of pauper families was the only executive item remaining to the Vestry after the Poor Law Amendment Act was implemented.

A detailed account of the employment schemes in Ash is valuable not only because it was a typical East Kent parish, exceptionally well-documented, but also because it shows so clearly the continuous development of and reconsideration given to such schemes. The information in a parliamentary report about allowances or roundsmen's system is limited to the period immediately preceding, and gives no sense of the constant battle which some vestries fought to solve an intractable problem.

In other East Kent parishes a similar story emerges from the more fragmentary evidence.¹ In Chislet for instance, in 1814 a labour scheme was in operation, though its details are not recoverable because no Vestry minutes are available.² In Eastry in 1819 sums of money were paid "to make up Labourers' pay." Vestry minutes in 1831 commence with the record of a meeting to consider a plan "for employing supernumerary labourers." It was decided to rent a 20 acre farm, and appoint a salaried superintendent to run the enterprise subject to control by a seven-man committee. The farm's produce was to be "sold to any of the poor belonging to the parish, who may be disposed to buy the same, at the same rate as may be the wholesale market price; however small the Quantity may be which they wish to purchase."

By December 1833 a further stage had been reached of renting a cottage "for victualling those persons whom they think proper who apply to the Parish for Relief,"³ and at the same time instituting a ticket or roundsman system. The entitlement or allocation of labour was regulated according to rateable value: £4 was allotted one labourer for one day; £24 was allotted one week's work. As in Ash, "ticket men" were not to perform the routine work of the farm, such as threshing, working with horses on arable land etc. The men were allowed so many days work a week in accordance with size of family, a married man with more than three children being allowed six days' work at 2/- per day. Like Ash Vestry, the Eastry Vestry incorporated clauses about industrious and punctual behaviour, and the non-transferability of tickets. Two weeks later a further resolution pegged the labourers' pay to 3d a day less than the "usual" rate of wages. Eastry also at this time (March 1834) appointed a Beadle to be paid out of the poor rate, significantly "excepting in time of harvest."

1. The creation of work as a means of relieving distress was advocated by many writers at the time, and was by no means confined to East Kent. Poynter (1969) 254.
2. The overseers' accounts record payments for "labour" as though the parish itself were employing the labourers.
3. The superintendent of this victualling was allowed a salary, an allowance of tea, good Beer and provisions "in a moderate way better than that given to the poor."

April 16. 1833. Rose & Crown

At a meeting of the ratepayers in the Parish of Echem held for the purpose of adopting a Suborn rate the following resolutions were passed

1st That of the Poor rate next to be granted for this Parish at the rate of 2¹/₂ in the Pound only 1¹/₆ shall be first collected and that it shall be optional with every ratepayer either to pay the remaining portion to the collector or to spend it in the employment of any one of the surplus Labourers belonging to this Parish who may present to him by ticket from the Overseer until the full amount of the rate is thereby made good

2^{dy} That the scale of wages for the payment of the surplus Labourers shall be as follows

1st Class able bodied Labourers with families 2¹/₆ per day

2^d do with families ————— 1¹/₆ per day

3^d for able bodied single men who are to be employed under this agreement only } 1¹/₆ per day
four days in a week

4th for boys of the age of 17 years & upwards ————— 9¹/₁₀ per day

And that the Overseer or Overseer shall (whenever a ticket is drawn by any Labourer) appoint the length of time he is to work for and the amount of wages he is to receive from the rate payer named on the first ticket and to direct him to carry implements of Husbandry with him adapted for the season of the year

3^{dy} That tickets not exceeding the value of 12¹/₆ each and bearing the names of every ratepayer shall be deposited in a bag to be drawn by the Labourers who are out of employ

4th That the surplus Labourers may be employed upon every description of work except threshing, mowing, reaping, peeling, and sizing of hops for the first time and felling of wood

Vestry minutes in Elham recommenced in 1822 with a meeting "to regulate the employment of the labouring men." The scheme is not described, and may be presumed to predate 1822, but it involved payments by the Guardian, and a specific caveat was entered that the earnings of the family should be taken into account in bringing the pay up to the agreed level. Later in the year the rates were given as 6/- per week and 9d for each child as far as four children, and 9d per day for single men "while employed by the parish." The practice of making up pay was subject to abuse, it seems, from the labourers' side as well as from the farmers'. Thus in May 1828 Elham Vestry resolved "That the labouring people in future do produce a written order from their Master the Earnings of themselves and their family and their pay to be made up at the rate of 8/- per week and 9d for each child." Earnings were not always declared. In March and November 1832 further meetings were held to consider the employment of labourers, with what result does not appear. In December $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres of land was rented to be grubbed by the parish, and a hedge on another farm was also grubbed at the parish's expense. In April 1833 Elham Vestry adopted a Labour Rate (see illustration). Cottages rated under £4 were exempt. Other ratepayers paid 6d in the pound. Labourers drew tickets from a bag, the tickets not exceeding the amount of a week's wages and bearing the names of the ratepayers. When a ticket was drawn the overseer "mentioned" the sum of money to be worked out and paid by the ratepayer according to the then scale of wages in force to the labourers out of regular employ. Regular farm jobs were again excluded from the work. Several labour rates were raised over the following year. The scale of wages categorised men as first class able-bodied labourers or second class men, both with families, the rate being $2\frac{1}{6}$ a day for the first and $1\frac{1}{6}$ a day for the second; single men, who received $1\frac{1}{6}$ per day; and boys 17 years and over, 10d per day. This avoided the "premium" on family size.

In the remaining parishes, there is no direct indication of labour rates or roundsmen schemes, but there is evidence of attempts in less formal ways

to find work for unemployed men. Thus St. Nicholas in 1818 was paying the farmers for "employing extra labourers" and sometimes they were also employed by the Surveyor of the Highways on the roads. (Children were employed doing jobs on the roads too). Boyce in his Select Committee evidence suggested that in his parish work was found for unemployed men on the roads. In Wickhambreux payments were made to the Overseers for the poor's labour. Large parishes, merely because of their size, were bound to adopt more formalised schemes and specify their operation more precisely. Thus, Ash, Chislet, Eastry and Elham, all large parishes, have 19th century records of make-work schemes. It is striking that all found similar problems pressing at similar times. If the poor law alone were responsible for the situation, then the timing of the crises might be expected to be different for each parish. Exogenous factors seem to have brought such simultaneity.¹

1. The factors involved may include change of monetary policy, industrial depression and corn imports in the period after the Napoleonic Wars. See Chapter Eleven.

5. Conclusion: Main strands in rural administration.

Two significant strands in poor law administrative practice with respect to outdoor relief are thus apparent: one was its tendency always to have acted as a wage supplement; and the second was its response to the prevalence of casual labour. Methods of relief found in East Kent are not at all unique - indeed they are almost all to be found in the poor law commission's report;¹ nor should too much significance be attached to "first" indications of this or that particular practice. The implications of administrative methods, however, are important, and their overall development from 17th to 19th centuries.

The role of the old poor law as a wage supplement was clearly of very long standing. All the varied methods of relief described lead to the conclusion that for numbers of people in the 17th and 18th centuries the old poor law was the means to maintain some sort of standard of life. Shoes, clothes, house rent, medical care and so on all were provided because they were outside the capacity of the earnings of many labourers. Medicine might be regarded as an exceptional item, but the others are basic items of a family's budget. In earlier times, the variety of relief in kind was perhaps mainly for those unable to earn a full wage because of age or sex. Gradually during the 18th century it seems that more and more able-bodied men were relying on the relief system. Particularly was this so in periods of bad weather or poor harvest. It was thus accepted that the labourer applied to the parish frequently and probably without too much stigma. At the same time as the numbers in need of relief grew, money was often substituted for some of the more paternalistic methods of relief in kind.² For bread to be the means of relief suggests greater indigence, such that even food could not be afforded. The particularities of the Speenhamland Scale

1. See P.L.Report (1974) 82-114 particularly on methods of outdoor relief.

2. This too has been observed in other parishes, for instance Eaton Socon in the early 19th century. Emmison (1933) 53.

itself are not of great significance.¹

The second strand in the development of poor law practice was its response to the prevalence of casual labour. In the 1705 listing of Ash all the labourers were described as "day labourers", presumably an accurate reflection of their economic position. Obviously there were regular labourers on the farms, men who worked with horses and were therefore needed all through the year, and "servants in agriculture" hired by the year. But the rest of the labour force was casual, and thus very vulnerable to any contraction of employment due either to weather or economic conditions. In a year of poor harvest work would be short and wages, if not raised, inadequate to meet the sudden high prices. After the Napoleonic Wars the numbers in distress through lack of work grew to alarming proportions. Many schemes were drafted to try and encourage farmers to employ men, even if it meant subsidising their wages. In one parish all men "in farmer's employ" might have their wages supplemented on a Speenhamland-type scale, in another some men continued to be employed at a full wage but others were wholly without work. Such schemes were obviously open to abuse, but vestries and overseers were struggling with what was for them an unprecedented situation.

A third strand woven into the practice of poor law administration was the settlement system, which determined which of the parish's inhabitants at any one time should be granted relief, and this will be examined next. It too helped shape the attitudes of poor law administrators.

1. Except in so far as a systematic scale of relief may have tended to depress wages more than the earlier more roughly calculated doles. Clapham (1926) 1, 125.

CHAPTER SEVENTHE IMPORTANCE OF THE SETTLEMENT SYSTEM.

The foundation of poor law administration was a set of duties imposed on parishes by statute; the settlement system served to delimit those obligations by a complicated set of rules derived from statutory and case law as well as customary practices. In evaluating the effects of the law as it developed up to 1834 (and it was then modified, not abolished) scholarly consideration has been focussed on estimating how many people it directly affected, either through hindering mobility or by physically removing them to another place. In these terms it has been concluded that its effects were limited.¹ But in less tangible ways the system may have had immense influence - it has even been argued that it was totally responsible for all the evils documented in the 1834 report,² and more recently that it aided the development of industrialisation.³

1. See Chapter One.

2. Webb S. & B. (1927) discuss the effects on mobility and "make a more sober estimate" than Adam Smith; but they conclude their chapter with this absolute condemnation by John Revans, the Secretary to the Royal Commission on the Poor Laws.

3. Taylor (1976) 45.

1. The Law of Settlement and Removal.

The settlement system received its clearest definition in the Act of 1662,¹ usually called the Settlement Act, but the concept was of much greater antiquity, having its origins in the mutual obligations within a community imposed by both residence and work.² Tudor legislation against vagrants and rogues defined "belonging" as the place of birth or the place of residence for at least a year³ and authorised the removal of those who did not belong. Wandering without any definite links to a particular community was a threat to the social order - permitted mobility was contingent on dwelling and employment. The 1572 act of Elizabeth's reign, as well as obliging parishes to relieve the poor, seems also to have authorised the removal of "aged, impotent and lame persons" who did not belong (regardless of their need of relief)⁴ but this clause was definitely not repeated in the Acts of 1597 and 1601. However, it was never easy to categorise the poor, and the laws relating to vagrants and the poor were in practice conflated - removal was one facet of the doctrine of settlement.

Society was familiar with removals of wanderers. An early instance is recorded in the Registers of the parish of Staplehurst, Kent,⁵ on 17 December 1579, (perhaps in response to the 1572 Act):

"There was committed to the earth the body of one Johan Langley who Died in the highway (as she was carried on horseback to have been Conveyed from officer to officer till she should have come to the parish of Rayersh)."

An "Explanation" of the 1598 Act, in which "certain doubts and questions which have arisen or may arise upon the general words of the same, are here

1. 14 Car II c.12: An Act for the better relief of the Poor.
2. "A law of settlement...is coeval with our earliest authentic institutions; and these refer evidently to a complete pre-existing system." Coode (1851) 201. George Coode reported to the Poor Law Board (PP 1851 XXVI) on the Law of Settlement and Removal which he eloquently condemned. He provided a detailed history of the development of the law which forms the source for subsequent writers, for example the Webbs.
3. The period of time for qualifying as a resident was three years in 1564 and 1572, but in 1597 it was reduced to one year. Styles (1963-4) 46.
4. Webb S.& B.(1927) 318.
5. The Registers of Staplehurst 1558-1596 (Canterbury 1910) 64.

expounded and resolved," was chiefly concerned with the circumstances in which people could be "put out" of the parish. "No man is to be put out of the town where he dwells, nor to be sent to their place of birth or last habitation, but a Vagrant Rogue."¹ In the case of those said to be rogues, they were to be sent to the place of birth or residence for one year, or to where they had rental or possession of a dwelling, including dwelling as an "inmate". Towns in particular were always afraid of incurring the obligation to give poor relief to those who were "inmates" or lodgers - obviously a less viable economic group generally - and often tried to control them.² Sandwich for instance in 1579 decreed that no one should allow persons not inhabitants for three months before the date of the decree "that shall be burdensome or any way chargeable to the town by his or their poverty" to occupy any part of their property.³ Justices before 1662 frequently declared that parishes had no power to remove other than rogues, indicating clearly that the practice still continued.⁴

It is wrong, therefore, to see the Act of 1662 as creating the system of settlement and removal.

"In any statute of this time we should expect to find rather a legalisation of current practice than the beginning of a new policy, though the date of its passing may be none the less significant of the increasing urgency of the problems it deals with."⁵

Indeed, the second reason cited for the Act "And for want of a due provision of the regulations of relief and employment in such parishes or places where they are legally settled" shows full acceptance of the doctrine of settlement. Little interest or comment was provoked at the time by the measure, a fact which both Coode and the Webbs found surprising; yet this too underlines the unexceptional nature of its provisions. However, historically, it was to be

1. This "Explanation" is preserved in the archives of New Romney and printed in Melling (1964) 30. See Chapter Six for the similar Chislet "Charge".
2. Styles (1963-4) 36-9; Webb S.& B.(1927) 317.
3. Melling op cit 49-50.
4. Webb S.& B. op cit 317-9.
5. Styles op cit 46. The problems may have included the discharged commonwealth armies.

of great significance, for it gave parishes an unequivocal right to remove, where before it had been somewhat uncertain.¹ "Thus was produced the mournful and onerous general post of indigent folk, men, women and children, in all states of health and disease, perpetually criss-crossing the Kingdom under expensive escort, which lasted two whole centuries."²

The Act of 1662 also laid the foundations of the certificate system which was to undergo considerable development in the next century. Limited migration was possible if a certificate was provided confirming that the person had a house or dwelling and had left wife and children, where they would return when their labour was completed. This provision echoes the vagrancy acts. But harvest work or other limited tasks was not the factor underlying most migration. The Act also provided that people were not removable if they could give a sufficient security "for the discharge of the parish" in which they had come to reside. Again, the origins of indemnity bonds may be found far back in history;³ a considerable number have survived for the town of Stratford for the 17th century for instance. An essential ingredient of the bond was a sum of money paid as security; poor families were unlikely to be able to raise any such payment. After the 1662 Act there is some evidence, however, that parishes were beginning tentatively to use the idea without any accompanying cash sum. So St. John the Baptist in Thanet in 1692 gave an obligation simply to indemnify the parish of St. Dunstan's, Canterbury, from charges which might arise because Nicholas Thompson had married a widow and gone to live with her there, along with his five children. Similarly in 1692 St. Peter's, Sandwich, gave indemnity to Deal for Ann Naylor and three children who were going to live there for "their maintenance and getting of their livelihood." An interesting example (1678) is the undertaking by the parish of Herne that the parish of Chislet

1. Hence Coode said it should be called the Law of Removal. Churchwardens and Overseers by warrant of two Justices, could remove any newcomer within 40 days unless he could give security for indemnity of the parish or rented house or land of £10 a year or more. Webb S. & B. (1927) 327.

2. Ibid 322.

3. P. Styles (1963-4) 39-45.

should not be at any expense on account of the Widow Beane who had come to live there in a small tenement actually belonging to the parish of Herne.

Considerable doubt apparently existed on the part of the parish officers as to whether such bonds would in fact "save the parish harmless"; it was feared after 1686 that they might be interpreted as the notice in writing which a newcomer was then required to give before a qualifying forty days residence could lead to a settlement. This first of a series of amendments to the Settlement Act¹ had been designed to close a loophole because poor people "at their first coming to a parish do commonly conceal themselves." In 1697 in the preamble to another Act amending the settlement laws, the Certificate Act,² it was suggested that many people were forced to remain chargeable in one parish because although work was available in another they were unable to furnish sufficient security to be allowed to take up residence. The force of parliamentary sanction was therefore put behind the Certificate, which obliged the parish issuing it to accept liability for the persons named "whenever they shall become chargeable or be forced to ask relief in the parish to which they had come"; at such time they could be removed back to their parish of settlement. Certificates had to be issued by the overseers and churchwardens, attested by two witnesses and approved by two magistrates.³ A spate of documentation immediately began after the passing of this act, indicating that it met a well-felt need, and quickly became formalised through the use of printed forms. Removal orders, also issued by the justices, became formalised in the same way at the same time, (see illustration). Each document recited the relevant acts, and merely gave the name of the head of the family, his wife and children if relevant (not always named individually) and the names of the parishes to and from which the move was taking place.

At the end of the 18th century the flood of certificates was dammed again as quickly as it had been opened. In 1795 an Act⁴ "to prevent the

1. 1 James II c.17.
3. Oxley (1974) 20.

2. 8 & 9 Will III c.30.
4. 35 Geo III c.101.

Removal of Poor Persons until they shall become actually chargeable" was passed. The preamble stated that the certificate system had been found ineffectual in allowing the free movement of poor people. Following the Act certificates became superfluous for all but single pregnant women. (The certificate had avoided the removal of those identified as liable to become chargeable). The basic doctrine of settlement still remained untouched, and removals continued, if anything at a faster tempo.

After the 1662 Act, the grounds on which settlement was determined were often amended. The practice inherited from the Tudor period was on birth or residence for more than a year. The 1662 Act referred to removal to the place of last legal settlement, whether as "householder, sojourner, apprentice or servant", and only permitted removal within the first 40 days, of coming to a place. This seemed to maintain the broad basis of Tudor settlement law, but in practice seems to have given rise to legal doubts. The Act of 1692, which required notice to be given in writing before the 40 days could be counted, clarified what conferred a settlement: holding office, paying public taxes, serving an apprenticeship. In 1697¹ settlement was conferred on single persons hired for a year as servants, but the following year² it was specified that they must serve the whole of 12 months. Many other amendments of detail were made, for example leases of tenements had to be bona fide (1699)³; the servants and apprentices of Certificate men were not entitled to a settlement (1714);⁴ the highway rate was excluded from the taxes whose payment conferred settlement (1723).⁵ This last amendment particularly supports the Webbs' contention that all amendments tended to make it "difficult and disadvantageous for the labourer to move,"⁶ and to deny him a settlement in the parish where he was actually resident, since the

1. 8 & 9 Will III C.30.
3. 9 Will III c.11.
5. 9 Geo I c.7.

2. 9 & 10 Will III c.14.
4. 12 Anne c.18.
6. Webb S & B. (1927) 328.

highway rate was paid by a much wider spectrum of inhabitants than other parish rates.¹ It was certainly not a very paternal system; settlement was the basis of the right to poor relief, yet legal expedients were always being sought to make settlement less simple or possible to acquire. The Poor Law Amendment Act abolished settlement by hiring, service, apprenticeship, purchasing or renting a tenement, paying rates or serving an office, but left intact the essential features of the system - removal was allowed to the place of last legal settlement, and settlement was defined by birth, marriage and parentage. It thus failed to tackle the most fundamental aspect of the old poor law. The secretary to the Poor Law Commission wrote "I am certain that all those evils....will in a few years burst forth again, when they will at once be recognised as the results of the vicious system of settlement."²

The quantity of documents remaining, and the fact of parliament's frequent tampering with it both show the importance of the law of settlement; its imponderable effects on attitude are much harder to demonstrate.

"The very practice of expelling strangers, while it arose from and increased the fallacious reliance on removal as a safeguard, begat also, both in the poor and in the parish, a stronger conviction of the claims of 'their own poor,' a greater supineness in admitting their demands, and acquiescing in the interested solicitations of their employers."³

From the vantage point of the 20th century, it would seem simpler if the criterion for relief had been not "settlement" but residence at the time it was required, thus obviating much administrative confusion. But in the 16th century it was impossible to envisage a national rather than a local community solution. Settlement inevitably implied also removal, if the pauper was to be able to get relief, or else a sophisticated system of transfer payments by one parish to another which in pre-industrial England was not feasible. Similarly parishes were likely to safeguard their interests by removing those

1. The highway rate was derived from the obligation of all householders in a parish to provide "statute labour", which was gradually for practical reasons commuted to a small money payment. See Chapter Eight.
2. Webb S. & B. (1927) 349.
3. Coode (1851) 237.

likely to become chargeable. The evidence in East Kent suggests that the Law of Settlement and Removal had a dominating influence. The two aspects of the law need to be seen as one whole in examining its importance.

The major source for the study of the Law of Settlement, the actual certificates, many of which have survived, thus exists from 1697; before this date references are much less frequent in poor law records. It is complemented by removal orders, which have also survived in large numbers. Four parish collections of these documents have been analysed, and these will be described in the next section. Evidence to be found in other parish records which bears on the significance of the settlement system in East Kent will then be examined.



Kent

To the Church-wardens and Overseers of the Poor of
the parish of *Ash*
the County of *Kent* and to the Overseers
of the Village of *Sarr* in the County
afore said.

Geo. Borden

WHEREAS Complaint hath been made by you unto us whose
Hands and Seals are hereunto set *two of His* Majesties
Justices of the Peace (*Quorum unus*) for the County of *Kent*
afore said, that *Wm. Joads and his Family* have

lately intruded *themselves* into your said parish of
Ash there to inhabit as *Parishioners* contrary to
the Laws relating to the Settlement of the Poor, and are there likely
to become Chargeable, if not timely prevented. And whereas up-
on due Examination and Enquiry made into the Premises

it appears
unto us, and we accordingly Adjudge, That the said *Wm.*

Lynch

Joads and his Family are
likely to become chargeable, and that their last legal Place of Set-
tlement was in the *the Village of Sarr* in the
Isle of Thanet in the County afore
said

THESE are therefore in *the* Majesties Name to Order and
Require you the said Churchwardens and Overseers of the Poor of
the Parish of Ash afore said, That you or some of you do forth-
with remove and convey the said *Wm. Joads and his*
Said Family from your said parish of *Ash*
to the *Village of Sarr* afore said, and *do* deliver
to the ~~Churchwardens and~~ Overseers of the Poor there, or some or
one of them, together with this our Warrant or Order, or a true Copy
hereof, whereby they are likewise required in *the* Majesties Name,
and by Virtue of the Statutes in such Case made, forthwith to receive
the said *Wm. Joads and family*
into their said *Village of Sarr* and provide for them
as their own Parishioner. Given under our Hands and Seals, the
Day of *Monday* Anno Regni *Sand. Nostri Georgij*
nunc Magnae Britannie, &c. *Regis nunc* Annoq; Dom. *1723*

2. Four sets of documents analysed.

Significantly, 13 years after the passing of the 1697 Act, St. Dunstan's Canterbury and Ash both compiled registers of certificates received - the quantity evidently justifying the effort.¹ Comparison of registers and certificates make clear that collections of documents are not necessarily complete. In St. Dunstan's, the register recorded three times as many as are now available.² On the other hand the Ash register records only two thirds of the existing certificates.³ Later Ash registers, 1734-95, agree more closely.⁴ A retrospective register compiled in 1786 by the parish of Chislet also agrees largely with the documents themselves now available,⁵ but losses of earlier material will of course have gone unrecorded. It was entitled "Removals of the Poor" though actually recording settlement certificates, thus demonstrating the inter-relationship between the two facets of the system. These parishes all kept removal orders too, in varying quantities; though here again documents may well have been lost. Certificates had to be carefully preserved or recorded because they did not require immediate action - perhaps not for many years; on the other hand the removal order mostly resulted in immediate action. In addition to the three parishes with document registers, a small number of documents also survive for the parish of St. Nicholas-at-Wade. The total numbers of documents extant for these four parishes are set out in Table 7.1:

Table 7.1 Documents extant for 1697-1835.

	Certificates	Removal Orders	Total
Ash	236	167	403
Chislet	166	131	297
St. Dunstan's	179	10	189
St. Nicholas	32	29	61

1. Other examples of registers are noted by Webb S. & B. (1927) 338.
2. 105 names, 26 documents, for period 1697-1717. The list was added to from 1710-17.
3. 70 names, only 2 not documented, but 21 additional certificates in period 1697-1710.
4. 1723-64 and 1764-95: 117 names, 125 certificates.
5. 1698-1788: 136 names, 158 certificates.

Removal orders continued to be used after 1795, and in fact in Chislet more than two thirds relate to the later period.¹

These documents begin to give some impression of the numbers affected by the settlement system. Indeed for Chislet, whose population in 1801 was only 158 families, and 186 in 1831, the 95 removal orders of the period 1795-1835 represent a considerable proportion of the families in the parish, particularly as they only relate to the less prosperous section of the community. But only one side of the picture is here available. There is no record of how many persons left each parish bearing a certificate. Copies of removal orders bringing people into the parish, and moving them out, were normally retained. Only Ash kept a record of certificates given out, and then not before 1734, though it is clear that they had been issued in earlier years from the Vestry resolution in 1729 "to give no Certificates on no Condition whatsoever." Equally clearly Ash was nonetheless obliged to operate the system.² Between 1734 and 1795 there were 195 names recorded for certificates given out. The gross amount of movement in and out of any particular parish witnessed by certificates, therefore, probably needs doubling. The totals of known movements in and out of these four parishes, divided into 25 year periods, are set out in Table 7.2.³ Although it appears that certificates were generally used all through the 18th century, removal orders were more frequent after 1795.

There is some evidence of the legal device called by Styles "retrospective certification"⁴ in East Kent, but it was not a major feature of the certificate system. Thus in some instances, a removal order was obtained apparently in order to force a parish to grant a certificate, the legal settlement having been decided by the justices. It may be wondered why once a removal order had been obtained, a certificate should then be demanded.

1. Of the 131 removal orders, 36 are for the period before 1795 and 95 for the period after.
2. Many parishes refused to grant certificates, Hammond J.L. & B. (1966) 113, referring to evidence in Eden (1797).
3. Compiled from certificates, removal orders, Vestry minutes and settlement register for Ash in the parish chest; for Chislet and St. Nicholas-at-Wade CCL/U3/55 and U3/18; for St. Dunstan's, Canterbury: temporary deposit in CCL.
4. Styles (1963-4) 61 on the basis of the Gloucestershire parish of Painswick.

Table 7.2. All Known Documented Movements 1697-1834

	ASH		CHISLET		ST.DUNSTAN'S		ST.NICHOLAS	
	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out	In	Out
<u>1. CERTIFICATES</u>								
1692 - 1725	38	0	25		131		10	
1726 - 1750	44	50	33		48		9	
1751 - 1775	86	63	63		63		8	
1776 - 1795	77	57	47		18		5	
Totals	245	170	168		260		32	
<u>2. REMOVAL ORDERS</u>								
1692 - 1725	1	8	6	3	0	1	1	1
1726 - 1750	1	5	0	2	0	1	0	6
1751 - 1775	2	14	2	2	3	4	1	3
1776 - 1800	7	31	6	15	0	1	5	11
1801 - 1834	53	46	55	38	0	0	0	0
Totals	64	104	69	60	3	7	7	21
<u>Families</u> <u>1801</u>	343		158		159		98	

Presumably the removal order could not be stored up against a future emergency, but had to be acted on. A certificate enabled a parish to allow persons to inhabit while it was convenient, and even to claim reimbursement of occasional relief given, but to remove them as soon as real indigence set in.¹ Only in a relatively small number of cases in East Kent has a removal order pre-dating a certificate survived in the four collections. Three out of 32 follow this pattern in St. Nicholas; in St. Dunstan's only one; in Ash 18 out of 179. More often, the host parish demanded that a certificate should be supplied and the request was acceded to. Ash Vestry resolved in 1771 "That all the persons Residing in this Parish without Certificates shall apply to their own parish for one." Only in recalcitrant cases was recourse to the magistrates necessary, for example later that year Ash resolved that one John Fennymore should be taken to the monthly meeting of the justices "to Swear to his Parish, Residing in the parish of Ash without a Certificate, and then the Overseer to conduct him to the parish of his last Legal Settlement." Although in this area certificates were not often the response to removal orders, nonetheless, as these examples show, certificates were often retrospective in the sense of being obtained after the person concerned had moved. Occasionally certificates were transferred to another parish. St. Dunstan's has a note, November 1708, from the overseer of St. Mary Bredman, Canterbury, that Thomas Transham has security from Hothfield, and has come to settle in St. Mary's "contrary to law..I do promise in case they do return into the parish of St. Dunstan's again there to deliver up the said security." Presumably the certificate was first addressed to St. Dunstan's. However this was not common, because the certificate was directed to the officers of a particular parish.

Detailed study of the certificates preserved in St. Dunstan's parish chest throws a certain amount of light on the whole operation of the certificate system and indeed on the life experiences of ordinary and usually

1. The 1697 Act said that the Certificate "shall oblige the said Parish or Place to receive and provide for the Person mentioned....whenever he, she or they shall happen to become chargeable to or be forced to ask Relief.... and then and not before it may be lawful for any such Person.....to be removed."

faceless people. Using the indexed and printed registers for 1559-1800¹, the subjects of settlement certificates (as named both in the original documents and the early 18th century register) and of the ten removal orders were linked where possible with the records of baptism, marriage and burial.² While there were problems of identification as with any nominal record linkage, a great deal of interesting and suggestive information could be extracted about a sizeable proportion of the population under consideration. It is of course limited to the young and the old - that is those marrying or baptizing children in the parish, or those buried, and much movement in and out of the parish could go un-noticed as far as parish registers were concerned. A total of 270 names were searched for, and 191 were found to have left at least a possible trace in the registers, i.e. 70%. Many of the remaining 30% of those with certificates (or removal orders) could have escaped registration, or have moved quickly elsewhere, or have been removed back to the parish where they claimed settlement. Of the 191 persons traced, fairly certain identification of the burials of 53 could be made, and with less certainty of a further 25. Thus more than two thirds of certificated persons appear to have left the parish again before they died³, a fact which lends support to the ruthless use made of the settlement system by overseers who rid themselves of those no longer economically viable because they were old or sick.

Consideration of some of the actual cases identified can illustrate the different life situations. The first shows what happened when the head of the family died.

1. Cowper (1887).
2. If the certificates named not only the head of the family but wife and children too, identification was certain. In other instances entries of the name/s within a reasonable period of time of the certificate itself seemed to validate the linkage. On the other hand in the case of very large families, for example the Hobdays, with 87 separate page references (and several entries could occur on one page), the task of tracing a John Hobday (22 page references) was next to impossible. Also the registers are not suitable for detailed reconstitution because the entry for a burial generally gives the bare name only, and no family relationship, making links almost impossible.
3. 78 burials, 260 certificates, 30% buried, 70% moved again.

John Atwell: certificate dated November 1774 from Seasalter, for himself, wife Jane and one child Sarah aged 14.

The only reference to this little family is the burial of John, 12 June 1780. Jane and Sarah never occur in the registers. They may have married outside the parish, but more probably they were moved back to Seasalter on the death of the breadwinner.

The Epps case illustrates this principle very clearly.

Thomas Epps: certificate dated July 1769 from Ash, for himself, wife Barbara, and two children, William aged 8 and Jane aged 5.

In 1773 both Thomas and Barbara died, and were buried within a few days of each other, on 23 and 29 October. In November a removal order was made out for William, now 14, and Jane, 12, because they were actually chargeable, back to Ash. In this case it is possible to trace the actual removal, perhaps because they were children and had to be escorted.

An obvious situation which led to use of the certificate system was bastardy and its attendant problems.

Catherine Anderson: certificate dated October 1702 from St. Cosmos and St. Damien in the Blean.

In the register of baptisms for December 1702: Susannah, ye baseborn daughter of Catherine Anderson belonging to Cosmos Blean.

No reasonable doubt about identification seems to exist. Moreover Catherine Anderson was baptized (said to be the daughter of John and Elizabeth) on 13 March 1678. It seems probable that she came home to her family to have the baby but was settled in St. Cosmos (perhaps as a hired servant). Her father John was a labourer, buried by the overseers and so poor in November 1701, but there were other Anderson children. No further mention of Catherine or Susannah ever occurs in St. Dunstan's registers. The maintenance of the bastard was the Blean's responsibility and presumably back Susannah had to go. The certificate was perhaps merely a short-term permit to live with her family for a few months.

In April 1715 another Anderson, Robert, also had a certificate from the Blean. He appears in the registers baptizing a daughter Elizabeth on 4 September 1715, said to be the child of Robert and Elizabeth, but on burial a year later declared a bastard. A second daughter, Mary, was buried in 1720. After this there was no further mention of him. Robert was the brother of Catherine previously described, and both had been baptized in St. Dunstan's.

It is easy to envisage the rationale behind certificates which covered a parish against the cost of maintaining a bastard, and certificates continued to be used for single pregnant girls after 1795. It could well be, too, that there is more often a connection between certificates and bastardy than appears from the documents themselves. Other cases similar to that of Robert Anderson occur, though not clearly declared.

John Sanders, wife, and daughter Ann aged 22 were granted a certificate in May 1770. Four months earlier a baseborn daughter of one Ann Sanders had been baptized. St. Dunstan's might have had to bear the cost of the child, but seems to have placed responsibility for the parent and the grandparents firmly on another parish.

Another situation to which certificates related was the movement of the aged, and this too is revealed in linking register entries and the documents themselves. It is assumed that when single men or a man and his wife are the subjects¹, they were young and unencumbered with children. In several instances it seems clear from the burial record that the person/s concerned were almost certainly aged. If they were widows this is less surprising. But the following case shows the basis of the assumption that might be justified about a single man:

Abraham Warwick: certificate dated 1710 from St. Peter's. This is a distinctive name. In the register Abraham Warwick woolcomber was buried on

1. Hampson (1926) 280; Marshall D.(1969) 164.

4 January 1711, and Mary Warwick widow was buried on 10 May 1713. The reason for the arrival in the parish of this couple could well have been the presence there of relatives. Richard and Ann Warwick were baptizing children from 1689-90 and Richard and Mary Warwick from 1718-28.

Similarly John Hogben, granted a certificate from the parish of Lyminge dated September 1711 was buried (by the parish of Lyminge it states also) five years later. Again other Hogbens are in the parish. With the conditions of mortality of the period this can only be a tentative conclusion, but the cases are suggestive. Age at death is almost impossible to ascertain, the registers do not give it, and links with baptisms are few in a suburban parish where there was considerable movement. Of the 191 persons traced, for instance, only 25 seemed even likely to have been born in the parish.¹ But in a proportion of the certificate cases traced through to burial, it seems probable that they were old people.

The most important aspect of the settlement system revealed by the linkage of register entries and certificates is its application to a particular stage in a man's life-cycle. This is thrown into sharp relief by the following examples, out of a number which could be quoted:

John Fordred: certificate October 1766 from Stowting for himself, wife Hannah and twin children William Sparks and Thomas aged two weeks. A first reaction is one of pity for the mother forced to move when twins were only two weeks old. However in St. Dunstan's registers there is recorded first the marriage of John Fordred of Stowting and Hannah Foreman on 17 October 1765, and then the baptism of William Sparks and Thomas on 16 August 1766 - that is two months before the date of the certificate. (Incidentally this suggests that the certificate was applied for when the twins were two weeks old as stated in the certificate but took two months to get fully executed.) It is difficult to believe that this family were not resident in St. Dunstan's

1. The lack of detail of burial entries also makes this assumption difficult.

from the time of the marriage, but on the birth of the children was forced to obtain a certificate or move. Two more children were born to this couple and one of the twins died. After that the registers record nothing more. They may have moved voluntarily elsewhere, and perhaps Stowting provided a certificate to another parish. Or they may have been moved back to Stowting when three living children made the family a poor liability.

A similar case is that of John Friday.

John Friday: certificate August 1765 from Harbledown for himself, wife and child John aged 3 months. Once more the registers show John marrying Mary Foreman (?the sister of the Hannah who married John Fordred) on 10 May 1763. A child William was baptized in 1764 but died 17 days later. A second child John was baptized on 17 February 1765. This child was three months old when the certificate was obtained. Six more children were born in St. Dunstan's, four of whom died in infancy (28 days, 4 months, 5 weeks, 7 days). When Samuel was baptized in 1773, he made the third living child out of eight. And then the registers lose all sight of the Friday family, perhaps because they were moved back to Harbledown.

Altogether no less than 25% of all those traced were married and/or had children in the parish before the certificate was obtained. In 5% of the cases identification is not certain. There are further cases, moreover, which should probably be added to the proportion in this life-cycle situation. Some certificated men may not have been Anglicans, and numerous burials were recorded relevant to the certificated person but no baptisms, implying again that the birth of children led to certification. In other cases the certificate was obtained when the wife was pregnant, for children were baptized within a few months of the certificate's date. The conclusion is inescapable that in numbers of cases the birth of children pushed a family into potential if not actual poverty.¹ The certificate system enabled the parish overseer

1. Anderson (1971) 31 demonstrates from a rather different standpoint, on the basis of estimated earnings and expenditure, the potentiality for a family in Preston in 1851 to sink to the poverty line when there was more than one child (life-cycle stage 3).

to move the family just as soon as this should actually happen. In one case, indeed, the certificate itself was even endorsed to this effect.

Richard White, wife and one child were given a certificate by the parish of Mongeham, three months after the baptism of the child. The couple, the note says, were permitted to live in the parish because of the certificate. Five children had been born since then and they "are now become chargeable", so they are to be removed to Mongeham. In truth six children had been born, but one had died. In November 1728 the parents and the ^{five}~~six~~ children were removed.

This evidence confirms how often certificates followed the actual move, but adds an important dimension: as soon as children were born the overseer hastened to obtain a settlement certificate. They have been regarded as an amelioration of the settlement system, permitting mobility, and appeared to ensure freedom from disturbance.¹ They should, however, more properly be regarded as delayed removal orders. They demonstrate how, in a part-agricultural, part-suburban parish like St. Dunstan's as much as in the more purely rural parishes, earnings were too low to support a family,² and people were thus accustomed to have recourse to poor relief. The certificate ensured that should this happen too often, the family could promptly and without argument be removed. The simple recording of names on certificates hides a variety of family situations which illustrate the close margin of poverty in many lives.

1. Hampson (1934) Chap.11.

2. Ibid concludes of the late 17th century "statutory wages rarely met the needs of a large family." In Cambridgeshire the arrival of a third child was the critical threshold. It seems in the 18th century Kent wages failed to meet the needs of even a small family.

3. Other evidence of the importance of the settlement laws.

Even though settlement certificates and removal orders may not have survived, there is striking evidence in other parish records of comprehensive application of the system. The existence of the documents themselves is a poor guide to the one-time prevalence of their use.

The attitude of the Canterbury Court of Guardians in this connection is particularly important. The first extant records, when the union and work-house were set up in 1728 contain the order "No parish shall grant any Certificates without an order of the Court for that purpose."¹ In 1743: "ordered that it be advertised in the News Paper that in order to encourage Parish officers to be vigilant in obtaining Certificates for Persons coming out of the Country to reside in the several parishes of this City, that every Parish Officer will be allowed 2/6 for every such certificate upon bringing the same to the Guardians at their Weekly Meeting". The success of this encouragement seems to be indicated by the order in 1748 "that the place where the Certificates and other Papers are deposited be enlarged in order to make the same more commodious for that purpose". Bureaucracy once more! A few years later the sensible decision was reached that certificates made out to one parish "shall be deemed good as to all other parishes in the city", which obviated the need to write certificates for moves within the city. (And to store them too). By the end of the decade Canterbury was considering whether to grant certificates at all, but the practice still continued.² In 1757 the Guardians ordered that a man living in Church Walk should be examined "that he may either produce his certificate or be removed directly" but despite this appearance of vigilance two years later they admitted "Whereas there is a great Number of non-certificated Persons in the several parishes of the City, and much mischief does, and it is apprehended still more may, arise therefrom, the Consideration of this matter is recommended by the Committee to the next General Court."

1. CCL/Canterbury Court of Guardians, July 1728.

2. Ibid June 1743, December 1748, February 1752, January 1759.

Throughout the rest of the 17th century there are continued references to certificates and to removals if certificates are not provided. At the end of 1789 the Court appointed an Inspector specifically to enquire "from those who take in lodgers what persons they have and whether they belong to any and what Parish so that they can be examined". Non-certificated people were to attend at the workhouse for examination "that they may be obliged to get Certificates or otherwise to be removed".¹ The Inspector's appointment was renewed thereafter. Even residence in the workhouse had to be covered by a certificate if the person was from another parish, in case a settlement was created.² When the bill for Preventing the removal of poor persons was before parliament (1794-5) the Canterbury Guardians asked their members to press for amendments since they feared that it would materially influence the inhabitants of the city. Nonetheless the bill became law. In 1834 the Guardians again found themselves strongly objecting to the provisions with respect to settlement in the Poor Law Amendment Act.

"Settlement by birth will occasion a very unequal and ruinous increase of Paupers in the said Cities and Towns [i.e. those which are large], Your Petitioners being satisfied that country parishes within a few miles of such Cities and Towns will be assiduous in pulling down their Cottages to prevent Births as they have been particular in not agreeing with Servants till a few days after Michaelmas day to prevent their gaining of settlements".

The Guardians also drew attention to the great increase of births because of the military stationed in and near the city. Despite their printing 400 copies of their petition and circulating it to other towns of size likely to feel the same way, the provisions on settlement in the Poor Law Amendment Act were carried. "Towns will be ruined in service of country parishes who will scarce have a Pauper to maintain", they lamented.³

1. CCL/Canterbury Court of Guardians, December 1789.
2. CCL/Vill of Christ Church Vestry Book, October 1793 records this demand of Canterbury Guardians.
3. CCL Ibid undated letter and petition.

If the original Settlement Act was passed with urban communities mainly in mind,¹ the country party had reversed the situation in the end. There can be no doubting the great importance attaching to the certificate and settlement system for the Canterbury Court of Guardians.

Further evidence may be drawn from Sandwich records. St. Peter's in 1707 compiled a list of eight knotty problems concerned with settlement for advice from a Canterbury barrister. Three of the questions involved the certificate system. In one case "Several married People come from the Country into our parish and when we demand Certificates are denied". Removal was said to be the only answer. A second question was whether the promise of a certificate prevented a settlement in the parish in which the party was then resident. The answer to this was yes, since a parish must not be allowed to benefit from a breach of promise. Could a freeman be prevented from taking his oath until he brought a certificate? Counsel doubted whether in the cause of preventing settlement a parish could go this far. In another Sandwich parish, St. Clement's, for which the poor rate assessments have survived though no settlement documents, from the 1770's the lists of ratepayers are endorsed "No Certificate" in quite a number of cases. Since payment of rates made a settlement, the officers were therefore alert to those who might slip through the net in this way. In towns it seems that rates were in any case paid by a larger proportion of the residents than in the rural parishes.² It is hard to imagine that the officers allowed the rates to go unpaid; much more likely these people were asked to obtain the necessary documents.

The rate books for St. Mary's Dover tell the same story. The first surviving complete list, for 1776, has endorsements identical with St. Clement's Sandwich. Out of 877 separately recorded rating assessments the parish officers were vigilant enough to record 30 who had no certificate. In 1786 an effort was made to evict non-settled "inmates" by prosecuting

1. Webb S.& B.(1927) 325.

2. See Chapter Eight.

those who provided their lodging.¹ It was easy to overlook lodgers. In collecting the income tax in Dover Thomas Pattenden observed how difficult it was to be sure all were included.² In 1793 the Vestry of St. Mary's asked the committee set up to examine the working of the poor law and in particular the workhouse, to "get at and Examine those persons not Assessed in the Poor Rate to their Settlements". The next complete rating list in 1796 also records similar information - of 1291 assessments (the 1801 census records 1453 houses in this parish), 84 were excused for an unidentified reason, perhaps the lack of a certificate, 57 were marked 'Certificated', and 18 were marked 'Query' or 'not sworn'. This means that 9% of the inhabitants of St. Mary's were for one reason or another not paying rates, and 4% were recorded as certificated. With a familiar tendency to imagine a golden age in the past, a report on the charity almshouses in Dover lamented:

"The sums then raised [by a poor cess in 1601] were not employed as they now too often are in supporting the Idle and Drunken but in setting them to work. At that time people had little encouragement to wander from their homes; many laws were made to prevent persons from wandering from their Parishes as they do now."³

Both urban and rural parishes were thus vigilant in attempting to ensure that all inhabitants who were potential applicants for relief were covered by the certificate system. Even where no documents survive this is clearly the case. In some parishes there are the merest hints: in Elham specific references are infrequent, yet in the back of the Vestry minute book for the later 18th century there is a list of "Certificates Wanted" for 13 men, and endorsed against each name is a comment such as "received", "gone", or "removed". Many such lists are presumably lost. Adam Smith observed that the law seemed to imply that "certificates ought always to be required by the

1. Quoted in Chapter Five. Printed notices were delivered to those concerned.
2. Dover Public Library. Styles (1963-4) 35-8 discusses fairly frequent examples of action against "inmates" in the 16th century in Midland counties, but assumes the practice had disappeared by the 18th century.
3. CCL/St. Mary's Dover Vestry minutes December 1803.

parish where any poor man comes to reside and that they ought very seldom to be granted by that which he proposes to leave."¹ The first part of this observation seems to have been in fact the case, but fortunately the second was not, and parishes did provide the documents, since refusal meant immediate removal of the person concerned.

In some cases the working of the settlement system obviously led to great hardship and personal suffering. It is easy to concentrate attention on the cases of callousness and on the instances of petty bickering and collusion amongst parish officers. They are striking enough; East Kent had its share of such cases. Thomas and Ann Fordred, two children, for instance, were illegally and without warrant of Removal brought into the parish of St. Mary's Dover, by two persons, their relations from Eastry, and were left by them. Whereupon the Overseers equally without warrant removed them back to Eastry and left them at the home of the one who had brought them. The Dover Overseers were then indicted at Quarter Sessions, and the Vestry agreed to pay all expenses in defending the case.² Another example is provided by St. Peter's Sandwich. The case concerns a child of one Mary Brandford. "This child was born on board a Gravesend boat - the mother then under order of removal".³ Four children "in a starving condition" were left until an enquiry could be made as to which parish's responsibility they were.⁴ Such examples stand for all the misery of the old poor law. But clearly they relate to a very small minority of the population, even of the cases dealt with by the overseers.

Vestry minutes and other poor law records also give hints of the variety of life situations met by the certificates, corroborating the St. Dunstan's study. Removal was often the end result of a certificate. "John Cadle, wife and child to be removed to Chatham they having a Certificate there."⁵

1. Smith (1776, 1964 edition) 1,127.
2. CCL/St. Mary's Dover Vestry Minutes, August 1769.
3. CCL/St. Peter's Sandwich Parish Memoranda, 1806.
4. CCL/St. Mary's Dover Vestry Minutes January 1785.
5. CCL/Canterbury Guardians Minutes 1759.

Sometimes the threat of removal underlay a parish's willingness to give relief to someone not resident. Thus "Agreed to allow the Widow Jefford of Chislet one shilling per week In case she produce a Certificate."¹ Certificates were used by the Vill of Christ Church in such situations as the move of a wife and her children to her mother's house in the East End of London because the husband was away in the navy, and for the transfer to a grandmother of a child when the widow mother married again. It was also clearly felt undesirable to have a bastard born in the Vill, even though their responsibility, and a certificate was issued to "any parish" which would let the unfortunate girl lie in.

In the early 18th century payments by one parish to another were sometimes made but by the end of the century it may be suspected that it was proving difficult to get the money reimbursed by the certificating parish, especially if it was any distance away. This could be one reason why the certificate system eventually failed. Thus in 1703 Ash promised to pay 3/6 weekly to Chislet for the Widow Gardner so long as she should live, and asked that she be permitted to dwell in the said parish. If the certificated person died in his new parish then the burial expenses could be reclaimed from the parish of settlement. St. Dunstan's register records several cases: John Hogben, certificate from the parish of Lyminge, buried by the parish of Lyminge (1711); Thomas Hogens, certificate from Boughton, buried by the overseers of Boughton (1707). The Vestry minutes of the Vill of Christ Church at the end of the century, though, illustrate the difficulty that could be experienced in claiming reimbursement. A young man, late coachman to the Archdeacon, was taken seriously ill. He was relieved as casual' poor by the overseer but the justices decided that his place of settlement was rightly Elvedon in Suffolk where he had served two years with the Earl of Albemarle and had lived at Elvedon Hall, his lordship's seat, the last six weeks. No reply was received to letters written to the

1. Ash Vestry Minutes 1743.

parish about the case. Finally, in despair, the overseer wrote to the minister of the parish begging him to look into the matter as the young man "has no friend in the world to assist him" and was much too ill to be moved. The appeal to the cloth brought an unsympathetic letter in reply saying that if the man was moved they would deal with his case. Tartyly it was pointed out to him that the man was in no fit state to be moved. Letters to the butler and steward of Lord Albemarle likewise brought no reply. The man died. Sadly the Vestry recorded that no answer to their letters was ever received, (1800-1). A similar hardening of attitude is evidenced in St. Peter's Sandwich in the 19th century. "Mrs Matthews a parishioner of St. Clement's living in St. Peter's has asked the officers to interest themselves for the purpose of obtaining relief for her from her said parish - that nothing can be done unless she finds it necessary to make a Demand for Relief to this Parish in which case she shall be removed to the said parish of St. Clement's accordingly." (1816). Removal was in fact the only sanction which the parish had.

Much scattered evidence combined with the certificates and removal orders themselves gives a very strong impression of the significance of the settlement system, indeed of its general pervasiveness. Yet it was fighting against the constant mobility of the population,¹ so that parish officers were often checking up and losing control of the situation. Much effort and ingenuity was spent on examining the law's intricacies, and in some cases the ruthless application of the law was inhuman in its effects. But its importance was in its general influence on the working population. Adam Smith, indeed, could attribute to it the "very unequal price of labour which we frequently find in England in places at no great distance from one another" because a man could not without a certificate find work elsewhere: "a man with a wife and family who should attempt to do so would in most parishes be sure of being removed, and if the single man should afterwards marry, he

1. See next section.

would generally be removed likewise. The scarcity of hands in one parish, therefore, cannot always be relieved by their superabundance in another."¹
There seems much evidence to support Smith's assertions.

1. Smith (1776, 1964 edition) 1,128.

4. The effects of the settlement system in the early 19th century.

In 1795 certificates were abolished, the preamble to the Act claiming that they had been ineffective in permitting free movement; nonetheless settlement remained the basis of the poor law. Of the different ways of determining a settlement, birth was the simplest of legal criteria, and after 1795 it became even more important,¹ while settlement by hiring provoked the most controversy. Some indications of the parameters involved in the settlement system may be gained from an examination of mid-19th century census data.

Settlement by hiring appeared to contemporaries to be a capricious method of determining settlement. Thus the Poor Law Commission reported that in their Rural Queries "The reply to our printed question - 'Can you suggest any and what alteration in the settlement laws?' almost always contains a protestation against settlement by hiring and service."² It is easy to understand the demand for the abolition of settlement by hiring. It was a matter of chance whether any particular occasion would be the last service; the man might subsequently marry and become a day-labourer, or move to another position. It was perhaps reasonable to argue that the parish which had last benefitted from the man's labour should support him when in distress, but as the case of the coachman in the Vill of Christ Church illustrates, it was often impractical and inhumane. The major employers of male servants were farmers, and so agricultural parishes where it was still the practice to supply much of the regular labour by agricultural servants hired yearly (and resident in the farmer's own house) seemed to be penalised by the settlement system.

In East Kent in 1851 there were certainly many farmers with resident agricultural servants,³ and it was usual for such servants to come from

1. All the redefinitions of the grounds of settlement tended to exclude more recent places where persons were living and working and throw them back on the parish of birth.
2. PL Report (1974) 244.
3. See Chapter Ten.

outside the parish, and indeed generally to circulate round the area.¹ This can be demonstrated from the birthplace of servants² in a sample of 1851 census enumerators' books, analysed in table 7.3.

Table 7.3 Resident servants born outside the parish of employment 1851.

	No.	% of all servants
Ash	98	56
Chillenden	11	92
Chislet	46	66
Sarre	22	85
St. Nicholas	43	64
Waldershare	16	100
Wickhambreux	34	83

The age structure of servants in 1841 is set out in table 7.4. About one third of the people in the usual age groups were in fact in service,³ and this means that a greater proportion could at some time have had that experience during the ten years between ages 15 and 25 that service was customary. It might be many years later that their settlement needed determining because they had become "chargeable". In 1841 there is clear evidence therefore of the continuance of the habit of employing resident male servants on the farms, despite Cobbett's assertions to the contrary.⁴ To try and circumvent the law, farmers often hired servants for just under a year, if Canterbury Court of Guardians is to be believed;⁵ but although the accusation was frequently

1. Even though hiring fairs were no longer so popular, servants still were able to circulate from farmer to farmer, as their examinations to determine settlement show.
2. Not quite all yearly or "covenant" servants lived in, so this very slightly understates the numbers.
3. Based on census enumerators' books for 12 parishes, eight agricultural, three urban and one intermediate market village: 1445 in age groups 15-20 and 20-25 (17%); 423 resident servants.
4. See Chapter One. It is just possible that between 1834 and 1841 farmers reverted to the old practice of resident agricultural servants after a period of giving them up, but this seems unlikely. If they persevered with the practice despite the complaints of poor relief officers, it was because it suited them and was their custom.
5. Much earlier, Adam Smith had made the same observation, that the settlement laws had "put out in a great measure the old fashion of hiring for a year." Smith (1776, 1964 edition) 1,125.

voiced, there would have been no reason for the general outcry against settlement by hiring if this had been generally the case.

Table 7.4. Ages of resident servants, 1841. (Numbers in each age group.)

Age group	Agricultural parishes		Eastry		Urban parishes	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
10-15	4	6	0	3	1	5
15-20	70	61	16	10	12	49
20-25	65	62	14	10	6	48
25-30	20	25	5	11	6	37
30 and over	24	46	7	13	5	34
Total 15-25	135	123	30	20	18	97
Total all	183	200	42	47	30	173

Settlement by hiring was thus sufficiently frequent to be a subject of complaint; settlement by birth was less arguable. Before 1795 children born to a certificated man were the responsibility of his parish of settlement. Without a certificate, children were the responsibility of the parish in which they were born, so that after 1795 birth was the most usual determinant of settlement. It may be for this reason that attempts were made in the early 19th century to restrict cottage building, where a landlord had sufficient power to do so, and even to demolish cottages. As certificates were abolished, removal became more important, and the numbers of removal orders increased after the passing of the 1795 Act. It could be, therefore, that once certificates were no longer available, couples took the question of settlement into account in deciding their place of residence, thus avoiding the risk of future removals. A couple's choice of residence could be the result of a number of factors: availability of employment and housing, proximity to the wife's parents, where some help with children and the births might be expected (the husband's parents might not naturally be as likely to offer this kind of assistance as the wife's), and the settlement

of the husband (wives took their husband's settlement on marriage). If residence had a patrilocal tendency, it would support the thesis that settlement was an important factor. The 1851 birthplace data seems to confirm that there was a strong propensity to take up residence in the parish of the husband's birth. (Table 7.5).

Table 7.5 Residence of couples in 1851 related to parish of birth.

	No. of couples ¹	Both partners in parish of birth	Patri-local	Matri-local	Neither linked
		%	%	%	%
Ash	351	22	25	15	38
Chillenden	23	0	17	9	74
Chislet	196	22	24	18	36
Sarre	38	3	21	11	65
St. Nicholas	114	11	29	14	46
Waldershare	12	0	0	0	100
Wickhambreux	95	6	25	8	61
All	829	17	25	14	44

Overall, table 7.5 shows more than half of all couples were living in the place of birth of one or both of them; in some parishes the proportion was nearer two thirds. Here is some confirmation for the belief that in non-industrial areas, substantial numbers of families were rooted in the place of their birth, albeit perhaps due to compulsion rather than choice. The proportion is also clearly correlated with the size of the parish. In a small parish, could it be there was positive discouragement to young couples to remain once married?² Rather more couples lived in the parish of the husband's birth than the wife's, which seems contrary to expectation - men were after all not unwilling to leave the parish to serve as servants.

1. "Couples" is here defined as all declared nuclear units, whether heads of households or not, where both husband and wife are present in the census.
2. The chance of finding a marriage partner within a small parish was also less, and this affected the proportion who could thus be found linked.

A great majority of the men found resident in the parish of their birth (overall 79%) were agricultural labourers.¹

The census data also confirms the lack of mobility once children were born (table 7.6). Of couples with children present in 1851, a large majority of the children had all been born in the parish where they were still resident. A larger proportion of couples had only one child born outside the parish of residence. (Very often, the first child may have been born in the mother's own home). This matches the experience shown through settlement certificates. After the first child, settlement became more important.

Table 7.6. Mobility of families with children, 1851.

	No. of families ²	% with all children born in parish	% with all but one child born in parish
Ash	308	70	77
Chillenden	20	50	60
Chislet	173	69	76
Sarre	25	64	76
St. Nicholas	91	76	88
Waldershare	13	8	38
Wickhambreux	72	71	81
All	702	69	77

If households³ are divided according to occupation into socio-economic groups, the persistence of agricultural labourers, who are classified in group 4, can be examined and compared with other sectors of the community. This again confirms in a different way the tendency of the poorer sections of society to immobility. (Table 7.7). All households present in the 1841 census were searched for in the same parish in 1851. It is true that moves

1. This was also the group most often in need of poor relief. See Chapter Eight.
2. "Families" is defined as all nuclear units whether heads of households or not, consisting of children with one or both parents.
3. "Households" are defined as all those co-resident with someone described by the enumerator as a "head" of a household. See Appendix X on conventions followed in analysing census enumerators' books, and Chapter Ten for further discussion of persistence of households.

may, and very probably did, occur between census dates - these will be undetected by the decade check possible from the census. But there is a strong presumption that if a household is present in 1841 and 1851 it had been present throughout the intervening period; the evidence of birthplaces of children reinforces this. More than two thirds of the agricultural labourers, on this test, were still in the same parish in 1851; the farmers, comprising most of class two, were rather less persistent, the craftsmen in class three were nearly as immobile as the labourers. Overall 64% of all households in the six agricultural parishes persisted from 1841 to 1851.¹ There were very few households indeed classified in groups one and five, so that no really informative comparison can be made with them. There were also large numbers of households where no occupation was ascribed to the head: some were widows, some were in fact gentlemen farmers of means who could not apparently find a description to their satisfaction.² There is therefore a heterogeneous group about whom generalisation is also difficult. Generally, however, the conclusion is that the more prosperous were the more mobile.

Table 7.7. Percentages of households in each of the Registrar General's groups persisting in the same parish from 1841 to 1851.

	No. of households	Percentages in Registrar General's Groups.					Others	Total persisting
		1	2	3	4	5		
Ash	401	30	56	69	71	0	54	65
Chillenden	29	0	50	60	71	0	33	62
Chislet	218	0	66	68	61	0	56	62
Sarre	42	0	60	55	73	0	33	62
St. Nicholas	129	0	56	67	76	100	30	68
Wickhambreux	97	0	74	45	65	0	47	60
All	916	21	60	64	69	50	49	64

1. This underestimates persistence, since 25% of those not present in 1851 were aged 65 and over in 1841, and had probably died in the intervening decade.
2. This is seen from the fact that they had sizeable acreages of land. See Chapter Ten.

It is surprising to find two thirds of all households immobile. In earlier periods, the evidence has all pointed to the considerable changeover of population in any particular place.¹ No less than 62% of the people in Clayworth in 1688 had not been there twelve years earlier; 50% of those in Cogenhoe in 1628 were not there in 1613.² There would of course be a tendency for those owing land or small businesses to remain in the same parish from generation to generation, and it would not be surprising from this point of view for labourers to be more mobile than other classes of society. Thus more than half the farmers in the Vale of York 1777-1812 were settled in the parish where they were born, and in Easingwold at the same period few labourers were found in the parish of their birth. Easingwold was a small market town; in Carlton on the other hand two thirds of the labourers were natives to the parish,³ which is more in accord with the East Kent evidence. Thus in East Kent in the mid-19th century there was a surprising immobility of the poorer households, which could well be one of the effects of the careful observation of the settlement laws in the area.

The effects of the settlement laws should not be underestimated. Study of their operation reveals not only the widespread administrative work which they clearly involved, but the pervasive influence which they had on the poorer classes of society. "The father of almost every man, the grandfather of every man now living, was born in this state of things, to which his forefathers had been born for generations, and had been nursed in traditional dread of the removing constable," Coode wrote in 1851.⁴ The Act of 1795 was not a liberalising influence as far as they were concerned. Sickness,

1. Buckatsch (1951-2) 62-9.

2. Laslett (1968) 147. This approaches the calculation of mobility from a retrospective viewpoint. Provided population was not growing fast (or declining) it would not make very much difference to the proportions. Laslett also uses total population rather than households, which tends to increase the appearance of mobility, since servants who did move frequently are included in the totals. The proportion of household mobility is therefore probably less.

3. Holderness (1971) 44-54.

4. Coode (1851) 283.

bereavement, physical or mental incapacity or the birth of children all meant that a family slipped below the poverty line, and if not in the parish of settlement was very liable to removal. Parish officers were on the lookout for any family approaching breakdown.

Under the influence of the settlement system, families almost certainly became less mobile. The need for the Act in 1662 certainly points to the considerable amount of mobility in 17th century society, whether families were intruding as inmates in towns, or squatting on the wastes and commons of rural parishes. The Act seemed a way of distributing poor relief burdens equitably amongst different parishes, so that the enterprising parish was not penalised for its more generous provision by attracting the poor across its boundaries.¹ Other evidence supports the mobility of society at this time. Yet in the 19th century the population of rural parishes in East Kent was remarkably static. Indeed it has recently been suggested that in preventing mass migration from the countryside to the town, the settlement laws materially aided the early stages of industrialisation.² This feature of inertia has to be reconciled with the incontestable migration from agricultural to urban and industrial centres.³ Many must have left the parish of their birth or the population of the agricultural parishes would have grown much faster as a result of natural increase than in fact it did.⁴ Some broke out of its constraints; those that remained were chained by the settlement system.

1. Styles (1963-4) 38 shows that the preamble to the Act which states that the poor consumed woods etc. and then moved on may not be merely a flight of parliamentary rhetoric.
2. Taylor (1976) 65-7.
3. Saville (1957) 11 uses this argument to disprove Adam Smith's assertion about immobility. Eden had observed the same contradiction (1797) 54. But Redford (1964) chap.5 drew attention to the problem of "why the surplus labour persisted in staying at home on a starvation pittance when much higher wages were to be had in the rising manufacturing districts or in the overseas colonies," and thought the settlement system was an impediment to movement.
4. See Chapter Nine for estimates of migration from East Kent parishes.

The settlement system also had important implications for the economic structure of society. It encouraged the development of a basic attitude towards wages and employment which made the community generally accept responsibility for survival (which arguably in the 16th century it had not)¹ but divorced it from any realistic relationship with work. The laws almost certainly acted to keep wages down, and made for the maximum economic advantage to employers who could dispose of surplus labour as soon as there was any economic downturn. In the 19th century a point of equilibrium was passed. The operation of the settlement laws had accustomed people to a certain set of expectations and limitations. Economic and social changes coupled with population growth may also have led to the abuses of the old poor law documented by the commission, but the settlement system does bear some of the responsibility for shaping the old poor law.

1. The 1662 Act in the preamble said that a remedy was needed "for the preventing the perishing of any of the poor, whether young or old, for want of such supplies as are necessary."

CHAPTER EIGHTTHE DISTRIBUTION OF WEALTH IN EAST KENT: A STUDY OF ECONOMIC INEQUALITIES.

The distribution of wealth within a community is an integral part of its social structure, and changes in the distribution over time may suggest changes in the amount and incidence of poverty. Comparisons between different communities can give information on the economy of each, and changes over time reflect the relative growth or decline of agricultural and industrial sectors. Comparative information on the distribution of wealth may thus contribute towards an understanding of the scale and pattern of relief expenditure already described.

On a national scale, attempts to measure the distribution of wealth at different dates have been particularly concerned with whether overall wealth has become more or less equal, and this is an argument which obviously has important political overtones. How Much Inequality¹ or Unequal Shares² reflect the political significance of the argument in recent years. Over a long time span, Soltow argued that there has been a move towards equality of incomes, and that no greater inequality could exist than that of property incomes in the pre-industrial period.³ Certainly in 1688 incomes were very unequally distributed,⁴ but the apparent lessening of inequality since then depends on the technique of the Lorenz curve, which reflects the growing numbers in lower income brackets, and does not necessarily imply either less disparity between high and low incomes or a decrease in the numbers in poverty.

In the agricultural sector particularly there is a certain amount of evidence that the distribution of wealth was becoming more unequal in at least one respect, that is through the labourer's loss of access to the land. In the south particularly, "the cottager and labourer saw his condition worsen... he was suffering the loss of rural timber supplies and easy poaching or

1. Polanyi & Wood (1974)

2. Atkinson (1972)

3. Soltow (1974) 152-165.

4. Pollard & Crossley (1968) 154 show that in 1688 51% of the population received 17% of the total income.

grazing."¹ This loss was not, as the Hammonds thought, entirely due to enclosure. "The excessive stress on enclosure misleads - the proletarianisation of the rural poor proceeded everywhere in southern, midland and eastern England."² The process of engrossing was as much to blame as enclosure. Nonetheless, if as the Hammonds said "the anchorage of the poor was gone,"³ a very small deterioration in their economic position meant pauperisation. At the same time much of the growth of rural population would occur in the landless classes. This was the case in a number of European countries⁴ and has been shown in England for example in the midland parish of Wigston Magna and in Moreton Say in Shropshire.⁵ In the 19th century the cottage garden too seems to have declined.⁶

Estimates of the numbers of poor (or potential poor) at different periods before the 19th century are difficult to make. In some towns, censuses of the poor were occasionally taken, as in Sheffield in 1615.⁷ There 725 out of 2207 people were all "begging poor." One hundred households could relieve others, 160 households could not. Similarly in Norwich more than half the population were poor in 1570.⁸ In smaller provincial towns the proportions were likely to be much the same. By the end of the 18th century Eden supposed that country towns contained greater numbers of poor than in previous times, but shows particular examples (Burwash in Sussex, Carlisle and Shrewsbury) where the proportions were again between one third and one half.⁹ These estimates set a contemporary administrative basis to the demarcation of poverty, and probably include only those termed "regular poor." More may have been only occasionally in need of poor relief.

1. Pollard & Crossley (1968) 162.
2. Hobsbawm & Rude (1969) 36. The suggestion that enclosure accounted for increased numbers of poor was, however, common in the 16th century, for example in Harrison (1577, 1877 edition) 215.
3. Hammond J.L. & B. (1966) 93.
4. Armstrong, contribution to Mingay & Higgs (forthcoming).
5. Hoskins (1957) 243-269; Jones (1968) 9-10.
6. Clapham (1926) 1, 119.
7. Webb, S. & B. (1927) 82.
8. Pound (1966) 55.
9. Eden (1797) 21.

Such evidence is rare. Estimates more often have to be made from indirect evidence: occupational status, taxation records or surveys of land or personal estate. The calculations of numbers of poor or potential poor rely on the assumption that those who could not pay taxes at all, or who were assessed at very small amounts, were probably likely to face poverty at some time in their lives. Gregory King estimated that 63% of families (51% of the population) were "insolvent" or unable to pay poll taxes;¹ he also showed that their income needed supplementing merely for them to subsist. These families were headed by labourers, cottagers and paupers, seamen and soldiers. Coode thought from Gregory King's evidence that four-fifths of the population would have been subject to the Settlement Laws.²

A great deal of evidence relating to the distribution of wealth in the 16th century has been collated by Professor Hoskins, which compares closely with Gregory King's general description of 160 years later. In the hundred of Babergh in south Suffolk in 1522 60% of the population (1,375 out of 2,277 named people) were propertyless. Of the 902 who were assessed on 'lands', 620 had land to the value of £1 or less. This was a clothing area, not a fully agricultural area. In Coventry, 51% of the assessments in 1522 were 'nil' and a further 29% were less than £5. In Henrician England, Hoskins concludes "the social structure rested on a vast base of people who owned little or nothing more than what they stood up in, who rented their houses and cottages from others, who had no reserves to fall back on in a bad year, and who therefore formed a potentially explosive foundation of which any Tudor government was continually aware."³ There is evidence of a similar nature for the early 17th century. In Hartest in Suffolk, for example, in 1608, there were 40 small copyholders and cottagers with less than 2 acres each and 35 other poor households with "no habitation of their own nor cow nor calf."⁴ But there is a lack of any similar

1. Cooper (1974) 125.
3. Hoskins (1976) 29-52.

2. Coode (1851) 217.
4. Pound (1971) 79.

evidence relating to the distribution of wealth in later times, particularly 18th and early 19th centuries.

As a result, argument about this later period has centred on the average wages and the amount of Speenhamland relief, rather than on the quantification of those potentially in poverty. Colquhoun's estimates for 1801-3, seem to indicate that while the labouring family's income had doubled since 1688 the farmer's had trebled. Further, the differential between labourer and pauper had narrowed dramatically; Gregory King estimated a labouring family's income at £15 a year and a pauper's at £6.10.0. Colquhoun put it at £31 and £26 respectively.¹ This may reflect a real worsening of the economic position of the labourer, even though in total numbers Colquhoun's figures do not support a substantial growth of rural population.²

Evidence comparable with that used by Hoskins can, however, be found for the 18th and 19th centuries, in the rating assessments preserved in many parish chests. From these lists of assessments, relative wealth in each parish can be described, and in some instances also estimates made of numbers unable to pay rates. Changes over time in the distribution of wealth can also be measured. Rating assessments are a good source of information on relative wealth in a community, in that they record the apportionment of the required sum of money according to some accepted criterion of ability to pay.³ The apportionment can never be wholly equitable; within each parish it may well be that those with most power influenced the apportionment in their own favour, but in general they were subject to the close scrutiny of their neighbours. Rating lists have often survived in connection with the three principal parish duties: relief of the poor, maintenance of the church and maintenance of the highways,⁴ and for intervals of time

1. Soltow (1974) 153-4.

2. Colquhoun suggests the numbers of freeholders and farmers had risen from Gregory King's 310,000 to 400,000 and the numbers of labourers, cottagers, paupers and vagrants from 794,000 to 822,179. Gregory King's figures included urban labourers, Colquhoun's did not. By 1831 it seems the number of farmers and labourers had declined. Clapham (1926) 1,144.

3. See Chapter 2.

4. All three lists are generally comparable, except that the owner or lessee of tithes was not subject to church rates and the acting surveyor of the highways for the year was not subject to highway rates.

at least yearly and very often more frequently. In some parishes these lists exist in almost unbroken succession from early 17th to mid-19th centuries, an enormous quarry of information on the distribution of wealth.

Analysis of this data has been made on the following principles:

- (i) At 10 yearly intervals, or as close to 10 years as the sources allow.
- (ii) Assessments expressed in money have been divided into arithmetically reasonable groups. Hoskins, in his analysis of tax assessments, used intervals of under £2, £2-4, £5-9, £10-19, £20-39, £40-99, up to £500 and £1,000 and above. The narrower bands for small assessments are obviously useful. Very similar divisions have been used here: £1-4, £5-19, £20-49, £50-99, £100-199, £200-299, £300-399, £400-499, and £500 and above. (Similar arithmetical intervals have been used for assessments in acreages also). Where the assessments to be analysed only span a short period of years, and are all arithmetically comparable, it is possible to make divisions based on a subjective criterion such as occupational class,¹ but the differing bases of these assessments from parish to parish² and changes over time would make such a scheme impossibly complicated. It seems best to analyse all lists in the same way and draw attention to any adjustments which should be made for changing administrative practices.
- (iii) The distribution of wealth amongst "out-dwellers"³ has been excluded from the analysis, and only the figures relating to those defined strictly as inhabitants has been examined. This distinction was of much greater importance in agricultural districts than in towns. Inevitably some farmers will appear with smaller holdings than they

1. Daunton (1976) 23 did this in a study of Cardiff rate books.

2. See Chapter Two. Assessments were not comparable in monetary terms, not only because of the problems of defining "rent", and making reductions for repairs etc. but also because each parish could vary its strategy in levying a high poundage rate on low rateable values or a lower poundage on high values (i.e. realistic or "rack rents").

3. See Chapter Two. An out-dweller occupied land in the parish but was not resident there.

really had because their land crossed parish boundaries; this would apply particularly to larger farmers. For the majority of inhabitants, however, i.e. small farmers, craftsmen, labourers, the area of the parish circumscribed their wealth.

- (iv) Estimates of the numbers of inhabitants not rated have been made wherever possible, often from a variety of sources. Although those at the bottom of the scale with small assessments appear relatively poor and may indeed have often been in need of relief, they appear in different perspective beside those not rated at all. Throughout the period it is clear that parish rating lists did not include all householders. There was, perhaps, little point in writing out by hand lists of occupiers and their assessments if it was a foregone conclusion that they would be unable to pay. When new parish valuations were made, then all were included, but it quickly became apparent that many had to be "excused". At different times different proportions of the inhabitants were included in rating lists.

Comparisons of the distribution of wealth, particularly over a long time period, would be facilitated by a statistical measure of inequality, but this is not easily obtainable. Any measure used will, to some extent, pre-judge the answers. There are conceptual problems in the measurement of inequality, because underlying it is in fact some concept of "social welfare". This problem is thrown into particularly sharp relief by the characteristics of the rating material. On what basis is it possible to judge that society was becoming more or less equal? Is it reasonable to assert that inequality had increased, because of an increasing number at the bottom of the scale, when the distribution of wealth amongst the rated had not changed very much? Most statistical measures of inequality are highly sensitive to the numbers in the distribution. The East Kent material will be discussed with respect to this important aspect of the distribution of wealth.

While rating assessments do not, therefore, provide a perfect set of data on the distribution of wealth, but merely indications, they still remain a unique source of information, which in certain respects is intrinsically very reliable. It remains true, despite varying administrative practices, that assessments were made by local people who would have been subject to local pressure if they appeared to do the job inequitably. While assessments are not directly related to income (in the way that income tax data is) or to variations in household composition (like tax thresholds), they do reflect the status and income, both earned and unearned, of the households. Like occupation, the value of property occupied is a good indicator of class. Rates, therefore, are standing as a proxy for wealth, derived from all sources.

1. A study of the distribution of wealth in Ash.

In the description of the distribution of wealth in East Kent, Ash again serves as a suitable starting point. The long and full series of records, and the 1705 listing, both contribute to an unusually full description. The physical size of the parish, over 7,000 acres and over 1,000 inhabitants at least from 1700, also make detailed analysis particularly valuable, because fluctuations in numbers of occupiers in each class tend not to be entirely random, or exaggerated by the small numbers involved, but part of a definable trend.

(i) The seventeenth century.

The earliest rating assessment list in Ash is 1606, and was based upon acreages, not money rents. From 1606 to 1704 this remained the practice, and then the change-over to assessment of money rents was made. In 1606 there were many small farms; out of 100 men liable for rates, 55 had holdings of under 20 acres and 17 had over 100 acres. (See Table 8.1). Even at that date, there were probably some households without land, and not rated. The population was perhaps in the region of 830,¹ and with a household size of possibly 4.5 to 5.0, there would have been between 60 and 80 households not rated.

The 1606 list and one extant for the following year contain interesting hints of changes occurring in the pattern of land-holding. Quite frequently the names of occupiers are given for the first half-year and different names recorded for the second half-year. During the two years 1606 and 1607, 119 changes were recorded. Some were clearly complete changes of tenancy, as names disappeared from the rating lists altogether and new names were introduced. Others continued to appear as occupiers in the parish, and the impression is then of minor adjustments in holdings, which might be a tantalising glimpse of common field strips being exchanged.

1. There were 500 communicants in 1588; inflated to allow for those under 16 gives a population total of 830, and between 166 and 184 households. See Appendix I, 2 for the sources of all population totals used in this chapter.

The next rating list to have survived is for 1636, and from this date a series of records survive to 1704. Between 1606 and 1636 the number of people liable for rates had increased from 100 to 134, with increases in all sizes of holdings. There were 75 of less than 20 acres, and 103 of less than 50 acres. In 1636 there was also a supplementary rate levied on "cottagers that have no garden," of whom there were 36. Together with the 134 landed, the total rated was then 170. It still seems probable that there were at least a further 20% of households not included, since between 1588 and 1640 the population had clearly risen.¹ In 1676 the proportion not rated was again 40%; in that year the parish rating list included 135 names, four of whom were rated not on land but on "ability",² but the Compton Census return was of 220 families.

Table 8.1. Acreage assessed in the parish of Ash 1606-1698.

Acreages	1606	1637	1645	1657	1668	1678	1688	1698	1704
1 - 4	8	27	28	34	39	30	34	40	39
5 - 19	46	48	48	54	49	48	51	52	50
20 - 49	20	28	26	17	21	16	18	18	21
50 - 99	9	13	13	14	18	16	21	22	22
100 - 199	13	16	15	18	15	12	8	12	12
200 - 299	3	1	-	1	1	1	4	-	1
Over 300	1	1	1	-	-	3	1	2	1
For "ability"			2	3	2	2			6
Total	100	134	133	141	145	128	137	146	152

Table 8.2. Proportion of land occupied by "out-dwellers" (non-residents) in Ash 1606-1704.

	%		%		%			
1606	-	30.5	1637	-	22.0	1645	-	20.6
1657	-	27.1	1668	-	21.9	1678	-	16.4
1688	-	21.6	1698	-	18.4	1704	-	13.2

1. In 1640 there were 840 communicants, which may in fact be a total count of population. If inflated, as for 1588 return, the population is 1400, or between 280 and 310 households, which is too large to reconcile with 220 families in 1676 or 1200 people in 1705.
2. See Chapter Two.

Overall in the period 1637 to 1704 covered by acreage assessments, there was some increase in the numbers holding small amounts of land, generally at the expense of the group farming 20-49 acres. At the same time the numbers of farms of from 50-99 acres also increased. The proportion of the parish's land occupied by the "out-dwellers" fell considerably. (See Table 8.2). Within these trends the decades of the 1670's and 1680's were anomalous, both because the total number of holdings apparently decreased, and because the number of larger farms of over 200 acres increased. There was a run of good harvests at this period. It seems to suggest a mechanism whereby in times of low prices, smaller farm units found survival difficult, while larger farms not only survived but absorbed extra land while it was cheap. The falling proportions of land in "out-dwellers'" hands indicates the declining value of marsh pasture, associated with changes in husbandry which led to improved animal feedstuffs being available. Thus in the seventeenth century some of the population increase which seems to have occurred in Ash was accommodated by the subdivision of holdings (or perhaps reclamation of marsh) but a fairly large proportion of households were completely without land, as the assessment on cottagers with no gardens illustrates specifically. The distribution of land was nonetheless wide, with only a few large holdings and many small ones.

(ii) The eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

In 1705 the parish administrators made the change to money assessments, which they probably felt allowed a more accurate and a more flexible approach to the distribution of the tax burden, and this remained the basis thereafter. The effect of the rerating was simply to reduce the liability of the largest farmers, and to introduce into the system a number of very small rate-payers, though 40% of the households were still omitted.

Table 8.3 Comparison of assessments by acreage in 1704 and by money rentals in 1705.

Acres/Rents	1704 (Acres)	1705 (£)
1 - 4	39	62
5 - 19	50	52
20 - 49	21	22
50 - 99	22	24
100 - 199	12	6
200 - 299	1	
300 & over	1	
Ability	6	
Total	152	166

From this comparison it seems that rents were approximately £1 per acre on smaller holdings, but rather less than that on larger holdings. No fresh valuation of the parish was made until 1822, though new properties were steadily introduced into the rating lists, one presumes as houses were built, and there were constant changes from year to year in the rateable value of numbers of the parish's inhabitants. However, highly significant changes in rating procedures occurred towards the end of the 18th century. Firstly in 1772 there was a pro rata upgrading of all values to "whole rents" or "rack rents". The 1705 valuations were presumably felt to be not out of harmony as between different occupiers, but too low in relation to current market rents. On "whole rents" a lower poundage rate was imposed, which nonetheless enabled the parish officers to collect in a larger income. The other very important step was to resolve in 1778 "not to cess" those inhabitants listed at £3. This was an overt decision to omit some who previously had been liable to, and presumably able to meet, payment of rates, and naturally resulted in a fall in the numbers assessed. (See Table 8.4). These "submerged" households can, however, be tracked down to some extent through comparisons between rating lists and other nominal lists extant from the period.

Table 8.4 Rating assessments in Ash 1708-1829

£ Rates	1708	1718	1728	1738	1748	1758	1768	1778	1788	1798	1808	1818	1829
1-4	51	50	61	58	53	50	48	44	20	27	44	54	54
5-19	55	54	49	48	45	39	36	61	59	64	76	73	78
20-49	22	27	28	22	21	12	15	21	18	22	11	16	17
50-99	23	17	18	18	15	13	16	13	16	12	11	7	8
100-199	6	6	8	10	10	14	8	11	13	15	15	19	13
200-299	-	-	1	1	2	1	3	3	2	4	3	4	6
300-399	1	1					1	1	3	4	2	2	2
400-499								1	-	-	1	2	
500 & over								1	1	1	1		
Total	158	155	165	157	146	129	127	156	132	149	164	177	178

In 1822 new valuations were made of all properties, and revised lists prepared which included all householders in the parish. The effect of the rerating is not obvious in the table (8.4), since the change in the general distribution of rateable values was minimal. Omitted from the table, however, is the block of 185 names of householders, rated at less than £5, who in 1829 were "excused" rates. The attempt to draw contributions from all for poor relief, and thus to emphasise the responsibility of all, immediately had to be abandoned. Lists of "excusals" were prepared, to be presented with the rating lists to the justices of the peace for verification. The numbers in 1829 not able to pay rates represented 50% of all householders.

From the rating lists in this period, 1705 to 1834, analysed in Table 8.4, it is clear that there was a definite and quite marked fall in smaller sized holdings, in all groups of less than £100, from mid-18th century. There was a particularly sharp reduction in the 1750's and 1760's, from which only a partial recovery was later made. In the first decades of the 19th century there was again a diminution in the numbers of small farmers. Apart

from a setback in the 1760's, on the other hand, holdings worth more than £100 steadily increased from the early 18th century onwards. There is no sign of the subdivision of small-holdings to accommodate the population rise which occurred between 1705 and 1801.¹ The class of ratepayers assessed between £5 and £19 it is true showed some increase in the latter part of the period, after a fall in earlier decades, but not all in this group were necessarily farmers or small-holders. Many were tradesmen and craftsmen. The two decades in this period which seem to have seen the decline of the small farms were the 1750's and the 1800's. This seems more explicable in relation to poor harvests, rather than, as in the 17th century, in relation to good harvests and low prices. The poor harvests perhaps led to too low a turnover for the small farmer, who could not then survive. For the lowest group of ratepayers, the decade of the 1770's saw the most significant deterioration in their economic position. In that decade some were taken out of the ratepaying class altogether, and this decision can be set against the parish's resolution in 1779 to build a new workhouse.

In the early 19th century the numbers paying rates can be compared with the census enumeration of families and houses. In 1801 there were 343 census families but 285 houses, which means that 47% of the houses or 56% of the families did not pay rates. It was probably the amount of sub-letting or lodging which accounts for the discrepancy between houses and families; rating would have applied to those responsible for property rather than to sub-tenants and is thus most appropriately compared with houses. It is interesting that when the new valuation of the parish was made in 1822, 362 names were listed, of whom 185 were excused rates. This agrees closely with the enumeration of 360 houses in the previous year. Between 1801 and 1831 families increased from 343 to 429 and houses from 285 to 388. The proportions not rated rose a little.

1. Population from listing in 1705 was 1,200 and in the 1801 census was 1,575.

Table 8.5. Comparison of numbers of houses in the Census and numbers rated in Ash: 1801-31.

	Houses	Rated	% Not rated
1801	285	150	47
1811	334	165	51
1821	360	177	54
1831	388	178	54

(iii) Estimates of numbers not paying rates in the eighteenth century.

In the 18th century a particular series of records in the Ash parish chest can be made to reveal unusual data on total numbers of households not rated. This is a series of lists made by the Surveyors of the Highways. Their duty was to extract from occupiers of land and those keeping a draught of horses "one wain or cart furnished after the custom of the country..... and also two able men with the same" to work for four days a year, and from "every other householder, cottager and labourer, able to labour and being no hired servant by the year" labour for four days.¹ Consequently in Ash two lists were made: of "those able to go with carts" and of labourers. It is reasonable to equate all those liable for statute labour with householders, since servants were excluded. However, because of the provision of the 1555 Act² that only those "able to labour" were liable, widows, even if householders, were omitted from the lists, which means that the number of households is slightly underestimated. The surveyors did not make new lists annually, but updated old lists for a year or two, and then remade the list. In 1767 the Ash surveyors introduced commutation of statute labour, labourers henceforth paying at 2/- per head and other occupiers of land at a poundage rate comparable with other parish rating procedures. Even this 2/-, however, proved impossible to collect, because after 1793 the majority of the "labourers" are omitted altogether from the highway lists. Comparison of highway lists and poor rate lists thus pinpoints those householders in the parish liable for highways service but not rated for poor relief.

1. Tate (1969) 243.

2. 2 & 3 P & M c8.

**TEXT BOUND
INTO
THE SPINE**

Labourers

- Ralph Leggett
- Mich. Solley
- Wm. Newes
- Edw. Brown
- Wm. Hitchingman
- Jm. Read
- Wm. May
- Wm. Lacy
- Rich. Bins
- Isaac Payne
- Wm. Hodgman
- Wm. Webb
- Alba Peeling
- Alba Holt

Feb: 7th 29: 1772

A List of the Names of those in the Parish of Ash who are able to go with carts and Carriages for repairing his Majesties Highways for the Year ensuing

	Names	Days
	Wm. Curling	6
	Wm. Reynolds	12
	Jm. Polley	12
	Jos. Pitt	6
East Street	Tho. Neame	1
	Hen. Horn	6 Cart
New Street	Wm. Carr	6 Cart
	Jm. Bax	6 Cart
	Jam. Edwards	6 Cart
Moat	Tho. Minter	6
Ash Street	Jm. Stoddard	6
	Wm. Beale	6 Cart
	Jm. Bax	6 Cart
	Mr. Conduitt	6 Cart
	Tho. Baker	6 Cart
Quilten Town	Tho. Bushel	12
	Wm. Kingsford	6 Cart
	Jm. Seal	6 Cart
Redding	Tho. Jull	6
	Hen. Coller	6 Cart
	Wm. Andrews	6
Molland	Jm. Fuller	12
Chogner	Wm. Lajer	12
Hell	Jm. Bushel	6
	Wm. May	6 Cart
Weddington	Hen. Minter	18
	Jm. Hills	6 Cart
	Geo. Minter	6 Cart

Highway records are extant from 1727.

Between 1727 and 1762, while statute labour was being required, the numbers of "labourers" not paying poor rates rose from 93 to 148, while the number of ratepayers fell from 152 to 115. Those not rated therefore became more than half of all households from mid-18th century. After 1767, the numbers paying 2/- or without any payment specified, who again were not assessed to poor rates, were 137 in 1785 but only 123 in 1793 - some of the labourers paying 2/- had been omitted. In 1785 the surveyors of the highways had included 277 householders altogether in their lists, and in 1801 there were 285 houses counted in the census, which lends support to the general accuracy of the parish officers and to the interpretation put upon their administrative records. The trend of the 18th century was continued in the 19th century: as the population grew, so did the numbers potentially in poverty, and at the same time the proportion of the poor in relation to those paying rates also increased.

Table 8.6. Highways Lists in Ash: Numbers not assessed to poor rates 1727 to 1762.

	Not rated	Ratepayers	Total
1727	93	152	245
1749	123	142	265
1758	140	127	267
1762	148	115	263

(iv) The parish in 1705 and 1841.

It is possible to anatomise the parish of Ash in unusual detail in 1705 and to make comparisons with similar material for 1841. Both the 1704 rating assessments on acreage and 1705 on money values can be collated with the 1705 household listing, which as well as indicating details of family and servants, also specified occupation. In 1841 the first householder schedules which also specified occupations coincide fairly closely in

date with the tithe survey of the parish and with churchwardens' rating lists. The changes in the distribution of wealth indicated by these two sets of sources are considerable.

There were 260 households listed in 1705. Of these, 135 heads of households can be matched with assessments on acreage in 1704, six paid on "ability" in 1704 and a further 14 can be matched in the 1705 money assessments.¹ It is impossible to secure a perfect match between two nominal lists, especially when made for different administrative purposes. There is also the time difference between the various lists: a certain amount of movement in and out of the parish will inevitably cause some non-matching. Thus in 1704 there were 154 people rated, and 141 could be found as heads of households in 1705.² The numbers of 1705 households not apparently liable for rates will thus be a maximum, but will only be subject to a small error.

On the basis of the 1705 listing and the money assessments of the same year, 105 out of 260 were not rated, that is almost exactly 40%. Thirty eight of the 105 were indeed described as in receipt of alms, so clearly recognised as constantly poor. Some others of the non-rated can be traced in the overseers' accounts books receiving relief, including six day labourers and a weaver, so confirming their poor status. This proportion tallies exactly with estimates based on other rating lists and population estimates.

1. The occupations of these 20 who were apparently without land included a surgeon, maltster, 3 carpenters, shoemaker, tallow-chandler, 2 victuallers, glover, blacksmith and 8 labourers. The value of their businesses (or perhaps gardens) brought them into the rating lists in 1705. See Chapter Two.
2. Two men who were not heads of households but were stated to be "Boarders" in another's household in 1705 were assessed in 1704 on 54 and 65 acres of land respectively. "Boarder" thus indicated a rather different status from "lodger". On the other hand two men stated in 1705 to be "husbandmen" were not rated either in 1704 or 1705. Perhaps they were retired and any land they had once held was by 1705 someone else's responsibility. Such discrepancies tend to cancel each other out.

Table 8.7. Acreage and occupations in Ash 1704-5.

1704 Acreages	Profess- ional	Husband- men	Trades - Crafts- men	Day Labour- ers	Widows No occup- ation	Poor	Total
1-4			6	28	1	1	36
5-19		14	8	17	2		41
20-49	1	17			5		23
50-99	3	16			2		21
100-199	1	11					12
200-299		1					1
300 and above		1					1
Total	5	60	14	45	10	1	135
1705 Rated			12	8			20
Not rated		2	21	38	7	37	105
All	5	62	47	91	17	38	260

Table 8.8. Comparison of acreages held in Ash 1704-5 and 1840-1.

Acreage	1704-5	1840-1
1-4	36	22
5-19	41	27
20-49	23	9
50-99	21	6
100-199	12	11
200-299	1	1
300-399	1	1
400-499		
500 and above		2
All	135	79

There is no surprise in the result gained from examination of the distribution of land vis-à-vis occupation. (Table 8.7). Tradesmen and craftsmen had small amounts of accommodation land, never more than 20 acres, and the few "professional" people, the Squire, Lady Wylde, the Vicar (though his acreage represents tithes and not actual land), and two maltsters occupied land too. Husbandmen, the real farmers of the parish, occupied holdings as small as five acres up to over 300 acres, but still the majority, as in earlier times, were concentrated at the lower end of the scale: 47 out of 60 had less than 100 acres. The most important finding from the occupational distribution of land, however, is that over half the day labourers were small holders too, of up to 20 acres, a number having five acres or more.¹ Thirty eight day labourers paid no rates at all, eight had not been rated on land in 1704 but were rated in 1705 (who might therefore have moved into the parish since) and no fewer than 45 were assessed on land. No doubt a substantial proportion of the men who in 1705 were stated to be in receipt of alms, and whose usual or former occupation was not given, were also day labourers, and many of the poor widows may have been the widows of day labourers. This means that the proportion of day labourers with land was perhaps smaller than it appears; one third rather than half of the parish labourers is perhaps a truer estimate. Even so, it remains a significant proportion, and provides an important contrast with the 19th century situation.

In broad outline the changes which had occurred between 1705 and 1841 were dramatic, whereas in the previous century overall changes had been insignificant. By 1841 there were only 79 land occupiers left, a reduction of nearly half from 1705. (Table 8.8).² The reductions had occurred in

1. The designation "day labourer" was considered appropriate therefore, for those who worked for another, even if maintaining some independence through a small holding.
2. The basis of both sets of figures is the household listing, of 1705 and 1841, collated with land assessments of the previous year for the earlier set and with the tithe survey of the previous year for the latter set. Absolute numbers will therefore be slightly understated, as in Table 8.5, but the figures are reasonably comparable.

all sizes of holdings except the very largest, while two new farms of over 500 acres emphasise the shift towards large farms, for none were over 400 acres in 1704.¹ The smaller sized holdings had perhaps held up better than those of 20 acres and above, and even more so than the 50-100 acres, while holdings above 100 acres had increased in number. In total, out of 401 households in the 1841 census, the 79 with land represent less than 20%. There had been in the 18th century not only a proportional fall in numbers with access to the land, as the number of households had increased from 260 to 401, but an absolute decline in numbers also. This makes more dramatic the shift in the social structure of the parish evident from the 18th century rating lists. Only a dozen of those who were called "agricultural labourers" in the 1841 census were occupiers of land, (Table 8.9), compared with the minimum 45 - maximum 53 of 1705. The numbers of craftsmen and tradesmen with land was absolutely constant, while the fall in the numbers called "farmer" compared with "husbandman" is probably cancelled out by changes in numbers classified as professional - a product of the enumerators' choice of designations. The burden of the overall fall was on the agricultural labourers.

Table 8.9. Acreage and occupations in Ash 1840-1.

Acreage	Profess- ional	Farmers	Crafts, Trades Shopkeepers	Agricultural Labourers	No occup- ation	Total
1-4	1	4	8	7	2	22
5-19		18	5	4		27
20-49		7		1	1	9
50-99		5			1	6
100-199		9	1		1	11
200-299		1				1
300-399		1				1
400-499						
500 and over		2				2
Total	1	47	14	12	5	79
No land	9	10	74	199	30	322
All	10	57	88	211	35	401

1. The proportion of land farmed by out-dwellers had remained fairly constant; it was 16% of the total described in the tithe survey. (See Table 8.2).

The comparison of 1841 census households with a rating list confirms the structure deduced from the tithe survey. There was some attempt at this time to include all households in rating lists, rather than as in earlier periods omitting those unable to pay. Even so, a proportion were still missing; 172 labourers could be traced in the rating list, out of 211 apparently heads of households in the census. This may reflect the enumerator's policy on sub-tenants, who perhaps formed separate commensal units but were not responsible for rates on the property occupied.¹ Twenty eight labourers were rated on amounts of £5 and over - in one case on over £100 which seems to indicate a somewhat anomalous use of the term labourer. This is more than twice the number appearing from the tithe survey to hold land. Some of these may have moved into the parish since the tithe survey was made. Some perhaps paid rates on small businesses, like running a beer shop (there is sometimes evidence of this in the rate lists) or perhaps combined labouring with some craft enterprise which was not indicated by the enumerator. Their status must have been in some way superior to the rest of the group. The 28 paying rates on £5 and above have to be set against the 144 rated in the lowest category, and the census total of 211 agricultural labourers who were heads of households. The distribution of wealth appears much less equal than in 1705 because of this mass at the bottom of the scale.

If the parish in 1841 is analysed simply by means of the Registrar General's five groups,² then the very skewed distribution of wealth is striking. (Table 8.10). Farmers fall into class two, craftsmen into class three, labourers into class four. Fifty six per cent of all rated households were assessed on less than £5, 79% on less than £20. Three quarters of those in the lowest category were agricultural labourers; not many craftsmen or traders rose above £5 either, and most of those with no stated

1. This is comparable with the census discrepancy between "houses" and "families". See above.
2. See Chapter Ten and Appendix VIII. Class VI is the residual class of those with no stated occupation. There were no members of Class V.

occupation also came into this category. In 1841, when the churchwardens' rates were presented to the justices of the peace for confirmation, a list of those excused payment was again prepared. Altogether 122 can be linked with the census, 106 being agricultural labourers, and 10 with no stated occupation. Six from the ranks of the craftsmen and tradesmen were also excused. Poverty was thus overwhelmingly amongst the agricultural labourers, two-thirds of whom though rated could clearly not pay. The disparity between them and the few larger farmers was very great.

Table 8.10. Rateable values by Registrar General's Groups in Ash: 1841.

Rates £	I	II	III	IV	VI	All
1-4	2	8	20	144	12	186
5-19	2	26	17	26	7	78
20-49	2	25	4	1		32
50-99	1	10	1		1	13
100 and over	1	19		1	3	24
All	8	88	42	172	23	333

Overall it seems reasonable to conclude that rising poor relief costs reflect two self-reinforcing trends - the diminution of numbers of households with access to the land, and population increase. From 1705 to 1841 there were 141 households added to the population of Ash, (86 between 1801 and 1841), but 56 of the original 260 households had also been excluded from the land. Thus increase in wage-earning households was potentially 141 plus 56 - more than doubling the labouring population over the period. Even this understates the labour force available in the parish in 1841: many additional labouring hands were available as resident servants, lodgers, or members of families but not at the head of a household. The over-supply of labour seems undeniable. Agricultural improvements may have absorbed a proportion, but not enough to compensate many for loss of their former subsistence independence.

2. Other agricultural parishes.

By and large information on these parishes is less extensive and fruitful than for Ash. The trends in the distribution of wealth observed in Ash are well marked also because of the size of the parish, but in essence other East Kent parishes show the same overall development; the only exceptions are the two "closed" parishes¹ of Chillenden and Waldershare.

(i) Chislet.

Chislet, on the other side of the Stour from Ash, is the only parish where similar long term comparisons can be made. This too is a large parish, of 6,500 acres, comprising a substantial amount of marshland, but with a population in the 19th century only half the size of that of Ash. Two early rating lists, of 1604 and 1628, made by the churchwardens, use acreages as the basis of assessment, and are interesting because of the division between marshland (paying one penny per acre) and upland (paying only a halfpenny). In 1604 also there is exact indication of where all the "out-dwellers" were resident. Ten gentry were listed first without naming their parishes of residence and then 49 others, from neighbouring parishes either in Thanet or on the same northern side of the Stour. They occupied more than a third of the parish's land.² Further information on acreages held is not available until 1838.

In 1604 there were 32 occupiers of land, in 1628 there were 62, a surprisingly large increase, occurring amongst holdings of less than five acres³ and in modest-sized holdings of 5-19 acres (Table 8.11). About one seventh were over 100 acres, a proportion very similar to Ash, including in 1628 one farm of over 500 acres. A feature of the parish in 1604 obscured by counting numbers of holdings is that no less than five were held by different members of the Rose family, three of which were each more than 100 acres.

1. See Chapter Three.

2. There were 59 out-dwellers in 1604 and 63 in 1628, occupying respectively 42% and 33% of the land.

3. It may be that in 1604 the optional method for collecting rates had not been worked out and that holdings of less than five acres were not rated, rather than there being none. The same trend occurred in Ash at the same dates.

Table 8.11. Acreage assessed in Chislet, 1604, 1628 and 1840.

Acres	1604	1628	1840
1-4	-	11	19
5-19	2	23	17
20-49	14	11	5
50-99	8	8	3
100-199	7	6	3
200-299		1	-
300-399	1	1	1
400-499			1
500 & over		1	2
Total	32	62	51

From 1658 to 1831, with two gaps around 1700 and 1760, the pattern of rating assessments can be traced through money rentals, Chislet having made the changeover rather earlier than Ash.¹ It reflects the process of engrossing occurring in this parish also in the 18th century. In the 17th century the position remained fairly stable; in 1658 and 1671 there were slightly fewer ratepayers than in 1628, but there was no real change in the overall distribution. Using money rentals instead of acreages resulted in an increase in the numbers in the lowest category, a decrease in those paying on £5-19 compared with 5-19 acres. By 1736, when the record is again available, the total numbers of ratepayers had risen, but markedly in the lowest group at the expense of the middling payers, and this trend became more marked from the 1790's. Those paying on £20-49 were the most vulnerable group.

There is a coincidence of timing in changes in rating practice in Ash and Chislet. In the 1770's Chislet increased all the rating valuations pro

1. In the 1620's some lists give only the amounts to be paid not the basic assessment. It is not clear if the change from acreage assessments had therefore been made earlier than 1658. See Appendix V for full analysis of these lists.

rata, but simultaneously small ratepayers assessed at £1 were dropped from the lists. In the early 19th century a new valuation of the parish was made. There is a parallel series of highways surveyors' records between 1770 and 1801, listing larger numbers of labourers than were assessed to poor rates: nearly 50% were not ratepayers, and this proportion remained steady. In the 17th century, comparing Compton Census population with ratepayers, the proportion not rated had been perhaps nearer one third, though 40% of those included in the Hearth Tax list were exempt, and 50% were not parish ratepayers. The 1801 census returned 154 houses and 158 families, compared with which the surveyors of the highways noted 124 households but the overseers of the poor only rated 67. Thus 57% of the census houses were not rated, to compare with 47% in Ash. (Table 8.12). After 1811, the situation deteriorated still further. The upswing in the population of the parish 1811-21 and 1821-31 was not matched in any way by increases in the rated population, the non-rated increasing in relation to the census count of houses from 57% to 63%. After 1822 the highways surveyors excluded from their lists the labourers who had been paying a per capita rate of 2/- - confirmation of their deteriorating position.

Table 8.12. Comparison of numbers of houses in the census and numbers rated in Chislet: 1801-31.

	Houses	Rated	% Not rated
1801	154	67	57
1811	169	74	56
1821	191	67	65
1831	204	76	63

The changes in farm sizes from the 17th to 19th century were in the direction of fewer of all sizes, apart from the really large holdings of more than 400 acres, which had increased from two to four, and a few more under five acres; in total there were only nine fewer holdings in 1840¹

1. The tithe survey was made in 1838 but in 1840 the churchwardens recorded acreage against every ratepayer and this is the information which has been used.

than there had been in 1628 (Table 8.11). However, between those two dates, as in Ash, there could have been an increase before the late 18th century decline. In 1840, as well as the 51 with land, there were also 151 rated who had no land at all, or a fraction of an acre. These figures can be set against the parish's inhabitants in 1841. Thirteen of those with land were agricultural labourers, five of them having between 5 - 19 acres, but altogether there were 135 agricultural labourers who were heads of households. In 1841 there were 20 resident farmers. One quarter of the parish's inhabitants had access to the land.

Before 1811, therefore, there had been some decline in land-holding in Chislet, but the proportion unable to pay rates had remained fairly constant at about one half of the households. After 1811 sharp population increase brought an increasing proportion in poverty, which was of the same order or even greater than in Ash.

(ii) St. Nicholas-at-Wade and Sarre.

St. Nicholas-at-Wade, a parish on the Thanet side of the Wantsum channel, offers striking examples of the process of engrossing. The parish is of medium size, 3,450 acres in the tithe survey, with considerable areas of marshland (1,546 acres). It is considered together with Sarre; although as Hasted reported, the inhabitants of the Ville "keep up the distinction of maintaining their own poor,"¹ for ecclesiastical purposes the Ville was combined with St. Nicholas and churchwardens rates were recorded for both areas in the same volumes while parish registers did not distinguish the two places. Sarre's history is further complicated by the fact that, once the port of entry to the island of Thanet, it was also a limb of the Cinque port of Sandwich, so that for some administrative aspects the records are with those for Sandwich. It comprised 652 acres, one third of which was marshland. A poll tax listing for 1689 has been located, but it did not record occupations,

1. Hasted (1800) X,252. The poor law records do not appear to have survived.

and can only be used cautiously for a population total.¹ The poor law records of St. Nicholas are physically in excellent condition, easy to read and well written. The earliest poor book starts in 1732, and from then the series is unbroken until 1834. St. Nicholas is one of the parishes covered in the 1705 listings, though again occupations were not recorded.

In the early 18th century the proportion who were potentially poor in St. Nicholas was similar to Ash and Chislet. The land tax assessment for St. Nicholas for 1705 indicates 37 tax payers, though the listing the same year showed 59 households, so that 37% were not paying the land tax.² A generation earlier there were no exceptions from the Hearth Tax in St. Nicholas. From 1732 decadal totals of households assessed for poor rates are available for St. Nicholas and from 1751 for church rates for Sarre.

Although only small absolute numbers are involved, there was a clear decline in the medium sized holdings (£20-99) in St. Nicholas from the 1760's, and also in the totals of households assessed to rates in both St. Nicholas and Sarre from the 1770's.³ This clearly relates to an administrative decision, applied to both poor rates and churchwardens rates, to drop the poorest from the lists, at the same time as the same decision had been made in Ash. A generation before Speenhamland this group, almost certainly agricultural labourers, were facing increased poverty.

1. See Chapter Nine.
2. Possibly more would have paid poor rates than land tax, and so 37% is an overestimate of poverty in this context.
3. See Appendix V for full analysis.

	St. Nicholas		Sarre	
	1772	1782	1771	1781
Total ratepayers	55	26	21	12
Paying on £1-4	43	13	16	6

The decline of the smaller farmer enabled a few to become much larger farmers. Two well marked examples can be observed in St. Nicholas:-

The White family are first observed in 1732 with an assessment of £55 for a farm called Upper Hale. From this time their steady progress up the agricultural ladder can be witnessed within this parish.

	£
1732	55
1742	76
1752	79
1762	208
1777	207
1782	198
1792	251
1802	259
1812-32	394

Between 1752 and 1762 Bartletts was added to Upper Hale. By 1782 Bartletts had been exchanged for Nether Hale, and in 1792 the small charity farm of Chambers Wall was also tenanted. These three farms, Upper and Nether Hale and Chambers Wall, were all in White occupation in the tithe survey. Nether Hale today appears a large Georgian house, but Upper Hale, in part at least a 16th century building, is in ruins. In 1841 it was occupied by agricultural labourers.

The Evernden family similarly over the same period, added more than one farm to their holding in St. Nicholas.

	£
1752-62	100
1772	166
1782-92	256
1802	395
1812-22	283
1832	386

Starting from Downbarton, this family acquired Street Farm, Bartletts and Potten, and then gave up Downbarton and held Frost instead. Unlike the Whites, who were largely tenants, the Everndens were owners of their land.

When a whole farm was taken over, the names recorded in the rating assessments give a fair guide to the process; but as well as these larger engrossing activities, there must also have been smaller parcels of land being attached to larger holdings, with only small adjustments in money assessments to reveal the case. Hasted commented in 1800 after giving the number of households in St. Nicholas returned to Archbishop Parker in 1563 "of late there have not been near so many, owing to the laying farms together and pulling down the houses of the smaller ones."¹ Certainly in 1841 agricultural labourers were living in the former farm houses of Chambers Wall, Frost, Potten Street, Downbarton, Upper Hale and Warehorne, quite apart from any houses which may have been demolished. The occupiers of farms in St. Nicholas had diminished considerably in the 18th century.

Yet Hasted's observation could only have been prompted by looking at the former farm houses. The population of the parish had grown a great deal in the 18th century. Between 1705 and 1801 the number of households had nearly doubled from 59 to 98, the number of people had more than doubled from 254 to 520. Between 1801 and 1831 the population continued to increase, particularly in the decade of the 20's, reaching 726 in 1831. St. Nicholas is indeed a good example of a fast growing rural population.

One fifth of the census houses in 1801 were rated, one quarter in 1831. A very small minority was thus maintaining the great weight of the poor. Exclusion from the land was a factor, but population growth in this parish was a much more important one. In St. Nicholas the surveyors of the highways continued to compile lists of labourers in the 19th century, after Ash had adopted a commutation for money. They show that for every new household rated between 1801 and 1831, there were two more new "labourers" and beyond this the census recorded about 20 more houses at each successive date.²

1. Hasted (1800) X,238.

2.

St. Nicholas	1801	1811	1821	1831
Poor rate payers	20	22	27	28
Highways labourers	52	59	67	67
Total	72	81	94	95
Census houses	92	100	107	114
Sarre - Census houses	30	30	39	39

In Sarre one third of the total of census houses also was assessed to rates.

The picture of St. Nicholas and Sarre drawn from the tithe surveys and the 1841 census is that of a few large farms and a very small number of less than 100 acres.¹ (In Sarre there was only one holding under 100 acres). There was effectively no middling group. Even of those six men with less than 20 acres in St. Nicholas, one was the blacksmith, one the miller, and four were agricultural labourers. All the other small occupiers listed in the tithe survey had only a few perches of garden ground. Fourteen of the 129 households listed in 1841 had access to land, a mere 11%. Both St. Nicholas and Sarre were "open", in the sense that landownership was divided between a number of men. In St. Nicholas the largest owner held 22% of the land, while several members of the Bridges family between them held another 22%. In Sarre the land was evenly divided between five owners. In both there is some evidence of tied cottages in the tithe: in Sarre the Reverend John Hilton owned 13 cottages, perhaps an indication of a philanthropic attitude to the provision of housing. Even so the inhabitants seem to have been crowded into multiple occupancy of the houses. On a smaller scale St. Nicholas and Sarre echo the picture drawn in Ash and Chislet.

(iii) Chillenden, Waldershare and Wickhambreux.

By contrast with Ash, Chislet and St. Nicholas, three small parishes in East Kent illustrate the practical control of population growth which was possible, particularly in the two classic "closed" parishes, but also to some extent in the one approaching to this model. Control of cottage building did not mean that there were no poor, but that relative to the parish's landholders their numbers did not increase.

The fullest evidence is available for Wickhambreux, another parish in the Wantsum Channel area, but of only 2305 acres overall, which is relatively small for this marshland area. In 1664 57 households were included in the

1. The tithe surveys were two years distant from the census, and the collation of the two sources from the basis of the householder schedules underestimates the numbers of landholders by a small factor. See Appendix VI for full analysis.

hearth tax,¹ of whom 35 were exempt. Early rate lists, between 1680 and 1710, show continuing small but steady groups of ratepayers of mainly modest size.² There were only two rated at over £100 (but less than £200) and more than half the ratepayers were assessed at under £20. From the hearth tax it would seem about 50% of households paid poor rates.³

After 1710, there is a gap in the records until 1763. By this date a small increase in rated population had occurred, from 28 to 39, and large farms had fared better than small. In 1800 Rack Rents were substituted for half rents. This is the same pro rata increase in assessments which occurred in Ash and Chislet a decade or two earlier. It likewise coincided with the omission from rating lists of nearly all small assessments. At this date the census count of houses was 65, apparently a very modest increase of eight households since 1664.

In the 19th century Wickhambreux's apparent stability was shattered, and there was a sharp deterioration in the relative equality of the distribution of wealth. In 1823 a new valuation of the parish was made, in common with the other parishes in the area. Of the 65 ratepayers assessed at less than £5, 35 were marked in the lists "Poor". By 1837, 57 were poor, and indeed at this date only three in this lowest group were judged able to pay their rates. The proportion of poor households by then was 61%. At the same time the number of houses in the census had increased from 65 in 1801 to 93 in 1831. The overseers listed nearly all the households, regardless of inability to pay. The extra households established in the parish in the early 19th century were nearly all poor.

The tithe survey of 1838 collated with the 1841 census shows only 18 occupiers of land within the parish, but 38 other tenants of tiny parcels of garden ground and allotments. In the 1841 census there were 97 households.

1. See Appendix I, 2. Chislet, over 6,000 acres, was taxed on 107 hearths; Ash, over 7,000 acres, on 106 hearths; St. Nicholas, 3,450 acres, on only 28 hearths.
2. There were 22 who paid the hearth tax, and 26 paid parish rates in 1680. See Appendix V for full analysis of rate lists.
3. The 1705 listing for this parish seems to cover only one of the two burroughs so cannot be compared with ratepayers. See Chapter Two.

One holding of 468 acres, owned and occupied by Charles Collard, the owner of Wickham Court, dominated the parish.¹ Wickhambreux does not therefore strictly conform to the working definition of a closed parish i.e. one where more than half the land is owned by one man, but clearly control over expansion of the population had existed in the 18th century, but had been relaxed in the 19th century. That it approximated to the type is further indicated by the number of tied cottages evident in the tithe survey. Wickhambreux was also notable for the extensive provision of allotments, particularly by the owner of the watermill and by the Rector. There are no Vestry Minutes and no means of determining when the allotments were made, but they were probably one response to the 19th century population increase and to the consequent numbers of poor.

Both the tiny parish of Chillenden, 195 acres only, 60% of which was owned by Sir Brook William Bridges and a further 25% by William Hammond, and Waldershare, just less than 1,000 acres, more than two thirds of which area in the tithe survey was owned by the Earl of Guilford of Waldershare Park, are examples of the true closed parish with its near static population.

In Chillenden in the 1664 Hearth Tax, there were 15 chargeable households and six exempt; the first rating assessment of 1695 listed 13 households. In 1705 there were 20 households listed - only one more than in the Hearth Tax - so that a third of this tiny population was not rated. The numbers assessed hardly varied throughout the 18th century, and in 1801 there were still 15.² There is no 19th century rating evidence, but the census counted 23 houses in 1801, three more than 1705 and 28 in 1831. The census and tithe survey showed three occupiers of land. Even here, therefore, some expansion had occurred in the early 19th century, to the extent of five more houses in 30 years.

In Waldershare only four households were charged to the Hearth Tax, and in 1705 five households were listed. Only sporadic rating evidence has

1. See Appendix VI for full analysis.
2. See Appendix V for full analysis.

survived for Waldershare, and it seems that from early 18th century all the houses were rated. There were six in 1833, twelve in 1789, but only ten rated in 1809. There were almost no ratepayers assessed at less than £5, thus no poor as defined in other parishes. The 1801 census confirms that there were nine houses and eleven families, so that this tiny community had doubled since 1705; three of the 15 households in 1841 could be traced in the tithe survey four years later. The extra households may of course be the result of permitted building of houses for more well-to-do persons.

Thus even in "closed" parishes defined in terms of ownership, population growth still occurred, but from such a tiny base that it was scarcely significant.

(iv) Eastry and Elham.

Two parishes categorised as market villages on the basis of 19th century occupational structure, when examined from the viewpoint of the distribution of wealth have some distinctive features and some in common with the more purely agricultural parishes. Both Eastry and Elham are downland parishes, and both had very similar size of population of around 1,000 in the 19th century, though Eastry was physically only half the size of Elham.

The rating material in Eastry is incomplete. There is a small run of information for mid-18th century (1720-50) and some for early 19th century. The distribution of wealth in the land tax in 1705 was very similar to that evidenced in the first extant parish rating list; it showed no assessments greater than £300, while two thirds of the ratepayers were assessed at less than £20. Probably 60% of Eastry households at this date did not pay land tax.¹ Between 1721 and 1750 the situation remained very stable.² W.F. Shaw recorded a count of the parish's inhabitants in 1774 in *Liber Estriae*,³ of 656 persons, which suggests that as many as 70% of households at that date

1. The 1705 listing contains 111 households and 464 people in all. This total is difficult to reconcile with the Compton Census figure of 540 in 1676, but the ecclesiastical figure may have included the chapelry of Worth. See Chapter Two.
2. See Appendix V for full details.
3. Shaw (1870).

were not ratepayers. A highway surveyor's list of 1812 recorded 81 persons obliged to provide for the upkeep of the roads, but the 1811 census counted 184 houses.¹ From the re-rating of the parish which took place in 1822-3, however, 207 households were rated,² of which 144 were introduced into the lowest category, as in Ash and other rural parishes, swinging the average level of wealth sharply downwards. All these poorest ratepayers were immediately omitted from the lists, but were again included from 1830. From 1832 a list was attached to each rating list presented to the J.Ps of those "recommended to be relieved because unable to pay" - 129 names were recorded, and in 1841 143. A major proportion of the village's population (70%) was thus unable to meet the call on income represented by rate assessments, while less than a quarter (25 out of 209) were assessed on amounts of £20 or above.

Comparison of the tithe survey and the 1841 census confirms that 23 people occupied holdings of 5 acres or more, and there were 43 smaller sized holdings, in all one third of households³, so that access to the land in Eastry also was very restricted, but less so than in Ash where only one sixth of households held any land. Allowing for the upward revision of monetary values during the period, in Eastry there is no real evidence of engrossing; there was indeed an increase in numbers of medium-sized ratepayers presumably both businesses and wealthy private houses. On the other hand, there was substantial population increase, from 464 in 1705 to 656 in 1774, and 1245 in 1831, nearly all of it accommodated at the lowest end of the scale.

The profile of the distribution of wealth in Elham is in certain respects rather different. This large downland parish of nearly 7,000 acres

1.	Eastry	1811	1821	1831
	Poor ratepayers	81	207	218
	Census houses	184	193	204

2. This list no longer distinguished "out-dwellers" as had 18th century lists. There were only a few but they account for the fact that more households were rated than there were census houses.
3. Full analysis set out in Appendix VI.

included a quantity of woodland and of common.¹ Amongst the numerous owners of the parish's land, the Oxenden family owned 21%, and Thomas Papillon 30%. Yet at the same time Elham had a large number of small occupiers, many of whom also owned land, so that 32% of all occupiers of land of one acre or more owned at least part of their holding, and this characteristic distinguishes Elham from other East Kent parishes.

From the intermittent series of rating lists which have survived, it is apparent that this was already a feature of the parish in the early 18th century. More than half of the ratepayers (158 in all) were assessed at £5 and over, there was a large group of those assessed on £5-19, and only two paid on more than £100. A first rating list for 1730 was based on half-rents. By 1740 there seems to have been an early attempt to bring more of the population into the system. There was an increase in numbers, from 87 to 113, in the lowest category, and at the same time the Vestry resolved that the rates of those "not usually cessed" should be abated. In 1753 whole rents were substituted for half-rents, an upscaling of values rather earlier in the 18th century than in some other parishes, but having the same effect in causing the overseers to omit some of the poorest.² A number of those listed in the 1787 rating lists were marked "poor", and the following year 33 out of 187 payments were not collected. With a population of less than 1,000 in 1811, perhaps a quarter of all households were unable to pay rates.

In 1802 and again in 1820 new valuations of the parish were made. In 1802 the Vestry discontinued the practice of buying wheat and selling it to the poor, and this decision coupled with the re-rating certainly indicates some difficulty in the parish over long continued practice and probably a wish to distribute the burden of poor relief more equitably.³ The money raised for poor relief was thereby reduced, with what consequences for the poor is not known. Elham was a key parish in the 1830 Swing riots⁴ - the

1. In the 1844 tithe survey there were 1100 acres of woodland and 32 acres of Minnis Common.

2. See Appendix V for full analysis. Ratepayers in the under £5 class fell from 119 to 76. Only some of these could have been upgraded to the next group which rose between 1751 and 1774.

3. See Chapter Six.

4. Hobsbawm & Rude (1969) 98-9, 187. The rioting actually started in Elham.

1802 decision was a generation earlier, too far removed in time to be directly relevant, but perhaps foreshadowing the Vestry's attitudes during those 30 years. Early 19th century rating lists have not survived, but for 1822 the lists show little change overall in the distribution of wealth since 1790, and certainly no indication of growing population. The tithe survey of 1844 included 121 holdings and 113 cottagers were also listed. The poor quality of the land was reflected in the fact that there were 24 holdings of over 100 acres, but only five assessments on more than £100. The churchwardens listed 240 names,¹ and there were 67 abatements, again a proportion a little over a quarter.

In Elham also there was little evidence of engrossing, while the proportion of those unable to pay rates was lower than in other East Kent parishes. The poorer land and larger proportion of small-holdings seem significant sources of variation serving to lessen the propensity to poverty in the parish.

In the larger agricultural parishes in the area, in the 18th century there is thus unequivocal evidence of engrossing, most clearly emphasised by information on acreages where available. But in the 19th century population increase became the more significant variable in the changing social structure. The numbers of households at the bottom of this scale derived from rating assessments were being augmented from decade to decade: gradually in the 18th century, more rapidly in the 19th century. At the same time the perception of inequalities in rural society was sharpened by the revaluations which took place after 1770. While these showed that property and land values had grown out of step with rating assessments, the effect was to upgrade the recognised wealth of all members of the community bar those unable to pay at all. Some elements of the 19th century crisis of poor administration should be traced back to this decade of the 1770's

1. 1841 census returned 248 houses.

when not only were vestries experimenting with improved workhouse operation, but also they were apparently forced to exclude from rating many of the poorer in the parish.

In 1841 the occupations of those poor "excused" rates can be plotted by comparing enumerators' books with lists of the excusals¹ from church-wardens' rates in the same year. This is possible in three parishes: Ash, Eastry and Wickhambreux. Three quarters of all the agricultural labourers in these parishes, forming registrar-general's category four, were excused rates. Both proportionately and numerically they formed a large group. A third of the craftsmen and shopkeepers - registrar general's class three - were in the same position.² (Table 8.13). It is very probable that the same occupational groups in earlier times had not been rated at all.

Table 8.13. Exemption from ratepaying: Ash, Eastry and Wickhambreux, 1841.

Registrar-General's class	No. of census households	Ratepayers linked with census		Excused rates	
		No.	%	No.	%
I	19	15	79	-	-
II	153	145	95	3	2
III	113	98	87	36	37
IV	361	293	81	216	74
V	1	1	-	1	-
Residual VI	76	53	70	35	66

1. See Chapters Five and Six for discussion of the practice of excusing rates.
2. These proportions are based only on the numbers of census households linked with rating lists, and are not biassed by inclusion of numbers for whom links could not be made. Some of the linkage failures will be due to mobility, some to the fact that occupants of tied cottages may not have been listed in rate assessments, some to the mismatch between the definition of census households and sub-tenants of property not liable to rates.

The widening gap in social structure in the 19th century was not merely a statistical feature, it was reflected in contemporary comment on the changing lifestyle of the farmer, no longer prepared to share his table with his labourers. The vicar of Ash echoed Cobbett's better known criticism of widening social distinctions. He suggested that landlords had bought out the smaller squire's property, thus losing their connections with the yeomanry. Their sons then went into the church or the army instead of "portioned off on small properties." Similarly there was a widening of social distinction between the yeomanry and their labourers. The "smock-frocked farmer disappeared, and was no longer content to board his labourers; he now left the work of the farm to the bailiff and headman. Wives and daughters played the piano, and left butter-making to the dairymaid."¹ Since these reflections were prompted by the East Kent scheme which Gleig had just left, he must have thought there was truth in what he said.²

While the farmer rose in the social scale, the labourer was excluded from the land. Over the period since early 18th century some numbers of small holdings had disappeared, and to this extent the old village economy "crumbled."³ In Ash in 1705 numbers of day labourers had held land, in 1841 very few did. The proportion with land in the seven agricultural parishes analysed in Table 8.14⁴ was about one fifth, but a quarter of these were allotment holders in the one parish of Wickhambreux. Often the labourer was explicitly denied the means of subsistence which small plots of garden ground afforded. Gleig again echoes Cobbett in his judgement on the greed of the farmers.⁵ In his fourth tale, he recounts (incongruously as the prelude to a tale about an illegitimate baby and a poor girl's hopeless attempt to support herself in London) the rejection by the Vestry of Waltham

1. Gleig (1835) 1, "The farm of forty acres."

2. Hobsbawm & Rude (1960) 45, quote similar evidence from other parts of the country.

3. Hoskins (1965) 266-72. However, as the poor rates rose in the same key years in Wigston Magna as in East Kent, this crumbling of the village economy should not be attributed wholly to the enclosure of the village.

4. The table is compiled from the basis of the 1841 census households matched with tithe surveys. As the two sources are not always very close in time (up to three years apart in one case) the table underestimates the numbers with access to the land.

5. "The great, the big bull frog grasps all." Cobbett (1821, 1973 edn.)248.

of a scheme of allotments. "What!" cried several voices at once, "Would you convert your labourers into so many farmers? Would you make little gentlemen of them?"¹ The hero of the tales is portrayed nonetheless as experimenting with two-acre allotments for his two most worthy labourers. Their frugality and hard work are finally shown rewarded.²

One of the rural queries was directed to finding out whether allotments existed.³ Gleig felt strongly enough to reply "There is no resident Gentleman in the Parish, and the Farmers unfortunately set their faces against this excellent practice." In Wickhambreux the owner of the watermill and the Rector provided the allotments. The Chislet respondent to the rural queries left the question unanswered; the Eastry reply was tersely "None." Assistant commissioner Ashurst Majendie also reported that farmers were against cottage allotments because they were afraid of making labourers independent.⁴ In East Kent, it would seem, it was not true that "the majority, probably the great majority" of labourers had a garden or a patch of potato ground.⁵ Considerably less than a third of all Kentish parishes had allotments.⁶ Farmers perhaps felt with Malthus that there could be no right to subsistence; as for the labourer, as Cobbett said, he lived surrounded by land and food but in the utmost indigence.

1. Gleig (1835) 2 "The Overseer's daughter."
2. Ibid "The rival systems."
3. PP 1834 XXXI 235 Q20.
4. PP1834 XXVIII 170.
5. Clapham (1927) 1,119. However he also suggested (473) that the movement gathered strength after 1830, and that although often tried, it was not in general in Kent, Surrey and Sussex. It had been pioneered in the late 18th century by agricultural experts and enlightened landowners.
6. Barnett, ed. Jones and Mingay (1967) 162-183. Between 16 and 30% of Kentish parishes had allotments in 1833, and this was one of the lowest proportions of all the south, east and midland counties. Such poor provision was noticeably clustered in the counties round London.

Table 8.14. The distribution of land by occupation in 1841.a) Seven rural parishes.¹

Acres	Profess- ional	Farmers	Clerical Independent Shopkeepers	Crafts- men	Agricult- ural Lab- ourers	N/K
1	1	-	13	21	87	16
1-4	2	9	11	7	20	3
5-9		7	3	4	6	-
10-19		14	2	1	3	-
20-49	1	17	1		2	1
50-99		11	-			1
100-199		17	1			1
200-299		4	2			1
300 and over		11				
Total	4	90	33	33	118	23
No. in census group	14	105	81	115	524	92
% with land	28.6	84.9	40.7	28.7	22.5	25.0
b) <u>Eastry.</u>						
1	-	-	4	13	13	2
1-4	1	4	1	2	5	
5-9	2	-	3	-	2	
10-19	-	-	1	1		
20-49	-	1	-			
50-99	1	7	-			
100-199	1	2	1			
200-299		1				
300 and over						
Total	5	15	10	16	20	2
No. in census group	7	16	24	51	104	23
% with land	71.4	93.7	41.7	31.4	19.2	8.7

1. 7 rural parishes: Ash, Chillenden, Chislet, Sarre, St. Nicholas-at-Wade, Waldershare, Wickhambreux.

3. Urban parishes.

In urban communities it would be expected from evidence of the kind collected by Hoskins for the 16th century that there was a very great amount of poverty, more than in agricultural parishes. In country towns generally, it is suggested, more than half the population was poor, and the proportion could rise much higher, for instance to 80% in Coventry. The proportions are based on occasional censuses of the poor, or on the numbers of households in the lowest rating band or for whom a nil assessment was shown. From the 18th century rating evidence, however, for four urban parishes studied here, the emphasis is rather different. Certainly the distribution of wealth within the urban parishes was in strong contrast with the agricultural parishes; however a different administrative definition of poverty may be appropriate. The four urban parishes studied are St. Clement's, Sandwich, St. Mary's, Dover and St. Dunstan's and the Vill of Christ Church, Canterbury. Two were not wholly built up, but nevertheless all were distinctively urban through both density of occupation and social structure.

(i) St. Clement's, Sandwich.

Sandwich has always been categorised as a town and port, and within Sandwich one of the three parishes, St. Clement's, has a good run of records stretching back into the 17th century. St. Clement's is on the eastward side of the town, including in its bounds High Street, Strand Street and the quayside,¹ but also an area of marsh and salt marsh where the sea has receded from the town. In 1800 the area was calculated as 496 acres, of which 434 acres were cultivated. Boys, in making his Collections for a History of Sandwich noted that in 1771 the land was valued at £461 and the buildings in the parish at £721, thus pointing to the urban basis of the parish's economy. At this date the population was 634, having apparently not altered in the previous 100 years.²

1. It did not include the more modern centre of the town in Market Street which is part of St. Peter's parish.
2. The Compton Census returned 389 communicants, the Poll Tax of 1689 covered 390 persons. Both are 40% deficient in omitting persons under 16; Gregory King estimated that the Poll Tax excluded 60% of the population (see above). Inflated by 40% the population was therefore about 650 in 1676.

Urban rating assessments are more difficult to analyse than rural because of the existence of purely commercial property - shop, storehouse, stable, barn, malthouse for example. These premises were not necessarily occupied by a resident of the parish, and have therefore to be excluded.¹ In 1688 rates were apparently collected from the "Ferryway" for the first time. It was assessed at £30 a year and paid £1. 5. 0. Later the assessment was raised to £50. During the 18th century more and more commercial property was made liable for rates. By 1740 the Custom House was rated, and also the Great Key and "Wharfage". In 1754 the "Dock" was rated. The Excise Office was listed but with nil assessment, though the "Supervisor" paid six shillings, a substantial amount in relation to most domestic rates. As in agricultural parishes the tithes were also assessed: the Rector paid £2. 5. 0. a year. Thus despite the relative decline of Sandwich as a port, the commercial life of the town seems to have expanded during the 18th century.

From the first extant rating list of 1673 until 1760, only the amounts paid were recorded, not the rateable values. The range, analysed in Table 8.15 section (a) is very small in comparison with the agricultural parishes, and this is the most striking aspect of the urban distribution of wealth. After 1770 rateable values were recorded; again the range is very small (section (b)). Until the later 18th century, the officers of St. Clement's listed names with nil assessments,² which is the counterpart of the agricultural parishes' habit of omitting altogether those unable to pay. After 1771 there were no nil assessments, but instead "poor" or "no certificate"³ was noted against names, probably indicating the reasons for the nil assessments earlier. (Table 8.15 section (c)). "Empties" were also noted,

1. When such an item was recorded together with a house, the rateable value has been added to that of the house. In the new rating valuations made in 1814, rather more detailed descriptions of this sort were given: yards, gardens, cowsheds, smithery, shipwright's yard, slaughter house, plumbery, carpenter's shop etc.
2. Nil assessments were common urban practice. Some were because the house was empty, but usually "empty" was recorded. In 1680 four names were marked "morte"; nine houses were empty.
3. This also demonstrates the importance of the Settlement System, see Chapter Seven.

becoming a significant item in 1831.¹ From 1680 onwards nil assessments accounted for a significant proportion of all inhabitants, reaching a peak of 57-58% in the early 18th century but after 1720 declining from decade to decade.

Table 8.15. Rating assessments in St. Clements Sandwich.

a) Amounts paid 1673-1760.

Shillings	1673	1680	1690	1700	1710	1720	1730	1740	1750	1760
Up to 1/-	94	40	33	46	20	22	27	43	-	-
1 - 2	23	26	22	20	19	9	26	35	33	59
2 - 3	6	10	17	11	-	11	13	18	22	16
3 and over	8	28	24	20	-	25	23	18	42	40
Nil assessments	11	43	27	36	82	94	67	53	56	48
% nil	8	29	22	27	57	58	43	32	37	29
Total	142	147	123	133	145	161	156	167	153	153

b) Assessments 1771-1831.

£	1771	1780	1790	1800	1814	1831
1 - 4	120	118	100	92	78	97
5 - 19	31	37	48	52	64	71
20 - 49	1	2	1	1	4	5
Total	152	157	149	145	146	173

c) Non-payment of rates as recorded 1771-1831.

No certificate	20	22	17	-	-	-
Poor	10	5	13	12	-	-
% no certificate and poor	20	17	20	8		
Empty	6	8	6	1	9	18

1. When the county rate was calculated, an allowance was made for "empties" in determining each parish's contribution.

Rating lists in this parish included all households,¹ which was a most important difference between the urban and rural distribution of wealth. In St. Clement's it cannot be shown that large numbers at the bottom of the scale were adjudged unable to pay rates. The proportion of non-payers was about one-fifth of the population in later 18th and early 19th centuries, though at earlier times it was closer to half. By this definition, poverty had diminished.

Between 1673 and 1760 the pattern of the distribution of wealth showed some inflation of values, so that those paying less than one shilling disappeared, and those paying more than one, and particularly more than three shillings increased. About one third paid more than two shillings. At the same time the overall numbers of ratepayers remained very stable, reflecting the basic stability of population in the parish.² The pattern of the period 1771 to 1831, when rateable values were recorded, is similar. Very few people were assessed on more than £20, which is a considerable contrast with rural parishes; four fifths of the households were in the lowest rating category, but at the same time the contrasts in wealth were apparently much less. Even in this period there was little growth in population. Boys made an analysis of the parish between 1776 and 1786. He noted "two new houses built, 11 houses pulled down, six converted into shops and store-houses, one made into two dwellings, and two, in three instances, turned into one."³ On balance this implies a slight shrinkage of houses. The larger rateable values were located in Strand and High Streets,⁴ but the poor and those without certificates were to be found scattered generally through the parish.⁵ The new valuation made of the parish in 1814 resulted in more precise description of property, but little difference in the apparent distribution of wealth: some few properties were shifted out of the lowest

1. The Poll Tax 1689 listed 131 households, the 1690 rating list 123. Some small discrepancies due to definitions may be expected. In the 19th century rating numbers correspond closely with census houses. Census houses: 1801 - 148; 1811 - 145; 1831 - 161.

2. Boys (1792) 386 recorded a population of 634 in 1776, very close to the estimate based on the Compton Census a century earlier.

3. Ibid 393.

4. By 1771 the High Street had been divided, as it is today, into the lower end called High Street and the upper end, away from the river, called the Chain.

5. See Appendix V for fuller analysis.

rating band as a result. The impression continues to be one of stability.

The spread of rateable values in respect of occupations can be seen from a comparison of the 1841 church rate and the census enumerators' books. (Table 8.16). The distinction is clearly discernible between the lowest group of ratepayers, who were, as in rural areas, largely labourers, (Class IV), and the next group paying on amounts between £5 and £20, who were tradesmen, craftsmen, shop-keepers, and others grouped into the Registrar General's classes II and III.¹ Yet although the distinction is clear, the gap between labourers and others was less clearly quantified than in a rural parish, where land provided such high valuations compared with houses and businesses.

Table 8.16. St. Clement's Sandwich and St. Dunstan's Canterbury: Rating valuations and social class, 1841.

Rates £	<u>Registrar General's Classes</u>				
	I	II	III	IV	VI
<u>a) St. Clement's Sandwich</u>					
up to 5		2	15	31	6
5 - 19	5	29	21	16	5
20 - 49	2	5	1		
50 - 99	1	1	1		
<u>b) St. Dunstan's Canterbury</u>					
up to 5		3	7	9	1
5 - 19	2	39	38	22	3
20 - 49		12	3	3	
50 - 99					

In parallel with the rating assessments on town property, St. Clement's also made separate lists of the occupiers of land, specifying both acreage and rental. There were never more than two dozen land holders, declining to around 15 in the 19th century, and the range of land values in the parish

1. See Chapter Ten for discussion of Registrar General's classes. Class VI is those with no stated occupation; there are no members of class V.

extended from five shillings per acre to £2 in 1690, and from 17 shillings to £2 in 1831, so that acreage is a fluctuating guide to wealth. Some of the land was valuable because given over to market gardening. On the basis of acreage, however, it can be seen that there was some decline in numbers holding from 5 - 19 acres in the late 17th century, a recovery in early 18th century, and thereafter some variation around a lower level, which changes were in sympathy with the general agricultural experience in the area.¹

Thus the distribution of wealth in St. Clement's remained stable and remarkably equal, while there is no obvious sign of the crises in the agricultural parishes of the late 18th century or post-Napoleonic War periods. From 1814 there even ceased to be any direct evidence of inability to pay rates. The decline in the town described by contemporaries giving evidence to Parliamentary Commissions is not substantiated, though its stagnation is clear enough. This was also reflected in the small amount of population growth; only in the decade 1821-30 was there a substantial surge, from 777 to 912.

(ii) St. Dunstan's Canterbury.

St. Dunstan's Canterbury is in several respects very similar to St. Clement's. Properly described as a suburb of Canterbury, outside the City walls, St. Dunstan's consisted of a single street, but it was also concerned with agriculture; the parish contained 385 acres in total. A considerable amount of the cultivable land was given over to hops in mid-18th century.² Unlike St. Clement's, however, the population was not stagnant: it was about 350 at the beginning of the 18th century, had probably doubled to 707 by 1801, and nearly doubled again in the period 1801-1841, when it had reached 1209. Most of the 19th century growth was concentrated in the decade 1831-41, and marked in fact the commencement of fast urban development.

1. See Appendix V for full analysis.

2. Hopground was first specified in rating lists in 1720, and the £71 represented one ninth of the rateable value of the parish.

In the early 19th century St. Dunstan's contained 41 families engaged in agriculture out of 150 total, so that the parish had strong links with the agriculture of the area.

Rating material is available for the whole 18th century and up to the Poor Law Amendment Act. The urban pattern of assessments largely clustered at lower values is evident in St. Dunstan's, as in St. Clement's, and very few assessments were ever more than £20.¹ The farming pattern which it is assumed accounts for the higher assessments appears stable, with some slight shift upwards in values after 1800. From 1760 the numbers of inhabitants rated increased, indicative of a growing population, particularly in the 1770's and 1820's, some of whom were rated at under £5, and some from £5-19. The 1841 occupational structure again matches closely St. Clement's. (Table 8.16). One perceptible difference is in the larger proportion of households rated between £5 and £20 in St. Dunstan's; while this may reflect differing rating policies, it more likely points to the greater prosperity of the Canterbury suburb.

The practice in St. Dunstan's also was not to omit any inhabitants from rating assessments, and there were no nil assessments. In the 19th century numbers rated correspond quite closely with numbers of census houses.² At earlier times also this was probably true,³ though in 1720, some of the smallest ratepayers do seem to have been omitted. In 1710 there were 48 assessed at under £5, in 1731 there were 54, but in 1720 only 21. This was the period when nil assessments in Sandwich were at their maximum and suggests a general period of economic difficulty for urban communities. Occasionally the rating lists include information on excusals from payment: in 1710 there were six; in 1780, four; in 1810 three were described as poor, in 1830 nine. In 1780 nine empty houses were recorded, in 1810 only two, and none at any

1. See Appendix V for full analysis.

2. 1801: 129; 1811: 128; 1821: 128; 1831: 182.

3. The Compton Census return was 207; inflated and divided by 5 for mean household size this yields 69; Only 49 hearths were taxed in 1664, but this is probably not the total of households in the parish. Otherwise fast population growth must have taken place between 1664 and 1702, when 68 households were rated.

other dates. Probably empty houses were usually omitted, so explaining to some extent fluctuations in numbers, particularly in the lowest rating band, from year to year. Generally, if not rich, the parish does not give many signs of economic difficulty, but of steady expansion in the better small houses rated at £5-19.

(iii) Vill of Christ Church Canterbury.

Table 8.17. Vill of Christ Church Canterbury: Rating assessments 1801-21,

Rates £	1801	1804	1814	1821
5	10	3	3	3
5 - 19	34	28	30	25
20 - 49	1	16	15	17
50 - 99		3	4	4
All	45	50	52	49

An interesting sidelight on the distribution of wealth is seen in the small and contained area of the Precincts of the Cathedral, the Vill of Christ Church. Even such a small and select area needed to raise a poor rate, largely because of the provisions of the Act of Settlement which made hiring for a year a means of determining a settlement. Numerous servants were employed in the large houses of the Precincts. Poor rates for a few years of the 19th century survive. A new set of valuations was made in 1804, but a list of 1801 enables comparisons to be made. The changes in rateable values of some occupants of the Precincts were dramatic. Most notably the Dean, who was assessed at £14 in 1801 had his assessment raised to £90 in 1804. The 1801 values generally appear to have been largely nominal, so that five of the clerics paid on £5 rateable value and nine paid on £10. In 1804 the dispersion of values is much greater. Some of the £5 were raised only to £12, some to £15, one to £17. The £10 were raised to values ranging from £29 up to £53.

The significance of this re-rating is in a closer definition of relative wealth, and in the much greater dispersion of values. In agricultural areas,

the value of the land could change because of agricultural improvements, and because of the general inflation of monetary values. But in the Precincts it was not a pro rata upgrading of all values, but a new scale. Distinctions of status and income must have appeared much less when the monetary assessments were all more similar; it seems reasonable to suggest that class distinctions were seen more clearly after 1804. This is the urban counterpart of the widening of social divisions seen in the agricultural parishes.

(iv) St. Mary's Dover.

St. Mary's Dover might be expected to display a rather different pattern from the other urban parishes considered. Not only was it much larger in population, but also it was fast expanding in the 18th and early 19th centuries. From about 2,500 in 1676,¹ St. Mary's reached 5,757 in 1801 and 9,753 in 1831. While the town suffered some fluctuations of fortune, particularly through the effects of war and technological change at sea, fundamentally it was thriving. St. Mary's contained the major part of the inhabitants of Dover; for administrative purposes it was divided along Snargate Street into two nearly equal parts, the upper ward, TOWN, was the most ancient, the lower, PIER, contained the harbour. The population of Pier division grew less fast than that of the commercial centre in Town division.

Although St. Mary's Vestry minute books have survived in the parish chest, only a few rate books for years before 1834 have been preserved amongst the archives of the Corporation,² and then sometimes for one but not both divisions of St. Mary's. The Vestry minutes make clear that in 1803 rating lists were extant for 1601, since in a report on an investigation into the management of the poor which the Vestry carried out, it is evident that they had examined them; no such long-ranging comparisons of the structure of wealth in the town are now possible. Rates were raised quarterly in St. Mary's until 1828, but in 1829 they became monthly assessments. For that

1. Compton Census return was 1,500 which has been inflated for under 16's.
2. Dover Public Library.

year the complete series of books for both Town and Pier have survived. Such frequent collection of rates might have been necessary because of the mobility of the population, but more likely it provided an instalment method of payment which helped meet the unusually large sums needed. Lists for both Town and Pier divisions have been analysed for 1776 (the first available), 1796, 1816 and 1829 (the last available before 1834). (Table 8.18).

Table 8.18. Dover St. Mary's: Rating assessments 1776-1829.

Rates £	a) <u>Town and Pier Wards.</u>				b) <u>Totals</u>							
	1776	TOWN		1829	1776	PIER		1829	1776	1796	1816	1829
		1796	1816			1796	1816					
Up to 5	195	310	450	560	176	270	416	482	371	580	866	1042
5-9	173	254	323	302	201	247	296	276	374	501	619	578
10-19	74	86	80	81	42	57	54	38	116	143	134	119
20-49	10	23	16	20	6	6	9	9	16	29	25	29
50-99		1	2	1		3	3	5		4	5	6
100-199						1				1		
Total	452	674	871	964	425	584	778	810	877	1258	1649	1774

c) Non payment of rates as recorded in some years.

	TOWN				PIER			
	1776	1796	1817	1829	1776	1796	1811	1829
No cess	72	48			74	35		
No certificate	18	17			20	56		
Wanted or poor	48	27	117		56	49	116	
Total unpaid	138	92	117		150	140	116	
%	31	14	13		35	24	15	
Empty		7		43		7	61	68

As in St. Clement's Sandwich, commercial property in the town increased steadily in value over the period: such items as the Harbour, Fish Market, Market, Butchery, Fair, Corn Mills, Theatre, and Coach offices, were all

rated.¹ The Corporation paid rates on £40 in 1796, £87 in 1816 and £115 in 1829. The Commissioners of Dover Harbour paid on £82 in 1776, £96 in 1816 and £185 in 1829. Although these rateable values crept up, new valuations made as a result of the Poor Law Amendment Act drastically upgraded such public concerns: in 1841 the Harbour for example was rated at £873.² Even so, in Pier only nine properties were then rated at more than £100, among them four hotels, Fector's bank and Minet's shop.³

The rate books provide interesting evidence of the physical growth of the town; new streets appear⁴ and also what were obviously terraces of identical houses, all with the same rateable values. Some areas were notably poorer than others: Stembrook contained almost no property but the poorest, Snargate Street contained mainly much higher rateable values, and was at this date the commercial centre of the town. Between 1796 and 1816 in Town ward two road names disappeared and six new ones came into existence; in Pier ward two names were lost but three new roads appeared. Between 1816 and 1829 three more new streets were created. In 1816 the first obvious terrace in Albion Place had been built, 24 houses all rated at £3. Parish houses were also rated at £3, so this seems to have been a humble row and was subsequently demolished. Union Row was also built about the same time, twelve houses all at £4. Sometimes there is direct indication of back to back housing, with "front" and "back part" of several properties noted in Beach Street and Fisherman's Row in 1816 and again in 1829. Blocks of houses were owned by one individual, often residing in one of the number himself, typical of developments by speculative builders, but at this date there is no evidence of large scale property development such as might be under-

1. As in St. Clement's, commercial rates have been excluded from the analysis as not giving indication of personal wealth.
2. Pier division rates for 1841 are the earliest to survive following the new valuation. No Town rates have survived for this period.
3. Whyman (1970) 49. Minet and Fector had formed a very successful partnership in the 18th century, importing and exporting, providing cross-channel transport and banking facilities, and were probably the wealthiest Dover citizens.
4. In 1776 roads were not specified, but from 1796 the lists were always arranged by streets.

taken by Minet and Fector.¹ Thus by 1829 the extensive development of Dover had clearly commenced, thus confirming the report in 1835 by the Commissioners for Municipal Corporations that "the town of Dover presents the appearance of a good deal of traffic, and was stated to be upon the whole in a thriving state. A good number of good houses have been recently built near the sea on the Eastern part of the town which are readily let."²

The population growth of the town is accurately reflected in the rate books. In each of the years analysed there were substantially more households rated, predominantly at under £10.³ (Table 8.18). In the massive clustering of rateable values at the lowest end of the scale Dover is exactly similar to St. Clement's and St. Dunstan's. In 1776 half the households were rated at under £5, and nearly all under £20. By early 19th century rather more than half were rated at under £5. There is little evidence of an upward drift of values in St. Mary's; the conservative rating policy followed by the Vestry in respect of commercial property was indeed revealed after 1834. In November 1799 the Vestry very significantly resolved "the present Rate for the relief of the Poor is extremely unequal, bearing hard upon the Poor and exempting the Rich." The next rate was therefore to be made "in proportion to what his premises are worth by the year, and such equal rate to be made at once and impartial and proper persons to value the lands and tenements." At the same time machinery was set up to deal with complaints. Except in respect of commercial property, the re-rating had little effect.

Rating lists almost certainly covered the entire population. The total of 877 households in 1776 is not inconsistent with the population growth of the town between 1676 and 1801.⁴ In the 19th century rating lists and

1. Until 1841 rate books did not consistently record owners and occupiers, so that only after that date could an intensive study be made of the development of the town.
2. PP 1835 XXIV, 292.
3. Because of the numbers involved, the £5-19 band has been subdivided into two sections, £5-9 and £10-19.
4. If a multiplier of 5 is used, this leads to a population of 4385; in 1801 it was 5,757.

census houses approximated to each other quite closely.¹ Thus it seems to have been general urban practice to list all households. The 1776 and 1796 lists were annotated to indicate when the amount due was unpaid, when there was no assessment, and when no certificate had been produced. In January 1793 the Vestry made particular efforts "to get at and Examine those persons not Assessed in the Poor Rate to their Settlements," but after 1795 this precaution became unnecessary. In 1776 a third of the ratepayers were for one reason or another unable to pay rates, in 1796 this proportion had diminished, particularly in Town ward. An 1811 churchwarden's list for Pier division was also annotated; 116 households were marked "Cant Pay", "Dont Pay" or "Exempt", which amounts to 15% unable to pay. Similarly a Town list for 1817 was marked up with 117 "poor", or 13% of the householders, with further comments such as "say they can't pay", "say they cannot - five children". From 1817 the amount of money lost through failure to pay rates, now described as "arrears", increased sharply. The year is thus emphasised in several ways as the point of crisis. In January 1829, 261 people were in arrears in Town and 198 in Pier, that is a quarter of all ratepayers (26%) and by the end of the year these figures had risen to 308 and 303, or a third of all rated households (34%). Three lists for Pier in 1831 suggest that arrears remained at the same level over the next few years. Empty houses also became significant from 1811, perhaps the result of "huddling",² whereby in times of economic difficulty two families squeezed into accommodation formerly occupied by one in order to save rates and rent.

Thus at certain times in the 18th century, up to a third of the inhabitants of St. Mary's Dover could be defined as in poverty; and in the 19th century, despite the fast-growing population, the proportion of poor remained at around a third.

1.		1801	1811	1831
	Census inhabited houses	1453	1508	1723
	uninhabited houses	66	58	29

2. Anderson (1971) 150. In 1841 it was reported that 10% of the houses in Preston and 15% in Bolton were empty for this reason.

5. Conclusion.

"The people in a civilised state may be divided into different orders; but for the purpose of investigating the manner in which they enjoy or are deprived of the requisites to support the health of their bodies and minds, they need only be divided into two classes, viz. the rich and the poor."¹

The appositeness of this early 19th century comment on society is illustrated by the East Kent rating evidence. The poor have been defined as those unable to pay rates. In the urban parishes there was no group expected as a matter of course to be unable to pay rates, and excusals were made in order to avoid making settlements. In rural parishes, by contrast, perhaps a third of all households were in this category, and furthermore the proportion increased from the 1770's, a generation before Speenhamland, to nearer two thirds. Gregory King's calculations imply comparable proportions of poor, but on a national scale the numbers and ranks of the more prosperous distract attention from the majority. At the level of each individual parish the numbers of gentry, clergy, freeholders and farmers are tiny, and the whole focus is on the poor masses.

The massive concentration of all rate assessments at the bottom of the scale makes difficult any statistical summary of the distribution of wealth; it was extremely skew. Lorenz curves, for instance, indicate greatly increasing inequality, as the wealthy few became a diminishing proportion of the population.² But it could be argued that society was fairly equal and equally poor, with just a few households placed at a distance by reason of their greater wealth. It seems simplest to summarize the findings by reference to a single proportion, of those households judged to fall below a poverty line. This line can be drawn at rateable values less than £5.³

Indeed Whitbread in 1807 proposed in his Poor Law bill to exempt all occupiers

1. Briggs (1967) 48.
2. Atkinson (1970) 244-263 discussed the failure of this measure of inequality. Another measure considered was quartile values but they do not focus on significant parts of the distribution.
3. A vast majority of excusals (274 out of 290 in Ash, Eastry and Wickhambreux) were for less than £5 rateable value.

of cottages not exceeding £5 a year, and such exemption was not to count as poor relief.¹ Using the estimates of those excluded from rating combined with those below the £5 line leads to the proportions of "poor" set out in Table 8.19. Despite inflation, in all parishes except Eastry the proportions of households below £5 rose between the early 18th century and 1831. This demonstrates a quite definite shift in social structure. In all but one parish these households were more than half the population, in one as much as nine tenths. In the urban parishes, the proportions below £5 were only a little less than in the rural. Elham stands out with a quite unusually small proportion of poor.

Table 8.19. The proportions of poor in each parish in early 18th and early 19th century.

a) <u>Rural parishes</u>	<u>Early 18th century</u>	<u>c.1801</u>	<u>c.1831</u>
Ash 1705, 1798, 1829	59	57	68
Chillenden 1700, 1801	65	70	-
Chislet 1736, 1801, 1831	77	72	79
Eastry 1705, 1812, 1834	72	63	69
Elham 1822	-	-	47
St. Nicholas 1705, 1802, 1832	69	89	82
Sarre 1802, 1832	-	73	69
Wickhambreux 1680, 1800, 1830	65	62	76
b) <u>Urban parishes</u>			
St. Clement's 1800, 1831		66	56
St. Dunstan's 1801, 1830		70	60
St. Mary's 1796, 1829		53	59

In the agricultural parishes the proportions of poor correlate closely with per capita poor rates.² (Table 8.20). Yet the same positive relation-

1. Hammond, J.L. & B. (1966) 176-7.

2. See Chapter Four, 102, table 4.6; the rates for 1831-34 have been used in table 8.20.

ship also exists with the overall wealth of each parish, as measured by its assessment to the property tax.¹ The more wealthy the property of the parish, the more poor it contained. The connection would seem to be that more valuable land was intensively cultivated - either arable or market gardening - and so required a larger labour force. The more agricultural labourers, the more poor below the £5 line. The fact that in towns the numbers of poor seem nearly as great but per capita rates were lower must indicate either a different attitude towards poverty (less closely observed so more indifferent) or that employment and wages were a little more adequate.

The rating evidence not only emphasises that the vast majority of households were poor, it also throws into prominence the widening social divisions from later 18th century. The effect of revaluations, whether in town or country, was to extend enormously the range of money values. This distributed a larger burden of poor relief costs on to the more prosperous, but at the same time must have been of psychological importance in emphasising the divisions between rich and poor. A poll tax implied a more equal appearance of society, or a different attitude to inequalities. Rural society was moving towards extremes of wealth and poverty. In the towns, while there was nearly as heavy a weight of poverty, the extremes were less marked.

Table 8.20. The proportion of poor in agricultural parishes compared with per capita poor rates and total wealth.

	Rank order		
	% below £5 c.1831	Per capita rates 1831-34	Wealth per capita 1821
Ash	5	4	2
Chislet	2	1	3
Eastry	4	5	6
Elham	6	6	7
St. Nicholas	1	2	1
Sarre	4	-	5
Wickhambreux	3	2	4

1. As printed in the 1831 census abstract, the 1815 estimates of the annual value of the real property as assessed to the property tax, related to the 1821 population. The per capita values range from £10 in St. Nicholas to £4.5 in Elham.

Population increase exacerbated the poverty of the countryside and was itself exacerbated by the process of engrossing; but in the towns it was accommodated more readily, and was not all in the lowest income group. The evidence raises the question of why population increase could occur at all in the countryside, and in this the Settlement Laws seem significant, both in discouraging mobility and in imposing on parish officers the obligation to sustain "settled" parishioners. Even so, as can be seen from the study of the demographic experience of these parishes in the next chapter, the actual increase of population was much less than the natural increase could have made possible.

CHAPTER NINE

THE GROWTH OF POPULATION

The ^{near} doubling of the population of England and Wales between the time of Gregory King's calculations and the 1801 census is an acceptable generalisation, but tantalising because the timing of the rise, the mechanisms which produced it and its regional incidence are all difficult to establish precisely. At the national level population growth has been pressed into service to explain much of the strain on the old poor law, and an examination of the population rise in each parish is an important part of any argument concerned with the old poor law. Yet to establish the coincidence of population growth and per capita poor rate increases does not prove a causal relationship, and certainly not the direction of causation, for the inter-relationship can be very complicated.

At the theoretical level, there are several demographic explanations possible for a population increase. With respect to mortality it may be quite simply that population grew through a long-standing pattern of some surplus of births over deaths, leading to a gradual accumulation of population in each generation in an exponential relationship. It may be too that there were changes in the incidence of mortality, leading to an altered age structure; particularly if mortality of the young changed, this could have promoted higher crude fertility rates. The whole structure of mortality rates also could have changed, so that the balance between births and deaths altered. In these ways the mechanism of population growth could have been out of human control, and overseers have been faced with inexorable natural factors.

There may also have been demographic changes with respect to fertility. The age of marriage may have fallen (as Malthus thought), which together with a lack of control over family size could have led to a higher birth rate; or age specific fertility may have risen, due perhaps to better nutrition or to more imprecise changes in social mores. Here the old poor

law overseers could have played a more active role, in encouraging both marriage and the birth of children by their systems of allowances.

Malthus's name epitomises this second argument about the connection between poor relief and population rise. Malthus saw the poor law as a typical mechanism (though not the only one) to encourage growth in accordance with his Principle of Population. The poor law provided a means of subsistence to those who otherwise would "prudently" find marriage impossible. Malthus assumed that more births must follow younger or more frequent marriages. Lacking the prudential check, the ultimate positive check of starvation would be faced. "Famine seems to be the last, the most dreadful resource of nature."¹ The principle he considered a realistic one. "Consider man as he really is, inert, sluggish, and averse from labour unless compelled by necessity."² The basic factors of human nature and the necessity for food were held in natural equilibrium, though he allowed that changes could occur in either resources, population or the distribution of wealth. In applying his principle to empirical evidence, Malthus found that artisans, servants, farmers and tradesmen all showed prudential restraint on their reproductive capabilities,³ but the positive check operated mainly on the lowest orders, for example the high rates of mortality suffered by their children. "The sons and daughters of peasants will not be found such rosy cherubs in real life as they are described to be in romances."⁴ The sons of labourers he thought stunted in their growth and late at arriving at maturity. "Distress from want of proper and sufficient food, hard labour and unwholesome habitations must operate as a constant check to incipient population."⁵

Although he thought poor relief enabled men to marry without the means of supporting their families, Malthus was thus forced to observe that the poor law also acted in a contrary way to discourage increase, because it

1. Malthus (1798) 139.

3. Ibid 60.

5. Ibid 99.

2. Ibid 363.

4. Ibid 73.

provided such a poor subsistence. He denied that poor law money was embezzled or badly spent - it merely had the effect of spreading distress more thinly and more widely.¹ The poor rates indeed demonstrated that the poor had not got a "command of necessities".²

Malthus's argument has been countered by suggesting that population rise occurred independently or "autonomously",³ and that the poor law was forced to deal with the consequent over-supply of labour. One such study of Kent in the 19th century asserts that in parishes where exceptional poverty existed, indicated by the use of Speenhamland allowances, there was a tendency for population rise to be below average.⁴ It has also been argued that even if the poor law did not positively promote population growth through encouraging marriage and fertility, nevertheless it could have had the effect of removing some of the limitations, most particularly through improving the infant's chances of survival.⁵ Both Blaug and Huzel are here depending on the lack of short run correlations in the 19th century between demographic characteristics and variations in poor law administration. But the sweep of Malthus's theory is not necessarily invalidated by a lack of responsiveness to particular administrative differences, since it describes an underlying tendency in society. The poor law over its long history had acted as a safety net against complete indigence, so removing in its starkest form Malthus's prudential check. The question is how much further to push the argument.

For the country as a whole, the argument has to proceed from the parliamentary papers - both the returns of poor relief expenditure and the parish register abstracts. Concerning the 18th century population rise, a great deal of debate has centred on the strengths and weaknesses of the abstracts;⁶

1. Malthus (1798) 74.

2. Ibid 319.

3. Chambers (1972) 82.

4. Huzel (1975) 437 shows that this is true in Kent for the decade 1821-30 only. In the two previous decades "allowance" parishes grew faster than non-allowance parishes.

5. Blaug (1963) 174.

6. See Chapter Two, section two.

they have been reworked many times, perhaps to the point when further exploitation is pointless.¹ Even so, they remain the one national source from which answers to the more comprehensive questions can be found, and they provide the background, as in this study, to local sources.

At the parish level, demographic experience can be examined in considerable detail from the original parish registers, as well as from other sources, making use of the techniques of aggregative analysis and in one case here family reconstitution also. Estimates of the pre-census population of the parishes have been made from Hearth Tax, Compton Census, listings of inhabitants and rating evidence, all taken in combination where possible to provide firmer support to the estimates. These provide the basis for calculations of crude rates per thousand. Local sources too have limitations and weaknesses,² but they are perhaps easier to identify on the small scale than the national aggregates.

There are three main aspects of enquiry: the timing of population rise, which can be closely compared with the timing of poor law problems; the mechanisms of change, through approximate fertility, mortality and marriage rates; and natural increase, which when it is compared with the actual size of each parish's population provides an estimate of the amount of out-migration. In so far as other demographic information of value emerges from the analysis, this has also been described, even if not so directly relevant to the examination of the poor law, since it contributes to the general evaluation of demographic factors as they worked themselves out in East Kent during the period.

1. Glass PIH. (1965). 9.
2. See Chapter Two, section two.

1. Population growth rates.

(a) At the national level.

As a summary statistic, annual compound growth rates can be calculated which place the individual East Kent parishes within a general context. At the national level, the calculation depends on two population estimates: Gregory King's for 1700 and the 1801 census. Both have been considered to need adjustment. Taking the estimates suggested by Glass¹ of 5.2 million in 1700 and 9.3 million in 1801, the growth rate is 0.6% per annum. If Gregory King's actual figure of 5.5 million is used, the growth rate is reduced to 0.5%. Upward revision of King's figures to 6 million reduces the rate still further to 0.4%. The national rate therefore was likely to have been between 0.4 and 0.6%. A mid-century population figure between 6 and 6½ million based on levels of baptisms, marriages and burials in the parish register abstracts² yields a faster rate of growth in the second half of the 18th century. The varying estimates thus give growth rates for the first half of the century ranging between 0.2 and 0.5% and for the second half of the century between 0.7 and 0.9%. The fastest rate for the ^{early} 18th century, 0.5%, still leads to an accelerated rate of 0.7% in the second half of the century.

It is possible that the parish register abstracts have led to a misleadingly low mid-century estimate, and that throughout the 18th century there was a steadily compounding increase of population. This would be critical not only for the attempts to analyse the causes of acceleration of industrialisation, but also for the possible links with 18th century rises in poor rates. It has been shown³ that the 1770's were marked by evidence of increasing difficulty in poor law administration. On a very long time scale it has also been suggested that the compound growth rate of England and Wales never varied very much, but was subject to occasional recessions, one of which may

1. Glass PIH (1969) 204.

2. Ibid 240.

3. Chapters Five and Six.

have occurred in the period 1720-50.¹ This longer perspective then shows a decisive break after 1780 in the steady upward trend of population growth.

During the last years of the old poor law, 1801-34, population grew faster than at any stage in the preceding century. The decade of 1811-21 is a particularly strange one in which to find the maximum growth rate, on average 1.53% per annum:-

	%
1801-11	1.31
1811-21	1.53
1821-31	1.45
1831-41	1.33

In a Malthusian context there was economic depression following the peace, and also two years of exceptionally bad harvests in 1816-17, followed by acute unemployment in 1818.² If these factors curbed population rise, it is not apparent from the figures; the rise could even, perhaps, have been potentially more powerful but for the discouraging economic conditions.

(b) East Kent: rural parishes.

The 18th century rate of growth in the 44 rural parishes in East Kent covered by 1705 listings seems to have been well up to the maximum estimate for England and Wales, at 0.56% per annum,³ though this can be only an approximate calculation. The rate of growth was certainly not equal in the six parishes in the 1705 listing studied in detail. The key parish of Ash, for instance, only grew at 0.24% per annum in the 18th century, and St. Nicholas at 0.79%. (Table 9.1). In the first three decades of the 19th century the 44 parishes grew less fast than the national average, 1.18% per annum as compared with 1.33%. The administrative area within which

1. Chambers (1972) 112.

2. Flinn (1961) 82-92; Post (1976) 14-37.

3. Based on simple comparison between total populations in 1705 and 1801 census returns for the same parishes. Although over 44 parishes there will probably be mismatches in areas covered, they may well cancel each other out. See Chapter Two.

they were situated, the Lathe of St. Augustine, during the same 30 year period, increased in population at the rate of 1.13%, which is overall less than the 44 parishes. Individual parish growth rates varied more widely than in the previous century, ranging from 0.1 to 1.27%. It is particularly noticeable that as between 18th and 19th centuries their rates of growth were not consistent, with the possible exception of St. Nicholas, which was nearly the fastest growing in both periods. These calculations are summarised in Table 9.1.¹

Table 9.1. Comparisons of 18th and 19th century average annual rates of growth (%).

	1705-1801	Rank	1801-1831	Rank
Ash	0.28	6	1.03	3
Chillenden	0.48	5	0.77	4
Eastry	0.64	4	1.27	1
St. Nicholas	0.79	1	1.13	2
Waldershare	0.65	3	0.10	6
Wickhambreux	0.69	2	0.55	5
44 parishes	0.56		1.18	
Lathe of St. Augustine	-		1.13	
England & Wales	0.43 to 0.58		1.33	

For Eastry, a mid-18th century population figure allows a calculation of two rates:

	1705-1774	1774-1801	1801-1831
Eastry	0.49%	0.61%	1.27%

This certainly supports the theory of accelerating growth in the later part of the century.

Two parishes studied were not covered by 1705 listings, Chislet and Elham, so that the Compton Census has to be used as a population base. The parish of Chislet seems to have grown very fast. The 1640 communicants returns (340) and the Compton Census (200, inflated to 333) are consistent.

1. Sources for population figures are given in Appendix I.

By 1801 the population was 848, so that the growth rate was 0.78%. This is supported by the rating evidence. The earliest available list, for 1736, leads to an estimated population between 470 and 590.¹ This means for the period 1676 to 1736 a growth rate between 0.57 and 0.95% and for the later 18th century between 0.91 and 0.56%. The lower estimate for 1736 implies a rapid growth thereafter. Between 1801 and 1831 the growth rate was 1.0%.

Elham, by contrast, appears not to have grown at all, or even to have declined in the 18th century. There were 600 communicants in both 1640 and 1676; there were 260 hearths in 1664. All these figures indicate a population in the region of 1,000. In 1811 Elham contained 992 persons. The rating lists of the parish, surviving from 1730, might support a population in the region of 1,050 to 1310. Like Ash, therefore, a large parish, population growth was at a slower rate than in some smaller parishes. In the 19th century Elham did experience growth, between 1811 and 1831 at the rate of 1.35%². Table 9.2 sums up for these parishes.

Table 9.2. Average annual growth rates in Chislet and Elham, 1676-1831.

	1676-1736	1736-1801	1676-1801	1801-1831
Chislet	0.57 or 0.95	0.91 or 0.56	0.78	1.00
Elham	Nil			1811-1831 1.35

Chislet thus seems to have grown rather faster than the national average in the 18th century but have slowed down in the early 19th, while Elham failed to grow in the 18th century but was close to the national average in the early 19th century.

1. See Appendix VII for method of calculations.
2. The decade 1801-10 has to be excluded because of no 1801 census return, so that the growth rate will probably seem a little faster compared with the other parishes 1801-31, since in general the first decade of the 19th century was not marked by such rapid expansion as the next two.

(c) East Kent: urban parishes.

In the 18th century the population of St. Clement's Sandwich also was static. Both the poll tax listing and the Compton Census figures are in close agreement (390 and 389 respectively), and both need inflating,¹ so that the population was in the region of 650. Boys counted 634 people in 1776 and 611 in 1786. Sandwich was reputedly declining as a port by 1700², so that its population experience matched its economic fortunes. Between 1786 and 1801, however, St. Clement's grew at the rate of 1.21%, and between 1801 and 1831 at 0.74%. The spurt of the late 18th century was thus not maintained, and St. Clement's growth in the 19th century was below the national average. Only the decade 1821-31 saw much increase, (from 777 to 912), later than the surge of population growth in the rural parishes and nationally. Rating assessments generally support this pattern.

In St. Dunstan's Canterbury also the decade 1821-31 witnessed the fastest growth, but during the 18th century the population of this parish more than doubled, the Compton Census figure leading to a growth rate of 0.57% (345³ to 707). Rating evidence also points to a similar size of population.⁴ In early 19th century the growth rate dropped slightly to 0.44% and so lagged behind the national average at this time.

The most significant growth rates occurred in St. Mary's Dover, of 0.67% between 1676 and 1801, and 1.75% between 1801 and 1831,⁵ both periods being well above the national average. This is the reverse of Sandwich's position: Dover was an expanding town and port and its population growth reflected this. The growth rates for these three urban parishes are summarised in table 9.3.

1. See Chapter Eight. The evidence of baptism and burial totals also supports this. The communicants returns for 1640, 468 persons, are not easy to reconcile, but perhaps also need inflating, suggesting population decline between 1640 and 1676.
2. See Chapter Three.
3. Compton Census figure inflated from 207.
4. Between 272 and 340, according to multiplier for household size.
5. Compton Census figure inflated from 1500.

Table 9.3. Average annual growth rates in three urban parishes 1676-1831.

	1676-1801	1776-1801	1801-1831
St. Clement's	nil	1.21	0.74
St. Dunstan's	0.57		0.44
St. Mary's	0.67		1.75

The general impression of population rise in the area is that it was surprisingly uneven between parishes, some hardly increasing at all, others increasing fast. Both Ash and Elham, markedly large rural parishes, had sluggish or nil rates of growth in the 18th century. In the 19th century, with the single exception of St. Mary's Dover, no parish, urban or rural, matched the national growth rate, though nonetheless in many parishes there was an acceleration of population growth. If urban mortality was high, the rapid growth of St. Mary's Dover and to a lesser extent St. Dunstan's Canterbury must have depended on considerable migration.

Unimpressive though most of these population growth rates were, there is another perspective which must not be overlooked. In absolute terms, each parish (with the probable exception before 1801 of Elham and St. Clement's Sandwich) had to accommodate more people. It should be borne in mind that a growth rate of 0.69% over 100 years, or 0.58% over 125 years (for example 1676 to 1801) leads to a doubling of population.

Overall, growth rates bear no exact correspondence with per capita poor rates; in some cases there is support for the thesis that growing population marched with high poor rates, but in others the opposite is true. (See Table 9.4). Thus St. Clement's had both low population growth and poor rates and St. Nicholas high throughout; but in the 19th century Chislet and Wickhambreux had high poor rates but relatively slow population growth, while Elham and Eastry had low poor rates but high population growth. Overall there is certainly no simple correspondence.

Table 9.4. Comparison of population growth rates with per capita poor rates¹ (rank orders).

(a) 18th century

	Population c.1700-1801	Poor rates 1791-1800
Ash	4	2
Chislet	2	1
St. Clement's	5	5
St. Dunstan's	2	4
St. Nicholas	1	3

(b) 19th century

	Population 1801-31	Poor rates 1831-34
Ash	4	4
Chislet	5	1
Eastry	2	5
Elham	1	7
St. Clement's	6	9
St. Dunstan's	8	6
St. Nicholas	3	2
Wickhambreux	7	2

1. Derived from Chapter Four, section 3.

2. Urban parishes: demographic experience.

The parish register abstracts contain summaries¹ of relevant demographic data for Canterbury, Dover and Sandwich, and for the Lathe of St. Augustine, though the parishes included in these urban summaries varied after 1801: Dover was taken to include the Cinque Port "limbs" of Birchington and Folkestone, but after 1801 only the two urban parishes of St. Mary's and St. James; Sandwich similarly included Walmer until 1801, and thereafter only the three urban parishes of St. Clement's, St. Mary's and St. Peter's and the extraparochial place of St. Bartholomew's Hospital. This information has been supplemented with the data extracted from the Sandwich parish registers by Boys and printed in the Collections for an History of Sandwich (1792), and an aggregative analysis of St. Dunstan's parish registers, which have been printed up to 1800 by Meadows Cowper (1887). From these sources much more detailed information on the demographic experience of the area can be gained to fill out the summary of growth presented in the last section.

For both Sandwich and St. Dunstan's Canterbury there is some indication of probable under-registration due to nonconformity which is not evident from the bare totals of events recorded in the parish register abstracts. Boys collected the parish register data from an interest "in the doctrine of annuities and political arithmetic."² He was particularly interested in his own parish of St. Clement's, so the information for this parish is more detailed. However he commented generally on the effects of nonconformity on the registers:

"From 1690 the baptisms of the presbyterians are added to those of the church. There was a great number of dissenters of different denominations in Sandwich in the last century and at the beginning of this; some of whose pastors baptised, but they had no burial ground. Their registers are all lost except that of the presbyterians."³

1. Reproduced in Appendix VIII section 1.
2. Boys (1792) 282.
3. Ibid 389.

This comment clearly supports the suggestion that parish registers were characterised by a greater deficiency of baptisms than burials;¹ but Boys also implies that during the 18th century the number of dissenters had declined, which makes inconsistent any general inflation of baptisms and burials to compensate for deficiencies.² The Compton Census³ bears Boys out, 22% of communicants in the three Sandwich parishes being returned as nonconformists. St. Clement's, however, only had 12%, while the other two parishes each had 26%.

For St. Dunstan's too there is evidence of nonconformity. In the parish rating lists there were a number of Jews indicated, and there was a Jewish synagogue in the parish. On 4 May 1660 the Register contains the entry: "the first child was baptised in the Font since it was Anabaptist-acaly abused," a clear hint of the extreme Puritan beliefs of some inhabitants. The marriage figures during the Commonwealth period also point to nonconformity. From an annual average of eight a year in the three previous decades, in 1643 there is a sudden jump to 14, and between 1643 and 1653 167 marriages were recorded, an average of 15 a year. After 1653, when the Act for Registers came into force, almost no marriages were recorded until the Restoration, and for a considerable period thereafter only three or four a year. The pattern of marriage numbers seems therefore to reflect administrative rather than demographic factors. In St. Dunstan's too the Compton Census recorded 37% of communicants as nonconformists.⁴ It is difficult to know how far the Anabaptists and other dissenters maintained their strength during the 18th century. In Dover, St Mary's contained rather fewer dissenters (13%) though St. James' had 22%. Here the problem was likely to be not so much nonconformity as the numbers migrating into the town and the

1. Krause. PIH (1969) 383.

2. Krause based his suggestion of the increasing deficiencies of registers in the late 18th century not on numbers of dissenters, which he said had fallen since the early 1750's, but on other factors such as opening non-Anglican burial grounds and laxer Anglican attitudes. PIH (1969) 385.

3. Chalklin (1960) 160-171.

4. Ibid 160-171. The other extra-mural parish adjoining St. Dunstan's, Holy Cross, also had a high proportion (51%) of nonconformists.

size of the population.

These limitations of the parish register material mean that it must be searched for trends rather than absolute levels of baptism, marriage and burial rates. Within these limitations, further light can be thrown on demographic experience in the urban parishes.

In the area of the Lathe of St. Augustine, baptisms began to increase from 1740, more strongly from 1770, and a major rise commenced in the 1770's. On average each year between 1801-10 there were more than twice as many baptisms as for individual years between 1700 and 1760. It seems unlikely that a rise of this magnitude was the result either of deficient registration in earlier periods or of increased fertility. It points strongly to population increase from 1740 onwards. The only year when burials exceeded baptisms was in 1720, though as data was only collected for the individual years of 1700, 1710, 1720, up to 1780, there could well have been extreme fluctuations of both baptisms and burials which would have altered the apparent steady natural increase. If the years 1760, 1770 and 1780 are typical, then the average natural increase of that 30 years is enough to account for the increased number of baptisms in the following 30 years,¹ in a natural exponential growth relationship.

The experience of Dover was very much in line with the general pattern of the area. There was a considerable surplus of baptisms over burials in the town from 1730;² only in 1720 was there a deficit. Baptisms began to increase in absolute terms from 1750 and more strongly from 1780. For 1801 the baptism rate is too high, 56.7 per thousand, because of the limitations of the data³ but nonetheless the rate seems to have fallen steadily

1. Natural increase 1760-178, 1770-230, 1780-115; more than 5,000 extra people could thus have been born. Over a 30 year span of child-bearing with four children per couple, there would be 1,000 more baptisms. The number of baptisms in 1760 was 748; in 1801-10 there were 1776 baptisms a year.
2. Figures set out in Appendix VIII section 1. The experience of Dover itself is assumed to be the preponderant one before 1800 though Birchington & Folkestone were included in the parish register abstracts.
3. Calculations based on 5 years 1801-5 and 1826-30 and 10 years 1806-15 and 1816-25 round census populations, these being the relevant figures available in the parish register abstracts.

and rather surprisingly in the early 19th century. Perhaps as the population of the town grew the two churches of St. James and St. Mary's were increasingly unable to register all vital events. The hundreds a year which they did register are impressive. Matching the fall in the baptism rate the burial rate also fell, from 32 to 19 per thousand between 1801 and 1830.

Table 9.5. Crude baptism and burial rates per thousand: Dover 1801-30.

	Baptism	Burial
1801	56.7	32.0
1811	46.8...	30.0
1821	38.0	21.5
1831	32.3	19.1

By contrast, Sandwich and Canterbury both seem to have experienced very similar and unfavourable demographic conditions, which were out of step with the general pattern of the Lathe of St. Augustine. In Sandwich, the parish register abstracts show five occasions between 1700 and 1780 when burials exceeded baptisms; the same is true of the whole decade 1791 to 1800. Natural increase in the other years, if this was typical, could not have made good the deficit through mortality, so that even to maintain its population size, Sandwich depended absolutely on migration. In Canterbury six out of the nine years between 1700 and 1780 were years of deficit, though here the last year when burials exceeded baptisms was 1780, earlier than in Sandwich. Natural increase only became significant, however, after 1810. In both Sandwich and Canterbury this low rate of natural increase was in part due to the fact that baptisms increased only very slowly, such small gains being registered from the last two decades of the 18th century.

The fuller figures for Sandwich collected by Boys¹ confirm the typicality of the parish register abstracts. From 1620, when Boys' figures for all the Sandwich parishes commence, until 1750, burials usually exceeded baptisms even when the average of a whole decade is taken; only in the decades 1680-89

1. Set out in Appendix VIII section 2.

and 1730-39 was this trend reversed. From 1750, however, decadal averages produce a natural increase which from 1801 became significant. Sandwich experienced some extremely devastating attacks of mortality. Plague affected the town in 1637, 1644 and 1666; according to Boys the two plague years of 1637 and 1666 were most severe, nearly 500 people dying in each,¹ perhaps as much as a quarter of the town's population in two successive generations. Boys mentioned jail-fever in 1745-6, and smallpox in 1754 and 1776, but these 18th century diseases had nothing like the dramatic effect on the population that plague had had. The poor record of Sandwich with respect to mortality continued into the 19th century and was partly at least attributable to the water supply. The Delf Stream was a problem and indeed was recognised as such as late as 1894.² Hasted commented in 1800 "the town is not well supplied with good water."³

Boys' figures for St. Clement's parish alone commenced in 1570, and seem to indicate that there at any rate the 16th and early 17th century were more favourable demographically than later periods. (Graph 1). Between 1570 and 1649 more decades produced some natural increase than decrease, but after 1650 burials exceeded baptisms in every decade until 1800. A curious feature both of the town as a whole and of St. Clement's parish, however, is that total numbers of baptisms tended to fall from mid-17th century while burials remained at similar levels though in the earlier period fluctuating more widely. The decline in baptisms after 1650 may have been a reflection of the nonconformity in the town, and the establishment of separate congregations, in which case the apparent demographic decline of the town in later 17th and 18th century needs revision.

Crude baptism and burial rates,⁴ set out in table 9.6 show over the

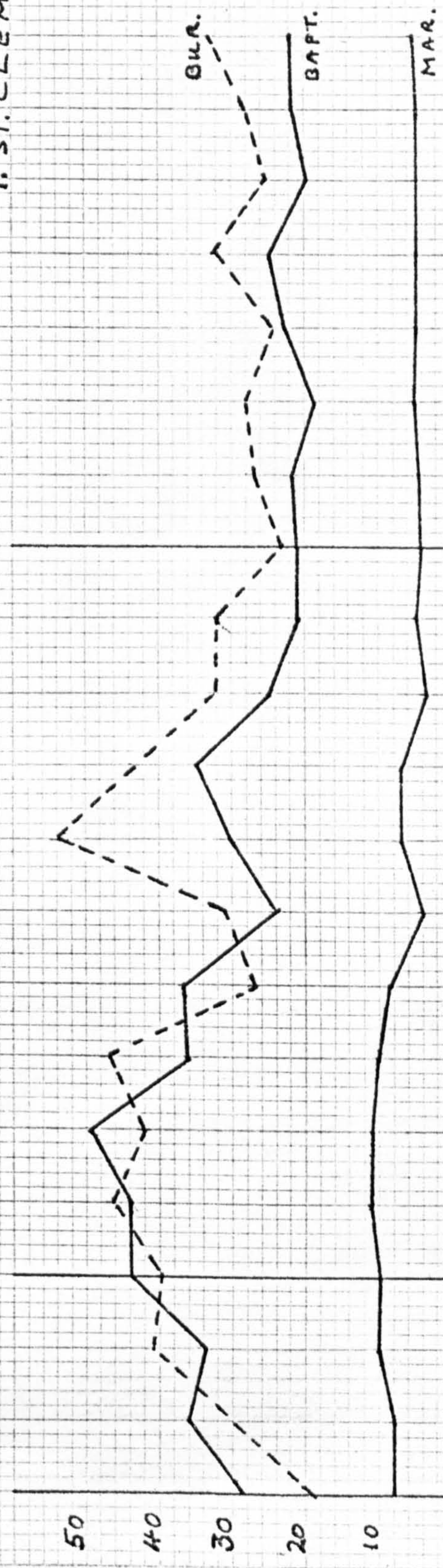
1. Gardiner (1954) 220 reported that 1,000 men, women and children died in "the great sickness" in 1644, and that the town was "so poverty-stricken it could not meet the expense involved in the disaster" and had to be assisted by loans and charity.
2. Bentwich (1971) 103-12 describes the attempts of the Medical Officer of Health to persuade the Town Council to instal a new water supply.
3. Hasted (1800) X, 167.
4. Calculated for the period 1660-1699 on the basis of the Compton Census figures: Sandwich 1416 inflated to 2360; St. Clement's 389 inflated to 650; for 1770-79 on Boys count: Sandwich 2259; St. Clement's 641; and for 1801-30 on Census: 1801: 2452; 1811: 2735; 1821: 2912.

GRAPH 9.1

BAPTISMS, MARRIAGES + BURIALS : ST. DUNSTAN'S + ST. CLEMENT'S, 1570-1840

(DECADAL MEANS PLOTTED AGAINST FIRST YEAR OF DECADE)

1. ST. CLEMENT'S



2. ST. DUNSTAN'S



period 1660 to 1830 a fairly constant level of baptisms but a very distinct fall in the burial rate. The baptism rate fluctuated between 32 and 47 per thousand, being highest generally in the decade 1801-10 but in St. Clement's declining from mid-17th century. The burial rate, on the other hand, reached very high levels in the 17th century during outbreaks of plague, in the 18th century was apparently low generally but still high in St. Clement's, and in the 19th century fell sharply after 1810.

Table 9.6. Crude baptism and burial rates per thousand: Sandwich 1640-1830.

	Sandwich		St.Clement's	
	Baptism	Burial	Baptism	Burial
1660-69	40.4	63.6	45.8	83.7
1670-79	39.8	48.0	53.8	66.2
1680-89	43.7	40.6	38.5	48.6
1690-99	32.0	41.1	31.8	48.6
1770-79	33.6	30.5	34.6	51.6
1801-10	46.6	28.8		
1811-20	38.3	20.5		
1821-30	33.0	20.2		

While population growth in Sandwich was never naturally large, the fall in the death rate seems significant even after allowance for defective registration has been made. The high death rate and stagnant population total are the background in St. Clement's to the very stable levels of poor expenditure. The constant in-migration and heavy mortality no doubt made the settlement laws less biting in effect, since migration out of the town would presumably be less than from a rural parish with better demographic conditions.

The demographic experience of St. Dunstan's is very like that of Sandwich and Canterbury generally, even though St. Dunstan's was properly a suburb and moreover small and fairly rural at the beginning of the 18th century. Burials exceeded baptisms in every decade from 1571 to 1800; it

was only a small deficit in absolute numbers each decade, but nonetheless the population was not self-sustaining. (Graph 1). Yet from other evidence it appears that the population doubled between 1676 and 1801. Migration into the parish would seem always to have been necessary to sustain it. Years of heavier mortality were 1574 and 1575, 1583, 1596, 1625, 1665, 1729 and 1820 when burials were 100% above the average for the preceding and following five years.¹ Taking the absolute totals of burials in each decade, however, the 1620's and 1630's were the worst. Crude rates of baptisms and burials per thousand² which are set out in table 9.7 are perhaps too low because of registration deficiencies. Even so, the fall in the burial rate from 50 per thousand in 1676 to 21 per thousand in 1831 must reflect a real fall. The baptism rate was 39 per thousand in 1676, and around 30 per thousand in the early 19th century. In absolute numbers, the upsurge of baptisms evident in the Lathe of St. Augustine found only a weak echo in St. Dunstan's.

Table 9.7. Crude baptism and burial rates per thousand: St. Dunstan's 1676-1831.

	Baptism	Burial
1676	39.1	50.1
1801	31.1	31.9
1811	29.5	22.2
1821	28.9	23.1
1831	28.0	21.1

The demographic experience of the urban parishes was thus generally unfavourable until the 19th century, but Dover seems to have been the exception. Absolute numbers of baptisms rose so significantly after 1780 that it seems reasonable to look for population growth before this date to produce the rise, which was to accelerate in the 19th century. At the same time natural increase was generated even more strongly by the quite distinct fall in the

1. Smallpox was the cause of the 1729 peak in burials. The Kentish Post reported on 19 July 1729 that 140 people in Canterbury had died, though 1385 cases had been reported.
2. Calculated from the 10-yearly average of which the census year is the mid-point, and inflating the Compton Census from 207 to 345.

burial rate. This change in urban experience has been termed a demographic revolution.¹ The problems perceived by poor law administrators from the 1770's thus seem to come a little before the real impact of population growth.

1. Chambers (1972) 103.

3. Rural parishes: demographic experience.

(a) Sources.

The registers of six rural parishes have been analysed aggregatively:¹ Ash, Chislet, Eastry, Elham, St. Nicholas and Wickhambreux. More detailed calculations have been made from the Ash registers than from the other five.

The most obvious deficiency of the registers is in the Commonwealth period, when four out of the six have gaps;² in Chislet and Eastry where the registers continued to be kept, it still seems that registration was affected by the civil upheavals. In all but Ash, according to the evidence of the Compton Census, nonconformity was insignificant. Only two nonconformists were acknowledged in Eastry (0.4% of communicants) and Wickhambreux (1.2%), six in Elham (1%), eight in Chislet (4%) and none at all in St. Nicholas. In the 19th century there was a Methodist chapel in St. Nicholas, which between 1821 and 1830 registered 26 baptisms and six burials.³ This makes only a marginal difference to the crude baptism and burial rates. In Elham in 1829 the Bible Christians reputedly arrived in the town; they were held partially responsible for the outbreak of the Swing Riots there in 1830.⁴ Again they could have affected the level of crude rates only marginally. In general, where the population base can be regarded with some confidence, the crude rates which have been calculated do not imply much under-registration; at least they correspond with what is suggested as "normal".⁵

In one respect only do all the registers seem defective, and that is in the numbers of marriages recorded. With crude baptism rates of at least 30 per thousand and often more, the marriage rate should have been at least eight per thousand.⁶ In the 17th century in some of these parishes the marriage rate was indeed higher than this, though like the high baptism

1. See Appendix VII section 2 for notes on methods used.
2. There are serious gaps in the "great majority" of registers listed in the Parish Register Abstract of 1833. Eversley I H D (1966) 47.
3. PRO/HO/129/70/1 - the Wesleyan chapel was built in 1822.
4. Hobsbawm and Rudé (1969) 187.
5. Eversley IHD (1966) 54 says that "rural areas never reached crude death rates below 15 per thousand.....until long after civil registration began. The birth rate, on the other hand, was very rarely below 30 per thousand."
6. Ibid 55.

rates this may be a product of an underestimate of the population base. In the 19th century, however, nowhere in these six parishes was the marriage rate ever as high as eight per thousand. However, there is also definite evidence of increased numbers of marriages registered after Hardwicke's Act of 1753;¹ for this reason Rickman regarded marriage statistics before the Act as thoroughly inaccurate.² Only in Ash have the marriage figures been used. Otherwise it was felt the most important information could be derived from baptism and burial figures.

Because of its size, the apparent reliability of the population count of 1705 and the adequacy of the registration, more detailed work on the Ash parish registers has been undertaken. Although a large parish, Ash is physically clearly delineated, with the river Stour and the Wantsum marshes forming the boundaries on the north and east, and the Wingham brook on the south. The main settlement is along the street, but although there are numerous scattered hamlets as well, only on the western side would it have been easier to go to a neighbouring church (Elmstone) than to Ash. The parish had a tradition of careful administration, evidenced by the large collection of records of all branches of parish activity. In these circumstances the parish clerk would perhaps have been more conscious of the need for record keeping of baptisms, marriages and burials. The 1705 listing is typical with its detail of family relationships and occupations, in the handwriting of the then parish clerk. The total population listed is surprisingly close to the 1801 census count, which tends to support its comprehensiveness.

It is not suggested that registration in Ash was uniformly and absolutely accurate, but that there is no evidence of any major weaknesses. In the Compton Census, 100 out of 220 families were said to be nonconformists, but if a population of 1,000 is assumed at that date the crude baptism rate of

1. Eversley IHD (1966) 63 notes generally that registration became more comprehensive, and also supplied more information on the printed form.
2. Glass PIH(1969) 223.

34, marriage rate of 7 and burial rate of 22 does not imply substantial omissions. Certain entries in the registers themselves show nonconformists using the parish church. For example there was a baptism performed by a presbyterian minister (1699), the burial of an un-baptised child (not an infant) "being of such a sect" (1750), the burial of the wife of a dissenting minister (1787), and presumably many more similar occasions not specifically described by the recorder. Again, the late 18th century crude baptism rates, ranging from 33 to 38 per thousand do not support the theory of deteriorating registration after 1780;¹ around 1811 indeed the baptism rate was as high as 42 per thousand. In 1831 there is the testimony of Gleig, the vicar who studied the parish, that only one baptism a year was omitted from the registers.² When civil registration was introduced in 1837, the numbers of baptisms in Ash church fell sharply:

1831	79	1836	75
1832	75	1837	46
1833	80	1838	55
1834	70	1839	51
1835	68	1840	41

This seems to suggest a sudden release from the necessity to use the church registration system and thus supports the comprehensiveness of registration before 1837. In Ash there was no sudden rise of baptisms in 1837 as noted nationally,³ as though in appreciation of the need for registration following the Act. The trends emerging from the registers of as large a rural parish as Ash will, therefore, be fairly reliable evidence. It seems best

1. Krause PIH (1969) 384-5; Eversley agrees that generally English registers "tend to be less and less useful after 1780." IHD(1966) 53. See Chapter Two, section 2.
2. In his reply to the 1831 Census question asking for an estimate of deficiencies, PRO/HO/71/38 Pt.I. Dr. Huzel noted this for me. There was a Wesleyan chapel erected in 1821 in the hamlet of Westmarsh, but presumably vital events were still registered in Ash parish church PRO/HO/129/71/1/1.
3. Glass PIH(1969) 231 noted the "peculiar" trend in baptisms nationally rising suddenly in 1837 and then falling 1838-40. Thus Brownlee's ratio of births/baptisms by which he corrected the 18th century data may be based on an untypical period when civil registration was new.

to accept them at face value and not attempt to make adjustments based on a ratio of supposed to recorded events.¹

(b) Natural increase and crude rates.

The six rural parishes show surprisingly diverse trends in demographic experience, and considerable discrepancies also in the timing of population increase. They seem to fall into two distinct groups. Three parishes: Chislet, St. Nicholas and Wickham, produced apparently little natural increase until late 18th century. Baptisms and burials in each decade were always fairly close, with some decades showing a deficit. The other three parishes: Ash, Eastry and Elham, produced a considerable natural surplus in most decades, and the population would appear to have been increasing particularly strongly from the later 18th century. (See Graphs 2 and 3).²

(i) Chislet, St. Nicholas and Wickham.

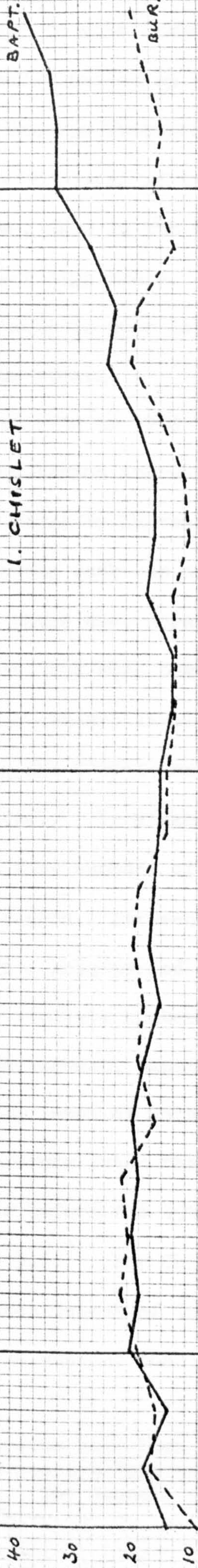
The three parishes of low natural increase are all marshland parishes.³ Settlements are situated on land above the 50 foot contour, and are nearly surrounded by the Stour and its marshes. In two cases the 1720's was the last decade when the average of burials equalled or exceeded baptisms; in the third, Wickham, this last period of demographic restriction was one decade later. Unlike the urban parishes, therefore, there was some natural increase in the 18th century, but the major feature of these three parishes was its slow rate. It was also the case that from the late 17th century there was a declining trend in both baptisms and burials for 40 years or so. This is more marked in the larger parish of Chislet (population 848 in 1801) but is also true for Wickham (population 411 in 1801). There was thus no buoyancy in baptisms to counter the high mortality. For St. Nicholas it is

1. Chambers (1952) 3 came to a similar conclusion: "The procedure of applying a uniform ratio of correction by which baptisms and burials could be turned into births and deaths was rejected, in view of the diverse characteristics of the agricultural, industrial and urban centres studied, the unreliability of the population estimates, and the fluctuating influence of migration and nonconformity to which they were subject."
2. The graphs have been drawn to show decadal totals e.g. 1600-1610 (11 years) plotted against the beginning point. Data is set out in Appendix VIII section 3.
3. Chambers (1972) 98 referred to the poorer demographic experience of lowland zone parishes which he associated with malaria (or ague). The Wrangle(Lincs) population for example until mid-18th century was only maintained by migration into the parish. Ibid 46.

GRAPH 9.2

BAPTISMS + BURIALS : CHISLET, ST. NICHOLAS & WICKHAMBREUX

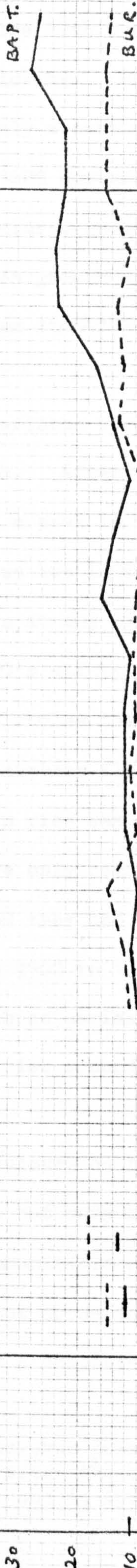
(DECADAL MEANS PLOTTED AGAINST FIRST YEAR OF DECADE)



1. CHISLET

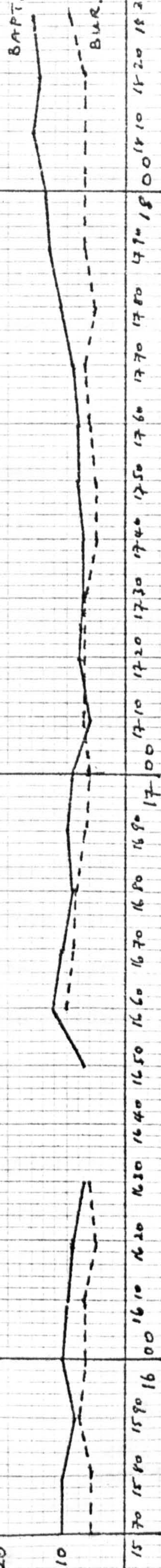
40
30
20
10

2. ST. NICHOLAS



30
20
10

3. WICKHAMBREUX



not so easy to make comparisons with the 17th century because the registers for the early period up to 1660 are missing. The survival of some of the relevant Bishops Transcripts allows only a partial comparison to be made; from this the level of baptisms 1567-1620 appears the same, if not actually any higher, than in the later 17th century, indicating a similarly stagnant if not declining trend. If population growth was the single most significant variable in poor law expense, then 1660-1740 should have been a period of minimum strain.

Until 1730 or 1740 these three parishes were not contributing very much to any population increase in the area. After this date, numbers of baptisms began to increase, rising to a peak in the 19th century. The timing of the peak was not simultaneous but in the 1820's in all three parishes there were more baptisms than at any time in the previous 240 years. In Chislet, the rise began in the 1770's and by 1801-10 baptisms were double early 17th century levels. In St. Nicholas the comparable rise was established in the 1780's, and thereafter numbers fluctuated around the new higher level. In Wickham, no certain rise was discernible until 1801-10, and even then numbers of baptisms were only recovering the levels of an earlier period - between 1560 and 1660 they had been usually above ten a year, but a long period of stagnation 1700 to 1780 had intervened. In terms of absolute numbers, in these three parishes while burials remained steady throughout, baptisms began to rise around 1800, and thus was generated a new level of natural increase.

The crude rates that can be calculated on the basis of population estimates before the 19th century are not very secure. They are set out in table 9.8.¹ For Chislet, the communicants returns of 1640 (340) and the Compton Census of 1676 (200) do not agree easily with each other, unless it is assumed that the first was a complete count of population and

1. The rates have been calculated wherever possible from the average of five years before and five years after the census date, i.e. 11 years in all. The decadal totals are set out in Appendix VIII section 3.

the second needs inflating. If the population at both dates is said to be 340,¹ then a baptism rate of 62 per thousand and burial rate of 57 per thousand in 1640 results, and 54 and 64 in 1676. These seem implausibly high. The 1640 return inflated perhaps leads to a more likely population of 566, and baptism and burial rates of 37 and 34 per thousand. It is possible that the 200 of the Compton Census is an anomalous return of numbers of families (as in Ash) plus all servants counted individually;² it leads to too large a population (about 1,000) if regarded simply as a return of families. Thus it is perhaps best merely to say that both crude baptism and burial rates could have been very high, and that even if the total population were nearer 600 than 300, the rates would still be over 30 per thousand.

In the 19th century the baptism rate in Chislet fell from 37 per thousand around 1801 to 31 in 1821; the burial rate, however, was only 19 in 1801 and 16 in 1821, and no matter how deficient the registration, this represented a substantial amelioration of mortality conditions from 17th century levels.

For St. Nicholas, the calculation of rates is complicated by the fact that the parish church also served the Vill of Sarre. It was only a small place, but with its unhealthy position may have contributed disproportionately to the work of the parish priest. Once the port of entry into Thanet, Hasted noted that "the continued fogs and damp vapours, occasioned by the vast quantity of marshes inned from the decreasing waters, soon made this place exceedingly unhealthy, and at the same time unpleasant, and of course decreased the populousness of it, so that it has been for a long time but very thinly inhabited, and that by those only whose occupations among these sickly marshes oblige them to reside in it."³ The communicants returns of 1640 (300)

1. Compton Census inflated is 333.
2. This seems to be the basis of at least one 1705 listing (for Minster) and may therefore have been a recognised way of counting population for administrative purposes.
3. Hasted (1800) X 249-50.

and 1676 (160) for St. Nicholas may include the Vill. In 1689 there were 52 in the Poll Tax listing of Sarre, which only included those over 16 and liable for tax, and in 1705 there were 245 in St. Nicholas. This suggests a population of 330 around 1700, so that 300 in 1640 also seems highly consistent.¹ On the basis of a population of 300 in 1640 and 1676 and 330 in 1705 the crude baptism rate in St. Nicholas fell from 48.5 to 35.5 and the burial rate from 52 to 34.5. Again in the 19th century the baptism rate was 33 in 1801 and fell slightly thereafter, while the burial rate was only 17 in 1801 and 16 in 1831. If the numbers registered in the Methodist chapel are added for the decade 1821 to 1830, the baptism rate is 31.5 and the burial rate 16.5. There remains an amazing improvement in the death rate.

Wickhambreux is the third marsh parish examined. In both 1640 and 1676 the population was returned as just under 170. To be consistent with the 1705 listing (213) these figures do not need inflating, but they produce crude baptism rates of 42 and 63 per thousand in 1640 and 1676 respectively, and burial rates of 36 and 59. If it is assumed that the 1705 listing is defective, and the ecclesiastical returns need inflating, then the rates tumble to 25 and 38 for baptisms, 22 and 35 for burials. The uninflated population figures may well be more plausible. Nineteenth century rates fluctuated widely: baptisms were highest in 1811 (39 per thousand) and lowest in 1801 (30 per thousand); burials were lowest in 1811 (15 per thousand) but increased to 19 per thousand in 1831. Generally Wickhambreux seems to have had a higher birth rate than the other two marsh parishes, but experienced an equally dramatic fall in the burial rate, such that natural increase was rapid in this parish in the 19th century. In such a small parish, however, rates are very sensitive to small random fluctuations.

In all three parishes, absolute totals of burials remained steady, despite both increasing numbers of baptisms and growing population. As a

1. The 267 yielded by the Compton Census, even when inflated, thus seems too low.

result, the baptism rate actually fell from 17th and early 18th century levels, while the burial rate fell dramatically. The onus of explaining the increasing population is thus firmly on the fall in the burial rate. As marsh parishes, one possible explanation of this improved mortality is in the land drainage which was carried out from later 18th century. In 1776 the Commissioners of Sewers for the "General Vallies", which comprised all the lands from Fordwich Bridge to Sandwich Haven, (the marshes surrounding the three parishes described), sought powers to make a new cut because they said the lands "are frequently overflowed."¹ When Chadwick was collecting information on public health 70 years later, Mr Emerson, one of the medical officers of the Eastry Union, reported that the eastern coast of Kent was free of malignant and contagious fevers because of the "total absence of malaria", "the whole district being secured from innundations by the most complete and effectual system of drainage and sewerage." Another medical officer of the Eastry Union, Mr Elgar, was a little less categoric, noting that the parishes comprising the union were close to marshes separating the Isle of Thanet from the rest of East Kent, with the consequence that in spring and autumn "the inhabitants are exposed to the malaria therefrom." "Some years back, a great portion of the parishes adjoining these marshes was under water from the end of autumn to the early part of the following spring; then, agues and fevers of all characters prevailed to a very great extent." However, he concurred in the statement that over the last few years owing to the excellent plan of draining, there had been very few fever cases.² Both observers thus noticed a decline in their lifetimes which they attributed to improvements in drainage. No doubt earlier civil engineering efforts could also have resulted in some improvement in health, but clearly not to such an extent that in the 19th century there was no room for further improvement.

1. 16 Geo 3 c.62 (1776)

2. Chadwick ed. Flinn (1965) 1521.

Table 9.8. Estimated crude baptism and burial rates per thousand:
Chislet, St. Nicholas and Wickhambreux 1640-1831.

	Census Date	Population	Baptism	Burial
1. <u>Chislet</u>	1640	340	62.0	56.7
	1676	340	53.5	64.2
	1801	848	37.0	19.4
	1811	912	35.6	18.2
	1821	1135	30.8	16.3
	1831	1145	33.0	18.0
2. <u>St. Nicholas</u>	1640	300	48.5	52.0
	1676	300	36.3	38.3
	1705	330	35.5	34.5
	1801	689	33.4	17.4
	1811	666	31.8	22.7
	1821	781	31.9	19.1
	1831	926	28.7	15.9
3. <u>Wickhambreux</u>	1640	163	41.8	36.3
	1676	169	63.0	58.6
	1705	213	43.9	28.2
	1801	411	30.1	17.5
	1811	430	39.1	14.8
	1821	469	29.5	15.7
	1831	486	35.9	19.4

(ii) Ash, Eastry and Elham.

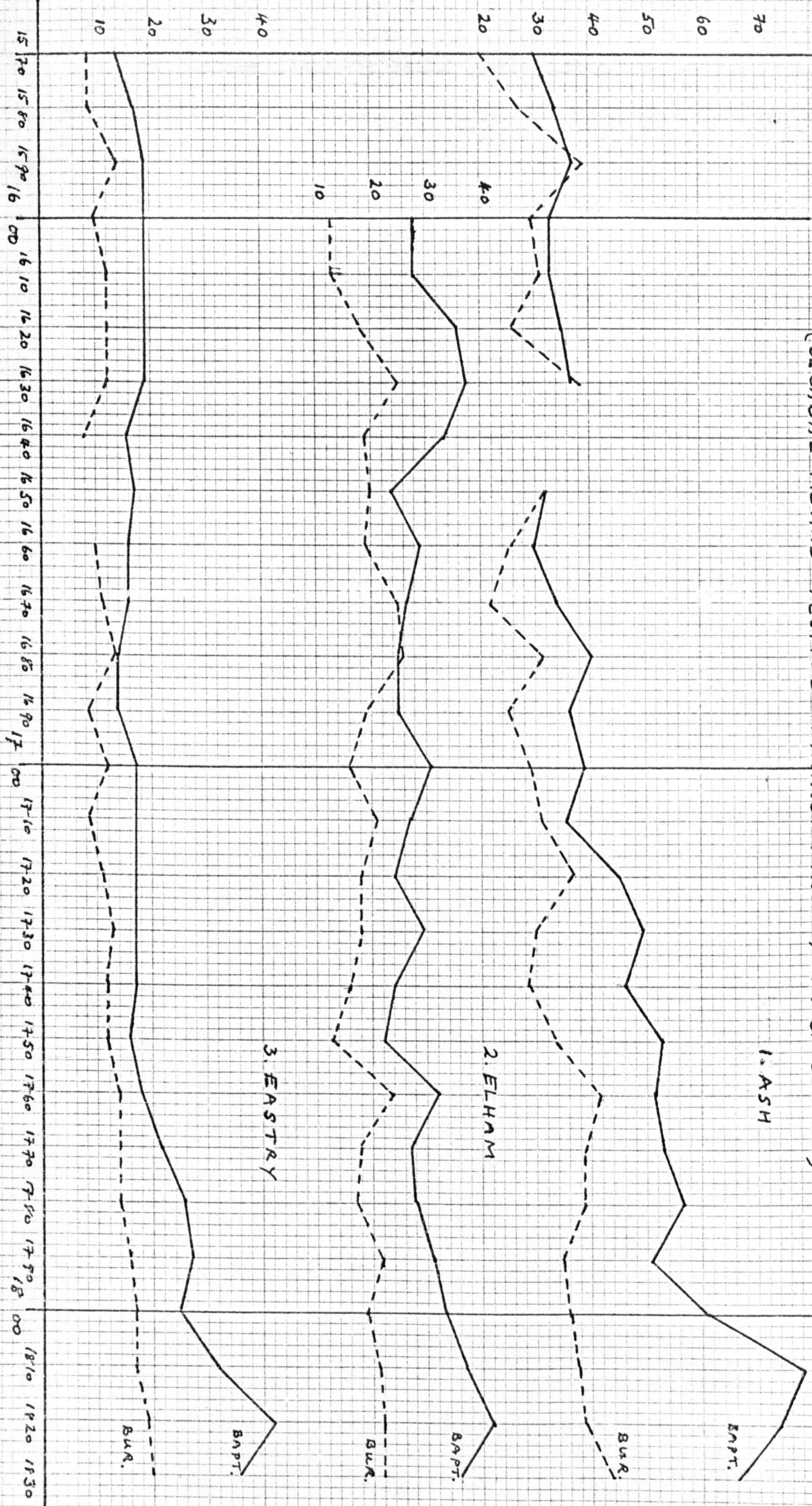
Ash, Eastry and Elham, on the other hand, are distinguished from the three previous parishes by the common factor of considerable natural increase from at least the late 17th century. Eastry and Elham are both downland parishes, but Ash contains a substantial amount of marshland within its boundaries. Planché, the 19th century historian of the village, said "The climate is cold, but in the higher portions of the parish from Guilton to New Street the situation is healthy, a fresh sea-breeze sweeping across the low grounds, neutralising the effects of what some of the good folks in the neighbourhood call the "marshal air."¹ The main centre of settlement is in

1. Planché (1864) 146.

GRAPH 9.3

BAPTISMS + BURIALS : ASH, EASTRY + ELHAM

(DECADAL MEANS PLOTTED AGAINST FIRST YEAR OF DECADE)



fact along a spine of higher land from Guilton to New Street, thus described as healthy. In these three parishes, the last period of demographic constraint was in the 17th century: 1680 in two of the three, and 1650 in the third. Not only was there a substantial natural increase in the 18th century, but in the 17th century also: there were only two decades in Ash (1590's and 1630's) and one in Elham (1680's) when burials were so numerous as temporarily to reduce the population. In individual years there were exceptional peaks of mortality, but overall experience was generally favourable. (Graph 4). Here no doubt was generated some of the surplus population which could fill up the empty places in the towns, and contribute to the growth of Dover.

As in the marshland parishes, unprecedented levels of baptisms were experienced in the 19th century. In Eastry the new level was established from 1770, and the upward trend continued until at least 1840. In Elham a peak of baptisms in 1620-40 was not again equalled until 1810, and a fresh peak occurred in the 1820's after 160 years of fair stability.¹ In Ash the upward trend is marked from as far back as 1680; the second decade of the 19th century saw an exceptional peak, though some decline thereafter. It is interesting that the numbers of baptisms fell in the 1820's and more strongly in the 1830's, in a period when the poor law administration was certainly being made harsher. Thus in 1822 the Ash vestry drew up a bread scale which substituted relief in kind for some part of the former money relief, and set a maximum for both money and bread. The harshness of the overseer before 1830 has been described.² At the same time this was also the period of maximum economic difficulty for the labourer. Thus some responsiveness of the birth rate may be seen to prevailing conditions.³

Crude baptism and burial rates show very similar trends in the three

1. From the evidence in Chapter Eight it seemed possible that the population of Elham may even have declined in the 18th century. The numbers of baptisms and burials suggest that the population was stable.
2. Chapter Six.
3. Huzel (1969) found a significant fall in fertility 1821-30 and suggested this disproved the connection between the old poor law and fertility, because in the 1820's per capita poor expenditure was higher. But if more people were on relief because of general economic conditions, their individual relief could well have been less generous.

"healthy" parishes to the three marshland parishes. (Table 9.9). For Eastry, a good late 18th century population figure is available, and also a figure based on the 1705 listing of the parish. In 1774 the crude baptism rate was 33 per thousand and burial rate 20.5 per thousand, only a little lower than the rates indicated for 1705 of 36 for baptisms and 25 for burials. In the 19th century the baptism rate rose as high as 38.5 in 1831, but the burial rate fell from 20 to 16. Comparative rates for the 17th century are more problematic. The Compton Census return is 540, rather larger than the 1705 total of 464.¹ The parish of Worth was in theory a chapelry of Eastry, though separately listed; it could be that it was counted twice, and included in the Eastry total. If the Worth figure is deducted, it leaves Eastry with 390 inhabitants, leading to baptism and burial rates of 41 and 27.5. In 1640 the communicants returns uninflated (335) suggest rates of 50 and 35 respectively. All these 17th century figures imply steady population growth in Eastry, but they perhaps lead to over-statements of the crude rates.

Table 9.9. Estimated crude baptism and burial rates per thousand: Eastry and Elham 1640-1831.

	Census Date	Population	Baptism	Burial
1. <u>Eastry</u>	1640	335	49.7	35.3
	1676	390	41.0	27.5
	1705	464	35.7	25.3
	1774	656	33.3	20.5
	1801	852	30.9	19.7
	1811	909	28.3	20.0
	1821	1062	36.0	18.1
	1831	1245	38.5	15.7
2. <u>Elham</u>	1640	1000	36.1	19.5
	1676	1000	25.6	26.1
	1811	992	36.7	19.0
	1821	1168	32.6	18.5
	1831	1302	31.0	17.7

1. See Chapter Two, section 2.

Yet to assume a larger population base leads to remarkably low crude rates, of the order of 30 per thousand for baptisms but only 20 per thousand for burials. It may be concluded that baptisms and burial rates probably fell a little in the 18th century and that thereafter the baptism rate rose while the burial rate continued to decline. Burials in the 19th century were added to by the presence in the parish of the Gilbert's Union workhouse. The numbers in the workhouse were also included in the census returns, and thus depress the baptism rates. Because of the nature of a Gilbert's Union, it may be assumed that more burials than baptisms would be added to the normal parish totals. Without the workhouse population in 1801 (when it was known) both baptism and burial rates are a little higher than in 1774, baptism 34, burial 20 per thousand. This serves to underline the approximate nature of such calculations, so that small changes in rates are not significant, but large changes remain so.

For Elham, both 1640 and 1676 communicants returns are identical at 600. Inflated, these yield a population of 1,000 almost exactly what it was in 1811. An estimate based on rating assessments supports this size of population. In Elham the baptism rate was 36 per thousand in 1640 and 1811, and rather lower in 1676 and 1821-31. The burial rate by contrast was low in 1640 (19.5) and similar in the 19th century, but higher (26.1) in 1676. Perhaps some 17th century population growth should be assumed, and the communicants returns inflated by a smaller factor. In either case, Elham experienced a lower burial rate than elsewhere.

For Ash, a more elaborate series of crude rates have been calculated, covering each decade of the 18th century and selected dates before 1700. (Table 9.10). For the 18th century the population at each mid-decade point has been estimated by distributing the increase observed between 1705 and 1801 at a compounding rate throughout the century. Even though the increase was not large (375), the estimates may be too high or too low, according to whether growth actually occurred suddenly or gradually. Le Grand, a

gentleman resident in Ash, wrote to Arthur Young in 1789 with an account of the poor house,¹ and included an estimate of population made by the parish clerk and schoolmaster. "According to the proportion of five to a house" it was 1362, which Le Grand thought too low.² By 1801 the census showed 1575 inhabitants. The estimate made here for 1785 (1500) falls between the two.

Table 9.10. Estimated crude baptism and burial rates per thousand:
Ash 1588-1831.

Census Date	ASH			ENGLAND & WALES	
	Population	Baptism	Burial	Baptism	Burial
1588	676	50.7	41.1		
	830	41.3	33.5		
1640	840	44.0	46.2		
1676	1100	32.2	20.5		
1705	1200	32.5	24.2	31.6	28.6
1715	1235	28.7	25.2	31.4	31.3
1725	1270	35.2	29.1	33.9	34.9
1735	1305	37.9	23.2	35.6	35.8
1745	1340	34.5	21.3	36.9	33.0
1755	1380	38.3	24.2	36.9	30.3
1765	1420	36.7	29.7	37.0	30.0
1775	1460	36.4	26.9	37.5	31.1
1785	1500	38.2	26.3	37.7	28.6
1795	1540	33.4	22.7	37.3	26.9
1801	1575	35.8	22.7	37.5	23.9
1811	1685	42.1	20.9	36.6	21.1
1821	2020	38.7	18.9	36.6	22.6
1831	2140	33.3	19.6	36.6	23.4

For the 17th century, there is some interesting information bearing on numbers. The communicants returns in 1640 were 840.³ However, the church-warden's accounts for the year 1634⁴ also record an interesting detail:

"Item paid for bread and wine for the Easter Communion, six in number,

1. See Chapter Six.
2. Annals of Agriculture (1789) 11 366. Le Grand was the lessee of the tithes and resident at Guilton Rectory (the main tithe district of Ash).
3. Planche (1864) 174.
4. Mr. D. Downes pointed out this reference to me.

And the parties 623 which received for Easter in the year 1634, the Sum 24s. 10d." Perhaps the discrepancy is because the communicants returns relate to "ideal" numbers, while the churchwarden's accounts for 1634 show actual communicants in church. More likely, 840 was the total population of the parish, as seems the case in other instances. It is supported by an estimate based on the 1635 rating list (170 households) which multiplied by a factor of five leads to a population of 850 - a useful coincidence. Communicants were therefore 74% of the total population, which is a larger proportion than that usually suggested.¹ In 1676 the Compton Census states there were 220 families, suggesting a population around 1100. Between 1676 and 1701, therefore, the population was growing at the same rate as in the 18th century; but between 1640 and 1676 the rate of growth was rather more rapid.² An estimate for the 16th century is also possible using the 1588 communicants returns: two calculations have been made, one inflating the 500 of the return by 40% and one by 26% as suggested by the 1634-40 calculation above.

On the basis of these calculations, the crude rates per thousand for baptisms and burials in Ash are set out in table 9.10. In the later 16th century the baptism rate was between 41 and 51 per thousand, and perhaps rates as high as 50 per thousand in individual parishes should not be dismissed. The burial rate correspondingly was between 34 and 41. In the 17th century the baptism rate was between 32 and 44, the burial rate between 21 and 46. From 1705 a more reliable series shows the baptism rate fluctuating around 35 per thousand (the average for the 18th century) but rising temporarily around 1811; and the burial rate similarly fluctuating around 25 but distinctly falling from about 1811. During the 18th century, therefore, neither series shows any very marked change, and both seem also to

1. Sögnér (1963-4) 140; Hoskins (1959) 147. If this were a more accurate proportion, crude rates based on inflating Compton Census figures by 40% will produce rates which are as much as a quarter too low -

$$\frac{74 - 60}{60} = \frac{14}{60} = \frac{1}{4} \text{ approximately.}$$
2. Rating lists imply rapid growth early in the 17th century. See Chapter Eight.

continue the pattern of the late 17th century, whereas it seems likely that in the early 17th century both baptisms and burials were at a higher level.

The Ash baptism rates conform fairly closely to the national series (calculated by Brownlee),¹ the main difference being the greater fluctuations evident in Ash, no doubt a reflection of particular local conditions and age structure which are smoothed or lost in the large aggregative figures. If parish registers of baptisms are deficient, as has been suggested, by at least 11%,² then the crude rates are in turn about 12% deficient,³ which produces a birth rate in Ash at its highest of 47.3 per thousand around 1811, and an average rate in the 18th century of 39 per thousand instead of 35. When civil registration commenced, the national birth rate was then about 35 per thousand.⁴ There seems, therefore, to be some justification for accepting the Ash figures. As far as burials are concerned, on the other hand, Brownlee's national rates are generally higher throughout the 18th and early 19th century, thus suggesting for Ash a higher than average rate of natural increase.

(c) The significance of the burial rate: conclusions.

In the three "healthier" parishes, therefore, as in the three marshland parishes, the onus of population increase is on the falling burial rate; in Ash, Eastry and Elham this fall was apparent earlier, but in all six it clearly was responsible for the rate of increase in the 19th century. Annual totals of burials make plain the very definite, progressive reduction both in the amplitude of mortality peaks and in the frequency of their occurrence. In this respect the perspective of the 17th century figures is particularly important for then "crisis mortality" in certain years pushed burial totals well above baptisms.

(i) Crisis mortality.

As burials fluctuated so much from year to year, it is not easy to

1. Glass PIH (1969) 241.
2. Wrigley (1975) 299. See also Chapter Two section 2.
3. If the rates calculated relate to 89% of the actual births, then they need raising by a factor of $\frac{100}{89} = 1.12$
4. Glass op cit 240.

decide how large an increase should be regarded as a "crisis". It has been defined here as a year when the total of burials was twice the annual average of the five years on either side.¹ (Table 9.11). In these six parishes there were nine years of crisis mortality, so defined, in the 17th century but only four in the 18th century. Perhaps there were in reality even more in the 17th century, if a full set of data were available, but the registers of St. Nicholas do not start until 1660, and there is also the failure of registration in the 1640's and 1650's. The years 1660 to 1679 were particularly unhealthy. Lesser peaks of mortality can also be identified when burials were 50% above the average. There were many years when this was the case, 37 in the 17th and 44 in the 18th century. (Table 9.11). The large number of these minor peaks but the smaller number of major crises underlines the diminishing character of mortality in the 18th century, as too does the concentration of minor peaks in the early part of the century. Wickhambreux emerges with the worst record, suffering altogether five years of crisis mortality: one in the 16th, three in the 17th and one in the 19th century. It was indeed the only one of the rural parishes to experience a mortality crisis in the 19th century, though there was one also in St. Dunstan's Canterbury. In a small parish such as Wickhambreux fluctuations are, however, more likely to be noted because one or two random events are enough to stand out, but the mortality crises in larger parishes such as Ash, Chislet, Eastry and Elham are more important.

The years of crisis mortality in East Kent do not always correspond with what are known to have been bad years nationally. Four periods of crisis are generally recognised: 1557-9, 1623, 1657-8 and 1728-9,² while "better-known epidemic years" also occurred in 1603 and 1665.³ These certainly all

1. Schofield suggests this as a useful summary measure in LPS No.5. In this study burials for each year were tested against the central point of an 11-year moving average. The use of an 11-year average will depress to a certain extent the size and occurrence of each crisis, since the average is smoothed and inflated by the inclusion of the crisis years. It is necessary, however, to use average mortality rather than a notional "normal" level, both because mortality fluctuated so much, and because accurate population size and age structure is not known from which to deduce a "normal" level.
2. Hollingsworth (1969) 326.
3. Schofield op cit.

Table 9.11. Crisis mortality in six rural parishes.a) Periods of mortality 50% and 100% above the average.

Decades beginning	Numbers of crisis years		Total
	50% above average	100% above average	
1560/70	13	1	14
1580/90	5	1	6
1600/10	7	2	9
1620/30	12	2	14
1660/70	8	5	13
1680/90	10		10
1700/10	14	1	15
1720/30	10	1	11
1740/50	9	1	10
1760/70	7	1	8
1780/90	4		4
1800/10	7	1	8
1820/30	7		7

b) Dates of 100% crises of mortality.

Parish	16th	17th	18th	19th
Ash		1666		
Chislet		1679	1720	
Eastry	1597	1670		
Elham		1603 1638	1748	
St. Nicholas		1669	1714 1767	
Wickhambreux	1561	1611 1637 1679		1801

find echoes on a smaller scale in East Kent but without always the doubling of burials defined here as a crisis. There are other years of crisis in particular parishes which do not reflect national epidemics. Indeed there was little coincidence of crisis mortality even between the six East Kent parishes studied. By reason of its isolated peninsular-type geographical

situation, East Kent perhaps had its own pattern of mortality.

Two periods of heavy mortality in the 16th century, in the 1560's and 1590's, are coincident with crises in East Kent. In 1557 there was a European influenza epidemic¹ and in 1556-60 mortality nationally may have been 50% above normal.² The tail end of this epidemic is probably reflected in Wickhambreux register. In 1597 a number of illnesses were held responsible for the high mortality: dysentery, plague and famine fever are cited, and 1597-8 was also a year of great scarcity. This was a period of crisis mortality in Eastry. In the 17th century, there were nationally many years of crisis,³ reflecting the endemic nature of smallpox, plague fevers and influenza, and in this respect East Kent experience was typical. Plague certainly accounted for many deaths in Sandwich, in 1637, 1644 and 1666 particularly; the last outbreak almost certainly spread⁴ to Ash (1666), St. Nicholas (1669) and Eastry (1670). It had started in London in 1665, according to Creighton⁵ and struck Sandwich, Eastry, Deal, Dover, Canterbury and Westwell in the same year, but gained real force the following year. It seems to have taken several years to reach its peak in some East Kent parishes, unless another disease was responsible for the 1669-70 peaks.⁶ In 1603 also plague was general - it was attested in several West Kent parishes, including Maidstone, and in Cranbrook register "a great dearth in corn time" was recorded "while the plague raged."⁷ Perhaps this reached Elham also.

1. Creighton (1965) I 400.
2. Fisher (1965) 120 basing this on numbers of wills proved.
3. Creighton op cit 544. However the evidence for the 17th century is also more plentiful, since more registers survive. In the 16th century, though record-keeping commenced in 1538, few registers were preserved before 1558. Tate (1969) 44.
4. Gardiner (1954) 220-1: in 1644 the County Justices tried to prevent Sandwich townsfolk leaving the liberty and going to church in Ash and Woodnesborough, and "dispersing through the countryside".
5. Creighton op cit 681.
6. Cox (1910) 173.
7. In Poulton-le-Fylde 1592-1801 crisis years calculated by the same method occurred in 1623, 1669, 1728-9 and 1751. The crisis in 1669 is attributed to typhus, dearth is suggested as the major factor in 1623, and 1728-9, and smallpox in 1751. Foster LPS No.17. Chambers (1952) 85 suggests plague disappeared in 1667.

But apart from the general periods of heavy mortality, there were other times of crisis, for example in 1637-8 and 1679 which have not been noted nationally. In the Vale of Trent, however, the more notable checks to population were also in 1678-80 and in the 1720's.¹ The last years of the 17th century were called the "seven ill years" and were remarkable for frost and cold.² These too find only a lesser echo in East Kent, as also in England generally.³

The period 1720-40 has been described as perhaps the last major check to population growth.⁴ It was certainly so in the Vale of Trent. In 33 Warwickshire parishes between 1727 and 1730 mortality of 50% above average was correlated with grain crises and has been presented as a "subsistence" crisis unconnected with epidemics.⁵ In East Kent it was the first 20 years of the 18th century which were the most unhealthy of all, judged by the incidence of lesser peaks of mortality, and of two major crises in 1714 in St. Nicholas and 1720 in Chislet. Famine is said to have existed nationally in 1708-10,⁶ but this does not coincide with the East Kent peaks. However, despite the heavier mortality of this period in relation to average mortality, the crises did not prevent there being some natural increase in all years in the rural East Kent parishes, apart from a tiny deficit in Wickhambreux in 1710-20. As average mortality was lower in the 18th century, crises appear as great statistically as in previous centuries, but in reality represent a less severe level of mortality. This is the case in the 18th century.⁷

Thus while the experience of crisis mortality in East Kent did not always coincide in date with the national experience, the trends were nonetheless the same. Plague and other diseases caused peaks of mortality frequently in the 17th century, but in the 18th century and even more so

1. Chambers (1952) 23-35.

2. Creighton (1963) 2, 46.

3. Chambers op cit 28.

4. Chambers (1972) 23.

5. Gooder (1972) 10.

6. Creighton op cit 2, 46.

7. Wrigley (1977) 295 suggests this trend is apparent in the aggregative series for 404 parishes being analysed by the Cambridge Group.

early 19th century, a lower average level of mortality obtained. This overall similarity of experience is most important. Epidemics affected "healthy" and marshland parishes alike. The depressing demographic effect of mortality crises must have been considerable; in Ash one third of the population died in the five years 1591-5 and one half in the whole of that last decade of the 16th century. If such experience were common to large numbers of parishes, it would have constituted a substantial check to population, and the concentration of crisis years in the 17th century points to their severity. Peaks of mortality, however, often did not coincide, so that surplus population generated in one parish could find space in another recently devastated.

(ii) Child mortality.

In a further respect, too, the experience of mortality in the early 17th century was very different from the 18th century, that is in its effect on the younger part of the population. The turning point was the Civil War period. The parish registers give some indications of the age or status of those buried, particularly through the description "son" or "daughter" in naming the parents, or the term "infant". Sometimes sons or daughters may have been adults living in their parents' homes, but the majority will have been young people.¹ These descriptions in the Ash registers have been used to examine what proportion of children were buried in relation to the number baptised, and in relation to all burials. (Table 9.12). In the later 18th century the Ash parish clerk or incumbent started to specify age instead of other description, and with the introduction of printed registers in 1813 relationship was again specified as well as age. The problem then is what age to use to give an approximate comparison with earlier and less precise definitions of "child". Eversley counted as a child everyone under the age of 20, but this seems to make the dividing line much too old; many from the age of 15 would have been working as

1. Eversley PIH (1969) 404 used the same method to calculate rates of child burials per thousand.

servants, and sometimes at younger ages still, from which time the description "son" or "daughter" would seem less appropriate, and the term "servant" was quite often used. Superficially similar results between early and later 18th century were obtained by taking age 10 and under as the criterion of a child, and applying this from 1760 onwards. This is the basis of the calculations in the second part of table 9.12.

Table 9.12. Child burials: Ash 1561-1840.

Decade	as % of baptisms	as % of all burials
1561-70	38.3	39.4
1571-80	27.8	43.3
1581-90	42.0	51.8
1591-1600	61.6	57.1
1601-10	41.2	44.0
1611-20	48.5	53.1
1621-30	34.8	45.3
1631-40	41.6	48.3
1653-60	43.0	29.0
1661-70	30.3	34.7
1671-80	18.9	29.6
1681-90	19.7	27.6
1691-1700	21.0	31.5
1701-10	27.7	35.5
1711-20	28.2	33.8
1761-70	26.9	33.0
1771-80	25.7	33.3
1781-90	15.8	22.6
1791-1800	15.9	22.8
1801-10	18.8	33.5
1811-20	18.1	38.6
1821-30	18.8	35.6
1831-40	23.1	35.8

These very approximate calculations¹ indicate a great improvement in a child's relative life expectancy after 1660. The worst decade in Ash was 1591-1600: more than half of all burials were of children, and this is almost certainly an underestimate; at the same time child burials were nearly two thirds the number of baptisms. This was a period when in Ash mortality was generally so high that no one year shows up as a year of crisis mortality. There were 75 burials in Ash in 1593, however - the peak year - to compare with the 11-year average of 38.45, though 1597 was nationally the peak. No subsequent period in Ash was as severe; as a proportion of all burials, child burials diminished after 1653, and although differently defined, remained at about 33 to 35% right through to 1840. In relation to baptisms, the proportion of child burials fell after 1660, and fell again to a lower level after 1780. In the 19th century it seemed that approximately one fifth of those baptised would not survive to age 10. Even if this is an underestimate, it still leaves a substantial change in child mortality from earlier times. The ratios of child burials to baptisms in fact correspond generally with the trends in nine Worcestershire parishes analysed by Eversley.² At the end of the 17th century he found ratios varying from 16 to 42%, with a mean of 29%, for children aged two and under, and in the later 18th century the ratio fell, though not as far as in Ash (1775-99: 24.7%; 1800-24: 20.0%) with a similar upturn after 1825 (1825-49: 26.7%). In London the proportion of deaths of children under five to live births, as calculated by a writer in the *Lancet* in 1836, was 74.5% in 1730-49, but 31.8% in 1810-29. "The very great diminution of the mortality of infants in England is one of the most remarkable phenomena of modern times" he commented.³

1. Wrigley (1977) 310 estimated that the deficiency in the registration of baptisms increased from about 2 to 7½% between 1550 and 1800, and of infant burials from almost nil to 25%. Jones (1976) 316 thought that one third to one half of infant deaths escaped registration. Registration deficiencies as well as the imprecise criteria used make the figures only indicative of trends.
2. Eversley PIH (1969) 410. These figures were arrived at by searching the registers for two years back from the date of a burial for the baptism of the person concerned. Wrigley op cit 395 shows a rather different trend for infant mortality, with a peak in the 1680's but an improvement only in the 1780's. Jones op cit 307 finds the same in rural north Shropshire.
3. T.R. Edmonds, quoted by Beaver (1973) 247.

The periods of heavier mortality in the 18th century seem, therefore, to have affected adults quite as seriously, or perhaps even more seriously, than children.¹ The reasons for the improved life chances of children are obscure. The nature of the diseases themselves may have been critical. Smallpox deaths fell considerably in Maidstone in the 18th century and as a proportion of all burials became insignificant by 1801.² Yet in the 17th century smallpox had become "much more formidable."³ It may be doubted, however, whether inoculation was the critical factor. Only from 1806 for example did Ash Vestry agree to meet half the cost of inoculation, though the practice was known in the area some time before.⁴ There are no references in these registers to smallpox. The major factor in the improvement may again be the disappearance of plague. Thus it seems that while all age groups suffered from plague, those aged 5-20 years had been the most heavily affected.⁵ Plague could well have been the reason for the heavy mortality in Ash in the 1590's; October 1592 was the month when burials noticeably increased, though continuing at a very high level throughout 1593.⁶ If any part of the improvement in child mortality can be attributed to the poor law, then it was not specifically the allowances of the later 18th century; but perhaps there was better support of poor families generally after the Restoration (hence creeping increases in poor rates) which improved children's life chances. Griffith noted the higher rates of natural increase in "allowance" counties, and suggested the old poor law may have acted to lower the death rate.⁷ More recently it has been argued

1. Sogner (1963-4) 135 also found that in "bad" periods, 1726-30 and 1741-5, in 17 Shropshire parishes adults suffered more than children.
2. Razzell (1965) 312.
3. Creighton (1965) 434.
4. For example Richard Seddon, the steward of the Waldershare Park Estate reported in 1767 that a man at Elham was inoculating against smallpox at half a guinea per person, and that inoculation was going on all around. KAO/u471/c15. I owe this reference to Richard Grover.
5. Bradley (1977) 73.
6. This seems a not untypical profile of plague, as for instance in Eyam in 1665-6. *Ibid* 70.
7. Griffith (1967) 160.

that only improved nutrition can account for the decline in the death rate.¹ The willingness of the old poor law administrators to prevent total indigence may have played a part, together with the technological improvements in agriculture.

Whatever the explanations, an improvement in life chances for children could give a substantial impetus to population increase, by producing larger cohorts of marriageable age.

(d) Migration.

Even though in some parishes natural increase was small, from 1701 to 1801 the population of each parish could still have grown faster than it actually did, had it retained the whole of the natural increase. (Table 9.13). In Ash, while the observed population rose by a quarter, natural increase would have allowed it to double. It follows that in the 18th century an average of ten persons a year must have moved out of the village, on a net basis. Since a certain amount of movement was always characteristic of pre-industrial society,² the rural parishes therefore had a net outward balance of migration. From the 1780's, it is suggested, "the pace of migration from the rural areas quickened,"³ and certainly this accords with the increasing surplus of baptisms over burials from this time. In the early 19th century the peak of population size was reached in some of the East Kent parishes in 1831,⁴ and thereafter some decline occurred. Despite rapid growth between 1801 and 1831, all except Eastry were still losing the natural increase at quite a rapid rate.

1. McKeown, Brown and Record (1972) 351. Two thirds of the fall in mortality in the 20th century they suggest is attributable to the decline in deaths from infectious diseases, and postulate a similar factor in the 18th century, though not as the result of a spontaneous decline. They discount the possibility of medical advances contributing significantly even in the 19th century.
2. For example in Clayworth 1676 to 1688 only a little over a third of the population remained. Laslett (1965) 147. Servants provided a substantial part of this mobility. Similar turnover rates have been found in a number of places. Buckatsch (1951-2) 62-9.
3. Saville (1957) 5. Griffith (1967) suggested that old poor law "allowance" counties had a faster rate of natural increase than other counties though their actual populations grew less fast.
4. In other areas the peak was 1841, for instance in Bedfordshire. Marshall (1934) 36.

To gain some indication of the direction of migration the 1851 census birthplace data was searched for all those stated to be born in Ash but enumerated in parishes lying across the routes to Dover and to Canterbury, these being the two likely foci of migration. From this brief test, it seems that in the years before 1851 Dover was the main centre of attraction. This was probably not a new trend, since there were a number of heads of households over the age of 50 (26) as well as under 50 (40) found either in Dover itself or in the parishes en route from Ash to Dover. Similarly servants were moving towards Dover rather than Canterbury (32 to Dover, 14 to Canterbury). Altogether 266 of those stating that they were born in Ash were found in the Dover direction, and 109 in the Canterbury direction, of which 76 were children, whose parents had therefore moved during their childhood. This total is equivalent to the natural increase in the parish of Ash of rather more than one 19th century decade. Many more of the Ash-born would probably be found scattered generally in neighbouring parishes. Correspondingly, not all residents of Ash in 1851 were born within the parish, though rather more than half (1219 persons or 58%) were. Nearly half of the heads of households were natives of the parish (46% of both male and female heads). Of the more mobile proportion of the population, 76 or 17% came from contiguous parishes, 30 from Thanet, 94 from the rest of East Kent, and only 27 from further afield. Thus of each cohort born in the parish, only a small proportion stayed as adults. Mobility was in any case selective by age and sex, the young and the female being the most mobile.¹

The typical distance of migration from any pre-industrial community was 10 miles (i.e. half a day's walk) within which well over three-quarters of all moves were comprehended,² and servants and labourers were usually the

1. Saville (1957) 100.

2. Mobility within a 10-mile area was demonstrated by Ravenstein in 1885, Saville op cit and subsequent work on parish registers has confirmed it, for example in Yorkshire (Holderness (1971) 444-54), where only 18% of the people whose moves were recorded in the registers came from further away. Labourers were the most mobile.

most mobile, rather than those who had a stake in the area in the form of land or property. The origins of marriage partners as indicated in the Ash registers show the same pattern: the majority of spouses not "of this parish" came from contiguous parishes, and a mere handful from outside the county. (Two thirds of all marriage partners 1754 to 1835 were apparently resident in Ash at the time of their marriages).¹ This illustrates the general hypothesis that movement was not necessarily directly to the towns, but was a rippling movement that washed population ultimately into the urban and industrial areas.² Much of it is not therefore detected in inter-county figures.³ Nonetheless the rural areas were providing the population to sustain the towns, and this constant movement of population is the demographic background to the settlement system.

Table 9.13. Actual population compared with natural increase: rural parishes 1700-1841.

	c 1700-1801		1801-1841	
	Actual	N.I.	Actual	N.I.
Ash	375	1342	502	1255
Chislet	348	613	249	681
Eastry	388	683	777	751
Elham	nil	893	299	623
St. Nicholas	359	427	-10	360
Wickhambreux	198	270	106	300

(e) Marriage rates and baptism to marriage ratios.

Marriage rates in all the rural parishes appear to be too low to be an accurate reflection of the numbers of couples. In the 19th century they almost never reached 8 per thousand.⁴ Where rates seem to be higher for

1. Sögner (1963-4) 131 finds the same proportion even in a rapidly expanding area like Coalbrookdale in Shropshire. However, the pressure of the Settlement Laws on couples may have encouraged many to claim to be "of the parish without very much real justification.
2. Redford (1964) 182-7.
3. White (1968) 175-86 found that agriculture as the main employment was the only significant variable found to explain different inter-county rates of migration, and then only in the 19th century. Enclosure was not significant.
4. Chislet is the one parish where in 1801 the marriage rate was 8.4 and in 1811 8.3 per thousand, though falling thereafter to 6.3 in 1821 and 5.5 in 1831.

earlier periods it is on the basis of a doubtful population figure, which also leads to exceptionally high baptism rates: for example taking the lower estimate of the population in Chislet in 1640, a marriage rate of 14 per thousand is matched by a baptism rate of 62 per thousand. Even on the assumption that population was smaller than estimated, and that baptism rates of 40 and even 60 per thousand could occur, marriage rates in the East Kent rural parishes were still only of the order of 12 per thousand in the 17th century. In the Vale of Trent Chambers calculated marriage rates of 10 per thousand in mid-18th century Nottingham and 9 per thousand in both agricultural and rural parishes. In 1801 the marriage rates were 7 to 8 per thousand in the agricultural and 9 to 11 in the industrial villages.¹ Marshall assumed that on a national scale the numbers of marriages needed doubling, and suggested rates between 16 and 17 per thousand.² Thus the East Kent data seems very suspect, and implies that the marriages of many couples were not recorded in the registers of the Church of England. This may be a reflection of the number of poor in the area.³ The Ash rates set out in table 9.14 are in fact typical. The jump in the rate after 1754 is apparent, and probably does reflect some tightening up after Hardwicke's Marriage Act. Until 1811 the marriage rate was fairly steady at a reasonable level (8 to 9 per thousand) but from 1811 was at a lower level (6 per thousand).

Because of these deficiencies in the marriage registers, marriage rates are low, and baptism to marriage ratios are correspondingly high. (Table 9.15).⁴ In his study of the Vale of Trent, Chambers used a ratio of

1. Chambers (1952) 54-5.
2. Marshall PIH (1969) 259.
3. From a detailed examination of the recordings of illegitimacy and from tracing the marriages in other parishes of couples baptising children in Ash, it is suggested that a proportion of couples were not married: see my essay for volume on the Comparative History of Illegitimacy (forthcoming) ed. Laslett and Smith. Anderson (1975) 52 questioned whether the availability of civil marriage after 1837 promoted legal marriage among the poor, as opposed to "stable cohabitation". Colquhoun commented on "the prodigious number among the lower classes who cohabit together without marriage." Thompson (1974) 60.
4. Ratios have been calculated for decades, rather than 20-year periods, but with marriages offset by five years as Chambers did.

baptisms over a 20-year period related to marriages in a 20-year period commencing five years earlier. In the 18th century the ratio varied between 4.4 and 4.8. He found that industrial villages had consistently higher ratios than agricultural villages, and commented on the ability of industrial villages to generate through a differential birth rate their own population expansion.¹ In Ash the ratio was as high as 7.5 (in mid-18th century),² and after 1754 still varied between 7.3 (1811-20) and 3.6 (1781-90). But no great reliance can be placed on these fluctuations as indications of marital fertility. They emphasise further the weakness of the marriage statistics.

Table 9.14. Crude marriage rates per thousand and baptism/marriage ratios: Ash 1588-1836.

MARRIAGE RATES		BAPTISM/MARRIAGE RATIOS	
Census date	Rate	Baptisms in decade:	Ratio
1588	16.1	1561-1645	4.2
..	or 13.1		
1640	10.6	1661-1700	5.4
1676	6.6		
1705	5.7		
1715	4.6	1701-10	5.0
1725	5.8	1711-20	5.9
1735	4.8	1721-30	6.6
1745	5.5	1731-40	7.1
1755	6.9	1741-50	7.5
1765	8.5	1751-60	6.4
1775	9.1	1761-70	4.2
1785	8.2	1771-80	5.2
1795	8.1	1781-90	3.6
		1791-1800	4.5
1801	8.3	1801-10	4.8
1811	6.5	1811-20	7.3
1821	6.3	1821-30	5.5
1831	6.1	1831-40	5.6

1. Chambers (1952) 53.
2. Sögner (1963-4) 137 calculated a ratio of 6.4 in 1736-40 in Shropshire parishes, but a decline thereafter. (The study terminated in 1760).

(f) Bastardy.

In collecting data from such a source as parish registers, the monotony of the majority of entries, recorded without illuminating comment of any sort in the same format page after page, tends to make the unusual entry, such as the baptism or burial of a bastard child, stand out with more force than numbers warrant. No doubt the overseers of the poor and the Poor Law Commission also were over-impressed by a minor but always arresting feature of their societies.¹ Yet the recording of bastardy was by no means always explicit,² and often the fact must be inferred from the recording only of the mother of the child.³ At some periods (particularly late 18th century) the Ash incumbent seems carefully to have eschewed the use of the word bastard. These "undeclared" bastards have been added to the declared to calculate illegitimacy ratios, set out in table 9.15.

Table 9.15. Bastardy in Ash 1654 to 1840.

	Declared	Undeclared	Illegitimacy ratio
1654-1700	10	8	1.1
1701-1725	11	4	1.6
1726-1750	18	5	1.9
1751-1775	37	0	2.8
1776-1800	27	50	5.7
1801-1825	105	24	7.0
1826-1840	48	14	6.2

There was a big rise in the illegitimacy ratio from later 18th century, which is typical of the national picture - in some places the ratio was in fact higher than in Ash.⁴ This gives ground for the Poor Law Commission's concern on the subject. Bastardy would certainly have contributed in part

1. They devoted a whole chapter to the subject in their report.
2. The recording of bastardy has been more fully described in the essay in ed. Laslett and Smith (forthcoming), which this section summarises.
3. If the father were recently dead this was usually indicated either by the description "posthumous" or by more direct statement.
4. Laslett and Oosterveen (1973) 277. The ratio is of bastard baptisms to all baptisms.

to any general rise in fertility.¹ The rise also coincides with the period of high baptism to marriage ratios and even more of low marriage rates. The problem is whether genuine bastardy was rising (or numbers of couples not marrying in church) or whether the church's attitude was changing so that the incumbent identified the irregular unions more often. There is some evidence of the inconsistency of recordings, as for example in the St. Dunstan's case quoted in Chapter Seven of a child of John Anderson baptised with reference to mother and father, but buried as illegitimate; only very detailed study will identify such cases. The recording of bastards certainly depended very much on the willingness of the local clergyman to take an inquisitorial role; hence bastardy appears lower in towns than in the country villages because numbers made for greater anonymity, and the status of a couple was less easy to ascertain. Part of the apparent increase in bastardy is perhaps due to changing church and social attitudes. This suggests that many unions were not recorded as marriages in church, and further throws doubt on marriage statistics.

Perhaps some hint of these "irregular" unions is also to be found in the rush to the church in 1834, just as the old poor law was coming to an end. The average number of marriages in a year in Ash was 11 between 1811 and 1830 and 13 between 1831 and 1840. From 1811 onwards there were three years when there were as many as 16 marriages and in 1823 there were 21; these were the largest totals before 1834.² In 1833 18 couples were married in Ash church and in 1834 27. This could have reflected anticipation of a different attitude to the provision of relief. Thereafter the numbers of marriages certainly dropped sharply. Gleig in the Chronicles of Waltham

1. In modern times illegitimacy can be shown to account for a small proportion of the rise in fertility observed in the period 1940-50. Cutright and Galle (1973) 519.

2. Marriages in Ash:

1826	11	1831	13	1836	9
1827	8	1832	13	1837	11
1828	9	1833	18	1838	6
1829	12	1834	27	1839	11
1830	14	1835	9	1840	6

refers to the reading of an exceptional number of banns in church one Sunday, out of spite he says because single men were paid less than married men for the same amount of work. The date he was referring to is not precisely indicated, but was before the Swing Riots which form the climax of the chapter.¹ This incident perhaps finds an echo in the 21 marriages registered in 1823, just after the bread and work scales had been formulated. It does support the Malthusian idea of some inter-relationship between marriages and old poor law practice, but probably not the direct encouragement envisaged by the Poor Law Commission, but rather the regularisation of existing union when considered necessary for the purpose of securing entitlement to relief.

In the light of the well-authenticated falls in mortality, and the extreme fragility of the evidence supporting increases in marital fertility, the population growth evident in rural East Kent parishes seems much more attributable to lower death rates than to higher birth rates. The crude baptism rate fluctuated, but was probably rather higher in the 16th and 17th centuries than in the 18th and early 19th centuries. A progressive reduction in the size of mortality peaks and in the frequency of their occurrence was responsible for opening the substantial gap between births and deaths. It is true this gap would be accentuated in a parish of net outward migration, where couples might baptise one or more children and then move to another parish, so yielding a parish death rate not entirely appropriate to the people born within its boundaries.² Nonetheless, even allowing for a slight under-statement of the death rate, the salient feature in East Kent remains the amount of natural increase. It varied from parish to parish in the 18th century, but in the 19th century all experienced a great upsurge of population. There is also a fairly general consonance of crude

1. Gleig (1835) 1 "The Village Oracle."

2. Hollingsworth (1969) 185.

rates between the six rural parishes, which minimises the probability of there being nothing real to explain.

The important question here is whether there was any connection between this demographic change and the old poor law. In the short run, there is very little association apparent. Indeed, any relationship which may exist seems to be positive rather than negative; an increase in poor law expenditure took place at the same time as an increase in numbers of burials.¹ This was probably because in times of difficult circumstances, of food shortage, high prices, lack of work in bad weather, the death rate increased, while overseers of the poor were also obliged to find more relief moneys. Even so, the poor law may nonetheless have offset the worst effects of the crisis and prevented a larger increase in burials.² In more favourable times, there was less need of relief, so mortality and poor expenditure both fell. In good and bad years alike, the poor law was thus always there as an ameliorating factor. It could be that it was instrumental in separating mortality from food shortage.

In the long term, taking the perspective of a century or more, it is notable that as mortality followed a constantly falling trend, so did poor law expenditure follow a constantly rising trend. It may be incautious to infer a *prima facie* link. On the other hand, perhaps rising standards of living for farmers particularly, of which there is considerable evidence, made it increasingly unacceptable for overseers to hold down relief bills. Near starvation conditions for the casual or unemployed labourer could no longer be tolerated.³ Bread scales and money wage-supplements imply that no one should be allowed to starve, and the period of their use, from the

1. As in Ash in the early 18th century for example.
2. Poor relief moneys given in times of dearth may thereby have increased prices still further, by keeping up demand, particularly for wheat, to normal levels which could not be met.
3. There is little evidence, either locally or nationally, of starvation as a cause of death. Laslett (1965) 117 quotes a few instances. In Ash, only two references to starvation have been found. In 1708, a year of near famine nationally, Solomon Sturges was given one shilling "when nothing to eat", and in 1709 "given John Jull's wife when two women came and complained that he was run away from his wife and she lying-in and ready to starve."

1790's, was also the period of rapidly falling death rates. At the very time when the poor law was most criticised and maligned, for adopting "allowances", the coincidence with sharpest mortality falls leaves open the possibility that, along with other factors such as drainage of the marshes, smallpox inoculation and so on, the poor law helped to save lives.

4. Reconstitution of Ash parish registers.

The reconstitution of the Ash parish registers for the period 1653 to 1840 allows a more sophisticated examination of demographic trends than the analysis so far presented.¹ Even in a large parish like Ash, decadal totals of events derived from a reconstitution are too small to be satisfactory; in order to have sufficient data to analyse, therefore, statistics have to be derived from a long time period. The years 1653 to 1840 have been divided into three or four blocks of time. From the simpler time analysis but more detailed demographic calculations, the changes in the 18th century suggested by the aggregative analysis are fully supported, and can be amplified and extended.²

(i) Expectation of life.

In respect of mortality, the results calculated from the reconstitution add considerable support to the suggested decline in the death rate in the 18th century. For those in the prime of life, expectation of life rose markedly. A man aged from 25 to 29 lived on average a further 26 years in 1650-99, 33 years in 1700-49, and 39 years in 1750-99. His wife enjoyed an expectation of life of 23, 30 and 32 years respectively. These figures are based on known dates of death. In many cases, however, it is clear from the record that a wife or husband was still alive when other vital events were recorded, or alternatively was dead by then, even though the actual date of death is not known. If optimistic assumptions concerning the mortality of all these cases are made, the figures of expectation of life are further improved; while pessimistic assumptions still lead to some improvement in the expectation of life. These calculations are set out in table 9.16. Because of the termination of the reconstitution in 1840, the known dates of death for the last period, 1800-40, give rise to a very poor expectation of life, since they reflect those who died within the period at, there-

1. See Appendix VII, section 3 on reconstitution methods.

2. All references in both tables and text are to the data analysis tabulations of the Cambridge Group. Some selected tabulations are set out in Appendix IX.

fore, comparatively young ages. Optimistic assumptions about those still alive by 1840 probably more closely portray the experience of that generation. It is surprising to find that the women in Ash apparently fared less well than the men. Presumably this reflects the hazards of child-bearing, especially as the parish experienced out-migration of young women seeking domestic employment which might be expected apparently to lower the death rate (in 1841 the sex ratio was consequently weighted to the men). Optimistic assumptions about what happened to the women whose deaths are not recorded do tend at least to restore parity between the sexes.

Table 9.16. Expectation of life: Ash, 1650-1840. (Years)

	Aged 25-29		Aged 35-39	
	M	F	M	F
a) <u>Known death</u>				
1650-99	26	23	20	20
1700-49	33	30	27	25
1750-99	39	32	31	28
1800-40	24	17	21	16
b) <u>Pessimistic assumptions</u>				
1650-99	26	26	20	21
1700-49	32	30	25	24
1750-99	33	31	26	26
1800-40	28	28	21	22
c) <u>Optimistic assumptions</u>				
1650-99	33	35	27	29
1700-49	37	36	30	30
1750-99	41	38	32	32
1800-40	41	41	33	34

Table 92 MO.

(ii) Infant mortality.

Rates of infant and child mortality do not match completely with the pattern of adult mortality, but nonetheless they show a decline, particularly in rates of infant mortality in the 19th century. (See table 9.17). Male infants had a poorer chance of survival than female, and the first-born of

of a family also a poorer chance than subsequent children. (T 90 E). Chances of survival only deteriorated markedly for the sixth or later children, and, these later additions to a family excepted, all birth ranks of children including the first participated in the improved rates of infant mortality in the 19th century. Throughout the 200 years, the time of greatest risk was the first week after birth. (T 92 QR). Also, infants of very young mothers, under the age of 20 years, had higher rates of mortality than infants born to mothers in their twenties (92 GH), though as the mother's age rose above 30 years, rates of mortality increased.¹ Compared with the national average (England and Wales) for infant mortality in the 19th century of 150 per thousand,² these Ash rates appear a little low, and may seem, therefore, to imply some measure of under-registration; nonetheless they are certainly indicative of the trend. The national rates will, after all, be influenced by the much less favourable experience of the urban areas.

Table 9.17. Rates of infant and child mortality: Ash 1653-1840.

	Age group							
	0		1 - 4		5 - 9		10 - 14	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1650-99	136	129	66	77	33	25	26	0
1700-49	130	104	64	59	33	27	16	17
1750-99	129	129	65	63	36	27	23	30
1800-40	98	71	70	59	17	34	20	41

Table T 92 QR; all families; weights 70 and 71 included.

(iii) Fertility.

The picture which emerges from the reconstitution as to fertility, 1653 to 1840, is that there probably were changes in the average age of

1. Tables of infant mortality by birth rank, age in days and age of mother are set out in Appendix IX. The variations in rates from table to table are the product of the different set of events which can be analysed in each.
2. Laslett (1965) 124; Beaver (1973) 246.

marriage and in the duration of marriage, but no changes in age-specific fertility. The Malthusian case is therefore to some extent substantiated - a younger age at marriage would tend to lead to a larger potential family size; while the improved mortality rates also led to marriages of longer duration and the survival of more children.

For men, the median age of marriage was 26 in 1650-99, 27 in 1700-49, 24 in 1750-99, and 23 in 1800-40; for women the corresponding ages were 21, 24, 22 and 22 (T 90 L). The starting date here tends to limit the accuracy of the first period, since for marriages 1653-1700, baptism dates before 1653 are not known. The age of marriage in the early period could well, therefore, have been higher than it appears. The fall from mid-18th century seems incontrovertible. If a different set of sub-periods is used, dividing 1660-1840 into three instead of four sub-divisions, a smooth but falling progression of median ages at marriage is produced:-

	Male	Female
1660-1719	36	23
1720-1779	25	23
1780-1840	24	22

Looked at a different way, before 1750 less than half the men in observation were married by age 30, 59% were in the period 1750-99 and 67% in the early 19th century. Of the women, the proportion married by age 25 increased from a quarter to nearly half. At the same time the duration of marriages lengthened considerably, from 16 years on average in 1650-99 to 26 years in 1750-99. (Table 9.18). Where the duration of marriage can be measured against the wife's age at marriage, not surprisingly those married before the age of 25 enjoyed generally the longest married lives. Thus the much larger proportion of women married by 25 in the early 19th century also enjoyed the longest marriage period.

Age-specific marital fertility showed no real change over the whole period. Taking only "completed" marriages (i.e. the date of end of marriage

is known), the fertility of wives in the younger age groups (under 25) was highest, and fertility rates began to fall off at age 35 and markedly so at age 40. (AT 90 VW).¹ Fertility was highest in the first five years of marriage, but remained fairly high up to fifteen years. Thereafter fertility fell sharply. Maximum family size was achieved by those wives who were married under 25. (T 92 TS). This would be expected in the absence of family limitation. As years of marriage accumulated, therefore, so too did the number of children born. (Table 9.19). The tendency for marriage in the 19th century to take place at younger ages seems to underlie the slightly larger mean family size, observed in table 9.19, after each successive five-years duration of marriage, compared with earlier periods. Nonetheless, completed family size after the maximum duration of fertility in marriage² did not change very much.

Table 9.18. Duration of marriages: Ash, 1650-1840 (years).

	(i) Mean	(ii) Wife aged			N
		under 20	20-24	25-29	
1650-99	16.3	9.4	25.2	0	13
1700-49	21.7	27.1	21.9	22.7	59
1750-99	25.8	28.3	33.0	20.4	106

- (i) Table T 90 J; accurate dates only accepted.
(ii) Table AT 90 VW; all marriage orders.

Table 9.19. Cumulative family size after completed 5-year marriage periods (means).

Completed years	1650-99	1700-49	1750-99	1800-40
5	1.9	1.8	1.8	2.1
10	3.4	3.2	3.2	3.8
15	4.8	4.5	4.3	5.6
20	5.2	5.1	5.2	6.9
25	5.2	5.0	5.5	6.4
30	5.6	5.2	5.9	5.8

Table 92 L; all marriage ranks; wives of all ages at marriage.

1. See Appendix IX.
2. Completed fertility is taken to be when a family is in observation from marriage until the wife reaches her 45th birthday or for 30 years of marriage.

There is little sign of family limitation in these fertility calculations, except perhaps in the indication that from mid-18th century the last child was born when the wife was younger than previously. Thus for those married under the age of 30, in 1653-99 (only a total of 5) the mean age at the birth of the last child was 42, in 1700-49 it was 44, (31 cases), but in 1750-99 it was 38, (52 cases), and 1800-40, 39 (again only 4 cases). (T 90 I). Apart from the first child, frequently born within nine months of the date of marriage,¹ mean birth intervals were fairly constant at about 2 years at all periods, and for all successive births. (90 XY). If family limitation were being practised, then the last birth might quite often have been a replacement for a child who died, and the regular sequence of child-bearing have been extended by a random amount. In the Ash data, the interval between penultimate and ultimate births was perhaps a little longer, in a few cases much longer,² but this was not a general feature of the community such that it made a significant impression on demographic patterns.

Over the whole period of 200 years, therefore, rates of age-specific marital fertility changed very little, the one significant exception being the increased rate for very young wives in the later 18th century (23 children were born to wives under 20 in 42 years lived); this irregularity had disappeared again by 1800. Equally, fertility according to the length of married life changed little over the period. There is some support, in the demographic material gained from the Ash reconstitution, for the idea that people were marrying younger in the later 18th century than in earlier times, and that this may have had some effect on completed family size. But people's behaviour was by no means standardised, and there was therefore much variation. Also the numbers available for analysis are not always

1. Percentage of baptisms less than nine months after marriage: 1653-99: 13%; 1700-49: 25%; 1750-99: 51%; 1800-40: 44%.
2. Impressions gained at the stage of collating register entries were of a stronger probability of limitation being exercised; this illustrates well the tendency to pick up the unusual where rigorous analysis forces attention to the usual. See Appendix IX for tabulation.

large enough to lend great confidence to the numerical results. On the mortality side, however, there is rather clearer evidence of a declining death rate, leading to a longer expectation of life, and this seems to be the more major variable in the population expansion of later 18th and 19th centuries.

CHAPTER TEN

SOCIAL AND FAMILY STRUCTURE IN EAST KENT.

The householder schedules of the 1841 census allow a detailed examination to be made of society close in time to the period of the old poor law. Further, some comparisons can be made with similar material for the beginning of the 18th century. It might be expected that the demographic changes between about 1700 and 1840 would be reflected in the household, and in the detail of family structure it may be possible to see some of the circumstances facing administrators of the old poor law, which coloured their approaches to their problems. Changes in the occupational structure of the parish communities may also have occurred, illuminating also the development of the old poor law. Although the 1841 census was not as accurately conducted as 1851 and subsequent censuses,¹ its nearness in date to 1834 makes it the more valuable in this context, and its limitations are certainly no worse than those of earlier listings of inhabitants.

In terms of comparability, the main question is how to define the basic unit of analysis, whether called "family", or "household". What is required is a realistic unit, a group of people "interacting together on a reasonably regular basis."² The traditional word was "family"; "the family, in the sense which it has acquired in England (in 1851) consists of the occupier of the house (his other roles - householder, master, husband, father) his wife, children, servants, relatives, visitors, and persons constantly or accidentally in the house."³ Gregory King used the term, and a similar concept may be presumed to be the rationale behind for example the Ash listing in 1705. There a new line was started for each group,⁴ the head of the family was named, and members of a group were linked by "and", with their relationship to the head of household specified e.g. wife,

1. See Chapter Two section 2.

2. Anderson NCS (1972) 143.

3. 1851 Census: Population Tables 1(I) XXIV.

4. The exception was when there were more details than could be entered on one line so that servants' names had to be listed on the next line.

servant, children, niece, apprentice, journeymen, nurse child etc. However, the word "family" has more recently acquired a narrower meaning, of "nuclear family" or at the very least blood relations.¹ Hence the word "household" seems the more satisfactory to use,² applied to the groups in the 1705 listing which must form the basis of the analysis, and also to the groups indicated by the 1841 census enumerators as living together in a unit in an "inhabited house".³ Within this grouping, subdivisions between nuclear family and lodgers have also been attempted, using the criterion of surname to establish the probability of nuclear relationship, rather than the more variable definition of "family" indicated by the enumerators in their use of the short oblique single dash " / " and double dash " // ".⁴

There is also the question of condensing the information on occupations contained in the Ash listing in 1705 and in the 1841 census, in order to arrive at an easily comprehensible picture of society in its economic structure and in its social stratification. A simple classification is the five social classes defined by the Registrar General,⁵ for which the printed lists of allocations of occupation to each class prepared in 1951 can be used as guides. The five classes summarise both social and economic

factors:

- Class I - professional etc. occupations
- Class II - intermediate
- Class III - skilled
- Class IV - partly skilled
- Class V - unskilled

In 1841 as in earlier listings, the enumerators often failed to state occupation, so that a Class VI has been added to include these cases.

1. In 1841 there were differences in practice between enumerators as to whether the word "family" covered all relations or only the "nuclear" family of the head. See Appendix X.
2. Anderson NCS(1972) 136 suggests "co-residing group" as a better term, because in modern usage "household" is defined strictly in terms of commensality, but this seems unduly pedantic.
3. The 1841 enumerators were instructed to mark with a "1" in a separate column in their books each inhabited house, and this is the division used for the analysis. See discussion in Appendix VIII.
4. See Appendix X.
5. Armstrong NCS(1972) 202.

Whatever its intrinsic merits, this scheme has the advantage of permitting comparisons, which become impossible if researchers use unique systems of classification based on local conditions.¹ Subdivisions of the five main classes have also been made to help to draw finer distinctions. Thus Class II has been divided into four sub-groups: those stated to be "independent"; farmers; shopkeepers and publicans; and clerical workers. Class III has been divided into two groups: the skilled or self-employed and the journey-men; and Class IV into three groups: specialised agricultural workers (shepherds, waggoners etc.); undifferentiated agricultural labourers; and other occupations classed as semi-skilled (laundress, servant etc.). In East Kent the very large numbers of agricultural labourers make any specialisation of occupation stand out.

On this basis, the 1841 census enumerators' books for 12 parishes - eight rural, three urban and one intermediate market village - have been analysed, using a computer programme.² All households in these parishes were included: there were 934 households in the eight agricultural parishes, 225 in the market village of Eastry, and 471 in the three urban parishes, distributed between the five major social groupings as follows:-

Parishes	Social class						All
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	
8 Agricultural	14	188	115	525	2	90	934
1 Market village	7	40	51	104	1	22	225
3 Urban	24	147	135	137	4	24	471
Total	45	375	301	766	7	136	1430

As there were so few households in Registrar General's class V, at most containing less than 1% of all households, it has been omitted from most of the tables which follow.

1. Anderson (1971) for example grouped occupations in the Preston study according to his assessment of size of income, regularity of employment and employment status within the community.
2. Brief details of the programmes used and procedures are given in Appendix X.

As well as information drawn exclusively from the 1841 census, some matching of 1841 data was undertaken with the 1851 census, with parish rate books and with tithe surveys when moderately close in time. This adds further detail to the description of society. Another aspect is suggested in a superficial examination of the numbers of households in each parish with surnames in common. It seemed possible that surnames could be used as the criterion for probable relatedness between households, just as they are within households. Naturally the probability of a shared surname indicating a blood relationship is much greater if the persons concerned are within one household; nonetheless in some parishes there were one or two quite outstanding sets of shared surnames. Moreover this crude test must understate the true kinship network, since only patrilinear relationships can be plotted thus.

1. Changes in social composition 1705 to 1841.

(a) The distribution of social classes.

The classification of households into the Registrar General's five social classes provides a preliminary summary of the social composition of the twelve parishes examined. (Table 10.1).

Table 10.1. Social distribution of households in twelve East Kent parishes, 1841. (%)

Parishes	Social Class					
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
Agricultural	1.5	20.1	12.3	56.2	0.2	9.6
Market	3.1	17.8	22.7	46.2	0.4	9.8
Urban	5.1	31.2	28.7	29.1	0.9	5.1
All	2.8	23.0	18.5	47.0	0.4	8.3

Agricultural labourers (comprising class IV) formed nearly half the population, and as would be expected were more numerous in the agricultural than the urban parishes, though even there they were nearly a third of the households. The urban parishes, however, were distinguished by the larger professional and "intermediate" classes (I and II), despite the fact that farmers are allocated to class II and might be expected to form a substantial proportion of the households in the agricultural parishes. Only a small and primitive service sector existed in the rural parishes (12% of households were in class III); in the urban parishes class III was as large as class IV. In this respect the intermediate position of Eastry as a market village is most apparent, in the larger class III found there compared with the other agricultural parishes. Generally the distribution of social classes was very different from modern times; in 1951 for instance only 16% of households were in class IV while 52% were in class III, and this seems to point to the backward nature of the East Kent economy in the early 19th century. Even the urban parishes in East Kent were far different from the modern pattern, whereas York in 1851 approached very closely to it.¹

1. Armstrong (1972) 212.

The listings of Ash in 1705 and Eastry in 1801 reveal a close correspondence in social structure both with the same parishes in 1841 and with all eight rural parishes together, suggesting that there had not been any substantial changes before 1841. Yet this pattern was markedly out of line with the national pattern suggested for pre-industrial times by Laslett's analysis of 59 communities, where only 15% of households were headed by labourers.¹ This may be because the average for the 59 communities is heavily weighted by the inclusion of a number of listings for London, making it appear more modern. (Table 10.2).

Table 10.2. Comparisons of the social distribution of households, 1574-1841. (%)

	Social class					
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
59 pre-industrial communities 1574-1821	7	26	31	15	-	22
Ash 1705	2	24	17	34	-	22
Ash 1841	3	23	13	53	-	9
Eastry 1801	4	10	27	53	-	6
Eastry 1841	3	18	23	46	-	10

In Ash, it might seem that there was a shift towards more agricultural labourers between 1705 and 1841, but this is in part at least the result of a lack of occupational descriptions in the earlier listing. Thus some heads of households in receipt of alms in 1705 would probably have been described as agricultural labourers in 1841. Similarly in Eastry, the proportion of labourers seems to have fallen between 1801 and 1841, but again this is almost certainly the result of changes in enumerators' practice. A rigid definition of the term "farmer" was used by the enumerator in 1801: 14 of those he designated "labourer" appeared in the land tax schedules

1. Laslett (1969) 220. Groups 1 and 2 (gentlemen and clergy) have been combined in class I, groups 3 and 4 (yeomen and husbandmen) in class II, group 5 (tradesmen and craftsmen) forms class III, group 6 (labourers) class IV, and groups 7, 8 and 9 (paupers, "others", and not stated) class V. In this re-classification, class II will be a little too small, because a few tradesmen and craftsmen should in the Registrar General's scheme be placed in class II not class III.

while in one case a man was described as "fruiterer and labourer", strongly suggesting the semi-independent nature of his occupation. A number of very small holders, part farmers, part labourers, could easily have been classified differently in 1841. Apart from the larger class III in Eastry, therefore, the parish in 1801 and 1841 was not very different from Ash in 1705, and both were quite similar to the other agricultural parishes in 1841.

In Canterbury it was stated by the respondent to the Urban Queries in 1834 that those in need of poor relief were mainly shoemakers, carpenters, bricklayers and labourers,¹ that is those in both class III and class IV, while in the agricultural parishes it was mainly the labourers, comprising class IV. Thus while the proportion in class IV in town and countryside was different, it may be that the proportion of the population potentially in poverty was similar. Nonetheless in the 19th century the size of class IV in each parish in 1841 was in fact correlated with the amount of per capita poor rates (in rank order):-

	Per capita poor rates 1801-34	% in class IV 1841
Chislet	1	2
St. Nicholas	2	1
Wickhambreux	3	4
Ash	4	3
Eastry	5	5
St. Dunstan's	6	7
St. Clement's	7	6

The range of proportions in class IV in individual parishes was from 28% in St. Dunstan's to 64% in St. Nicholas.

In view of the apparent stability of social class composition in Ash and Eastry, it might seem that rising poor rates cannot be explained by social structural changes in the agricultural parishes. But while proportions did not alter very much, absolute numbers in each class did, and

1. See Chapter Five.

so too did the numbers with access to the land, as shown in the previous chapter. In Ash, for example, there were numerical increases in all classes between 1705 and 1841, but while the numbers of craftsmen and tradesmen increased from 45 to 51, and of farmers, victuallers, those of independent means etc. from 63 to 94, the number of labourers apparently increased from 88 to 211. Some of those without stated occupation in 1705 ("recci alms") should perhaps be included with the labourers, but even if as many as half are, it still leaves an increase, from 118 in 1705 to 211 in 1841. Thus a small percentage change in the proportion in class IV marks a much larger change in absolute numbers. Similarly in Eastry, between 1801 and 1841 the proportion of labourers appears to have fallen or (if adjusted for enumerator's different practices) at least remained static, but in absolute terms there were 76 labourers (maximum) in 1801 but 104 in 1841. This seems to show how with population growth, the numbers providing services of various kinds increased proportionately with the population, but the increased numbers of labourers were not economically viable.¹

(b) Servants.

In addition to the labour force thus available as independent heads of families, a certain amount of the agricultural work in East Kent was performed by servants.² From the 1841 census it is clear that the practice of having resident agricultural servants in farmers' houses was still quite common: more than half of the households in class II in the agricultural parishes (mainly farmers) had resident servants, and they accounted for three quarters of all the servants in those parishes. (Table 10.3). About half were male servants (183 males : 200 females). Eastry was like the other agricultural parishes in this respect. The resident male agricultural servants would presumably have provided the core of the labour

1. This was not a trend peculiar to East Kent, but has been analysed in some European countries, and occurred at the same time. Armstrong ed. Mingay & Higgs (forthcoming).
2. Servants have been defined as those described as male or female servant, agricultural servant (if resident in a farmer's household) and apprentices. This is the same definition as Laslett adopted.

force, performing all the regular round-the-year work. Boys' complaint that servants were hard to get applied to the coast,¹ and in this respect had been anticipated much earlier in the 18th century by Lewis (in 1736): farmers "find it very difficult to get servants fit for their Business, so many of them either going to sea, or being employed in the Hop gardens."² Nonetheless in 1841 servants still formed a significant part of the work-force.

Table 10.3. Incidence of servants in East Kent, 1841.

a) Proportion of households with servants by social class. (%)

Parishes	Social class					Total
	I	II	III	IV	VI	
Agricultural	71	53	23	4	12	18
Market	71	23	18	3		17
Urban	88	47	14	7	4	25

b) Proportions of servants in households by social class. (%)

Parishes	Social class				
	I	II	III	IV	VI
Agricultural	8	73	10	5	5
Market	20	61	15	4	
Urban	25	53	14	5	5

In Ash, the total number of servants of both sexes hardly changed between 1705 (154) and 1841 (137); 53 households had servants in 1705 (20%) and 73 in 1841 (18%).³ The number of male servants, however, had fallen considerably: in 1705 they doubled the available agricultural labour force (there were 96 day labourers and 94 servants to farmers), whereas in 1841 servants were about one fifth of the labour force (211 labourers, 56 male

1. See Chapter Eight.

2. Lewis (1736) 24.

3. In this respect again Ash was unlike Laslett's pre-industrial communities (66) 1564-1821, where the proportion of households with servants was 29%. Laslett (1972) 152.

servants). The parish's agricultural workforce had increased from 190 to about 250.¹ Similarly in Eastry between 1801 and 1841 the number of households keeping servants rose from 29 (19%) to 38 (17%), but there was a decline in numbers of male servants, from 57 to 42. Thus while in 1841 similar proportions of households had servants, more were domestic servants and fewer were agricultural. Even so, male agricultural servants were still in 1841 a considerable addition to the already enlarged class of agricultural labourers.² Such decline as had occurred was not sufficient to account for the increased numbers of labourers or their apparently deteriorated position.

In the urban parishes servants were more usually domestic servants, though some were trade assistants. Thus there were 30 male servants altogether but 173 female. Servant-keeping was more common than in the agricultural parishes - 25% of town households had servants compared with 17-18% of rural households. (Table 10.3). In St. Clement's parish, as in Ash and Eastry, there had been between 1689 and 1841 an increase in the numbers of households keeping servants from 33 to 39, but the majority were female servants at both dates (25 and 49). Some urban households had very large numbers of servants: the Dean of Canterbury Cathedral for instance in 1851 had a household comprising four male servants and six female servants attending to the wants of himself, his wife and two visitors, while the elderly Canon Robert Moore, with his lady wife Dulcibella, was cared for by a butler, footman, coachman, groom, housekeeper, lady's maid, two housemaids and a kitchen maid, a total of nine resident servants. These represent the most affluent extreme; most households had only one servant.

Despite some small decline in numbers of male agricultural servants, servant-keeping was increasing in East Kent in the early Victorian period, a reflection of the increasing number of households of greater affluence.

1. In addition, in 1841 many lodgers and some sons living at home were also agricultural labourers, to add to the workforce. Some male servants, however, were not labourers but apprentices.
2. In East Yorkshire in 1851 servants formed a third of the agricultural labour force; they were found particularly where the location of the farm was a good distance from a village and thus they were a response to the communication problem. Sheppard (1961) 49. This is also partly true in East Kent.

Overall the proportion of households with servants (20%) was typical of the country generally,¹ though in some areas like the rural district round Preston the proportion could rise as high as 28%.² The presence of servants was closely related to the social class of the household, as table 10.3 illustrates, so that in the urban parishes nine in every 10 households in class I had at least one servant, and the proportions keeping servants declined in a regular progression through classes II to IV. Even so, some few households with humble occupations in class IV also had servants.³ Servant-keeping was not always a way of purchasing leisure but was sometimes an economic exchange for the wage-earning capacity of a member of the family who might otherwise be kept at home looking after children. A servant might have been in rather the same relationship in a household as a relative elsewhere.⁴ The descriptions "servant" and "relative" were sometimes both appropriate, the enumerator deciding which to specify. For example in Eastry in 1841 there was a farmer, Thomas Andrews, aged 60, and a female servant, Eliza Lawrence, aged 35, in one household, but in 1851 Eliza is stated to be a niece of Thomas Andrews. Generally, however, it remains true that servants were an indication of social status.

The pattern of servant-keeping in East Kent shows that better-off families did not decline in absolute numbers, only proportionately. The important point is probably that new households and increased population were accommodated at the economic margin of society, while those with farming or larger trading interests also increased but not at the same rate.

(c) Land and wealth.

The decline in numbers of landholders between 1705 and 1841 has been described in Chapter Eight, and also the heavy preponderance of households

1. Laslett (1972) 210-13, 220. Fourteen communities in 1851 had a proportion of 13 to 19% (on alternative maximum and minimum assumptions of numbers of households, and including trade assistants.) In York in 1851 the proportion was 20%. (Armstrong (1972) 220.)
2. Anderson (1971) 46 and 85.
3. Laslett (1972) 153 comments on this same feature of pre-industrial communities.
4. Anderson op cit 9, 42 etc. finds this principle underlying the whole kinship structure of households in Preston.

in the lowest rating category. The distribution of wealth in 1841 can be tested against social class categories in a few parishes where rating lists exist close enough in time to be useful (three rural parishes, Eastry, and two urban parishes).¹ A £5 rating assessment was considered a poverty line in Chapter Eight, so £20 could be regarded as relative affluence. To test simply the economic basis of the social classes, the proportion of households rated at £20 and over has been set out in table 10.4.² It reveals the sharp distinction between classes I and II and the others. A few of those without stated occupations were obviously of substantial means (probably private) and it may have been an affectation to refuse to enter anything on the schedule. Table 10.4 also illustrates again the apparent difference in wealth of town and countryside. In the towns, few reached or passed the £20 rating limit, and while some in the countryside were rated on over £1,000, in the towns none exceeded £100. Rating valuations thus reflected not only the rents paid, but also the continuing respect in which land was held, which was "pre-industrial." If a man could subsist on a few acres, then a farmer with hundreds of acres was expected to be proportionately wealthy.³

There was a realistic economic difference between some of the major constituents of the Registrar General's classes (table 10.5). In Ash, 86% of the farmers (group 2.2) in class II were rated at over £20, but only 24% of those of independent means and 15% of the shopkeepers and publicans.

1. A fuller rating profile of the social classes is set out in Appendix XI.
2. The percentages calculated are those of the rated, and do not include those apparently not rated, so that loss of information because of time lags between the two sources does not affect the proportions. The full rating profiles of the Registrar General's class are set out in Appendix XI. In later 19th century Cardiff occupational classes were found to correspond with the following rateable values:-
 - over £35 largely professional and merchants
 - £20-34 largely middle class
 - £12-19 artisans and clerks
 - under £12 semiskilled and unskilled.
 Daunton (1976) 21-27.
3. In the 20th century land is no longer heavily taxed, while at the same time the large-scale farmer is held to be doing a public service by producing food. Hicks J.R. & U.K. (1945).

Table 10.4. Proportions of households rated over £20 by social class:
East Kent, 1841. (%)

Parish	Number rated	Social class				
		I	II	III	IV	VI
Agricultural						
Ash	339	50	62	12	1	17
Sarre	27		50	0	0	
Wickhambreux	63	100	61	0	4	10
Market						
Eastry	215	100	38	8	1	0
Urban						
St. Clement's	143	63	16	5	0	0
St. Dunstan's	142	0	22	6	9	0

Table 10.5. Proportions of households rated over £20 by sub-groups:
East Kent, 1841. (%)

Class sub-divisions	Ash (1)	St. Clement's (12)	St. Dunstan's (13)
II.1	24	0	21
2	86	67	100
3	15	25	18
4	0	17	25
III.1	14	7	9
2	7	0	0
IV.1	0	0	20
2	20	0	17
3	0	0	0

In the latter group, some had accommodation land, and combined for example the occupation of butcher with grazier, which accounts for high rating assessments. There were only two clerical workers and neither had rateable valuations over £20. In class III, 14% of the master craftsmen but only 7% of the journeymen reached the £20 limit, and in class IV none of the agricultural labourers, but 20% of the specialised agricultural occupations such

as waggoner and shepherd. In St. Clement's and St. Dunstan's, too, most farmers in class II exceeded £20, and up to a quarter of the others in this class; a small percentage of the craftsmen but no journeymen did. A few in class IV in St. Dunstan's reached this level of affluence, but again in St. Clement's and St. Dunstan's, no agricultural labourers. This points again to the poverty of most of class III and IV.

2. Family and household structure.

(a) Mean household size.

Mean household size, it is suggested,¹ is a simple summary of social structure. In considering family structure, small variations in M.H.S. could indicate large shifts in social habits. For instance, the existence of an extended family system could probably be inferred from the slightly larger mean compared with a nuclear system,² even though only a small percentage of families might be multi-generational because of the demographic constraints of mortality in pre-industrial times.³ M.H.S. can also be an indicator of economic status. Very large households contained numbers of servants, which would obviously inflate average household size. On the other hand M.H.S. can be inflated by the presence of relatives or 'kin' in the household. It is not always clear that additional kin in a family is an indicator of better economic status; at the upper end of the social scale it may well be so, while for the poor it may represent a desperate attempt to gain a little income, whether from lodgers or relatives. Taking in lodgers in the 20th century is a recognised method of solving economic problems for some poorer families.⁴ Very small families, on the other hand, can indicate poverty. Among the poor and landless in the Waldviertal in Austria the small nuclear family was common "as their only practical means of existence."⁵ Differences in M.H.S. may thus not be simple to interpret, but be nonetheless suggestive.

The variations in mean household size in particular parishes in East Kent in 1841 present some of these alternatives of interpretation. They ranged from 4.4 in St. Dunstan's to 9.0 in Knowlton. The M.H.S. of Knowlton,

1. Laslett H & F (1972) 126.
2. Burch H & F (1972) 91 demonstrates mathematically for stable populations the increase in M.H.S. where there are extended rather than nuclear families.
3. Berkner (1972) 407-9.
4. Hicks, J.R. & U.K. (1945) 53: as well as moving to lower rated houses, "expenditure on housing can also be reduced by taking in lodgers, a very usual method of restoring budgetary equilibrium in the lower income ranges." On a practical level this accords with the idea that kin were taken into a household on a "calculative" basis. Anderson (1972).
5. Berkner (1972) 408.

which consisted only of the one big house and two others, reflected the very large size of the gentry household; Knowlton was an extreme example of a "closed" parish. Waldershare also, with 15 households and another gentry establishment, also had a high M.H.S. of 5.9. The size of the population is a significant influence on the M.H.S. of any individual parish: the effect of one or two very large households is damped down in a larger parish.¹ There were some exceptionally large households in the Vill of Christ Church (the Dean and Canons) for example, but also some small ones, so that the mean was a little lower, 5.4.

Mean household size was higher in the agricultural than in the urban parishes (table 10.6), and for all twelve East Kent communities the mean was 5.0, which is within the range for communities in the mid-19th century, though perhaps a little lower than for other comparable areas.² There seems, however, to have been some increase in M.H.S. from earlier times. Laslett has suggested 4.75 as the standard for English communities 1574-1821³, while for East Kent in 1705 the mean for 34 communities was 4.43.⁴ In Ash alone in 1705 the mean was 4.5, in 1841 it was 5.1.

Table 10.6. Percentage distribution of households by size.

	Household size							M.H.S.
	1	2 & 3	4	5	6 & 7	8 & 9	10+	
<u>East Kent 1841</u>								
Agricultural	4	29	14	15	21	12	6	5.1
Market	4	31	12	12	17	14	10	5.3
Urban	5	35	14	12	20	8	6	4.7
100 communities 1564-1821	6	31	16	15	20	8	5	4.8

1. Wall, H & F (1972) 195 argues that there is no correlation between M.H.S. and size of settlement, but there is some slight indication in all his calculations that the smallest settlements had the highest means, up to settlements of 4,000 people. These will be urban. Many of the small settlements may be of the closed parish type, but some will be hamlets, and lower M.H.S. there reflect quite a different social structure.
2. The urban parishes (4.7) may be compared with York (4.8) and Preston (5.4) in 1851; the rural parishes (5.1 to 5.3) with the Preston rural sample (5.5). Anderson H. & F (1972) 219.
3. Laslett (1969) 210.
4. Laslett H & F (1972) 138.

Table 10.7. Mean persons per household by social class: East Kent 1841.

Parishes	Social class						All
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	
Agricultural	6.9	5.5	5.2	5.0	2.0	4.1	5.1
Market	6.1	5.9	5.3	5.7	1.0	2.7	5.3
Urban	5.8	4.5	4.8	4.8	3.8	5.0	4.7

The distribution of sizes of household, set out in table 10.6, seems to point to a fairly stable pattern, both over time and between urban and rural communities. The median for all the East Kent parishes in 1841 as for other English places, was between 4 and 5 persons per household.¹ There seems to have been some increase in the proportion of very large households in the rural areas in 1841, and this is perhaps the most significant point. It is these few households at the extreme which determine M.H.S. The question therefore is whether the increase in M.H.S. by 1841, which was due mainly to the larger proportion of households of eight and more persons, was general to all social classes, or was particular to any one, especially to poorer families. Table 10.7, which lists the mean numbers of persons per household by social class, suggests that while there was some decline in household size in accordance with lower social class, only the highest class was at all clearly differentiated, and household size was remarkably constant between Registrar General's groups II, III and IV.² The main contrast is between urban and rural communities: M.H.S. was smaller in all classes I to IV in the town parishes, but particularly so in class II. It was the number of farmer's households with resident male servants which makes the M.H.S. of this class noticeably higher in the agricultural parishes.

The relationship which seems to emerge from comparisons of different communities in mid-19th century is that the highest class is clearly differentiated as to household size, and that rural households show some tendency

1. In York 1851 54% of households were four persons or less, in Preston 44%, in rural areas round Preston 40%. Anderson H & F (1972) 219.
2. This was true also of Laslett's pre-industrial communities and of York in 1851. Armstrong H & F (1972) 207.

to be larger than urban. But further than that, the variations in M.H.S. from social class to social class and from parish to parish, as explanatory factors in relation to poverty, need examining with respect to the distribution of children and servants, and to the age structures of the classes, before they can be seen as significant.

(b) Aspects of fertility.

The apparent similarity of household size between classes II, III and IV in East Kent in 1841 may be the result of the presence of servants in classes II and III, but of children in class IV. In relation to the poor law, the numbers of children in labourers' households is important. Servants were certainly unevenly distributed, as has been shown above. In examining household composition in earlier times, the proportion of households with servants has been shown to have some correlation with overall size, but the proportion with children did not.¹ In the pre-industrial communities, three quarters of all households contained children: the mean number per household was 2.03, the mean size of groups of children was 2.8.² The variation in size of groups of children between households of different social status was not large; apart from the clergy (3.5) all social classes had on average somewhat over two children, ranging from 2.3 for paupers and others with no stated occupation to 2.9 for gentlemen. Labourers certainly did not have unusually large numbers of children.³

In East Kent in 1841 also enumerated children were fairly evenly distributed across the social classes. (Table 10.8). In the agricultural parishes, the overall mean size of groups of children was 3.2; class I was exceptional, but otherwise households in classes II, III and IV were all very close. In Eastry the overall mean was higher, 3.5, and labourers' families had a higher mean than any other group. In the urban parishes the mean was

1. Laslett (1969) 222. The correlation coefficient for households with servants was +0.599 and with children was -0.015.
2. Laslett, H. & F (1972) 80-83.
3. Laslett (1969) 222.

generally lower, and the exceptional group was class II with fewer than average children. Generally the means for all social classes were higher than in the pre-industrial communities. The largest group size in East Kent in 1841 was nine children, the median value for all groups was four.

Table 10.8. Mean size of groups of children by social class: East Kent, 1841.

Parishes	Social class					All
	I	II	III	IV	VI	
Agricultural	4.5	3.0	3.1	3.3	2.7	3.2
Market	3.7	3.1	3.4	3.9	2.2	3.5
Urban	3.2	2.4	3.1	3.2	3.4	2.9

The small differences in mean sizes of groups of children, however, are not insignificant. Labourers more often than other social classes, for example, had more than four children. In the agricultural parishes 24% of all families had more than four children but 26% of labourers' families; in Eastry the mean was 34% but for labourers 41%, and in the urban parishes the mean was 23% but for labourers 30%. (Class I in the agricultural parishes also exceeded the mean). When children are averaged over all households (that is taking into account those with no children at the time of the census), labourers' families stand out even more. (Table 10.9).

Table 10.9. Mean numbers of children per household by social class, East Kent 1841.

Parishes	Social class					All
	I	II	III	IV	VI	
Agricultural	3.0	1.7	2.2	2.6	1.6	2.3
Market	1.6	2.2	2.6	3.3	1.3	2.7
Urban	1.7	1.3	2.2	2.3	2.1	1.9

This is because fewer labourers' families were childless than in other social groups:-

Childless families (%)

	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Labourers'</u>
Agricultural	29	22
Market	24	15
Urban	36	28

(In the towns class III was also less often childless than average - 29%).

Even though more households were childless in East Kent in 1841, there seems some evidence here to suggest that compared with the pre-industrial communities the proportion of children in the community had increased, particularly in the agricultural parishes. The mean number of children per household was higher, and so was the mean size of groups of children. Well over half of all the children were in the families of agricultural labourers, but then they also comprised half the population.¹ It is not difficult to imagine how overseers and poor law commissioners could maintain that poor relief encouraged fertility, in the light of the number of labourers' children evident in the community.

It must be remembered that all these observations derive from static census data, and, moreover, take no account of variations in the age of household head. It would be premature to conclude that the agricultural labourers' fertility was higher, or his sense of responsibility towards the maintenance of his family diminished by the poor law system without examining also the age structure of the social classes. It could be that young men filled labouring positions until they had either inherited or acquired a piece of land, or until they could move to a more independent position. Certainly there were fewer old heads of households amongst the labourers than any other class, with the single exception of the "top" agricultural people,² and there were also more very young heads of households, in both the agricultural and urban parishes, though not in Eastry. (Table 10.10).

1. In the agricultural parishes 56% of all heads of households were in class IV, in Eastry 42%, in the urban parishes 29%, with the overall proportion 47%.
2. The younger profile of class I in the agricultural parishes ties in with the large numbers of children in this class also.

Table 10.10. Proportions of heads of households by social class a) under 30 b) over 55 years of age: East Kent, 1841 (%)

Parishes	a) under 30					b) over 55				
	Social class					Social class				
	I	II	III	IV	VI	I	II	III	IV	VI
Agricultural	7	14	9	11	12	14	42	35	29	51
Market	14	3	12	8	5	30	43	27	17	59
Urban	8	4	13	15	17	33	47	25	29	29

This supports the idea that there was some tendency for labourers to establish households a little more often at younger ages than other social groups. Further, there were also young married labourers lodging in others' houses who are not taken account of here. There were 58 subsidiary families altogether in the agricultural parishes and 11 in Eastry, of which 31 were labourers. Half of the lodging families were headed by people under 30. Nonetheless it seems that there were proportionately more young couples in the town than in the countryside, which modifies the view that early marriage was encouraged in the rural parishes.

In rural and urban parishes alike there was a tendency for wives to be younger than their husbands; this would generally support high fertility.¹ (Table 10.11).

Table 10.11. Relationship of wives' ages to husbands': East Kent 1841 (%)

Parishes	N = 100%	Younger by 5 years or more	Older by 5 years or more	Same age group
Agricultural	701	41	9	50
Market	166	48	9	43
Urban	313	42	7	51

While half of the couples shared the same five year age group, more than 40% of wives were at least five years younger than their husbands. Eastry again stands out as farthest from the mean, but the tendency there for wives to be younger was not associated particularly with the younger generation.

1. In Colyton, the tendency for the reverse relationship to exist between 1647 and 1719 has been interpreted as a means of "homeostatic" control of population, Wrigley (1966).

As has been seen, amongst labourers particularly, there were fewer heads under 30 in Eastry than elsewhere. There were fewer wives under 30 also.¹

Table 10.12. The age structure of servants: East Kent 1841.

Age group	Agricultural parishes		Eastry		Urban parishes	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
10 - 19	40.4	33.5	38.1	27.7	43.3	31.2
20 - 24	35.5	31.0	33.3	21.3	20.0	27.8
25 - 29	10.9	12.5	11.9	23.4	20.0	21.4
30 and over	13.2	23.0	16.7	27.6	16.7	19.6
N (= 100%)	183	200	42	47	30	173

Some indication of the usual age of marriage is gained from the age structure of the servants in the population. (Table 10.12). Many young girls went into domestic service before marriage, and the majority of young men of this status were agricultural servants, for whom their own household and employment as day labourer normally went together.² In the urban parishes the great majority of servants were women, and there were quite surprising numbers of older women in this residential capacity in both town and country. Even so, half of all the women servants were under 25, and in the agricultural parishes particularly the number of female servants in the age group 25-29 fell off sharply. Of the men servants, 70% were under 25. The normal age of marriage for this group would seem to have been between 25 and 29.³

The overall age structure of the area emphasises high fertility. (Table 10.13). Children under 15 formed over one third of the population in town and country. There was no apparent drop between numbers aged 0-4

1. In Eastry 14.5% of all wives were under 30, in the agricultural parishes 16.7% but in the urban parishes 20.4%.
2. Very few heads of households were described as servants, but just occasionally there is a hint of an unusual arrangement, as in Sarre in 1841, where the man was enumerated with a group of servants in one household, and the wife and children were alone in another household. In 1851 they were all enumerated together.
3. From parish register evidence, the median age of marriage in Ash in the 19th century was 22 for women and 23 for men. See Chapter Nine.

and 5-9, presumably because of under-enumeration of the very young,¹ so that this is an underestimate of the numbers of children. In the agricultural parishes the census ratio of children 0-4 to women 15-49 is remarkably high, 677 to 1,000 and 743 to 1,000 in Eastry, but in the urban parishes it is only 420 to 1,000. The ratio in town areas in 1821 is also distinctly lower than for the county as a whole:²

Canterbury	489
Dover	509
Sandwich	550
All Kent	650

These ratios are affected by differential rates of infant and child mortality, and also by the imbalance of females because of domestic service (rural areas losing young women and urban areas gaining them). The sex ratios were consequently weighted to the men in the agricultural parishes (937 : 100; 960 : 100 in Eastry) but very much to the women in the urban parishes (127 : 100). Nonetheless the general contrast of levels of rural fertility with urban seems real.

There is some support, in this evidence from the 1841 census, for the view that labourers had a tendency to marry at younger ages and to have on average larger families than other groups in society. Emphasising this trend, however, were the absolute numbers involved. The labourers were numerically such a large group, that while out of the total numbers in the class those marrying young were not so strikingly disproportionate to other classes, the absolute numbers were clearly noticeable. Thus 9% of class III in all the agricultural parishes together were heads of households and were aged under 30, and this was 10 people, but 11% of class IV, the labourers, were in the same position, numbering in all 58 people. In a large parish like Ash there were 24 such young labouring families, in Chislet 18, in

1. Glass estimated that in 1851 omissions from the census within the 0-4 age group were about 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ %. Armstrong (ed. Lawton) (forthcoming).
2. Calculated from the printed census data. The ratio for all Kent of course includes urban and rural areas, so that a purely rural ratio would have to be considerably higher.

Wickhambreux 6, in St. Nicholas 8. For each of these parishes, the overseer would have noticed not one or two, but a number of young households, and his views on the situation be accordingly influenced.

Table 10.13. The age structure of East Kent 1841.

Age group	Agricultural parishes		Eastry		Urban parishes	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
0 - 4	13.9	13.6	14.7	13.5	12.1	10.5
5 - 9	12.8	13.5	15.7	14.0	14.6	10.0
10 - 14	11.5	11.5	13.9	14.7	11.0	9.8
15 - 19	9.9	9.4	9.3	7.5	9.6	9.7
20 - 24	8.8	8.2	7.1	6.0	6.1	9.5
25 - 29	6.2	6.5	5.0	7.5	6.7	9.9
30 - 34	6.2	6.5	4.8	6.5	6.6	5.9
35 - 39	5.0	5.3	5.5	5.5	4.1	6.3
40 - 44	5.9	6.1	6.6	5.8	5.6	6.6
45 - 49	4.3	4.1	5.1	5.3	4.7	4.7
50 - 54	3.8	3.6	3.2	3.7	5.4	4.8
55 - 59	3.6	3.1	3.0	2.5	3.3	3.0
60 - 64	3.2	2.9	3.4	2.3	3.6	3.4
65 and over	4.8	5.6	2.7	5.0	6.8	6.2
N	2469	2314	624	599	984	1248

(c) Some other features of household structure in East Kent.

(i) Single or widowed heads of households. It is a striking feature of household structure in East Kent that one quarter of all households were headed by either a man or a woman alone without a spouse, and this proportion reached a third in the urban parishes.¹ Widowed or single

1. In York in 1841 (on similar assumptions) 50.6% of classes I and II, 17.0% of class III and 20.5% of classes IV and V were single or widowed heads of households. Armstrong (1974) 177. In pre-industrial communities the proportion was 30%. Laslett H & F(1972) 78.

women formed nearly a quarter of all heads of households in urban parishes, but were much less common in agricultural parishes. Some may have been only temporarily single, while the man was away searching for work or even while he was employed as a residential servant.¹ The poor law authorities indeed sometimes encouraged this, agreeing to support the family meanwhile. However, it has also been seen as a characteristic of the "culture of poverty." "A tendency towards matriarchal households regularly accompanied the deterioration of an area."² A town parish apparently provided an easier environment for the single head of a household, but it may not have been an indication of poverty, for many of the women heads in East Kent were "annuitants" or "independent" and had at least one servant.³ The number of such in the new houses in St. Dunstan's parish particularly was striking.

Table 10.14. Proportions of households headed by widowed or single persons, East Kent 1841.

	Head with no spouse	Head a woman
Agricultural	24.9	11.2
Market	26.2	15.1
Urban	33.5	22.5

(ii) Kin and lodgers. The presence of kin and lodgers in a household may also be because of either affluence or poverty. The analysis of kin in 1841 has to be based on simple assumptions of shared surname with the head and age difference for recognition, and undoubtedly therefore underestimates the real proportion in the population.⁴ The analysis of

1. See above, the case in Sarre in 1841.
2. Lees (1969) 363 views in this light the 20% of Irish families in London in 1851 with one spouse only.
3. Many women heads had no stated occupation and hence comprise much of class VI; some few had occupations; some were stated to be "independent" and so form part of class II. About half of all women heads came into this category (40% in agricultural parishes, 61% in urban and 32% in Eastry).
4. See Appendix X. In three parishes the enumerators' marks (the single dash " / ") were clearly used to distinguish not the nuclear family from the rest of the household but all related members from the rest. In these three parishes 23% of households classified as containing lodgers seem really to have contained kin. This suggests that households with lodgers are overstated by a quarter, that is 6% of all households, and those with kin correspondingly understated.

lodgers is dependent also on the surname criterion, lodgers being those members of a household who did not share a surname with the head. It is also dependent on the enumerators' mark, used as the definer of a "household". It will correspondingly be overestimated by the inclusion of kin, and perhaps by the inclusion of independent households sharing the enumerators' "inhabited house". Nonetheless the analysis does allow some comparison of the position by social class and in urban and rural contexts. (Table 10.15). Overall, urban households were slightly more likely to contain lodgers than rural households, but as far as kin were concerned, except for Eastry there was no real difference. A quarter of all households contained lodgers; if adjustments are made between lodgers and kin, then about the same proportion of households contained lodgers as kin (one fifth). This is twice the proportion of households with kin in pre-industrial communities.¹ Agricultural labourers were least likely to have lodgers or kin and class II was the most likely.² There are only small absolute numbers in the professional class, but in the towns they were notable for having very few lodgers but a lot of relations. Their economic position perhaps enabled them either to support or employ their kinsfolk. The labourer was least able either to find the resources to support kin, or probably the accommodation for extra members of the household.

Table 10.15. Proportions of households with a) kin and b) lodgers by social class: East Kent 1841.(%)

Parishes	a) Kin						b) Lodgers					
	Social class											
	I	II	III	IV	VI	All	I	II	III	IV	VI	All
Agricultural		20	15	12	13	14	36	23	30	22	26	24
Market		15	6	6	9	8	43	35	29	17	23	24
Urban	21	15	14	11	17	14	13	33	24	23	29	27

1. Laslett (1969) 218.

2. The same was true of class II in York in 1851, but not of class IV. Armstrong (1974) 181-7.

Table 10.16. Characteristics of lodgers a) age structure (%) b) sizes of groups: East Kent 1841.

Parishes	a) Age structure				b) Sizes of groups				
	Ages				Groups of				Total
	0-15	15-30	30-55	55 & over	1	2	3-5	6-13	
Agricultural	29	40	18	13	124	52	37	8	221
Market	27	36	16	21	30	13	9	3	55
Urban	31	25	25	19	73	25	26	4	128

Those found in the subordinate position of lodgers were mainly young, especially in the agricultural parishes. (Table 10.16). Interestingly, in urban parishes where employment as servants was available to a larger extent than in rural parishes, the proportion of lodgers in the age range 15-30 was lower, but there were more lodgers between 30 and 55 in the towns. Thus lodgings was one answer to accommodation problems for young couples, but also perhaps solved overcrowding difficulties for families by removing the older children even when not placing them as domestic servants. Over half of the lodgers were singletons in others' households, and most of the rest were in twos. Very large lodger groups were presumably found in lodging houses, of which there were a few both in town and rural parishes.

In examining family structure, it is clear that several functions of the domestic group overlap. Three main functions have been identified: the dwelling unit, the reproductive unit and the economic unit.¹ The census reveals primarily a dwelling unit. In some cases, both kin and lodgers may have been present to contribute to production, as for instance in a craftsman's or retailer's household. Such additional members of the dwelling unit may also have connections with its economic functions in a more distant way, for example by acting as child-minders in return for house-room, thus freeing the wife for paid employment. In households where the economic position is less marginal, as in upper class families, the dwelling

1. Goody H & F(1972) 106.

unit can be based on ties of family and blood relationship divorced from economic necessities. It is a matter of considerable comment that simple nuclear households were more prevalent in pre-industrial England than in the mid-19th century. Was it demographic pressures which forced numbers of people to live with other family groups, or a change in the economic status of the household?

Demographic pressure could lead to a multiplication of lodgers in households. Increasing numbers of children born and surviving could put pressure on house-room: other children and young married couples could be forced to find house-room in less crowded houses, while the provision of houses failed to keep pace with family formation. Eden's comment on shortage of cottages has been referred to in Chapter Six. Lodging could also have been forced on people by lack of economic resources, particularly if population were growing faster than employment possibilities. As to-day it was a cheap way of obtaining house-room. On the other hand lodgers could be purely an extension of an older system whereby young people were sent out of the home as domestic or agricultural servants. This outlet could no longer absorb all those in the customary age groups. Lodgers would obviously also provide additional income for those families who could accommodate them. There is considerable evidence that demographic pressure, acting in all these ways, was indeed responsible.

(iii) Family name groups. The 1841 census gives only an indication of the force of kin-based relationships in household structure. An alternative approach to the question of kinship can be made through study of surnames. They too can only be indicative, not definitive, since inter-relatedness depends as much on the female partners as the male, but surnames link only the patriline. Since these East Kent communities tended to be patrilocal,¹ surnames do perhaps catch a proportion of the kin network. The surnames of heads of households and of subordinate families² within each parish were

1. See Chapter Seven.

2. Subordinate families were lodgers where at least two persons shared the same surname.

consequently listed alphabetically, merely to count the frequency with which they recurred within a parish. There were some very striking large groups of names, and in each community there were distinctive sets, though the larger networks were only found in the agricultural parishes. (Table 10.17). Two families with the same surname can occur through chance and not necessarily indicate relatedness; for there to be twelve families within one parish with the same surname surely suggests a certain rootedness of that family in the area, possibly over many generations. Thus Planché, writing in 1864, after his study of a number of Ash families, commented with respect to the Solly family "This ancient family, of which so many descendants are resident in the parish at the present day". (This family name formed in fact the group of 12 identified in 1841). He examined the parish register, and noted one "Sexborow Solly widow buried being an hundred years old xxvj March 1586." "Some branches of the family had fallen into poverty early in the 16th century.....and the name, like those of Paramore and Hougham, is still found amongst the labouring classes and in the humbler ranks of the community."¹ Sometimes the more affluent members of such a kinship group preferred to be differentiated from the rest. Stephen Bayley the Master Grocer distinguished himself in the spelling of his name from the other agricultural labourers in Eastry called Bailey, a difference perpetuated to this day. In urban parishes no surname shared by more than five households was found; even so, a tenth of all families shared their surnames with at least three other families of the parish. In Eastry a sixth of the families were in that position, in the agricultural parishes one quarter. In small parishes mere lack of numbers militated against there being kinship groups of this type, but also perhaps small communities were protected from too much inter-relatedness. In the same way they contained few adults who had been born in the parish.² Mobility, especially of the servant community, led naturally to exogamy; at the same time there were fewer employment opportunities for young people in a small parish.

1. Planché (1864) 402-5.

2. See Chapter Seven.

Table 10.17. Frequencies with which three or more families in each parish shared surnames.

Size of surname groups	Parishes		
	Agricultural	Market	Urban
12	1		
10	2		
8		1	
7	5	2	
6	6	1	
5	10	3	1
4	24	3	10
3	147	10	10
Total families	985	241	521

Kinship networks acted as a channel of communication for jobs and housing. Relating the Eastry census to rating lists showed William Dixon apparently a replacement to John Dixon, Richard Gibbons to Robert Gibbons, and George Jarvis to James Jarvis. This seems to indicate different members of a family succeeding one another in accommodation, and probably also in working situation. In this respect even mobility was within a kinship framework. There is indeed some sign also that those with family ties (sharing surnames) in the parish were less likely to move away than those without such links. Failure of a household to persist from the 1841 to 1851 census is of course likely because of mortality as well as mobility, but it is suggestive that a slightly higher percentage of those sharing surnames with others were still to be found in the same parish census ten years later. This was so even amongst the generally much more mobile urban populations.

Table 10.18. Persistence of families from 1841 to 1851 within the same parish, East Kent.

Parishes	% persisting from 1841 to 1851	
	sharing surnames	all households
Agricultural	65	63
Market	70	63
Urban	50	42

(iv) Mobility. The tendency for agricultural populations to remain in the same parish over a longish period (at least a decade 1841 to 1851) has been described in Chapter Seven as a significant pointer to the influence of the settlement laws. It is further emphasised when persistence is examined by social class. (Table 10.19). In the agricultural parishes, class IV, the agricultural labourers, was the most persistent, but in the towns classes I and III. Over half the urban households had disappeared within the intercensal period, whereas only a third of the agricultural households had. The rural poor were thus the least mobile.¹

Table 10.19. Persistence by social class: East Kent 1841-1851.(%)

Parishes	Social class					All
	I	II	III	IV	VI	
Agricultural	22	61	65	68	48	64
Market	43	50	67	70	50	63
Urban	58	38	51	38	29	42

Children naturally acted as a deterrent to mobility, so that more than half of those households with no children or with only one child in 1841 had disappeared by 1851. They were also more likely to be old and so have died; over a third of those who were apparently mobile were aged 55 and over in 1841. A much smaller proportion of those households with two or more children had disappeared - between 20 and 30% in the agricultural parishes; but in the urban parishes children made no difference to the high mobility. This again underlines the conclusions of the settlement chapter, where two children pushed a family over the poverty line. Once dependent on poor relief, they were unable or unwilling to move.

Despite its limitations, a great deal of valuable insight can be gained into social structure from the 1841 census. Contemporary observers, not unnaturally, were considerably impressed by the sheer numbers of labouring

1. Studies of mobility in the 19th century in Boston, U.S.A. show that the poor were the most mobile, and that more than half of all households moved within the 10 years between censuses, the poorest often moving several times yearly. Knights (1969) 268.

families in the countryside; small swings in the behaviour of such a preponderant group, such as a tendency to marry younger, were automatically magnified. The census provides considerable support for the hypothesis that labourers married a little younger, had larger families, and numerically had increased considerably since the early 18th century. At the same time, while there was at all times considerable out-migration from the rural parishes to the towns, agriculture provided the main employment and was all that was available to the increasing numbers in the countryside.

The comparison with the urban areas is useful. The different employment structure, smaller families, larger numbers of single women heads of households, were all quite distinctive features. The agricultural parishes were closer to pre-industrial patterns than the towns, though in East Kent the towns too lagged behind the more modern structure of other parts of the country.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

CONCLUSION

1. Summary of findings.

Although there has been much historical research into the old poor law, it remains a lively field for competing hypotheses. It has usually been approached from two main perspectives: on a short time scale through re-examination of parliamentary papers, now made possible on a sweeping geographical scale by using the computer; and on a long time scale through establishing the particular detail of administrative practices in a few parishes from the bulky source materials. In this study, a long time perspective has been used, but there has also been a search for social structural variables which might be related to the general profile of old poor law practice. No new sources have been found, but the emphasis has been on the juxtaposition of sources, which have been examined for a number of individual parishes, urban and rural, in the East Kent region. The strong set of records for the large agricultural parish of Ash formed the core of the enquiry.

The general framework for discussion of the old poor law is derived from consideration of expenditure. It was decided in Chapter Four that the best guide was in the amounts required to be raised each year by rates. In the agricultural parishes, one of the important conclusions to emerge from plotting poor rates over a long time span is the steadily rising trend, and the more pronounced rise after 1760, which can only be inferred from parliamentary returns. In East Kent the crisis year of 1795 appears less significant than the years 1799-1801, and these in turn were overshadowed by the post-Napoleonic war period, particularly 1817-20. This points to a slow and probably insidious deterioration in the position of the agricultural labourer before 1795, that is before the Speenhamland meeting which apparently instituted the most well-known aspect of old poor law practice.¹

1. Oxley (1974) 111-2 shows that the Speenhamland Scale was published by Eden and thereafter dominated thinking about bread scales.

In the urban parishes, on the other hand, rates remained steady until the last decade of the 18th century, and thereafter, though increasing, did not rise as sharply as in rural parishes.

The provision of workhouses was quite general in East Kent parishes after 1723, but as elsewhere it was found impossible to administer them efficiently or to make them productive. As an asylum or hospital the cost was acceptable (and several East Kent parishes adopted Gilbert's Act) but as a means of testing how real was the need for relief, the workhouse failed. Both the structure of the labour market and the large amounts of unemployment at certain times because of bad weather or economic depression frustrated this objective. Nonetheless in the later 18th century many parishes enlarged or rebuilt their workhouses, an indication of the pressure on poor rates.

The minor details of poor law routine described in Chapter Five were much the same as elsewhere. When confronted at first hand with books of accounts, the overseers' "humanity" emerges strongly, particularly at earlier periods when there was itemisation of relief in kind. Money doles are more impersonal (and possibly more economical). The old poor law of course dealt with old age, sickness, orphanage and other social disabilities. It also provided many standard items of household expenditure, rent, clothes, food and fuel. Here it seems to have been meeting a shortfall of earnings.

An important conclusion to emerge from the administrative records related to the chronology of the old poor law. It is clear that in the countryside problems were perceived as much more pressing from late 18th century, and reached a state of crisis from 1814. In the towns, the crisis dated from 1817.

The settlement laws are regarded here as rather more important than some historians allow. The surviving documents are not an adequate guide to the importance of the settlement system, both because they represent probably only a minor proportion of the total number originally created, and because the system's effects were generally pervasive. The laws affected

all age groups, but particularly young families, emphasising the effect of children in pushing a family below subsistence. Settlement certificates did not indicate a move from one parish to another, but a recognition by parish officers of the potential poverty of inhabitants. In East Kent the laws did tend to restrict mobility.

Throughout the 18th century there was a gradual modification of the social structure of East Kent parishes. The study of rating assessments in Chapter Eight shows two changes of particular importance in agricultural parishes, one the process of consolidation of farms, which was certainly a significant factor in the creation of rural poverty, and second the increase in the numbers and proportion of landless and poor. In Ash, while the number of householders had increased by more than a third, the numbers holding land had fallen by half; many small holdings had disappeared, replaced by two extensive farms of more than 500 acres. A quarter as many agricultural labourers tenanted small plots of land in 1841 as in 1705. The numbers not assessed to poor rates also increased substantially, mainly, it can be seen in 1841, agricultural labourers. The experience of other parishes in the Wantsum channel area was comparable. It might have been expected that market villages would occupy an intermediate position in this respect between rural and urban parishes, but the two erstwhile market towns experienced a parallel though less marked decline of small-holders. In the "closed" parishes, however, there was stability of land holding. The misery of the increasing "pauperisation" of rural parishes in the early 19th century was expressed in the riots in 1830. The typical "Swing" parish, it has been noted, was one with a high ratio of labourers to farmers.¹

In the urban communities studied, between a quarter and a half of the households were below a "poverty line" (not rated or rated at less than £5) from the earliest times that records are available, and this is typical of urban conditions generally. Yet because there were no very large rate-payers, the distribution of wealth appears more equal; the majority of

1. Hobsbawm & Rudé (1969) 188.

households came into the lowest category of rating assessments, where the expansion of numbers also was naturally accommodated.

Population growth has been regarded as the main factor in the 19th century crisis of the old poor law. Rates of growth of East Kent parishes have been described in Chapter Nine. Generally they were not as high as for the whole country, though there was substantial growth in the early 19th century. But even from the late 17th century, rural parishes seem to have generated a natural increase of baptisms over burials, implying considerable net outward migration. Rather than any increase in fertility, the increasing amount of natural increase was due to a very dramatic change in the pattern of mortality, which seems to date from the Restoration period. Marsh parishes were notably less healthy than upland parishes, and urban parishes showed natural deficits of baptisms relative to burials up to late 18th century.¹ All shared in the 19th century decline in mortality.

Changes occurred also in the structure of households from early 18th to early 19th centuries. In 1705 in Ash households headed by day labourers formed one third of the total, but in 1841 they formed over half, and this was true of all East Kent agricultural parishes in 1841. The average size of the labourer's household had also increased. In 1705 in Ash the day labourer had less than four in his household, in 1841 more than five. In 1705 household size varied directly with economic status. In 1841 labourers still had smaller households than other social classes, because mean household size for the more prosperous was inflated by the presence of servants. It was still customary in East Kent in 1841 for farmers to maintain resident agricultural servants, though perhaps fewer did so than in early 18th century. There were more children per family in rural than in urban areas. The numerical preponderance of agricultural labourers and their families perhaps made their characteristics seem exaggerated in the thinking of the overseers.

1. Chambers (1972) 103, noted this general turning point.

2. The long run: links between social structure and poor relief problems.

Can these different social structural features be linked with the administrative development of the old poor law, and with its rising cost? The burden of the Poor Law Commissioners' report in 1834 was that the last two were indeed crucially linked, and that increasing pauperisation in rural communities was the direct result of the old poor law's methods. "The great source of abuse is the outdoor relief afforded to the able-bodied on their own account, or on that of their families."¹ In the long run in East Kent there is considerable support for the Commissioners' views, but at the same time old poor law methods need to be set against the structure of the economy of the period.

Coleman has argued that under-employment was a chronic problem in Tudor and Stuart England, the inevitable result of a backward economy. Not only was employment restricted, but also subject to cyclical variation in trade and, more seriously, to the ravages of nature and "the tyranny of the seasons."² Domestic industry was encouraged precisely because it absorbed the idle time of labourers and provided extra earnings for their families. Overseers' accounts afford some direct evidence of the existence of unemployment and the dire effects of the weather, though these factors seem to underlie much more of old poor law practice without being made explicit. Relief lists lengthened markedly in Ash in 1741, for example, a year of unusually high prices nationally; and the following year the overseer entered "no work", "in relief" and "in want" against many small cash sums disbursed. In 1746 he was recording payments made "in frosty weather"; in 1747 "no work" is again mentioned, as also in 1764, 1769 and 1771. These too are years of somewhat higher prices.³

1. PL Report (1974) 82.

2. Coleman (1962) 299.

3. Mitchell & Deane (1971) 468-9: Index values before 1740 are never higher than 95; 1740: 100; 1741: 108; 1742: 99. Local conditions may of course have been rather worse than the national index suggests. From 1764 the index is almost invariably above 100. Unemployment appears specifically in other counties in poor relief accounts from mid-18th century. Newman (1969) 319; Thomas (1956) 126.

In other parishes there are scattered references to lack of work as the reason for relief in the 18th century. In Elham in 1781 two men were relieved "not having any employ", and in the same year there were long lists of "in want". The Vestry expressed itself willing to grant a settlement certificate in 1776 provided the man had some prospect of "constant employ" in the place he wished to go (Folkestone). In Chislet the overseers' most frequent entry was "in want", but in the 1770's sums of money paid by farmers for "work" appear, so that already some method of allocating the unemployed seems to have existed. "Loss of time by wet weather" was noted in Eastry in 1818 as a reason for relief. Poor harvests certainly led to lack of work and to a double shortfall in wages, since prices also rose. "If the poor work at low wages when provisions are dear, the deficiency must be made up by the parish rates."¹ Availability and fluctuations in employment were certainly significant for the 18th century poor law administrators.

The process of "engrossing" or consolidation of holdings might have been expected to add to demand for labour, but its main significance in connection with the poor law in East Kent is that it reduced the number of small self-sufficient household units, leaving labourers therefore solely dependent on their wages. The same effect has more usually been ascribed to the decline of rural industries,² but in East Kent this hypothesis is not relevant. The textile industry was fast decaying by the later 17th century (though some silk-weaving survived into the 19th century in Canterbury), and so too was the Wealden iron industry.³ In Ash in 1705 there was only one weaver and his journeyman. These industries which had national and international markets may indeed have declined because of the agricultural structure of Kent. Profits from farming were attractive because access to London was easy. Small subsistence holdings were therefore not allowed to occupy useful land, so removing the subsidy to rural domestic industry which the

1. Newman (1969) quoting the Reading Mercury for March 1787. Hammond J.L. & B. (1966) 162 suggested that Speenhamland represented the application to the normal case "of methods of relief and treatment that had hitherto been reserved for the exceptions."
2. Blaug (1963) 125-140.
3. Chalklin (1965) 122-128.

agricultural base is usually supposed to provide, and tending to raise wages because the worker was wholly dependent on them.¹ Industries and crafts which met a host of local needs (tanning, malting, brewing, leather crafts, blacksmithing for example) were by no means in decline until the 20th century, as the 19th century censuses show. The lack of subsistence holdings for the labourer, however, made any irregularity of earnings far more serious.

The old poor law certainly met the problem of a shortfall of wages in circumstances which to administrators of the time were similar: unemployment due to bad weather, structural underemployment in a casual labour market, and unemployment due to trade variation. Few labourers were out of work all the time. Employers, labourers and poor law overseers alike were thus confused, and those in authority took shelter behind a notional concept that if the labourer worked hard enough he would be independent. In occasional relief as well as in meeting many standard items of household expenditure: rent, clothes, food and fuel, the old poor law provided in effect a wage supplement.² It was a safety net, which allowed agricultural employers to pursue their own maximum economic advantage and exploit to the full a casual labour market, without accepting responsibility for their labourers' temporary periods of unemployment. Moreover there was a slow accretion of population in the rural parishes, encouraged by the settlement laws, and a decline in self-sufficiency. The labourer's deteriorating position in the 18th century was hidden from him by the casual labour system, by the amount of movement around the villages and farms from job to job which did exist,

1. Thirsk (1961) 87-8 suggests in Hertfordshire the cloth industry disappeared because of pressure on that suitable type of land and area to become a corn county.
2. McCloskey (1973) 419-436 argues for a distinction between a wage supplement (paid to augment earnings) and an income supplement (a guaranteed minimum income even if no work was performed). The two would have had different economic effects. It is argued here that the poor law always was both, and that the distinction is in practice unhelpful. Casual labour and underemployment make it difficult to follow through the implications of the two forms of relief. Furthermore, McCloskey's theory requires that the labourer should have a choice of work or leisure. But poor relief was a matter of waiting, and was then granted reluctantly. Pauperisation or massive unemployment would have appeared much the same to contemporaries.

and by the system of poor relief itself. He slipped imperceptibly from lack of wages because of bad weather or mishap, to certainty of employment only at times of maximum labour demand, harvest or hop-picking time.

The poor law overseers cannot be blamed for pursuing an humanitarian relief policy in face of employers' lack of concern, but in the circumstances of the 18th century they created the habits of mind which were the foundation for the 19th century crisis. In the 19th century much more dramatic factors intervened to destroy the labourers' position. These were an unprecedented upthrust of population and an agricultural depression.

3. The nineteenth century.

It is significant that the crisis of poor relief began in 1814¹:-

Numbers indicated by overseer as having no work: Ash 1814.

May	-	13	October	-	5
June	-	9	November	-	17
July	-	1			

Labour was absorbed during harvest time², but from 1814 in Ash "no work" became a much more frequent item, and in April 1817 the first employment scheme was drafted. What caused the sudden increase in unemployment in 1814? It cannot be that the amount of labour was suddenly increased in that year, nor can returning soldiers be pressed into service as an explanation. It seems that actual or potential agricultural depression was the cause. Pressure on parliament to amend the corn laws commenced, indeed, in 1813, perhaps because of the bountiful harvest and perhaps because "the mere prospect of peace had sufficient psychological effect to bring a fall in prices." The following year falling prices were having "ruinous effects."³ In 1815 a new Corn Law was passed. In 1816 the Board of Agriculture undertook an enquiry, and received 326 replies from all over the country. They gave evidence of widespread want of work amounting to "great misery and wretchedness."⁴ There were resolutions in parliament on the "unexampled distress and the dangers thereof."⁵ In 1817 a special Act authorised loans to help employ the poor.⁶ Parliamentary committees were set up in 1821, 1822 and 1833 to investigate the state of agriculture and in 1824 and 1828 to investigate the practice of paying wages out of poor rates. Select committees investigated the corn laws in 1826-7 and 1834. The Poor Law Commission also made some attempt to find out about local conditions with a Query

1. There was also a phenomenal rise in the numbers of indictable committals between 1814 and 1819, which somewhat surprised Gatrell & Hadden since it seemed to predate the economic depression. NCS (1972) 352 & 368.
2. Large numbers were also recorded in July passing through the parish with "passes", presumably moving in search of harvest work. Even in the 20th century it is said men would work on the early Thanet barley harvest first, and then move westward across Kent, as crops successively ripened.
3. Adams (1932, 1965 edition) 151 & 36. Although the harvest in 1814 was poor, much foreign corn was imported.
4. Ibid 74.
5. PP 1816 XIX 3.
6. Flinn (1961) 86 suggests this originated in a scheme to help landowners unable to collect rents.

"Is agricultural capital diminishing?"¹ There can be no doubt that throughout the period 1814 to 1834 agriculture felt itself in difficulties.

It may be that the high prices and prosperity of the Napoleonic Wars enabled farmers to employ lavish amounts of labour.² The first fall in profits could then have led to some shedding of labour, as the crisis bit deeper more and more labour would be made surplus. Farmers may not have lost all sense of responsibility for their workforce, but certainly the poor law was readily called into action. This is the interpretation put forward by at least one local commentator. In his evidence to the Select Committee in 1828³, Boyce from Waldershare maintained determinedly against persistent questioning that the farmers could not afford to pay wages; the employment of the poor had "very much fallen off" because the occupiers of land did not get "a remunerative value for the productions of the earth." A "vast number" of labourers had been thrown on the parish. Boyce also thought that as a consequence the land was being badly cultivated, "neglect of hoeing etc."⁴ He denied that there was a surplus of population, that men were unwilling to work, or that the wage fund could as well be distributed in wages as in poor relief. He also maintained that farmers would not pay their regular men less than a proper wage for the job. On the other hand, "by unemployed labourers being paid out of the poor rate, trade houses and those who cannot or will not employ any hands, must contribute to the support of them." It was this latter point which may have led insidiously to more and more labourers on relief.

Q. Then what you mean to say is, that under the actual state of things at the price the things are now, there is a redundancy of labourers beyond the demand for their services?

A. Yes.

1. PP 1834 XXXII Q36.

2. The continued high level of poor relief expenditure implies, however, that the undoubted prosperity of the farmers was not being passed on in higher wages to meet the increased cost of living.

3. PP 1828 IV 156-161.

4. The same point was made to the 1833 Select Committee. Jones (1964) 326.

Q. But if the price of corn was higher, and if the rates and tithes and rents were lower, under those supposable circumstances, that then there would not be a redundancy?

A. The whole of this population would be employed.

Q. The Committee understood you to say, there was beneficial employment for every man in the parish?

A. I have not said "beneficial" employment.

Q. Do you not think it follows as a matter of course, if the same amount was given to those men and you employed them on farms, it would not be a better way of expending it than leaving them idle?

A. It would so, certainly.

Q. Why is not that adopted?

A. Because, as I have said before, they have not the money to pay them.

When Gleig came to write his analysis in 1835 in the Chronicles of Waltham, he traced two parallel influences on the development of the poor law, the one economic (resembling Boyce's) and the other administrative. "Waltham" represents a composite picture of the area. Gleig presented the Napoleonic War period as something of a Golden Age. He commented on the general prosperity: wages and rents both rose;¹ "the labourers constantly engaged and adequately remunerated, were industrious, temperate and respectful." Tithes were collected in kind; there was no dissenting meeting house; a few dame-schools; no newspapers - such was the idyllic peace of Waltham. At the same time Gleig noted the process of "engrossing" which provided the plot for the Tales² and also that "we were by far too prodigal both in the wages we gave and in the amount of parochial relief which we afforded." He avoids the question of why parochial relief should be needed at all in good times.

1. Hueckel (1975) 331-46 suggests rents rose by as much as 90% on average, but that farmers gained less than landlords.
2. Another local commentator, Boys in his report on Kent to the Board of Agriculture in 1796, 35, also noted "the putting together of small farms," which he justified as economic.

After the Napoleonic Wars, however, returning soldiers and the collapse in prices, particularly of hops, faced the overseer of the poor with the problem of surplus labour. Gleig estimated that only two thirds of the parish labour force was required. "When the bad times came, we found many more were employed on the land than the land actually required - at least so said the occupier; though there were lookers on who doubted the fact." Labourers were paid half their wages by the parish and were not constantly employed by one master, which Gleig thought destructive of morale. Treasonous ideas were spread by the habit of taking provincial and London newspapers and reading them aloud at the "Black Dog". National schools contributed to unrest amongst the poor by leading them to have unrealisable expectations.

Despite the "poverty, universal poverty" everywhere, farmers lived just as before. The "wretched" custom of granting an annuity out of the rates to all large families, whether in steady employ or not, had grown up¹ and since appeals to the magistrates brought orders of relief or employment, the two tended to be combined, "till at last a large proportion of the work on each farm was paid for out of the sums collected from the parishioners at large under the authority of a poor rate." The farmers reduced wages, and having "tasted the sweets of reduction," fancied that they could not obtain too much of it. Poor relief allowances were reduced too, though rents were still paid, thus keeping them up. There followed the attempt to set up a manufactory at the workhouse. Finally in desperation, the parish made use of the charity farm to find work for unemployed labourers. "Did a wet day befall, the farmer instantly discharged the whole body of his men, who, flocking to the overseer for relief, were by him transferred to the parish farm, where they worked in gangs." With this resource available, the farmers also discharged the married men and employed the single instead.

1. Note that Ash itself does not appear as a fully "Speenhamland" parish because at least some of the labour force was paid "full" wages. But Gleig is generalising about the area.

In his reminiscences of this period written much later,¹ Gleig again described how "farmers dismissed their men in shoals, and took them on again, just as many as were absolutely necessary, whom they paid, in great part, out of the rates. The residue they compelled, in my neighbourhood at least, if single men, to come to the workhouse, whence they were marched out every day in gangs to do whatever job the overseer might think fit to put them to." These two accounts, separated by half a century, seem to lend credence to the reality of the events described and so vividly imprinted on Gleig's mind. The final debacle of these events was the Swing riots in Ash.²

The weight of the indictment made by Gleig in the Chronicles of Waltham is thus on administrative features of the old poor law, and resembles very much the arguments of the Poor Law Commissioners. There seems little doubt that this is indeed part of the story in East Kent, despite modern historians' reluctance to accept that this was so.³ Contemporaries' own firmly held ideas are important historically. Economic factors received less emphasis in the book, being sketched briefly in the background to the first Tale. However, in his replies to the Rural Queries, Gleig placed rather more emphasis on economic factors. About the causes of the Swing Riots Gleig said that he attributed them to "low and unfair wages, and in some degree the absence of common courtesy in the Farmer towards his Labourer." In response to the query about agricultural capital, Gleig's reply was that it was diminishing rapidly because of "the extravagance of the farmers, the change in the currency and the great increase in the number of Paupers, the Farmer being unable to Employ the Labourer as heretofore." The Chislet respondent agreed. He listed the same factors as Gleig: an increase in pauperism, the withdrawal of £1 notes, free trade, indirect

1. Gleig (1904) 32.
2. An 'agent provocateur' was also introduced into the story, who incited the men to riot. There is no other record of the historical authenticity of this character, but like the story of the fire in the workhouse, it may be based on truth.
3. Thompson (1974) 247-8 accepts that Speenhamland did encourage the laying-off of labour, as also Body (1965) 236.

taxation, the lack of sufficient protection for agricultural produce against the foreigner. The Eastry respondent, however, denied that any change was due to the poor laws in particular.

Contemporaries were less doubtful about the fact of agricultural depression than its causes. The Chislet respondent to the Rural Queries encompassed all the current theories. Clearly there must have been some change in supply factors. Good harvests contributed in some years, but even in poor years prices did not rise. This seems attributable to the import of large amounts of corn, once Napoleon was defeated, the continental ports opened and peace made with the United States.¹ But there was also a monetarist school of thought. In the period 1813-16 many country banks failed; the Bank of England was probably making preparations for the resumption of cash payments. In 1819 the first steps towards returning to the gold standard were made, and a full return was made in 1821.² Between 1818 and 1823 the notes of both the Bank of England and the country banks contracted rapidly; and between 1818 and 1823 the price of corn fell by 54%. The select committee enquiring into agriculture in that year found things as bad as the farmers' petitions said, but decided that they could do nothing. In this crisis farmers obviously pressed for rent reductions, but they could themselves control directly and immediately the amount expended on wages. The effects of agricultural depression on the position of the labourer should not be under-estimated.³

In the towns, the real crisis started in 1817, that is, when a general economic depression affected trade and manufacturing. No doubt the towns also suffered from the reduction in demand from the rural areas, but the main cause of their difficulties seems chronologically more firmly located in the economic recession. The lower food prices from 1813 obviously did not

1. For example in 1814, 700,000 quarters of wheat and meal were imported. Adams (1932, 1965 edition) 59.
2. Ibid 67-9; 92-7.
3. Chambers & Mingay (1966) 126-131 tend to play down the extent of agricultural depression, confining it to inefficient farmers on heavy soils.

release purchasing power for industrial products.

At the same time that first agriculture and then trade and manufacturing were suffering from depression, there was also in town and village alike an unprecedented thrust of population growth. In part this was the inevitable result of the previous generation's changed mortality, and hence of a changed age-structure in the population; also the reduction in child mortality meant that the dependency ratio was larger than in earlier periods. The appearance of surplus labour thus was the product of a reduced demand for labour and an increasing population. A point of equilibrium was passed. Once it was established that some labourers were paid out of the rates, it then became difficult to prevent the situation escalating. The more were paid that way, the less inducement there was for employers to continue the individual employment of their own labour. The poor law became subject to real abuse, and a subsidy for a large part of the agricultural labour force.

Thus Blaug is right to emphasise that wages were below a minimum for physical efficiency (i.e. malnutrition) and that the methods of the poor law overseers were a not unreasonable attempt to share work widely. He does not, however, give due emphasis to the insidious nature of long-established poor law practice, nor allow that the distinctions drawn by commentators in describing different forms of relief were largely without differences in practical effect.

The old poor law thus continues to challenge. Though contemporaries like Boyce and Gleig saw the problem of poor relief in the early 19th century as mainly the result of the agricultural depression, historians have concentrated on long-run factors such as population growth and the structure of the agricultural economy. Thus in a recent appraisal of the relative importance of six variables in relation to per capita relief expenditure in the English counties, Tucker draws attention again to the fact that relief was highest where the proportion of the population engaged in agriculture

was highest.¹ His division of the English counties into two sets, East and West, on the basis of Caird's analysis, further emphasises the high per capita cost of relief in the Eastern part of the country, where the mainly arable farmers were particularly affected by the post-Napoleonic War depression. This supports in a quantitative way Cobbett's assertion that "the more purely a corn country, the more miserable the labourers,"² an observation made, significantly, in Thanet.

Yet this explanation, even in combination with the depression, which it is argued here should not be minimised, leaves further questions unanswered. It directs attention towards deeper-seated social structural features of the country, towards what factors made one area to be dominated by large arable farms and landless labourers and another by smaller mixed farms and small holdings. Geographical differences in themselves are only a partial explanation. Professor Everitt has recently reviewed briefly the differences between the various farming regions of Kent; he pointed to "the marked tenurial differences,.....and reading between the lines, one senses that differences of social structure, farming organisation and land ownership, as well as the more obvious factors of soil type, climatology and transport differentials, also underlay these distinctions."³ It is against such features that the old poor law should be further examined.

There is also the difficult question of whether attitudes to poverty changed. In certain areas of the country, like East Kent, if it is found that landless labourers and large arable farms had been the predominant pattern for a very long time, then how had the problems of casual labour, under-employment and seasonal unemployment been met in the past? It may be that further investigation would show a different wage structure, less casual labour, and a greater degree of self-sufficiency. On the other hand, a rising standard of living for some may have drawn attention to the

1. Tucker (1975) 233-251.
2. Cobbett (1822, 1973 edition) 248.
3. Everitt (1976) 152.

continuing poverty of others, and made unacceptable a callous disregard of suffering. There is some evidence here suggesting that both alternatives may have been important in the development of the poor law.

In the early 19th century the economic structure of society was at a point of change; past experience for the poor law overseers led in one direction; the future possibility of an expanding economy removing the spectre of mass poverty had not yet appeared impressively to contemporaries as Malthus's Principle of Population demonstrates. The administrative stratagems of the period should therefore be viewed sympathetically, as a struggle against the demoralisation of unemployment and against the abuses which are always possible in a system of welfare. No perfect solution can then be possible.

APPENDIX I1. Area and population of parishes studied in the 19th century.(a) Agricultural parishes.

	Area	Density ¹	1801	1811	1821	1831
Ash	6,940	3.2	1575	1685	2020	2140
Chillenden	180	1.2	122	123	147	154
Chislet	5,180	4.5	848	912	1135	1145
Eastry	2,750	2.2	774 ²	909	1062	1245
Elham	6,240	4.8	- ³	992	1168	1302
St.Nicholas	3,390	4.7	520	480	590	726
Sarre	610	3.1	169	186	191	200
Waldershare	960	14.3	65	48	69	67
Wickhambreux	1,710	3.5	411	430	469	486
<u>(b) Urban parishes.</u>						
St.Clement's, Sandwich	496	0.54	731	744	777	912
St.Dunstan's, Canterbury	320	0.4	707	695	719	809
St.Mary's, Dover	130	0.01	5757	7634	8653	9753
Vill of Christ Church, Canterbury	-	-	286	248	239	216

1. Acres per person in 1831.

2. The total includes the workhouse. The number in the workhouse in 1801 is available from a letter of the enumerator (Boteler) in Eastry parish chest.

3. No census return was made in 1801.

2. Sources for population estimates before 1801.(a) Agricultural parishes.

	1640 ¹	1664 ²	1676 ³	Listings	
Ash	840	106	220 ⁴	1705 ⁵	1200
Chillenden	70	21	53	1705	77
Chislet	340	107	200		
Eastry	335	61	540	1705	464
				1774 ⁶	656
Elham	600	260	600		
St.Nicholas	300	28	160	1705	245
Sarre				1689 ⁷	52
Waldershare	33	4	31	1705	35
Wickhambreux	(163) ⁸	57	169	1705	213
(b) <u>Urban parishes.</u>					
St.Clement's, Sandwich	468		389	1689	390
				1776 ⁹	634
				1786	611
St.Dunstan's, Canterbury	156	46	207		
St.Mary's, Dover			1500		
Vill of Christ Church, Canterbury		61			

1. Numbers of communicants from the returns reported in Hasted (1799 & 1800).
2. Hearths from the Hearth Tax return KAO/Q/RTh.
3. Numbers returned in the Compton Census, Chalklin (1960) 160-171.
4. Stated to be "families".
5. Populations listed in 1705 returns under the Marriage Duties Act KAO/Q/CTz(rounded).
6. Shaw (1870) 37.
7. As a limb of the Cinque port of Sandwich, a Poll Tax listing was found with Sandwich borough records, KAO/Sa/RTz4.
8. Hasted op cit only gives figures for 1558. In a number of parishes the 1558 and 1640 figures are the same, but not always e.g.

Chillenden	1588	-	77	communicants
	1640	-	70	"
Ash	1588	-	500	"
	1640	-	850	"
9. Boys (1792) 386 gives figures for 1776 and 1786.

APPENDIX II

POOR RATES (MEAN PER DECADE).¹I. Parishes Graphed.1. AGRICULTURAL PARISHES (a) 1601-1700.

	Ash	Chislet	St. Nicholas	Wickhambreux
1601-10	28 (9)			
1611-20				
1621-30		6 (1)		
1631-40				
1641-50				
1651-60		169 (3)		
1661-70	143 (3)	149		
1671-80	167	122 (4)		37 (3)
1681-90	185			25
1691-1700	323			41

(b) Actual (A) and corrected² (C) rates 1701-1834.

	A	C	A	C	A	C	A	C
1701-10	382	386					52	
1711-20	468	457					-	
1721-30	-	-					-	
1731-40	374	411	175	190	47	52	-	
1741-50	511	544	252	269	55	59	-	
1751-60	554	575	308	328	97	101	-	
1761-70	665	644	-	-	146	142	130	125
1771-80	910	804	463	410	169	150	211	187
1781-90	902	751	521	433	254	211	279	233
1791-1800	1117	738	723	472	346	232	575(1)L ³	271
1801-10	1391	734	1010	529	582	304	352 L	182
1811-20	2850	1480	2020	1038	992	505	588 L	255
1821-30	2441	1861	1415	1074	799	582	660	502
1831-34	3250	2634	2054	1666	1153	936	788(1)	765

2. MARKET VILLAGES AND URBAN PARISHES. (a) 1601-1700.

	Eastry	Elham	St.Dunstan's	St.Clement's
1601-10				
1611-20				
1621-30				
1631-40				
1641-50				
1651-60				
1661-70				
1671-80				90 (1)
1681-90				112 (2)
1691-1700				109 (4)

(b) Actual (A) and corrected (C) rates 1701-1834.

	A	C	A	C	A	C	A	C
1701-10	-		-				109	111
1711-20	-		-				119	117
1721-30	131	135	269	273			116	120
1731-40	121	135	176	194			132	148
1741-50	159	171	268	373	120	126	-	-
1751-60	-		331	344	115	119	163	166
1761-70	-		312(1)	332	103	100	181	177
1771-80	-		402	356	172	153	198	174
1781-90	(263)		502	418	200	166	191	159
1791-1800	527(1)L	249	768(1)	362	286	193	224	152
1801-10	604 L	321	791	430	330	173	350	185
1811-20	703 L	357	934	481	534	277	565	291
1821-30	839	487	(946) ⁴ (4)	746	504	387	566(4)	461
1831-34	1436	1165	(1094)	882	773	640	(483)	381

II. Parishes not graphed - Actual (A) and corrected (C), 1731-1834.

	Chillenden		Waldershare		Vill of Christ Church	
	A	C	A	C	A	C
1731-40			26	29		
1741-50			47	50		
1751-60			56	58		
1761-70	40(3)	39	60	58		
1771-80	42	37	67	59		
1781-90	58	48	54	45		
1791-1800	63	43	63	42	146(4)	88
1801-10	69	38	77	41	176 L	93
1811-20	80 L	39	96	53	256	137
1821-30	(50)	43	(95)	66	228(2)	174
1831-34	(76)	61	(171)	138	(214)	173

Notes:

1. Rate book evidence has been used wherever available. Where figures are available for less than half the decade, this has been indicated by the figure in brackets.
2. A indicates actual amount of rates.
C " " "real" amount, corrected annually by Schumpeter-Gilboy Index. From 1823 the Gayer, Roston & Schwartz Index has been used, adjusted to bring it in line with the Gilboy Index.
3. The Lords returns have been used in preference to the printed parliamentary papers where there are no rate books covering those years, and to supplement rate books where they cover only a few years of the decade. Where the figures are based on Lords returns, this is indicated with an "L".
4. Where neither rate books nor Lords returns are available, figures of expenditure from parliamentary papers have been inserted in brackets, to indicate the order of amounts raised.

APPENDIX III

Cost of Living Indexes

Year	Average wheat prices ¹	Elham corn	Richardson ² "Cost of Food"	Schumpeter- ³ Gilboy "Consumers' Goods"	Gayer, Rostow ⁴ & Schwartz "Domestic"
	shillings per quarter				
1773	52.7	39.5		119	
1774	54.3	44.4		116	
1775	49.1	42.0		113	
1776	39.4	36.8		114	
1777	46.1	42.7		108	
1778	43.3	40.0		117	
1779	34.8	29.7		111	
1780	36.9	31.4		110	
1781	46.0	42.3		115	
1782	49.3	37.1		116	
1783	54.3	47.0		129	
1784	50.4	46.6		126	
1785	43.1	31.8		120	
1786	40.0	35.2		119	
1787	42.5	40.4		117	
1788	46.4	45.0		121	
1789	52.9	49.2		117	
1790	54.9	48.0	100	124	87.1
1791	48.7	42.7	95	121	84.5
1792	43.0	44.0	91	122	80.6
1793	49.3	43.8	96	129	91.6
1794	52.3	47.0	104	136	96.3
1795	75.2	74.6	146	147	113.6
1796	78.7	70.8	140	154	115.8
1797	53.9	43.8	128	148	100.8
1798	51.1	42.7	118	148	100.2
1799	69.0	67.0	154	160	119.9
1800	113.1	77.1	191	212	156.6
1801	119.6	107.8	196	228	161.7
1802	69.1	63.4	152	174	122.3
1803	58.1	53.5	152	156	120.4
1804			169	161	119.7
1805			181	187	135.5
1806			169	184	131.9

Year	Average wheat prices ¹	Elham corn	Richardson ² "Cost of Food"	Schumpeter- ³ Gilboy "Consumers' Goods"	Gayer, Rostow & Schwartz ⁴ "Domestic"
	shillings per quarter				
1807			166	186	128.3
1808			176	204	141.3
1809			188	212	153.8
1810			194	207	153.5
1811			197	206	149.2
1812			139	237	172.2
1813			229	243	173.1
1814			178	209	148.5
1815			173	191	124.6
1816			173	172	115.0
1817			204	189	131.8
1818			179	194	139.8
1819			161	192	130.4
1820			158	162	117.4
1821			146	139	98.4
1822			110	125	83.9
1823			106	128	97.0
1824			128		104.2
1825			135		116.5
1826			136		106.7
1827			136		106.2
1828			135		102.9
1829			139		102.8
1830			126		101.7
1831			136		103.0
1832			128		97.9
1833			117		92.2
1834			108		88.4

1. Mitchell & Deane (1971) 488.

2. Richardson, in Huzel (1975) 446-7. The "cost of food" index has been preferred to the "cost of living" which included a calculation of average rents paid.

3. Mitchell & Deane op cit 469.

4. Ibid 470.

APPENDIX IVThe Speenhamland Scale

Income shall be for:-	When the gallon loaf is:-	
	1/-	2/-
Man	3/-	5/-
Single woman	2/-	3/-
Man and wife	4/6	7/6
" 1 child	6/-	10/-
" 2 "	7/6	12/6
" 3 "	9/-	15/-
" 4 "	10/6	17/6
" 5 "	12/-	20/-
" 6 "	13/6	22/6
" 7 "	15/-	25/-

i.e. so in proportion as the price of bread rises or falls (that is to say) 3d to the man and 1d to every other of the family, on every penny which the loaf rises above a shilling."

"The justices recommended farmers and others to increase labourers' wages in proportion to the price of provisions. The scale shows that the magistrates felt a man could not live upon less than the equivalent of $2\frac{1}{2}$ or 3 loaves a week, and his wife and children $1\frac{1}{4}$ or $1\frac{1}{2}$ loaves."¹

1. Tate (1969) 231-2.

APPENDIX VAnalysis of rating assessments - (a) Agricultural parishes.1. Chillenden

£	1695	1700	1711	1720	1732	1742	1751	1761	1771	1781	1791	1801
1-4	5	7	7	7	4	3	4	4	7	7	7	8
5-19	6	5	4	4	7	7	7	5	5	6	6	5
20-49										1	1	1
50-99	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	1
100-199									1			
Total	13	14	13	13	13	12	13	11	14	16	16	15

2. Chislet

£	1658	1671	1736	1751	1771	1781	1791	1801	1811	1821	1831
1-4	16	16	38	49	20	21	29	24	22	26	33
5-19	17	18	15	11	26	28	20	25	31	24	23
20-49	13	15	8	8	5	9	6	4	5	3	7
50-99	6	3	5	6	2	3	6	7	7	5	5
100-199	5	3	4	2	6	3	4	4	6	3	2
200-299		1		2	2	2	2	1	1	2	1
300-399			1					1	1	2	3
400-499										1	1
500 & over					1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Total	57	56	71	78	62	67	68	67	74	67	76

3. Eastry

£	1705 Land Tax	1721	1730	1740	1750	1812 Highways	1823	1834
1-4	11	13	9	13	14	13	144	151
5-19	17	11	12	9	9	37	33	38
20-49	7	8	7	11	9	12	13	10
50-99	4	4	5	5	6	6	9	8
100-199	3	3	2	1	1	10	6	8
200-299		1	2	2	1	1	1	1
300-399								1
400-499							1	1
500 & over						2		
Total	42	40	37	41	40	81	207	218

4. Elham

£	1730	1741	1751	1774	1790	1822
1-4	87	113	119	76	81	90
5-19	48	45	39	61	64	64
20-49	19	15	17	28	27	23
50-99	2	3	3	10	11	11
100-199	2			1	3	5
200-299				2	1	
300-399						
Total	158	176	178	178	187	193

5. St. Nicholas-at-Wade

£	1705	1732	1742	1752	1762	1772	1782	1792	1802	1812	1822	1832
1-4	19	21	31	38	41	43	13	12	10	7	11	8
5-19	7	5	3	3	5	4	4	4	3	7	8	10
20-49	3	2	3	3	2	1	2	2	-	1	-	-
50-99	5	2	4	4	3	2	1	-	1	-	-	2
100-199	2	4	2	3	1	1	3	3	1	3	4	4
200-299	1	1	2	1	4	4	3	2	3	-	-	-
300-399								2	1	2	2	3
400-499												
500 & over									1	2	2	1
Total	37	35	45	52	56	55	26	25	20	22	27	28

6. Sarre

£	1751	1761	1771	1781	1792	1802	1811	1821	1832
1-4	16	16	16	6	6	3	1	3	2
5-19	1	1	1	2	4	5	6	7	8
20-49	1	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	-
50-99	2	3	1	1	2	2	1	1	1
100-199	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	2	2
200-299							1	1	1
Total	21	21	21	12	14	11	11	14	14

7. Waldershare

£	1733	1741	1759	1789	1805	1809
1-4		1			3	1
5-19	2	3	5	7	4	5
20-49	1	1	2	2	2	1
50-99	2	2				
100-199	1	1	1	3	2	2
200-299					1	1
300-399						
400-499						
500 & over			1			
Total	6	8	9	12	12	10

8. Wickhambreux

£	1680	1690	1700	1710	1763	1770	1780	1790	1800	1810	1823	1830
1-4	6	8	9	11	23	23	29	25	1	2	65	60
5-19	9	12	8	10	5	7	7	7	9	11	16	14
20-49	6	7	4	3	5	6	8	7	5	5	4	4
50-99	3		2	2	4	4	3	3	7	5	6	4
100-199	2	3	2	2			1	1	2	3	3	3
200-299					1				1	1		
300-399						1					1	1
400-499									1	1	1	1
500 & over												
Total	26	30	25	28	39	41	48	43	26	28	96	87

(b) Urban parishes.

1. St. Clement's Sandwich: (i) 1673-1760.

	1673	1680	1690	1700	1710	1720	1730	1740	1754	1760
Strand St.										
Nil	2	14	8	11	23	16	16	31	17	12
1/-	27	9	10	11	6	4	5	31	-	-
1-2	10	9	13	10	9	5	10	23	5	14
2-3	3	4	9	6	6	7	9	13	9	6
3/- and over	5	15	15	13	7	18	12	15	18	18
High St.										
Nil	5	21	10	16	29	36	26	-	23	19
1/-	34	22	13	16	11	13	10	-	-	-
1-2	10	11	7	9	7	4	10	-	17	24
2-3	3	3	6	3	3	1	4	-	4	2
3/- and over	3	10	7	5	5	5	8	-	17	13
Fisher St.										
Nil	3	8	9	9	30	42	25	12	16	9
1/-	28	9	10	19	3	5	12	6	-	-
1-2	3	6	2	1	3	-	6	6	6	14
2-3	-	3	2	2	2	3	-	3	4	5
3/- and over	-	3	2	2	2	2	3	3	5	5
Church St.										
	Dutch									
Nil	1							5	5	4
1/-	5							3	-	-
1-2								6	4	5
2-3								1	4	2
3/- and over								-	2	4
Key										
Nil								5	5	4
1/-								3	-	-
1-2								-	-	2
2-3								1	1	1
3/- and over								-	-	-
Totals										
Nil	11	43	27	36	82	94	67	53	56	48
% Nil	7.7	29.3	22.0	27.1	56.6	58.4	42.9	31.7	36.6	29.4
1/-	94	40	33	46	20	22	27	43	-	-
1-2	23	26	22	20	19	9	26	35	33	59
2-3	6	10	17	11	-	11	13	18	22	16
3/- and over	8	28	24	20	-	25	23	18	42	40
All	142	147	123	133	145	161	156	167	153	163

(ii) 1771-1831.

	1771	1780	1790	1800	1814	1831
Strand St.						
£1-4	30	31	20	16	16	31
5-19	14	18	23	23	29	31
20-49	1	2	1	1	1	2
Church St.						
1-4	13	12	11	10	10	9
5-19	2	2	2	4	2	3
20-49						
Fisher St.						
1-4	28	26	26	21	18	20
5-19	5	5	5	6	9	17
20-49						1
Key						
1-4	8	5	19	4		
5-19			15	1		
20-49						
High St.						
1-4	41	22		15	10	10
5-19	10	11		15	19	13
20-49					2	1
Chain						
1-4		22	24	26	24	27
5-19		1	3	3	5	7
20-49					1	1
Totals						
1-4	120	118	100	92	78	97
5-19	31	37	48	52	64	71
20-49	1	2	1	1	4	5
All	152	157	149	145	146	173

(iii) Land assessments.

Acres	1673	1680	1690	1700	1710	1720	1730	1740	1754	1760	1770	1781	1790	1800	1814	1831
Up to 5	8	2	8	6	4	10	6	2	5	3	2	5	6	4	7	6
5-19	13	8	6	6	7	8	10	5	4	3	5	5	2	5	1	5
20-49	2	2	5	4	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	4	2
50-99	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	3	1	2
100-199			1	1	2	1		2	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1
200-299							1									
Total	24	13	22	18	16	23	20	12	14	11	12	15	14	14	15	16

2. St. Dunstan's Canterbury.

£	1702	1710	1720	1731	1740	1750	1760	1770	1780	1790	1801	1810	1822	1830
1-4	50	48	21	54	48	60	66	71	87	73	77	80	71	94
5-19	13	11	19	18	18	19	17	15	24	21	35	35	55	63
20-49	5	4	3	4	5	2	4	4	4	3	2	3	5	6
50-99			2		2	2	1		1	1			1	1
100-199				1	1	1	1	1			2	2	3	1
200-299														1
Total	68	63	45	77	74	84	79	91	116	99	116	120	135	166

APPENDIX VI

Analysis of land-holding in 1841 based on census enumerators' books and tithe surveys.

Acres	Chillenden	Eastry	St.Nicholas	Sarre	Waldershare	Wickhambreux
1-4	1	140	5	1		6
5-19	1	44	1			1
20-49	1	9	1			5
50-99		4	1		1	2
100-199		10	1	1		2
200-299		1	2	1	2	1
300-399		1	1			
400-499			1			1
500 & over			1			
Total	3	209	14	3	3	18

APPENDIX VIIMethodology used in deriving population data.1. Calculation of population totals from rating list evidence.

These lists can give only very approximate indication of population totals.

- 1) In rural parishes, the actual number of persons rated represents perhaps 60% of the number of householders in the 18th century; in the 19th century ratepayers approach more closely to the total of households in the parish, but by then census data obviates the need to base calculations on this source. (See Chapter Eight). Thus to arrive at an estimated population, the figure of those assessed to rates needs to be inflated by 40%. A multiplier is then required for average household size.¹ Two estimates, using a multiplier of 4 and 5, are quoted.
- 2) In urban parishes, it is assumed for the purposes of a population estimate that the rated numbers represent all households, and that the average household size again may have varied between 4 and 5, so that two estimates are again calculated.

2. Aggregative analysis of parish registers.

First monthly and yearly totals of baptisms, marriages and burials were counted, noting males and females, children, servants, bastards, wanderers, and any other information as given in the parish registers, in the manner suggested by Eversley (1966) 44-95.

Eleven year moving averages were then calculated² wherever possible. The data has been set out in Appendix VIII section 3. Averages have been rounded to the nearest whole number. (It was not thought the figures were accurate enough to warrant decimal fractions). The figures plotted on the graphs for each decade are therefore the average of the entire decade, for example 1620-1630, and are centred conveniently on the mid year of the

1. Glass, PIH (1969) 197-200 discusses Gregory King's estimates.
2. This was done on the UKC computer, with the help of Miss A. Worthington.

decade, 1625 etc. The advantage of an average taken over an odd number of years is that it can be accurately compared with the annual total round which it centres. This has been done to examine "crisis" levels of mortality. Eleven years was chosen rather than the nine used by Wrigley (1966) 82-109 because the period seemed to cover the decade more completely.¹ The longer period also tends to smooth the data more, and as indications were sought of long-term changes in population size and demographic experience, this seemed appropriate.

Crude rates have also been calculated on the basis of 11-year averages centred on a year for which an estimate of population size is available.

3. Note on method of reconstitution.

The reconstitution of the Ash parish registers was undertaken by a local history class based in the village. The Cambridge Group for the Study of Population and Social Structure sponsored the work, providing the specially designed forms for the extraction of material from the parish registers, for the collection together of family data on Family Reconstitution Forms, and for the final standardisation and punching of the data. Since many individuals were involved not only in the clerical data collection but also in the decisions in doubtful cases of how links between events recorded in the registers should be made, the final results do not reflect one researcher's preconceptions as to the probability of certain events occurring. All the forms were sorted alphabetically, and each letter set was handled by more than one person, so that an element of checking and double-checking was introduced, one researcher following through again the logic of a previous decision. In many cases, of course, decisions were referred to me, but often discussion as to the right course of action would reveal more angles than would occur to any individual. The weekly local history meeting was a pleasurable event for all concerned, but my special thanks are due to the then Vicar of Ash, the Reverend Wild, for permission to use the registers

1. Griffith (1967) chapter 2 also used 11-year averages.

stored in the church, and to all members of the class over the six years of working together.

The final standardisation of the entries on the F.R.F's was not a simple task, because of the many hands involved in the work, and Dr. R. Schofield of the Cambridge Group made possible the punching and processing. The Cambridge Group's programmes of analysis have been used in the discussion, and a considerable debt is owed by me to Dr. Schofield in particular.

Apart from minor amendments, the methodology was as set out in E.A. Wrigley IHD (1966) 96-159.

APPENDIX VIIIAverage annual totals of baptisms, burials and natural increase in each decade from parish registers1. Parish register abstracts

	<u>Lathe of St. Augustine</u>			<u>City of Canterbury</u>				
	Baptisms	Burials	Natural increase + -	Baptisms	Burials	Natural increase + -		
1700	697	489	208	238	325	87		
1710	636	566	70	242	348	106		
1720	590	716	126	283	275	8		
1730	676	617	59	227	292	65		
1740	743	621	122	196	244	48		
1750	729	637	92	229	231	2		
1760	748	570	178	235	195	40		
1770	987	757	230	278	178	100		
1780	936	821	115	245	282	37		
1781-90	989	809	180	270	236	34		
1791-1800	1182	855	327	305	261	44		
1801-10	1776	1260	516	453	396	57		
1811-20	2010	1157	853	446	291	155		
1821-30	2037	1157	880	426	294	132		
<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;"><u>Dover</u></td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;"><u>Sandwich</u></td> </tr> </table>							<u>Dover</u>	<u>Sandwich</u>
<u>Dover</u>	<u>Sandwich</u>							
1700	156	153	3	72	82	10		
1710	180	165	15	84	139	55		
1720	179	233	54	56	131	75		
1730	199	159	40	62	119	57		
1740	228	186	42	78	69	9		
1750	271	185	86	86	82	4		
1760	344	178	166	70	56	14		
1770	299	224	75	71	100	29		
1780	351	298	53	96	85	11		
1781-90	409	266	143	97	79	18		
1791-1800	475	296	179	105	126	21		
1801-10	432	268	163	114	71	43		
1811-20	395	229	166	105	56	49		
1821-30	384	223	161	96	59	37		

2. The town of Sandwich and St. Clement's Sandwich.

	<u>Sandwich</u>			<u>St. Clement's</u>		
	Baptisms	Burials	Natural increase + -	Baptisms	Burials	Natural increase + -
1570-79				28.7	18.8.	10
1580-89				35.6	30.4	5
1590-99				34.4	40.6	6
1600-09				42.3	39.5	3
1610-19				42.3	45.5	3
1620-29	148.3	159.6	11	48.6	41.6	7
1630-39	129.8	156.1	26	36.2	47.4	11
1640-49	112.2	118.6	6	36.7	27.2	10
1650-59	85.0	115.1	30	23.9	31.1	7
1660-69	95.3	150.2	55	29.8	54.4	25
1670-79	93.9	113.3	19	35.0	43.0	8
1680-89	103.2	95.8	7	25.0	31.6	7
1690-99	75.5	97.0	22	20.7	31.7	11
1700-09	68.5	79.6	11	20.8	23.4	3
1710-19	74.2	86.2	12	21.9	27.1	5
1720-29	65.2	85.0	20	18.5	28.0	10
1730-39	74.4	70.4	4	22.8	24.3	2
1740-49	69.1	73.8	5	24.5	32.3	8
1750-59	66.7	57.2	10	19.7	24.6	5
1760-69	67.9	60.4	8	21.6	28.0	6
1770-79	75.8	68.8	7	22.2	33.1	11
1780-89	82.6	63.9	19		30.5	
1801-10	114.2	70.5	44			
1811-20	104.8	56.2	49			
1821-30	96.0	58.8	37			

3. Aggregative analysisSt. Dunstan's

Decade beginning	Baptisms	Burials	Natural increase	
			+	-
1560				
1570	12	18		6
1580	12	13		1
1590	14	17		3
1600	17	18		1
1610	20	21		1
1620	21	26		5
1630	20	24		4
1640	19	-		-
1650	13	9	4	
1660	13	18		5
1670	13	17		4
1680	11	12		1
1690	12	19		7
1700	16	17		1
1710	15	22		7
1720	17	20		3
1730	16	19		3
1740	14	22		8
1750	15	20		5
1760	13	17		4
1770	14	18		4
1780	16	19		3
1790	20	21		1
1800	21	21	=	
1810	21	16	5	
1820	21	16	5	
1830	25	17	8	

Decade beginning	<u>Ash</u>			<u>Chislet</u>		
	Baptisms	Burials	Natural increase + -	Baptisms	Burials	Natural increase + -
1560	30	29	1	13(9)	10(9)	3
1570	30	20	10	15	10	5
1580	34	27	7	19	18	1
1590	37	39	2	15	17	2
1600	33	30	3	21	20	1
1610	33	31	2	20	23	3
1620	35	26	9	21	22	1
1630	37	38	1	20	23	3
1640	-	-		21(7)	17(8)	4
1650	35(7)	35(7)	=	20(7)	20(7)	=
1660	30	26	4	16	19	3
1670	34	22	12	18	21	3
1680	40	31	9	17	20	3
1690	36	25	11	16	15	1
1700	39	29	10	16	15	1
1710	36	31	5	14	14	=
1720	45	37	8	14	14	=
1730	49	30	19	18	14	4
1740	46	29	17	17	11	6
1750	53	33	20	17	12	5
1760	52	42	10	20	16	4
1770	53	39	14	25	21	4
1780	57	39	18	24	20	4
1790	51	35	16	28	14	14
1800	61	36	25	34	17	19
1810	78	38	40	34	16	18
1820	74	39	35	35	19	16
1830	66	44	22	39	21	18

EastryElham

Decade Beginning	Baptisms	Burials	Natural increase		Baptisms	Burials	Natural increase	
			+	-			+	-
1560	16	9	7					
1570	14	9	5					
1580	17	9	8					
1590	19	14	5					
1600	19	10	9		28	13	15	
1610	19	12	7		28	13	15	
1620	19	12	7		36	18	18	
1630	19	12	7		37	25	12	
1640	15	8(7)	7		33	19	14	
1650	17	-	-		24	20	4	
1660	16	10	6		29	19	10	
1670	16	11	5		26	25	1	
1680	14	13	1		25	26		1
1690	14	9	5		25	19	6	
1700	17	12	5		31	16	15	
1710	17	9	8		27	21	6	
1720	17	11	6		24	18	6	
1730	17	13	4		29	18	11	
1740	17	12	5		24	16	8	
1750	16	12	4		22	13	9	
1760	18	14	4		32	24	8	
1770	22	14	8		27	18	9	
1780	26	14	12		28	17	11	
1790	27	16	11		31	22	9	
1800	25	17	8		33	19	14	
1810	32	17	15		37	21	16	
1820	44	19	23		42	22	20	
1830	45	20	25		36	22	24	

St. NicholasWickhambreux

Decade beginning	Baptisms	Burials	Natural increase		Baptisms	Burials	Natural increase	
			+	-			+	-
1560					10	8	2	
1570	11(3)	5(3)	6		11	6	5	
1580					11	6	5	
1590					9	9	=	
1600					11	7	4	
1610	12(7)	15(7)		3	10	7	3	
1620	14(6)	18(6)		4	9	5	4	
1630					7	6	1	
1640								
1650					7(7)	-		
1660	10	11		1	12	10	2	
1670	11	12		1	11	9	2	
1680	10	15		5	9	9	=	
1690	12	10	2		10	7	3	
1700	12	11	1		9	6	3	
1710	12	10	2		6	7		1
1720	11	11	=		8	7	1	
1730	16	10	6		7	7	=	
1740	14	9	5		7	5	2	
1750	11	9	2		8	5	3	
1760	14	13	1		8	6	2	
1770	17	12	5		9	7	2	
1780	23	13	10		11	5	6	
1790	24	11	13		13	7	6	
1800	22	15	7		14	7	7	
1810	22	15	7		16	7	9	
1820	28	15	13		15	7	8	
1830	26	14	12		16	10	6	

Note. Figures in brackets refer to the number of years on which the average for the decade has had to be based.

APPENDIX IXReconstitution data: Ash 1650-1840Rates of infant mortality (per thousand)(i) by birth rank

	Birth rank									All
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
1650-99	130	152	114	98	86	241	272	444	142	145
1700-49	134	64	128	139	66	118	65	107	333	110
1750-99	120	114	109	147	129	104	173	137	186	129
1800-40	105	40	82	82	93	76	93	208	233	91

Table T 90 E; weights 70 & 71 included; date of marriage known.

(ii) by age (days)

	Age in days							180-1 yr
	0	1-6	7-29	30-59	60-89	90-179		
1650-99	45	13	21	7	14	18	22	
1700-49	12	26	28	16	8	21	24	
1750-99	16	16	33	14	6	31	28	
1800-40	3	5	16	5	5	30	29	

Table T 92 QR; weights 70 & 71 included; date of marriage unknown.¹(iii) by age of mother at birth of child

	Age group						All
	U 20	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	
1650-99	167	97	135	125	125	222	136
1700-49	278	85	92	119	198	130	126
1750-99	98	118	140	159	157	177	143
1800-40	120	81	111	132	203	80	117

Table 92 GH; dates of marriage known and unknown; all child birth dates included.

1. Results of tabulations according to whether date of marriage is known or unknown do not substantially differ, but there are more cases observed in the early period in the marriage date unknown class.

2. Age-specific marital fertility rates

Wife's age period	1650-99	1700-49	1750-99	1800-40
Under 20	400	273	548	273
20-24	433	427	416	371
25-29	300	342	367	325
30-34	295	379	295	280
35-39	286	260	229	320
40-44	100	98	159	54
45-49	53	16	27	31

Table AT 90 VW. All marriage orders; date of end of marriage known.

3. Fertility rates by duration of marriage.

Duration in years	1650-1699	1700-1749	1750-1799	1800-1840
0-4	345	382	385	377
5-9	346	326	290	215
10-14	324	254	216	254
15-19	125	142	154	102
20-24	0	31	79	24
25-29	63	0	23	34
30-	0	0	0	0

Table AT 90 VW; all marriage ranks; all ages at marriage; end of marriage known.

4. Mean number of children according to wife's age at marriage for completed families.

Wife's age at marriage	1650-1699	1700-1749	1750-1799	1800-1840
Under 20		5.3	7.9	10.0
20-24	6.3	7.8	8.0	8.0
25-29		4.9	4.4	
30-34		3.0	1.8	
35-39			1.8	1.0
40-44		1.0	2.0	
45-49				
All	6.3	5.5	5.6	3.9

Table T 92 TS; all marriage ranks.

5. Birth intervals (according to rank) in completed families with at least four births (mean/months)

	Birth rank					Penultimate	Ultimate
	1	2	3	4	5+		
1650-99	12	22	24	25	29	20	22
1700-49	15	23	29	29	26	36	155
1750-99	13	28	26	27	23	29	40
1800-40	8	26	26	25	21	26	35

Table 90 XY; all ages of marriages.

APPENDIX XConventions and methodology used in analysing 1841 census enumerators' books.1. Conventions.(a) The household.

There has been considerable discussion of the conventions suitable to be adopted for 1851 and subsequent census enumerators' books¹, but not for 1841. In some respects the 1841 census is more like 1861 than 1851, in particular in the use of single and double oblique dashes to indicate the divisions between households and between their component parts. In 1841 the enumerator was instructed to use a single dash "/" to indicate the end of a "family" and a double dash "//" the end of the "occupied house". The definition of the term "family" was not attempted in 1841, but was presumably thought to be generally understood. The enumerator also had to mark with a "one", "1", each inhabited house in the special column provided.

"By house is meant Dwelling house, any building in which a person habitually sleeps." In 1851 the word "occupier" was substituted for "family", presumably to avoid ambiguity, and a short line was to be drawn to mark the end of the occupying group, while a long line marked the end of the house. In addition the enumerator had a column in which to insert the designation "head" or for other members of the household the "relationship to head". In 1861 the column for relationships was retained, but the oblique dashes were substituted for the long and short lines. In addition each new house (defined as "all the space within the external and party walls of the building") was to be indicated by a "one" in the "houses inhabited" column. For 1861, therefore, the word "head" can be used to delimit each household, and four ways of distinguishing household composition were available. But in 1841 the enumerator only had three ways: thus a nuclear or extended family could be distinguished from one lodging unit by a single dash, but further lodging units each had to be divided from each other by double dashes, and

1. For example several essays are collected in Nineteenth Century Society (1972) ed. E.A. Wrigley.

the end of a group of such lodgers by the "one" in the inhabited house column. One example will illustrate the point:

1	Sarah Brickenden	75	
	Robert Quaife	30	
	Elizabeth "	35	
	<u>James Brickenden</u>	30	Lab.
	<u>Eliza Hogben</u>	20	

It seems unlikely that James Brickenden was an wholly independent household (from the 1851 census it appears he was Elizabeth Quaife's brother). Hence it was decided to take the "one" in the inhabited house column as the delimiter of households.¹ The majority of households were in fact neatly contained within double dashes and the "one"; only a few were ambiguous. The convention adopted may mean that in a few cases the unit was more properly a house rather than a household, and hence too large, but conversely if a different convention were adopted, lodgers would be elevated to the status of independent households.² There is no help from the very scanty address information.

The first name of the group marked by the "one" was taken as the head of the household, except in a very few cases where the household was obviously incomplete, as for example three servants in a group, or three children under sixteen. (Occasionally the head was noted as missing). These cases were excluded.

(b) Family and kin.

(i) From observation of the East Kent data, some enumerators obviously used the single dash to distinguish the nuclear family, while others included before it all related members of the household. Because of these inconsistencies in usage, it was thought best to take surnames as the

1. Armstrong IHD (1966) 229 used the double dash and the "one" in conjunction, thus avoiding the occasional odd situation where a family appears to occupy two houses. But there seems no reason why this situation should not sometimes arise. In one case, for example, a man and wife and two children appear to have occupied one house, and next door were the grandparents with the youngest grandchild. The two inhabited houses were closed off by one set of double dashes. It is impossible to deduce what elements of commensality existed.
2. In 1861 many more lodgers were in fact designated separate households, Anderson NCS (1972) 142.

criterion of "family" and designate as "lodgers" all other members of the household with different surnames (who were not described as servants).¹

(ii) Within the group sharing a surname, further familial relationships have to be inferred. The second person listed, if of suitable sex and age, was taken to be the wife. A suitable age was defined as within ± 10 years of the husband's, which, because of the rounding down of ages to the nearest five in the 1841 census, allows an age difference effectively of nearly 15 years. Further members of the surname group were then tested for age compatibility with the age of the head. If the ages were at least 15 and not more than 49 years different from the head's, they were categorised as children, and if outside this age range then as kin. No further categorisation of family relationships was realistic or required. Separate analysis was made of subordinate groups (lodgers) sharing surnames as "subordinate families". The families of servants were counted as lodgers.

(c) Servants and lodgers.

Servants were mainly those described as male or female servant, governess, groom, coachman etc. but occasionally also an agricultural labourer in a farmer's household. (In a labourer's household such a man was counted a lodger). Also included were those described as apprentice or journeyman if their craft was the same as the head of the household's. Occasionally this results in what were properly servants being classed as lodgers; for example an agricultural labourer in an Independent Lady's household may be running her small-holding or farm, and a blacksmith journeyman and apprentice in a Widow's household be running the smithy, but again these cases are few.

All other members of households were categorised as lodgers, including visitors and foster children.

1. Armstrong IHD (1966) 229 used the same convention.

2. Matching records

All cross-matching of records was done manually, and the results recorded on the computer file. A household was regarded as still present in 1851 even if the head was no longer present, if two or more members of the original household were matched. If there were problems of matching names or ages of the head and more than one member of a household, the match was rejected. In matching census households with rating lists, the head of the household was the only name which could be matched. In a few cases, it was clear that the enumerator had listed a family in an erratic way - for example servants separately first, then main family. This could be allowed for, but not where an individual member of a household appeared to be the ratepayer, not the census head. These had to be regarded as not matched.

3. Computer analysis

With the help of staff in the computing laboratory at the University of Kent at Canterbury, the 1841 census data was analysed by means of a programme SURMT 2, "An amended version of the Program for the Tabulation of Survey Data by Ann Holden, Bangor, June 1968." Initially data was transferred on to analysis sheets, as much as possible (e.g. ages) in raw form, but some (e.g. occupations) in coded form. Punched cards were prepared and verified by laboratory staff. Data was then written on to magnetic tape through DATACH, "A program to verify survey data and write to magnetic tape." Checks on the consistency and logic of the data could then be made. Data was manipulated at this stage, grouped suitably, tested for age compatibility etc. A further program, RECODING, "A program to alter the coding of a DATACH output tape" was used to add together the various age tables. SURMT 2 was complicated to use and much patient help was provided, particularly by Miss J. Dobby and Miss A. Worthington of the UKC Computer Laboratory, in getting round obstacles and failures.

APPENDIX XIRating Profiles of the Registrar-General's Five Social Classesa) Three Agricultural Parishes

£	I	II	III	IV	V	(VI)
Up to 5	2	14	39	238	1	26
5 - 9	1	18	14	23		8
10 - 19	1	18	14	6		1
20 - 49	3	29	4	3		-
50 - 99	1	14	1	-		2
100 & over	2	32	-	1		3
Total	10	125	72	271	1	40
No. of census households	12	136	91	361	2	67

b) Eastry

Up to 5	-	7	25	89	1	18
5 - 9	-	8	11	4		1
10 - 19	-	9	8	2		1
20 - 49	2	3	3	1		
50 - 99	1	2	1			
100 & over	2	10	-			
Total	5	39	48	96	1	20
No. of census households	7	40	51	104	1	22

c) Two Urban Parishes

Up to 5	0	5	22	40		7
5 - 9	1	31	38	32		7
10 - 19	6	37	21	6		1
20 - 49	2	17	4	3		-
50 - 99	1	1	1	-		-
Total	10	91	86	81		15
No. of census households	12	135	129	134	4	22

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CCL - Canterbury Cathedral Library (Canterbury).

KAO - Kent Archives Office (Maidstone).

PRO - Public Record Office.

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2. Parliamentary Papers.

(i) The returns of the amounts of the rates or expenditure for the relief of the poor in each parish have been taken from:-

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1818	XIX	Abstract of the answers and returns. (1813-1815).
1822	V	Report from the Select Committee on returns 1819-22.(1816-1821).
1825	IV	Report from the Select Committee on returns 1824. (1822-1824).
1830-31	XI	Money expended for the relief of the poor in every place in England and Wales 1825-29. Estimate of the annual value of real property assessed April 1815 to the Property Tax. (1825-1829).
1835	XLVII	An account of the money expended for the maintenance and relief of the poor 1830-34. (1830-1834).

(ii) Returns of population:-

(1801)		Abstract of answers and returns for taking an account of the population of Great Britain in 1801.
1801 VI; 1801-2 VI-VII		Enumeration abstract and parish register abstract.
(1811)		Abstract of answers and returns.....in 1811.
1812 XI		Enumeration abstract and parish register abstract.
(1821)		Abstract of answers and returns.....in 1821.
1822 XV		Enumeration abstract and parish register abstract.
(1831)		Abstract of the population returns of Great Britain, 1831.
1833 XXXVI- XXXVIII		Enumeration abstract and parish register abstract.
(1841)		Abstract of answers and returns.....in 1841.
1843 XXII		Enumeration abstract.
-	XXIII	Age abstract.
1844 XXVII		Occupation abstract.
1845 XXV		Parish register abstract.
(1851)		Census of Great Britain, 1851. Population tables.

1852-3 LXXXV- LXXXVI	Part 1. Number of inhabitants etc.
1852-3 LXXXVIII (Parts 1 and 2)	Part 2. Ages, civil condition, occupations, work places.
(iii) Reports of Select Committees etc.	
1816 XIX	Resolutions on relief of distress.
1817 VI	Report from the Select Committee on the Poor Laws.
1819 V	Third report from the Select Committee on the Poor Laws.
1822 V	Report from the Select Committee on the foreign trade of of the country.
1824 VI	Report from the Select Committee appointed to enquire into the practice that prevails in some parts of the country of paying the wages of labour out of the poor rates.
-	Report from the Select Committee on poor rate returns.
1825 XIX	Abstract of returns made to the committee in 1824 relative to labourers' wages.
1828 IV	Report from the Select Committee on that part of the Poor Laws relating to the employment or relief of able-bodied persons from the poor rates.
-	Report from the Select Committee on the Law of Parochial Settlements.
1834 XXVII	Report from His Majesty's Commissioners for inquiring into the administration and practical operation of the Poor Laws.
- XXVIII	Appendix A. Reports of Assistant Commissioners, part 1.
- XXX- XXXIV	Appendix B1. Answers to Rural Queries, parts 1-5.
- XXXV- XXXVI	Appendix B2. Answers to Urban Queries, parts 1-5.
- XXXVIII	Appendix D (Labour Rate).
-	Appendix E (Vagrants).
1835 XXXV	First annual report of the Poor Law Commissioners.
1835 XXIV	Reports from the Commissioners on Municipal Corporations in England and Wales.
1836 XXIX	Second annual report of the Poor Law Commissioners.
1843 XXI	Report of the Poor Law Commissioners on Local Taxation.
1844 XL	Return of the date of all Gilbert's Unions, whether dissolved or not, dated 4 June 1844.
1851 XXVI	George Coode's report to the Poor Law Board on Settlement and Removal.

3. Acts.

PICKERING, DANBY - Statutes at Large vol. XV (1765) 495-6:

1727 1 Geo II Session 2 c.20. An Act for erecting a workhouse in the city of Canterbury for employing and maintaining the poor there, and for better enlightning the streets of the said city.

4. Manuscript Sources.(i) Census Enumerators' Books 1841 and 1851.

	<u>Book number:-</u>	
(PRO/HO/107)		
a) <u>Urban parishes</u>	1841	1851
St. Dunstan's, Canterbury	466	1625
Vill of Christ Church, Canterbury	486	1625
St. Clement's, Sandwich	494	1631
b) <u>Rural parishes</u>		
Ash	465	1631
Chillenden	467	1631
Chislet	465	1625
Eastry	466	1631
Knowlton	467	1631
Sarre	470	1629
St. Nicholas-at-Wade	468	1629
Waldershare	470	1631
Wickhambreux	470	1623

(ii) Sources for Aggregative Analysis.

(a) Urban parishes:

St. Dunstan's, Canterbury: original parish registers, Canterbury Cathedral Library (temporary deposit), and printed registers.

J. Meadows Cowper, The Register Booke of Christenings Marriages and Burialls in St. Dunstan's Canterbury 1559-1800. (Canterbury 1887).

St. Mary's, Dover: printed figures drawn from the Parish Register Abstracts.

St. Clement's, Sandwich: printed figures drawn from the Parish Register Abstracts and from J. Boys, Collections for a History of Sandwich (1792).

(b) Rural parishes:

Ash: original parish registers in the parish chest.

Chislet: original parish registers, Canterbury Cathedral Library /u3/55.

Eastry: aggregative analysis made available with great kindness by Mr J. Bones of Eastry.

Elham: original parish registers in the parish chest.

St. Nicholas-at-Wade: original parish registers, Canterbury Cathedral Library /u3/18.

Wickhambreux: original parish registers, Canterbury Cathedral Library /u3/63.

(iii) Poor Law and other Local Sources.

(The dates shown are the limits between which material has been used, but the series of records is not necessarily unbroken throughout; the series may also continue after the date shown. Tithe maps and assessments for East Kent are all held at Canterbury Cathedral Library.)

(a) Urban parishes:

Canterbury:

St Dunstan's, Canterbury : CCL (Temporary deposit)
 Churchwardens' Accounts & Rates 1700-1838
 Vestry 1769-1839
 Overseers' Accounts & Rates 1740-1835
 Settlement 1697-1800
 Tithe 1851

Vill of Christ Church : CCL/u3/100
 Vestry 1772-1832
 Overseers' Accounts & Rates 1797-1823
 Miscellaneous 1798-1837

Canterbury Union :

Guardians' Minutes 1728-1834 : CCL/QG

List of Paupers 1831-2 : KCC Library (Canterbury Division)

Dover:

St. Mary's, Dover

Rate books 1776-1829 : Dover Public Library

Vestry 1611-1832 : CCL/u3/30

Sandwich:

St. Clement's, Sandwich : KAO/P323

Churchwardens' Accounts & Rates 1667-1825

Overseers' Accounts & Rates 1663-1836

St. Mary's, Sandwich : CCL/u3/11

Vestry 1631-1840

Overseers' Accounts & Rates 1800-3

St. Peter's, Sandwich : CCL/u3/12

Vestry 1601-1836

Overseers' Accounts & Rates 1598-1614

Miscellaneous 1598-1724

All three parishes : KAO/Sa

Rating returns 1830 : JP 4

Returns of males 1830 : AL r

(b) Rural parishes:

Ash : Parish Chest

Churchwardens' Accounts & Rates 1633-1842

Highway Accounts & Rates 1726-1841

Vestry 1704-1840

Overseers' Accounts & Rates 1601-1835

Settlement 1697-1818

Miscellaneous 1697-1818

Tithe 1840

Chillenden : CCL/u3/34

Churchwardens' Accounts & Rates 1694-1751

Overseers' Accounts & Rates 1768-1807

Tithe 1843

Chislet : CCL/u3/55

Churchwardens' Accounts & Rates 1604-1628

Highway Accounts & Rates 1771-1831

Vestry 1770-1838

(Chislet (contd.))

Overseers' Accounts & Rates 1619-1840
 Settlement 1707-1834
 Miscellaneous 1598-1836
 Tithe 1838

Eastry : Parish Chest

Churchwardens' Accounts & Rates 1841
 Highways Accounts & Rates 1812-1824
 Vestry 1830-1838
 Overseers' Accounts & Rates 1721-1834
 Settlement 1733-1835
 Miscellaneous 1786-1835
 Tithe 1839

Elham : CCL/u3/32

Churchwardens' Accounts & Rates 1821-1841
 Vestry 1773-1834
 Overseers' Accounts & Rates 1729-1821
 Tithe 1844

Sarre

Tithe 1843

St. Nicholas-at-Wade : CCL/u3/18

Churchwardens' Accounts & Rates 1749-1842
 (including Sarre also)
 Highways Accounts & Rates 1805-1837
 Vestry 1833-1839
 Overseers' Accounts & Rates 1732-1835
 Settlement 1706-1792
 Miscellaneous 1781-1843
 Tithe 1839

Waldershare : KAO/P380

Churchwardens' Accounts & Rates 1809
 Overseers' Accounts & Rates 1733-1809
 Tithe 1843

Wickhambreux : CCL/u3/63

Churchwardens' Accounts & Rates 1800-1840
 Overseers' Accounts & Rates 1678-1831
 Tithe 1838

(iv) Miscellaneous manuscript sources.

The Pattenden Diary : Dover Public Library

