

Economic change and possible proto-industrialisation in the parish of Standish in the late seventeenth century: The evidence from wills and inventories, 1671–1680

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Introduction

This article looks at probate records from the parish of Standish, Lancashire, from 1671 to 1680, with a view to assessing the extent to which they provide evidence for emergent proto-industrial trends. The parish is in rural south-west Lancashire, adjacent to Wigan and close to other centres of population such as Preston and Bolton. It lies on the edge of the central Lancashire plain, between and slightly to the north of the two areas centred on Manchester and Liverpool, which have been described as distinctive cultural and economic regions, and which in the eighteenth century were to become the cradle of the world's first industrial revolution.¹ It has been suggested that the favourable position of this area in terms of geography and climate led to its relative prosperity.² The farms were generally small, many no more than twelve to twenty customary acres, with only a few of fifty acres or more.³ Accurate population estimates before 1801 are elusive, but sources from the sixteenth century to 1821 show

¹ J. K. Walton, *Lancashire, a social history, 1558-1939* (Manchester, 1987), p. 1.

² G. Miller, *Historic houses in Lancashire: The Douglas valley, 1300-1770* (Barrowford, 2000), pp. 16-31.

³ T. C. Porteus, *A history of the parish of Standish* (Wigan, 1927), p. 32; J. A. Aikin, *A description of the county from thirty to forty miles round Manchester* (London, 1795, reprinted 1968), p. 292.

some evidence of a stable population over a sustained period prior to the mid-eighteenth century.⁴

The period has been characterised as one of relative stability and improving prosperity after the upheavals of the civil war and commonwealth. After the Restoration came 'gradual and unobtrusive' change, especially in the textile areas centred on Bolton and Manchester.⁵ Diversification of textile manufacture in Lancashire took place at the beginning of the seventeenth century, with the introduction of cotton in fustians (mixed cotton and linen). The fustian industry expanded rapidly, especially near Blackburn and Bolton. At first, the organisation of production was not affected. Small manufacturers, usually farmers, bought in raw materials and sold the finished product on the open market, but by the last quarter of the century the 'putting out' system, where a supplier of the raw material could demand repurchase at a prearranged price, was coming more into play. Even then, few families depended solely on textile trades. Domestic manufacture in the rural areas was a sideline using surplus labour in large families.⁶ Coal mining underwent rapid expansion from c.1558 to c.1603 and, though its development remained backward and intermittent, the larger collieries near Wigan encouraged growth in metal working, such as nail making at Chowbent to the south-east of Wigan and pewter, brass, copper and bell founding at Wigan itself.⁷ Developments in agriculture were also taking place. Dairy production for the market intensified by the 1630s and the potato was introduced to the moss lands of south-west Lancashire, giving rise to a specialised market at Wigan by 1680.⁸

It has been suggested that small farms and landholdings acted as a stimulus to domestic manufacture and industry, as a means of supporting families, especially at times when, and in places where, agricultural production was under stress. Indeed, Walton (drawing on B. G. Blackwood) suggests that these processes are evidence of proto-industrialisation, creating the conditions which made possible the later massive expansion of

⁴ Porteus, *Standish*, pp. 45-47.

⁵ Walton, *Lancashire*, p. 60.

⁶ Walton, *Lancashire*, pp. 21-22.

⁷ Walton, *Lancashire*, p. 23.

⁸ Walton, *Lancashire*, pp. 25, 75.

industrial production based on new technologies.⁹ Considering Rossendale, Tupling asks how it was possible for an expanding population to support itself in a locality with soil generally unsuited for tillage and poor climate, and where land holdings were small and becoming more fragmented. He argues that this was in part the stimulus for the growth of domestic textile manufacture, which arose to satisfy not only the demand for its goods but to make use of the available labour.¹⁰ Husbands states more baldly that all theories of proto-industrialisation depend on an explicit link between the development of rural industry and the amelioration of poverty.¹¹ Schwarz's study of occupational change in Blackburn hundred shows that the foundations of rural industrialization were laid in the seventeenth century and grew rapidly in the eighteenth.¹²

The aim of this article is to use probate material, concentrating on the evidence for occupational descriptors, agriculture and textiles, to show whether similar economic trends were present in Standish parish. The concept of proto-industrialisation, though not without controversy, has emerged as a convenient hook upon which to hang ideas about rural industry in an age before centralised, factory-based production. In particular, three key elements of proto-industrialisation have been expounded: production beyond the requirements of the locality for sale in non-local markets; the part-time employment of people who also engaged in agriculture; and the co-existence of rural manufacture with increasingly commercialised agriculture.¹³ Scrutiny of the three areas of evidence from wills and inventories

⁹ Walton, *Lancashire*, pp. 64-65; B. G. Blackwood, *The Lancashire gentry and the great rebellion, 1640-60*, Chetham Society, new ser. 25 (1978), pp. 130-33.

¹⁰ G. H. Tupling, *The economic history of Rossendale*, Chetham Society, new ser. 86 (1927), pp. 61-68.

¹¹ C. Husbands, 'Hearth Tax exemption figures and the assessment of poverty in the seventeenth-century economy', in N. Alldridge, ed., *The hearth tax: Problems and possibilities* (Hull, 1984), p. 50.

¹² S. Schwarz, 'Economic change in north-east Lancashire, c.1660-1760', *Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire*, 144 (1994).

¹³ S. C. Ogilvie & M. Cerman, 'The theories of proto-industrialization', in Ogilvie & Cerman, eds, *European proto-industrialization* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 1-6.

mentioned above may reveal the extent to which these conditions existed in the parish of Standish from 1671 to 1680.

Three aspects of Standish wills and inventories are considered: occupational designations, agricultural activity and textiles. The prevalence of designations denoting specialised activities is considered with a view to evaluating the relevance of these designations as a marker of emergent proto-industrial trends. On the one hand evidence for by-employment of farmers is considered and on the other craftsmen's involvement in farming. In considering agricultural activity and textiles, detailed analysis of the values attributed to various commodities is undertaken. The relevance of their relative values and of the proportion of total inventory values they represent is discussed as a means of evaluating the importance of these activities in the parish during the period under consideration.

Probate records of 101 Standish testators have been indexed for the years 1671-80.¹⁴ The records for ten of these were missing. Fifty-four wills and inventories from the remaining ninety-one were sampled. Since the records are indexed alphabetically for this period, the first fifty records of testators in the index which yielded an inventory were called up and transcribed for analysis. A further four were added to produce a more even distribution of testators for each year.

Occupations

Changing patterns of occupational and status designation in probate material have been used to shed light on economic trends. Tupling suggested that increasing appearance of occupational descriptions such as 'weaver', 'webster' and 'clothier' in seventeenth-century wills and inventories from Rossendale (as well as in some lay subsidy returns) is a marker for the move away from dependence on subsistence farming.¹⁵

There are problems of interpretation. Firstly, the term 'yeoman', though often associated with someone engaged in

¹⁴ J. P. Earwaker, ed., *An index to the wills and inventories now preserved in the Court of Probate at Chester, from AD 1660 to 1680*, Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, 15 (1887).

¹⁵ Tupling, *Rossendale*, p. 68.

farming, does not necessarily explain what a person actually did. Wills and inventories of yeomen are frequently met with which give no indication of engagement in farming activity. The term is therefore best viewed as an indicator of status rather than occupation. Riley, in his study of inventories from Poulton and Bispham in the Fylde 1660-80, found that the terms yeoman and husbandman were 'flexibly used', though he concludes that the status of yeoman was generally accorded to those of greater relative wealth, that is to say those occupying larger landholdings and those more likely to have lent money.¹⁶ That the term yeoman was more of an indicator of status than occupation is perhaps illustrated by those testators who call themselves 'yeoman' in their will, but whose appraisers regard them as 'husbandman', as was the case with Alexander Barker of Standish.¹⁷ Secondly, the occupational description accorded the testator often hides his (or her) pursuit of by-employment.¹⁸ Ironfield found that eleven (79%) of the fourteen craftsmen testators in Chipping 1650-1700 also had farming interests, ranging from the linen weaver and mason, with 70% and 55% of inventory valuations respectively represented by farm stock, to the innkeeper, with 6% of his inventory value accounted for in this way.¹⁹

In Standish, husbandmen and yeomen make up 32% of the sample, confirming the dominance of agriculture in the economy of the parish. This becomes still more apparent if the composition of inventories is analysed in more detail. The designations of occupation and status of Standish testators are summarised in Table 1, together with the proportion of their total inventory values represented by farming assets.

¹⁶ D. Riley, 'Wealth and social structure in north-western Lancashire in the later seventeenth century: A new use for probate inventories', *Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire*, 141 (1991), pp. 81, 88-90.

¹⁷ Lancashire Record Office (Lancs RO), WCW, Alexander Barker, 1679.

¹⁸ N. Evans, 'Occupations and status of male testators in Cambridgeshire, 1551-1750', in T. Arkell, N. Evans & N. Goose, eds, *When death do us part: Understanding and interpreting the probate records of early modern England* (Oxford, 2000), p. 182.

¹⁹ C. Ironfield, 'The parish of Chipping during the seventeenth century', *Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire*, 127 (1977), p. 41.

TABLE 1 *Occupations of Standish testators 1671-80 and percentage of inventory values represented by farming*

Description	No	% of inventory value in farming			
		total	range	median	mean
Bachelor	1	49			
Carpenter	1	51			
Collier	1	0			
Cooper	1	34			
Gentleman*	2		27 - 50	39	39
Husbandman	11		0 - 78	27	35
Innkeeper	1	57			
Linen weaver	2		0 - 74	37	37
Miller	1	60			
Nailor	1	no inventory			
None §	11		0 - 60	26	23
Spinster †	3		0 - 0	0	0
Tanner	4		5 - 58	44	38
Tailor	1				
Widow‡	7		0 - 45	37	14
Yeoman	6		0 - 58	30	29

Notes. * See comments for Edward Holt below. § Two inventories were too incomplete to calculate. † One inventory was too incomplete to calculate. ‡ Figures relate to six widows, as one inventory was too incomplete to calculate.

Though the percentage of husbandmen's total inventory value represented by farm assets (implements, crops and so forth) and livestock ranged widely, most had a significant amount invested in farming activity. Three of the six yeomen had a considerable proportion of their inventory valuation accounted for by farm goods and livestock, ranging from 42% to 58%. Typical of them was Robert Foster of Anderton who had farm goods and livestock valued at £51 7s (£51.35) from a total inventory valuation of £99 15s 8d (£99.78½), representing 51% of the total.²⁰ Similarly, both gentlemen had significant farming

²⁰ Lancs RO, WCW, Robert Foster, 1671.

interests. Edward Dicconson of Coppull had 27% of his inventory value in farm goods and livestock.²¹ The total inventory value of Edward Holt of Shevington was untypical and hugely greater than any others at £2,174 16s 2d (£2,174.81). If the figure for debts owing to him and ready money of £1,911 2s 3d (£1,911.11) is removed, 50% of his remaining assets were accounted for by farm goods and livestock.²²

It is clear, too, that the bachelor and those with no designation also had significant farming interests. Total inventory values ranged from £3 5s (£3.25) to £161 18s 10d (£161.94), although no calculation could be made for two of them, because they were defective. The total inventory values and proportion of farming assets of five of these individuals place them firmly in the category of husbandman or yeoman.

As Ironfield found in Chipping, a considerable proportion of the inventory assets of many craftsmen and traders was also accounted for by livestock and farming equipment. The proportion ranged from 0% for the collier, tailor and one of the linen weavers to 74% for the other linen weaver, with a median of 43% and an average of 36%. Eight of the twelve designated by a trade other than husbandman or yeoman therefore seem to have derived a considerable amount of their income from farming activities. Three of the four tanners were typical in this regard, with 40% or more of their inventory assets relating to farm and livestock. In fact, all four had values within their inventories attributable to farming activities close to or greater than the value of items and goods which could be attributed positively to the pursuit of their tanning trade. There is an obvious problem thrown up by the inventories here, as analysis inevitably involves interpretation. Some entries are difficult to assign to specific categories. Nevertheless, due to the formulaic compilation of most inventories, with livestock preceding other farm implements, followed by items associated with trade or occupation and lastly domestic items, it was generally possible to arrive at fairly reliable assessments. The most substantial of the tanners, judging by the value of the tanning assets, may therefore be given as a typical

²¹ Lancs RO, WCW, Edward Dicconson, 1680.

²² Lancs RO, WCW, Edward Holt, 1677.

example. From a total inventory value of £208 5s 7d (£208.28), the amount attributable directly to Lewis Aspinall's tanning business was £86 7s (£86.35), whilst the total for farming assets came to £83 3s 4d (£83.16½), of which cattle alone represented £51 10s 4d (£50.51½). A further £5 and £6 respectively were appraised for wheat and oats growing. The inventory also makes it clear that he occupied a substantial dwelling in Standish Wood with eight rooms and two stories, possibly of four bay construction, with stable and workhouse. The property was bequeathed in his will and so must have been held freehold or on a long lease.²³ Though he was called 'tanner' in his will (there is no inventory description), he obviously relied as much on the income from pastoral farming as from tanning.

Lower down the social scale, John Baron, also of Standish Wood, carpenter, had movables appraised at £12 4s 10d (£12.24). Of this only 8s (40p) can be attributed to his carpentry trade in one entry in the inventory: 'In the worke house in boards and other od work loomes' (meaning here tools in general, rather than weavers' looms). The most valuable item in the inventory is 'Two milch Kyne', valued at £5 13s 4d (£5.66½). Apart from confirming that agricultural activity was perhaps more important in this household than the carpenter's trade, it also illustrates a further potential problem of inventory interpretation. Since they are made after the testator's death, the records tend to be biased towards elderly people. It seems likely that John Baron was in semi- or almost total retirement and so the value of items relating to carpentry in his inventory is correspondingly small. The long interval between the dates of his will and inventory appraisal is also suggestive of this. He made his will 'somewhat infirme in body' on 20 July 1663, but was buried on 13 March 1671/2. So he may have been relatively inactive for almost ten years prior to the appraisal of the inventory on 22 March 1671/2, though he was clearly not quite as infirm as he thought at the time he made his will!²⁴

²³ Lancs RO, WCW, Lewis Aspinall, 1678.

²⁴ Lancs RO, WCW, John Baron, 1672; Lancs RO, MF8/29, parish registers of Standish.

A further group of inventories is deserving of comment here, as it throws light on an area of economic activity which appears important in the parish at this period. Seven inventories indicate that activities based on timber production were significant and there is further evidence in one inventory of large-scale manufacture of timber products and furniture parts. These are surveyed in Table 2. Though the amounts of cut timber and finished wooden goods, such as wheel fellies (curved pieces of wood from which the wheel's rim is constructed), spokes, spade shafts and so on are generally small, these inventories are indicative of a supply of timber from managed forestry in the parish. It was still a custom in the eighteenth century for landlords to demand as part of their rent a specified number of 'plants'.²⁵ Some farmers were obviously making use of this resource. William Crosse and Robert Foster are described as yeomen, William France and Richard Dickenson as husbandmen, Edward Dicconson as gentleman and Lawrence Finch and Alexander Halliwell had no designation. Though the inventory of Lawrence Finch of Standish township was partly damaged, it is nevertheless the most interesting, listing a large quantity of finished and partly finished timber goods, ranging from joists and spars to large numbers of furniture parts such as bed ends and sides and chest and table feet. There were also 140 coffin boards and '30 wale plate peeces'. The latter could be components for mill dams, but are also suggestive of the supply of timber for shipbuilding, since a 'wale' is the bent timber forming the sides of a ship or the upper edge of the side, hence 'gunwale'. The inventory also lists supplies of timber in Coppul township and in Farrington, near Leyland. Not only was Finch able to draw on a plentiful supply of raw material but obviously was also able to rely on a strong demand for his goods.²⁶

²⁵ Porteus, *Standish*, p. 31.

²⁶ Lancs RO, WCW, Lawrence Finch, 1678.

TABLE 2 *Proportions of inventory values represented by timber-related trade*

Name	Timber value in £s	tools value in £s	finished goods value in £s	total value in inventory in £s	% of total inventory value
William Crosse	1.4	0.2	0.9	2.5	3
Edward Dicconson	1.98	0.53	0.77	3.28	4
Richard Dickenson	2.9			2.9	7
William France	0.6			0.6	3
Lawrence Finch*	7.625		73.375	81	50
Robert Foster	1.05	0.6	1.35	3	3
Alexander Halliwell	5.5			5.5	16

Notes. * This inventory was damaged. The total value was intact, as too were those parts of the inventory listing timber and finished timber goods.

There is an absence of labourers' wills and inventories in the sample. Some 20% of the wills in the diocese of Ely from 1600 to 1650 were of labourers.²⁷ The absence of probate records for labourers in Standish may result from the sample size, but may also suggest that there was not a high reliance on or demand for labour. Smallholders may have been able to subsist without the need to sell their labour, through a combination of small-scale farming and domestic manufacture. If the overall size of even the larger farms was not great, then they perhaps did not generate a demand for labour other than could be met from the immediate

²⁷ Evans, 'Occupations and status of male testators in Cambridgeshire', pp. 183-84.

family. The inventory of Robert Buller is instructive here. He is described as a bachelor, the son of James Buller. He may still have been living with his parents at the time of his decease. Though his own farming assets are appraised in the inventory, furniture and domestic items are lacking. It is possible that he was rendering labour on his father's farm.²⁸

The foregoing discussion illustrates the extent to which farming activities were important in the parish in the period under consideration, even for those who are described as other than husbandmen and yeomen. However, the type of farming and how successful it may have been must be considered, as this will have a bearing on any judgement as to whether the conditions were present in the area which may have stimulated diversification into other activities.

Agricultural activity

Walker has referred to the mixed agriculture of south-west Lancashire, involving arable farming, stock rearing and dairying.²⁹ Crosby has characterised west Lancashire historically as 'an area of some woodland, but with extensive pastures and grazing lands, and with arable agriculture also occupying a prominent place'. Standish lies on the extreme eastern edge of this area and may be considered an eastern extension, exhibiting similar practices. It occupies an undulating upland area between the coastal plain and the Pennine hills. In the early Middle Ages long distance stock-moving from the eastern lowlands to the Pennine moors took place, using these upland areas as an intermediate stage. This had disappeared by the late seventeenth century, but its legacy was a pattern of agriculture involving arable farming around the nucleated settlements, combined with stock moving to and from pasture in outlying parts of the townships. Place-name elements associated with this are 'green' and 'moor', the former a large area of roadside grazing, the latter an area of common rough grazing.³⁰ Surviving examples of these elements in the parish are Shevington

²⁸ Lancs RO, WCW, Robert Buller, 1672.

²⁹ F. Walker, *Historical geography of south-west Lancashire before the industrial revolution*, Chetham Society, new ser. 103 (1939).

³⁰ A. G. Crosby, *The landscape history of west Lancashire* (Ormskirk, 1994), sections 6.2, 7.2.

Moor, Coppull Moor, Charnock Green and Bolton Green. The pattern of settlement, however, also exhibited many relatively isolated farms. This is significant, as the isolated farmsteads had to be more self-sufficient, hence the dominance of oats here. Oats could be grown year after year by one farmer, without the need of frequent rotation. Wheat and barley depended on rotation, requiring greater co-operation, and so were restricted to the communal farming systems of the nucleated settlements

Aikin noted of Lancashire in general that the land near the towns was chiefly pasturage, with a great number of cows and considerable cheese production.³¹ The principal livestock was the Lancashire long-horned cattle, with few pigs and sheep in the south-west of the county.³² The analysis in Tables 3 and 4 shows that cattle are much in evidence. Cows predominated and their individual values were likely to be greater. This indicates the pre-eminence of dairy farming in the agriculture of the parish. Sheep are insignificant in comparison. One or occasionally two pigs per household were kept. Only two inventories contained valuations for more. They were probably kept to satisfy domestic demand. Cattle herds ranged from one to twenty-four, the median size being eight. Counting just cows, which would have produced milk, the range is one to ten, with a median of four. There were two herds with ten cows. Of the three dairy commodities (milk, butter and cheese), milk is never itemised in the inventories. Some butter and butter-making equipment occurs, but since the butter, like the milk, was perishable, it does not seem to have been itemised by the appraisers, except if found in large quantities.³³ Butter appears in six inventories and is valued in three, at 2s 6d (12.5p), 4s (20p) and 6s 6d (32.5p), but no weights are given. Butter prints are itemised in three inventories and 'butter wayes' in one. This may suggest that some butter was being produced for market, beyond what was required domestically.

³¹ Aikin, *Description of the county*, pp. 18, 292.

³² J. Holt, *A general view of the agriculture of the county of Lancaster* (London, 1795, reprinted 1969), pp. 143-75.

³³ F. W. Steer, ed., *Farm and cottage inventories of mid-Essex, 1635-1749* (Chelmsford, 1950), p. 36.

TABLE 3 *Livestock in Standish inventories 1671-80 and its value*

Livestock	No. individually itemised	No. of inventories in which mentioned	Value range (£s)	Median value (£s)
Cows	101	29	2 - 6.27	3.335
Calves	36	14	1 - 1.35	1.05
Heifers	27	9	2 - 3.83	2.42
Bulls*	1	1		
Stirks	34	16	1.08 - 2.335	1.25
Steers*	4	2		
Bullocks*	5	2		
Twinters	14	3	1.83 - 3.33	2.33
Cattle (all)*	222	31		
Pigs	32	15	0.2 - 1.5	0.68
Sheep	26	6	0.125 - 0.375	0.21
Horses	45	18	0.87 - 6.66	2.25

Notes. * Value ranges and median values are not readily calculated due to the high incidence of combined itemisations in the inventories.

TABLE 4 *Relative values of different types of livestock in Standish inventories 1671-80*

Live-stock	Value range as % of total inv. values	Median value as % of total inv. values	Value range as % of total farm values	Median value as % of total farm values
Cattle	5% - 65%	24%	25% - 100%	61%
Pigs	0.1% - 2%	0.7%	0.4% - 13%	1.8%
Sheep*	0.08% - 1.3%	1.15%	0.5% - 7%	3%
Horses	0.5% - 17%	8%	5% - 40%	17.5%

Notes. * Based on entries in four inventories only.

The chief dairy product would have been cheese and evidence of its production in some quantity has left a much greater mark in the surviving records. Cheese presses are itemised in seventeen inventories, valued from 2s (10p) to £1 1s 6d (£1.07½), but their individual value is probably of less significance than their existence. Other equipment associated with cheese production are cheese-vats and cheeseboards, mentioned twelve and eight times respectively. These items of smaller value are more likely to have been lost in some inventories and so could have been present in greater numbers than they would suggest. Where cheese is itemised, in eleven inventories, it is sometimes obviously an item of domestic provisions, but in five inventories there is evidence of significant production and these are illustrated in Table 5. There was not only a market in nearby centres like Wigan and Preston, but also a burgeoning London market after 1650. Though the cheese sold in London was called Cheshire cheese, this term applied to cheeses from Lancashire also.³⁴

TABLE 5 *Cheese in Standish inventories 1671-80*

Name	No. of cheeses	weight	value	% of inventory value
Henry Fisher	128		£7 11s 6d	9.6
William France	7		19s	4.3
Thomas Holland	19		£1 15s 6d	4.3
William Kindesley	161	18 cwt	£13 10s	11
Thomas Lee		12 cwt	£11 8s	16

Foster cites a value for the standard Cheshire cheese made from full milk of 2d (1p) per pound.³⁵ The cheese of William Kindesley and Thomas Lee is valued at slightly less than this, at 1.9d and 1.5d per pound respectively, based on the standard cheese measure of a 120-pound hundredweight. One

³⁴ C. Foster, 'Cheshire cheese: Farming in the north-west in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries', *Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire*, 144 (1994), pp. 1-9.

³⁵ Foster, 'Cheshire cheese', p. 3.

cow produced two gallons of milk daily, from which two pounds of cheese could be made and the usual practice was for one cheese a day to be made from the milk of the herd.³⁶ William Kindesley's eighteen hundredweight of cheese equates to cheeses of just over thirteen pounds each, the product of a six or seven cow herd, and indeed his inventory does list six cows.³⁷ Similar comparisons are not possible for the others. Thomas Lee's inventory only gives the weight of cheese and not the number. His herd was four cows, slightly fewer than might be expected to produce the usual ten pound cheeses.³⁸ Since the amount of milk obtained depended very much on the skill of the farmer and the quality of the pasture, this is still possible.³⁹ Henry Fisher's 128 cheeses would have been between seven pounds and just over nine pounds weight if valued from 1½d to 2d per pound, but his inventory is defective and the number of cows is therefore unknown.⁴⁰ Thomas Holland's two cheeses valued at 8s (40p) must have been larger than average. However there are only two cows in his inventory.⁴¹ The mode of production perhaps differed from that described by Foster. Alternatively, there could have been co-operation between the smaller farmers in the supply of milk for cheese making. William France had no cows in his inventory and very little by way of farming items. His cheese, if valued at 2d per pound, would yield 114 pounds.⁴² Whilst this seems a lot, cheese was a staple in the diet at this time and so it is possible that this is just domestic provisions. Foster states that the yearly consumption of cheese per person was forty pounds.⁴³ It may also suggest that the market for cheese was developed enough to have encouraged middle men to trade in cheese, buying it from farmers for sale at market.

The evidence for cheese making, then, suggests that there was production for the market rather than just as a means of using

³⁶ Foster, 'Cheshire cheese', p. 11.

³⁷ Lancs RO, WCW, William Kindesley, 1680.

³⁸ Lancs RO, WCW, Thomas Lee, 1676.

³⁹ Aikin, *Description of the county*, pp. 46-47.

⁴⁰ Lancs RO, WCW, Henry Fisher, 1679.

⁴¹ Lancs RO, WCW, Thomas Holland, 1680.

⁴² Lancs RO, WCW, William France, 1677.

⁴³ Foster, 'Cheshire cheese', p. 4.

surplus milk for domestic purposes. Moreover, it was probably profitable. Lee's inventory reveals £12 13s 7d (£12.68) in ready money and £4 19s 6d (£4.97½) owed to him. Kindesley had £3 6s 4d (£3.31½) in cash and £22 3s 2d (£22.16) owed to him.⁴⁴

Turning to cereals, Aikin, referring specifically to Standish, gives the principal crop as oats, with a little wheat and barley.⁴⁵ This is largely borne out by the evidence of the Standish inventories 1671-80. Table 6 summarises the incidence of crops in the inventories. Grain is mentioned in twenty-nine of the fifty-four inventories sampled. Hay (including grass) is mentioned in fifteen. Not all value crops separately and so a problem arises when different types are itemised together. The range and median figures in Table 6 therefore derive only from those inventories in which a definite value is ascribed to specific crops. Another problem of interpretation stems from the term 'corn', hence its appearance in Table 6 as a separate heading. Corn is usually regarded as denoting oats in inventories of this period.⁴⁶ Table 6 does not include references to meal and malt, which generally appear in relatively small quantities in a position which would indicate their valuation as items of household provisions rather than farming stock.

Whilst each type of grain crop is itemised in roughly the same number of inventories, examination of both the range of values attributed to them and the median values of each would suggest that oats were of greater significance in the farm economy. Figures for barley are based on far fewer inventories, but indicate less cultivation, probably only to meet the needs of domestic brewing. Wheat was clearly of much less importance. Acreages were mentioned only twice: one and a half acres of oats⁴⁷ and three quarters of an acre of wheat.⁴⁸ The relatively high top figures for hay are accounted for by its valuation in the inventory of Francis Jolly of Standish, innkeeper. His inventory

⁴⁴ Lancs RO, WCW, Thomas Lee, 1676; William Kindesley, 1680.

⁴⁵ Aikin, *Description of the county*, pp. 18, 292.

⁴⁶ Ironfield, 'Parish of Chipping', p. 36; M. Brigg, 'The Forest of Pendle in the seventeenth century', *Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire*, 113 (1961), p. 80.

⁴⁷ Lancs RO, WCW, Francis Jolly, 1677.

⁴⁸ Lancs RO, WCW, Lawrence Finch, 1678.

reveals a large establishment, possibly the Boar's Head on the main road north from Wigan. This was a major route and presumably he would have provided considerable stabling. Itemised valuations for hay and grass appear commonly in the inventories and their value is further evidence of the importance of livestock rearing.

TABLE 6 *Incidence and value of crops in Standish inventories 1671-80*

Crop	No. of inventories in which mentioned	Value range (£s)	Median value (£s)	Value range as % of total inventory value	Median value as % of total inventory value
Corn	11	3 - 21	8	1.7% - 12.9%	7.3%
Oats	12	0.065 - 6.75	4.25	0.1% - 8.2%	2.9%
Barley*	10	2 - 2.9	2.45	4.8% - 5.3%	5%
Wheat	12	0.75 - 5	2.37	0.03% - 2.4%	1%
Hay inc. grass	15	0.2 - 25.3	1.92	0.1% - 17.3%	4.4%
Flax†	3	0.2		0.2%	

Notes. * Only two of the inventories allowed the range, median and percentage values to be calculated. † Only one inventory had a valuation for five pounds of flax.

The inventories seem to confirm the generally accepted view of arable farming at this date in south-west Lancashire. Oats were the principal grain cultivated. It is significant, too, that the next most frequently itemised and third most valuable cultivated

commodity was hay, pointing to the importance of livestock rearing and dairying.

Arable farming appears to have accounted for a relatively small part of farming investment in Standish. This is reinforced by comparison with other Lancashire locations showing a similar mixed farming structure. The incidence of grain crops in the inventories broadly replicates the findings of Brigg for the Forest of Pendle in the seventeenth century.⁴⁹ Brigg concluded that cattle formed the chief farming pursuit in the Forest of Pendle. Ironfield, too, found that the farmers of Chipping had, on average, 60% to 70% of the wealth itemised in their inventories invested in cattle.⁵⁰ It is difficult to make direct comparisons with Brigg and Ironfield, as their inventory analysis is not systematic. However, their examples suggest that crop growing may have been even less significant a part of the agrarian scene in Standish than in Pendle or Chipping. For instance, Brigg quotes crop values ranging from 6% to 60% of total farm values, including four examples of £20 or more, while Ironfield cites crop values ranging from £9 10s (£9.50p) to £44.⁵¹ Riley's study of the Fylde, an area noted for its stock rearing, shows 9% of the thirty-three yeomen sampled having crop values of £21 to £30 and 3% from £51 to £60, whilst of the forty-three husbandmen 11.6% had crop valuations from £21 to £40.⁵² This compares to three inventories from Standish with a total crop value of more than £20 and only one with a value for corn of more than £20, indicating that arable production there was even less important relative to stock rearing and dairying.

In Standish parish the herd of cattle, whether small or large, was the mainstay of the farm: This is shown in Table 7. The lower value range and lower median value of arable crops relative to livestock demonstrate that they were subsidiary, supporting the stock rearing and domestic needs. Dairying and cheese making were important specialisations. However, though farming, with an emphasis on stock rearing and dairying, was the major source of

⁴⁹ Brigg, 'Forest of Pendle', p. 79.

⁵⁰ Ironfield, 'Parish of Chipping', p. 38.

⁵¹ Brigg, 'Forest of Pendle', pp. 80-82; Ironfield, 'Parish of Chipping', p. 36.

⁵² Riley, 'Wealth and social structure', pp. 89-90.

income, complementary sources such as timber and tanning were present and in particular income derived from textiles.

TABLE 7 *Comparison of the value of crops and livestock as a percentage of total farming valuations in Standish inventories 1671-80*

	Range of valuations as a % of total farming valuations	Median valuation as a % of total farming valuations
Crops	3 - 77	20
Livestock	25 - 100	59.5

Textiles

At the turn of the sixteenth century, the three branches of the textile industry in Lancashire, based on wool, linen and cotton, were becoming localised. Woollen manufacture was more prevalent in the Pennine valleys, whilst linen centred on Manchester and extended west and north to Preston. By the end of the century there was further differentiation within linen manufacturing, with cotton/flax mixtures (fustians) predominating nearer Manchester and pure linens confined to remoter areas. At this time, too, the organisation of the industry was changing. 'Putting out' was making an appearance. Middle men supplied spinners and weavers with raw materials, bought back the finished goods at a fixed price and supplied the finished cloth to the market. Thus the lone manufacturer, sourcing his raw materials and seeing through the various processes to the finished cloth himself, was being superseded.⁵³ Standish lay in the linen area, but not far removed from centres of fustian making such as Bolton.

Evidence of textile manufacture in Standish in the period 1671-80 appears in the wills and inventories in a variety of ways. Occupational designations, raw materials, equipment, references to manufacturing processes, yarn, finished goods such as cloth, as well as articles made from it, are all represented. The extent to

⁵³ A. P. Wadsworth & J. de Lacy Mann, *The cotton trade and industrial Lancashire, 1600-1780* (Manchester, 1931), pp. 11-25.

which probate records provide evidence for the organisation of the trade is, however, limited.

Only two individuals were described as weavers in the wills and inventories sampled, both linen weavers.⁵⁴ Three others can be identified. Robert Catterall of Shevington, webster, owed Richard Dickenson of Shevington, husbandman, 7s (35p), and Hugh Browne, webster, of Standish owed him £1 3s 6d (£1.17½).⁵⁵ John Catlishe of Welch Whittle, linen webster, was one of the appraisers of Margaret Birchall's inventory, probably because he had the specialist knowledge to value her linen, fustian and kersey cloth.⁵⁶

There is little evidence for wool production in the inventories and, as we have seen, sheep were not generally kept. Only two references to wool were found, in the inventories of Margaret Green and William Baron.⁵⁷ Neither was separately valued. No reference to hemp or flax growing appears in the wills or inventories considered. Lewis Aspinall had flax valued at £1, Margaret Birchall had five pounds of flax, Clemence Chisnall had 'flax and yarn' and Robert Foster had 'toe and toe cards'.⁵⁸ It is possible that this was grown by these testators or that it was bought for processing and spinning. Since these items appear in inventories, they were presumably the property of the testators and thus not put out to them for processing.

Equipment appears in the inventories in three main categories: looms, spinning equipment (predominantly spinning wheels and also windles), as well as lesser items such as cards, hachells or hatchets and boards for dressing flax and hemp. The incidence of some items, together with the range of values attributed to them, are set out in Table 8.

Looms could be identified definitely in only three inventories, though there is a possibility of their inclusion in two others. John Hill of Duxbury, cooper, owned 'workelooms' valued at 15s (75p), which could be the tools of his coopering trade,

⁵⁴ Lancs RO, WCW, Richard Booth, 1673; Robert Chamberlain, 1673.

⁵⁵ Lancs RO, WCW, Richard Dickenson, 1671.

⁵⁶ Lancs RO, WCW, Margaret Birchall, 1677.

⁵⁷ Lancs RO, WCW, Margaret Green, 1679; William Baron, 1671.

⁵⁸ Lancs RO, WCW, Lewis Aspinall, 1678; Margaret Birchall, 1677; Clemence Chisnall, 1675; Robert Foster, 1671.

though he also had woollen yarn valued at 5s (25p) and a spinning wheel at 1s (5p).⁵⁹ One loom was usually referred to at this time as a pair of looms.⁶⁰ Similarly, William Baron of Langtree, husbandman, left 'workloomes' valued at 12s 6d (62½p), together with a spinning wheel, fifteen pounds of yarn, linens and sacks. His inventory also contains a valuation for 'beam stools', possibly, though by no means certainly, a stool on which the weaver sat at the beam onto which the finished cloth was wound on the loom.⁶¹ There is, therefore, a suggestion that these two possessed looms for weaving, especially in view of their valuations, which seem high for a collection of small implements and are comparable to the other valuations of textile looms.

TABLE 8 *The incidence and value of textile manufacturing equipment in Standish inventories 1671-80*

Item of equipment	No. of inventories in which occurring	Value range in £s
Looms	3 (5?)	0.25 - 1
Spinning wheels	14	0.025 - 12.5
Yarnwindles	2	0.01 - 0.02
Cards*	6	

Notes. * Values for individual cards could not be calculated as they were appraised with other items

Spinning wheels were by far the commonest item of textile equipment and usually of low value. Windles for spinning

⁵⁹ Lancs RO, WCW, John Hill, 1671.

⁶⁰ D. Winterbotham, "'Sackclothes and fustyans and such like com'odyties': Early linen manufacture in the Manchester region", in E. Roberts, ed., *A history of linen in the North West* (Lancaster, 1998), p. 31.

⁶¹ Lancs RO, WCW, William Baron, 1671.

were also present but in far fewer numbers, probably because they were small and of little value and so tended to be overlooked as individual items by the appraisers. It is clear from the inventories that spinning must have been carried on in a large proportion of households of various descriptions. It is rarely possible from the item description to be sure which fibre was being spun, though one spinning wheel is referred to as a 'fustian wheele', implying use of cotton fibre.⁶² Cotton was known as fustian wool at this date and fustians were cloths with linen warp and cotton weft.⁶³

Cards, used for aligning the fibres prior to spinning, also appear. Both wool and tow was being carded, tow being the mass of short waste fibres of hemp or flax separated from the line at the heckling stage. William Kindesley's inventory includes a 'pair of wool cards', whilst Clemence Chisnall and Robert Foster both had 'toe cards'.⁶⁴

TABLE 9 *The incidence and value of yarn in Standish inventories 1671-80*

	Number of inventories	Value range in £s	Range of values as % of total inventory value	Median % of total inventory value
Yarn (not defined)	6	0.05 - 1.37	0.03% - 2%	0.8%
Woollen yarn	1	0.25	0.5%	0.5%
Linen yarn	13	0.165 - 3.75	0.1% - 27%	2.2%

Yarn features more prominently in the inventories. An analysis of its occurrence and value appears in Table 9. The type of yarn is specified often enough to conclude that flax, hemp and

⁶² Lancs RO, WCW, Mary Chrichlow, 1674.

⁶³ Winterbotham, 'Early linen manufacture', p. 26.

⁶⁴ Lancs RO, WCW, William Kindesley, 1680; Clemence Chisnall, 1675; Robert Foster, 1671.

tow were the chief raw materials, though wool was also being spun. The possession of yarn was in evidence across the spectrum of testators. Thus yeomen, husbandmen and widows were as likely to possess it as weavers. Even the miller, Robert Kindesley, died owning canvas yarn valued at 12s (60p).⁶⁵ However, the activities in which individuals were engaged are not easily discerned. Not all those in possession of yarn had a spinning wheel valued in their inventory. William Calderbank, husbandman, owned no spinning wheel, but had 'graye yearne' at 7s (35p) and 'whyte yearne' at 4s (20p), as well as lime, valued in his inventory.⁶⁶ Lime had many uses, but it is tempting to speculate that he was engaged in bleaching, especially as the yarn appears to be at two different stages in the process. Richard Dickenson, husbandman, had no loom or spinning equipment, but linen yarn worth £2, a piece of woollen cloth, seven yards of 'kytermaster stuffe' (perhaps Kidderminster, a heavy, linsey-woolsey fabric much used in the seventeenth century for wall and bed hangings, as well as table carpets), together with lime and ashes.⁶⁷ Ashes were also used in the bleaching process because of the alkaline salts they contained. The repeated boiling or steeping process was called bowking. Thomas Lee had '12 douzen and one hafe at bouching', but whether this was slippings of yarn or cloth is not recorded.⁶⁸ The whole process was protracted, requiring capital to be tied up in the value of the yarn, as well as space for the repeated boiling, souring and drying process. The souring was achieved by use of buttermilk, of which there would have been a plentiful supply from the dairy herds of the parish.⁶⁹ A farmer with funds to spare may well have been able to profit from buying in yarn and selling it on after bleaching.

Yarn appeared in twenty of the fifty-four inventories sampled and its value was generally a very small proportion of individuals' appraised goods. Richard Booth, weaver, had 12.4% of his inventory value in yarn.⁷⁰ The greatest proportion, 27%, was

⁶⁵ Lancs RO, WCW, Robert Kindesley, 1675.

⁶⁶ Lancs RO, WCW, William Calderbank, 1672.

⁶⁷ Lancs RO, WCW, Richard Dickenson, 1671.

⁶⁸ Lancs RO, WCW, Thomas Lee, 1676.

⁶⁹ Winterbotham, 'Early linen manufacture', pp. 36-38.

⁷⁰ Lancs RO, WCW, Richard Booth, 1674.

held by one of the widows, Grace Lea.⁷¹ Both had relatively modest total inventory values of £13 15s 2d (£13.76) and £9 5s 5d (£9.27) respectively and so for them the value of the yarn was significant, but in general the occurrence of yarn is indicative of by-employment on the part of more substantial farmers and tradesmen.

Cloth, other than domestic items such as bed linen, hangings, tableware and such like, appears in eighteen of the fifty-four inventories considered. Its incidence and value are set out in Table 10. Linen, including canvas, predominates, but the other chief types of finished cloth of this period, woollens such as kersey and serge, fustian and linsey-woolsey, are found in some of the inventories. The value attributed to cloth, as for yarn, would seem to indicate that for most it was a sideline, something traded in as a secondary source of income or perhaps even accepted as payment for goods or services supplied. Only Richard Booth, linen weaver, had over 10% of his inventory valuation accounted for by cloth, 20% of the valuation in linen and 7% in 'woollen cloth at Chorley'. His total inventory value of £13 15s 2d (£13.76) makes it clear that he was of much more modest means than many of the other tradesmen and farmers of the parish.⁷² Some of the smaller amounts of cloth may have been bought in for domestic purposes and appear in the inventories prior to their making up into household items. However, it is difficult to explain some of the larger quantities in this way. William Kindesley had 'one peece of canvas 27 yards' and 'one peece of white readings 27 yards'.⁷³ These lengths suggest finished pieces of cloth as they came from the loom, but there is nothing in the inventory to suggest that they were woven at home. The inventory is rather one of a dairy and cattle farmer. This suggests trading in cloth or its acceptance as payment in kind. Mary Chrichlow, widow, had '2 yards of blew linen & woollen', '4 yards of greene linen & woollen' and '25 yards of new Canvas cloth'. Again, there is nothing to suggest this was woven at home, but she also had a quantity of whale bone and a number of finished items valued

⁷¹ Lancs RO, WCW, Grace Lea, 1677.

⁷² Lancs RO, WCW, Richard Booth, 1674.

⁷³ Lancs RO, WCW, William Kindesley, 1680.

separately from her wearing apparel, such as '2 smokes & one shirt', 'one flaxen Apron' and 'a scotchcloathe Apron', suggesting that she was buying cloth to finish into clothing.⁷⁴ Margaret German, widow, had 'i peece of Cloth now at Wigan'. Since her inventory is defective it is impossible to say if this was woven at home, but its value represented only 1.3% of the total inventory, from which it is clear that farming was her chief means of support.⁷⁵

TABLE 10 *The incidence and value of cloth in Standish inventories 1671-80*

	Number of inventories	Value range in £s	Value range as a % of total inventory value	Median % of total inventory value
Linen	13	0.15 - 6.25	0.4% - 20%	3.3%
Woollen	7	0.25 - 1	0.5% - 7.3%	0.7%
Linsey- woolsey	2	0.15 - 0.67	1.5% - 1.6%	1.55%
Fustian	1	0.175	0.2%	0.2%
Cloth (not defined)	2	0.08 - 0.65	0.9% - 1.3%	1.1%

Only limited correlation is discernable in the inventories between the ownership of looms and spinning equipment and the possession of yarn and cloth. In fact only one inventory, that of William Baron, husbandman, exhibited ownership of a loom and spinning wheel as well as yarn and finished cloth, indicating that his household could have been engaged in cloth production from start to finish. All this only amounted to 4% of his total inventory

⁷⁴ Lancs RO, WCW, Mary Chrichlow, 1674.

⁷⁵ Lancs RO, WCW, Margaret German, 1677.

value and so it was very much a by-employment.⁷⁶ One weaver had a loom, yarn and cloth and so presumably bought in his yarn or put out the raw fibre for spinning. The other had only yarn and cloth and so was perhaps not even directly engaged in the weaving process. Others, whether farmers, tradesmen, widows or spinsters, were more likely to have appraisals for yarn and/or cloth, with no spinning or weaving equipment. This was true of seventeen of the inventories. Some were perhaps engaged in bleaching, whilst others may have been using spare capital to buy raw fibre, putting it out to spin, and also putting the yarn out for weaving. Unfortunately, the inventories are incapable of providing anything other than a basis for speculation about these organisational possibilities. Many of the inventories show that testators had free capital that they were able and willing to extend on credit. Ten of the above seventeen fall into this category.

Conclusions

During the decade considered, the economy of the parish of Standish was based very largely on agriculture. Amongst occupational designations met with in the probate records, those of husbandman and yeoman represent about a third. However, it is clear from the contents of the inventories of those with other occupational designations that the majority of them, too, were heavily engaged in farming. Occupations of those who were concerned with servicing this population also appear – for example, the miller, the cooper, the carpenter and the innkeeper. Prominent, too, are occupational designations deriving from specialisms based on local circumstances. Hence there are four tanners, who would have taken their raw materials from the large number of local livestock farmers, as well as bark from local woodland. Exploitation of the local timber was also in evidence. Only five weavers could be identified, of whom two left probate records, only one nail maker and one collier. From this it is clear that industries that were establishing themselves in nearby locations, such as textiles in and around Bolton, nail making in Chowbent to the south of Wigan and coal exploitation in Wigan itself, had limited penetration into the parish of Standish at this

⁷⁶ Lancs RO, WCW, William Baron, 1671.

time. On the whole, the incidence of occupational designations does not point to the very wide-scale development of specialist trades which Tupling associated with a move away from dependence on agriculture in Rossendale.⁷⁷ This is not to say that Standish, dominated as it was by agricultural pursuits, was economically backward. There is evidence in the inventories that the farmers of the parish were prosperous and well able to exploit local advantages and the existence of demand. Thus, we find evidence of specialisation in cattle rearing and dairying, in particular cheese making, and, as we have seen, the timber in the parish seems to have been actively managed to supply a demand for furniture and possibly also shipbuilding.

The inventories suggest that large-scale textile manufacture had not emerged in the parish at this time. Spinning was undoubtedly carried on in many households, probably as a by-employment. Weaving also took place, though not extensively. However, there is some evidence of the beginnings of specialist activity within the textile trade in the form of bleaching. This could well have exploited the availability locally of materials useful to the process, such as fuel in the form of timber and coal, as well as buttermilk and other animal fats used in the souring process. Whilst the organisation of production and trade in textiles is difficult to assess from the probate records alone, there is an implication in the existence of finished cloth in households where it was probably not woven that it was in some way traded or acted as an item of exchange, especially amongst those who had spare capital with which to engage in such trade.

The prosperity of those engaged in farming in the parish has been referred to above. Caution should be exercised in assessing relative wealth from the evidence of the inventories alone, as the records are more likely to derive from those who had wealth to leave at death. However, there is evidence, apart from the contents of the inventories themselves, to support the view of relative prosperity. The absence of labourers' probate records has already been mentioned. This is suggestive of a farm economy not heavily dependent on labour outside the immediate family on the one hand, but perhaps also on the other hand of relatively few

⁷⁷ Tupling, *Rossendale*, pp. 68-69.

individuals in the parish dependent upon the sale of their labour. There is also some evidence that the incidence of will-making in the parish, especially amongst widows, was higher than might be expected. 26% of those buried in Standish in the period left wills, which is roughly in line with similar calculations for other locations. However, for the period 1671-78 67% of eligible females, as calculated from the burial register, left wills, which is considerably more than the 14% to 26% quoted by Evans and Goose at various dates between 1540 and 1725.⁷⁸ This in itself may be evidence of the relative prosperity of the parish at this time. The view is corroborated by Miller's assessment of the particularly rich stock of farm dwellings surviving in the Douglas valley from this time, together with his analysis of the relatively high proportion of households in some of the townships with more than one hearth in 1664.⁷⁹ This is also the case in 1673, when 56% of the households in the nominal assessment had two or more hearths.⁸⁰ This compares with the county average in 1664 of 23%. Detailed analysis of aspects of material culture evident in the inventories, which may be considered markers of relative comfort and wealth, has been beyond the scope of this article. One example, however, may serve to reinforce the picture of relative affluence. Duxbury noted that the first clock and case appeared in a Ravenstonedale inventory in 1715.⁸¹ Clocks appear in four Standish inventories in the period 1671-80 with a median value of £1 15s (£1.75). This possible relative prosperity, considered together with the stable population in the period alluded to by Porteus, is perhaps significant, since it would go some way to explain the lack of moves away from traditional farming activities in the parish at a time when this was happening, for instance, in the Blackburn area and also in Rossendale, under

⁷⁸ N. Evans & N. Goose, 'Wills as an historical source', in Arkell, Evans & Goose, eds., *When death do us part*, pp. 45-47; Lancs RO, MF 8/29, Standish parish registers.

⁷⁹ Miller, *Historic houses in Lancashire*, p. 30.

⁸⁰ National Archives, London, E179/132/355; microfilmed copy at Lancs RO, MF I/29.

⁸¹ A. Duxbury, 'Wealth and the standard of living in Ravenstonedale, 1691-1840', *Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society*, 85 (1985), p. 223.

the pressure of increasing population and small landholdings.⁸² A lack of cheap labour would have removed some of the impetus to increased domestic industry.

It seems possible then, that a stable population, coupled with successful farming, capitalising on favourable local conditions, acted to some extent as a brake on innovative pursuits and the development of domestic manufacture. By-employment in rural industry seems to have resulted less from necessity than from prosperous farmers' exploitation of new opportunities for profit. Nevertheless, evidence from the wills and inventories suggests that the three key elements of proto-industrial theory alluded to by Ogilvie and Cerman were present in the parish of Standish in the period 1671-80.⁸³ There is evidence of manufacture of timber products, and perhaps of textiles and leather, beyond local requirements, though the question of export outside the 'region' is debatable, as indeed is the definition of 'region'. Those engaged in this manufacture were undoubtedly also heavily involved in agriculture and this rural manufacture co-existed with what was probably increasingly commercialised agriculture, as the evidence of cheese production indicates. This goes some way, therefore, to bearing out Walton's assertion of 'gradual and unobtrusive' change.

⁸² Porteus, *Standish*, pp. 45-47; Schwarz, 'Economic change in north-east Lancashire'; Tupling, *Rosendale*, pp. 161-68.

⁸³ Ogilvie & Cerman, 'Theories of proto-industrialization', p. 6.

