

## THE PARISH OF CHIPPING DURING THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

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THE parish of Chipping is situated in Lancashire, about ten miles to the north-east of Preston. It is an area still very rural in character with pastoral farming the main economic activity. The parish consists of the two townships of Chipping and Thornley. The main settlement is the village of Chipping and there are also the small hamlets of Wheatley and Bradley and numerous scattered farmsteads.

The landscape of the area is one of hills and valleys with the parish itself lying between Longridge Fell to the south and Parlick and Saddle Fell to the north. The northern boundary of the parish at Fairsnape Fell reaches the height of 1707 feet and the highest point of the southern boundary which runs along Longridge Fell, attains the height of 1,100 feet. On the hills the soils tend to be thin and rather acidic and this, together with the short growing season, make these fell land areas more suited to grazing than to crop production. It is in the valley, where a capping of boulder clay does produce relatively more fertile land, that some crop growing is possible but the land is still more suited to grass.

The parish of Chipping at the time of Domesday was a wooded area and in about 1350 the inhabitants were referred to as being, 'few, untractable and wild,' the place being described as, 'in a manner inaccessible to man'.<sup>1</sup> As occurred in many other forested areas in the country, the woodland was gradually cleared and by the 17th century this process had been completed in the parish of Chipping.

The clearance and enclosure of the wastes and commons was also an on-going process in Chipping and Thornley and at the Tithe Award of 1840 there were still 1316 customary acres of common or fell land: 932 acres in Chipping and 384 acres in Thornley, out of a total parish acreage of 8,854 acres.<sup>2</sup> These figures indicate that there was no shortage of common pasture

and, in fact, no reference to stinting can be found at any time during the 17th century except for an area of land owned by the Sherburne family called the 'Castlesteads'.

The enclosure of the open fields occurred early in the parish and by the 17th century individual closes, hedged or walled round were, and are, the typical features of the landscape.

Using such material as wills, probate inventories, leases, rentals, surveys, hearth tax returns and manorial court rolls, an attempt has been made to reconstruct something of the economy and society of the parish during the 17th century. In particular, these sources have been used to try to shed some light on the status and wealth of some of the people living in the parish, the nature of the farming structure, the type of agriculture practised, and the existence of other crafts and by-employments within the parish.

#### THE ECONOMIC STRUCTURE OF THE PARISH DURING THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

Pastoral farming was the basic economic activity in the parish and, as such, the largest occupational group was formed by the farmers. The majority of farmers owned or rented relatively small farms and tenements. The craftsmen and tradesmen, though fewer in number, also constituted an important group, as did the labourers who provided the work force for both the farms and the workshops.

From an analysis of the hearth tax returns and the probate inventories, it is possible to gain some idea of the scale of wealth which existed in the parish during the seventeenth century. The complete hearth tax assessment of 1664 reveals that Chipping township had a total of 140 households, 74 of which were taxable and 66 which were exempt on grounds of poverty.<sup>3</sup> In Thornley, there were 78 households in total, 53 of which were taxable and 25 which were exempt.

At the top of the economic pyramid in Chipping, according to the number of hearths possessed, were the households of Mr Sherburne of Wolfhall, Roger Sherburne, and Robert Alston, each of which had four hearths in their residences. In Thornley, the outstanding members were Marjery Laites with seven hearths and Henry Sherburne with four hearths. At the other end of the scale, there were 56 houses with only one hearth each in Chipping and 39 houses in Thornley. Between these extremes, there were 12 houses with two hearths and 3 houses with three hearths in Chipping and, in Thornley, 10 houses with two hearths and 2 houses with three hearths. These houses with two or three

hearthths were occupied, in the main, by the more substantial yeoman farmers of the parish.

At the bottom of the 1664 assessment there were 91 households, out of a total number for the parish of 218 households—nearly 42 per cent which were exempted from paying the tax because of poverty. In Chipping, 66 or 45 per cent of all households were exempt and in Thornley 25 or 33 per cent of households. In a hill parish, on rather poor soil, one would probably expect this with families struggling hard to make a living and, at times, not succeeding in even doing that. In contrast, in the parish of Myddle in Shropshire, Dr Hey found that only about 16.5 per cent of the householders were exempted from the 1672 hearth tax.<sup>4</sup> This was an area similar to Chipping in that the economy of the parish was based on pastoral farming, but the relatively more fertile lands in Myddle probably helped to support more people above the poverty line. Indeed it would seem that Chipping showed more similarities on the question of poverty with an arable area like Wigston Magna in Leicestershire. Here Professor Hoskins found that 47 householders, nearly 30 per cent, were exempted by reason of poverty from the 1670 hearth tax.<sup>5</sup> After taking into consideration the fact that some of the exempt were retired persons living in reduced yet comfortable circumstances, and not the genuine able-bodied poor as such, Hoskins attributed the major cause of the pauper problem during the second half of the 17th century to the increasing pressure of immigration which taxed the resources of the parish to the full. This may also have been taking place in Chipping during the last half of the century, particularly as new names start to appear in the parish registers during this period. Throughout the middle ages, as its name suggests, the village of Chipping had been the principal market of the area and, although the market may have been substantially reduced by the 17th century, the village was still a very important centre for a wide surrounding area and it would have proved a strong attraction for people in search of work.

That sections of the parish lived in poverty is further evidenced by the quite extensive numbers of petitions for relief submitted to the Quarter Sessions held at Preston.<sup>6</sup> Many of the relief petitioners were asking for sums of money in addition to that which they were already receiving from the overseers of the poor in the parish. The recognition of their struggle with poverty was reflected in the various bequests made by their wealthier neighbours. John Brabine, one of the richest men in Chipping and the most generous benefactor, left bequests, when he died in 1683, for the founding of a school and the building of almshouses in the village. Relief was to be given to the poor and, 'some of the poor scholars

as shall be clothed and taught shall be put to trades or callings when children shall be capable thereof.<sup>7</sup> The school and almshouses are still present in the village, together with John Brabine's own house in Talbot Street. (Now the Post Office.)

#### STATUS AND WEALTH

From the wills and probate inventories available at Lancashire Record Office, it has been possible to trace the status and wealth of a number of people living within the parish during the second half of the 17th century.

Ninety wills and inventories have been analysed for the period 1650 to 1700 and from the 71 inventories which indicate rank, only 2 persons, John Sherburne of the Knot in Chipping and John Brabine, were referred to as 'gents'. Sherburne's inventory amounted to only £38 12s. 9d., but that of John Brabine totalled £726 7s. 3d. Brabine's inventory records no farming stock but it does include the sum of £527 17s. 11d. owing to him in bills and bonds and a further £128 8s. 4d. in ready money and gold.

The rank or status of 'yeoman' was given to 28 individuals; 20 persons were referred to in their inventories as 'husbandmen' and 8 women were given the title of 'widow', including the widows of retired yeomen.

The valuations of all the inventories, including those of craftsmen and those whose status was not given, ranged from the £772 of the yeoman George Eccles, to the £1 7s. 6d. of John Astley. These figures tend to indicate extremes of wealth from the top of the scale to the bottom, but only three other people had valuations over £200.

The average valuation from the 90 inventories was between £30 to £50. The full distribution of wealth from the inventory valuations can be seen in the table below.

Over £200	—	4	persons
£150—£200	—	4	„
£100—£150	—	11	„
£50—£100	—	16	„
£20—£50	—	24	„
£20 and under	—	31	„

Only 4 per cent of the valuations were over £200 indicating that, for the 1650 to 1700 period, there was not a large group of very wealthy persons resident within the parish. On the other hand, people with below £20 personal estate accounted for about 33 per cent of the total valuations and those with between £20 and £50 accounted for 28 per cent of the total number of inventories analysed. Mary Brigg, in her study of the pastoral farming

area of the Forest of Pendle, found that only 28 per cent of the inventories had valuations under £50 with 7 per cent over £200.<sup>8</sup> In the predominantly arable farming region of mid-Essex, F. W. Steer found that, during the 1635 to 1748 period, 20 per cent of the inventory valuations were over £200 with 45 per cent under £50.<sup>9</sup> In the middle range of valuations—between £50 and £150—30 per cent in this group were in Chipping, 54 per cent in the Forest of Pendle, and 30 per cent in mid-Essex.

The Chipping inventories, like those for the Forest of Pendle, reveal no great extremes of wealth at the top of the scale but, unlike the Pendle area, and showing more similarity with mid-Essex, they reveal quite a substantial number of people at the lower end of the scale. In fact of the inventories analysed, 61 per cent had valuations of personal estate below £50 although, in all probability, those persons with £20 or over would have been living in reasonable comfort and security. Also, the sample of 90 inventories does include 19 inventories which, from their content, listing mainly personal goods, household items, clothing, ready money and sometimes bonds and bills, would appear to be those of retired farmers and widows, living off their savings and investments. Some of these inventories have wills attached which describe the deceased as 'yeoman,' whilst other individuals can be identified as former yeomen, or the widows of yeomen, from other sources. The inclusion of these retired persons in the sample could slightly inflate the £50 and under group.

Nevertheless, this evidence emerging from the analysis of the probate inventories taken together with that from the hearth tax returns and the relief petitions, does tend to point to the existence of a substantially large section of people who had to strive and work to keep themselves and their families clothed and fed and as far away from the jaws of poverty as possible.

Of the 28 yeomen for whom inventories exist, 2 possessed personal estate over £200; 4 had valuations between £150 and £200; 8 had valuations between £100 and £150; 9 possessed valuations between £50 and £100 and 5 had personal estates valued at less than £50.

Despite the 'yeoman' status given to all these men, their living standards varied greatly. One of the wealthiest yeomen, John King, who was also the vicar of Chipping, died in 1672, leaving personal estate worth £222 16s. 8d. Of this, his farm stock amounted to £92 and his farm equipment £5 8s. od. His house of seven rooms had nine beds within it, each with extensive coverings, plus '60½ lb pewter, curtains, 2 carpet clothes and brass valued at £3 6s. 8d.' His household goods amounted to £60 18s. 8d., the highest valuation of household equipment in all

the inventories, indicating that the yeoman-vicar enjoyed a high standard of living.

In comparison, another yeoman, John Hindle of Chipping, though still very comfortably off, had a lower standard of living than John King. Hindle died in 1665 leaving personal estate valued at £122 11s. 0d. with farmstock valued at £67 15s. 11d. The implements he used on his farm accounted for another £7 15s. 4d. and his household goods totalled £30 1s. 2d. Three beds are recorded, 'with bedding and other furniture belonging,' valued at £4 13s. 0d., with one bed being situated in the 'parlour.' Brass in the Hindle household was valued at 17s. 6d. with pewter at 12s. The highest proportion of John Hindle's personal estate was in his cattle and horses which consisted of six cows, six heifers, nine stirks, four calves and five horses. Hindle's inventory gives one the impression of a hard-working yeoman, content to live modestly whilst investing as much money as possible into his farming stock.

Robert Dilworth, yeoman, who died in 1679, possessed £52 3s. 0d. in personal estate. As with John King and John Hindle, Dilworth's greatest wealth was in his cattle and other farm stock with £32 2s. 0d. in cattle and horses and £2 11s. 8d. in farm equipment. His household goods were valued at £10 3s. 4d. and consisted of such necessary items as, 'fire irons, rackentrees, girdle, spittle, tongues, cupboards, forms, chairs and stools.' Carpenter's tools are also recorded, indicating that Robert Dilworth carried on an additional occupation to that of farming.

The wealth of the husbandmen in the parish varied from £101 13s. 10d. to £9 17s. 4d. Five husbandmen had more than £50 and one had over £100, making these six individuals wealthier than some of the poorer yeomen. Hugh Sherburne of Chipping was the wealthiest husbandman with personal estate valued at £101 13s. 10d. He only possessed two cows worth £4 13s. 4d. plus other farm goods valued at £2 13s. 4d. and household goods at £8 5s. 10d., but he had debts owing to him amounting to £83 14s. 4d. Perhaps he was living in retirement or semi-retirement and using his savings to finance loans to other people. Although Sherburne was wealthier than many of the yeomen in the parish, he was still referred to in his inventory as a 'husbandman.'

Henry Wilkinson of Thornley, who died in 1671, was another husbandman with substantial debts owing to him. Mr William Osbaldeston of Walton le Dale owed Wilkinson £50 for the sale of, 'some lands,' and he was still waiting for the repayment of £22 6s. 6d. in connection with the sale of a house and two acres of ground to his nephew, Richard Wilkinson. There is no farm

stock listed in Henry's inventory which amounted, in all, to £86 12s. 8d., but thatching tools are recorded and perhaps Wilkinson was retired and doing a little thatching to pass his time and to make a little extra money. Henry Wilkinson obviously considered himself to be of 'yeoman' status for he addressed himself as such in his will. However, his neighbours thought otherwise and he was given the status of 'husbandman' in his inventory.

Leonard Bradley, who died in 1682, was a husbandman with quite a high proportion of his wealth in his farming stock. In fact his cattle, horses and grain amounted to £51 8s. 10d. out of a total inventory valuation of £97 18s. 1d. He possessed a house of five rooms containing household goods to the value of £24 7s. 2d. indicating that his house was better furnished than a number of yeomen.

The poorest husbandman from the inventories was Evan Eccles of Thornley who died in 1665 possessed of only £9 17s. 4d. in personal estate. Eccles had three kine valued at £6 and he owed £3 18s. 8d. to Robert Roades and John Brabine. His household goods were worth just £3 7s. 2d. When his wife died three years later she left £11 12s. 0d., with household equipment valued at £4 17s. 2d. Many of the goods recorded in the husband's inventory were repeated in that of the wife. Part of the increase in the value of the household goods between the two inventories could be accounted for by the inclusion in the wife's inventory of 'bed-sticks and bedding,' plus 'one stand bed' and a, 'wheel bed,' valued in all at £1 2s. 0d. This suggests that these items of furniture belonged to the wife and so were excluded from the inventory of the husband.

It is apparent from this analysis that the status terms 'yeoman' and 'husbandman' cannot be used to describe an individual's financial status for a 'husbandman' could be wealthier than a 'yeoman'. This was also found to be the case by Mary Brigg in her study of the Forest of Pendle.<sup>10</sup> It is also apparent that the majority of yeomen and husbandmen in Chipping parish, though living quite comfortably and securely, did not possess unnecessary luxuries. In some cases this was due to necessity, but in others the value in the farm stock and in bills and bonds owing implies that household refinements were sacrificed to provide more capital for further investment in farm stock and for money lending activities.

Twelve probate inventories survive for the women of Chipping parish and the individuals they relate to constitute something of a community in miniature. The inventories range from the £13 6s. 3d. of Maria King to the £4 11s. 6d. of Margaret Sherburne. They include six women with farm stock and six women without

farm stock, although, of the six with farm stock, Catherine Higham had only one cow and Margaret Eccles possessed just one cow and one heifer.

Maria King, the wealthy widow of John King the yeoman-vicar, had the highest valuation of £131 6s. 3d. From her inventory it is apparent that she was still in control of the farm but the value of the farm stock had dropped from £97 8s. od. (including farm equipment) to £62 16s. 1d. Maria King lived amidst quite luxurious surroundings with household goods valued at £43 18s. 8d., and which included books at £2, an abundance of beds and bedding, with carpets and curtains.

At the other extreme, Margaret Sherburne, the wife of John Sherburne, gent, of the Knott in Chipping, had personal estate worth only £4 11s. 6d. It would seem from their inventories that both husband and wife were living in retirement. Apart from six geese at 4s. 6d., Margaret Sherburne had no farm goods recorded in her inventory, and clothing, beds and bedding constituted the remainder of the valuation.

Ellin Richmond died in 1669 after carrying on with the family farm after her husband's death. She left £121 4s. 1d. in personal estate and, of this, £62 12s. od. was in farm stock which included, 'three pair of oxen, five cows, one heifer, six calves, two ox sterkes, two heifer sterkes.' This inventory valuation puts Ellen Richmond into the wealthy yeoman class and her household possessions, assessed at £32 2s. 1d., further underline her status.

On the other hand, Catherine Higham with only one cow valued at £2 13s. 4d. and household goods at £4 10s. 11d., out of a total inventory valuation of £13 4s. 3d., and Margaret Eccles with only one cow and 1 heifer worth £5 10s. od. and household goods at £4 17s. 2d. out of a total valuation of £11 12s. od., were below the poorer husbandman class.

#### DEBTS RECORDED IN THE PROBATE INVENTORIES

Of the 90 inventories analysed between 1650 and 1700, 29 record debts either 'owing by' or 'owing to' persons and many of the debts were quite substantial. Some of the debts may have been due to money lending whilst others could be outstanding sums due for the sales of livestock, crops and the like.

The largest amount owing to any one person was £527 17s. 11d. in bills and bonds, due to John Brabine in 1683, and the smallest amount was the 6s. owing to Richard Marsden, the shoemaker, in 1672. This latter debt may have been for the sale or repair of shoes still owing at the time of the shoemaker's death.

Some bonds recorded in the inventories were held by 'speciality'

—the most secure form of money-lending, whilst others were held 'without speciality' which gave higher interest rates but which carried with them a higher degree of risk. Christopher Simpson, a yeoman, had, 'debts owing by specialities £65 1s. od.' and 'without specialities £6 4s. 11d.' John Sherburne, a retired yeoman, had £23 12s. 3d. owing by 'specialities and trust.' Lending money was particularly attractive to retired persons, such as John Sherburne who had sufficient money to live off, and particularly to retired yeomen. The debts recorded in the inventories of retired persons may also refer to investments which they had made, particularly in mortgages. Bartholomew Eccles, a retired yeoman of Chipping, had only two items listed in his inventory, 'his purse and apparell £87,' and, in bills and bonds specialities £70.' Richard Helme, another retired yeoman, possessed £120 8s. od. in debts owing to him by bonds. Ellen Leigh, a widow of Thornley, died in 1661 with £115 8s. 2d. owing to her by bonds. Only one other item was recorded in her inventory besides her bonds and that was 'apparell' valued at £5.

Dr Hey, in his study of the parish of Myddle in Shropshire, found a similar situation to that in Chipping parish. He writes,

The frequency with which debts are recorded in the probate inventories, not just in Myddle, but all over the country, suggests that it was not very difficult to obtain a loan. The provision of credit enabled people in the countryside to purchase more land, to erect new buildings and to survive bad harvests and misfortune on their farms. Formal bonds were the most secure form of lending. They attracted the men who lived in retirement and the widows and spinsters who had money to spare, and who were able to live on the interest of their capital.<sup>11</sup>

Some of the smaller debts recorded in the Chipping parish inventories refer specifically to goods which people had purchased and which had not been paid for at the time of the person's death. Leonard Bradley, a husbandman, had 6s. 6d. 'owing by Richard Parkinson for four loads of coales' in 1682 and, another husbandman, Richard Bee, who died in 1664, had £3 1s. 6d. 'due from Richard Hollenhurst for a cow due at Inglewhite fair.' Richard Bee himself owed £6 16s. od. to various people including £1 to his son, Thomas Bee.

#### THE FARMING STRUCTURE DURING THE 17TH CENTURY

In the 1635 survey carried out by Lord Strange, seven years after his purchase of part of Sir Richard Houghton's lands in Chipping township, thirty-one tenants and eighteen freeholders were recorded, the thirty-one tenants farming 910 statute acres in all.<sup>12</sup> A schedule of 1620, made by Sir Richard Houghton shortly

before he sold the remaining parts of his lands to Sir Arthur Gorges (who then sold the lands to the Blundells), shows that he had seventeen tenants farming 470 acres.<sup>13</sup> The Sherburnes of Wolfhall had twelve tenants and twenty freeholders who themselves had six tenants on their lands. The twelve tenants farmed about 380 acres.<sup>14</sup> In all, in the township of Chipping in the first half of the 17th century, there were about sixty-six tenants farming 1760 acres of land and thirty-eight freeholders. It has not been possible to calculate the number of acres farmed by the freeholders and neither has it been possible to construct the farming structure later in the century except for the Sherburne tenants and freeholders. After Thomas Patten purchased the Sherburne lands, these farmers appear in the Patten rentals, which show that the basic structure remained the same to the end of the century, with about twelve tenants and twenty freeholders farming the lands formerly held by the Sherburnes.

In Thornley township, a rental of 1608 reveals that there were forty-six tenants and nine freeholders.<sup>15</sup> In addition, Edward Tildesley received chief rents from 8 freeholders in Thornley, bringing the total to seventeen freeholders in the whole township.<sup>16</sup> The tenants farmed in the region of 1350 acres and the freeholders 705 acres. Towards the end of the century, a 1695 'survey of the manor of Thornley',<sup>17</sup> together with the Patten rentals from 1679 to 1707,<sup>18</sup> show that this basic pattern had changed a little with about forty tenants being recorded and twenty-two freeholders.

The freeholders constituted about a half of all the farmers within both townships and they formed a very substantial and powerful body of men in the parish as a whole. This influential element must have reduced the power of the lords of the manor in the parish, particularly in Thornley where the lord was non-resident for most of the period.

The tenants usually held their land on ninety-nine-year-three-life leases, with the option of putting new lives into the leases on payment of a fine. Entry fines were also paid on the taking out of an initial lease and on the renewal of a lease. Indeed, though referred to as copyhold the tenure was closer to the nature of freehold, with the same stability of tenure and a fixed rent. This gave the tenants a secure holding and was an important reason for the stability enjoyed throughout the century by many tenant farmers within the parish. This security of tenure was also a feature of other pastoral areas during the 17th century such as Myddle and the Forest of Pendle. However, leases could be terminated if the persons named in the lease died within a short time of each other. Young people were often put in the leases to

try to safeguard against this, but the young could die as quickly as the old. In general, though, the ninety-nine-year-three-life lease, brought a great deal of security to the tenants, with families often continuing at the same farm from generation to generation.

The leases record the annual rents required and the services due to the lord of the manor. In Thornley, the Doughty leases contained the provision for 'one day shearing with a sufficient and able shearer, one day ploughing, and two fat hens.'<sup>19</sup> From 1679 onwards, when Thomas Patten became the lord of the manor of Thornley, money payments could be made in lieu of services. This was also the case in Chipping township, with the exception of the Sherburnes, who required their tenants to perform 'one day shearing of corn, one day making of hay, one day loading turves with a horse and one fat hen at Christmas,' until they sold their lands to the Pattens in 1679.<sup>20</sup> This change in Chipping parish was part of a general change taking place in the country as a whole with money payments being substituted for the traditional services.

#### AGRICULTURE IN THE PARISH OF CHIPPING DURING THE 17th CENTURY

During the 17th century dairying, cattle and sheep rearing were the dominant farming activities, as they are today, but a greater proportion of the land was used for crop growing. Oats, barley and wheat were the principal crops grown, mainly for subsistence, together with hay for animal feed. Peas and beans were also grown in the gardens adjoining the houses and, at the beginning of the 18th century, there are a number of references to potatoes. The Glebe Terrier of 1733, for example, refers to the, 'potatoo garden lying at the highway side of the house containing about eight fall of ground.'<sup>21</sup>

The *General View of the Agriculture of Lancashire* of 1815 shows that this type of agriculture continued to be practised into the 19th century,<sup>22</sup> and it was not until the later 19th and early 20th century that the importation of grain stuffs into the area from abroad led to a greater concentration on dairying and animal rearing.

The importance of cattle in the Chipping area is reflected in the fact that, until 1868, two fairs were held in the parish. One fair was held on the 24th August, Saint Bartholomew's Day, and another was held on Easter Tuesday both for cattle and sheep. The fair on Saint Bartholomew's Day still continues in Chipping, but it is now more of an agricultural show than a cattle or sheep fair.

An analysis of the probate inventories for the parish of Chipping confirms this picture of a pastoral economy together with some grain cultivation on the more fertile and better drained lands. Of the ninety inventories which survive for the 1650 to 1700 period, fifty-nine are of sufficient detail to be analysed in this regard.

Out of the fifty-nine inventories, forty-five mention stores of grain, with its description varying with the time of the year. In April, 1666 Edmund Eccles had 'corn sown upon the ground' valued at £2 10s. od. and in June, 1678, James Dilworth had 'corn growing on the ground' worth £9 10s. od. In August 1682, Leonard Bradley's inventory referred to 'nine acres of oats and barley' at £15 with 'hay in the barn at Cockhill' valued at £1 4s. od. In January, 1696, Henry Barnes possessed 'thirty thraves of oats at the Higher Barn' valued at £2 10s. od.

The crops are often grouped together making it difficult to identify the value of each type of grain. When they are priced separately, oats and barley are usually the most valuable, with smaller quantities of wheat. When the comprehensive term 'corn' is used it seems to imply 'oats.'

Some farmers grew more grain than others and the quantities grown by each farmer varied with the suitability of his land for crop growing. The glacial boulder clay which covers most of the parish, together with the reliable rainfall of the district, must have made drainage quite a problem at times, but this combination of boulder clay and reliable rainfall did produce good grazing lands with plentiful supplies of grass. Grass was also cut and used for animal feed particularly during the winter months. In July 1661, James Dewhurst of Curr Hey Head in Chipping, had 'grass for mowing' valued at £2 and, in August 1665, John Hindle had 'meadow grass' valued at £2 10s. od.

The fields which were used for grain cultivation had to be carefully selected to avoid the particularly badly drained areas, but the weather must still have provided many problems. In 1600 the parish register for Chipping records that, 'between Pendle and Pirelock two known hills there was not three fare days in all in six weeks last before the 6th October and six weeks before to the great loss of much corn: being great showe on the ground.'<sup>23</sup>

The farmer with the highest percentage of grain was James Dilworth, a husbandman, who in June 1678, out of a total inventory valuation of £27 10s. od. had £9 10s. od. in 'corn growing on the ground.' Dilworth's grain valuation, in fact, amounted to 55 per cent of all his farm stock. Christopher Simpson, a yeoman, had the highest absolute value in grain with £44 'in corn' in February, 1663.

Fourteen inventories had no mention of grain at all and four of these belonged to craftsmen. Richard Marsden, a shoemaker, had no grain recorded in his inventory of May 1672, and his farm stock consisted of 'two beasts' valued at £4 13s. 4d. One would expect craftsmen to concentrate more on the less time consuming pastoral side of farming rather than the more labour and time consuming arable side of farming. Roger Blackburne, a carpenter of Saddleside in Chipping, possessed one cow worth £2 10s. 2d. and 'one olde mare' at £1, but again he had no mention of any type of corn, as was also the case with John Cottam, a blacksmith, and John Dagger, a carpenter of Thornley.

Oxen and horses were both used for ploughing on the farms and almost all the farms with oxen had horses as well. There was some correlation between the valuation of the corn grown and the numbers of oxen and horses. Those farmers with the higher corn valuations in the inventories did tend to have larger numbers of oxen and horses, whilst some of those with lower corn valuations had no oxen at all and sometimes only one horse. For example John Hindle, in August 1665 owned two oxen and five horses valued at £23 13s. 4d. and grain valued at £12 10s. 0d. In contrast, in May 1690, Anthony Procter had £3 in corn, but only possessed one horse and no oxen. Some farmers may have been renting out oxen and horses for ploughing to other farmers who either did not produce enough grain each year to warrant investment in their own beasts, or simply could not afford to purchase them. That a number of farmers were rearing oxen would also appear to have been the case from the quite large numbers which they possessed. In May 1663, for example, Robert Walne had four oxen and two young oxen, Christopher Sidgreaves, in January 1672, possessed six young oxen, and in July 1664, Thomas Coulthurst owned two oxen and four young oxen.

Of the fifty-nine farmers for whom the inventories have been analysed, only one, James Dilworth, had more wealth invested in grain than in cattle. The majority of farmers had two or three times as much value invested in their cattle as in their grain. The grain grown was mainly used for household needs and for supplying the cattle with winter feed. Those farmers with the highest valuations of grain generally had the largest herds of cattle.

No matter what the financial standing of the farmer, the greatest wealth was almost always in the cattle. From the small herd of a farmer like Robert Richmond, a husbandman of the Blackmoss in Chipping, with one cow and one calf valued at £3 5s. 4d. and a total inventory valuation of £13 7s. 10d., to that of Robert Roades, a yeoman, with a herd of 33 cattle and

6 oxen valued at £86 out of a total valuation of £180 18s. 4d., the greatest percentage of the wealth was invested in the cattle.

A calculation of the wealth invested in the cattle, as a percentage of the total farm stock, consisting of other farm livestock (except horses), equipment and grain shows that the cattle, on average, comprised from 60 to 70 per cent of the total farm stock. This was the median average but there was a substantial amount of variation from this with 15 farmers below the median average and 27 above it. In the Forest of Pendle the median average was also in the region of 60 per cent,<sup>24</sup> but in the parish of Myddle the figure was considerably higher with about 85 per cent of the wealth concentrated in the cattle.<sup>25</sup>

The farmers of the parish of Chipping between 1650 and 1700 had nine head of cattle, on average, or ten if fully grown oxen are included. A farmer with an 'average herd of cattle' was Thomas Marsden, a husbandman, who, in March 1674 owned four kine, two twinters, 3 stirks and 2 steers valued at £23 17s. 8d. Many of the yeomen possessed larger-than-average herds. In August 1665, John Hindle had six cows, 6 heifers, 9 stirks and four calves valued at £39 3s. 4d., together with one yoke of oxen which he had just sold at the time of his inventory valued at £9 13s. 4d. His cattle, including the oxen, accounted for 63 per cent of his total farm stock.

Over one-third of the farmers owned herds above the average, in fact, with the largest being that of Robert Roades. Out of every ten head of cattle, three were milch cows, two out of every ten were young beasts or fully grown oxen and three out of every ten were heifers, heifer stirks and heifer twinters. From the larger numbers of calves which a few of the farmers possessed, it would seem that some of the calves were being reared for the market in addition to the rearing of beef cattle for the market.

Only seven inventories mention sheep, but in two instances sheep are referred to in the wills as bequests, but are not listed in the actual inventory. Maria King, in 1674, made a bequest of her 'sheep now herded on Burntslack,' and John Burne, in 1662, mentioned five sheep in his will whilst none are recorded in his inventory. This opens up the possibility that, in some cases, the sheep on the fell may have been omitted from the inventories. In Maria King's case this is further underlined by the fact that her husband John King, who died two years before Maria, possessed the largest herd recorded in the inventories owning, 'five score ould sheep' valued at £20 and 36 lambs valued at £4 10s. od. James Dewhurst of Carr Hey Head in Chipping, possessed eighty sheep in 1662 valued at £20, which he probably grazed on his freehold part of Burntslack Fell, just to the north of

his farm on Saddle Fell. Thomas Coulthurst, in 1664, had eighteen sheep worth £5 and Thomas Helme, in 1683, had five sheep valued at £5, showing that there were significant differences in the quality of the sheep from farmer to farmer.

About one-third of the farmers kept pigs and most had only one or two pigs probably to provide food for the household. In 1666, Edmund Eccles, a yeoman, had 'one swine' worth 8s. and John Bond, a husbandman, owned 'one sowe and three pigs' valued at 15s.

Twenty-four farmers possessed poultry of varying descriptions, but often a valuation was given to cover an unspecified number. Small numbers were usually kept for fulfilling household needs. Anthony Arey, for example, had 'in pullen' 1s. 8d. in 1681 and in 1666, Edmund Eccles had 1s. 'in hens.' Seven farmers had quite large flocks of geese though again the valuations were only small. James Dewhurst owned fourteen geese valued at 6s. 8d. and Ellin Richmond had sixteen geese worth 8s. together with two hens at 8d.

The same fifty-nine farmers possessed 123 horses, consisting of fifty-seven horses, forty-seven mares, eighteen colts and one gelding. Many of the horses and mares would be used as draught beasts, indicating again that although dairying and rearing were the major agricultural activities in the parish, the arable side still played an important part. Most farmers possessed one horse or mare and the majority had two. Some farmers such as Robert Rodes, with ten horses, and Robert Walne with two horses, two colts and one mare, may have been rearing horses for the market.

Farming tools and equipment were usually listed in the inventories but were rarely of any great value. Only three farmers had over £5 in tools and implements and the majority had valuations between £2 and £4. Some of the inventories provide good descriptions of the tools the farmers were using, whilst others envelope them all in the phrase 'husbandry gear.' Edward Richmond senior of Chipping had 'two harrows and irons, one plough, three yokes, a pair of shod wheels and an axletree, one spade, one fork, two sythes,' plus 1 hay cart and two turf carts all valued at £2 11s. 10d.

Twenty-nine ploughs are recorded together with forty-six harrows and thirty-three yokes, indicating once more the important role played by grain cultivation in the parish. For transport around the farm, sixty carts are mentioned, described as 'hay', 'turf,' or 'muck' carts, and twelve coupes (coupes had closed sides and ends making a 'box' cart especially designed for carting manure, lime and marl.) Pack saddles are frequently recorded in the inventories, indicating that horses were also used for carrying

loads or packs. In the hilly countryside around Chipping this form of transport would have been the most efficient and convenient.

Of particular interest are the forty-two sledges and trailes recorded in the inventories. Both were used for carrying farm goods such as hay, corn and turves on steep or uneven ground, for the load at ground level was much less likely to overturn. The two farmers with the most sledges or trailes, with five each, possessed farms on the side of Saddle Fell where the fields around the farms were very steep, making these vehicles the most practicable form of transport.

In connection with the dairy industry in the parish, there are a few references to cheese in the inventories. Five cheese presses are mentioned, the first being recorded in an inventory of 1665. The farmer with the most cheese in his house at the time of his decease was John Hindle with eight cheeses valued at 3s. Six others had smaller quantities worth between 1s. and 2s. Eleven inventories record butter, the largest amounts being owned by Henry Barnes, a yeoman, who in 1696 had twelve stones of butter valued at £2 2s. od. Robert Wilkinson, a husbandman, possessed £1 10s. 10d. worth of butter in his inventory of 1667. There are frequent references also to bacon, beef and pork. In 1664, Thomas Coulthurst had 'one half pork' valued at 2s. and, in 1671, Leonard Clerkson had 'one pork and half pork' at 6d., plus 'beef' valued at £2 8s. od. Allan Battall, in 1671, possessed 'one bacon fitch' at 15s. and James Helme had 'in flesh' 10s. Ground meat is also recorded in a few inventories and one inventory referred to 'beans with ground meat and dust.' Of all the food items recorded in the inventories the store of 'meal' was usually the most valuable. Oaten cakes and other foodstuffs were made from the meal which was often kept in an ark (a large wooden chest.) In 1677, William Alston, a shoemaker of Chipping, had 'meal' at 8s. with a 'chest with meal in' at 6s. out of a total inventory valuation of £3 17s. 6d. James Dewhurst, in 1662, possessed meal valued at £6 out of a valuation amounting to £105 19s. 4d.

Much of the barley grown in the parish was reduced to malt and used for brewing ale. Brewing equipment is often mentioned in the inventories together with quantities of malt. Edmund Eccles had malt valued at £1 16s. od. and 'brewing vessels, barrels and other wooden vessels' at £1 14s. 6d. Mrs Francis Parkinson possessed a 'drink house' in which four barrels were kept valued at 6s. A brewhouse is referred to in the inventory of Maria King in which many items were housed in addition to her brewing equipment.

## CRAFTS AND BY-EMPLOYMENTS

Farming was the principal occupation in the parish during the 17th century, but, as with many other rural areas, crafts and by-employments were carried on alongside the farming activities. In particular, the important part played by the by-employments is only discovered by an analysis of the probate inventories which reveal, as no other documents can do, the additional activities carried on by people who otherwise are termed simply as yeomen or husbandmen.

Of the ninety inventories analysed between 1650 and 1700, fourteen belonged to craftsmen. There were three shoemakers, three carpenters, one blacksmith, two millers, one innkeeper, two masons, one cooper and one linen weaver. In some instances the sons of farmers became craftsmen, particularly those who found themselves omitted from the line of inheritance or who received only small parcels of land. For example, Robert Dilworth, a miller, was the son of Robert Dilworth, yeoman, and William Wawne, carpenter, was the son of William Wawne the yeoman farmer.

Eleven of the craftsmen listed above had farm stock, indicating that they combined their craft with farming, but the scale of farming did vary from man to man. The craftsman with the highest percentage of farm stock, including cattle, horses and equipment, was Bradley Bright the linen weaver, who in 1683, had 70 per cent of his wealth in his farm stock. In 1654, James Seed, a mason, had 55 per cent and John Hayhurst, the innkeeper, had the lowest percentage of farm stock with 6 per cent. Richard Marsden, a shoemaker in Chipping, with 20 per cent of his wealth in farm goods, had a total inventory valuation of £22 2s. 2d., 40 per cent of which was invested in his work tools. £7 1s. was in 'leather', £1 in 'broken leather and tools,' 2s. 6d. for 'lasts,' 15s. in 'shoes,' and 3s. 2d. 'for mending ould shoes.' His farm stock consisted of two beasts worth £4 13s. 4d. and the most valuable items in his household goods were 'bedsticks and bedding' at £3 4s. 4d. Of the remaining craftsmen, five had between 40 and 50 per cent of the total value of their inventories in farm stock, and two had between 20 and 35 per cent.

Three craftsmen, William Alston, the shoemaker, Thomas Bradley, a carpenter, and Thomas Sawle, a shoemaker, had no farming stock at all, their inventories amounting to £3 7s. 6d., £12 14s. 0d. and £8 16s. 0d. respectively.

Of the fourteen craftsmen, only one, Henry Winder, the mason, with £79 8s. 0d. had over £50 in personal estate. Richard Boulton, the cooper had £47 2s. 11d. Four craftsmen had

between £10 and £20, and four had between £5 and £10. Two men had personal estate under £5: John Dagger, a carpenter, with £3 6s. od. and William Alston, the shoemaker with £3 17s. 6d.

Most of the craftsmen were only modestly placed financially, but the majority were well away from poverty's door with eight of the fourteen possessing over £10 at the time of their death. Those craftsmen with farm stock were particularly well situated for they could devote more energies to their farming if trade was slack and vice-versa. It was often the case, in fact, that in pastoral areas like Chipping, craftsmen combined their craft with farming, for pastoral farming tended to be less time-consuming than arable farming.

Richard Bee of Chipping was described as a husbandman in his inventory of 1664 valued at £33 9s. 11d. The fact that he was also a part-time carpenter is only revealed by his inventory which records 'carpenter's tools' worth 5s. Likewise, Robert Dilworth was described as a yeoman in his inventory of 1679, but he also possessed carpenter's tools valued with his husbandry gear at £2 5s. 6d. Both farmers were also engaged in the by-employment of spinning, and again this activity is only discovered by an analysis of their inventories. Richard Bee had 'hemp, yarn and one spinning wheel,' and Robert Dilworth also possessed a spinning wheel and 13s. 4d. in 'flax and yarn.'

In all, seventy-five inventories were suitably detailed to detect the households owning textile equipment, the remaining containing such all-embracing phrases as, 'goods in the chamber over the house,' or 'other things in the same room,' which could cloak the presence of spinning wheels or other textile implements. Of the seventy-five inventories, forty had some mention of either spinning wheels, cards, looms, heckles, flax, yarn or wool. In her study of the Forest of Pendle, Mary Brigg found that out of 121 inventories, ninety-three listed 'cards, combs and wheels used for the preparation and spinning of wool or flax into yarn, and forty-five had one or two hand-looms as well.'<sup>26</sup> In other parts of the country farmers were often engaged in these spare-time spinning and weaving activities. In the Forest of Rossendale in Lancashire this part-time involvement with the textile industry was developing to a higher degree, culminating in the establishment of many mills and factories in the area during the 18th and 19th centuries.<sup>27</sup>

Out of the seventy-five Chipping parish inventories, eight spinning wheels are recorded and one pair of looms. Heckles (for carding yarn) and cards, flax and yarn are recorded in about thirty-five to forty inventories.

Persons of 'yeoman' status were engaged in this very useful

by-employment. John Hindle, the yeoman farmer of Chipping, had listed in his inventory 'a pair of looms,' together with equipment for spinning flax into yarn. John King, the vicar and yeoman, and his wife Maria, possessed the most extensive stock of textile goods, including, 'a spinning wheel, 2 stone of flax, 9 lb. of hecled flax at 17s.,' '5 dozen and a half of linen and canvas yarn dyed and undyed,' at £4 2s. 6d., '7 lb. woollen yarn' at 3s. 6d. and, '4½ stone of wool' at £2 4s. od.

It would seem that some men in the parish provided others with flax for Hugh Bradeley, in his inventory, had one spinning wheel and he owed Henry Cottam £1 for flax, and William Bleasdall 12s. 9d. for flax. William Richmond, yeoman, had the most extensive stock of flax and yarn valued, in all, at £3 18s. od. and he might also have been engaged in supplying others with the raw material.

Even craftsmen-farmers often had textile equipment recorded in their inventories. John Cottam, the blacksmith, in addition to his tools and farm goods, had 'one old heckle' and 18s. 8d. in flax. John Hayhurst, the innkeeper, possessed 'linen and canvas yarn' valued at 10s. and the miller, Robert Dilworth, had 'one heckle' and £1 18s. od. 'in flax and yarn.'

From various references it is clear that the dyeing process was carried on within the parish. A dye-house was recorded in the inventory of John Brabine in 1683: 'goods in the dye-house £6 6s. 8d.' In his will, Brabine bequeathed 'to John Walton dyer 10s. to be allowed him in his rent for the dyehouse the next year after my decease.' That sufficient spinning and weaving was taking place in the parish to require the services of a dyer would thus appear to be the case. Unfortunately no inventory exists for John Walton to see if he also possessed any farm stock.

In the main, the cloth produced was for domestic use only. Those people, who formed the majority, with only spinning wheels, heckles, flax and yarn probably took their yarn to the linen weaver to have it made up into cloth. Bradley Bright is the only linen weaver for whom a probate inventory survives, but from other sources such as the parish registers, it is evident that there were at least six weavers in the parish between 1650 and 1685.

Flax or linen and canvas yarn predominated in the inventories with only four instances of wool being recorded. There is a possibility that flax may have been grown in the area but no definite evidence can be found. In the Forest of Pendle wool was the main raw material used. 'Wool predominated: only seven instances of flax or linen yarn are recorded.' 'So few farms had flocks of sheep that the amount of wool produced locally must

have been negligible. The large stocks that some men held suggest that they were buyers of quantities of wool for distribution or sale to the spinners.<sup>28</sup>

In the parish of Chipping, the major proportion of finished cloth in hand when the inventories were made, was linen or canvas cloth. Three inventories record pieces of kersey (coarse woollen cloth) and one lists 'three yards of linsie wolensie' (rags made from cloth woven with a cotton warp and a woollen weft).

In most cases, spinning and weaving was done in a room in the house which was also used for other purposes. The spinning wheel in the King household was in the kitchen, whilst the flax, yarn and finished cloth was 'in the chamber over the house.' Leonard Bradley, yeoman, stored his 'wool for carding' in the 'fyre house' with yarn and windles in the 'lower chamber.' Bradley Bright, the linen weaver, kept his 'pair of looms' and 'canvas yarn' in a room amidst other items such as 'chests, cupboards, brass, pots and pans, wooden vessels, chairs, stools and cushions.'

The persons possessing these items of textile equipment came from all branches of the social strata and the value of their inventories ranged from £5 8s. od. to £222 19s. 2d. All members of the family took part in this by-employment and, particularly in the large yeoman families, it provided gainful employment for sons and daughters whose assistance on the farm was not always needed. Spinning and weaving could also be turned to during the slack periods of the farming calendar. In fact, the small amount of capital needed to purchase spinning wheels, looms and carding equipment must have enabled most people to engage in this most useful and profitable activity. The costliest item was the flax, but even then the difference in the cost of purchased cloth and home-made cloth must have made the latter a far more attractive proposition. Indeed, many of the less well-off people may have found it something of a necessity to make their own yarn and then have it made up into cloth by the weaver.

By the early 18th century, cloth was being taken from the parish to Preston and Blackburn to be sold. Peter Walkden, the nonconformist minister of Hesketh Lane Chapel in Chipping township, frequently mentions pieces of cloth being conveyed to the above towns in his diary for the years 1729 to 1731.<sup>29</sup> 'I lent my mare to Richard Salisbury to go to Blackburn with Edward's pieces of cloth which he had woven.' From his diary it is apparent that Walkden himself was engaged in spinning, 'I came to Robert Rhodes Lower House and paid him 3s. for whitening yarn, winding and weaving it for us.' The establishment of two spinning mills in Chipping towards the close of the 18th century, continued the tradition of textile working in the parish.

## CONCLUSION

During the seventeenth century the economy of the parish of Chipping was based on pastoral farming and the succeeding centuries have seen an even greater concentration on this type of farming. Providing the services and man-power to keep the economy running as smoothly as possible were the craftsmen, tradesmen and the labourers. Many of the craftsmen and tradesmen, and some of the labourers too, combined their usual occupation with a little farming on their own small-holding. Conversely, some farmers were engaged in a craft or trade during their spare time, such as carpentry work and thatching. Many families also carried on by-employments in the home, the principal of which was spinning and, to a lesser degree, weaving. These additional crafts and by-employments supplemented the income gained from the regular occupations and they were useful in that they could be turned to at any time. In all this, Chipping was fairly typical of rural communities in the country as a whole and particularly those communities where pastoral farming was predominant.

There was not a large group of wealthy persons living in the parish during the seventeenth century and the majority of the farmers, craftsmen and tradesmen lived comfortably, but, in the main, household luxuries were kept to the minimum to allow as much capital as possible to be put into the working stock. The parish did not escape the scourge of poverty by any means and, from the sources used, it would appear that Chipping suffered more from poverty than other pastoral farming areas such as Myddle in Shropshire and the Forest of Pendle in Lancashire. This problem of poverty may have been increased during the second half of the century by an influx of labourers in search of work. Many individuals, particularly those with only small farms on the fell-land areas, had to strive hard to make a living, but it is significant that families of only very modest means continued to live and work in the parish with the farm being handed down from one branch of the family to another. This feature of stability was common in many pastoral areas in the country and the security of tenure given by the leases and the common rights which enabled people to gain plentiful pasture for their animals, plus wood, stone and turves for building and fuel, would have been vital factors in this. As in these other areas, this element of continued residence in the parish from one generation to another, was a feature shared by all the social classes and many of the family names present during the seventeenth century, can still be found in the parish of Chipping today.

## NOTES

- 1 T. C. Smith, *History of the parish of Chipping* (1894), p. 1.
- 2 Lancashire Record Office (LRO) DRB/1/42.
- 3 LRO Hearth Tax Returns microfilm.
- 4 D. G. Hey, *An English Rural Community: Myddle under the Tudors and Stuarts* (1974), p. 52.
- 5 W. G. Hoskins, *The Midland Peasant* (1957), p. 201.
- 6 LRO Q.S.B. and Q.S.P.
- 7 LRO Probate inventory and will of John Brabine, 18 July, 1683.
- 8 M. Brigg, 'The Forest of Pendle in the seventeenth century', *T.H.S.L.C.*, 113 (1961), p. 65.
- 9 F. W. Steer, *Farm and Cottage Inventories of mid-Essex 1653-1749* (1970), *passim*.
- 10 Brigg, *op. cit.* pp. 73-5.
- 11 Hey, *op. cit.* p. 56.
- 12 LRO DDK 1548/39.
- 13 LRO DDIN 47/1.
- 14 LRO DDK 1548/41-2.
- 15 LRO DDK 861/10.
- 16 LRO DDK 1548/16.
- 17 LRO DDK 1548/33.
- 18 LRO DDK 1548/14-31.
- 19 LRO DDK 861.
- 20 LRO DDst.
- 21 LRO DRB/3/8.
- 22 R. W. Dickson, *General view of the agriculture of Lancashire* (1815), pp. 267-8.
- 23 *Lancashire Parish Register Society*, 14 (1903), p. 132.
- 24 Brigg, *op. cit.* p. 83.
- 25 Hey, *op. cit.* pp. 60-1.
- 26 Brigg, *op. cit.* p. 90.
- 27 G. H. Tupling, *The economic history of Rossendale* (1927), pp. 161-229.
- 28 Brigg, *op. cit.* p. 91.
- 29 *Extracts from the diary of the Rev. Peter Walkden, Nonconformist Minister, for 1725, 1729 and 1730* (1866), p. 36.