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UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

POPULATION, DISEASE AND FAMILY STRUCTURE IN EARLY MODERN  
HAMPSHIRE, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE TOWNS

- JOHN ROBERT TAYLOR -

Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
October 1980

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

RESEARCH IN THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

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UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

ABSTRACT

FACULTY OF ARTS

HISTORY

Doctor of Philosophy

POPULATION, DISEASE AND FAMILY STRUCTURE IN EARLY MODERN  
HAMPSHIRE, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE TOWNS

by John Robert Taylor

Despite the emergence of urban history in recent years, relatively little is known about the society of market towns. The period 1520-1670 was one of demographic change and expansion for these communities, developments which affected many aspects of social and economic life. This thesis traces the course of population increase within the small towns of Hampshire and focusses upon three of the main factors underlying this growth, namely mortality, fertility and migration. A wide variety of sources is utilised, including parish registers, taxation and probate records, and consistory court books. The market towns were a dynamic element within the demography of early modern Hampshire, growing more rapidly than either the surrounding rural parishes or the old established towns of Southampton and Winchester, and forming an increasing proportion of the population. This growth was under way in many towns by the middle of the sixteenth century and was maintained at differing rates throughout the period. The prime factor dictating the course of demographic change was mortality. Whilst most towns tended towards natural growth, with births normally exceeding deaths, the population was always vulnerable to the severe effects of disease which could rapidly erase the effects of more healthy years. Influenza, dysentery and, increasingly, typhus and smallpox, as well as plague, represented a persistent threat to population and influenced the pace and character of demographic development. At the same time, the market towns witnessed steady immigration from the countryside and developments within family structure helped to create a small increase in fertility which also contributed to the overall demographic picture.

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ABBREVIATIONS

APC	Acts of the Privy Council
APL	Andover Public Library
BL	British Library
BLO	Bodleian Library, Oxford
Charity Commissioners	Reports of the Commissioners appointed in pursuance of various Acts of Parliament to enquire concerning charities in England and Wales relating to the County of Hampshire, (London, 1819-1837)
CSPD	Calendar of State Papers and Documents
DRO	Dorset Record Office
HMC	Historical Manuscripts Commission
HRO	Hampshire Record Office
L/P Henry VIII	Letters and Papers of the reign of Henry VIII
PRO	Public Record Office
VCH	Victoria County History: Hampshire
WCM	Winchester College Muniments

Footnotes

Detailed footnotes are not provided for information derived from parish registers - a complete list of parish records which have been consulted is included in the Bibliography.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In the course of preparing this thesis I have received invaluable help and encouragement from many people and I extend my sincere thanks to them all. Special mention is due to my supervisor, Dr. Colin Platt, of the Department of History, Southampton University, who has been a constant source of advice and stimulation during my research and to whom I will always be grateful for his wise guidance throughout my happy years as a student at Southampton.

Much of the work for this thesis was undertaken at the Hampshire County Record Office, Winchester, where I spent many enjoyable months of research. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the staff for the sound advice and kind assistance I have received. Staff at the British Library, the Public Record Office and various other local record offices have also contributed in no small way and I would also like to acknowledge the help I have received from several University libraries, in particular those at Southampton, Leeds, Leicester, Reading and Liverpool, as well as the Institute of Historical Research, London.

An important part of the research I have undertaken has been done on parish documents still in the custody of local incumbents. I feel strongly that, in the interests of conservation and access, such records, many of them in a very delicate condition, are best housed in an official record office. However, this in no way detracts from my gratitude to several parishes for allowing me access to their old records, in particular the Vicars of Romsey, Petersfield and Alton where relatively long periods of study were undertaken.

I have benefited greatly from discussions with Dr. Tom James of King Alfred's College, Winchester, and would also like to thank Barry Stapleton of Portsmouth Polytechnic for information relating to the small town of Odiham.

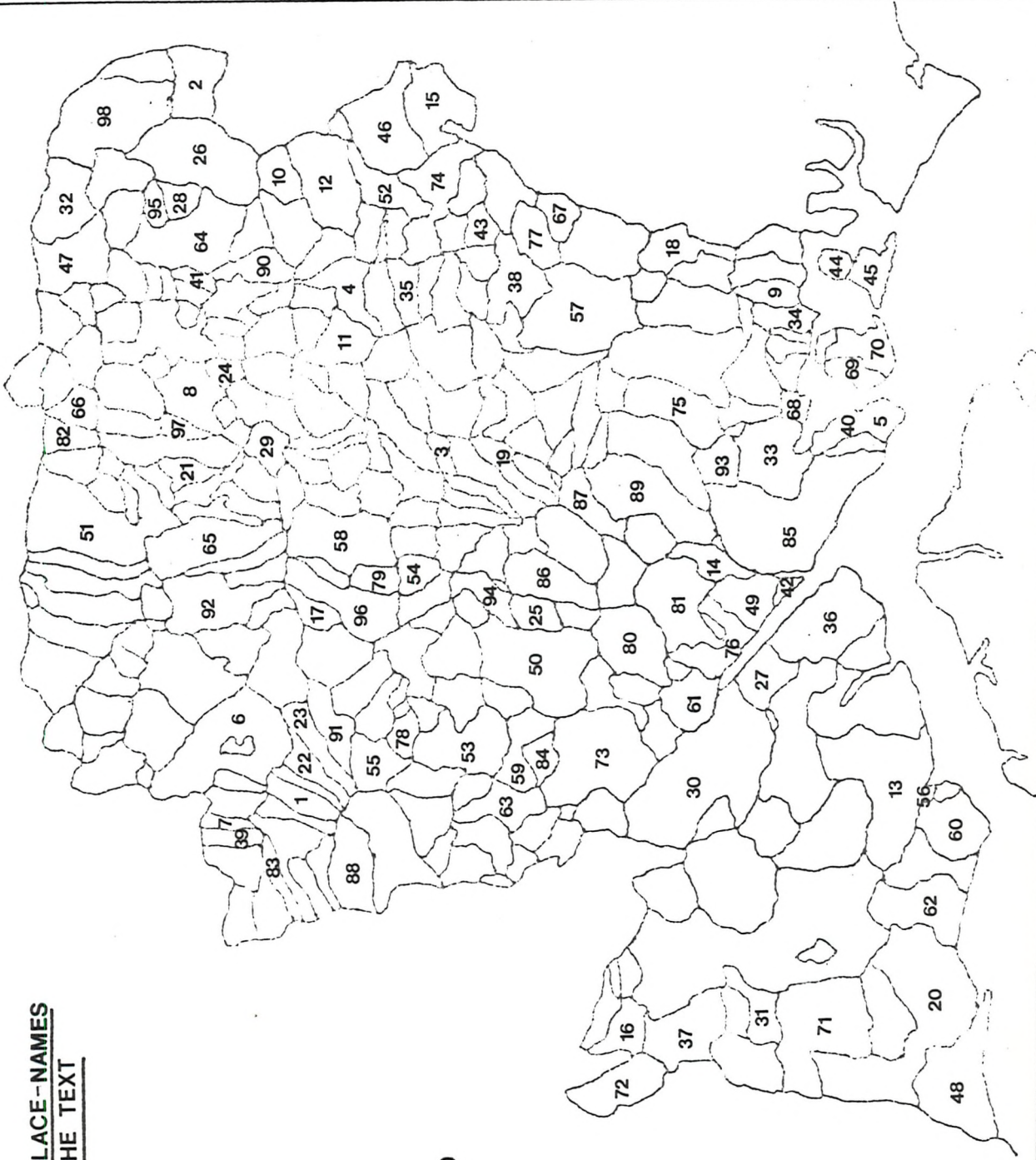
Further thanks are due to my friends and colleagues in the Deputy Secretary's Office, University of Leeds, and a special mention must go to Janet Crosland for all her efforts in the typing and final presentation of this thesis.

Lastly, I am grateful to my parents for their support throughout my research and to the Social Science Research Council for providing the necessary financial assistance.

John Taylor  
Registry, University of Leeds  
October, 1980.

MAP SHOWING PLACE-NAMES  
MENTIONED IN THE TEXT

0 5 10  
Miles





Key to map showing place-names mentioned in the text

- |                        |                     |                       |
|------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Abbots Ann          | 34. Farlington      | 67. Petersfield       |
| 2. Aldershot           | 35. Farringdon      | 68. Porchester        |
| 3. Alresford           | 36. Fawley          | 69. Portsea           |
| 4. Alton               | 37. Fordingbridge   | 70. Portsmouth        |
| 5. Alverstoke          | 38. Froxfield       | 71. Ringwood          |
| 6. Andover             | 39. Fyfield         | 72. Rockbourne        |
| 7. Appleshaw           | 40. Gosport         | 73. Romsey            |
| 8. Basingstoke         | 41. Greywell        | 74. Selborne          |
| 9. Bedhampton          | 42. Hamble          | 75. Soberton          |
| 10. Bentley            | 43. Hawkley         | 76. Southampton       |
| 11. Bentworth          | 44. North Hayling   | 77. Steep             |
| 12. Binstead           | 45. South Hayling   | 78. Stockbridge       |
| 13. Boldre             | 46. Headley         | 79. Stoke Charity     |
| 14. Botley             | 47. Heckfield       | 80. North Stoneham    |
| 15. Bramshot           | 48. Holdenhurst     | 81. South Stoneham    |
| 16. Breamore           | 49. Hound           | 82. Tadley            |
| 17. Bullington         | 50. Hursley         | 83. Thruxton          |
| 18. Chalton/Idsworth   | 51. Kingsclere      | 84. Timsbury          |
| 19. Cheriton           | 52. Kingsley        | 85. Titchfield        |
| 20. Christchurch       | 53. King's Somborne | 86. Twyford           |
| 21. Church Oakley      | 54. King's Worthy   | 87. Upham             |
| 22. Goodworth Clatford | 55. Longstock       | 88. Over Wallop       |
| 23. Upper Clatford     | 56. Lymington       | 89. Bishops Waltham   |
| 24. Cliddesdon         | 57. East Meon       | 90. South Warnborough |
| 25. Compton            | 58. Micheldever     | 91. Wherwell          |
| 26. Crondall           | 59. Michelmersh     | 92. Whitchurch        |
| 27. Dibden             | 60. Milford         | 93. Wickham           |
| 28. Dogmersfield       | 61. Millbrook       | 94. Winchester        |
| 29. Dummer             | 62. Milton          | 95. Winchfield        |
| 30. Eling              | 63. Mottesfont      | 96. Wonston           |
| 31. Ellingham          | 64. Odiham          | 97. Worting           |
| 32. Eversley           | 65. Overton         | 98. Yateley           |
| 33. Fareham            | 66. Pamber          |                       |





SECTION ONE : INTRODUCTION

1. Historiography and Sources
2. Towns and Society

Part One: Historiography and Sources

## URBAN HISTORY

It cannot be overstated that the England which witnessed the rule of the Tudor and Stuart monarchs in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was largely a rural nation wherein an overwhelming majority of people depended predominantly, and often exclusively, on agriculture for their livelihood. However, as is equally well established, towns enjoyed a very considerable influence on all spheres of economic activity and on every section of the population. Very few individuals, from any occupation or social background, could have failed to experience some regular association with urban life and, for the majority, this probably meant at least weekly contact.

The key to this situation was the enormous diversity among towns throughout the period. In 1680 John Adams compiled a list of 788 separate communities which represented all the cities and market towns of England and Wales, subsequently revised in 1690 to include 779 places<sup>1</sup>. A little later Gregory King added a few more locations to bring his personal total to 794 towns<sup>2</sup>. Within this number there was a wide range of urban types which have successfully defied any detailed or convincing classification. They ranged from market towns and county centres to provincial capitals and London itself. The great metropolis expanded rapidly from about 40,000 at the commencement of the sixteenth century to about 300,000 two centuries later while the leading regional centres like Bristol, Exeter, York, Norwich and Newcastle had each grown to in excess of 8000. These communities had little in common with the closeknit, introverted society of the smallest market towns which lacked any kind of complicated politico-economic framework and which possessed populations of, perhaps, just 400 souls in 1500, rising to possibly a few hundred

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1. John Adams, Index Villaris, (London, 1680, and London, 1690)

2. D.V. Glass, "Two Papers on Gregory King", in D.V. Glass and D.E.C. Eversley (eds.), Population in History, Essays in Historical Demography, (London, 1965), p. 186.

more by the end of the period. Gregory King, who set a tempting but sometimes misleading precedent by his attempt to classify towns by size, estimated in 1696 that there were 650 towns outside London with between 150 and 200 houses, which formed one particular group separated from the largest cities by a middle rank of 120 or so distinctly urban communities, all incorporated and including most small county towns and several lesser cathedral cities.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately it is quite impossible to reach any firm definition of a town which would enable a clear line to be drawn between urban and rural settlement and thus facilitate some firm identification and enumeration of small towns. Various guides have been proposed. Clark and Slack, for instance, set out five characteristics - an unusual concentration of population, a specialist economic function, a complex social structure, a sophisticated political order and an influence beyond their immediate boundaries.<sup>2</sup> However, these are not all essential criteria for every town and, with this in mind, it becomes possible to firmly designate several places, inhabited by as few as a hundred families, as towns. Many communities in this range clearly provided a particular specialised economic function, be it in primary, secondary or tertiary production.

In terms of individual size, especially by modern standards, any settlements with populations of less than 300-400 were very small, but they cannot be overlooked. Taking an overall perspective they actually contained the majority of the provincial urban population and for thousands more country dwellers they offered the only regular contact with any form of town society. London and the large provincial capitals alone resembled towns as they may be recognised today, but in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries these communities were the exception and the massed urban ranks were swelled by "a network of relatively small market towns that acted chiefly as local centres of commerce and distribution".<sup>3</sup> It was here that most provincial consumers could obtain the bulk of foodstuffs and any other necessary items they were unable to produce themselves. An agreement concluded

- 
1. *ibid.*, p. 178.
  2. P. Clark and P. Slack, English Towns in Transition 1500-1700, (Oxford, 1976), pp. 4-5.
  3. P. Corfield, "Urban Development in England and Wales in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries", in D.C. Coleman and A.H. John (eds.), Trade, Government and Economy in Pre-Industrial England: Essays presented to F.J. Fisher, (London, 1976), p. 221.



at Andover, for example, stated specifically that half of the market house was to be reserved "for the people of the countrey to resorte unto".<sup>1</sup> Most of these small market towns barely extended their influence beyond a radius of five or six miles, perhaps rather further in Wales or the north of England. Their markets were commonly held once or twice a week and the symbols of their function, such as the market house or market cross, stood as prominent reminders to allcomers, then and now, of the importance attached to the services these towns provided. Kingsclere was just one of the communities which was anxious to maintain the repair of its market cross, aware of the distinction it afforded.<sup>2</sup> Of rather wider significance, extending beyond the local intimacy of weekly commercial intercourse, were the fairs which came to market towns, usually once or twice a year, and attracted traders from a much wider range. Clearly these small country towns which formed the overwhelming majority of urban settlements in early modern England have an importance and interest which has not been fairly represented by historical research.

Urban history has flourished in recent years, not least because of the convenience with which the study of a single community lends itself to the scope and timetable appropriate for a doctoral research project. The pre-industrial town has been the subject of several important theses like those of Pound on Norwich and Palliser on York.<sup>3</sup> Published work has also proliferated, inspired by the researches of Hoskins on Leicester and Exeter, and followed by, among others, McCaffrey on Exeter, Dyer on Worcester and Phythian-Adams on Coventry.<sup>4</sup>

---

1. APL, 6/MK/1.

2. HRO, QO/3 f. 290.

3. J.F. Pound, "Government and society in Tudor and Stuart Norwich, 1525-1675", Unpubl. Ph.D. thesis, Leicester University (1974); D.M. Palliser, "Some aspects of the Social and Economic History of York in the Sixteenth Century", Unpubl. D.Phil., Oxford University (1968).

4. W.G. Hoskins, "An Elizabethan Provincial Town: Leicester", in Provincial England, (London, 1963); "English provincial towns in the sixteenth century", Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, 5th series, 6, (1956); Industry, Trade and People in Exeter 1688-1800, (Manchester, 1935); W.J. McCaffrey, Exeter 1540-1640, (Cambridge, Mass. 1956); A.D. Dyer, The City of Worcester in the sixteenth century, (Leicester, 1973); C. Phythian-Adams, "Ceremony and the Citizen: The Communal Year at Coventry 1450-1550", in P. Clark and P. Slack (eds.), Crisis and Order in English Towns 1500-1700, (London, 1972).



Yet two things are clear from the mounting bibliography of early modern urban history. First, the absence of general works of oversight; and second, the marked bias in research towards the county towns and provincial centres to the exclusion of the small market town.

The tendency towards study of one particular town is understandable both in terms of sheer convenience and because of the absence of any adequate criteria for comparison before the nineteenth century. Yet some commendable attempts at a more general approach have been made. Hoskins and Cornwall presented a picture of towns in the first half of the sixteenth century, but more recently an encouraging start has been made on drawing together the multifarious strands of research by Clark and Slack, Corfield and Patten.<sup>1</sup> From these sources some idea of the economy and society existing in the small towns may be gleaned and profitably contrasted with higher levels of the urban hierarchy.

However, these generalisations are based on very little concrete research. The coincidence of internal commerce and significant population growth created a generally accepted picture of prosperity for small towns through the Tudors and early Stuarts until 1640. Thereafter their fortunes are much less clear. The image of decline in the second half of the seventeenth century, in the face of less favourable demographic conditions and intensified competition from larger towns, as depicted by Clark and Slack, has been challenged by Dyer and the question remains open.<sup>2</sup> Pythian-Adams, in an article setting out some of his arguments in favour of a continuing urban "crisis" in the first three quarters of the sixteenth century, noticeably excludes the smaller market towns from much of the gloom which persisted from the depressed conditions of the fifteenth century and enveloped many larger county and provincial towns into the early

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1. W.G. Hoskins, "English Provincial Towns", op.cit.; P. Clark and P. Slack, English Towns, op.cit.; J. Cornwall, "English Country Towns in the Fifteen Twenties", Economic History Review, second series, XV (1962); P. Corfield, "Urban Development", op.cit.; J. Patten, English Towns 1500-1700, (Folkestone, 1978).

2. P. Clark and P. Slack, English Towns, op.cit., pp.24-5; A. Dyer, "Growth and Decay in English Towns 1500-1700", in Urban History Yearbook 1979, (Leicester 1979), pp. 60-72.

years of Queen Elizabeth.<sup>1</sup> However, he goes little further and, instead, minimises their importance to the national economy. The number of detailed scholarly studies of lesser market communities is very few indeed. Moxon's specialised work on one particular small town, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, is a notable exception and Cowley's more general analysis of the market towns of Sussex offers a taste of the potential in the subject.<sup>2</sup> Patten, meanwhile, has successfully illustrated the whole range of urban society in East Anglia.<sup>3</sup> Perhaps the best general discussion of market towns and their function is contained in the analysis of agricultural marketing by Everitt.<sup>4</sup> Unlike some urban historians he does not dismiss the smallest towns almost without a second glance and notes that even a community of 300-400 persons with influence over just a few square miles "played a vital role in the lives of several thousand husbandmen and labourers". Much more research is needed if the imbalance in pre-industrial analysis towards the county towns and provincial centres is to be corrected. In particular, specialised monographs are needed relating to individual settlements or dealing with specific themes - occupations, education, the church, the poor law and many other topics need to be understood more clearly in the small town context. Only then will the large number of market towns be successfully integrated into our understanding of urban society in general and some weight added to the bland statements with which they are all too often cast aside.

Hampshire was just one of many predominately agricultural English counties in which market towns played a vital role in the local economy. It was perhaps an under-urbanised region compared

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1. C. Phythian-Adams, "Urban Decay in Late Medieval England" in P. Abrams and E.A. Wrigley (eds.) Towns in Societies, (Cambridge, 1978).
  2. C.J.M. Moxon, "Ashby-de-la-Zouch: a social and economic survey of a market town 1570-1720", Unpubl. D.Phil. thesis, Oxford University (1971); G.O. Cowley, "Sussex Market Towns 1550-1750", Unpubl. M.A. thesis, London University (1965).
  3. J. Patten, "The Urban Structure of East Anglia in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries", Unpubl. Ph.D. thesis, Cambridge University (1972).
  4. A. Everitt, "The Marketing of Agricultural Produce", in J. Thirsk (ed.) The Agrarian History of England and Wales Vol IV 1500-1640, (Cambridge 1967) pp. 466-589.

with the closely-packed markets of Kent, Essex or Hertfordshire which fell more completely under the influence of London. Yet it offered an interesting array of towns and must have mirrored several other parts of the country. Indeed to contemporary London society the whole of provincial England was dismissed contemptuously as "Hampshire".<sup>1</sup> There were two old established shire towns, Winchester and Southampton, and it also contained one of the fastest growing communities anywhere in early modern England, namely Portsmouth. This thesis, however, will be concerned predominantly with the true market towns of the county, none of which had a population in excess of 3000 by the 1670s. Reference to the three major centres will, therefore, be made mainly for comparison. In fact, the pattern of academic research on towns in Tudor and Stuart Hampshire rather reflects the nationwide trends in urban studies with recent theses being produced on each of the leading towns - a survey of the economy and society of Winchester, a detailed analysis of Southampton migrants, and a longer-term study of occupations in Portsmouth which extends back to 1550.<sup>2</sup> Odiham, one of the smallest towns in the county and the subject of a major demographic study by Barry Stapleton of Portsmouth Polytechnic, will not be treated in any detail though it will be included in more general discussion.

Scholarly historical work on the history of the small towns of Hampshire has been largely non-existent although the archaeological aspects of their development are now the concern of research by Michael Hughes.<sup>3</sup> In the past, several historical sketches have been produced of individual towns like Robertson's History of Alresford, Curtis' Story of Alton and Privett's Story of Fareham, but these

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1. G. Etheredge, "The Man of Mode, or Sir Fopling Flutter. A Comedy", (1676), p. 88.
  2. A.B. Rosen, "Economic and social aspects of the history of Winchester, 1520-1670", Unpubl. D.Phil. thesis, Oxford University (1975); T.B. James "The Geographical Origins and Mobility of the Inhabitants of Southampton 1400-1600", Unpubl. Ph.D. thesis, St. Andrews University (1977); P. Christie, "Occupations in Portsmouth, 1550-1851", Unpubl. M.Phil. thesis, Portsmouth Polytechnic, C.N.A.A., (1976).
  3. M. Hughes, The Small Towns of Hampshire, (Winchester, 1976).

offer little real depth of research or analysis of the community.<sup>1</sup> Most towns in the county have various pamphlets, often dealing with local curiosities or notable past inhabitants, as well as guidebooks and other miscellanea some of which are quite informative and instructive but which can do little to satisfy the serious urban historian. This is not always true, however, and mention may be made, for instance, of the detailed series Dwellings in Alresford by Isobel Sanderson, a fine example of very serious and worthwhile research by a local enthusiast.<sup>2</sup> Petersfield, Lymington, the Test valley and other places have active local history societies which produce, as in all counties, an array of booklets full of interesting anecdotal material which is often a useful supplement to the diet of the scholar of particular settlements but can never provide complete sustenance. The absence of any substantial work on the small towns of Hampshire is clear, a position not helped by the failure of any permanent records series to develop for the county. There is nothing to compare with the research of Burgess, Merson, Patterson and Platt in Southampton or the volumes of the Southampton Records series, or with Atkinson's Winchester, or with the Portsmouth Records series.<sup>3</sup> Even the Victoria County History for the county, the first to be completed in the country, whilst offering a useful outline and starting point, is singularly old-fashioned in its approach, contains several flaws and lacks all the refinements of historiography which characterise more modern volumes in the series.<sup>4</sup> For most towns, therefore, there has been little or no authoritative historical research. Two of the larger small towns, Andover and Basingstoke, are marginally better off. Baigent and Millard compiled a history of Basingstoke at the end of the last century although their work is basically a collection

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1. W. Curtis, A Short History and Description of the Town of Alton, (London, 1896); G.L. Privett, The Story of Fareham, (Winchester, 1949); A.J. Robertson, A History of Alresford, (Winchester, 1938).
  2. I Sanderson, Dwellings in Alresford, (Alresford, 1975).
  3. T. Atkinson, Elizabethan Winchester, (London, 1963); L.A. Burgess, "Southampton in the seventeenth century" and A.L. Merson, "Elizabethan Southampton", in Collected Essays on Southampton, eds. J.B. Morgan and P. Peberdy, (Southampton, 1968), pp. 66-73 and 57-65; A.T. Patterson, A History of Southampton, 1700-1914, (Southampton, 1966-1975), 3 volumes; C.P.S. Platt, Medieval Southampton, (London, 1973).
  4. Victoria County History: Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, ed. J.H. Round, (London, 1900-1912), 5 volumes.

of extracts from documents relating to the town (the transcriptions are not always very accurate) and contains little analysis of their contents.<sup>1</sup> Andover in the first half of this century had two notable local historians, Arthur Bennett and Edmund Parsons, whose researches into the rich archives of the town bore fruit in several short articles and pamphlets and a book, jointly written, on the history of Andover school.<sup>2</sup> Both left copious notes but unfortunately the history of Andover that they hoped to produce never emerged. Their work, however, has been taken up by a very active local archives committee and, as a result, though a major study of the town is still missing, more is known of Andover's past than is true for most of the small towns. Some of the smallest market communities, like Kingsclere or Whitchurch, have received almost no treatment at any level of historical research, whilst some of the larger towns are hardly better off. Petersfield has had little study other than a very brief account of its history by E. Arden Minty and some more useful local society publications, whilst Romsey has had no serious historian since John Lathan whose collections for a history of the town, compiled in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries from a wide range of sources, survive in the British Library but were never published in any form.<sup>3</sup>

This pattern is not unique to Hampshire for in most counties written history and certainly academic research has concentrated on larger towns, usually the county town. The reasons are simple - the larger and more important was the town, the more varied were its functions as an administrative, cultural, religious and economic centre within the county, so the greater was the range of records likely to have been produced and the stronger is the attraction to the student. Yet this is not to say that the small community is a

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1. F.J. Baigent and J.E. Millard, A History of the Ancient Town and Manor of Basingstoke, (Basingstoke, 1889).
  2. A.C. Bennett and E. Parsons, A History of the Free School of Andover, (Andover, 1920).
  3. BL, Add Mss 26774-9; E.A. Minty, Some Account of the History of Petersfield, (London, 1923).

closed door for research and certainly in Hampshire the small towns have proved a highly promising subject for study. Local record offices and the Public Record Office can provide an array of ecclesiastical, civil and parochial records which apply just as much to small towns as to their larger counterparts. In addition, in this thesis, extensive use has been made of fine collections of borough records which survive and throw invaluable light on the society of towns like Andover, Basingstoke, Christchurch, Romsey and Petersfield. What, perhaps, inhibits research into such communities is the absence of perfect records from every main source for any one particular town. For instance, Andover and Basingstoke in the early modern period have good borough records but poor parish material, whilst Ringwood has a very useful register but little else to commend it to the historian. For this reason a study of a group of towns has been attempted, focussing on particular communities only to illustrate certain points or where documentation is especially good. In fact, such is the wealth of evidence which may be accumulated on the market towns of Hampshire, that in the course of research it soon became obvious that it would be necessary to curb the scope of the study. For that reason it was decided to investigate the demographic history of the small towns through the early modern period. Many other aspects of economic and social history could have been tackled at length, some of which are dealt with briefly in the general introduction to the small towns of Hampshire. It is very important to understand clearly the general nature and character of the life experienced by the townsmen and to comprehend fully the changes in education, religion, employment, government and other aspects of society that so closely affected their day-to-day lives. Far too often demographic aspects are set aside from the rest of social history, treated as a separate discipline concerned with aggregate figures and long-term trends. Yet it was individuals who made up these statistics - one man's decision to move from one town to another or one couple's decision to defer their marriage or to have another child. In making these very human choices ordinary men and women were influenced by all manner of things,

often emotional and quite unquantifiable, but it is clearly necessary for demographic analysis to be set in a wider economic and social context. For the small towns, in particular, this essential background is all too often noticeable by its absence.

### THE SOURCES

In this section the most common sources for demographic history are examined briefly in the context of Hampshire.

#### Taxation Records

The fiscal and military embarrassments of Henry VIII, prompted by the persistent hostilities with France and Scotland, not only necessitated a drastic reappraisal of national military resources but also required detailed information on wealth throughout the country. Both demands culminated in the general proscription of 1522. In April 1523, armed with this national survey of taxable capacity, surreptitiously prepared the year before under the guise of the muster, Wolsey sought from Parliament a subsidy of 4s in the pound on lands and goods. Long and bitter dispute followed before a lesser grant was made to be collected over the next four years. The resulting mass of documentation has provided historians with invaluable material for an insight into early Tudor society, coming as it does after a period when tax records had lost much of their meaning as a realistic guide to wealth and some time before parochial registration was accepted in more than just the occasional parish. Complete transcripts of the tax lists have been compiled for particular counties such as Sussex, Buckinghamshire and Suffolk but the records for Hampshire, other than Southampton and Winchester, have received no detailed study and none have been published.<sup>1</sup> This is very unfortunate for elsewhere they have been extensively used, in particular by Sheail in the study of national patterns of wealth and population and by Cornwall in the investigation of county

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1. A.C. Chibnall and A. Vere Woodman (eds.), Subsidy Roll for the County of Buckinghamshire 1524, (Bedford, 1944); S.H.A. Hervey (ed.), Suffolk in 1524, Suffolk Green Books, X, (1910); J. Cornwall (ed.), The Lay Subsidy Rolls for the County of Sussex 1524-25, Sussex Record Society, LVI, (Lewes, 1956).

towns.<sup>1</sup> Research from the assessments has also been incorporated into many works of local history dealing with urban centres like Worcester and Northampton or with rural society as in the case of Cambridgeshire.<sup>2</sup> Small towns, villages and the countryside, in Hampshire or elsewhere, may especially be illuminated by the subsidy: communities deficient in much of the archival wealth of larger cities.

The act as it finally emerged detailed a subsidy to be spread over four years. For the third and fourth years only the wealthier sections of the population were liable, but for the first two payments, in 1524 and 1525, all but the very poorest sections of the population were listed. Those with an annual income from land paid one shilling in the pound; those with goods worth £20 or more paid at the same rate; those with goods valued between £2-£20 paid 6d in the pound; and lastly there was a flat rate of 4d on those possessing goods worth from £1-£2 or in receipt of wages. Aliens paid double rates or a poll tax of 8d. Goods liable to tax included coin and plate while debts owed to or by the assessed party were also taken into account.

Commissioners were appointed for each hundred or group of hundreds charged with the task of appointing a high collector and preparing an indenture for the Exchequer giving the name of the collector and the sum to be raised. This document was to be accompanied by a schedule of each taxpayer, the source of his wealth and how much he was to pay. The resulting compilations are long lists of names which represent all or most households in any particular community. They cannot be seen as "virtually a Kelly's Directory for the year 1523-4" and there are great problems in their use and interpretation.<sup>3</sup> However, the urgency of the military

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1. J. Sheail, "The Regional Distribution of Wealth in England as indicated in the 1524-25 lay subsidy returns", Unpubl. Ph.D. thesis, London University, (1968); J. Cornwall, "County Towns", op.cit.
  2. A.D. Dyer, The City of Worcester, op.cit., and "Northampton in 1524", Northamptonshire Past and Present, 6, (1979), pp. 73-80; M. Spufford, Contrasting Communities, (Cambridge, 1974).
  3. A.C. Chibnall and A. Vere Woodman, Subsidy Roll, op.cit., p. ix.



situation dictated that "this assessment was exceptionally searching and comprehensive" and coming as it does at a time when any sources of demographic history are at a premium, Sheail is surely right to conclude that there simply is "no other source which is likely to help in studying the distribution of population and wealth over the greater part of the country".<sup>1</sup>

In Hampshire neither the subsidy lists for 1524 nor 1525 are complete but if the two sets are taken together then there is a countywide coverage including each of the market towns.<sup>2</sup> They are generally in good condition although some outer folios are quite badly rubbed. In cases where both years survive additional information on the turnover of population within one calendar year may be ascertained and the source may be valuably compared with other contemporary material such as wills or rentals to further enhance the study of social structure. As befits a tax survey born out of royal impecuniosity and with the priority of raising money firmly in mind, the subsidy lists contain little or no information beyond the bare essentials necessary for levying the appropriate amount from each taxpayer. No details about family or dependents are provided and usually occupation is given only to distinguish two men of the same name within one community. Employment was systematically recorded only in the surveys of Bristol, Cambridge, Coventry and Northampton, which makes the record for 1525 covering the hundreds of Fareham and Titchfield especially valuable. Here again occupations were recorded enabling a close study of population, occupation and wealth in this corner of South Hampshire and in particular in the small market town of Fareham.

Just as the medieval subsidies had become increasingly standardised and unrealistic in the decades after 1334 so the Henrician tax also became more stereotyped and less useful to the historian. Subsequent levies fell exclusively on the wealthy minority and assessors failed to update their records so that the same sums and the same names

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1. J. Sheail, "The distribution of taxable population and wealth in England during the early sixteenth century", Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, 55, (1972), p. 111.

2. see note 1, p. 109.

appear in successive assessments. Sheail has shown the value of the subsidy of 1543-5 especially in the north where the earlier impost was less well conducted than in the south.<sup>1</sup> For Hampshire, however, the later Henrician subsidy is both poor in coverage and much reduced in the numbers of taxpayers compared with 1524-5. A large group of subsidy rolls is extant for Hampshire throughout the Tudor and early Stuart years but their value is limited. The number of names for each community is very small whilst the sums paid were increasingly conventional, a fact which did not escape contemporaries like Lord North who wrote to Burleigh in 1589 that "there is no man assessed before me but is known to be worth at least ten times as much as he is set at, and six times more in land".<sup>2</sup> However, that is not to say that the records are totally without use to demographic inquiry. As long ago as 1915 S. A. Peyton used the turnover of names to illustrate mobility of populations and this may be extended to investigate both short-term and long-term turnover of taxpayers whilst some idea of the working life of an individual may be gauged by the number of appearances in successive tax lists.<sup>3</sup> Again the subsidy material may be valuably set alongside other borough and parish records. Many rolls survive for different hundreds and divisions of the county at various times and a series can easily be accumulated for one particular town or parish and occasionally extra information, such as occupation, may be recorded alongside the basic entry of name, assessment and amount due. The quality of the original work varied greatly and so does their present condition but these later subsidy rolls for Hampshire, both in the Public Record Office and in local record offices, can give an insight into the upper levels of small town society.

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1. J. Sheail, "Distribution of taxable population and wealth", op.cit., pp. 111-26.
  2. quoted in M. Beresford, Lay Subsidies and Poll Taxes, (Sussex 1963), pp. 7-13.
  3. S.A. Peyton, "The Village Population in the Tudor Lay Subsidy Rolls", English Historical Review, 30, (1915), pp. 234-50.

Unfortunately one important demographic source is almost completely absent for the county, namely the poll taxes of 1641, 1660, 1666 and 1677. These were graduated taxes which covered most male householders over 16 years old. The only assessments which survive for Hampshire relate to Kingsclere hundred in 1641 and a fragmentary record for the same hundred in 1660.<sup>1</sup>

Hearth Tax material is the last of the main fiscal records which relate to demographic analysis and has become a very well-known source for historians of the early modern period. They represent a crucial vantage point from which to look back on the Tudor and early Stuart times whose changes were so fundamental to the English economy and society. These records were the subject of detailed work by contemporary observers like Davenant, King and Petty and their interest has been inherited by many modern students. There have been several editions of the Hearth Tax published for other counties and the records have been used in a variety of interesting ways, mainly for the compilation of absolute totals and the study of population and wealth structure, but also in some refreshingly innovative research such as Richard Vann's work on seventeenth century illiteracy.<sup>2</sup> Hampshire, however, lacks any detailed general work other than that of Gwyn Meirion-Jones, first in his London M.Phil. thesis and subsequently in an article dealing with architecture in northern Hampshire.<sup>3</sup> Indeed the tax, which receives detailed attention in many volumes of the Victoria County History, has been largely overlooked as far as Hampshire is concerned. The only use made of the tax for urban history has been for Portsmouth and Winchester and, again, the smaller towns have been very little researched.<sup>4</sup>

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1. PRO, E 179/247/24; E 179/176/558.
  2. See, for example, C.A.F. Meeking's Surrey Hearth Tax, Surrey Record Society, XVII, (1940), and Dorset Hearth Tax Assessments, 1662-4, (1951); M. Spufford, "The Significance of the Cambridgeshire Hearth Tax", Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society, LV, (1962), pp. 53-64; R.T. Vann, "Literacy in Seventeenth Century England: Some Hearth Tax Evidence", Journal of Interdisciplinary History, 5, (1974), pp. 287-93; M.M.B. Weinstock, Hearth Tax Returns: Oxfordshire 1665, Oxfordshire Record Society, XXI, (1940).
  3. G. Meirion-Jones, "The Use of Hearth Tax Returns and Vernacular Architecture in Settlement Studies", Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, 53, (1971), pp. 133-160.
  4. P. Christie, thesis, op.cit.; A.B. Rosen, thesis, op.cit.; see also P. Christie, "Analysis of the 1674 Hearth Tax for Portsmouth", Portsmouth Geographical Essays, II, (1976), pp. 22-50.

The hearth, commonly acknowledged as the centre of family life, had always been a traditional unit of taxation and Domesday records the levying of fumage or smoke money. However, the Hearth Tax raised by Charles II was to be the last imposition based on the fireplace. In March 1662, the king complained bitterly about the fiscal arrangements reached at the Restoration and very soon "An Act for establishing an additional revenue upon his majestie, his heirs and successors for the better support of his and their Crown and Dignity" was passed, imposing a charge of two shillings on each chimney hearth. It was to be levied on "every dwelling and other house and edifice and lodgings and chambers in the inns of court and of chancery, colleges and other societies" in England and Wales. The classes of hearth which were, in theory, exempt were those belonging to people excused payment of church or poor rates, those without a house valued over 20s per annum and those without an income of £10 a year, hearths in hospitals or almshouses whose endowment was under £10 per annum and lastly private furnaces, kilns or ovens like those of a baker.

Ideally, the assessments and returns which survive should record all the inhabitants of a particular community for even the very poor should appear among the list of exempted persons. Accuracy was enhanced by the fact that it was specifically the occupier and not the landlord who was to be taxed. However, few records survive which show such perfection. For Hampshire the best evidence is an Exchequer duplicate of Assessment enrolled at Quarter Sessions in Basingstoke in 1666 and endorsed "Southtax 1664 to 1665".<sup>1</sup> It covers nearly all the county and the folios are generally in good condition, naming both taxpayers and those exempted. All the small towns are recorded in this survey. It is exceptional for this date in that both chargeable and non-chargeable households are presented. Coming at an early stage in the history of the Hearth Tax is, perhaps, an added advantage, a time when evasions and maladministration, always problems in the turbulent history of such a bitterly contested tax, were yet to become entrenched. Certainly as far as Hampshire is

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1. PRO, E 179/176/565.

concerned subsequent records do not approach that of 1664-65 for detail. Only the returns of 1674 are of any real use for the county but the coverage is less comprehensive and the notation of non-taxpayers, essential if an accurate picture is to emerge, is very patchy.<sup>1</sup> Where, however, good records do survive for both years, as in Ringwood, very worthwhile comparison can be achieved.

As with the subsidy of 1524-25, much of the value of the hearth tax lies in relating its evidence to other contemporary material and the assessments may be effectively used in conjunction with records like parish registers and probate material. It also shares with Wolsey's similarly broad-based creation, enormous problems of interpretation and its use arouses much debate and dispute. Hoskins wrote that the tax for Exeter produced a "complete and invaluable directory of the city's inhabitants and their wealth by the number of their hearths" and Marshall noted that the source was "a record of every family, however humble, in a given parish".<sup>2</sup> Perhaps such views are exaggerated in their optimism but in the absence of much alternative archival material the hearth tax will always remain a powerful lure for demographic and social historians of the seventeenth century. Certainly it adds much to the knowledge of early modern Hampshire and its towns.

#### Ecclesiastical Records

Records compiled at the behest of religious authorities form valuable sources for the study of population. All the available material relevant to early modern Hampshire has been studied in detail and will be used throughout this thesis. None have hitherto been published.

The first comprehensive survey was made in 1563 when the Privy Council initiated a general investigation into the state of the church.<sup>3</sup> Among their returns the archdeacons of each diocese were to submit

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1. PRO, E 179/247/30.
  2. W.G. Hoskins, Industry, Trade and People in Exeter 1688-1800, (Manchester, 1935) p. 111; L.M. Marshall, The Rural Population of Bedfordshire, Bedfordshire Historical Record Society, Vol.16 (1934), p. 4.
  3. BL, Harleian Ms 280; see The Catalogue of the Harleian Manuscripts (Oxford, 1808), pp. 359-61.

the number of families in each parish. In several parts of the country the investigations were apparently conducted with an encouraging degree of efficiency and accuracy, providing a valuable insight for historians into the size and distribution of population in the middle of the sixteenth century. The returns for the diocese of Winchester, however, do not survive. Indeed they may never have existed in the first place, for a number of archdeacons were apparently tardy in their work and, complaining that they had been given insufficient time for the exercise, promised to submit the numbers of households at a later date. Although some such returns were subsequently appended to the bulk of documentation, those for several dioceses were either never correctly arranged or were never sent in at all. Unfortunately, the county of Hampshire, forming the bulk of Winchester diocese, is among this group of missing returns.

In 1603 a similar survey was commenced for which the Winchester returns are extant.<sup>1</sup> Following the death of Queen Elizabeth, Archbishop Whitgift sought to produce for the new king a comprehensive report on the state of the English church. Among other things he asked to be informed by the bishops "of the number of communicants throughout all their dioceses and what number there was of recusants". It was therefore different from its predecessor in 1563 in that the number of communicants was to be established rather than the number of households or families. The parish totals for recusants and non-communicants were divided between males and females whilst a single figure was returned for the communicants. As with the subsequent Compton Census there is, however, no evidence to suggest the omission of women from the survey of communicants. Throughout the ecclesiastical documentation of the period it was customary for female recusants and, later, dissenters, to be recorded individually. Returns survive for just five dioceses of which Winchester is one, affording a major source for the analysis of Hampshire population at the start of the seventeenth century. The Winchester diocesan figures for 1603 are strongly criticised by Hollingsworth who shows that

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1. BL, Harleian Ms. 595.

parishes were omitted, mistakes in arithmetic were committed and that the use of round figures was prevalent.<sup>1</sup> Fortunately, however, these errors were largely confined to the Surrey parishes and the Hampshire figures are much more reliable. The use of rounded figures was, no doubt, commonplace and many parish totals for communicants would seem to have been taken to the nearest ten, but reassuringly few figures are given in round units of hundreds or thousands. Inevitably much of the survey must have been of a speculative nature and a few returns, like that for Basingstoke parish, with exactly 1000 communicants have all the appearance of guesswork. On the whole, however, such entries seem to be the exception rather than the rule and the survey seems to have been conducted fairly conscientiously throughout Hampshire archdeaconry. Certainly the number of parishes included is admirable with figures for 276 parishes - very nearly 100% coverage. Another criticism levelled at the 1603 survey by, among others, Hollingsworth, is that of "gross misrepresentation" by the parish incumbent, who deliberately understated the number of recusants and non-communicants in order to assert the orthodoxy of his own parish. Yet the figure of 398 recusants for Hampshire in fact tallies fairly closely with the 437 individuals named in the proceedings against recusants held at the Bishop's Court between 1597-1602 and is a greater figure than the 317 names which appear on the recusant roll of 1602-3.<sup>2</sup> There may have been some degree of underestimation but it is unlikely to have been substantial or of sufficient scale to seriously distort the overall figures contained in the survey.

In 1676 there came a third investigation of the church which grew out of the attempts to crush dissent in the years after the Restoration in 1660. Nonconformity had undergone a bitter onslaught but had survived relatively intact and by the middle 1670s there were growing fears that Roman Catholicism was also resurgent. As a result Archbishop Sheldon instigated a national survey of the

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1. T.H. Hollingsworth, Historical Demography, (Cambridge, 1969), pp. 80-4.
  2. HRO, Processus contra Recusants 1597-1602, Consistory Court Book, 66A.

church in an attempt to prove that nonconformity had been exaggerated and as a prerequisite for a final purge on the dissenting movement. The numbers of recusants and dissenters were to be recorded by churchwardens and ministers as well as "what number of persons, or at least families, are by common account or estimation inhabiting within each parish subject unto them". The inquiry, which is generally known as the Compton Census, after the Bishop of London, was complete by the late summer of 1676.<sup>1</sup> Only a few original returns survive, including that for Winchester, but the William Salt Library, Stafford, possesses an eighteenth century copy which covers the whole province of Canterbury. The coverage in Hampshire is very nearly complete, an indication of the importance of the survey and the seriousness with which it was conducted. The problem of estimated figures remains, though perhaps to a lesser degree than in 1603. In both sources returns in round hundreds must be regarded as rather dubious though this does not necessarily mean that they were wildly inaccurate. In most parishes incumbents or their nominees probably made a genuine effort to fulfil the task to the best of their ability. Doubts exist, however, about exactly whom the figures in the Compton Census are meant to represent. The initial letter from Sheldon to Compton said "number of persons or at least families" but this seems to have been widely interpreted as "inhabitants above the age of 16".<sup>2</sup> It became, therefore, an enumeration of male and female communicants on the same lines as the inquiry of 1603. Further uncertainty surrounds the validity of the figures given for dissenters and papists. The census was widely regarded as the precursor of persecution and many occasional conformists may have conformed merely for the purpose of the inquiry while ministers may have deliberately underestimated nonconformity in order to avoid the disfavour of their bishop. In fact the evidence for Winchester diocese concurs closely with findings made by Chalklin for Kent, and a comparison between the census and the

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1. William Salt Library, Ms. 33, ff.51-69

2. E. Cardwell, Documentary Annals of the Reformed Church of England, (Oxford, 1839), Vol.II, pp. 337-42.



licences granted during the Indulgence of 1672 indicates that while understating the actual numbers of dissenters the census does accurately reflect the distribution and relative strength of non-conformity throughout the country.<sup>1</sup>

Both the 1603 and 1676 "censuses" can be used to show the distribution of population throughout the county and in the estimation of total population. They are especially valuable as two directly comparable sources using the same basic unit, namely males and females of 16 years or more. Their use is especially important because of the absence, as far as Hampshire is concerned, of any evidence from the Protestation Return of 1641-2. This was not strictly a religious census although it took the form of a pledge of loyalty to the "true reformed Protestant religion", to the King and to the powers of Parliament. Long lists were compiled of adult males over 18 years, indicating those who had subscribed to the oath and those who had refused. Unfortunately the returns are completely non-existent for Hampshire except for the town of Southampton.

The last religious "census" to which reference will be made was drawn up in 1725 and was not part of any national count. It was fairly common procedure in the eighteenth century for a newly-appointed bishop to request from all his incumbents information relating to their parishes. The survey conducted in 1725 included inquiries on papists, dissenters, schools, charities and hospitals while ministers were requested in the second question to determine "what number of souls according to the best information that you can reasonably get, do you suppose to be in your parish".<sup>2</sup> The resulting two volumes covered 87% of Hampshire parishes. The quality of returns varied enormously. Many figures are prefaced by an ominous "about" and rounded figures are very prevalent. Yet in some parishes extremely detailed information was provided. At Micheldever, for instance, totals of men and women were given and then subdivided into three different age groups, while in other parishes additional information was provided about the number of

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1. C.W. Chalklin, "The Compton Census of 1676: The Dioceses of Canterbury and Rochester", Kent Archaeological Society, Vol. 17, (1960), pp. 153-60 and 172-4; M. Spufford, "A note on the Compton Census", Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society, LXI, (1968), pp. 94-5.
  2. HRO, B/2/A.

houses or families. Certainly the printed instructions and detailed directives on how the survey should be recorded indicate a well managed, methodical investigation.

All the counts of people, whether it be households, communicants or souls, instigated by the Bishop or Archbishop are invaluable as general surveys for a particular diocese. There are doubts over the credibility of entries in each of the sources but at the same time no reason to suppose that they were wildly inaccurate. The use of these figures involves, of course, more difficulties, which will be detailed at relevant places in the subsequent analysis.

Another rather different religious source has also been used - the chantry certificates prepared in 1547 some of which relate to particular parishes in the county.<sup>1</sup> Chantries were small chapels usually within a parish church with an altar and a priest appointed to pray for individuals whilst they were alive or for the ease of their souls after death. The Act of 1545 for the suppression of chantries and the reversion of their revenues to the crown had been nullified by the death of Henry VIII and as a result a new survey was made in 1547. Ministers and churchwardens in relevant parishes were to include in their returns the number of "houselyng people" which probably meant the number of communicants or the men and women over about 14 years of age (the age at which communion became obligatory was later fixed at 16). The returns for Hampshire are varied and several give no figure for houseling people. Other parishes were not included at all. Where figures were present, their value is uncertain for many returns are in round figures, like the 900 houseling people in Alton which has all the appearance of a rough estimate. Elsewhere entries have a semblance of greater reliability like the 804 returned for Basingstoke, yet there is no evidence as to how these headcounts were achieved and appearances may well be deceptive. Nevertheless, for a number of parishes, including several

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1. PRO, E 301/52.

towns, the chantry certificates offer some guide to population in the mid sixteenth century.

#### Church Court Records

Wills and inventories are among the most absorbing and rewarding sources available to social historians. For the diocese of Winchester they survive in bulk from the start of the sixteenth century. A will could be proved in either the Consistory Court or the Archdeaconry Court, both in Winchester, and large numbers of wills remain for Hampshire from both courts either in their original form or as registered copies. These may be supplemented by a series of unclassified wills and by peculiar wills which came from scattered parishes in the county where the incumbent enjoyed peculiar jurisdiction including the grant of probate. Inventories, which were lists of possessions belonging to the testator at his death, are appended to a large proportion of the wills. A smaller number of Hampshire wills were proved at the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, theoretically intended for the settlement of probate where the testator held possessions in more than one diocese although in practice this court was used by the wealthiest members of society, as an additional guarantee because its records were generally better maintained, and as a status symbol. This system was in existence for almost all the early modern period, the only exceptions being the years of the Commonwealth (1653-60), when all ecclesiastical courts were abolished and a single Court of Civil Commission had sole testamentary jurisdiction. In fact most church courts had ceased to function effectively from the onset of the Civil War and the whole period from 1640-1660 is rather confused as far as wills are concerned. Nevertheless, probate records are available for the county throughout the whole period covered by this thesis.

Large numbers of wills survive for all parts of Hampshire, from all kinds of communities, and they form a major source for the study of population history, yielding much valuable demographic information as well as many miscellaneous insights into society. Most of the Hampshire towns are well represented although some, like

Ringwood and Fareham, were peculiar parishes and their early wills have not been preserved. Sheer weight of numbers is unfortunately a drawback in the use of probate material especially in a study like this which is attempting to look at a group of communities. For that reason, in order to achieve a reasonable chronological span, detailed study of wills has been confined to one town, Romsey, although the wills of other parishes have been used at various stages of the analysis.

The will was normally dictated by the testator on his deathbed although on some rare occasions he or she obviously lived through their predicament and the will might not be necessary for several years after it was first drawn up. Usually the opening phrases were of a religious character, bequeathing the soul to God and the body to Christian burial, often in a specified place. Even these initial sections are of use, for the formulae used in the dedication of souls have been used by historians as an indication of varying levels of Catholic or Anglican sympathy, while the place of burial may, rarely, point towards a different parish and signify migration earlier in the life of the deceased. Thereafter the testator usually disposes of his estate. Much information can be gleaned about family relationships for wills may mention children, grandchildren, wives, parents, nieces, nephews, cousins and other connections as well as diverse other legatees. Assorted charitable bequests may be made and debts are sometimes specified. To conclude, the will usually refers to the executor, the overseers and the witnesses and is signed or marked, a distinction crucial in the study of literacy in the period. Individual inheritance patterns, of course, varied widely but the Hampshire wills do seem to confirm the desire of most testators to provide something, however small, for each of their children, even those who were married and had presumably left home. This was also found to be true by Dyer in Worcester.<sup>1</sup> It is from this conviction that much of the demographic value of wills ensues, implying as it does that the will offers a reasonably

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1. A.D. Dyer, Worcester, op.cit., p.35.

accurate guide to family size and thus to replacement rates in early modern society.

However, Hampshire wills, like those elsewhere, represent only a very small proportion of the people who actually died. There are examples of men being vehemently exhorted to dispose of their estates by relatives, neighbours and parish ministers, and it was clearly expected of the better off members of society, but, taking the community as a whole, it was nevertheless the exception rather than the rule to make a will. Yet this is not to say that the wills point exclusively to the rich for the Hampshire records refer to some very humble individuals indeed, but it does mean that the study of wills is, in fact, focussing on a very small sample of the population.

In cases of intestacy an administration was granted and these also survive in large numbers for Hampshire, sometimes taking the form of a detailed inventory and on other occasions simply a grant of probate to a named individual. Often this is a widow or son and such a relationship may be specifically mentioned in the document. They are, however, of less value to demographic historians than the wills although both have been used in this thesis. Inventories had to be produced before probate could be granted and they are appended to many wills. Their role in population study is, perhaps, tangential despite their great intrinsic interest and their importance in other fields of research, but they do offer a crucial indication of the lifestyle enjoyed by the deceased. Hampshire appears to be quite fortunate in the number and scope of inventories which survive.

Probate records may be treated in many different ways for they can facilitate a close insight into one particular family, providing welcome substance to an otherwise impersonal entry on a tax list or muster roll. Alternatively they can be used on a much grander scale by simple enumeration of wills each year over a wider geographical area to indicate periods of abnormally high mortality. As far as Hampshire is concerned it is not always very easy to perform such aggregative study beyond broad impressions that one year has more wills than another. This is because of duplication between the

different categories of wills. For instance, some of the unclassified groups of original wills, formed when they were at some time removed from their true series, perhaps for litigation, and never replaced in the correct sequence, may also individually occur in the registered wills of either church court. Therefore simple aggregation of wills from each source would lead to double counting of some records. Any careful listing of individual names would be a major task. Nevertheless, the variety of information yielded and the range of uses to which it may be put make probate records immensely valuable to economic and social historians.

The diocesan courts produced several other records which are of importance to the study of early modern population and family life. Visitation books produced at the time of an episcopal examination of each parish in the diocese normally list only the names of the incumbent, the churchwardens and the poor law overseers. However, occasionally matters relating to church jurisdiction were surveyed at the visitation and a liber detectorum was produced containing a plethora of miscellaneous cases often concerning sexual morality or internal family disputes as well as issues arising from misconduct or maladministration by church officials, absence from church services and other misdemeanours. No continuous series was produced but six such books are of especial interest for Winchester diocese, compiled at various times between 1586 and 1623.<sup>1</sup> They cover the whole of Hampshire and most parishes appear at some time, enabling an idea to be obtained of the nature of sexual offences and the attitude of the community at large to such incidents and also offering some clue to the strains imposed on the ties of kinship and the reaction of average families to such tensions.

In fact the Consistory Court in Winchester enjoyed jurisdiction over a wide range of causes including tithes and dues, defamation, church discipline, rating and seating and many domestic disputes,

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1. HRO, Consistory Court Books, 59, 64, 69, 75, 94, 96.

especially matrimonial and testamentary matters. The whole county is covered in the series of court books and the inhabitants of the small towns occur regularly either as litigants or defendants or as witnesses. The cases were recorded in deposition books of which twelve remain for the period relevant to this thesis, ten of them surviving almost continuously from 1561 to 1603 and the other two relating to 1531-47 and to 1631.<sup>1</sup> They have been indexed and abstracted by A.J. Willis but the originals must be consulted for details of actual cases, many of which are of great interest in the study of marital and moral customs. Possibly of even greater use are the short biographical details which accompany the recorded testimony of witnesses (though not of the principals). These state name, age and occupation and then proceed to note, in varying degrees of quality and detail, the birthplace and former residences of the deponent, giving some evidence of migration in these years.

Lastly, use has been made of marriage licences, usually issued if both parties desired to marry outside their parish or without the banns being called. For Hampshire the main group relating to the early modern period is a sequence running from 1607 to 1640, though not unbroken.<sup>2</sup> They provide information on the names of the marriage partners, their conditions, occupations, bondsmen and parishes, and, like wills, provide valuable clues to family relationships, especially when used in conjunction with or, in the case of imperfect registrations, instead of the parish register. The Hampshire series has been calendared and published by A.J. Willis but, again, it is necessary to refer to the original in most cases.

#### Parish Registers

Perhaps the sources most important to this thesis are parish registers. Every register from before about 1670 and deposited in any of the record offices in Hampshire has been consulted as well as several registers still held by parishes and other transcripts made

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1. HRO, Consistory Court Books, 6, 13, 19, 24, 37, 42, 44, 50, 55, 62, 67, 112.
  2. HRO, D/1/C, D/1/D, D/1/E, D/1/F, D/1/G, D/1/H, D/1/I, D/1/J; A.J. Willis, Hampshire Marriage Licences, (Folkestone, 1957 and 1960).

from undeposited books. Bishop Stubbs once noted that "every parish must have a history, every parish has a register, every person has a parish" and more recently it has been said of these records that they are "certainly the most important of all demographic sources before the nineteenth century" which brought with it the official censuses and Registrar General's reports.<sup>1</sup>

In 1538 Thomas Cromwell ordered that the incumbent of each parish should every Sunday enter in a book the name of every person married, christened or buried in the previous week. Unfortunately it is very rare for registers to survive from this date and only twenty books exist from 1538 in Hampshire, including two which relate to small market towns, Kingsclere and Odiham. Many more survive from 1558. This was because of the exhortations for better keeping and preservation made at the end of Elizabeth's reign and confirmed by a canon of 1603 which ordered that old registers, which had usually been kept in paper books, should be copied into new parchment books. The transcription was meant to go back in time as far as possible "but especially since the first year of Her Majesty's reign" and many parish clerks simply interpreted this as an order to begin in 1558. Several Hampshire registers therefore begin at this time including those for Fareham and Petersfield while those for Romsey and Ringwood begin soon after. In total there are 120 registers dating from the sixteenth century and another 48 survive from the first half of the seventeenth century. Many more Tudor and early Stuart registers must have been made but have, for some reason, not survived.

The Civil War was a period of enormous strain on registration. Many priests were ejected from their livings and although the ordinance of 1645, which instituted the Directions for the Book of Common Prayer, ordered that each parish should possess a "fair register book of velim" and that records should be made of dates

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1. Quoted by J.C. Cox The Parish Registers of England (London, 1910), frontispiece; W.B. Stephens, Sources for English Local History (Manchester, 1973), p.28.



of birth and death as well as baptism and burial, registration was widely neglected. This is well illustrated by the Basingstoke register which was very poorly maintained in these years. In 1653 the duties fell within the compass of a parish "register" or registrar, who was to be elected triennially by the parishioners. The Petersfield register, for instance, records the election of Symon Flood as "register" and he was sworn into office on 7th December 1653. At the same time civil marriages before Justices of the Peace were introduced which were supposed to be recorded by the "register" but in several parishes, including Petersfield, this innovation met with much disapproval and a gap in the registration of weddings exists until the Restoration and the resumption of religious marriage and clerical registration.

Parish registers are one of the most tantalising and debated sources available to historians. The ideal register will record all the vital events of baptism, burial and marriage along with the names of parents where applicable and short identifying notes such as "widow" or "infant". Normally the dates provided are those for baptism and burial rather than birth and death, though for demographic purposes this difference is of only marginal importance in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when the church ceremony usually followed very soon after the event. Baptism usually occurred within a few days of birth, sometimes even on the same day and rarely more than one or two weeks after. Sometimes the cause of death will be described or on other occasions it may be inferred from dates and numbers of burials. Illegitimate children are usually denoted by incriminating words like "base born" or "spurious" and may also be assumed by the absence of a father's name. Registers may also record particular events of local history which the incumbent or his clerk considered particularly worthy of note, like the hanging of soldiers in Romsey during the Civil War. The variety of miscellaneous entries which occur in registers is a constant source of interest.

Yet the perfect register is a very rare occurrence. Few records were updated each week as they were supposed to be and clerks who made short notes to be copied up at a later date often

failed to fulfil their duty. Other registers were badly maintained or lost. Cromwell's injunction laid down that a "sure coffer" should be provided for the safe keeping of the records with two sets of keys, one for the priest and one for the churchwardens, but few parishes ever implemented these safeguards. Indeed, even today, several parish registers which remain in churches have no adequate security precautions. Death of an incumbent or clerk often caused a break in registrations while some earlier records have been destroyed by various mishaps. At New Alresford, for instance, the registers begin in 1678, just after the church was destroyed in the terrible fire which hit the town. Some damage to registers seems quite inexplicable other than by wilful and malicious spoilation like the single pages missing here and there in the otherwise well kept Romsey register. It is such imperfections which greatly reduce the use of a register and which make them often an infuriating source to use - they could tell so much but all too often they prove a disappointment. Other parish registers have clearly been the subject of very serious deterioration over time and the Andover books, already very irregular in their entries, have suffered from badly torn and frayed pages and further despoilation by water. The register which suffers none of these handicaps is an exceptional record, not only in Hampshire but in the whole country. Most have at least some incomplete years or missing pages.

However, even a fairly well kept and well preserved register need not be a completely true account of baptisms, burials and marriages within the particular parish. Some children were never baptised at all and others were baptised at home by midwives, while stillborn children were sometimes included and more usually excluded, at the whim of the clerk. Burials occurred without religious ceremony, especially in epidemics, when the whole system of registration regularly broke down, or because of poverty, or because the deceased were excommunicates or suicides. Soldiers and sailors often died away from their home parishes while Jews, Nonconformists and Roman

Catholics were often buried privately or in their own graveyards. Dissenting factions were very important in Hampshire where several small towns had sizeable nonconformist communities, especially Romsey, Ringwood and Andover. This must always be borne in mind when using all the registers but it need not be seen as a reason to completely negate their evidence. Romsey was a leading centre of dissent in the county but when a comprehensive listing of households like the Hearth Tax, which included all households irrespective of their religious affiliation, is compared with the parish registers, almost all the families appear in both records. This may be re-emphasised by the appearance of known Quaker families in the Anglican register and it would seem that for most of the period many nonconformists were recorded alongside their conforming neighbours although their religious views and activities were becoming increasingly divergent.

Various views have been expressed about the contrasting degrees of accuracy of the marriage, burial and baptism registers. It is normally assumed that the record of weddings is the most trustworthy because of the need for couples to have some written legal record of their marriage. There are many cases before the Winchester church courts of people living suspiciously together and clearly it was an advantage to have clear proof of a past ceremony both to regularise their own relationship and to legitimise any subsequent children. Of much less certainty are the burial and baptism records which tended to exclude illegitimate children, suicides, foundlings and any others who met the personal disapproval of the incumbent. Clearly there were great variations between the practice of individual clerks at different times so that there may be great changes over the years in the quality of entry within one register. Certainly the Hampshire records tend to vary much more over time than over category of entry - a conscientious clerk who maintained his marriage register properly was likely to record baptisms and burials at a similarly high standard.

What certainly emerges from a detailed analysis of the Hampshire registers is an impression that these were very much "living"

documents, not shut away and overlooked but regularly consulted by their compilers and reckoned by contemporaries to be an authoritative record, capable of settling disputes and misunderstandings. Clearly the church authorities in Winchester were anxious that registers should be maintained at a high standard and they were examined in visitations. Where a book was missing or poorly kept the curate would be presented, like the curate of Headbourne Worthy where the register book was lost in 1593.<sup>1</sup>

In cases of matrimonial argument the registers were commonly used to determine whether couples were in fact married or the exact date of the wedding. This often applied to strangers who were regarded by local inhabitants with suspicion and were often asked to prove that they were indeed lawfully married. In 1593 it was reported that Cicely Harwood of New Alresford was married to Robert Uphill in Baddesley and had given birth to a child before marriage.<sup>2</sup>

The immediate response was to check the marriage in the registers. A disputed marriage in Romsey was settled similarly when John Gumbledon was despatched all the way to Glastonbury, Somerset "to search the churchbook there whether one Thomas Brown was there married to Ann Tichborn about 17 or 18 years past". On arrival, he urged the minister there "to search the register book of those churches for the truth therein".<sup>3</sup>

Sometimes a check on entries may be provided by parish register transcripts. Lord Burghley had tried unsuccessfully to institute a general register office but in 1597 a system was adopted whereby copies of parish registers were to be submitted to the diocesan authorities. Although this was included in an official canon little attention was taken of the order. No provision was made for rewarding parish officials supplying the transcripts or to encourage the diocesan registrars to preserve the records intact. Certainly some parishes in Hampshire faithfully compiled their

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1. HRO, Consistory Court Book 64, f. 8.

2. *ibid.* f. 14.

3. HRO, Consistory Court Book 67, ff. 371-4.

copies for long periods in the seventeenth century and the despatch of such duplicates to Winchester is noted, for instance, in the Kingsclere register. However, none survive and no parish register transcripts remain for the county before the middle of the eighteenth century.

The uses to which parish register evidence can be put seem almost limitless. Basically the two forms of application are aggregative analysis and family reconstitution. The first is based on simple compilations of baptisms, marriages and burials, which can be used to give a very accurate guide to general population trends. The second method has only developed comparatively recently, first in France and subsequently extended to this country by the Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure. It involves the very informative but very time consuming and labour intensive reconstruction of individual families from register entries, leading to the study of factors such as age at marriage, infant mortality, prenuptial conception rates, average intervals between births, age specific fertility and average duration of marriage.

In Hampshire the only registers relating to a town which are of sufficient quality for a long-term reconstitution study are those of Odiham, the subject of research by Barry Stapleton. However, this thesis does not set out to be simply an intensive study of register material. Rather, it attempts to present a broader picture of demographic and social history than is possible from the registers alone, although some of the techniques of both aggregative analysis and family reconstitution have been applied. In fact such methods can only really be attempted in connection with urban history where the subjects are small, single parish towns rather than the larger multi-parish cities where the chances of sufficient registers surviving simultaneously for any length of time in order to build up a general demographic picture of the town as a whole are very slim indeed. By contrast, the registers of towns like Romsey, Petersfield, Ringwood, Fareham and Kingsclere, though inadequate for a single detailed investigation, can yield precious information on their

population structure and development, while even records of lesser quality like those from Alton, Andover, Fordingbridge and Basingstoke can be made to yield useful insights.

Certainly Anthony White, vicar of Romsey, took great pride in his record and in 1627 wrote on the cover of the register: ...

"Hereunder see those at our font baptised  
Those who had here their nuptials solemnised,  
And those in heaven enjoying bliss untold  
Whose bodies sleep beneath our churchyard mould".<sup>1</sup>

### Musters

Another significant group of sources relevant to demographic history are those which result from military musters.

At the start of the sixteenth century contemporaries had little idea of the manpower and equipment available to the nation in time of war. The longstanding Statute of Winchester exhorted men to hold themselves in readiness to serve the king and this had been re-emphasised by the Government in 1511. However, there was no information available about the numbers of able-bodied men of military age or their arms and armour, their distribution throughout the country or the actual resources which were at the disposal of the leading lords and landowners and which would constitute the core of the armed forces. Against this background and with the threat of war against France and Scotland in 1522, it is easy to understand the *raison d'être* for the so-called "general proscription of 1522". In early March "commission was geven throughout the realme, for generall musters to be had". Wolsey, at the peak of his influence in these years and the guiding light behind the survey, combined the military inquiry with a fiscal investigation which was to provide a new and comprehensive guide to national wealth, the essential precursor to the lay subsidies of 1524-5. Thus people were also to be "sworne of what substance and landes thei were of". Polydore Vergil

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1. HRO, 10 M 58A PR1.

considered the work to be a "census", and it certainly represented in intention the most informative large-scale analysis of the state of the nation since Domesday Book.<sup>1</sup> Twenty-nine counties sent in complete returns, including Hampshire, but unfortunately very few survive and the quality of those varies enormously in the degree of detail provided. For some counties, like Buckinghamshire and Rutland, the extant returns provide valuable material for the demographic historian, listing the inhabitants and their assessments. Sometimes, as in Suffolk, only parts of the county survive. Occasionally occupations are specified while in Berkshire the orders were implemented faithfully by allocating each man to his lord. Clearly the commissioners for each county differed in their interpretation of the orders issued to them and, perhaps, also in the honesty of their return. The muster book for Hampshire was returned to the Star Chamber but it is among those lost.

However, there is some compensation. One of the drawbacks in the Statute of Winchester, revealed clearly in the 1522 returns, was the dichotomy between those able to serve but without arms and those unable to serve but with arms. Something had to be done to match these groups and in March 1523 new commissions were issued and another series of muster certificates were prepared. Only two sets survive, for Hampshire and Gloucestershire. Thus a muster book is available for the early 1520s and it covers the whole county with the exception of the town of Southampton and the Isle of Wight.<sup>2</sup> Organised under parishes, it lists able men with armour and also assigns able men without armour either to unable men or to able men who possessed more than one set. Clearly this is not a record of every male inhabitant in each parish but the collection of names may be profitably compared with the subsequent subsidy listings and the distribution of able-bodied males can be effectively contrasted with the muster certificates later in the century. The spirit of inquiry for which Wolsey was largely responsible in 1522-3 thus

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1. see J.J. Goring, "The General Proscription of 1522", English Historical Review Vol.86 (1971) pp.681-705; J. Cornwall, "A Tudor Domesday: The Musters of 1522", Journal of the Society of Archivists, 3, (1965-69), pp. 19-24.

2. PRO, E 36/19.

leaves no direct trace for Hampshire but indirectly it produced a valuable and almost unique muster book of value to the demographic history of the county.

The years 1538-46 produced a large number of muster rolls but the period appears to be totally barren as far as Hampshire is concerned. In early 1539 an invasion from France seemed imminent and in February a muster was ordered for all men between sixteen and sixty throughout the country and likewise in August 1542 the Privy Council ordered commissions to be sent out for musters throughout the realm. The returns for several counties have proved to be very valuable demographic evidence but nothing relating to Hampshire has survived. This period is, however, of significance because it marks the first years when mustering took place with any semblance of regularity. The muster itself was simply a display of men and equipment which took place at certain predetermined points in a county, the object being that a man did not have to travel for more than half a day to the place assigned for his hundred. They were probably very short in duration for any unnecessary assemblies of men, especially armed, were always discouraged. The muster rolls that emerged henceforth were lists of able men in possession of armour and weapons and additionally notes of men not able to serve in war but possessing necessary equipment.

Under Edward VI and then Philip and Mary, very few muster rolls survive containing names of individuals attending. Only seven counties have any muster material from these reigns and Hampshire is one of them, although the certificate relates only to one particular muster on Portsdown Hill in 1548 for five hundreds in the south east of the county.<sup>1</sup>

The reign of Queen Elizabeth was one of very regular military activity and this is reflected in the muster certificates which survive in abundance and formed the basis of the study of late Tudor

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1. PRO, SP 10/3.



population by Professor Rich.<sup>1</sup> The first musters were made in 1558-60 but they were very imperfect with large numbers absenting themselves and the whole exercise was hindered by the sickness of those years. This period does, however, mark the appearance of the "muster master" as a supervisory figure and also the adoption of arabic rather than Roman numerals. The returns for Hampshire do not survive but there was clearly much activity in the county, and in May 1560 the Justices of the Peace took orders for the firing of the beacons as signals for assembling the forces of the adjoining counties, while in November it was reported that measures had been taken to have the force of the county of Hampshire in readiness.<sup>2</sup>

Following the irregularities of these early Elizabethan musters regulations were tightened for the preparations of 1569. Detailed orders were given to the commissioners as to the books they were to prepare "mentioning the number and names, surnames, hundreds, parishes and dwelling places of such persones as are mete to serve her Majestie in her warres ... None shalbe sparrde neither gentlemen nor noble men's servants".<sup>3</sup> The result for most counties was the most detailed muster of the reign. The return for Hampshire does survive and it is the only Elizabethan muster roll in the county which records the names of able men. Organised basically under hundreds, lists are also given for smaller administrative units and particularly interesting as regards this thesis, are the names of able men compiled for several boroughs in the county.<sup>4</sup>

Thereafter the bulk of Elizabethan muster evidence consists of abstracts of certificates containing the numbers of men in their

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1. E.E. Rich, "The Population of Elizabethan England", Economic History Review, Second Series, Vol.II, (1949-50), pp. 247-65.
  2. PRO, SP 12/14/40.
  3. PRO, SP 12/49/65; also SP 12/61.
  4. PRO, SP 12/59/8.

various categories rather than complete lists of names. For Hampshire there is an abstract return for 1570 which merely gives county totals and is not even subdivided into hundreds. It is, however, quite an accurate looking assessment, similar to the totals for 1569, whereas in many other counties, the urgency of the situation having passed, there was a marked decrease in the numbers returned. For 1572 there was no countywide muster but there do survive similarly administered and recorded certificates of the forces in the county appointed to defend strategic parts of the coastline and the Isle of Wight.<sup>1</sup> In 1573 it was re-emphasised to the Justices of the Peace that "The principall intent of the Queenes Majesty ... is to have perfect knowledge of the numbers qualeties, abilites and sufficiency of all her subjects ... from the aige of 16 yerres upwardes that maye be founde able to beare armor".<sup>2</sup> Returns survive for Hampshire for that year and for 1574, both of which appear to be underestimates of the true figures of able men in the county.<sup>3</sup> The muster of 1577 is probably more reliable and may be set alongside certificates from 1580 and 1588 as acceptable indicators of the numbers of able men in the county.<sup>4</sup>

These muster certificates therefore offer some rough guide to the population of Elizabethan Hampshire. Each covers the whole county and each is formed in a very similar fashion with figures recorded for able men furnished followed by detailed subdivisions into particular types of armour or weapon, able men unfurnished and lastly a range of ancillary duties such as carpenters and smiths who would have been expected to support the soldiers. In each case the figures are given for hundreds and it is usually impossible to obtain more detailed figures for individual communities or the names of the people mustered, and in this Hampshire is no different from

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1. PRO, SP 12/90/1.

2. E.E. Rich, "Population", op.cit., p. 253.

3. PRO, SP 12/94, 12/97/32.

4. PRO, SP 12/117/33, 12/137/66, 12/210/38.

most other counties. The muster enumerates only able adult men, a very ill-defined group, but they do seem to have been reasonably carefully compiled and there appears to be no prevalence of rounded figures. Their use to the genealogist may be small but for the evidence they offer to the relative standing of different areas within Hampshire, the musters are of use to the demographic historian. Only for the town of Southampton do the actual registers of names survive, representing the fullest listings for the town before 1600.

A further muster for Hampshire survives from 1591 and the importance of these military arrays was maintained until the very end of the reign, although no other certificates or extracts are known.<sup>1</sup> Absenteeism must in some way diminish the validity of the returns although persistent offenders were to be imprisoned for ten days according to the Statute of 4-5 Philip and Mary and their names were to be sent to the Privy Council. What casts more doubt over the source, however, are the obvious inadequacies of some captains. In 1601 the captains of each division in Hampshire were instructed on the drawing up of a muster book:-

"Perfect books of your said severall furnished companies we likewise require you and every of you to make and bring for us unto the said masters, the same to be made according to your former prescribed manner in the which you shall first downe the name of him that serveth with the furniture, then his name that findeth the said furniture, and in what hundred, parish or tithing he dwelleth that findeth the same. Then the names of your posts, victuallers, carters, numbers of carts and hackneys and by whom found, of which forme of booke we thought good to remember you because many of you have failed therein, the which we pray you now have care to amend".<sup>2</sup>

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1. BLO, Mss. Tanner 121 ff. 83-4.

2. BLO, Mss. Rawlinson D 924 ff. 49-50.

In 1573 the Government began to introduce the system of trained bands in each county, a selected group of men who were given special training, rather than a general muster. This process gathered pace and by the seventeenth century these local militia forces had become well established. Musters therefore lose much of their value as evidence for demographic history. In 1608 a general muster for the whole country was ordered but only one roll, for Gloucestershire, is known to have survived and another general muster in 1638 remains only for Suffolk and Derbyshire. Otherwise little of substance remains from the years up to the Civil War among the central archives. Locally, however, records do remain of military preparations and the organisation of armed bands. In this respect Hampshire is especially fortunate because of the Herriard collection of military papers, extending from 1587 to 1640 and especially comprehensive for the 1620s and 1630s.<sup>1</sup> These were documents built up by the Jervoise family and comprise a vast collection of manorial rolls, royal grants, charters and deeds of title, estate and family papers, official papers and other special collections of which the militia material is only a small part. The extensive family estates in Hampshire, Wiltshire, Buckinghamshire, Berkshire, Nottinghamshire, Shropshire, Warwickshire, Worcestershire and London had been built up by Richard Jerveys, mercer and alderman of London, in the first half of the sixteenth century. He was a Justice of the Peace and was elected a Member of Parliament for Whitchurch. The extensive collection of military papers consists of both general documents and muster books, and they offer an invaluable insight into these early Stuart militias. Beyond that purpose they offer some important lists of able men which can be used for the study of demographic change.

These, therefore, are the major sources of demographic history. However, evidence for population may be acquired in a great range of alternative sources and demographers are very foolish if they confine themselves only to these mainstream materials. As far as the small

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1. HRO, 44 M 69.

towns of Hampshire are concerned, contemporary estimates of population have appeared in documents as diverse as the Winchester College Muniments and the minutes of the Committee for Plundered Ministers, 1646.<sup>1</sup> References to disease and to population movement may occur in all manner of court records, especially from quarter session material, while some very useful listings of inhabitants for towns like Basingstoke and Romsey have been found in the Court Leet books of those towns.<sup>2</sup> The lesson to be learned by historical demographers, and by urban historians as a whole, is therefore that the small market town and its population is by no means a sterile field of research but, rather, a subject that, if approached with a broad mind to the sources available, can yield some worthwhile results.

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In Section Two of this thesis all these varied sources will be analysed in an attempt to trace the course of population change. For the sake of convenience they may be divided between static sources, which list the members of a community resident at a specific point in time, and dynamic sources which provide data on a month-by-month or year-by-year basis. Thereafter, in Section Three, three particular aspects of demographic history - disease, migration and family structure - will be studied in order to understand more fully some of the forces underlying the demographic development of the market towns.

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1. for example, WCM, 2249; BLO, Mss. Bodl. 323 ff. 126-29.

2. for example, HRO, 148 M 71 2/1/117; HRO, 20 M 60/M1.

Part Two : Towns and Society

Hampshire is a suitable county for the study of small town society. It was sufficiently divorced from London to contain towns which served, first and foremost, their own hinterlands yet, at the same time, were clearly part of the national economy, able to share fully in the inter-regional commerce of Tudor and Stuart England. Functioning within a largely agricultural environment, the towns of Hampshire must have mirrored those in many other areas throughout the country. The distribution of markets in Hampshire is shown on Figure 1/2/1.

Assuming that the sphere of influence of each market was something like seven or eight miles in radius, representing a round trip of about fifteen miles, very few parts of the county lay outside easy reach of a market town. Even those outside this distance were normally close to a market town in another county; centres like Poole and Sherborne in Dorset, Newbury in Berkshire, Farnham and Haslemere in Surrey and Midhurst and Chichester in Sussex must have been patronised by many Hampshire customers.

Within the county the only area without a clear market was the district south east of Winchester where the city itself exerted a strong influence. Indeed, some of the jealousy and value attached to "the marketing function" can be illustrated by the reaction of Winchester to the suggestion in the 1590s that a market be established in Bishops Waltham. It was bitterly contested and two men were dispatched to London in 1593 to protest at "the market erected at ... Waltham to the great prejudice of the city".<sup>1</sup> The dispute continued until at least 1605 and thereafter the status of Bishops Waltham is unclear, but seemingly it only established itself fully as a market town at the end of the seventeenth century. Clearly local trade was something to be defended even by a larger community such as Winchester. Elsewhere in the county the distribution of towns seems fairly even other than some clustering in the north and southwest. The proximity of Overton to Basingstoke, Whitchurch and Kingsclere meant that it never matured beyond being a large village. Other

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1. A.B. Rosen, thesis, op.cit., p. 189.



Figure 1/2/1



towns were, in fact, not in direct competition because their markets were held on different days, like Ringwood, Christchurch and Fordingbridge in the Avon valley, with markets on Wednesday, Monday and Saturday respectively.

Market days in Hampshire:<sup>1</sup>

Alresford	- Thursday	Alton	- Saturday
Basingstoke	- Wednesday	Christchurch	- Monday
Fordingbridge	- Saturday	Gosport	- Saturday
Kingsclere	- Tuesday	Lymington	- Saturday
Petersfield	- Saturday	Portsmouth	- Tuesday/Thursday/Friday
Romsey	- Saturday	Southampton	- Tuesday/Thursday/Friday
Waltham	- Saturday	Whitchurch	- Friday
Andover	- Thursday/Friday		
Fareham	- Saturday		
Havant	- Saturday		
Odiham	- Saturday		
Ringwood	- Wednesday		
Stockbridge	- Thursday		
Winchester	- Wednesday/Saturday		

### Agriculture

The market towns of the county depended directly on the agricultural production of their hinterlands. Each week surplus foodstuffs would be bought and sold and the regular congregation of people encouraged the settlement of an array of tradesmen to service the needs of the surrounding countryside. Farming was at the heart of life in these small towns to a much greater extent than the larger urban centres. Trades like butchery, tanning and many others depended directly on the rural community, whilst for most townsmen their own homes probably backed onto fields or open land. In Hampshire agriculture was reckoned by contemporaries to be in a prosperous state. John Speed wrote that "the soile is rich for corne and cattle, pleasant

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1. R.R., A New Description of all the Counties in England and Wales, (London, 1752).

for pasturage and plenteous for woods; in a word, in all commodities either for Sea or Land, blessed and happy".<sup>1</sup>

Market towns were, indeed, an indication of the wellbeing or otherwise of a particular county. They proliferated in the immediate hinterland of London as the insatiable demands of the capital stimulated a very high level of activity in counties like Kent and Essex. Hampshire was somewhat less urbanised but, nevertheless, there was a healthy array of market towns which testified to the agricultural wealth of the county. Richard Blome said of the county in 1673 that

"it is of fertile soil for corn, hath rich pastures which feed store of cattle; enjoyeth a temperate air and is well clothed with wood; it affordeth plenty of iron which is here wrought from the mines; also wool, of which they make abundance of cloths and kersies; likewise excellent honey."<sup>2</sup>

Almost a century later the agricultural scene had clearly changed very little:

"The low land produce a great quantity of corn, particularly wheat and barley; but the hilly parts, which are less fertile, are only fit for sheep. The horned cattle here have nothing remarkable, but the sheep and hogs excel all others in England; for both the wool and the flesh of the sheep are remarkably fine; and the hogs, being never put into stiles but supplied with great plenty of acorns, which they find in the woods, the bacon make of them is greatly superior to any other in the Kingdom. The county of Hampshire is likewise famous for its honey, it being said to produce both the best and worst in England; for that of the champion country is esteemed the best and the honey collected from the heath is reckoned the worst. It has more wood than any other county in England, especially oak, and hence the greatest part of the English navy is built and repaired with the timber that grows here. This county is abundantly supplied with game of all kinds, as well as with sea and river fish, the former

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1. J. Speed, Descriptions of Counties, (London, 1615).
  2. R. Blome, Britannia, (London, 1673), pp. 106-111.

"yielding large quantities of soles, flounders, crabs, and lobsters; so that the inhabitants enjoy the greatest plenty of the necessities and conveniences of life".<sup>1</sup>

There was basically a threefold division in the farming of early modern Hampshire which concurred largely with the geological distinctions within the county (Figure 1/2/2, a/b). The great chalk downs dominated the centre and north and were grazed by flocks of sheep often numbering up to a thousand or more. It was an area of sheep-corn husbandry where the large numbers of sheep helped preserve the fertility of the soil and enabled the cultivation of barley and wheat for sale as well as oats, peas and vetches for fodder. Sheep fairs, like that of Weyhill near Andover, were famous for their meat and wool, but it was the grain of the area that would have meant most to the farmers and their labourers who frequented towns like Andover, Basingstoke, Whitchurch and Alresford. Sir John Norden wrote of the folding of sheep in Hampshire as "a most easie and a most profitable course, and whoso neglecteth it may be condemned for an ill husband, nay, I know it is good husbandrie to drive a flock of sheep over a field of wheat, rie or barly newly sowne".<sup>2</sup> Cattle, horses and pigs were also bred and fattened. Much of the farming must have been very impressive compared with other areas and Joan Thirsk comments that as early as the reign of Henry VIII the Hampshire downs witnessed "large scale capitalist farming".<sup>3</sup>

In the south of the county were the sands and clays of the Hampshire Basin. Here the market towns would have maintained a somewhat different rural economy. To the south-east, around Fareham and Havant, was an area of changing and improving agriculture. Leland had remarked on enclosure in the region,<sup>4</sup> and the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries saw the process further extended alongside

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1. anon., A Description of England and Wales, (London 1769), vol. 3-4, pp. 157-206.
  2. BL, Add Mss. 31853, ff. 25-28.
  3. J. Thirsk, "The Farming Regions of England", in J. Thirsk (ed.), The Agrarian History of England and Wales, IV 1500-1640 (Cambridge, 1967), p. 65.
  4. L. Toulmin Smith, The Itinerary of John Leland, (London, 1907), p. 282.

HAMPSHIRE: BASIC GEOLOGICAL DIVISIONS

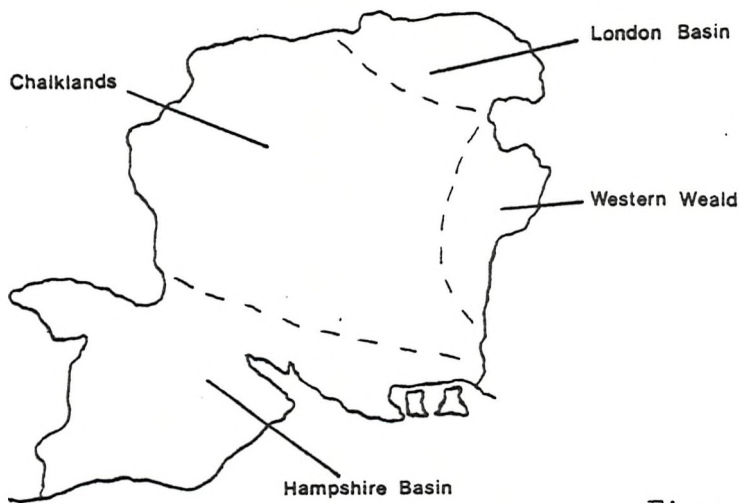


Figure 1/2/2a

HAMPSHIRE: AGRICULTURAL DIVISIONS

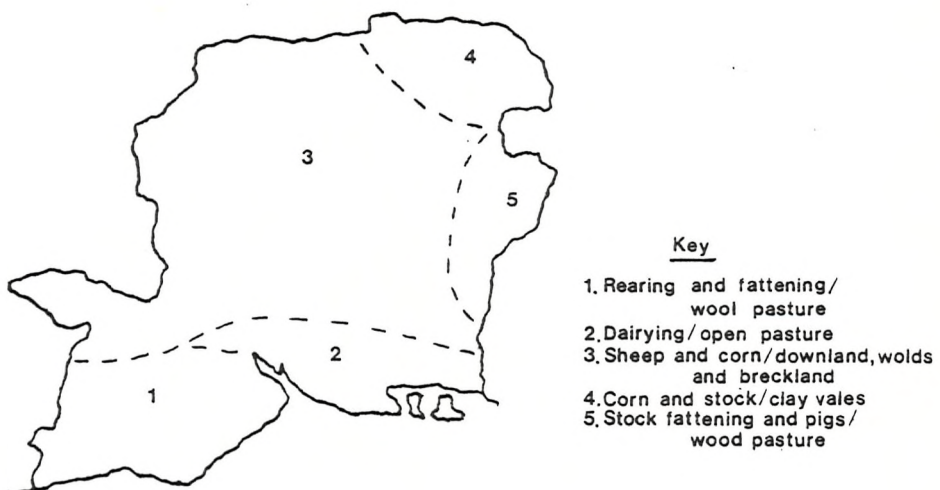


Figure 1/2/2b

the accelerated clearance of woodland. John Worlidge of Petersfield wrote in 1669 that "the great quantities of land that have within our memories lain open and in common of little value, yet when inclosed have proved excellent good land".<sup>1</sup> Much of the land was by then permanent pasture, initially supporting the fattening of cattle for beef and pigs for bacon, but by the early seventeenth century many farmers had turned to dairying and the production of butter and cheese far beyond the requirements of self-sufficiency. Such dairy goods must have found an outlet through the market towns as well as in the expanding requirements of Portsmouth and its dockyard labour force. As early as the 1520s dockyard accounts reveal the acquisition of food supplies from all over south eastern Hampshire.<sup>2</sup>

In the south west of the county lay the heath and woodland of the New Forest, served by the markets of Ringwood, Christchurch and Lymington and also by larger towns like Southampton and Romsey. Based on sandy soils rather than the clay of other heavily wooded areas, it was able to support some degree of corn cultivation as well as pastoral farming. The speciality of the region, however, was the breeding of horses and pigs on the abundant pastures of the forest and heath. It was here that much of Hampshire's fine reputation for pigs and bacon originated.

Unquestionably, agricultural life pervaded the society of the market towns. A study of the inventories from early modern Romsey has shown clearly how the majority of tradesmen enjoyed the use of a small plot of land and perhaps possessed a cow, a pig or a few poultry. To take just one example, Richard Storke, a Romsey clothier, left four cows, three bullocks, a horse and a pig, while cheese vats, butter churns and milling equipment were familiar items among the possessions of other testators. Many townsmen acquired farmland in their lifetime like a Basingstoke surgeon, Isaac Miles who, in 1650,

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1. J. Worlidge, Systema Agriculturae, (1669), p. 10.

2. PRO, E 36/6.

obtained a lease of an orchard and four acres in the common fields of the town.<sup>1</sup> In many towns enclosure was a contentious issue. The corporation of Basingstoke regularly granted licences to enclose like that allowed to John Stevens, an innholder, in 1613 or the three all issued on 20 September 1608 for plots of six acres, nine and a half acres and eight and a half acres in the town fields.<sup>2</sup> However, in the mid 1620s the bailiffs were accused of acting without the proper consent of the mayor and burgesses in these matters, one of various charges of of maladministration levelled at the town officials, and in the 1650s there were several accusations of enclosure without licence. Similar bitterness arose elsewhere. In 1633 a petition was sent by four burgesses of Christchurch to the Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench claiming that there had been enclosure of commons in the town by the mayor and two or three of the richer burgesses for their private use and to the exclusion of others who were "but tradesmen".<sup>3</sup> The court book of the manor of Romsey Infra which embraced part of the town includes several cases relating to hedges and fences, encroachments and disputed stints in the town fields.<sup>4</sup> Similarly the Basingstoke Court Leet ruled in 1660 that fences between Halfbery Field and Winchester Field were to be mended upon pain of 20s and such presentments are commonplace among the court records of all the market towns.<sup>5</sup> Such matters were obviously very important to townsmen.

#### Markets and Fairs

Professor Everitt reckoned that "in the south of England only one market town in four tended to specialise".<sup>6</sup> In Hampshire the only examples he gave were Basingstoke (corn), Alton (cattle) and

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1. HRO, 5 M 50/2513.
  2. HRO, 148 M 71 1/4/4.
  3. DRO, Christchurch Borough Records, A16.
  4. HRO, 102 M 71 M1.
  5. HRO, 148 M 71 2/1/117.
  6. A. Everitt, "The marketing of agricultural produce", in J. Thirsk (ed.), The Agrarian History of England and Wales, IV 1500-1640 (Cambridge, 1967), p. 495.

Alresford (sheep). Much of the explanation for such a marked absence of any advanced specialisation in Hampshire must lie with the extremely imperfect transport conditions. Bad roads, few navigable rivers and the presence of daunting woodland, like the Forest of Bere in the east or the New Forest in the west, all helped to maintain a very introverted economy and society. Like the small communities of Kent and Sussex, the Hampshire market towns were probably "surprisingly self-centred and self-sufficient places".<sup>1</sup> However there is evidence that Everitt may have slightly underestimated the degree of specialisation as far as Hampshire is concerned for there are also references to a corn market at Andover and to a cattle and corn market at Ringwood.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, most markets must have displayed a wide range of local foodstuffs and certainly this impression persists into Samuel Whatley's Gazetteer compiled in the middle of the eighteenth century.<sup>3</sup> By this time communications were much improved but still the markets remained very general in their scope, perhaps more a sign of small town mentality and conservatism rather than the more tangible outcome of difficult travelling conditions.

Fairs, however, were different and a wide range of specialities were noted by William Owen in 1756, in a list which was probably little changed from a century earlier:<sup>4</sup>

Andover	Midlent Saturday May 12 November 16	Cheese, horses, leather. Leather, millinery goods. Sheep, horses, leather, cheese.
Alresford	June 24	Sheep, horses, cows.
Alton	September 29	Cattle, toys.
Basingstoke	Wednesday, Whit week October 10	Peddling fair Hiring servants, cattle.
Christchurch	Trinity Sunday ) October 17	Horses, bullocks.

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1. *ibid.*, pp. 495-6
  2. BL, Add Mss. 31853 ff 25-28; J. Ogilby, Britannia (London, 1675), p. 181.
  3. S. Whatley, England's Gazetteer, (London, 1751), Vols. 1-3.
  4. W. Owen, An Authentic Account of all the Fairs in England and Wales, (London, 1756).

Fareham	June 29	Toys
Fordingbridge	September 9	Pedlars, forest colts.
Gosport	May 4 ) October 10 )	Toys
Havant	June 22 ) October 17 )	Toys
Kingsclere	1st Tuesday in April ) 1st Tuesday after old ) Michaelmas, October ) 10. )	Sheep
Lymington	May 12 ) October 13 )	Horses, cheese, bacon.
Odiham	Midlent Saturday, 31 July	Cattle, toys
Petersfield	July 10 ) December 11 )	Sheep, horses
Portsmouth	July 10	Shoemakers, hatters, milliners, merciers, cutlers, cabinetmakers, linen and woollen drapers, silversmiths' goods, apparel ready made, bed furniture.
Ringwood	July 10 ) December 11 )	Pedlars wares, forest colts.
Romsey	Easter Monday ) August 26 ) November 8 )	Horses, cattle, cheese, swine.
Stockbridge	Holy Thursday July 10 October 7	Sheep Sheep and horses Sheep
Southampton	April 25 ) Trinity Monday )	Horses, cattle, leather.
Waltham	2nd Friday in May July 24 First Friday after Old Michaelmas, October 10.	Horses, toys Cheese, toys Horses, stockings, toys
Whitchurch	April 23 ) June 20 ) July 7 ) October 19	Toys Sheep
Winchester	First Monday in Lent October 24	Bacon, cheese, leather, horses. Leather, horses, bullocks, sheep.



Some indication of the scale of activity in these town fairs is provided by a list of standings at the Mid-Lent fair in Andover compiled at the start of the seventeenth century.<sup>1</sup> In North Row and South Row there were stalls for 56 shoemakers, 41 hatters, 13 sackmen, 6 smiths, 5 trunkmen and 1 ironmonger as well as 8 other traders. London Street, at the south of the town, had capacity for 3 collarmakers, 3 leather clothes sellers, 1 cutler, 2 sadlers, 1 mercer and 41 others. In Cross Row another 16 stalls were pitched and finally in "the Booths" were standings for 19 glovers, 3 braziers, 7 butchers, 1 barber and 2 bottlemakers. In total there were 261 traders catered for and one may suspect that there was plenty more unofficial exchange in local inns and alehouses or on the town perimeter. Further, the Mid-Lent Fair was not Andover's main commercial jamboree - that came each year with the great Weyhill Fair close by the town.

### The Towns

The market towns of Hampshire were never a static element in the economy. There are signs, especially among the smaller communities, of an ebb and flow of fortunes which affected the very market status on which they depended. Overall, it seems that there was a net increase in the number of effective markets in the county during the seventeenth century and into the eighteenth century. Alan Dyer has illustrated a significant growth among smaller markets from contemporary surveys of town numbers.<sup>2</sup> These under-used sources can be similarly used to put the developing small towns of Hampshire into a national context and to highlight just which were the towns that emerged in the century and a half after the Civil War.

Table 1/2/1 sets the market numbers of the English regions alongside those of Hampshire. In 1588 William Smith enumerated nineteen such towns in the county, one more than William Harrison a year earlier and one more than the list reached by

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1. APL, 6/MK/10.

2. A. Dyer, "Growth and Decay in English Towns 1500-1700", in Urban History Yearbook, (Leicester, 1979), pp. 60-72.

COMPARISON BETWEEN CHANGES IN THE NUMBER OF MARKETS

IN HAMPSHIRE AND OTHER REGIONS

	MARKET NUMBERS					% CHANGE	
	1588	1673	1690	1720	1792	1588-1690	1673-1690
LONDON REGION	118	131	144	142	138	22.0	9.9
EAST ANGLIA	63	65	75	70	62	19.0	15.4
SOUTH WEST	110	104	121	119	100	10.0	16.3
CENTRAL SOUTH	74	77	85	81	80	14.9	10.8
MIDLANDS	72	83	83	80	77	15.3	0.0
NORTH MIDLANDS	71	83	85	73	82	19.7	2.8
NORTH	80?	114	132	118	115	65.0	15.8
WALES	54	64	69	69?	69	27.8	7.8
HAMPSHIRE	19	18	21	20	21	10.5	16.7
ENGLAND AND WALES	642	721	794	752	723	23.7	10.7

Table 1/2/1

Professor Everitt for the period 1500-1640. Bishops Waltham had been removed from the market towns when Richard Blome wrote in 1673 but was restored along with Fordingbridge and Overton in the gazetteer of John Adams. These sources show a nationwide, upward trend and an especial increase in markets in the North and in Wales. The London area also progressed significantly between 1588-1690, not surprising in view of the demands imposed on its hinterland by the capital. The Central South and South Western divisions show the least expansion, and, taking the seventeenth century as a whole, Hampshire's increase of 10% or so, from 19 markets to 21, is very closely akin to the change in the South West. However, also in line with the South Western region, there was a greater emergence of towns between 1673 and 1690 than for any other part of the country. This would indicate some endurance among the Hampshire market towns at the end of the Stuart period, when elsewhere the growth was beginning to tail off.

Though the next century, through to 1791, did not see the emergence of any new markets in Hampshire, it is very clear that some towns whose market status had been fragile in the sixteenth century and early seventeenth century, consolidated their position and became a regular fixture in the lists compiled by topographical writers and in gazetteers. Bishops Waltham was one such community. Its struggle against the city of Winchester has been mentioned already and its indeterminate position is clear from a single appearance in the list of 1588 before barren years until 1690. Only with Samuel Whatley's gazetteer in 1751, which states that the town had "a market on saturday, a fair on August 1 and a church school", is the status of the community confirmed and it appears in most subsequent listings.<sup>1</sup>

Other towns only began to emerge in the late seventeenth century. Fordingbridge first merits contemporary attention in the Magna Britannia of Thomas Cox, published in 1720, when a market and fair are recorded, but more interesting is the statement that, in

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1. S. Whatley, Gazetteer, op.cit., Vol. 2.

fact, the town had been larger at one time than it now was "because it hath suffered much by fire at several times, particularly about ten or twelve years ago, and the houses have not been rebuilt".<sup>1</sup> Despite this discouraging description the town and its market were firmly established in the minds of contemporaries thereafter.

Most of the market towns of Hampshire enjoyed a permanent position in all the lists but the status of a few others was much less certain and it was often these marginal towns that swung the balance towards an increase in the number of markets. Havant was one such town. Camden referred to it as a small market and it appeared in Smith's list. Richard Blome spoke of it as a "small market but now disused". Precisely what the word "disused" means is unclear. In his work on Sussex Cowley tends to assume that this meant the end of any effective functioning of the market in a town.<sup>2</sup> However, Havant reappears as a market community in 1720, 1751 and 1752, yet seventeen years later in 1769 it was called "a village that was formerly a market town". To come full circle the town was again included as a market town in 1790. Stockbridge follows a similarly fluctuating pattern and so, to a lesser extent, did Fareham. Clearly the few markets that were occasionally described as 'disused' never vanished altogether in the same way as markets had diminished in the later medieval period.<sup>3</sup> On the contrary, they survived and were able to bolster the urban ranks in the county. The main lesson, therefore, that we can learn from Table 1/2/2 is the emergence of certain new markets in the years after the Restoration, a period often characterised as one of stagnation or decline. They defy any true generalisation for the towns ranged from communities with an irregular history as a market to other newer settlements, some with the true rural economy of a place like Fordingbridge, others with the more specialised circumstances of a naval settlement like Gosport.

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1. T. Cox, Magna Britannia, (London, 1720), p. 846.
  2. R. Blome, Britannia, op.cit., p. 109; G.O. Cowley, "Sussex Market towns, 1500-1750", unpubl. London University M.A. thesis, (1965).
  3. A. Everitt, Marketing of Agricultural Produce, op.cit., pp. 467-72.

Contemporary Lists of Market Towns

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y
	1587	1588	1611	1635	1643	1656	1659	1673	1678	1678	1690	1695	1699	1699	1724	1728	1720- 1731	1751	1752	1769	1769	1790	1791		
ALRESFORD		*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
ALTON		*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
ANDOVER		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
BASINGSTOKE		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
BISHOPS WALTHAM		*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
CHRISTCHURCH		*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
FAREHAM		*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
FORDINGBRIDGE																									
GOSPORT																									
HAVANT		*						*			*	*			*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
KINGSCLERE		*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
LYMINGTON		*	*	*	*			*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
NEWTOWN														*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
ODIHAM		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*				*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
OVERTON											*				*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
PETERSFIELD		*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*				*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
PORTSMOUTH		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
RINGWOOD		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
ROMSEY		*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
SELBORNE											*				*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
SOUTHAMPTON		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
STOCKBRIDGE		*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
WHITCHURCH			*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
WINCHESTER		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Total of Market Towns as stated in text	18	19					18	18	15			18				15	20		21	19	21				
Market Towns specifically named in text		19	17	17	17	13	7	17	13	15	21	10	7	14	16	15	20	20	21	18	21	21	21		18

Table 1/2/2

Key to Table 1/2/2

- A. W. Harrison, Description of England (1587); see G. Edelen (ed.), The Description of England by William Harrison, (New York), p. 219.
- B. W. Smith, The Particular Description of England, (London, 1588).
- C. J. Speed, The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britaine, (London, 1611).
- D. anon., English Traveller, (London, 1635).
- E. anon., English Traveller: A Book of the Names of all Parishes, Market Towns, Villages etc., (London, 1643).
- F. H. Spelman, Villare Anglicum, (London 1656), (first edition).
- G. E. Leigh, England Described, (London, 1659).
- H. R. Blome, Britannia, (London, 1673).
- I. H. Spelman, Villare Anglicum, (London, 1678), (second edition - "corrected and amended").
- J. anon., England's Remarques: An Exact Account of the Several Shires, Counties and Islands in England and Wales, (London, 1678).
- K. J. Adams, Index Villaris, (London, 1690).
- L. E. Gibson (ed.), Camden's Britannia, (London, 1695).
- M. S. Dunstar, Anglia Rediviva: A Full Description of all the Shires, Cities and Principal Towns and Rivers in England, (London, 1699).
- N. J. Ogilby, The Traveller's Guide, (London, 1699).
- O. anon., A New Description of England and Wales, (London, 1724).
- P. P.W., A Description of all the Counties in England and Wales, (London, 1728).
- Q. T. Cox., Magna Britannia, (London, 1720-31).
- R. S. Whatley, Englands Gazetteer, (London, 1751).
- S. R.R., A New Description of all the Counties in England and Wales, (London, 1752).

- T. anon., A Description of England and Wales, (London, 1769).
- U. P. Russell and O. Price, England Displayed, (London, 1769).
- W. W. Tunnicklif, A Topographical Survey of the Counties of Hants, Wilts, Dorset, Somerset, Devon and Cornwall, (Salisbury, 1791).

\* \* \*

- X. Towns which returned Members of Parliament.
- Y. Towns listed as possessing a market by Professor Everitt; see A. Everitt, "The Marketing of Agricultural Produce", in J. Thirsk (ed.), The Agrarian History of England and Wales, Vol. IV, 1500-1640, (Cambridge, 1967), pp. 466-589.

### Communications : Roads and Rivers

Communications by road, river or sea were of crucial importance in the location and ultimate success or failure of market towns and it is worth considering the transport pattern of early modern Hampshire. Unfortunately the early county maps of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries do not indicate routes, though they may often be surmised from the location of towns, villages, bridges, hills and other physical features. Leland remarked on the route from Poole to Christchurch as well as "the way from Winchester to London" but his travels do not offer a concise guide to the county's roads and the information he offers is confined to odd comments drawn largely from personal experiences.<sup>1</sup> Road books began to appear sporadically under the Tudors and, more commonly, under the Stuarts, and these works consisted of tables dividing individual routes into short sections, often representing a day's travel.

In 1541 'A Cronycle of Yeres' included just one road through Hampshire, namely that "from Saint Buryen in Cornewalle to London", the Great West Road, which stretched across the north of the county and passed through Andover and Basingstoke. This was repeated in other road books and by William Harrison in his list "of our Innes and Thorowfares". However, more Hampshire roads were indicated by William Smith. In 1583 he noted the way from Southampton to Helford in Cornwall all along the sea coast, which went by way of Ringwood, a route from Southampton to Salisbury and Bristol which went through Romsey and, finally, a road from Southampton to London, avoiding Winchester but passing through Alresford and Alton. This last route also figured in Richard Grafton's "Little Treatise" of 1571 but it was not included in a list of "the high wayes from any notable towne in England to the Citie of London" produced in 1603.<sup>2</sup>

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1. L. Toulmin Smith, Itinerary, op.cit., pp. 262, 275.
  2. E. G. Box, "Hampshire in Early Maps and Early Road Books", Papers and Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club, XII (1934), pp. 221-35. For a catalogue of the road-books produced in the period see H. G. Fordham, The Road-Books and Itineraries of Great Britain, 1570-1850, (Cambridge, 1924).



By the turn of the century, therefore, four main roads can be identified in the county. They touched most of the leading market towns and must have contributed significantly to their economic development, enhancing their role as centres of commercial intercourse for their hinterlands and enabling them to share in the lucrative servicing of traders and travellers who passed regularly along these roads. Land carriage was expensive compared with waterborne transit and was beset by hazardous roads troubled by inadequate maintenance and climatic vagaries. However, roads must have retained and enhanced their role in internal trade or else, as Willan said, "the fairs and markets, the wholesalers and shopkeepers, could not have functioned as they did".<sup>1</sup> Towns on the main roads must also have benefitted from the extension of posts for royal purposes in the sixteenth century, bringing with it the regular demands for horses and accommodation from the carriers of packets and letters. Andover and Basingstoke, for instance, inevitably profited from the status earned in 1589 when they were among the towns "appoynted for ordinary stages for postes layde towardes Plimouthe".<sup>2</sup>

Noticeably the coastal towns, Christchurch and Lymington in the west, Fareham and Havant in the east, were on none of the routes identified thus far. No doubt they each commanded a series of local tracks and they would have used their maritime connections for all kinds of transactions; writing of links between Lymington and Southampton, Cochrane commented that it would have been "normal to travel from one port to another by sea rather than land".<sup>3</sup> However these were some of the less dynamic of the market towns in terms of economic and demographic advance and it is hard to avoid the conclusion that, away from the main roads, they were somewhat detached from the main lines of county trade. It should also be noted that

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1. T.S. Willan, The Inland Trade, (Manchester, 1976), p. 13.

2. HMC, 73 Exeter, p. 65.

3. C. Cochrane, The Lost Roads of Wessex, (Newton Abbot, 1969), p.153.

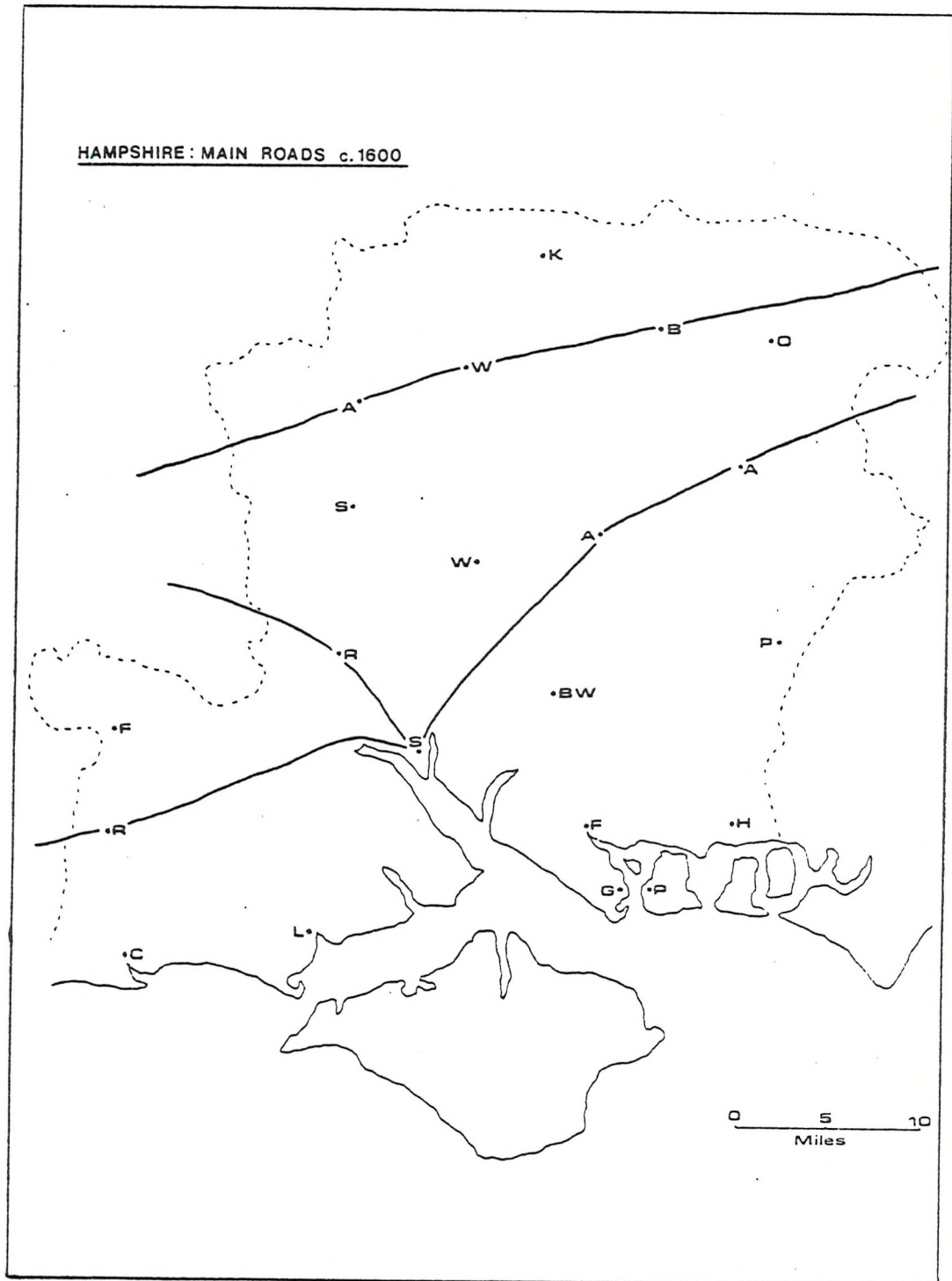


Figure 1/2/3

Winchester did not appear in any of these main roads but the city, active as an administrative, religious and social centre, was still able to function at a higher level than most other Hampshire market towns.

It is also apparent that certain important routeways of the future had not yet acquired any national significance by the end of the sixteenth century, at least judged by the early roadbooks. One was the south coast road from Southampton to Chichester. Another was the London-Portsmouth road, which meant so much to the inhabitants of Petersfield, implying that the expansion of naval activity under the Tudors had not yet stimulated a major connection to the port.

In 1675 John Ogilby published the first really detailed roadbook listing fourteen direct independent routes to London, nineteen direct dependent routes to the capital, thirty-two principal crossroads and twenty other "accidental" crossroads.<sup>1</sup> Those which passed through Hampshire are shown on Figure 1/2/4. Not surprisingly the Portsmouth road from London through Petersfield had appeared and in 1699 it was said to be "a generally good sandy way, well frequented and accommodated".<sup>2</sup> The way to Portsmouth could still sometimes be from Petersfield by way of Havant; this was the route taken by Samuel Pepys who "got a countryman to guide us by Havant, to avoid going through the Forest [of Bere]; but he carried us much out of the way".<sup>3</sup> Nonetheless, for most travellers the direct road would have been the usual choice. As a result of Portsmouth's rapid expansion this road, which had not been mapped in 1600, was by the late seventeenth century the busiest in Hampshire and it became the first to be turnpiked when the stretch south of Petersfield was authorised in 1710. In the north of the county the Great West Road

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1. J. Ogilby, Britannia, (London, 1675).

2. J. Ogilby, The Traveller's Guide, (London, 1699), p. 58.

3. S. Pepys, Diary and Correspondence, (London, 1889), Vol. I, p. 273.

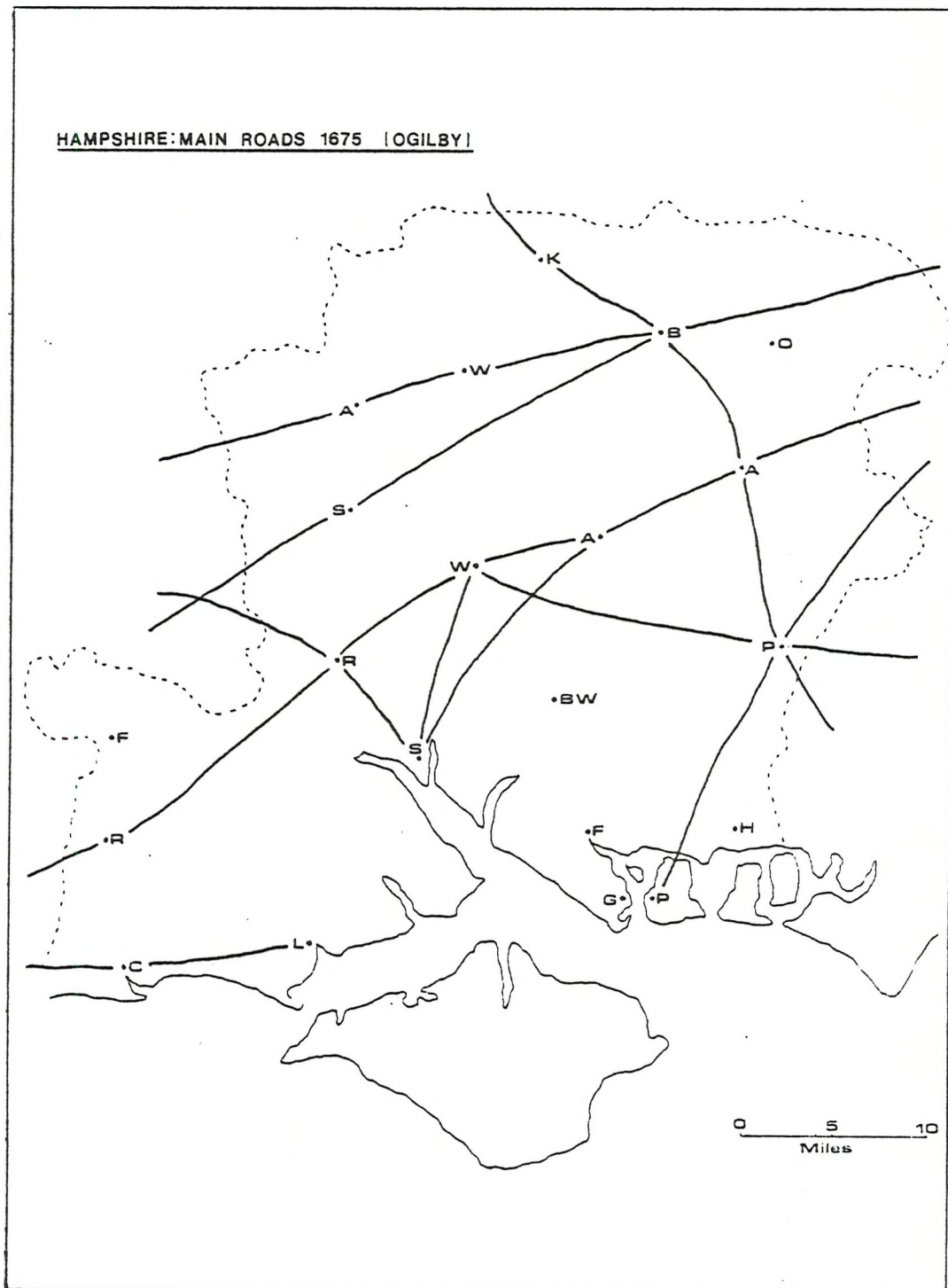


Figure 1/2/4

remained a vital national routeway and the market towns of Andover, Whitchurch and Basingstoke must have reaped important benefits from their location. All three were said by Ogilby to afford good accommodation to travellers and the route itself was supposed to be "in general a very good road [with] suitable entertainment".<sup>1</sup> The third major road in the county was that to Southampton from London, passing to the south east of Winchester, and with a continuation, through Romsey, to Salisbury. This was "a very good road to Southampton and thence to Salisbury, indifferent".<sup>2</sup> The last of the so-called dependent roads was that from London to Weymouth, the only major thoroughfare to pass through Stockbridge. There was one major cross county route, a road linking Oxford to Chichester and passing through the market towns of Kingsclere, Basingstoke, Alton and Petersfield, which, along with the Winchester to Midhurst connection, helped to counteract the north-east to south-west bias of communications in much of the county. Finally there was one "accidental" road, that from London to Poole by way of Alresford, Winchester and Ringwood, with extensions from Poole to Christchurch and Lymington and from Winchester to Southampton. Certainly there would have been a multitude of other roads, tracks and byways throughout the whole county, but probably Ogilby's book indicated the most important and most used routes as he saw them. In that case the towns on these roads were in a much more advantageous position than market communities elsewhere and it is not difficult to understand the influential part played by good road communications in the progress of towns like Basingstoke, Andover and Petersfield. Two coastal towns, Fareham and Havant, were still away from the main lines of travel and in the north Odiham lay off the main roads.

Twenty years after Ogilby's Britannia, Robert Morden published the first map of Hampshire with sufficient size and detail to show

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1. J. Ogilby, The Traveller's Guide, op.cit., p. 49.

2. *ibid.*, p. 96.

the roads of the county.<sup>1</sup> The edition which appeared in 1695 as part of Gibson's version of Camden's Britannia shows only three London roads, the Great West Road, the Southampton road and the Portsmouth road, with just one cross route, from Petersfield to Winchester, all of which had been recorded by Ogilby. The only addition was a connection from Andover to Amesbury. Freeman concluded that the stark contrast between Ogilby and Morden is the result of the latter's unreliability.<sup>2</sup> However, a further edition of Morden's map, published in 1720 and not referred to by Freeman, is much more detailed and includes all the routes listed by Ogilby as well as a road from Christchurch and Lymington to Southampton with a ferry over Southampton Water.<sup>3</sup> By this time, therefore, almost every market town was served by at least one major road while several were on two and Basingstoke and Petersfield were each on three such routes. Bishops Waltham lay on a traditional routeway from the Bishop's palace there to Winchester and its existence in 1675 is indicated by crossroads on Ogilby's Southampton to London roadbook, by which time it went on to Fareham and thence to Portsmouth. The first actual indication of this road on a map appears in 1724 when a further link from Winchester to Stockbridge is also established.<sup>4</sup> Similarly Odiham, which does not figure on any of the main roads mentioned, had traditional links with Winchester and in 1675 it must also have enjoyed connections with Alton and Basingstoke. Although it would have been commonplace near the coast to move from one port to another by sea rather than by land, all the functioning towns needed good road communications. By the mid-eighteenth century Thomas Kitchen's map reveals an even more complex network of roads in the county, a major reason for the domination of commerce exercised by the market towns which stood at focal points throughout the county.<sup>5</sup> It is essential for any true

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1. E. Gibson, Camden's Britannia, (London 1695).
  2. M.J. Freeman, "A Study in Road Transport Development during the Industrial Revolution: Southern Hampshire, 1750-1850", Unpubl. Southampton University Ph.D. thesis, (1977).
  3. T. Cox, Magna Britannia, op.cit.
  4. This map, drawn by H. Moll, appeared in A New Description of England and Wales, (London, 1724).
  5. T. Kitchen, The Large English Atlas, (London, 1748).

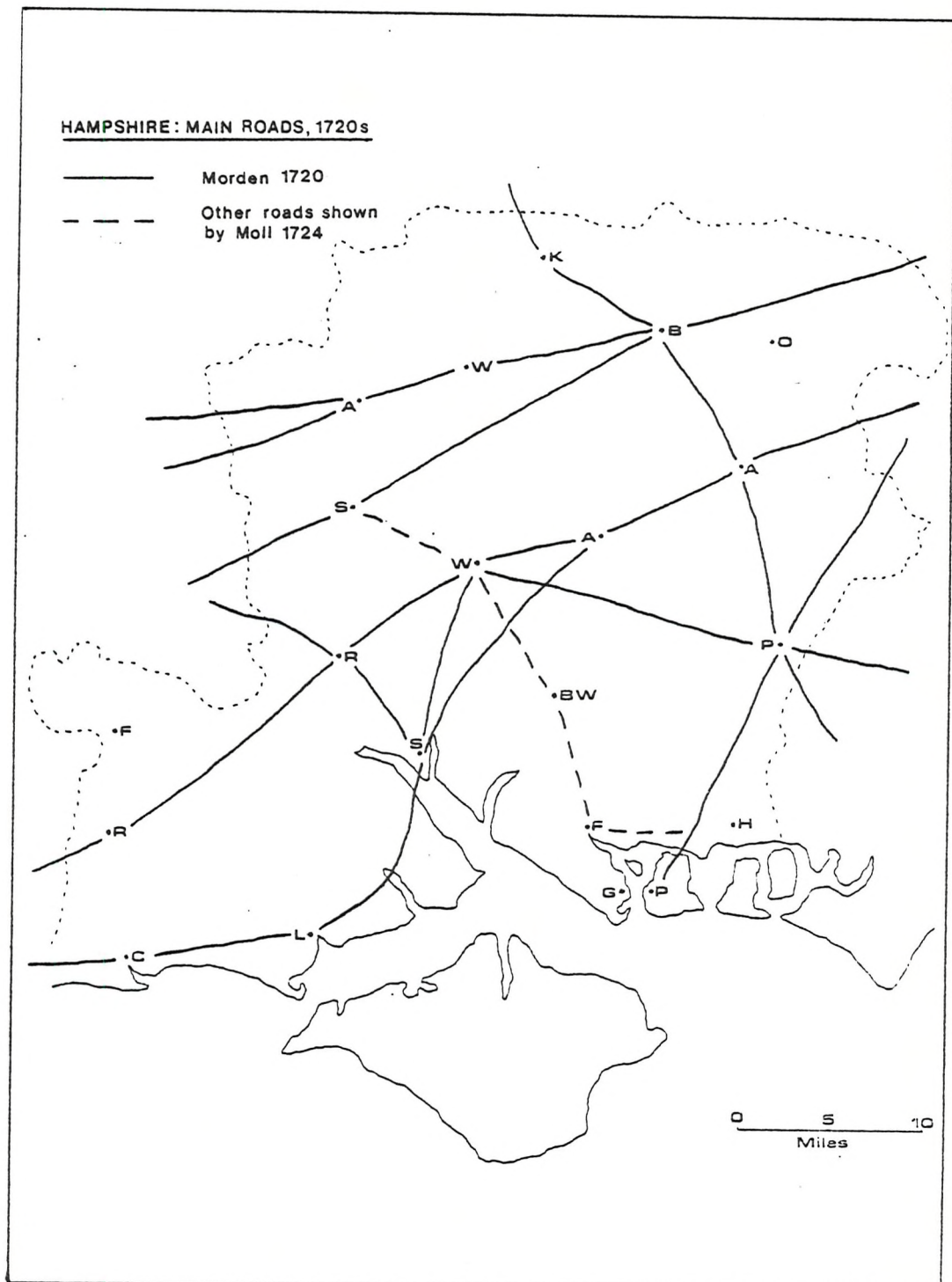


Figure 1/2/5

understanding of the character, society and economy of the early modern small town to grasp the significance of communications. The market was its lifeblood, its *raison d'être*; it depended on a flow of goods and people into and out of the town; and, as Daniel Defoe said, road carriage was "the very medium of our inland trade".<sup>1</sup>

Rivers had obviously been a factor in the location of many market towns in their earlier histories. Most acted as bridging points and their significance as such remained. For instance, Middlebridge Romsey, was a much used route frequented also by royalty travelling into the New Forest. In 1608 there was much concern when it was said to be "nowe growne to be verie perilous and dangerous for travailors and like to fall to utter ruine if some speedie course be not taken for repairinge thereof". It was agreed at Quarter Sessions that £200 be levied from the county fund for repairs which would then be repaid by a tax on the county and on the inhabitants of Romsey "in respect of the benefite to the saed towne".<sup>2</sup>

By contrast the use of the waterway itself was probably much less intense. The extent and development of river transport is more obscure than that of the roads but undoubtedly it was of much less importance to the market towns. It was said that the Itchen had been navigable up to Alresford during the reign of King John but it is unlikely that this meant anything in practical terms to the early modern town. Clearly improvements were needed in Tudor and Stuart times if the rivers were to play any major part in the economy but for most of the period nothing much could have happened to Hampshire's rivers. The main initiative only came in 1665 when an act of parliament designated seven men who in return for a transport monopoly, would implement the necessary changes.<sup>3</sup> Among the rivers included were the Itchen, Test and Hamble. Although work began on

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1. D. Defoe, The Complete English Tradesman, (1745, reprinted New York, 1970), I, p. 260.
  2. HRO, QO/1, f. 43.
  3. VCH, Vol. 5, p. 88.



the Itchen navigation, the market town of Alresford felt no benefit for only after about 1710 did the river become navigable to Winchester and work never progressed any further. There were odd schemes to make the Test navigable canvassed in the 1690s but nothing ever materialised and the river probably played a minor role in the commerce of the Test valley towns. Only, perhaps, in the Avon valley did the river ever contribute significantly to urban development. In 1535 a Commission suggested improving the port of Christchurch and opening the river for navigation but a century later John Taylor was still only expressing hopes when he suggested that the river ought to be used to take fuel inland where it could be exploited by a developing iron industry. Nothing came of these aspirations and upstream towns like Ringwood and Fordingbridge can hardly have benefitted. Finally, in 1664-5 an act authorised a scheme to open the river as far as Salisbury.<sup>1</sup> Little was achieved at first but after many financial queries works proceeded and were completed in 1687 when a code of regulations and tolls was issued. It was to be short-lived for serious flooding washed away the improvements. In 1695 Celia Fiennes wrote that the river "turns many great mills and there had been great attempt to make the Avon navigable, which would be of great advantage, but all charge has been lost in it".<sup>2</sup> In short, even the towns of the Avon valley owed their livelihood predominantly to the road network which expanded in the early modern period.

### Occupations

The study of occupations in market towns is hampered by the absence of any single sources covering a long period of years such as apprenticeship registers or freemen's books. However, it should be remembered that these materials are themselves selective and cover

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1. For background on the Salisbury Avon navigation see, for example, D.A.E. Cross, "The Salisbury Avon navigation was well-used for several years", Christchurch Times (19/1/68) and T. Dyson, The History of Christchurch, (Christchurch, 1954), p. 18.
  2. C. Morris(ed.), The Journeys of Celia Fiennes, (London, 1947), p. 58.

only a limited number of tradesmen in any particular community. For the smaller borough an index of occupations has to be built up from every source available and this can be done quite successfully to show the range of trades practised, although not their relative size.

A particular study has been made of Romsey identifying occupations for various individuals in the town from almost every source consulted throughout this thesis, with probate records, deeds and Consistory Court books probably proving the most useful. This is not an absolute list of trades within the borough - others may well appear in other sources; nor is it in any way a catalogue of the occupations of market towns in general. Petersfield, for instance, had a sadler and a lockyer and by 1684 had acquired a tobacconist. Some occupations appear in a variety of forms, as with linen drapers, woollen drapers or simply drapers, and other trades are very ambiguous in their meaning, such as 'merchant' or 'victualler'. However, the list does indicate something of the range of trades which existed in one small town, and as such is of interest (Table 1/2/3).

Overall 65 occupations have been found for the period 1550-1650, quite an extensive range for a town whose population was probably only in the order of 1500 in the mid-seventeenth century. All the various facets of the cloth industry were present and there were a large number of craftsmen for whom the town was a base for their trade which served the local community, like the smiths, tanners and wheelwrights. The town usually supported a number of distributive shopkeepers - chandlers, drapers, mercers, grocers - who were likely to be the main source of products from outside the neighbourhood. This was an important function of the market town. Besides a range of services unavailable in villages, within its bounds were also to be found shopkeepers who stocked goods otherwise unavailable to local

ROMSEY OCCUPATIONS 1550-1650

	<u>1550-1599</u>	<u>1600-1650</u>
Baker	*	*
Barber/Barber-surgeon	*	*
Blacksmith	*	*
Brasier		*
Brewer	*	*
Bricklayer		*
Butcher	*	*
Carpenter		*
Chandler		*
Chapman		*
Clerk/Schoolmaster	*	*
Clothier	*	*
Clothworker	*	*
Collarmaker		*
Collier	*	*
Cooper	*	*
Cordwainer/Cordwinder		*
Cosier	*	
Currier		*
Cutler		*
Dyer	*	*
Draper	*	
Farmer	*	*
Fellmonger		*
Feltmaker	*	
Finer		*
Fletcher	*	
Fuller	*	*
Gardener	*	*
Glasier	*	*
Glover	*	*
Grocer		*

Table 1/2/3

	<u>1550-1599</u>	<u>1600-1650</u>
Haberdasher		*
Hosier		*
Husbandman	*	*
Innholder	*	*
Ironmonger		*
Joiner	*	*
Labourer	*	*
Maltster		*
Mason		*
Mercer	*	*
Miller	*	*
Millwright		*
Parchmentmaker	*	*
Pedlar		*
Ropier/Ropemaker		*
Salter		*
Sawyer		*
Scrivener	*	*
Seaman		*
Sergeweaver		*
Servant	*	*
Shearman	*	*
Shoemaker	*	*
Sievemaker	*	
Stockmaker		*
Tailor	*	*
Tanner	*	*
Turner	*	*
Vintner		*
Weaver	*	*
Wheeler/Wheelwright		*
Woollen-drapeer	*	
Yeoman	*	*
<u>Total</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>59</u>

people, such as spices or particular types of cloth.

Perhaps of equal interest are the trades which do not appear in the Romsey list. The specialist metal working trades, like a goldsmith or a pewterer, were not present in the town so that the large quantities of silver and pewter household wares which appear in so many Romsey inventories must have originated to a large degree outside the town. The professions were also very poorly represented. Not a single lawyer or attorney has been found which is not really surprising for they would have found a more natural home in the legal, ecclesiastical and administrative centres like Winchester or Southampton. There was always a clerk or scrivener in the town who would have been engaged in the production of legal documents, though the wide variety of different hands which appear in the wills and inventories suggests that virtually all the literate inhabitants would have shared these duties at some time. The medical professions were also notable by their absence. Romsey does not appear to have enjoyed the services of a specialist apothecary, though Andover, Alton and other towns certainly had at least one. Physicians were also missing and they do not seem to have played a part in small town society. Their services, which were becoming more common in the period, were largely confined to the county towns and provincial centres with their wealthier clientele, and had not yet penetrated the small towns. This impression is enhanced by the Directory of English Country Physicians 1603-40 compiled by J.A. Raach which gives fourteen names for the county.<sup>1</sup> Two were in Southampton and four practised in Winchester but of the others only one was certainly in a market town, Ringwood. Clearly people in the small towns must have relied on the less developed skills of the barber surgeon. In fact Ringwood was also one of the few small towns with a practising solicitor although Richard Younge of the town was forced to give up the profession after admitting that he had overcharged

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1. J. A. Raach, A Directory of Country Physicians, 1603-40, (London, 1962).

his clients.<sup>1</sup>

The last notable absentees were the transport trades. In Andover there were waggoners like John Gill or carriers like Briant Hunt active in the mid-seventeenth century but despite the rising level of trade in these years no carter or other such worker appears to have been based, as yet, in Romsey. The seventeenth century was one of development in this respect. John Taylor's Carriers Cosmographie, published in 1637, does not show any services specifically to the small towns of Hampshire although carriers operating to Salisbury, Exeter and Winchester passed through the county.<sup>2</sup> By 1681 wagons were going to Andover, Alton(?), Basingstoke and Petersfield as well as Portsmouth, Southampton and Winchester.<sup>3</sup> In 1715 among the principal destinations of road carrying services in Hampshire were Andover, Basingstoke, Gosport, Odiham, Kingsclere, Petersfield and Romsey, and other towns were no doubt served by carriers en route to these termini.<sup>4</sup> Alton and Alresford, for example, must have been visited by many carriers heading for Winchester and Southampton. Carrying and coaching became increasingly important to the market towns in the late seventeenth century and the schedule of services from London outlined in 1728 shows just how far the development had gone.<sup>5</sup> It was, after all, less than a century since Taylor's Cosmographie yet the following list was compiled:

" Coaches

Andover - White Horse in Fleet Street, Monday and Thursday.

Basingstoke - King's Head in the Strand, Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday.

Gosport - Cross Keys, Gracechurch Street, Monday and Friday

Portsmouth - Cross Keys, Gracechurch Street, Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

Southampton - Swan, Holborn Bridge, Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

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1. HRO, QO/2, ff. 56-7

2. J. Taylor, The Carriers Cosmographie, (London, 1637).

3. T. de Laune, The Present State of London, (London, 1681).

4. T. de Laune, The Merchants and Traders Necessary Companion, (London, 1715)

5. P.W., A Description of all the Counties in England and Wales, (London, 1728), pp. 65-70.

"Winchester - Angel, Backside of St. Clements, Tuesday,  
Thursday and Saturday.

#### Carriers

Andover waggon - King's Arms, Holbourn Bridge, Thursday.  
Alton - ditto.  
Alsford - ditto.  
Basingstoke - Bell Savage, Ludgate Hill, Thursday, and White  
Horse, Ditchside, Holbourn, Friday.  
Kingsclere - Bell Savage, Ludgate Hill, Thursday, and the Swan,  
Holbourn Bridge, Thursday.  
Gosport and Earley - Bell Savage, Ludgate Hill, Thursday.  
Odiam and Warbore - ditto and the Swan, ditto, Friday.  
Petersfield and Godalming - King's and Queen's Heads, Southwark,  
Monday and Thursday.  
Portsmouth - White Hart, Southwark, Monday and Thursday.  
Romsey - King's Arms, Holbourn Bridge, Monday and Friday, and  
the Bell Savage, Ludgate Hill, Thursday.  
Southampton - the King's Arms, Holbourn Bridge, Wednesday and  
Friday.  
Winchester - the Rose, Holbourn Bridge, Monday and Thursday.  
Wickham - the Bell Savage, Ludgate Hill, Thursday.  
Yarley - White Horse, Ditchside, Friday."

#### Leather Trades

The leather trades were well represented in most of the small towns. Petersfield was well known as a cattle market and a thriving leather industry grew up in consequence. Like other crafts, they were often in contravention of the law and in 1606 tanners like Richard Woolgar were amerced sums of 3d or 4d for deceit in their trade contrary to statute.<sup>1</sup> Others incurred the wrath of the authorities for despoiling local streams and in 1605 John Mylls, Roger Terrell and other Petersfield tanners were warned not to wash their innards, and Lawrence Gudge not to wash his dossers, "to the great anoyance of a great many poor men", in Brook Lane under penalty for each of 3s 4d.<sup>2</sup> Andover was similarly noted for its leather production and some indication of the importance of this particular trade comes with a case which came before the hundred court in 1575 when Edward Moreinge was sued by one Thomas Parker.<sup>3</sup>

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1. HRO, 6 M 56/48.

2. BL, Add Roll 28015.

3. APL, 2/HC/21.

Moreinge, who came from a family involved in both the Andover leather and cloth trades, had apparently promised him 8s for carrying to London and delivering "1111 C weight of lether". Besides the tanners, Romsey, by the seventeenth century, had acquired a currier, who also prepared skins but by a different method, creating a more supple product, one which was especially attractive to the glovers who also inhabited the market towns. In fact, glovers were also liable to incur the displeasure of their neighbours and in 1586 those in Basingstoke were ordered not to wash their skins in the common river after the hour of six in the morning under pain to each delinquent of 3s 4d.<sup>1</sup> Their products would have included purses and other leather goods besides gloves. A group of them were fined 2d, 3d or 4d for offending their trades in Petersfield.<sup>2</sup> The shoemaker or cordwainer would have been a familiar figure in all these communities and the fellmonger (a dealer in skins) would have also been found in most towns. Indeed, Havant became famous for its fellmongering in the seventeenth century, when William Hayter and William Bagley were among the leading tradesmen in the town.<sup>3</sup>

#### Food Trades

The food trades in these market towns were probably dominated by the butchers. Seven were presented at one time for "selling flesh too dear" in 1606 in Petersfield and six of them appeared again two years later and were fined 4d each for "offending their trade".<sup>4</sup> The town therefore had at least seven active butchers in the early seventeenth century although the town's population was still only around 500, indicative of the wider role in the neighbouring countryside played by these tradesmen. In Andover a rental for 1636 shows the rents paid, which ranged from 24s to 53s 4d, by fifteen different butchers for their standings in the

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1. HRO, 148 M 71 2/1/87.

2. HRO, 6 M 56 47-9.

3. BL, Add Ch. 9454.

4. HRO, 6 M 56 48.



market.<sup>1</sup> Clearly they represented a very important trade in the market town; Andover, for one, having a particular 'Butchers Rowe' where most of the inhabitants as well as people from surrounding areas bought their meat. Butchers were often in contravention of the law in Andover too and in 1596 one was fined 5s because he sold his suet and meat by false weight.<sup>2</sup>

Bakers were much less common and there were probably never more than two or three operating at any one time in Romsey. As with country dwellers, most of the inhabitants of the market towns must have baked their own bread. In fact such products from outside the borough also found their way into the urban markets, further diminishing the role of the town baker, although in Basingstoke this could lead to dispute. In 1588 for instance it was complained that "the bakers of the country do bring bread to the town which is not of sufficient weight nor lawful; the offence is done by William Stevens of Tadley and such like".<sup>3</sup> Where they did practise their trade bakers were always liable to contravene the assize of bread and an Andover baker was fined 1s in 1596 for selling penny loaves of bread ten ounces short of weight.<sup>4</sup>

Fishmongers were few and far between in the small towns and not one such trader of any permanence has been positively identified in Romsey. Yet, they must have been in existence, especially in the small coastal towns. The fishermen of Lymington were commonly accused of using nets with too small a mesh or of fishing eels out of season, while on another occasion fish was wrongly sold in Romsey without passing through the Southampton market.<sup>5</sup> At Christchurch in the reign of James I a "worthy fishing for salmon" belonging to Lord Arundell was worth £100 per annum.<sup>6</sup> Fish, freshwater and sea, would certainly have played a part in the diet

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1. APL, 10/RS/4.

2. APL, 2/RF/6.

3. HRO, 148 M 71 2/1/87.

4. APL, 2/RF/6.

5. E. Welch, "Admiralty Courts 1199-1835", unpublished paper read to Lymington Historical Record Society, 19 February 1965.

6. VCH, Vol. 5, p. 467.

of people in the small market towns. They may have caught much for themselves, lawfully or otherwise, in local streams and ponds. However, some clue to the absence of any number of fishmongers in towns may come in a complaint made in Basingstoke in 1519.<sup>1</sup> It was said that "the inkeepers doth regrate and take up the fresh fish and keepeth it, and chooseth out the best for themselves and the poor people cannot have any, but as they will. Then as we might have of the fisher five herrings for a penny, they will sell us but four herrings for a penny". Apparently, ripiers from outside the towns had hitherto brought fish to the towns which was then sold openly in the market, but now innkeepers were buying their supplies and re-selling the fish to their profit. Either way there would have been little scope for an active fishmonger.

#### Inns and Alehouses

Some of the most important tradesmen in towns were the proprietors of inns, taverns and alehouses. The distinction between these establishments was often a very fine one, especially when other descriptions like victuallers, tippling houses and vintners are also used, but basically an inn was a place of accommodation, as compared with an alehouse where locals went for recreation and drinking. A tavern might sell wine in addition to ale and beer. The list of Romsey occupations makes no reference to any alehousekeepers but this is because they usually had other trades. In 1620 three alehousekeepers from the town were among the victuallers licences granted that year, including William Dowling, a tailor, and John Prowse, a baker.<sup>2</sup> The various kinds of drinking and lodging establishments flourished in Tudor and Stuart England but they are difficult to enumerate accurately for the towns. Some indication comes from a census compiled in 1577 in connection with the musters, but unfortunately the returns are

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1. HRO, 148 M 71 2/1/65.

2. PRO, E 180/66.

laid out for each hundred so that it is impossible to ascertain the number actually within a particular town.<sup>1</sup> However, it seems fairly certain that the three inns, two taverns and twenty-six alehouses recorded for Andover Infra were in the town and likewise the three inns, two taverns and nineteen alehouses of Basingstoke Infra must have been within the borough. Most of the twelve alehouses in Alton Hundred were probably in the town and it seems that several market towns, including Odiham, Romsey and Christchurch had above ten alehouses in 1577. The victuallers licences issued in 1619-20 with regard to the consumption of flesh in Lent, offer some further clues and they show at least nine innholders in Andover, as well as ten alehouses.<sup>2</sup> The last figure is largely immaterial for the alehouse was hardly a regular catering establishment, but the increase in inns from 1577 is significant and reflects the nationwide growth in hostelries especially in major thoroughfare towns. Andover and Basingstoke certainly fell into this category sitting astride the Great West Road and, in fact, most of the market towns were able to share in the movement to cater for travellers. This can be seen in the military survey of stabling and beds drawn up in 1688 giving the figures listed in Table 1/2/4 for the towns of Hampshire.<sup>3</sup> Indeed the town of Stockbridge was utterly dependent on its function as a thoroughfare and was described in 1720 as "... a poor ragged borough and depends chiefly upon its Inns which are fine and afford as good conveniences for horses and man as any in the road".<sup>4</sup> Meanwhile Petersfield reaped the benefit of the Portsmouth road in the seventeenth century and by 1769 it was said of the town that it "is populous and pretty well built, and being a great thoroughfare, is well supplied with inns".<sup>5</sup>

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1. PRO, SP 12/117

2. PRO, E 180/54.

3. PRO, WO 30/48.

4. T. Cox, Magna Britannia, op.cit., p. 854.

5. anon., A Description of England and Wales, (London, 1769), Vol. 3-4, pp. 157-206.

Military Survey of Stabling and Beds  
1688

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<u>Town</u>	<u>Guest Beds</u>	<u>Stabling for Horses</u>
Alresford	36	66
Alton	43	76
Andover	212	582
Basingstoke	104	357
Christchurch	56	52
Fareham	45	48
Fordingbridge	37	38
Gosport	61	48
Havant	31	36
Kingsclere	16	34
Lymington	52	36
Odiham	21	65
Petersfield	98	184
Portsmouth	164	87
Ringwood	81	139
Romsey	19	20
Southampton	179	287
Stockbridge	2	10
Bishops Waltham	58	54
Whitchurch	15	42
Winchester	336	1048

Table 1/2/4

Both inns and alehouses were the subject of much controversy in the local courts. In 1620 six Petersfield innholders were amerced 3d each "for offending in taking excess gains for hay and oats" and on the same law day five alehouse-keepers were fined 2d each "for offending in selling drink by cups and pots unsealed".<sup>1</sup> Selling short measures was seemingly a feature of similar establishments elsewhere, for in 1596 no less than twenty-four persons were presented in Andover for selling ale and beer in stone jars of too small a size.<sup>2</sup> Nor was it only beer and ale that were falsely sold. In 1570 indentures were taken out between various keepers of taverns or vendors of wine, the local magistrates and Richard Ellis, Deputy to the Crown's Agent, Sir Edward Horsey. Typical was that of George Kyrley, Nicholas Course and William Pratt who had kept taverns or wine cellars in Romsey without lawful warrant. They had bought and sold by various measure twenty tuns of wine "called Gascoyne, Gwyen, French, Rochell, Malvesy, Sack, Bastard, Mustadell and other kyndes of wyne" at greater prices, "that is to say Gascoyne, Gwynen, French and Rochell wyne every of them at the pryce of every gallon 16d and the other wyne aforesaid at the pryse of every of them of every gallon two shillings", contrary to the statute of 7 Edward VI.<sup>3</sup> Other vintners fined came from Alton, Petersfield, Basingstoke, Andover, Havant and Christchurch and later in the reign others followed in their footsteps from Ringwood, Lyminster and Fareham.<sup>4</sup> The licensing arrangements from the justices of the peace, either of the county or the town, involved undertakings about drinking laws and the sort of customers permissible, but the regulations were often flouted as was the case when Edmond Wells of Alton was indicted for keeping an "unlicenced alehouse" being "a person unfit for that employment".<sup>5</sup> Inns also

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1. HRO, 6 M 56 47.

2. APL, 2/RF/6.

3. PRO, E 176/1/122.

4. e.g. E 176/1/161, 174, 175.

5. HRO, QO/3, f. 97.

had to be authorised like the licence granted to one Margerie Manfield widow to keep an inn at the sign of the 'Prince his Armes' in Basingstoke.<sup>1</sup> It is also clear from entries in the church court records that many alehouses in the market towns were the scene of disorderly conduct and sabbath-breaking.<sup>2</sup>

### Brewing

Parallel with the growth in alehouses and inns went the emergence of brewing and malting. At least three maltsters were operating in Romsey in the mid-seventeenth century and a specialist brewer since the start of the century. In Basingstoke it was ruled in 1566 that tipplers should only buy from two named brewers rather than produce their own beer but, only a year later, a licence was granted to both brew and sell.<sup>3</sup> Such disputes festered elsewhere too. John Osgood of Andover petitioned the Earl of Salisbury in 1605.<sup>4</sup> He quoted an order of the Privy Council that the victuallers and publicans of all towns were obliged to buy drink from a common brewer. Osgood, himself, had established a brewhouse in Andover with the approval of local authorities but apparently the victuallers and publicans in the borough refused to buy from him. As a result he sought an order from Salisbury that the bailiff and magistrates of the town implement the measure and compel the offenders to buy from him. In time however the production and retail sides of the business diverged. Basingstoke maltsters, dependent on the town's corn and barley market, became famous, "of whom tis said that here is one of the richest of that trade in England".<sup>5</sup> Great quantities of malt were made in the eighteenth century at Andover, a craft which first reached prominence in the town a century earlier, while the beer of Romsey and the malting of Havant, close to the important

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1. HRO, 148 M 71 1/5/4.
  2. e.g. HRO Consistory Court Book no. 75, f 17.
  3. HRO, 148 M 71 2/1/79-80.
  4. HMC, Salisbury Mss., Part 24, p.4.
  5. T. Cox, Magna Britannia, op.cit., p. 865.

brewing centre of Chichester, became well known.<sup>1</sup>

### Milling

Milling was traditionally an important activity in many market towns. In the parish of Romsey, Domesday Book had recorded the presence of three mills: the two town mills and the Abbey Mill. By the sixteenth century the situation remained just the same. In 1545 there is a record of two water mills called the town mills, while at the time of the Dissolution the borough acquired the Abbey Mill. By 1579 it was said of Romsey millers that they served not only the town but also the surrounding areas and several other market towns must similarly have acquired much custom in this way.<sup>2</sup> At least eleven millers are known to have functioned in Romsey between 1550 and 1650 with one or two families, like the Newmans and the Sprages (Spraig) especially prominent. In Andover the town mill, rather curiously, was reckoned to be a 'vacant place' in 1510 and the merchant gild, reluctant to incur the charges for a new building, leased it out to one Richard Asheton for an annual rent of 5s with the right to rebuild. They finally surrendered ownership when they sold the mill and ground to an Andover mercer, Richard Gilbert. However, the desire of many boroughs to have at least a share in lucrative local milling was reasserted in 1601 when the Corporation acquired the Town Mills, described as two mills under one roof, one for grinding wheat, one for grinding malt. It was leased out again and appears in a subsequent list of purchases made by the Corporation, the revenues from which went for the use of the poor.<sup>3</sup>

As always the trade of milling was surrounded by controversy. In 1602 a case came before the Exchequer concerning alleged injury to the mills and the infringement of customs of suit and grist by

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1. VCH, Vol. 5, p. 474.

2. VCH, Vol. 4, p. 455.

3. APL, 8/CD/1.

newly erected mills at Alton.<sup>1</sup> Elsewhere millers were a frequent target for accusations of overcharging and deception. In 1598 William North, an Andover miller, was fined 3s 4d for taking an excessive toll in weight. He had retained seven pounds for grinding one bushel of grain when the amount should have been just two pounds.<sup>2</sup> The disputes which have always surrounded milling throughout history are a testimony to the importance of the functions in the town and surrounding community. It may be safely asserted that towns, especially those on rivers like the Avon, Test and Itchen became significant milling centres for their agricultural hinterlands and this helped to make the miller an important and often relatively wealthy member of small town society.

### Textiles

Traditionally Hampshire had been well known for its cloth industry and the market towns had long played a full part in the manufacture of textiles. In the mid-fifteenth century Romsey, Andover and Whitchurch in the Test valley all manufactured various types of cloth while to the east of the county, in Alton and Petersfield, kersies alone were produced. The ulnage accounts testify to the presence of six producers at Odiham while in Basingstoke a single clothier was taxed on the large quantity of 140 kersies. A small kersey industry also existed to the south west in Christchurch and Lymington.<sup>3</sup> In the early sixteenth century, while the trade of Winchester began to decline, the cloth manufacture in the smaller centres generally held its own and production went on in Basingstoke, Romsey, Whitchurch, Andover, Alton, Odiham, Havant, Kingsclere and Petersfield. None of these centres, however, were numbered among towns and villages with clothiers fined for defective cloth in 1561-2.<sup>4</sup> Tudor monarchs

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1. PRO, E 112/40/77.

2. APL, 2/RF/6.

3. VCH, Vol. 5, p. 484.

4. G.D. Ramsay, "The Distribution of the Cloth Industry in 1561-2", English Historical Review, LVII, (1942), pp. 361-9.



strove, with little success, to reverse the tendency for textiles manufacture to migrate to the countryside at the expense of the towns. The Weavers Act of 1555 said that "no person whatsoever, which heretofore hath not used or exercised the feat? mistery or art of clothmaking, shall make or weave any kind of broad white woollen cloths but only in a city, borough, town corporate, or market town, or else in such place or places where such cloths have been used to be commonly made by the space of ten years".<sup>1</sup> While the old draperies declined the fortunes enjoyed by the small towns were inevitably mixed, but there is no sign of the wholesale curtailment that afflicted Winchester, and several of the smaller settlements retained much of their manufacture. In 1586 the "clothing" formerly existing at Odiham was extinct.<sup>2</sup> Yet at the same time much of the prosperity and growth of late Tudor and early Stuart Petersfield was based on the cloth industry which by the reign of James I had grown to such a size that it maintained "1000 poor people in work without begging" - no doubt something of an exaggeration, but indicative of the high esteem in which the manufacture was held.<sup>3</sup> The trade certainly continued in Havant and indeed it was in search of "some gainfull bargain" that a cloth merchant from Rye in Sussex was attracted to the town in 1571 and the area around West Street became the centre of production.<sup>4</sup> Andover and Basingstoke maintained their industry under Elizabeth, though not without dispute. In 1588 Aurstun Phillip was presented for following the art of clothing contrary to the queen's statute and another complaint was that clothiers from Basingstoke "put out their wool to the todmen, which was very wrong, and a great impoverishment to the poor craftsmen of the town".<sup>5</sup>

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1. E. Lipson, The History of the Woollen and Worsted Industries, (London, 1965), pp. 226-7.

2. BL, Lansdowne Mss., 49, f. 96.

3. VCH, Vol. 3, p. 114.

4. HMC, Rep. XIII, App. 4, p. 15; BL, Add Ch. 9430.

5. HRO, 148 M 71 2/1/87.

If the list of occupations in Romsey is anything to go by it would seem that the town supported all aspects of the trade for the appearance of weavers in the community indicates that it was not simply a finishing centre for cloth manufactured in the countryside. Besides the clothiers themselves, there were shearmen, who cropped the cloth, fullers to thicken and prepare the cloth for dyeing, and the dyers themselves. It is hard to judge just what the scale of production was in these towns but one suspects that much of the consumption was local in which case it may be that dependence to a much lesser degree on the vagaries of interregional and, in particular, international trade helped defend the trade in these smaller communities and helped it adapt to changing demand conditions.

By the seventeenth century the pressure of the new draperies on the Hampshire kersies was beginning to bite much harder and the Merchant Adventurers were able to claim that "for the Hampshire kersies, let Guildford, Godalming, Farnham, Petersfield, Basing and other towns report: their decayes are extant".<sup>1</sup> In 1606 some 10,300 Hampshire kersies were exported to the Levant and Italy, but by 1622 this figure had fallen to 2,800.<sup>2</sup> The misfortunes of Basingstoke were especially marked. In 1612 the King was petitioned to exclude European imports in order "to relieve the great number of clothiers of Kent, Reading, Newbury, Basingstoke, Ockingham and Wallingford, who, owing to the banishment of coloured cloths from the Archduke's country, where they sold the greater part of their manufacture, are brought to want".<sup>3</sup> Relations with the Empire were not the only problem. In 1631 clothiers from the town petitioned to the county justices that they "heretofore made in Basingstoke 30 broadcloths and 100 kersies which employed the poor of 80 parishes" but now "there are not more than 7

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1. BL, Harleian Mss. 597, f. 211.

2. B.E. Supple, Commercial Crises and Change in England 1600-1642, (Cambridge, 1970), p. 160.

3. HMC, 80 Sackville 1, p. 279.

"broadcloths and 20 kersies made weekly and their cloth lies on their hands, the merchants refusing to buy, whereby the petitioners are discouraged and the poor daily increase".<sup>1</sup>

The emphasis here on the old draperies goes a long way towards explaining the predicament that the town found itself in but the clothiers themselves were partly to blame according to an investigation of 1633 which reported that the cloth of Reading, Newbury and Basingstoke was "more falsely made than white cloth ever was".<sup>2</sup> Another severe blow was dealt to the town's ailing cloth industry by the activities of the royalists in 1642 who demanded "2000 yards of woollen cloth and 500 yards of linen at 14d the yard". When the Basingstoke clothiers and woollen drapers were tardy in their response, the King's followers simply "served themselves at one shop and a greater quantity at another".<sup>3</sup> This bitter experience served to compound problems of another kind caused by the renewed depression of the years 1641-2 when Hampshire manufacturers, among others, complained that they could not sell cloths or collect debts.<sup>4</sup>

Certainly the old kersey manufacture which had been a very important trade in some market towns and had been present at some level in every urban settlement in the county was dying fast in the seventeenth century. Winchester and Basingstoke, two of the communities where the production had been on a large scale, suffered in particular. However, this did not mean the end of textile manufacture altogether; far from it. Clothiers, weavers, fullers, dyers and shearmen continued to appear regularly in towns all over the county and several boroughs developed important offshoots from the new draperies. Perhaps some of the glory of the late-medieval Hampshire industry had disappeared but it was in this way that

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1. CSPD, 1629-31, p. 481.
  2. CSPD, 1633-4, p. 86.
  3. F.J. Baigent and J.E. Millard, Basingstoke, op.cit., p. 432.
  4. B. Supple, Commercial Crisis, op.cit., p. 130.

textiles were to remain a significant craft in many market towns. Southampton had become a centre for the new production but it was in Christchurch that the first steps were taken among the smaller towns. In 1569 John Hastings obtained a patent for the manufacture of frisadoes in this 'decaied towne' and much of his produce was subsequently exported to Spain and Portugal.<sup>1</sup> Sergeweavers also established themselves in Romsey, one of the first of whom was Richard Wale, who was so described in 1630 but who had first arrived in the town at the start of the century and had married there in 1607. When he died in 1639 the parish register recorded that he had been the donor of a new organ to the church, indicating that he was a man of some local substance, and his son Richard continued the business into the 1660s. Certainly clothiers, dyers and weavers persisted in the town of Romsey in barely diminished numbers into the second half of the seventeenth century. Further, unlike Winchester, there were clearly fullers operating in Restoration Romsey, like Aaron Cooper, even though the new cloths did not require fulling. Textile manufacture apparently continued to thrive in Romsey and in the early eighteenth century production of coarse broad rashes, largely for export to Holland was maintained. In 1720 the town was said to be "much inhabited by clothiers".<sup>2</sup>

Yet Romsey had not been named in the report of the royal commission on the clothing industry in 1640 which had recommended the concentration of the trade on certain "cheife townes which at this present doe use the Trade of Clothinge, and makinge of stuffs" and which for Hampshire named only Southampton, Basingstoke and Andover.<sup>3</sup> For the leading market towns the seventeenth century must be seen as a time of transition from one mode of production to

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1. PRO, SP 12/130/48.

2. T. Cox, Magna Britannia, op.cit., p. 854.

3. G.D. Ramsay, "The Report of the Royal Commission on the Clothing Industry, 1640", English Historical Review, LVII, (1942), pp. 482-93.

another rather than a purely negative decline in trade. Andover's main industry remained cloth and in 1644 the royalist garrison in Winchester was able to obtain £10,000 worth of cloth in the town.<sup>1</sup> As in Romsey sergeweavers appeared in the town like Francis Percie who was active in the middle of the century. Clothiers contrived to assume leading positions in the community like John Staniford, a capital burgess of at least twenty years standing and bailiff between 1684-5 and one weaver, Leonard Sparkeman was sufficiently influential and diverse in his activities to lease the toll on corn and grain in Andover market in 1668.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, it is possible to think in terms of a Hampshire offshoot to the great Somerset-Devon border serge industry, centred in the market towns of the county. By the time Daniel Defoe visited Hampshire the days of kersey manufacture were long past but some of the smaller boroughs retained an active interest in textiles with shalloons and draggetts still produced at Alton, Andover and Basingstoke.<sup>3</sup> It is unlikely that much had changed from a century earlier when it was even said of little Whitchurch that "the chief trade of the town consists in shalloons, serges and other articles of woollen manufacture".<sup>4</sup>

Whilst it is impossible to define a "typical" market town, it is interesting to compare the list of trades found in Romsey with two similar compilations. Firstly, reference can be made to the analysis by Adrienne Rosen for the city of Winchester.<sup>5</sup> She found 87 different trades for the period 1550-99 and 100 in the years 1600-1649, considerably more than in Romsey. This is hardly surprising - Winchester was, after all, a much larger town, with about 3000 people in the city and soke in 1603, two or three times larger than Romsey. It was also an administrative and ecclesiastical

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1. CSPD, 1644, p. 300.
  2. APL, 9/FL/2.
  3. D. Defoe, A Tour through the Whole Island of Great Britain, (Penguin edition, London, 1971), pp. 155, 187, 267-8.
  4. S. Whatley, Gazetteer, op.cit., Vol. 2.
  5. A.B. Rosen, thesis, op.cit., pp. 198-201.

centre of some repute and it was to these functions that the greater functional complexity can be attributed. There was a wide range of professional people, from apothecaries to lawyers, who served the gentry and wealthier classes who frequented the city. Romsey had few, if any, such men. Then there were the more specialised trades which were unable to find sufficient demand in the small towns, like a basket maker, bookbinders, stationers, gunsmiths, organmakers and even a lantern horn maker. The building trades were, perhaps, rather underestimated in the Romsey survey - it is, for instance, very unlikely that the town had no carpenters in the second half of the sixteenth century - but it is clear that craftsmen like plumbers and painters were more likely to find an outlet in a larger town. Lastly, it would seem that division of labour was much less advanced in the small market community. Where Romsey just had its innkeepers to offer board and lodgings, Winchester had an array of cooks, ostlers and innholders, and where Romsey just had weavers and sergeweavers, Winchester had coverlet weavers, linenweavers, sergeweavers, silkweavers and worsted weavers. Much of this may be the result of distortions and variations in nomenclature, but it is hard to avoid the impression that the craftsman in the market town was much more a 'jack of all trades' than his counterpart in a larger community of county status.

Secondly, the Romsey list may be compared with the occupations for the town as set out in the first Hampshire directory, published over a century later in 1784.<sup>1</sup> The town retained most of its agricultural service trades, as exemplified by tanners and blacksmiths though there was now an impressive array of cornfactors, cornmerchants, seedsmen and mealmen. The food and clothing trades were little different. However, it was in the more individualistic skills that the greatest change was apparent. By 1784 Romsey had a surgeon, a watchmaker, a clockmaker and a cabinetmaker. This evolution from being a largely agricultural service town into a more

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1. J. Sadler, The Hampshire Directory, (Winchester, 1784).

broad-based lifestyle, still catering primarily for its rural hinterland but now offering a wider range of luxury trades, entertainments and services, can be traced from the early modern period. There are signs of such development even when the years 1550-99 and 1600-49 are contrasted. Seventeenth century Romsey witnessed the appearance in the town of more chandlers, haberdashers, grocers and cutlers who must have offered their clientele a greater range of specialised goods. As transport improved, so horizons widened and expectations grew. The town even had a finer, which was something that Winchester could not boast.

### Schools

One of the most important services provided by the market town to its neighbouring community was in the field of education. Some rural parishes were irregularly served by an elementary schoolmaster "but the educational function of the market town was much more extensive with a number of petty schools and frequently an endowed grammar school attracting pupils from a considerable radius".<sup>1</sup> The early history of schooling in Hampshire focuses on Winchester College, but in the first half of the sixteenth century grammar schools can be identified in three other market towns. The chantry commissioners of 1548 recorded that at Alton there was "a stipendary priest, founded by one John Chawnflower, to have continuance for ever, to the intent to assist ministration in the church of Alton and to teach children grammar". Similarly, at Odiham children received instruction in grammar from a priest attached to the chantry. In Basingstoke the commissioners found "a schoolmaster to teache children grammar, which hath been so continually kept these ten years last past".<sup>2</sup> He was sponsored by the Brotherhood of the Chapel of the Holy Ghost and the school had possibly been in existence since 1524 when Henry VIII granted a licence to establish the gild.<sup>3</sup> These schools were suppressed and their endowments seized

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1. P. Clark and P. Slack, English Towns, op.cit., p. 23.

2. PRO, E 301/52.

3. VCH, Vol.4, p. 138.

in 1548, but they demonstrate clearly the existence of some basic organised education in Hampshire before the Reformation and it was in the market towns of the county that they found their home.

The pattern became increasingly marked in the later sixteenth century and in the years up to the Civil War. A further six endowed grammar schools were established in Southampton, Basingstoke, Andover, Ringwood, Kingsclere and Alton. There were quite likely further schools founded, without endowments, in other towns for which evidence has not survived. The school at Basingstoke was refounded in 1557 and there followed several more endowments. In 1569 Richard Holloway left ten shillings a year for the school and thirteen years later John Green left "ten shillings to the grammar schoolmaster and ten shillings to the repairs of the grammar school". Among the extensive endowments of Sir James Deane on the borough of Basingstoke were rents from which £10 was to be set aside for a schoolmaster, "a good scholar and learned grammarian ... to instruct the children of the said town in their grammar rules and other good learning". Earlier in his will he complained that the existing allowance for teaching was too small to maintain a good schoolmaster there. Sir James Lancaster, who also contributed towards the school in Kingsclere, and John Hall granted further endowments to the school in 1618 and 1632 respectively.<sup>1</sup> In Andover money for a free school was given by John Hanson in 1569 and the church tablet states that Richard Blake gave to the town the land whereon the free school was built, and also that the corporation built the free school and schoolhouse which cost £186 13s 4d.<sup>2</sup> It was not only the market towns in the north of the county which were beginning to enjoy the benefits of a school. The will of Richard Lyne, proved in 1587, states that he had "with the assent of Henry Bissell,

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1. Charity Commissioners, pp. 377-399; 464-472.

2. *ibid.*, pp. 346-364.



"late vicar of Ringwood, and the churchwardens and parishioners of the said parish converted an old stone house, standing in the churchyard of the said church, to make a school house for scholars to be taught in". He proceeded to set out detailed provisions for its administration. The children who attended were to be instructed "in writing and reading, in knowledge of the Latin tongue, in godly discipline and in all manner of humane doctrine", and their academic diet was probably little different from their counterparts in other market towns.<sup>1</sup>

The dominance of these towns continued to a lesser extent in the provision of elementary schooling in the county. Several Hampshire villages did have some such provision before 1640, sometimes endowed, as at Martyr Worthy (1589) and sometimes not, as at Amport. Nevertheless, of fifteen elementary schools traced before the Civil War, either from the charity commissioners' reports or from diocesan licences for schoolmasters, as required under the act of 1580, eight belonged to market towns, namely Romsey (1609), Basingstoke (1618), Odiham (1619), Alton (1622), Havant (1625), Alverstoke/Gosport (1629), Petersfield (1630) and Portsmouth (1631).<sup>2</sup> It can be safely asserted that prior to the Civil War schooling in Hampshire was established not simply in the older and larger centres like Winchester and Southampton, but more generally in the market towns of the region, including some of the smaller urban settlements like Havant. Few of the inhabitants had aspirations for their children other than acquiring a grasp of elementary numeracy and literacy which would facilitate their taking an active part in any transactions they were likely to meet in and around the market place. The town school represented a convenient and relatively inexpensive means of meeting these limited objectives and so they came to flourish in the small communities.

The pattern continued after the Restoration, as far as grammar schools were concerned with establishments in other market towns like

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1. *ibid.*, pp. 529-538.

2. C.R. Davey (ed.), Education in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight: a guide to the Records, (Winchester, 1977).

Christchurch (1661), Lymington (1668), Odiham (1694) and Alresford (1696) while the emergence of Bishops Waltham to market status was enhanced by Bishop Morley who established a school in the town in 1679.<sup>1</sup> At the turn of the century only Fareham and Stockbridge were without known schools. By then, however, the number of elementary schools had multiplied rapidly in the countryside and the urban dominance in basic education was weakened. The 1725 Visitation inquired about schools in the county and several incumbents replied by illustrating the type of unofficial education which must have pervaded urban and rural society. In Empshot, for example, "some few women do teach children to read for 2d a week paid by the fathers of such children" and similar casual elementary schooling probably existed elsewhere in the seventeenth century. As regards established schools, however, they represent a characteristic and distinctive element in the society of an early modern market town.

What is much less clear is just how many townsmen and their children actually benefitted. Chalklin reckoned that in the towns of Kent at the most only about one in five of children enjoyed any formal schooling, but the situation may have actually been even worse. In 1725 Andover parish was recorded as having three schools, a Free School for "about thirty scholars" and two charity schools, one for "fourty boys" and the other for "twenty four poor children". Therefore perhaps a hundred children might have attended at any one time which, in an estimated population for the parish (including the town and the surrounding villages) of 6000, is not very many. The position in the towns during the Tudor and early Stuart years could hardly have been better and was probably much worse. Girls would have fared worse than boys and the school in Alton which accepted forty boys and twenty girls was just one instance of the contrasting opportunities between the sexes. Nevertheless, education in its broadest sense was something which did concern the population of the

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1. Charity Commissioners, pp. 224-30.

early modern market town. Several testators in Romsey made bequests for the schooling of their children whilst others were concerned that their offspring should be properly apprenticed in order to learn an honest trade. Whether it be a desire for some formal education or the stronger vocational guidance of an apprenticeship both show the hope of many townsmen that their children, especially their sons, be able to assume a secure niche within society.

### Religious Life

Market towns were important religious centres and the weekly services conducted in the parish churches attracted families from the surrounding countryside as well as from within the urban community itself. Men and women seem to have developed a deep loyalty to their own parish church: wills often specify in great detail the precise position in the local churchyard where a body was to be buried and bequests for the maintenance of the church were commonplace. People from all kinds of socio-economic background seem to have found a common focus in their parish church. It should be noted, however, that even attendance at a church service was not free from the social divisions which pervaded urban life with intense rivalries often erupting over the seating arrangements for parishioners.

In the sixteenth century Hampshire was well known as a strongly recusant county and was closely watched by the Privy Council and anxious church authorities. Winchester was a particularly important centre of recusancy and the large number of abbeys, priories, friaries and convents scattered throughout the county served to perpetuate Catholic sympathies. The market towns shared in the survival of recusant practices. At Romsey an ex-Marian priest, Thomas Cheston, was inducted to the living in 1558 and in October 1561 he confessed to conducting a papistical burial, bringing

"the corpse to the church with candles and tapers".<sup>1</sup> Similarly, in Alresford several townsmen seem to have retained their Catholic allegiance: in 1562 one Richard Birde was said to have had a lighted candle in his house on the Feast of St. John the Baptist and Thomas Travers was presented to the Consistory Court for possessing a prayer book which contained "prayers to the Blessed Virgin, prayers for the dead and rosaries of the Blessed Virgin".<sup>2</sup>

It is hard to assess the numerical strength of recusants in the market towns. In Andover there were eleven nonconformists and six recusants mentioned in 1570 and five years later twenty-four nonconformists were named.<sup>3</sup> However, it is difficult to know whether these were actual recusants or merely individuals who declined to follow the teaching of the established Church. Likewise, it is impossible to tell whether these cases which appear in the Church Court records can be translated into whole families. Nevertheless the presence of an ex-Marian priest, Thomas Palmer, in the town may have attracted a relatively large recusant community to Andover. Other towns with important Catholic sympathies included Christchurch and Fareham. These coastal locations were very significant in the infiltration of recusant missionaries from the Continent into England and the secluded creeks of the Hampshire coast were a much safer point of entry than the more strongly Protestant coastline of Kent or Essex.

The market towns therefore maintained some connections with Catholicism. However, the census of 1603 shows very few recusants in the urban communities and it would be easy to exaggerate the strength of urban recusancy.<sup>4</sup> The main centres of Catholic practice were actually in the countryside, in and around the homes of prominent recusant gentry families. Some of these households

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1. J.E. Paul, "The Hampshire Recusants in the Reign of Elizabeth I", unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Southampton University, 1958, p. 28.
  2. HRO, Consistory Court Book, No. 20, f. 51; Consistory Court Book, No. 27, f. 71.
  3. HRO, Consistory Court Book, No. 33, f. 214; Consistory Court Book, No. 45, f. 4.
  4. BL, Harleian Ms. 595.

had fairly close links with townlife, like the Ludlows of Fareham and the Pitts of Alton, but in other places recusant townsmen had to travel in order to find services which matched their beliefs. Thus in 1583-4 three people from Romsey, Thomas and Joan Spenser and a local tailor, Richard Chydden, were fined 100 marks for hearing mass, having probably visited the manor house of the Tichbornes at Sherfield English.<sup>1</sup>

The role played by the market towns in the development of Puritanism and Nonconformity was much more significant. Indeed, there is evidence that contemporaries were aware of the influence that the small towns enjoyed within their rural hinterlands. Towards the end of the sixteenth century Bishop Cooper of Winchester, a hostile opponent of both Papacy and Puritanism, decided to encourage the growth of controlled preaching and he therefore exhorted the lecturers of Andover and Romsey to preach in those places on Sundays each fortnight so that on alternate Sundays they might preach in neighbouring parishes where lecturers did not exist.<sup>2</sup>

By the end of the sixteenth century nonconformity was already well established in Hampshire and had taken root in the market towns. The 1603 census reveals a total of thirty non-communicants (other than recusants) in Romsey. Elsewhere the towns are shown as having relatively few non-communicants, something which reflects the very high level of conforming Puritanism rather than casting doubt on the validity of the source. However, it was in the first half of the seventeenth century that Puritanism really began to expand and the towns were especially prominent in the development. At Alton the census of 1603 shows 700 communicants and no dissenters but by 1619 thirty-six inhabitants were fined for not receiving communion and another twenty had promised a reluctant conformity. Joseph Upton, George Matthew, Samuel Butler and Richard Searle, among others, were charged for

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1. PRO, E 372/429.

2. W.H. Mildon, "Puritanism in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight", unpublished London Ph.D. thesis, (1934), p. 35. Mildon also includes many other illustrations of Puritanism in the towns of Hampshire. However, he also exaggerates the strength of non-conformity throughout the county and his thesis should therefore be viewed with caution.

"not standing upp at the sayeing of the Creade".<sup>1</sup> In 1623 William Hawkins of Alton travelled in search of sermons to Upton Grey where sermons were read by the parish clerk and where the curate, Thomas Fuller, was presented for "seldome wearinge the surplace".<sup>2</sup> In fact the surplice was to many Puritans a hated symbol of popery and in many towns it came under challenge. In Gosport, for instance, the churchwardens removed the surplice in 1602 but five years later they were presented to the Consistory Court and were forced to purchase a new one.<sup>3</sup>

In 1621 an instance of emotional Puritanism occurred in Basingstoke where one Marion Wolf absented herself from church and met a "traveller about the county", Anthony Spearing. They knelt together in the market house at Basingstoke and, hearing him pray, she followed suit. For her "crime" she was presented to the Consistory Court where she submitted and promised to attend the church in future.<sup>4</sup> In other ways Basingstoke typified the evolution of Puritan practice among the population and, in particular, the opposition aroused by Archbishop Laud in the 1630s. In 1634 kneeling at communion was reintroduced but many parishioners, including a churchwarden, George Baynard, who had all been brought up in a Puritan tradition, were strongly opposed to the new development.<sup>5</sup> They were deemed to be "schismaticall persons and dislikers of the Ceremonies of the church of kneeling, especially of kneeling att the Communion". They were also reported as disliking the cross in Baptism and were said to be frequenters of lectures held in the town. These people were essentially conforming Puritans who must have been uneasy in their faith for some years but whose allegiance to the established church was stretched to the limit in the 1630s. For such reasons in Basingstoke, as in other towns, Puritanism became

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1. HRO, Consistory Court Book, Acta 1619.
  2. HRO, Consistory Court Book, No. 96, f. 6.
  3. HRO, Consistory Court Book, No. 75, f. 19.
  4. HRO, Consistory Court Book, Acta 1621.
  5. W.H. Mildon, thesis, op.cit., p. 53.

increasingly open and assertive in these years.

In fact Puritan attitudes began to have an influence on urban society. Sermons were delivered on market day when the congregation would be swelled by families from surrounding parishes and towns like Basingstoke and Andover were endowed with lectureships by some of their wealthier inhabitants.<sup>1</sup> Sabbatarianism also began to increase with men and women regularly presented for opening shops, playing games or drinking at the time of divine service.

With the removal of the Consistory Court following the victory of Parliament some parishes began to go even further in their rejection of the established church. At Christchurch there was a movement towards Presbyterianism and the churchwardens were made subject to the eldership. In 1654 the sixteen elders resolved "that the churchwardens in being from henceforth shall not dispose any Roome in any seatt above the cresse without the consent of ye sixteene or ffourre of them at the lest converted and assembled upon notice given". Among the signatories were John Warner, a devoted Presbyterian, and John Kempe the town mayor, indicative of the penetration of nonconformist attitudes into the higher echelons of urban government and society. Such developments were often unsuccessful and shortlived in their impact but there is little doubt that the market towns were taking the lead in Puritan development.<sup>2</sup>

Following the Restoration many of the Puritan ministers who had taken over parishes during the Interregnum were ejected. However, it proved impossible to curtail the nonconformist sympathies in the towns. John Warren, for example, was ejected from Romsey but he continued to hold a thriving ministry in the town and lecturers like Samuel Sprint remained very active in Andover. The towns of Hampshire supported communities from almost every dissenting sect in existence and, despite frequent persecution, they seem to

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1. e.g. PRO, Prob 11, Sir James Deane, 1607 (Basingstoke); Richard Kemis, 1611 (Andover).
  2. R. Warner, Topographical Remarks relating to the South Western Parts of Hampshire, (London, 1793), pp. 130-1; R. Warner, Collections for the History of Hampshire, (London, 1795), p. 172.

have thrived in these early years of the Restoration. Most numerous were the Presbyterians who were said to number 200 at Andover, "above 200" in Alton and who were sometimes estimated at over 300 in Fordingbridge.<sup>1</sup> The licences to preach granted in 1672 also showed Presbyterian communities in Kingsclere, Odiham, Romsey, Ringwood, Christchurch, Lymington, Havant and Gosport. In Romsey Thomas Warren was the pastor to a private congregation and was licensed to preach in three houses and he gathered a large following in the town. There were Congregational communities in Whitchurch and Andover and Baptist groups existed in Whitchurch, Romsey and Bishops Waltham. Probably the most uncompromising Puritans were the Quakers who first took root in Ringwood. Subsequently, Alton became a Quaker centre - in January 1661 a meeting in the town was broken up and those present were "pulled forth and drawn along the streets to an Inn where they were kept prisoners three days."<sup>2</sup> However, Quakerism continued to keep a hold within the market town and by 1669 groups were also in existence in Andover and Fordingbridge.

A fine testimony to the strength of nonconformity in the Hampshire towns comes with the Compton Census.<sup>3</sup> Romsey was outstanding with a total of 777 returned but other towns with considerable dissenting groups were Andover (107), Whitchurch (50), Alton (65), Fareham (100), Christchurch (116), Fordingbridge (143) and Lymington (44), as well as Southampton (303), Portsmouth (60) and Winchester (135). These towns were responsible for 1900 nonconformists, over half of the total of 3714 for the county. Dissenting factions were prominent in all the Hampshire market communities and they must have been a focus for nonconformists in the countryside. New ideas and new practices evolved in the churches of the market towns and spread outward throughout the county. In sixteenth and seventeenth century Hampshire religion remained a deep

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1. W.H. Mildon, thesis, op.cit., p. 397.

2. ibid., p. 442.

3. William Salt Library, Ms 33, ff. 51-69.



concern for the large majority of the population, both urban and rural, and the role played by market towns in the satisfaction of individual requirements, both within and without the established church, is of great interest and importance.

The early modern market town was a medium for much that was changing in English society. The growing level of schooling and the emerging forces of nonconformity found expression in these communities. Yet it must be doubtful whether day-to-day life really altered very much during the period.

Some new houses were probably built in each town and from early on there are signs of improvements made to existing dwellings. In 1632 some land with a "house newly erected thereon" in Christchurch was leased from a local tailor and in 1663 the same borough leased to one Martin Stoakes, yeoman, a piece of property with a newly built house, constructed at a cost of £100.<sup>1</sup> Much earlier, leases from Christchurch borough of messuages around the market place were setting as a condition "the enclosure of shambles with walls or boards, doors and windows, in form of a shop". In Lymington a new market cross was erected while the town accounts of Andover, Christchurch and other towns reveal regular payments on the upkeep of the town hall and other borough property.<sup>2</sup> Andover acquired a new Guildhall, apparently at little or no cost to the town, as a result of an agreement in January 1583.<sup>3</sup> Half the lower floor of the new building was to be shops for the approved men of the Corporation, the rest was to become a common market.

Fire was a constant threat to buildings everywhere. Basingstoke suffered severely in 1601 "where was consumed with fire 14 fine houses, besides barns and stables", whilst the plight of the town

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1. HRO, 42 M 74 E/T3; DRO, Christchurch Borough Records H/12-13.
  2. e.g. APL 4/AC; C. St. Barbe (ed.), Records of the Corporation of the Borough of New Lymington, (London, 1848), p. 35.
  3. APL, 18/AH/10.

was intensified by an apparent outbreak of looting.<sup>1</sup> The Queen granted leave for the town to seek help from London and seven neighbouring counties but apparently little of the money subscribed found its way into the right hands. Another severe fire struck the town in 1657 when "the town house and a great part of the town of Basingstoke was destroyed by fire".<sup>2</sup> Clearly many houses and shops in the small towns remained of wood and thatch though there are signs that in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries stone and brick were increasingly used. Brickmaking probably began around 1500 in Andover and the brickwork of 'the Bell' built in 1534 was of a very high standard.<sup>3</sup> Bricklayers began to appear regularly in towns - Romsey certainly had one resident around 1600. In Christchurch an agreement was reached in 1651 between the mayor and burgesses and a bricklayer called John Wylde who was licensed "to dig clay for brickmaking on the common and waste where John Winsey formerly made bricks". He was to supply bricks to the inhabitants of Christchurch at the rate of 9s per 1000, to give notice to the mayor when a kiln is ready for sale, and "to sell only to the inhabitants of Christchurch for the first 3 days after a kiln is broken up".<sup>4</sup> However, fires still threatened and they could have a devastating effect, especially on the smallest towns. Alresford suffered terribly in 1689 when the homes of 117 families were destroyed along with the church and town hall and the damage sustained was said to have amounted to £24,000.<sup>5</sup>

The fear of fire was reflected by town courts throughout the county. In April 1654 Henry Vincent of Basingstoke was presented "for making a fire in the house where he dwells having no flue nor chimney, of great danger to the whole town". He was ordered to make a flue by 8 May on pain of 40s.<sup>6</sup> Several other such examples could

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1. APC, 1601-4, p. 222.
  2. F.J. Baigent and J.E. Millard, Basingstoke, op.cit., p. 685.
  3. R. Warmington, "Rebuilding of Le Belle Inn, Andover, 1534", Post-Medieval Archaeology, 10, (1976), pp. 131-41.
  4. DRO, Christchurch Borough Records, 57.
  5. CSPD, 1689-90, pp. 94, 121; VCH, Vol. 3, pp. 351-2.
  6. HRO, 148 M 71 2/1/117 - 1654.

be quoted whilst provision was also made for putting out fires in several towns like Andover and, in particular, Christchurch where a special rate was levied in 1615 for the purchase of leather buckets.<sup>1</sup>

A growing population necessitated the building of new tenements or a higher level of subdivision. Both, no doubt, went on in the market towns. There do seem to have been some improvements in housing whether it be the use of bricks or of glass - Romsey seems to have had at least one glasier in the sixteenth century and thereafter perhaps two or three at any one time. What hardly changed, however, were the appalling standards of hygiene in all the market towns, like those experienced by the larger urban centres. Tanners and dyers were regularly presented for disposing of their wastestuffs in the streets whilst animals roaming loose in the towns must have been a familiar sight. The Basingstoke Court Leet of 1652 tried several cases of hogs allowed to "waste in the town of Basingstoke to the common annoyance of passengers" but such judgements do not seem to have been very effective and market day in particular must have witnessed a major influx of livestock onto the streets of the town.<sup>2</sup> Roads were badly pitted and after bad weather would have assumed a deplorable state. Any adequate form of paving was rare and sanitary arrangements were few and far between. In Basingstoke John Spier was appointed in 1660 to be scavenger and he was "to have the streets cleansed once a week from the Red Lion to the Maidenhead" while most towns probably had a hayward to control wandering hogs and drive them to a pound.<sup>3</sup> In 1648 and 1649 payments were made by Andover Corporation for the removal of rubbish from the town.<sup>4</sup> References to road repairs also became more frequent in the seventeenth century. The Chamberlain's Accounts of Andover show the following: "6 April 1627, paid Bugley, pavior, for paying in the stratt as

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1. DRO, Christchurch Borough Records 2531 B/6.

2. HRO, 148 M 71 2/1/117 - 1652.

3. *ibid.*, 1660.

4. APL, 4/AC/7.

appeareth per his note the som of £1-14-8" and later in the year another 5s was expended on "stones and car to the mending London way".<sup>1</sup> In Petersfield some provisions were made in 1669-70.<sup>2</sup> Initially £23 9s 6d was spent on flints, stones and other materials for the pitching of 'the Streights' and in 1670 another £6 10s 6d was expended on "pitching ground before the George" and in the High Street. Yet these examples of cleansing or repairs seem to be only token gestures and little long term benefit probably resulted. The problem of hygiene was as acute as ever, only alleviated perhaps by the welcome proximity of the countryside, a relief not enjoyed by those who lived in the overcrowded, disease ridden hearts of the larger cities.

Although living conditions may have changed very little through the early modern period the importance of the market town remained throughout these years. Its basic economic marketing functions were increasingly supplemented by a growing complexity of other roles, including the educational and religious activities, which helped to give a very distinctive character to small town society. These communities were certainly among the most dynamic in the county. It is not the purpose of this thesis to investigate all the ways in which this growing assertiveness manifested itself. However, it is interesting to note that six of the Hampshire market towns were sufficiently confident to seek incorporation in the early modern period, three of them, Andover, Basingstoke and Romsey, being successful and the other three, Christchurch, Whitchurch and Petersfield, failing after sometimes acrimonious dispute. The growth of urban population lay at the heart of these developments - the expanding numbers of inhabitants saw in these small towns centres for their economic, occupational, educational, religious

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1. APL, 4/AC/6.

2. HRO, 39 M 74A DB 25.

and cultural requirements. There can be no better argument for the desirability of investigating the course of demographic history.



SECTION TWO : THE COURSE OF POPULATION CHANGE

1. Static Analysis
2. Dynamic Analysis

Part One : Static Analysis



POPULATION IN 1524-25

General

The subsidy lists of 1524-25 provide a fine opportunity to study the population and wealth of Tudor Hampshire.<sup>1</sup> Neither of the two surveys offers a complete coverage of the county, with several returns either defective or missing, but by substituting surviving records from either year, as available, a very good coverage can be achieved. Doubts exist about the validity of this process because of a downward trend in assessments for the second year as compared with the first. However, over the whole country very few counties paid less than 90% of the first year's total and in Hampshire the decline of £158 6s 10d between the two payments represented a fall of just 6.6%. Unless this substitution is made only a very limited coverage is possible.

Hampshire possessed a very complex local administration with a plethora of fragmented parishes and tithings. Many of the hundreds were so small that they had to be amalgamated into larger groups sharing the same officials. Mainsborough hundred, for example, contained just three small rural parishes and was assigned to William Frost and Lewes Wynkefeld who were also the commissioners for Bishops Sutton and the town of New Alresford. The assessments themselves were organised variously under parishes or tithings. Most of the small towns of Hampshire were part of much larger parishes surrounded by countryside, but where the taxpayers were listed by tithing it is possible to identify the urban as distinct from the rural aspects of a parish. There are, however, some exceptions, such as Alton, where no further subdivision beyond that of the parish was made. In this case some estimation of the wealth and population of the town has to be made by using the proportions as they appear in later tax sources. This method also has to be applied to later religious censuses. In the particular example of Alton

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1. PRO, E 179/173/172; E 179/173/175; E 179/173/193; E 179/173/195;  
E 179/173/171; E 179/173/176; E 179/173/180; E 179/173/181;  
E 179/173/182; E 179/173/183; E 179/174/287; E 179/174/290;  
E 179/174/291; E 179/174/293.

the town has been assumed to represent 91% of the whole parish. Clearly there are flaws in this approach but there seems to be no viable alternative and, fortunately, in most cases tithings are provided.

Another problem in using the subsidy returns concerns the exact extent and boundaries of the various taxation units which are largely unknown. The interpretation of individual assessors was also somewhat confused with vill names appearing in one subsidy but not in the other. In the sprawling hundred of East Meon detailed parish and tithing divisions were provided in 1525 after they had been completely omitted in the first year. There is little doubt that the pattern of parishes in Tudor Hampshire was somewhat different from the parochial map of today but in the absence of any further knowledge of the parishes at the start of the sixteenth century more recent civil units must be used. Obviously there are inaccuracies but, again, these have to be accepted and minimised rather than successfully overcome. Despite these problems the Hampshire record is a good one and enables a very worthwhile study of population in the 1520s.

Figure 2/1/1 shows the density of population as revealed by the subsidy lists of 1524-5. There is a very clear concentration of population towards the south east around Portsea and Hayling Islands. Portsmouth itself was already beginning to develop as a naval dockyard and centre of population drawing on a wide area for its workforce. The rest of Portsea Island, however, remained relatively under-populated. On the mainland the whole area from Fareham and Alverstoke in the west to Havant and Chalton in the east was well populated, as was Hayling Island. These were lowland parishes, largely rural in character, their mixed agriculture and dairy production assisting in the supply of the growing market of Portsmouth. With the chances of by-employment in the servicing of the dockyards or in other maritime activities,

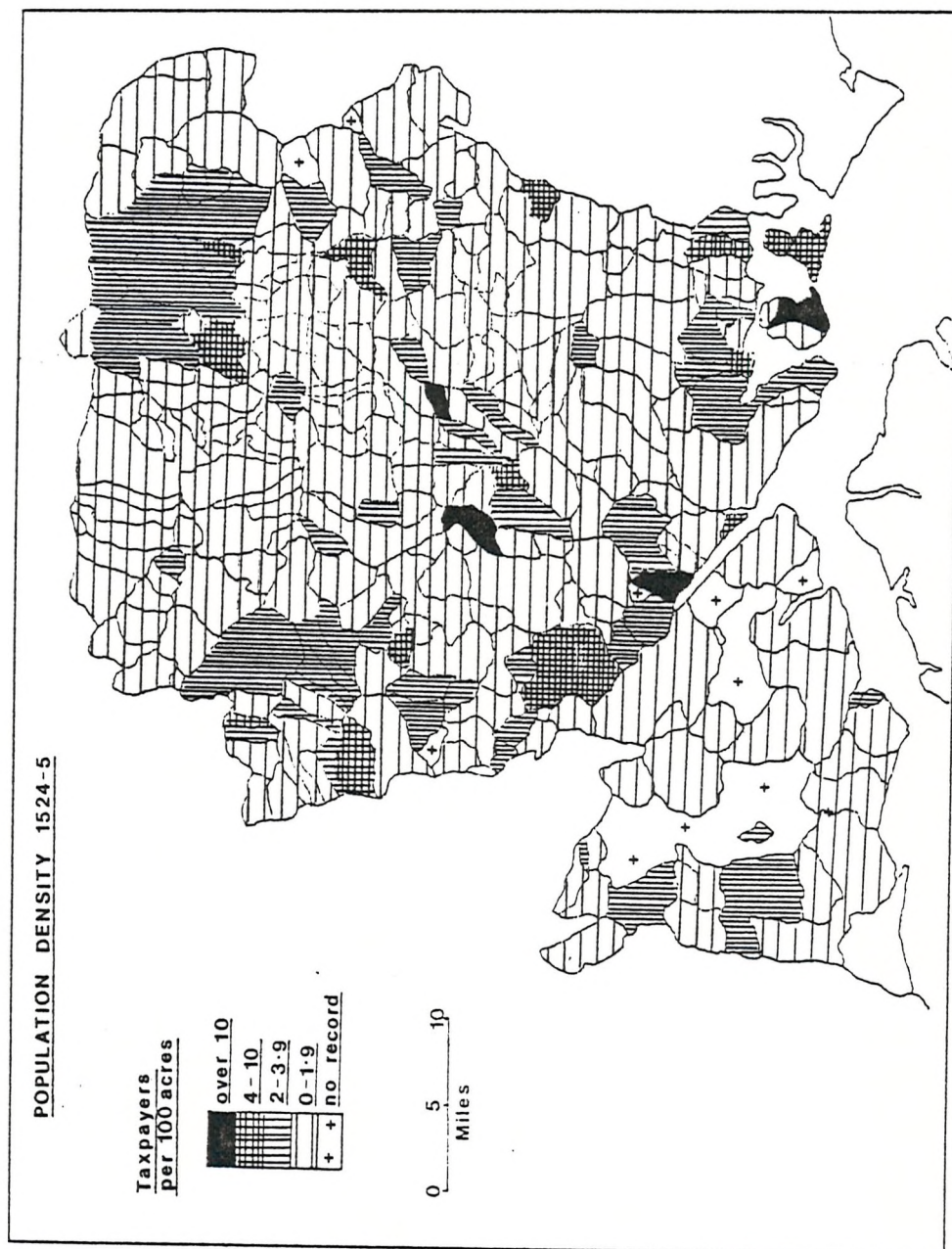


Figure 2/1/1



such as fishing or carrying, it is easy to understand the concentration of taxpayers in the south east, though, with the port still in its infancy, its demographic influence seems to be restricted to within ten miles of the town itself. Further west, Southampton was another centre of population. The lower reaches of both the Test and Itchen valleys to the north and north west of the town were fairly densely inhabited as was the area at the innermost end of Southampton Water. In fact the whole of the Test valley seems to have been well populated, centred on Romsey in the south and Andover in the north. Both were small market towns which served relatively large numbers of country people and were also important cloth-making centres. The waters of the Test and its numerous tributaries facilitated successful manufacture of kersies within the countryside with the towns offering the entrepreneurial organisation and marketing necessary to the trade, and as a result the area could maintain above average numbers of people. Certainly the area south from Andover to Stockbridge, including parishes like the Clatfords and Wherwell, and further west, taking in places like Over Wallop and Appleshaw, supported population levels on a par with much of the south east.

The other main centre of population within Hampshire was towards the north of the county on the border with Berkshire, part of Hampshire which looked towards Reading and the Thames basin rather than the south coast. Again it was a region where farming and cloth manufacture, assisted by the north flowing streams, fused to support a relatively high level of population. From Pamber in the west to Winchfield and Dogmersfield in the east and south to Basingstoke and Odiham densities of at least two taxpayers per 100 acres were recorded, especially dense around Basingstoke itself and the small parish of Greywell. The highest densities of inhabitants were found, therefore, largely in lowland areas and in the river valleys where farms were smaller and

more varied and also in and around the main towns of the county often districts where textiles were entrenched in urban and rural society.

By contrast, most of north, central and eastern Hampshire had very few taxpayers, usually less than two for each 100 acres. These were the chalk downlands of the county, almost exclusively rural, where large farms existed and the land was much more sparsely populated than the river valleys. Only the lesser towns like Alton and Petersfield and a small area of the upper Itchen valley in and around Winchester and Alresford show any greater concentration of taxpayers. The rural parishes of the Meon valley, without the presence of a market town to swell the figures, were also very thinly populated. Particularly low densities existed away from the chalklands in the north east on the wastelands of the Bagshot and Bracklesham Beds. Infertile heathlands dominated this area of the Surrey-Hampshire border and made for very few taxpayers in the Crondall and Aldershot areas. Woodland areas, often very difficult terrain, were also only slightly populated including the Forest of Bere, south of Petersfield, and in particular the New Forest. In fact, the whole region west of Southampton Water returned very few taxpayers and the infertile soils could support only poor mixed agriculture attracting very few inhabitants. Only the Avon valley had any greater density of population but even here, despite some textile production and the proximity of Salisbury, there was no real concentration of people as elsewhere in the county.

Figure 2/1/2 is also based on the subsidies of 1524-5 and shows the distribution of wealth. There are some interesting contrasts with the density of population although broadly the areas of greatest wealth were also those of the highest population. A notable exception is in the Avon valley which shows a marked concentration of taxable wealth from Christchurch north to Ringwood, Ellingham and Fordingbridge and extending into Wiltshire. The



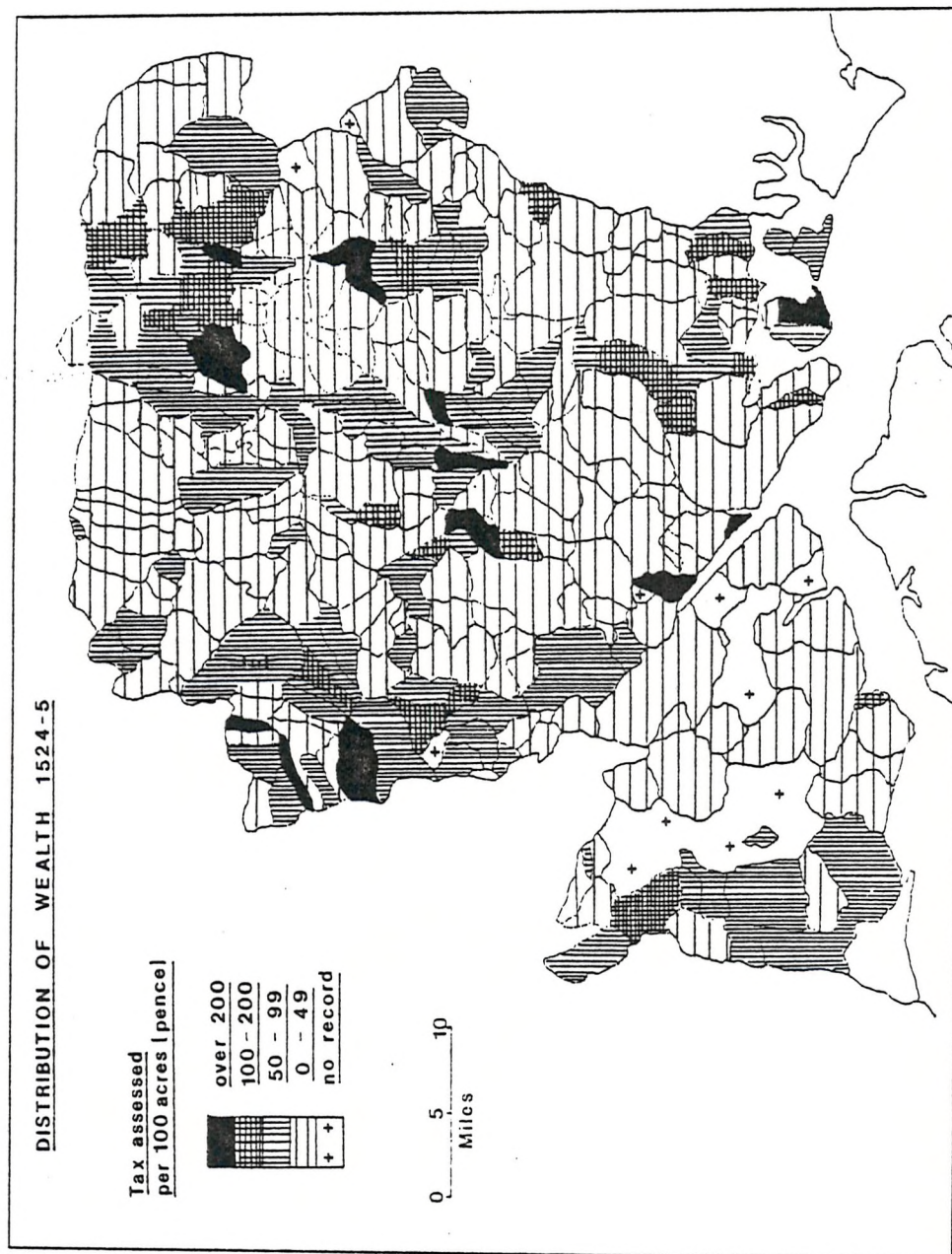


Figure 2/1/2

river valley possessed no real density of population but it was clearly a relatively prosperous region in stark contrast to the coastline of both south Dorset and south West Hampshire. In the south east of the county the reverse was true for although a large number of taxpayers were concentrated in the area it was not especially wealthy indicating that whilst population was beginning to be attracted to the Portsmouth region they had yet to impart any real prosperity to the countryside. It also tends to suggest that the mixed agriculture on the gravels and sands south of the chalklands was less profitable than the larger scale sheep and grain culture further north. In fact many parishes towards the agricultural heart of the county which showed up very sparsely in terms of population density appear as relatively well off. Stoke Charity and Farrington, for example both paid over 100 pence per 100 acres and were relatively better off than several of the more populated southern parishes. This was caused by a number of very large single payments from particularly wealthy landholders in these rural areas and, in fact, probably does not mean that the bulk of the population were any better off. The lower Test valley was another region where the concentration of population was not paralleled by noticeable prosperity and parishes like Michelmersh, Timsbury and Millbrook all paid less than fifty pence per 100 acres and Romsey parish was only slightly better off. Further up the Test valley, however, the picture changes and the north west corner of Hampshire was an area of considerable wealth in both town and country as well as a relatively densely populated part of the county. Rural parishes like Over Wallop, Thruxton and Appleshaw all paid over 200 pence per 100 acres and there is an obvious clustering of wealth in the Andover region and in particular on the Wiltshire border. This was part of a major textile manufacturing belt in both counties and it clearly resulted in greater population and taxpaying capacity in this part of Hampshire. The same was true of the other region with significant

urban and rural cloth production, the north, around Basingstoke, where there is an even greater clustering of wealthy parishes. The hamlets to the north and east of Basingstoke nearly all paid over 100 pence per 100 acres representing the greatest concentration of wealth in the whole county. In fact, looking at the county as a whole, the main taxable riches of Hampshire lay in the sparsely inhabited downland countryside with its few wealthy farmers, and the more densely peopled cloth regions on the Wiltshire and Berkshire borders. South of Winchester the only significant payments came from Portsmouth and Southampton and even in this latter example, although the town helped to create a fairly high concentration of population in neighbouring parishes like Millbrook and South Stoneham, these were among the poorest villages in the whole county. Thus whilst it is broadly true that the distribution of population and of taxable wealth were alike there are significant local differences related to the economies of individual communities.

#### Urban Population

Looking at the towns more specifically, the accuracy of the subsidies immediately comes into question. There is no simple explanation for the appearance or non-appearance of names in the tax lists. Cornwall assumed that the changes were largely due to under registration but T.H. Hollingsworth minimised such effects and concluded that "death and migration were responsible for almost all the differences" in the composition of the lists.<sup>1</sup> Probably all these factors, namely administrative inadequacy combined with deliberate evasion, death and population movement both into and out of the area, each had an effect. The individuals who appear on the 1525 list for Fareham town, for instance, but not

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1. J. Cornwall, "An Elizabethan Census", The Records of Buckinghamshire, Vol. 16, (1959) pp. 258-73; T. H. Hollingsworth, Historical Demography, (Cambridge, 1969), p. 51.



in the 1524 assessment include at least eight names which were recorded in the earlier muster book of 1523 and similar examples could be found for other parishes. Their absence from the first tax payment can best be attributed to under registration, either wilful or accidental. Death is clearly the answer in some other cases, as with Nicholas Love who was assessed on £4 in 1524 but who does not appear the year later and was replaced by Elyn Love, widow, taxed on the same amount. Sometimes there is a clear surname connection suggesting that perhaps the head of the household has changed, possibly by a mortality, rather than population movement, as with Thomas Holt of Fareham, listed in 1525 and following in the footsteps of Richard Holt, who had appeared in the earlier lists. However, migration was certainly another factor. It is difficult to establish with much confidence examples of movement within the area but it is quite possible that the Peter Strong who was taxed in Titchfield in 1524 but not 1525 was the same man who appears in Fareham parish in the second list but not the first.

Estimates of total population from the subsidy lists are thus very uncertain and have to be based on several broad and questionable assumptions. However, some attempt to calculate the numbers of urban inhabitants is essential as a base from which to trace urban demographic development in the early modern period. In the tax assessments some households were represented by two or more taxpayers whilst others do not appear at all because they were too poor. The commissioners no doubt had differing interpretations of their orders and the Exchequer was apparently at pains to try and reach some standard code of practice, resulting in a memorandum of 1524 which may have prompted some reassessment. Estimates of the number of omissions range from only 9% for Buckingham, Rutland and Sussex to a third at

Leicester and as high as 48.5% at Coventry.<sup>1</sup> In Hampshire Dr. James allowed for a "substantial untaxed group" and assumed that about 30% went unrecorded.<sup>2</sup> These problems are compounded when wives, children and other dependents have to be taken into account. Multipliers proposed for the translation of numbers of taxpayers into total population vary from 4.25 to 6.0.<sup>3</sup> More recently Dr. Patten has advocated the use of a more consistent approach to all the various sources from the subsidy lists to the hearth tax and communicants censuses, involving first the estimation of adult male totals, secondly making an allowance for women and finally assuming that children under sixteen represented 40% of the population.<sup>4</sup> One of the aims of this thesis is to compare populations at different times and therefore this sort of standard method seems to be the most appropriate. Therefore, for the 1524-5 subsidies the total number of taxpayers has been deduced (where two figures survive, the larger has been taken), 25% added to compensate for omissions and then increased by a further 10% to cover those too poor to be taxed. This figure represents adult males and is doubled to account for females and then children allowed for by introducing a multiplier of 1.7. Clearly there are flaws in any approach and many different estimates would emerge if other methods were used.

The estimates are set out in Table 2/1/1 and Figure 2/1/3. Southampton and Winchester stood well ahead of any other urban community, the former an old established and still prosperous port and the latter

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1. J. Cornwall, "English Country Towns", op.cit. pp. 58-60; W.G. Hoskins, "English Provincial Towns in the Early Sixteenth Century", in Provincial England, ed. W.G. Hoskins (London, 1965) p. 83.
  2. T.B. James, thesis, op.cit., p. 29.
  3. W.G. Hoskins, "The Population of an English Village, 1086-1801", in Provincial England, op.cit., p. 188; J.F. Pound, "The Social and Trade Structure of Norwich, 1525-75", Past and Present, 34, (1966), p. 50.
  4. J. Patten, "Population Distribution in Norfolk and Suffolk in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries", Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, 65, (1975), pp. 45-65.

# Ranking of Towns by Population, Assessed Wealth and Average Assessment (1524-5)

<u>Population</u>		<u>Assessed Wealth (£)</u>	<u>Average Assessment (£)</u>
1. Winchester	2913	1. Winchester	1. Ringwood
2. Southampton	1818	2. Southampton	2. Basingstoke
3. Basingstoke	1139	3. Basingstoke	3. Southampton
4. Alton	1164	4. Alton	4. Portsmouth
5. Romsey	1026	5. Portsmouth	5. Alresford
6. Andover	743	6. Ringwood	6. Havant
7. Portsmouth	606	7. Andover	7. Petersfield
8. Kingsclere	557	Romsey	8. Odiham
9. Odiham	552	9. Odiham	9. Lymington
Ringwood	552	10. Kingsclere	10. Alton
11. Alresford	401	11. Alresford	11. Christchurch
12. Christchurch	386	12. Christchurch	12. Andover
13. Fareham	347	13. Petersfield	13. Kingsclere
14. Bishops Waltham	337	14. Havant	14. Winchester
15. Petersfield	318	15. Lymington	15. Stockbridge
16. Havant	303	16. Whitchurch	16. Whitchurch
17. Whitchurch	293	17. Bishops Waltham	17. Romsey
18. Fordingbridge	264	18. Fareham	18. Bishops Waltham
19. Lymington	249	19. Fordingbridge	19. Fordingbridge
20. Stockbridge	152	20. Stockbridge	20. Fareham
21. Gosport	78	21. Gosport	21. Gosport

Table 2/1/1

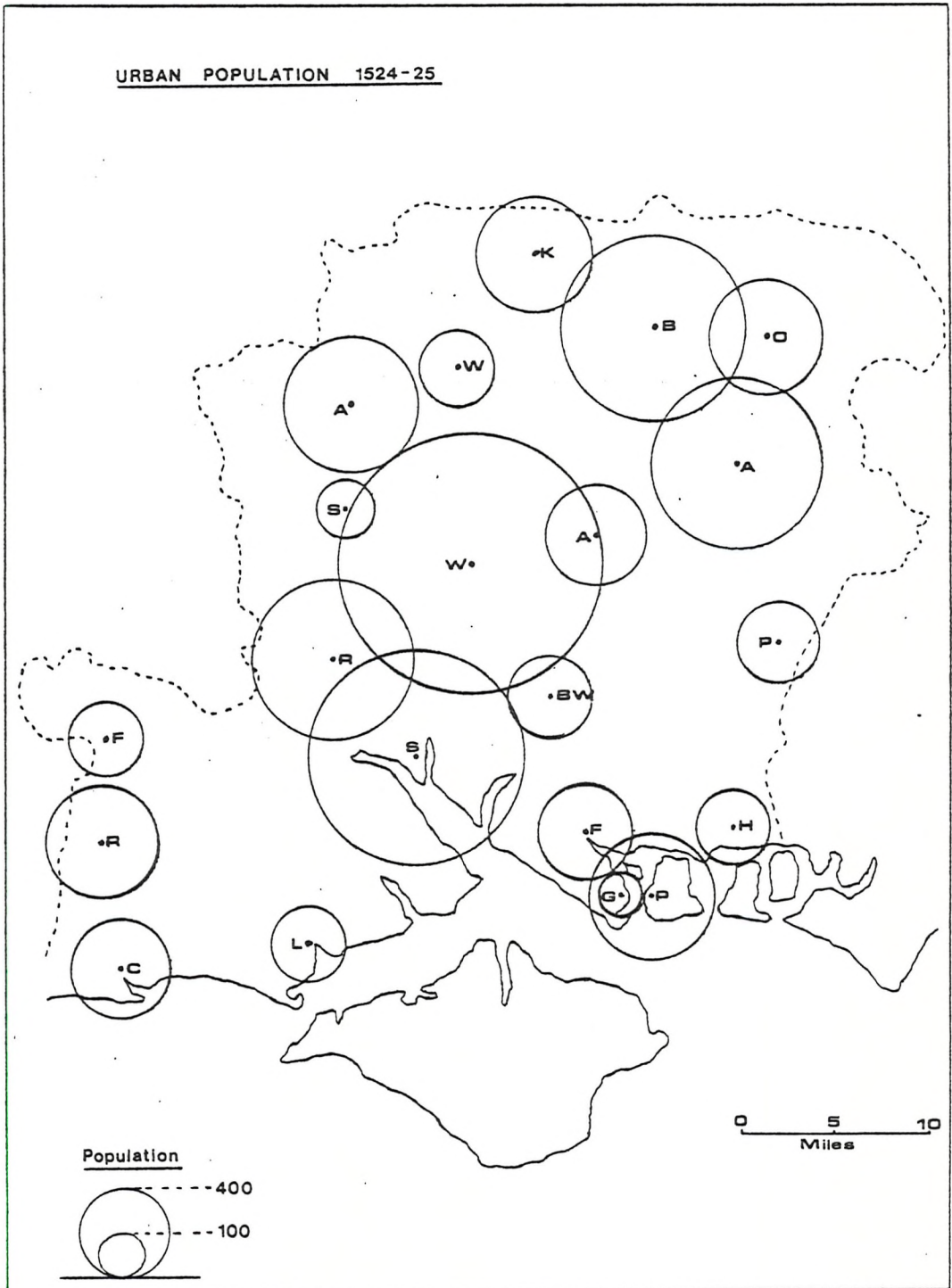


Figure 2/1/3

a manufacturing, administrative and cathedral city. Their functions were diverse and they could support large numbers of inhabitants. There followed a group of market towns including Alton, Basingstoke and Romsey which also had over 1000 people. All these possessed minor textile trades and were sited on the major routeways of the county. Near the bottom of the scale was a range of very small towns with perhaps as few as 200-300 people. The definition of these settlements as "urban" is open to question for there were several of the larger villages, such as Titchfield, which more than equalled their population, but in the main they can be distinguished by a range of marketing and manufacturing functions which marked them off from rural society. At the very bottom of the range are some communities for which the title 'town' is most certainly inappropriate. Many counties had decayed or decaying market towns and Stockbridge must be counted as such in Hampshire for it most certainly had a population of under 150. Gosport is included in the list in view of its subsequent growth but in the 1520s it was a minor tithing within Alverstoke parish recording just sixteen taxpayers.

The subsidy lists are undoubtedly a very imperfect source for the determination of overall population but it may be concluded that about 65360 people lived in the county during the 1520s, 4731 (7.2%) dwelt in Southampton and Winchester and 9667 lived in the market towns and Portsmouth. Overall the urban population represented just over 22% of the county total, a very similar figure to that of at least 20% reached for East Anglia.<sup>1</sup> Put another way, about one in five Hampshire men lived in some sort of urban society and, further, about two-thirds of these townsmen lived in smaller market communities. The significance of these

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1. *ibid.*, p. 54.

small towns to Hampshire's population needs no further re-emphasis.

As would be expected, the aggregate assessed wealth of a town tended to reflect its size and functional diversity with Winchester and Southampton again outstanding (Table 2/1/1). However, there are some interesting contrasts. Ringwood, within the wealthy but underpopulated Avon valley, was only the ninth most populous town but was sixth in wealth. Two towns with marine interests were both rather better off than their population would suggest, notably Lymington and Portsmouth. In the first case the local carrying trade and salt production may have been profitable on a local scale though not sufficiently labour intensive to generate a major concentration of population. As for Portsmouth, its number of inhabitants is never easy to judge with a large amount of casual labour in the dockyard and it is likely that, although the town was still comparatively small in the 1520s, the estimate of its population is the most suspect in the list and more likely it ranked with places like Alton and Romsey. Fareham was clearly a very poor town for it drops from thirteenth in terms of population to eighteenth in wealth, a reflection of the poverty apparent throughout the mixed agricultural belt from Southampton to Portsmouth and the absence of any well-developed manufacturing in the town.

When the towns are arranged according to the average assessment a completely different picture emerges and one which gives some sort of indication of the general levels of wealth within the community, though both methods of observing wealth are vulnerable to distortion by one very large payment. The two top positions are both filled by market towns, Ringwood and Basingstoke, both of which had a higher average individual wealth than Southampton. These two towns were situated in two of the richest parts of the countryside and Basingstoke in particular had a more varied economy with relatively developed manufacturing and service trades compared with some of the smaller

boroughs. There is no apparent correlation between average taxable capacity and urban population so that although the larger centres had higher aggregate wealth the inhabitants of smaller towns like Alresford and Havant actually possessed, on average, more goods than their counterparts in more populous settlements like Andover or Romsey. Winchester shows up very poorly in fourteenth place with an average assessment of under £4. Romsey also appears to have had a relatively poor population despite its size and functional diversity and the plight of Fareham is confirmed with its inhabitants, on average, about three times worse off than their counterparts in Ringwood or Basingstoke. Noticeably the three smallest communities are still found in the bottom four in terms of average wealth and clearly these were, indeed, poor under-developed settlements and only at this end of the scale did urban size actually coincide with individual wealth. Otherwise the average inhabitant of a market town could certainly hold his own with taxpayers from communities of county status like Southampton or Winchester.

### Aliens

The subsidy also enables something to be said about the number of foreigners in the small towns of Hampshire (Table 2/1/2). Most communities had some aliens although the groups were never particularly large in aggregate and did not approach the size of the overseas communities in Southampton or Winchester. Only at Lymington and Fordingbridge did they exceed 10% of the taxpaying population. Not surprisingly, they were concentrated near the coast in the south of the county and northern towns like Andover and Basingstoke only recorded one alien taxpayer each. The strongest settlement seems to have been in the south east and south west. At Portsmouth there were nine aliens charged for tax including one Fernando, a Spaniard, who was assessed at 26s 8d,

Alien Population 1524-5

	<u>Number identified in Subsidy</u>	<u>Percentage of Total Taxpayers</u>
Alresford	-	-
Alton	3	1.2
Andover	1	0.7
Basingstoke	1	0.4
Christchurch	5	6.3
Fareham	4	5.6
Fordingbridge	6	11.1
Gosport	1	6.3
Havant	-	-
Kingsclere	2	1.8
Lymington	8	15.7
Odiham	-	-
Petersfield	-	-
Ringwood	8	7.1
Romsey	8	3.8
Stockbridge	1	3.2
Bishops Waltham	4	5.8
Whitchurch	-	-
<hr/>		
Portsmouth	9	7.3
Winchester	47	12.3

Table 2/1/2



and five Dutchmen. Nearby Fareham had four Frenchmen in the town, three of whom paid on 40s in goods and the other on 20s. The Avon valley saw a particular concentration. There were eight alien families in Ringwood all of whom were poor and paid a rate of 8d assessed on 20s in wages. One called John Pynhell was a Channel Islander from Alderney but six of the others were Normans. One, simply recorded as James, was a servant to Robert Egeant and it is likely that the others were similarly employed. At Christchurch there were two Normans, one Frenchman and two Bretons and with the exception of Gylham Petite, who was rated at £4 in goods, they all paid 8d, the minimum sum for an alien. Frenchmen and Normans were also found at Fordingbridge where they made up 11% of the population, a sizeable minority group within the town. Proportionally the largest alien settlement was at Lymington where the eight taxpayers constituted over 15% of the total and they may have been attracted by the maritime activities of the town. There were four Normans, three Bretons and a single Fleming, one Peter Fysher whose surname may give some clue to the occupation of some of these aliens on the south west coast. They were, however, all very poor and each one paid at the lowest rate. Throughout the market towns where aliens are described by their country of origin it is always France, Brittany or Normandy. Only one Fleming was recorded and none of the Dutchmen and Spaniards who were found in Portsmouth. Nor were there the Germans and other North Europeans who settled in Winchester or the Italians of Southampton. Also, they were almost always very poor wage earners and the highest assessment for an alien in a small town was Nicholas Plover at Romsey who was rated at 10 marks.

Aliens from within the British Isles are harder to identify and only one is specifically designated, one John Hall, at Bishops Waltham, a 'Skot'. There were certainly large numbers of

Welshmen in Winchester and Southampton and several of the surnames in the nearby market communities like Romsey and Alresford would suggest that some Welsh families had also settled in some of the small towns, but these may have been second or third generation movements, men whose roots were very much in Hampshire, and only their names betray a Welsh ancestry.

### Wealth

The subsidy lists facilitate a close study of the structure of wealth within the urban population (Tables 2/1/3, 2/1/4 and 2/1/5). In almost every case the largest group of taxpayers was those assessed at below £2, usually labourers who paid on wages of £1 per annum. Only in Lyminster and Ringwood were these people less apparent. Otherwise in each town, large or small, it is clear that the very poor at the bottom of the tax scale were the most numerous section of the population. The assessments record payments of £1 in goods and £1 in wages but there was no material difference between these categories and in both cases 4d had to be paid. Many of these poorest taxpayers were clearly servants and appear clustered together in the lists after the assessment of some wealthier inhabitant. In Romsey, for example, John Bull was charged on £30, the third most wealthy man in the town and he is followed in the subsidy by five taxpayers, four of them wage earners. Not all wage earners paid on just £1 and several earned £2 per year although these assessments were much less common. Men like John Hargson, William Sandley and Thomas Browne in Romsey were 40s wage earners and were on an economic par with the large numbers who paid on £2 in goods. These people were in almost all cases the next most numerous group although they made up a much smaller section of the population than the £1 wage earners. In some of the smallest market towns the £2 group was of the same size or only a little larger than the £3-5 section. At Whitchurch, Lyminster, Alresford and Odiham these tax brackets were very similar

Distribution of Goods in Subsidy 1524-5

Number of Taxpayers (£)

	Under 2	2	3-5	6-9	10-19	20-39	40+	Total
Alresford	32	18	14	6	5	5	2	82
Alton (parish)	139	50	31	9	10	14	7	260
Andover	60	42	20	7	13	10	-	152
Basingstoke	107	79	33	13	17	12	13	274
Christchurch	42	15	13	3	1	3	2	79
Fareham	37	23	6	4	1	-	-	71
Fordingbridge	24	21	5	2	2	-	-	54
Gosport	13	3	-	-	-	-	-	16
Havant	29	4	11	5	11	1	1	62
Kingsclere	55	22	14	10	7	4	2	114
Lymington	8	17	16	3	5	1	1	51
Odiham	43	26	20	7	11	3	3	113
Petersfield	29	13	7	6	5	3	2	65
Ringwood	28	31	18	12	12	11	1	113
Romsey	118	47	14	15	8	6	2	210
Stockbridge	21	2	4	2	1	-	1	31
Bishops Waltham	34	17	10	3	3	2	-	69
Whitchurch	30	10	10	4	4	2	-	60
Portsmouth	40	27	21	15	14	4	3	124
Southampton	177	65	42	18	28	14	10	354
Winchester *	351	160	118	22	37	16	14	718

\* ex Rosen

Table 2/1/3

Percentage Distribution of Goods

	£ 1	£ 2	£ 3-19	£ 20+	Total	£ 1	£ 2	£ 3-19	£ 20+	£ Total
Alresford	39	22	30.5	8.5	100	7.2	8.1	36.2	48.5	100
Alton (parish)	53.5	19.2	19.2	8.1	100	11.1	8.0	22.6	58.4	100.1
Andover	39.5	27.6	26.4	6.6	100.1	9	12.6	44.5	33.9	100
Basingstoke	39.1	28.8	22.9	9.1	99.9	6.2	9.2	24.5	60.2	100.1
Christchurch	53.2	19	21.6	6.3	100.1	11.6	8.5	22.3	57.6	100
Fareham	52.1	32.4	15.5	-	100	25.7	31.9	42.4	-	100
Fordingbridge	44.4	38.9	16.7	-	100	15.8	36.8	47.4	-	100
Gosport	81.3	18.8	-	-	100.1	68.4	31.6	-	-	100
Havant	46.8	6.5	43.5	3.2	100	8.6	2.4	63.5	25.5	100
Kingsclere	48.2	19.3	27.2	5.3	100	11.5	9.2	42.6	36.7	100
Lymington	15.7	33.3	47.1	4	100.1	-	13.6	55.2	31.2	100
Odiham	38.1	23.0	33.6	5.4	100.1	7.6	9.2	44.3	39.1	100.2
Petersfield	44.6	20	27.7	7.7	100	8.6	7.7	34.3	49.4	100
Ringwood	24.8	27.4	37.1	10.6	99.9	3.9	8.6	43.7	43.9	100.1
Romsey	56.2	22.4	17.6	3.9	100.1	17.7	14.1	36.7	31.5	100
Stockbridge	67.7	6.5	22.6	3.2	100	18.8	3.6	36.6	41.1	100.1
Bishops Waltham	49.3	24.6	23.1	2.9	99.9	16.2	16.7	47.5	19.6	100
Whitchurch	50	16.7	30.1	3.3	100.1	14.4	9.6	56.7	19.2	99.9
Portsmouth	32.3	21.8	40.3	5.6	100	5.4	7.2	47.2	40.2	100
Southampton	50	18.4	24.9	6.8	100.1	8	5.9	30.2	55.9	100
Winchester	48.9	22.3	24.7	4.1	100	12.7	11.5	36.9	38.9	100

Table 2/1/4

Value of Goods (nearest £)

	Under 2	2	3-5	6-9	10-19	20-39	40+	Total
Alresford	32	36	62	36	64	110	107	447
Alton (parish)	139	100	107	61	114	355	375	1251
Andover	60	84	70	48	179	226	-	667
Basingstoke	107	158	124	91	206	270	765	1721
Christchurch	41	30	50	19	10	64	140	354
Fareham	37	46	23	27	11	-	-	144
Fordingbridge	18	42	18	12	24	-	-	114
Gosport	13	6	-	-	-	-	-	19
Havant	29	8	44	31	139	26	60	337
Kingsclere	55	44	49	74	80	80	95	477
Lymington	-	34	64	19	55	28	50	250
Odiham	43	52	73	48	130	79	143	568
Petersfield	29	26	27	39	50	67	100	338
Ringwood	28	62	61	82	171	276	40	720
Romsey	118	94	52	99	94	130	80	667
Stockbridge	21	4	17	14	10	-	46	112
Bishops Waltham	33	34	38	20	39	40	-	204
Whitchurch	30	20	39	29	50	40	-	208
Portsmouth	40	54	75	97	180	100	200	746
Southampton	177	130	178	129	362	293	944	2213
Winchester	354	320	426	160	438	361	720	2779

Table 2/1/5

in size and at Havant and Stockbridge the £3-5 group is actually larger. This pattern, however, was much less typical of the larger market towns where the £2 goods and wage assessments made up a very large group in their own right, something which can be seen in towns like Romsey, Andover and Basingstoke. Most of the £2 assessments probably represented very humble craftsmen and husbandmen, little better off than the very poorest group and most likely having to supplement their income by wage earnings as needs be. Their concentration in the more populous communities suggests that this combination of occupations found its best expression only in the largest markets and in towns where cloth manufacture could offer some by-employment.

Those assessed at £3-5 represented a slightly better off group of small craftsmen although not in the possession of any conspicuous wealth. In the smallest of the market towns they represented a significant group within the population, little differentiated from the £2 assessments. At Christchurch, for instance, there were only two less people charged on £3-5 than were in the £2 bracket. The larger market towns had much more in common with Southampton and Winchester where the £2 group was significantly larger than the next most wealthy category. Descriptions such as "middle class" are never the most acceptable in social analysis but nevertheless Cornwall reckoned that the taxpayers charged between £3 and £9 represented "a kind of lower middle class", with those assessed at £6-9 being particularly well established.<sup>1</sup> In the Hampshire towns there is little difference in the numerical strength between the "lesser middle class" taxed at £6-9 and the "substantial middle class" charged on £10-19. Both groups would have been made up of craftsmen-shopkeepers and farmers and the higher level included several important tradesmen and lesser yeomen. Towns like

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1. J. Cornwall, "English Country Towns", op.cit., p. 63.

Alresford, Petersfield and Whitchurch had about the same numbers in each of these categories. By contrast, Alton, Andover and Basingstoke had notable concentrations of taxpayers assessed at £10-19, inhabitants who were often important in providing wealth and employment within the towns. This was a feature they shared with Southampton and Winchester both of which also had more people in the upper rather than the lower of these middling groups. Poor towns like Fareham and Christchurch show a marked absence of these upper middle class taxpayers and this may go some way towards explaining the relative lack of wealth in these communities.

This point is re-emphasised by those taxed at over £20, people who were marked out for payments at double the rate of those lower in the social scale and representing the most prosperous traders, yeomen and gentlemen. These relatively wealthy inhabitants were concentrated in the larger towns like Andover, Basingstoke, Alton and Ringwood as well as Southampton and Winchester. Only the very smallest boroughs actually had none of these taxpayers but in most of the market towns there were less than five such men. The significance of these wealthier people, with the custom and employment that they created, is stressed by Dr. Rosen who reasoned that much of the relative poverty of early modern Winchester was due to their small numbers in the city compared with other county towns.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, it is interesting that although the larger settlements of Southampton and Winchester were, as would be expected, numerically well in excess of the lesser towns in the other tax groups, when it came to these important entrepreneurial elements of the population Alton had fourteen, the same as Southampton, and Basingstoke with twelve and Ringwood with eleven had only slightly less than the two largest towns in the county. It helps to explain not only the

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1. A.B. Rosen, thesis, op.cit., pp. 25-7.

concentration of wealth in some of the larger market towns but also shows how in these upper echelons of society the Hampshire market community could include men on a par with the wealthiest groups of Winchester and Southampton. At the very top of the wealth scale were the taxpayers assessed on £40 and above, men who had to pay in the "anticipation" before the main subsidy. These were by far the richest inhabitants in urban society and normally only one or two individuals were found in each of the market towns. Some of the very smallest communities had no such taxpayers, who were usually local gentry or particularly successful merchants. Only Basingstoke had any notable group of such inhabitants but otherwise these sections of the population were centred in Southampton and Winchester.

Perhaps the structure of wealth and population is best illustrated by the percentage distribution of goods. In both Southampton and Winchester about half the taxpayers fell within the poorest £1 bracket and although some of the market towns were in excess of this, some of the most wealthy market towns had significantly less of these poor wage earners, constituting about two-fifths of the population in Andover and Basingstoke and less than a quarter in Ringwood. Overall between a third and a half of all town dwellers came from the wage earning categories yet in most towns they possessed less than one-tenth of the aggregate wealth. In Basingstoke, for example, where they constituted 39% of the population, the £1 assessments represented only 6% of total taxable capacity. This unequal distribution of wealth was a feature of the main towns as well as the largest markets, and seems to have been present throughout all urban society for it was equally apparent among some of the very smallest boroughs such as Whitchurch where half the population possessed only 14% of the wealth. The £2 taxpayers also owned a less than proportionate share of goods. They



tended to represent about a fifth of the population throughout the towns, only rising markedly in Fareham and Fordingbridge, and it was only in these towns as well as Gosport, in each case communities totally devoid of any significant middle and upper class, that they enjoyed much over one-tenth of the wealth.

The middle classes are particularly interesting. Their proportion of the population could vary quite widely from 15% in Fareham to 47% at Lymington but in most of the larger market towns, as well as Winchester and Southampton, they represented about a quarter of taxpayers. However, in some of the small boroughs they actually held the largest share of urban wealth. At Andover they held 44.5% of goods compared with 33.9% in the £20 and over group. Clearly it was not true in every case - Basingstoke is a notable exception - but in towns like Havant, Kingsclere, Romsey and some of the other smaller markets the majority of urban wealth was in the hands of a well-entrenched middle class. This was not true of Southampton or Winchester, although in the latter case the proportions of goods held by the two top categories differed by only 2%.

The groups taxed on £20 and over represented only a tiny proportion of the urban population, the highest figure being 10.6% at Ringwood, but elsewhere, in the market towns as well as Winchester and Southampton, they made up usually about a twentieth of the inhabitants. Yet nowhere did they enjoy less than 19% of the total urban wealth and in most cases they possessed about half of all taxable goods and land. The market communities were no more egalitarian than the larger towns, for just as 6.8% of the population owned 55.9% of wealth in Southampton, so in a sizeable borough like Basingstoke 9.1% of the taxpayers were responsible for 60.2% of goods and in a smaller settlement like Petersfield 7.7% of inhabitants were assessed on 49.4% of taxable capacity. Clearly the grossly unequal

distribution of wealth was a feature of all kinds of urban population with the mass of inhabitants possessing a very small share of goods. What is equally obvious, however, is that for many of the market towns taxable capacity was concentrated within the middle classes without any well developed £20 plus group while the larger communities like Southampton and Winchester and a much smaller group of market settlements saw most goods in the hands of the very richest categories.

The enormous range in wealth must have been particularly obvious in some of the smallest towns as at Stockbridge where John Mody was assessed at £46 in goods and this one man held 41% of the aggregate goods within the community. The next most wealthy taxpayer was John Algur who was charged on £10. Meanwhile twenty-one other men (67% of the total) were assessed at only £1 in goods or wages.

Although many wills survive from these years almost no inventories are extant for the 1520s which can be matched with entries in the tax assessments in order to assess more precisely what the different ratings meant in terms of living standards. Further, the wills that do remain are almost all from the wealthier groups within urban society. At Petersfield the testament of John Frye was made in 1527, two years after the subsidy. He was taxed on £10 in goods, one of the wealthiest men in the town although relatively poor by the standards of larger cities. The wills shows him to be a householder and to have occupied more than one piece of land with at least two barns. Among the beneficiaries were the local church, Winchester Cathedral and the local Trinity Gild, and in his case it seems certain that the £10 assessment reflected a very comfortable standard of living significantly better than that experienced

lower down the tax scale. Clearly only wills made within three or four years of the assessment are likely to shed much light on the actual meaning of the assessments and this greatly restricts the information available. However, at Romsey, six wills can be matched with tax entries and, interestingly, they include some of the very lowest assessments, although nothing can be said about those too poor to be taxed. John Wytten was assessed on £1, at the bottom of the tax scale. As with his wealthier neighbours he made small payments to his local church and to Winchester Cathedral although nothing was said about the local socio-religious guilds from which he may have been excluded on the grounds of his poverty. His personal possessions were divided between his wife Margaret and his daughter Anne and among the items passed on to his child were cooking utensils including a kettle, basins and pottingers, towels, napkins, sheets and pillowberes, and a spruce coffer. The goods given to his wife were not listed but they are likely to have been of a similar kind and they indicate a fairly extensive range of basic furniture and household equipment. No mention was made of any tools for work and it may be that he was a wage earner even though the assessment was on goods, in which case, although he clearly possessed little or nothing of any great value, his household seems to have been functional and not quite as spartan as would be expected from such a low tax rating. Life may have been more arduous, in fact, for Richard Goldring who paid on £2 in goods and left all his goods to his wife but added in his will that "as God knows my debts are so sore, I suppose she will enjoy no part of it". Christopher George was another assessed at £2 and his will, made in 1525, which again lists in detail many of his bequests, shows a fair degree of affluence within what is commonly assumed to be a poor tax bracket. As was customary, he left sums to Romsey church

and Winchester Cathedral, 3s 4d in the first case, 20d in the second and in both cases well in excess of the 2d legacies of John Wyttten. There follows a string of legacies which make a mockery of the £2 tax rating. He left £100 to the children of Symon Alexander, gilt goblets and silver spoons to the Lady Abbess and nuns at Romsey and the rest of his "golde" was to be appraised in order to pay his debts. He left his black furred gown, his doublet, his great horse and two kine to his brother John and his fox furred gown, shirts and sword went to one John Ray. Another fox furred gown as well as a gold ring went to the rector of Romsey and a damask jerkin and black satin doublet went to a friend in Winchester. Clearly Christopher George was no poor man and his tax rating at just £2 in goods represents both fraudulent tax evasion and a clear warning that the assessments cannot always be taken at face value. Neither John Wyttten nor Christopher George, both in the two lowest tax categories seem to have been the paupers commonly associated with these ratings. Other wills are much less informative but that of John Ap Rice (Apris) who was taxed on £6 in goods shows an affluence in gowns and coats as well as furniture - he had, for example, a new folding table which he left to his sister - which would not be expected among poorer inhabitants of the town and true to his "middling" tax status. The example of Romsey suggests, therefore, that the lowest tax ratings of £1 and £2 were not necessarily very clearly differentiated from the lower middle classes rated from £3-9 and there must have been much overlap between these groups which represented a large majority of the taxpaying population. It was, perhaps, only at the very uppermost levels in the tax hierarchy that men were marked off from their neighbours in terms of wealth and standard of living.

Wills and deeds from other market towns support the Romsey evidence and leave little doubt that many people who paid on £1

or £2 were in fact quite comfortably situated and probably sharply differentiated from the poorest, untaxed inhabitants. At Christchurch, John Plowman, a 20s wage earner was able in 1527 to acquire a lease for a tenement on the south side of Castle Street for 10s per annum. Among the £2 taxpayers at Lymington there were some very substantial men including William Holyday who occupied a mill and was able to leave livestock and cash to his dependents. At Alton Richard Clerke's presence in this tax group is almost as remarkable as that of Christopher George in Romsey for he was apparently a prominent clothier in the town. He left his home and dyehouse to his wife but then his will continues, "I geve and bequeithe to my ii daughters Margerie and Alys my ii houses by the Clere and my house in Normandie to Johane my daughter". Clearly his property holdings were extensive and he can hardly have been classified as poor. The degree of wealth found among these lower taxpaying categories serves to cast yet more doubts on the numbers omitted from the records for if the poor people were not among the £1-2 group then they must, indeed, have been completely left out. It may also suggest that the £1-2 taxpayer in the smaller market town was relatively better off in real terms than his counterpart in the larger county town.

At the other end of the scale the wills certainly testify to the wealth enjoyed by those who paid on goods of over £20. One such man was Ingram Baker of New Alresford who was assessed at £66 13s 4d, one of the wealthiest men in the whole of Hampshire and the owner of several tenements in the town as well as his own home and a dyehouse. Another was William Pycke of Andover who was rated at £20. He was able to leave a sum of £20 to be given to his daughter at her wedding and left other "lands, rents and tenements" to his son Robert. Clearly men who fell into this tax category represented significant property holders in their

towns able to rent out land and buildings to the poorer sections of the population and fulfilling a similar social and economic role to men of similar status in Southampton or Winchester. In both market and county towns the £20 plus taxpayers, whose wealth was insignificant compared with leading townsmen in London or the great provincial capitals, were pre-eminent in local society.

They were not, however, necessarily among the rulers of their respective towns. At Christchurch in the 1520s the Berkeleys and the Imberleys were assessed at £40 and £24 respectively, but their names do not appear among the list of mayor and burgesses in 1527. The mayor, John Berell, paid on just £5 and other burgesses like Robert Farrant and John Frayle paid for only £6 and £10. The wealthiest was probably Thomas Hancocke assessed at £20 in goods but these men who were active in small town government were, it seems, not always the wealthiest people in urban society and, indeed, were often little better off than those in the lower tax brackets.

#### Occupations

Information regarding the occupations of the taxpayers is usually very poor for the small towns - hence the importance of the Fareham evidence examined at the end of this section. It is possible, however, to reach some conclusions for another Hampshire market town and one of a very different character, namely Basingstoke, because of occupational evidence derived from particularly complete court records for 1524.<sup>1</sup> These cover fines levied on 22 specifically urban occupations embracing 158 different individuals. 93 of these people can be matched with entries on the 1525 subsidy list and thus it is possible to identify about a third of the total number of taxpayers for Basingstoke town. Although some fines were levied on labourers

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1. HRO, 148 M 71 2/7/18.

they numbered only 16 and clearly the majority of those for whom no occupation is known were either wage labourers or engaged in agriculture as husbandmen or yeomen. Other occupations are also clearly missing, such as butchers. The 93 people for whom occupations and tax ratings are known covered nineteen different forms of employment - no matches can be made for the fishmongers, smiths and tilers listed in the court record - and are set out in Table 2/1/6 with the average and range of assessments.

Basingstoke was an important clothmaking community with a population of between 1000 and 1400, the third most populous town in the county and much more 'urban' in nature than Fareham. It had at least four innkeepers and twenty-three different tapsters were fined in 1524. Brewers were also important in the town and the food and drink trades clearly assumed far greater numerical significance in this larger centre than in a smaller community. A thriving market on a major routeway to the West enabled greater specialisation within the trades and the numbers who relied exclusively on manufacturing for their livelihood had more in common with a county town or provincial centre than with many humble market communities. Although the list fails to cover all the trades in the town, some sort of urban hierarchy of occupations emerges. Both carpenters identified in Basingstoke were assessed at only 40s reflecting the relative poverty of the building trades in early modern towns and the contrasting average wealth of the weavers and dyers who prepared the cloth with the mercers and drapers who sold it was also typical of textile manufacturing. Only three members of the leather trades have been found. Richard Hove the glover was one of the richest men in the town but the sadler and the shoemaker, who both had tax ratings in the £3-5 bracket, must be included among the less well off of the self-employed

Basingstoke Occupations and Tax Assessments  
(1524-5)

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Number of</u> <u>Examples traced</u>	<u>Average</u> <u>Assessments (£)</u>	<u>Range of</u> <u>Assessments (£)</u>
Baker	4	9.8	5-16
Barber	2	2.0	1 - 3
Brewer	5	14.0	1-40
Carpenter	2	2.0	-
Chandler	1	5.0	-
Draper	3	18.7	16-20
Dyer	2	8.5	1-16
Fuller	25	17.6	1-80
Glover	1	60.0	-
Innkeeper	4	35.0	2-80
Labourer	9	1.9	1 - 6
Mercer	2	50.0	40-60
Miller	2	3.0	1 - 5
Sadler	1	3.0	-
Shoemaker	1	4.0	-
"Singer"	2	25.0	10-40
Tailor	3	3.3	1 - 8
Tapster	13	3.3	1-10
Weaver	11	2.9	1-13

[ Total of sample - 93 taxpayers (approximately  $\frac{1}{3}$  of  
total taxpayers in the town) ]

Table 2/1/6(a)



Occupations and Assessments of the Thirteen Wealthiest  
Inhabitants of Basingstoke (1524-5)

<u>Name</u>	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Assessment(£)</u>
William Noris	"esquire"	100
John Bye	fuller	80
John Belchamber	innkeeper	80
Robert Stocker	fuller	80
Richard Hore	glover	60
William Loker	fuller	60
Richard Ronanger	mercier	60
John Cowslade	innkeeper	45
William Grete	"singer"	40
Thomas Lane	brewer	40
Henry Lee	fuller	40
Robert Peder	mercier	40
John Walker	fuller	40

Table 2/1/6(b)

craftsmen. Slightly more prosperous were the bakers who were all in the middle wealth categories, clearly well established in the town but never aspiring to the wealth enjoyed by some of the dealing interests within Basingstoke. Nor did the millers who, despite control of the vital grain supplies, had an average assessment of just £3.

Within the town there were thirteen people with tax assessments of £40 or above, by far the richest inhabitants of the borough and responsible for almost half the urban wealth. The occupations of all of them are known and they make an interesting contrast with the wealthy elite at Winchester for their composition was very different. At Winchester three of the richest men in the city were "officials", normally lawyers, who served the cathedral or religious houses. They had no parallel in the market town which had little need for their services and such men do not appear in the highest tax group at Basingstoke. Cloth manufacture was important to both towns but its significance was already dwindling in Winchester, reflected by an absence of craftsmen who prepared and finished the cloth from the highest tax assessments, but this was clearly not so in Basingstoke where four of the richest men in the town were fullers. John Bye and Robert Stocker both paid on £80 in goods while in the £20-39 group at least three of the twelve assessments were for other fullers. They were at the heart of the manufacturing process, thickening and preparing cloth before dyeing and their wealth suggests that many of them actually employed weavers, shearmen and dyers and dominated the whole industry. Clearly in a small town like Basingstoke where cloth was of greater relative importance than in Winchester with its functional diversity, the fullers had risen to a much more wealthy position in the community. In both towns the dealers or distributive shopkeepers, like the mercers, were among the highest tax ratings and so were the drink

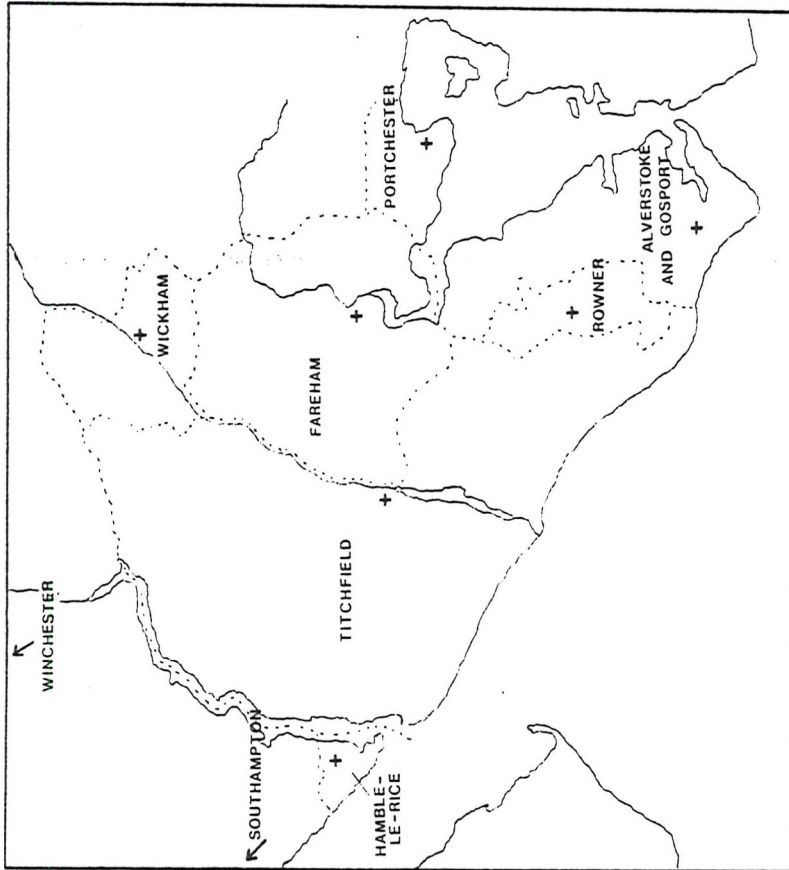
trades with two innkeepers and a brewer among the leading thirteen assessments in Basingstoke.

#### Wealth and Occupations in the Fareham area

The inclusion of information about occupations in the tax return for a small area of southern Hampshire (Figure 2/1/4) presents an opportunity for a detailed analysis of the occupational structure within the population. It also facilitates some comparison between the different occupations and levels of taxable wealth prevalent in urban and rural society. Particular consideration has therefore been given to the society of this part of the county as it appears from the subsidy of 1525.

Figure 2/1/5 shows the proportional distribution of tax assessments for the whole area. It is obvious that almost three-quarters of the taxpayers in this part of Hampshire possessed £2 or less in goods whilst, by comparison, only a very small group were charged on £10 or more. Tables 2/1/7 and 2/1/8 set out the subsidy payments in more detail. The predominance of assessments of £2 or below is reflected throughout the parishes with only Portchester having less than 60% of its taxpayers in this group. In Titchfield those assessed on £1 or £2 made up over 75% of payments but they actually held under 30% of the total taxable wealth in the parish. By contrast, those assessed on goods over £20 held 45% of the wealth yet represented barely 5% of the taxpayers. A similarly inequitable distribution of wealth can be seen throughout most of the area although in the case of Fareham the position was slightly different and the greatest proportion of wealth, 40%, was retained by the lower middle groups.

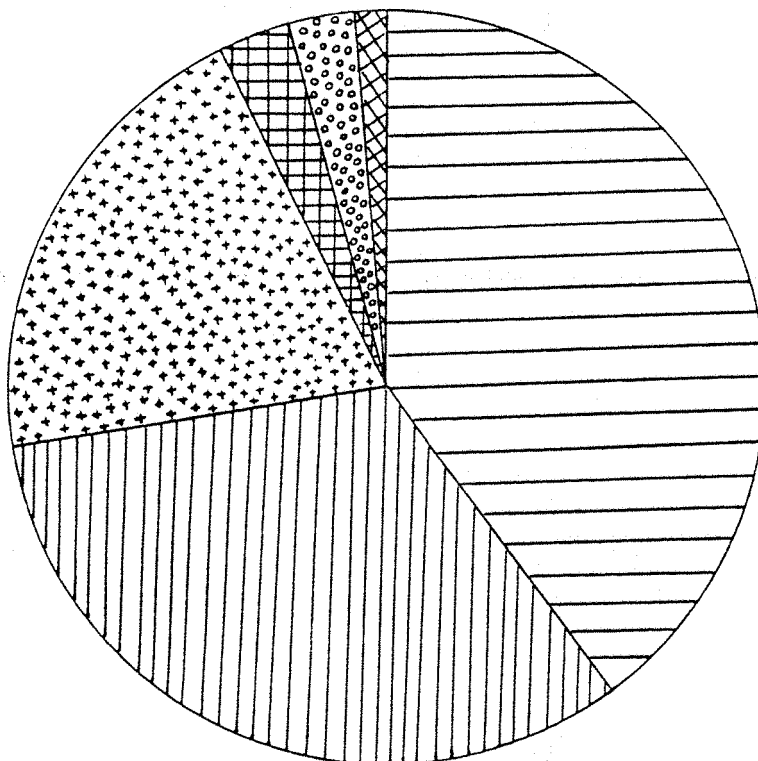
Looking more closely at the subsidy evidence, Figure 2/1/6 shows that there was a wide range of different wealth structures within Fareham parish. The town had over three-quarters of its



THE FAREHAM AREA OF  
SOUTHERN HAMPSHIRE

Figure 2/1/4

Proportional representation of tax assessments in the Hundred of Titchfield, with the township of Hamble-le-Rice, and the Hundred of Fareham, with the townships of Alverstoke, Gosport and Portchester in 1525.



Lands and Annuities

Goods: £1

Goods: £20  
and over

Goods: £2

Goods: £10-19

Goods: £3-9

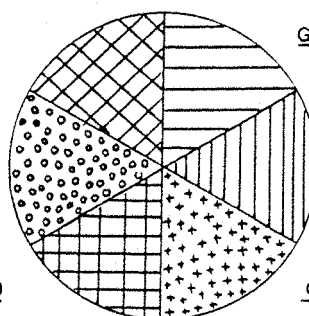


Figure 2/1/5

Distribution of Goods and Lands

Name of Parish	Number of Taxpayers						Total
	Goods: £1	Goods: £2	Goods: £3-9	Goods: £10-19	Goods: £20 or over	Lands and Annuities	
Titchfield	114	53	38	2	9	2	218
Fareham	62	40	28	4	1	1	136
Hamble-Le-Rice	4	9	3	1	1	-	18
Wickham	3	17	9	1	1	1	32
Rowner	1	7	-	-	-	1	9
Alverstoke/ Gosport	13	21	9	4	-	2	49
Portchester	5	17	17	4	2	-	45
Value of Goods and Lands (to nearest £)							
Titchfield	114	106	173	20	290	49	752
Fareham	62	80	128	24	20	4	318
Hamble-Le-Rice	4	18	13	10	20	-	65
Wickham	3	34	33	10	20	160	260
Rowner	1	14	-	-	-	160	175
Alverstoke/ Gosport	13	42	50	54	-	2	161
Portchester	5	34	89	48	50	-	226

Table 2/1/7

Percentage Distribution of Goods and Lands

Name of Parish	Taxpayers						Total
	Goods: £1	Goods: £2	Goods: £3-9	Goods: £10-19	Goods: £20 or over	Lands and Annuities	
Titchfield	52.3	24.3	17.4	0.9	4.2	0.9	100
Fareham	45.6	29.5	20.6	2.9	0.7	0.7	100
Hamble-le-Rice	22.2	50.0	16.6	5.6	5.6	-	100
Wickham	9.5	53.1	28.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	100
Rowner	11.1	77.8	-	-	-	11.1	100
Alverstoke/ Gosport	26.5	42.9	18.3	8.2	-	4.1	100
Portchester	11.1	37.8	37.8	8.9	4.4	-	100
Value of Goods							
Titchfield	15.2	14.1	23.0	2.7	38.6	6.4	100
Fareham	19.5	25.2	40.3	7.5	6.3	1.2	100
Hamble-le-Rice	6.2	27.6	20.0	15.4	30.8	-	100
Wickham	1.2	13.1	12.7	3.8	7.7	61.5	100
Rowner	0.6	8.0	-	-	-	91.4	100
Alverstoke/ Gosport	8.1	26.1	31.1	33.5	-	1.2	100
Portchester	2.2	15.0	39.4	21.2	22.2	-	100

Table 2/1/8

Proportional circles showing the distribution of tax assessments within the parish of Fareham

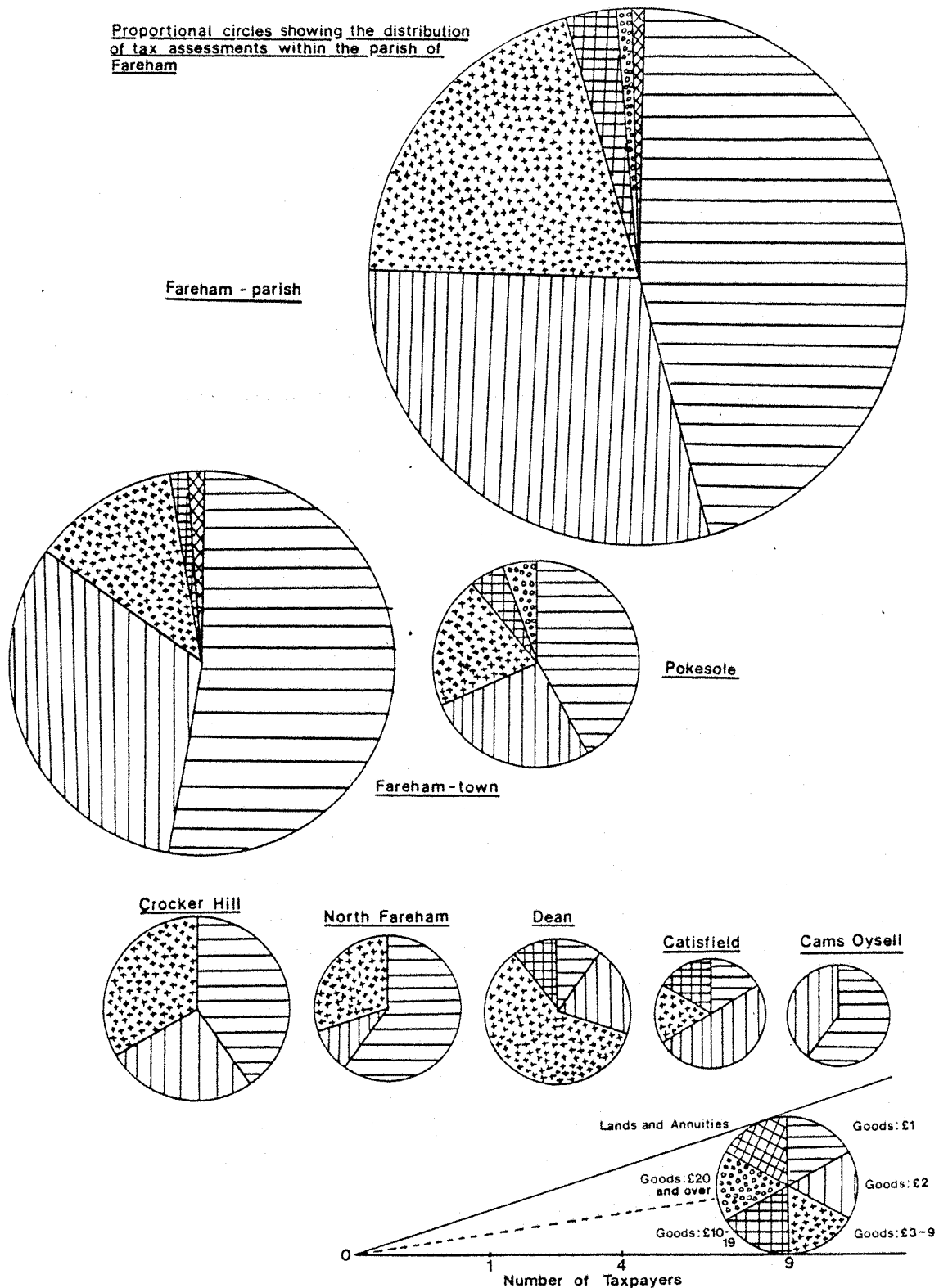


Figure 2/1/6



taxpayers in the £1 and £2 groups, a much higher proportion than in the surrounding hamlets except for Cams Oysell which had only five taxpayers anyway. Outside the towns the wealthier categories assessed at £3 and above usually represented between a quarter and a half of the taxpayers, a higher proportion than for Fareham itself or for the parish as a whole. The tithing of Dean in the north of the parish is, however, something of an exception, with an unusually high proportion of the relatively better off inhabitants. Assessments were certainly lower in the town where the average was £2 0s 7d compared with £2 13s 7d for the surrounds, both figures representing very low wealth but tending to confirm that there was some disparity between Fareham town and the rest of the parish. It seems therefore that, whilst the poor were predominant throughout the parish, they appeared as a higher proportion of the taxpayers within the town and that, whilst the middle classes were everywhere in a minority, their numbers were proportionately greater away from the town itself. As with all market towns, Fareham would have been the focus of the parish - nobody lived more than about three miles from the parish church anyway - and most people in the immediately surrounding hamlets like Pokesole and North Fareham would have gone into the town several times in a week to visit the market to sell what surplus they had produced and to buy the few essentials in which they were not self-sufficient, to visit the church or simply to visit friends and relatives. Dr. Patten has described these inhabitants of isolated holdings or small hamlets around the main centre as being "functionally part of the principal settlement" and there can have been no hard and fast distinction between townsmen and countrymen.<sup>1</sup> Labourers would have worked in both according to the season and the fluctuations of local demand conditions, whilst most of the craftsmen in Fareham would have possessed a smallholding of some sort. However, it remains true that the town itself had a higher proportion

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1. J. Patten, "Village and town: an occupational study", Agricultural History Review, Vol. 20, (1972), p. 8.

of the settled poor than the countryside in its immediate vicinity and it may be concluded that the wealth of a parish like Fareham was concentrated in the lands around the market centre rather than in the trades and inhabitants of the town itself. 45% of the wealth of the parish was assessed in the town itself, 55% of the wealth came from six fewer taxpayers in the rest of the parish. There was always a two-way relationship in Fareham: the town needed the parish, the parish needed the town. Yet in the case of Fareham and possibly other small market towns which lacked the diversified activities seen in rather larger communities and which relied more exclusively on the marketing function, the balance of wealth lay with the countryside and not the town.

Most research on occupational structure in early modern England has been preoccupied with the larger towns, an obvious consequence of the existence for such communities of valuable source material such as freemen's rolls and apprenticeship registers. Yet this type of evidence must be somewhat selective in its coverage for, whilst it clearly helps to determine the leading trades within a town, it can do little to reveal how the craftsmen who figured in such records related numerically to the mass of urban labourers. The study of occupations from a more comprehensive source like the subsidy list, though one which relates to a specific year only, is more informative in this respect. Therefore the tax assessments for this part of Hampshire have two important assets: firstly they deal with the less well understood rural communities and secondly they cover a much higher proportion of the population than is sometimes the case with other types of evidence.

Figure 2/1/7 shows the distribution of occupations into certain groupings. The classification used here is that outlined

Proportional representation of occupations in the Hundred of Titchfield,  
with the township of Hamble-le-Rice, and the Hundred of Fareham, with  
the townships of Alverstoke, Gosport and Portchester in 1525.

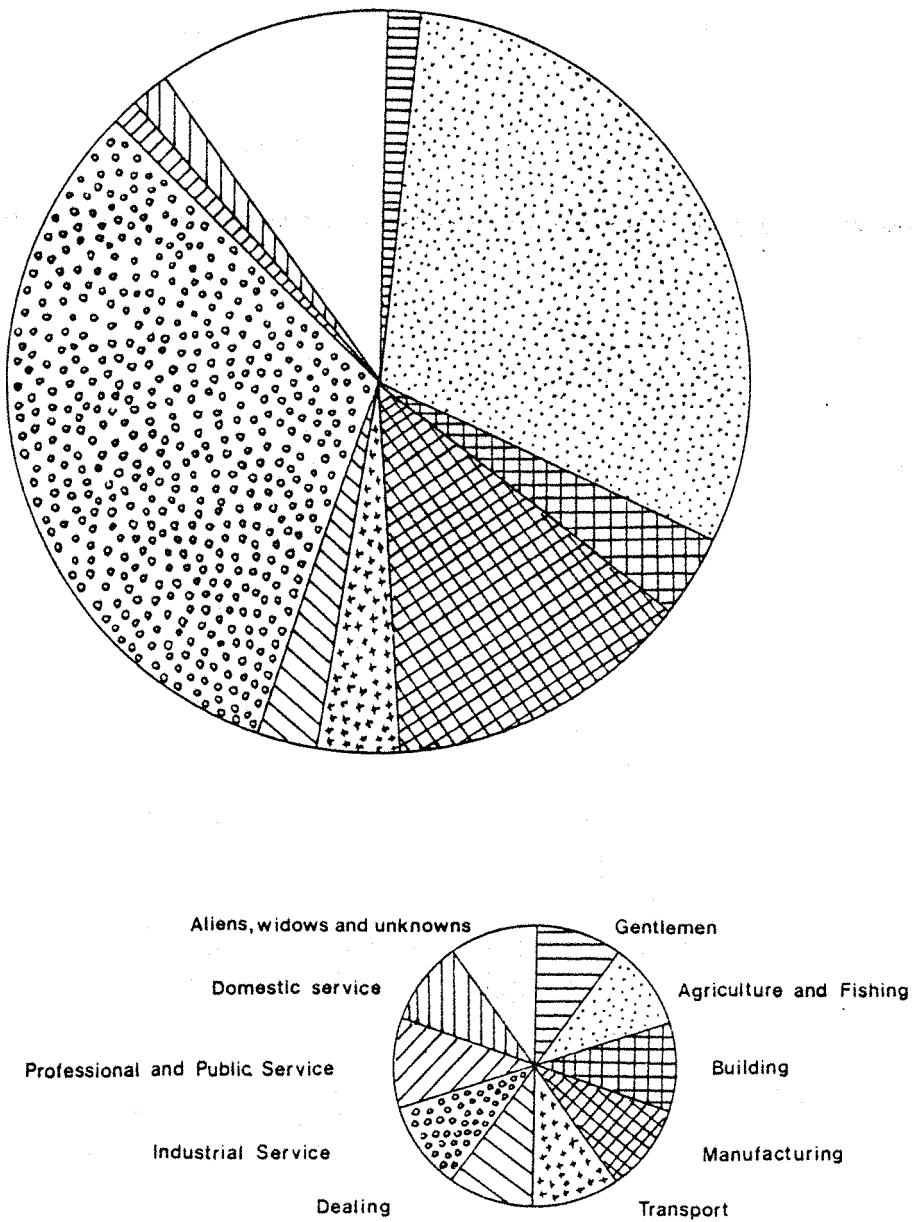


Figure 2/1/7

by W. A. Armstrong which distinguishes ten classes: Gentlemen, Property Owning and Independent; Agriculture and Fishing; Quarrying; Building; Manufacturing; Transport; Dealing; Industrial Service; Professional and Public Service; and Domestic Service.<sup>1</sup> Very clearly the two predominant groups were agriculture and industrial service, the group to which all the taxpayers described as labourers have been allocated. The next largest section belongs to manufacturing and, finally, dealing, transport and building all had roughly the same share of the population. There are 163 so-called labourers in the area representing 32% of the taxpayers, and while some may have worked exclusively within agriculture or a particular trade, it is impossible to be more specific about the activities of such men who probably floated between various forms of wage employment at different times of the year. There can be little doubt, however, of the predominance of agriculture in the area and the 154 men in Group II were all farmers of some kind. Fishing was an aspect of this part of Hampshire that was noted by John Leland but there are no fishermen recorded and just one ripier in Hamble.<sup>2</sup> Most likely the mariners who made up the third largest individual occupation, and who are listed under the heading of transport, were local boatmen who combined a little carrying work with fishing.

Clearly agriculture and the sea dominated these coastal parishes, and between them, labourers, husbandmen, yeomen and mariners represented 335 of the taxpayers or about two in three of the households (Table 2/1/9). The next most common trade was that of the carpenter, an interesting comparison with the lists of the top twelve trades in nine large towns at this period - Norwich, York, Bristol, Exeter, Coventry, Chester, Leicester, King's Lynn and Northampton - where carpenters appear only twice, in seventh

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1. W.A. Armstrong, "The Use of Information about Occupations, Part 1", in E.A. Wrigley (ed.), Nineteenth Century Society. Essays in the Use of Quantitative Methods for the Study of Social Data, (Cambridge, 1972).
  2. L. Toulmin Smith, Itinerary of John Leland, op.cit., p. 279.

Titchfield and Fareham Hundreds  
Occupational Distribution

Ranking of occupational groups by number of entries

	<u>Number</u>	<u>%</u>
1. Industrial service	163	32.1
2. Agriculture/Fishing	154	30.4
3. Manufacturing	67	13.2
4. Transport	19	3.7
Building	19	3.7
6. Dealing	13	2.6
7. Domestic service	8	1.6
8. Gentleman/Property owner	7	1.4
9. Professional/Public service	5	1.0
Unknown/Alien/Widow	52	10.3
	<u>507</u>	<u>100.0</u>

Ranking of individual occupations by number of entries  
(omits Gentlemen etc.)

	<u>Number</u>
1. Labourer	163
2. Husbandman	151
3. Mariner	18
4. Carpenter	15
5. Tailor	13
6. Shearman	9
7. Servant	8
8. Fuller	7
Butcher	7
10. Weaver	6
11. Shoemaker	4
Tanner	4
13. Yeoman	3
Miller	3
Sawyer	3
Smith	3

Only those occupations with three or more entries have been included.

Table 2/1/9

Ranking of individual occupations by average tax assessment  
(omits Gentlemen etc.)

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	£
1. Yeoman	6.3
2. Husbandman	5.3
3. Butcher	4.4
4. Miller	3.3
5. Fuller	3.1
6. Tanner	2.9
7. Mariner	2.6
8. Carpenter	2.5
9. Smith	2.0
10. Tailor	1.9
11. Shearman	1.8
12. Weaver	1.3
Shoemaker	1.3
14. Labourer	1.2
15. Sawyer	1.0

Only those occupations with three or more  
entries have been included.

Table 2/1/9

place at Norwich and eleventh at York.<sup>1</sup> Certainly the carpenter was a relatively more important and numerous tradesman in rural areas. There is, indeed, very little in common between the larger towns and this area of countryside in their occupations. These seven Hampshire parishes lacked any well-developed manufacturing employment and above all they lacked the numerous merchants and mercers, members of the so-called entrepreneurial and distributive pursuits, who figure prominently in the leading trades of the nine towns mentioned as well as in Winchester, Southampton and the larger Hampshire market towns. Weaving and textiles appear as only a minor occupation and among the food trades only the butchers seem to have been fairly well established. There were no grocers, only three millers, just one fishmonger or ripier, and the bakery trade, so important in larger towns, had just a single taxpayer in the area, one Thomas Dalamore of Titchfield. For people in these rural parts self-sufficiency was essential and home-baked bread would have been part of the staple diet throughout town and country alike. In fact, Fareham had no baker, no grocer and no fishmonger. A chandler and a mercer who might perhaps have diversified into the grocery business did exist in the community but otherwise it seems that this small market town had no well-developed set of food trades other than butchery.

Although produce would have been commonly exchanged on the market day such commerce could have only been marginally supplemented by the sort of food and drink occupations which made up over a quarter of tradesmen in large towns like Leicester and Hull. It is also significant that within the 507 taxpayers throughout the area there is nobody recorded as an innkeeper. This becomes even more important and sheds some light on the poverty of the small market town when it is noted that in Winchester six of the men assessed at over £5 were innkeepers and that the city's vintners were similarly a significant group in urban society. These taxpayers represent

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1. A.D. Dyer, "Northampton in 1524", Northamptonshire Past and Present, 6, (1979), pp. 73-80; C. Phythian-Adams, "The Economic and Social Structure" in The Fabric of the Traditional Community, (Milton Keynes, 1977), pp. 15-21.

not only an occupational category conspicuous by its absence from a small town like Fareham but one which elsewhere was often influential and wealthy. By contrast the upper echelons of market town society were predominantly rural in their social and economic orientation. The officials and administrators associated with religious and governmental centres, a section of the community which provided three of the five wealthiest inhabitants in Winchester in 1524, were other occupational groupings completely absent from rural south Hampshire. Also, unlike other parts of the county, these parishes never enjoyed a reputation for textile manufacture such as the Avon valley or the northern towns like Andover. Indeed, weaving comes only tenth in the list of trades. However, there were nine shearmen and seven fullers so that some small scale cloth production was certainly present and, taking these three trades together, textiles accounted for twenty-two taxpayers, more than the combined building occupations, more than the clothing trade and certainly more than food and drink. Nevertheless, overall, the region was dominated by agricultural employment. It is the overwhelming predominance of agriculture combined with the marked absence of both mercantile and entrepreneurial functions and the under-development of the food trades which offer the greatest contrast between this small town rural economy and the occupational structure of a larger town.

Dr. Patten has used scalograms to demonstrate the level of occupational complexity of each parish within Babergh Hundred in Suffolk and he showed clearly how the number of functions increased with the growth in the size of the settlement.<sup>1</sup> A similar form of analysis has been attempted here for the hundreds of Fareham and Titchfield (Figure 2/1/8). By plotting the parishes in order of size on the vertical axis and the occupations in order of their

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1. J. Patten, "Village and town", op.cit., pp. 1-16.



Scalogram for Fareham and Titchfield Hundreds

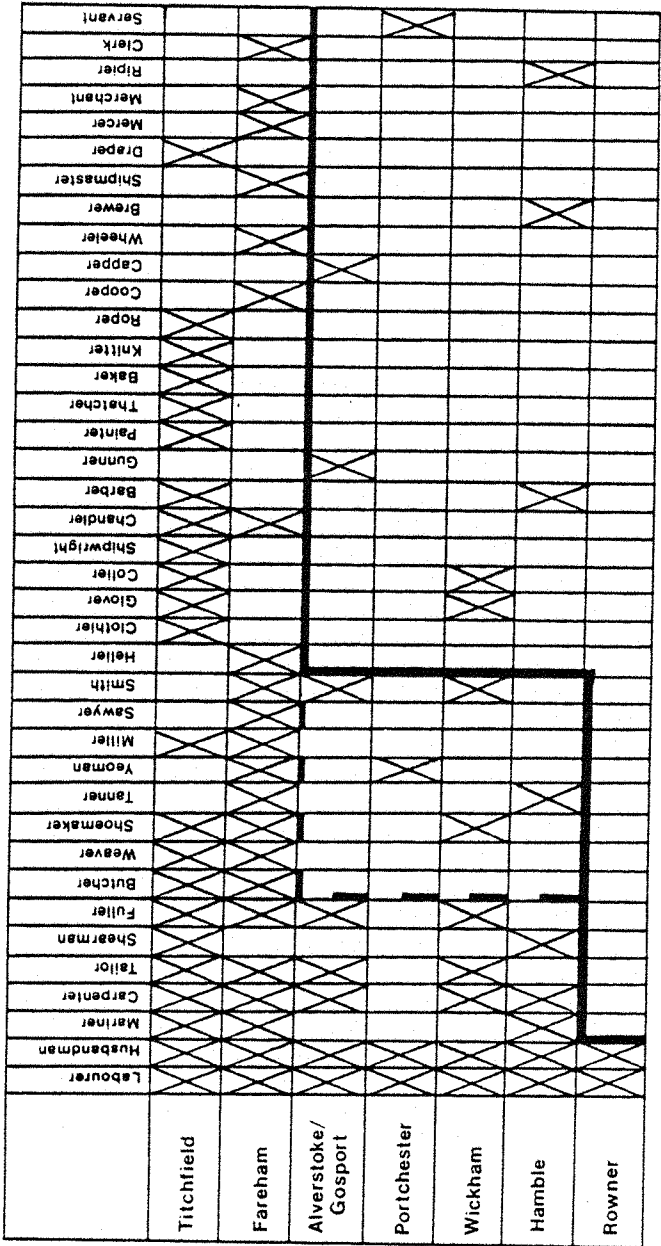


Figure 2/1/8



numerical occurrence on the horizontal axis a picture emerges of the functional structure of each settlement. Rowner is alone in having the simplest possible occupational picture and can be separated from the four parishes above it on the scalogram. The point where Alverstoke, Portchester, Wickham and Hamble can be distinguished from Fareham and Titchfield is less clear. Certainly all the occupations left of the dotted line seem to be in keeping with these rural settlements with some small diversification away from simple agriculture. A carpenter was found in three of the four parishes and a tailor in two of them, both no doubt serving local demand for clothes and building services. More significantly there is a representative of the textile trades in three of the four parishes, either a fuller or a shearman, indicating that some small manufacturing was present in these rural areas. Right of the dotted line comes a group of occupations like a tanner or a smith which it was possible but less usual to find in such scattered communities. The remaining functions of these four parishes indicated to the right of the unbroken line represent odd, one-off examples of functions which occur, perhaps, for local reasons, like the brewer in Hamble, and do not form part of any pattern of occupational distribution. Titchfield and Fareham both clearly have a higher complexity than the other parishes. Here there was sufficient demand to support many different trades not found elsewhere in the region. More services are found, like the barber in Titchfield, and there are more specialised trades like thatching and painting, unlike the other parishes where building needs could be met simply by carpenters. With information for just seven parishes extending over only a small part of the county firm conclusions are unwise but nothing emerges from this scalogram to conflict with Patten's conclusion that the presence or absence of certain occupational

skills served to distinguish different sorts of community in early modern England and was related directly to the population size of each settlement.

A similar form of analysis has been used to obtain some idea of the occupational structure within the parish of Fareham, in order to draw some contrast between the market town and the small villages in its immediate vicinity (Figure 2/1/9). Overall twenty-two different functions existed within the area, twenty of which (91%) were found within the town, showing clearly that there was very little economic activity within the parish that did not exist in some form or another within Fareham itself, the town offering a fair reflection of the complexity for the whole population. In the minor hamlets agriculture was predominant, with labourers and husbandmen found throughout the parish, but there were certain other occupations found outside the town. Butchers appeared twice and they clearly offered an important service within the countryside. Although there was only one carpenter it is interesting that Thomas Knoller of Pokesole had no counterpart within Fareham town. The other function found outside the town, tanning, occurred three times. Dyer, referring to Worcester, noted that "there was considerable distribution of the industry throughout the countryside and smaller towns of the shire".<sup>1</sup> Although the tanner, like other craftsmen needed to market his product and his main customer, John Gobull, the shoemaker, lived in the town, it was probably the need for oak bark to provide the tannin for hides and skins that prompted the trade to be centred in the countryside. Therefore, these small tithings clustered around the town did have a small number of trades besides agriculture but their range was very limited and it is significant that there were no examples of textile production. If tanning is excluded, then manufacturing made very little impact outside Fareham itself. In Figure 2/1/10 this category appears as a substantial proportion

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1. A.D. Dyer, Worcester, op.cit., p. 121.

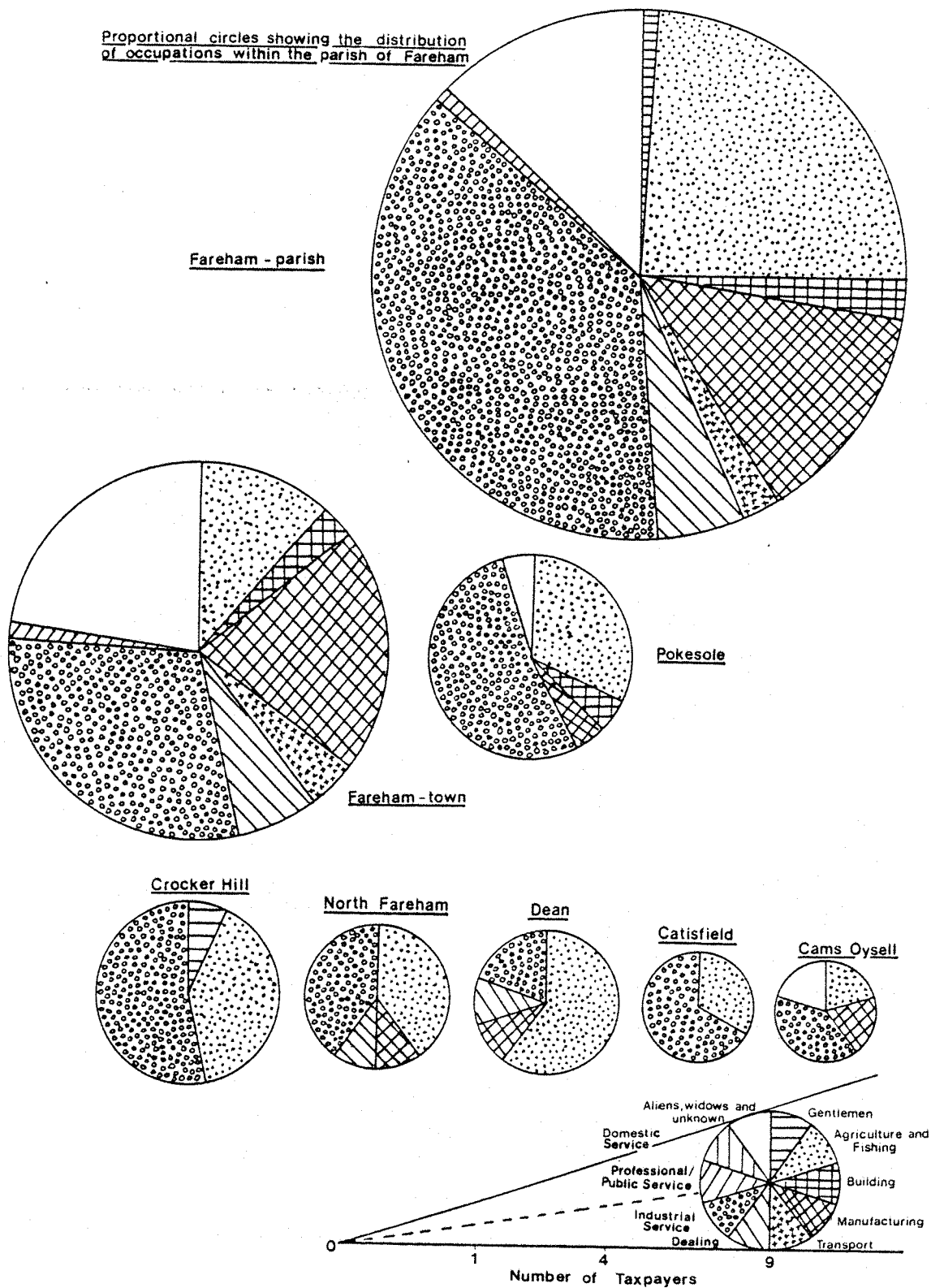


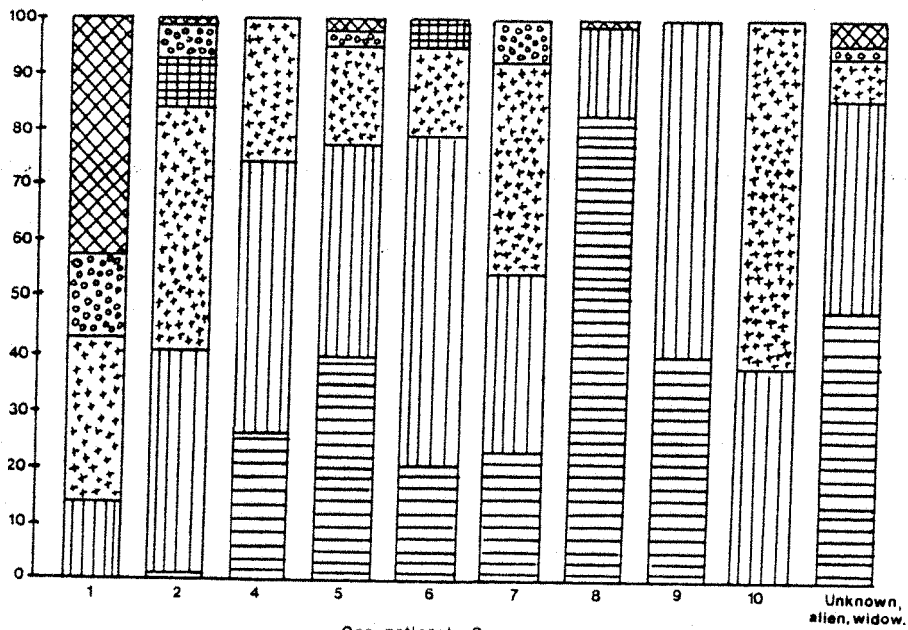
Figure 2/1/10

of the taxpayers only in the town where fifteen of the nineteen assessments in the manufacturing bracket for the parish were listed. Transport was not represented at all outside the towns and the building trade appeared in only one of these smaller communities. The close inter-relationship between Fareham and the surrounding parish cannot be doubted, but there was a substantial difference in functional complexity between the town and these smaller dependent hamlets. Fareham in 1525 was only a very small market town but it still provided an array of economic services which could not be found in the village. Scalogram analysis and proportional circles both illustrate that within the parish a sharp contrast existed between the more varied functions of the town and the almost mono-occupational structure of the lesser settlements, however interdependent they may have been. Fareham, therefore, was distinguished from its surrounds by both occupational and wealth structure.

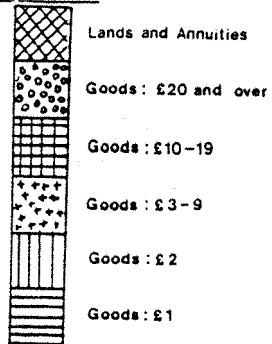
Occupations which fall within the agricultural category were not only numerically superior but they also had the highest average tax assessment behind the gentlemen and landowners. However, the average figure of £3-5 for husbandmen compares very starkly with an average of £1-2 for the labourers many of whom must have worked for much of their life on the land. Generally, therefore, within these seven parishes agriculture was the livelihood for both the wealthiest and poorest sections of society. Of the other functional groups, "dealing" with an average of £4.4 stood well ahead of the other three main categories, building, manufacturing and transport, which all averaged about £2.5. Domestic service is something of an anomaly because so few servants and apprentices were recorded and must be disregarded but otherwise Figure 2/1/11 shows that it was only categories one and two that did not have at least 20% of their total assessed at only £1. Clearly the breakdown of wealth

Proportion of each occupational group falling  
within each tax assessment category

% of each  
occupational group



Tax Assessment



Occupational Groups

1. Gentleman
2. Agriculture/Fishing
3. Mining (no entries)
4. Building
5. Manufacturing
6. Transport
7. Dealing
8. Industrial Service
9. Professional and Public Service
10. Domestic Service

Figure 2/1/11

among the husbandmen was very different from the building, manufacturing and transport trades which each had between 70-80% of their number taxed on £2 or less. It was only a very small minority within these occupations that could match the wealth of the majority of husbandmen. Even in the relatively better off category of "dealing" almost 60% were assessed on £1 or £2. Clearly the non-agricultural categories were dominated by very poor taxpayers but, with the exception of building, they also each had a small elite charged on £10 or more, standing in contrast to their fellow tradesmen. Nevertheless the majority of the small craftsmen in town and country shared the same tax assessments of £1 or £2 with the large numbers of labourers around them.

Within the agricultural category the three yeomen in the area had an average tax assessment of £6.3, the highest figure for any single occupation and just ahead of the husbandmen with an average of £5.3 (Table 2/1/10). These averages are useful for showing the general standing of a particular activity in relation to other functions but it can conceal a wide range of assessments. This is certainly true among the 151 husbandmen in this corner of Hampshire. There can have been little in common between, for instance, Thomas Pele and Thomas Smyth, who shared this same trade and were possibly near neighbours in Titchfield parish. However, the assessment of the former at £50 puts him among the very wealthy, quite different from the latter with a payment of just one shilling to be made on his £2 worth of goods. Meanwhile, the vital position of butchers within society at this period is confirmed by their average assessment of £4.4, well ahead of some of the other more common trades like the tailors, carpenters and mariners. In fact, although the food trades were not very well established numerically, not just in Fareham but throughout the area, their members were in general rated highly in their taxes,



Occupations and Tax Assessment

Name of Group	Name of Occupation	Number of Entries	Highest Assessment (£)	Lowest Assessment (£)	Range of Assessments (£)	Average of Occupation (£)	Average of Group (£)
1. Gentlemen/ Property Owners	Gentlemen/ Esquire	7	160	2	158	55.9	55.9
	Husbandman	151	50	1	49	5.3	5.3
2. Agriculture/ Fishing	Yeoman	3	8	5	3	6.3	
			NO	ENTRIES			
3. Mining							
4. Building	Carpenter	15	6	1	5	2.5	2.2
	Painter	1	-	-	-	1	
	Thatcher	1	-	-	-	2	
	Relier	2	1	-	-	1	
	Miller	3	6	2	4	3.3	
	Baker	1	-	-	-	6	
5. Manufacturing	Clothier	2	40	20	20	30	2.4
	Weaver	6	3	1	2	1.3	
	Fuller	7	6	2	4	3.1	
	Tailor	13	4	1	3	1.9	
	Shoreman	9	4	1	3	1.8	
	Knitter	1	-	-	-	1	
	Glover	2	2	1	1	1.5	
	Roper	1	-	-	-	1	
	Collier	2	2	1	1	1.5	
	Shoemaker	4	2	1	1	1.25	
	Sawyer	3	1	-	-	1	
	Cooper	1	-	-	-	1	
	Smith	3	4	1	3	2	
	Copper	1	-	-	-	2	
	Wheeler	1	-	-	-	3	
	Tanner	4	4	2	2	2.9	
	Brewer	1	-	-	-	1	
	Shipwright	2	4	1	3	2.5	

Table 2/1/10

(1)

Name of Group	Name of Occupation	Number of Entries	Highest Assessment (£)	Lowest Assessment (£)	Range of Assessments (£)	Average of Occupation (£)	Average of Group (£)
6. <u>Transport</u>	Mariner	18	10	1	9	2.9	2.6
	Shipmaster	1	-	-	-	3	
7. <u>Dealing</u>	Butcher	7	20	1	19	4.4	
	Chandler	2	7	1	6	4	
	Draper	1	-	-	-	7	
	Mercer	1	-	-	-	2	
	Merchant	1	-	-	-	6	
	Ripier	1	-	-	-	4	
	Labourer	163	2	1	1	1.2	
8. <u>Industrial Service</u>	Barber	2	1	-	-	1	1.6
	Clerk	1	-	-	-	2	
	Gunner	2	2	-	-	2	
10. <u>Domestic Service</u>	Servant	8	4	2	2	3.25	3.25
11. <u>Others</u>	Aliens	8	2	1	1	1.75	2.3
	Widows	13	20	1	19	3.8	
	Unknown	31	10	1	9	1.8	

Table 2/1/10

(2)

with the millers averaging £3.3, the sole baker assessed on £6 and the only fishmonger/riper paying on £4.

Within the manufacturing trades there were some interesting contrasts. The tanners, who can be fairly put into the lowest echelons of the "middle class", were still above their fellows in the leather industry and the shoemakers who rate as one of the poorest of all crafts. Within the textile occupations the fullers stood ahead of the shearmen and weavers but they were all in a completely different tax bracket from the two clothiers, Thomas Osborn and John Bardolf, both of Titchfield, whose assessments of £20 and £40 respectively mark them out as two of the richest men in the region, on a level with the most affluent of husbandmen. Two of the trades essential to the servicing of rural communities figure slightly above the poorest groups in society, namely the smiths with an average of £2 and the sole wheeler in the area who was taxed on £3. The majority of the building trades, in contrast, were among the lowest groups in society and with the exception of a few carpenters a £1 tax assessment prevailed for these craftsmen.

POPULATION : 1525-1664

Chantry Certificates

Following the subsidies of the 1520s there is no source for estimating total population size for the Hampshire towns until the chantry certificates of 1547-8.<sup>1</sup> These give the numbers of "houseling" people which are assumed to be totals of communicants. They only cover a limited number of Hampshire parishes, including eight market communities, but they do provide some indication of the progress of these towns in the last twenty years or so of the Henrician period. It has been commonly assumed that "houseling" people represented individuals over the age of fourteen years and this was the basis of Russell's estimate of 3.1 million for the English population in 1545.<sup>2</sup> However, it is now believed that before the Reformation confirmation occurred at the age of about seven and that the first communion was postponed temporarily until "years of discretion", possibly ten but perhaps older or younger and probably differing according to the interpretations of individual clergymen.<sup>3</sup> On the first assumption a multiplier of 10/6 could be used taking communicants over fourteen to be 60% of the total population. However, the doubts about the age of communion demand some modification and 10/7 may be more appropriate with children under about ten years approximating to 30% of the inhabitants.

Estimated populations for eight market towns using both methods are shown in Table 2/1/11. Even taking the lower estimates of population it is clear that most towns had grown since 1524-5. Only Basingstoke showed a marked drop in numbers, reflected in both estimates and probably representing a fall of about 15% in

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1. PRO, E 301/52.
  2. R. M. Smith, "Population and its Geography in England 1500-1730", in R. A. Dodgshon and R. A. Butlin (eds.), An Historical Geography of England and Wales, (London, 1978), pp. 200-1.
  3. D. Palliser, thesis, op.cit., pp. 30-4.

Estimates of Population : Chantry Certificates

	<u>Houseling People</u> <u>in Parish</u>	<u>Houseling People</u> <u>in Town</u>	<u>Estimates of</u> <u>Town Population</u> *	
			(a)	(b)
Alresford	370	370	617	529
Alton	900	819	1365	1170
Andover	800	608	1013	869
Basingstoke	804	780	1300	1114
Christchurch	800	248	413	354
Havant	500	325	542	464
Odiham	1000	530	883	757
Ringwood	942	499	832	713

\* (a) multiplier of 10/6

(b) multiplier of 10/7

Table 2/1/11

twenty-three years, a rate of decline of 0.65% per annum. It was the largest of the towns with chantry evidence and was clearly struggling through the 1530s and 1540s, perhaps a continuation of a longer-term decline through the later medieval period. Christchurch probably remained very much the same size and certainly had not expanded. Indeed, in 1538 it was said of this part of Hampshire that it was "situate and set in a desolate place in a very barren country out and far from all highways in an angle or a corner, having no woods nor commodious country about it, nor nigh no good towns, but only the said poor town of Christchurch which is a very poor town and slenderly inhabited".<sup>1</sup> All the other towns, however, show a positive upward movement. Alton had probably grown least of all but it was now on a par with Basingstoke. Yet it was among some of the smallest communities that the highest increases in population had been achieved, although the ominous presence of 'rounded' figures must make conclusions at best tentative. Odiham and Ringwood, both with about 550 inhabitants in 1524-5 had grown to somewhere between 700-800 while Alresford had expanded by almost a third during the intervening period. At Havant, using the lower population estimate, a rise of 161 had taken place, or 53.1%, in twenty-three years, a rate of increase of 2.3% per annum, indicative of a thriving, expanding community. Clearly, whilst some of the larger market centres had barely increased or, in fact, decreased in size, the late Henrician period was one of vigorous demographic expansion among the smallest towns. It is only to be regretted that, in the absence of any parochial registration before 1538 and, indeed, without adequate records for some time after that, the mechanics of this growth cannot be further investigated.

With the absence for Hampshire of the 1563 religious census, there is no fixed point for which population may be assessed between 1524-5 and 1603 with the exception of the few towns covered by the chantry certificates. Of interest, however, is a record showing "the residents at Andover between the ages of twelve years and seventy years in 1582".<sup>2</sup> It is, in fact, not

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1. L/P Hen. VIII, XIII, (1), 1117.

2. A.C. Bennett and E. Parsons, A History of the Free School of Andover, (Andover, 1920), pp. 210-16.

a complete list of inhabitants but, rather, contained the names of men expected to attend personally at the court leet. There are no women included. In all 372 people were named and this probably covered almost all the male householders in the town. Using the same calculation as for previous sources to allow for women and children an estimate of population of 1240 can be reached which is quite a plausible figure, if, perhaps, a little on the large size. Andover had grown from 742 in 1524-5 to 869 in 1548, an annual rate of increase of 0.7% but between 1548 and 1582 a rate of 1.3% was achieved and clearly the third quarter of the sixteenth century saw an acceleration in demographic expansion in the town from the steadier growth earlier in the century. If the 1582 estimate is anything like accurate it would also indicate stagnation or even a slight fall in population at the end of the century in view of an estimate of 1104 made for 1603. This is curious for although it is not known whether the town suffered badly in the plague of 1583, it certainly fared relatively well during the crises of the 1590s. The reversal of the main sixteenth century trend of population increase for this short period at the end of the sixteenth century may have been due to contraction in the cloth manufacturing industry which reduced the attraction of Andover to immigrants.

Further evidence for the distribution of population within the county is available from the musters conducted periodically throughout the sixteenth century. Whilst the precise meaning of "able men" as recorded in these records is uncertain, they do provide a further guide to the relative densities of population and may be compared with the muster record of 1523 (Figure 2/1/12). The muster of 1577 is a particularly complete record (Figure 2/1/13). As in 1523 it shows a marked concentration of people in the upper Avon valley and within parts of the Test

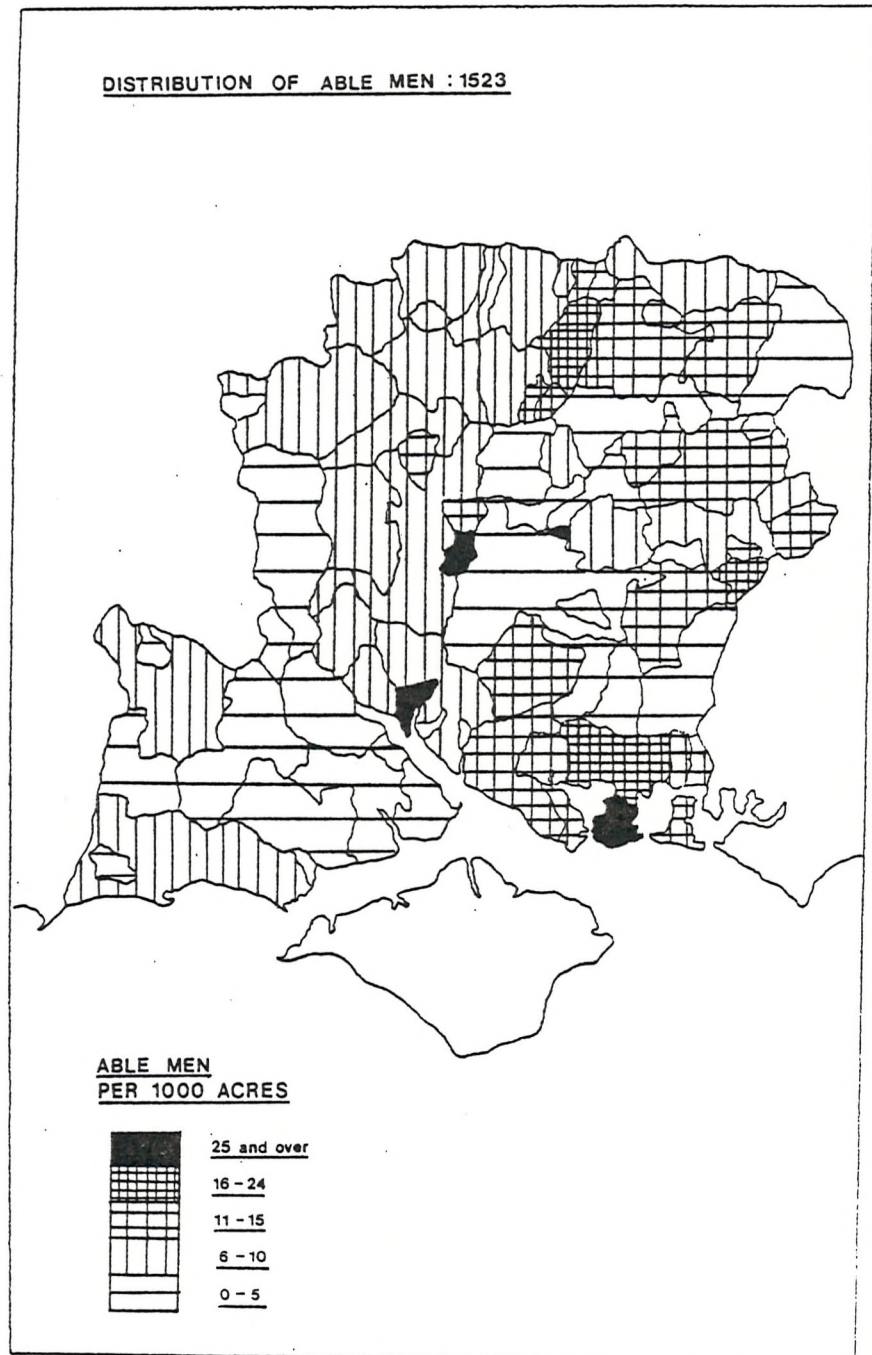


Figure 2/1/12



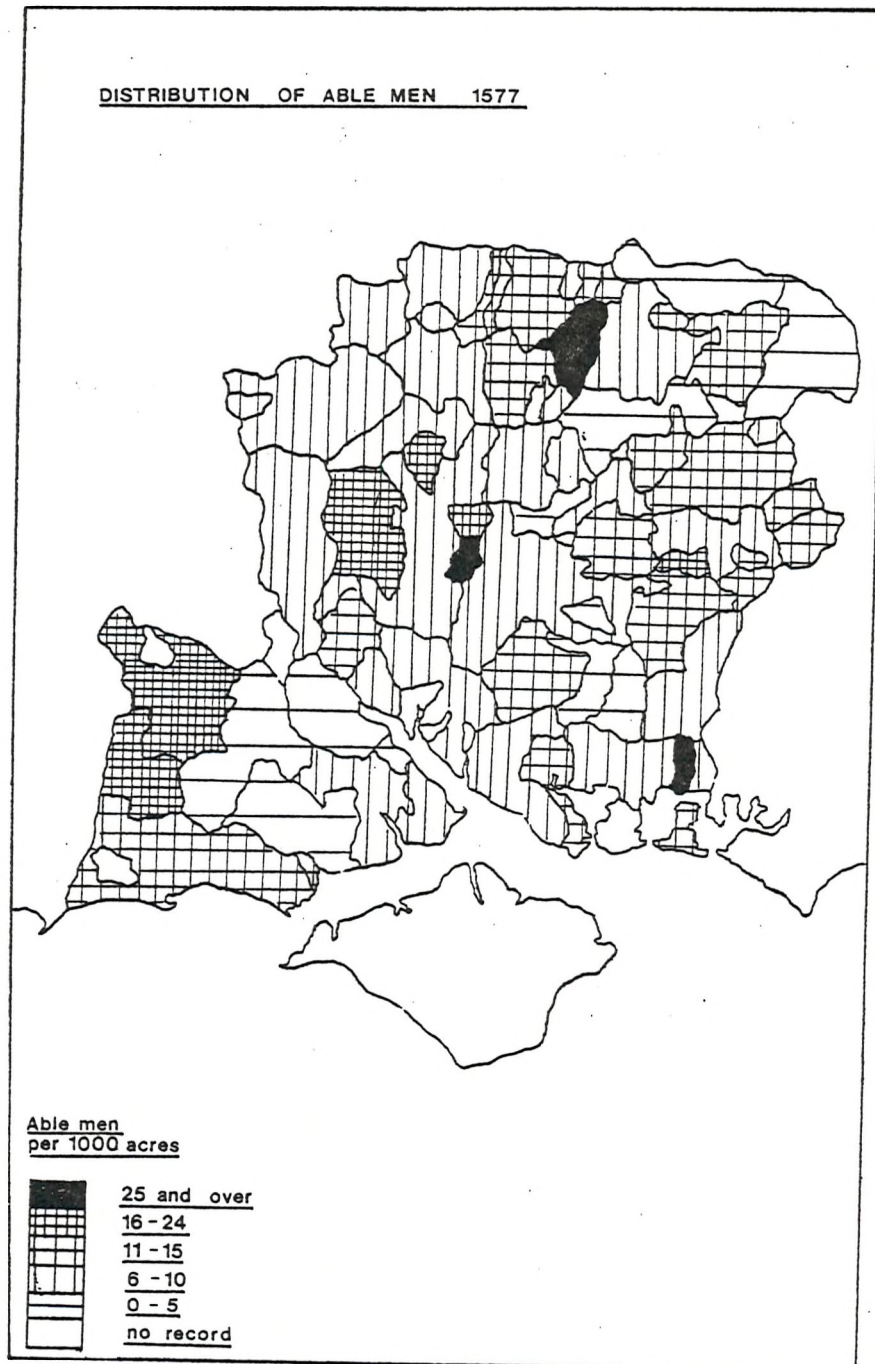


Figure 2/1/13

valley where a more diversified occupational structure including the lingering textile trade may have encouraged a greater density of settlement. Large areas of the county remained very sparsely populated with the north west, the centre and the south of the county recording especially low densities of able men. Interestingly, some areas in the east of Hampshire, on the Sussex border were relatively more populated, seemingly a continuation of the high density of population which characterised Wealden Sussex.<sup>1</sup> It was in these areas of small wood-pasture communities, with diverse forms of agricultural and craft activities and rights of land tenure conducive to the establishment of a household or smallholding, that a growing population could easily manifest itself. In Sussex there are actually signs of over-population in the Wealden countryside in the early seventeenth century and whilst such evidence has not been found specifically for eastern Hampshire it may be fairly concluded that the rural parishes around Petersfield were relatively densely populated compared with the Downland areas further west.

The muster returns of 1591 (Figure 2/1/14) only cover about half the county but nevertheless they endorse the concentration of population within the traditional textile producing areas of the county. Holdshott hundred in the north of the county on the Berkshire border is particularly interesting showing a significantly higher density of "able men" than other hundreds further south which contained within their boundaries significant concentrations of urban population. In terms of overall population an area of several large villages could still show a greater density of population at the end of the sixteenth century than multifarious settlements scattered around the focus of a single market town.

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1. C. E. Brent, "Rural Employment and Population in Sussex between 1550 and 1640", Sussex Archaeological Collections, Vol. 116, (1978), p. 51.

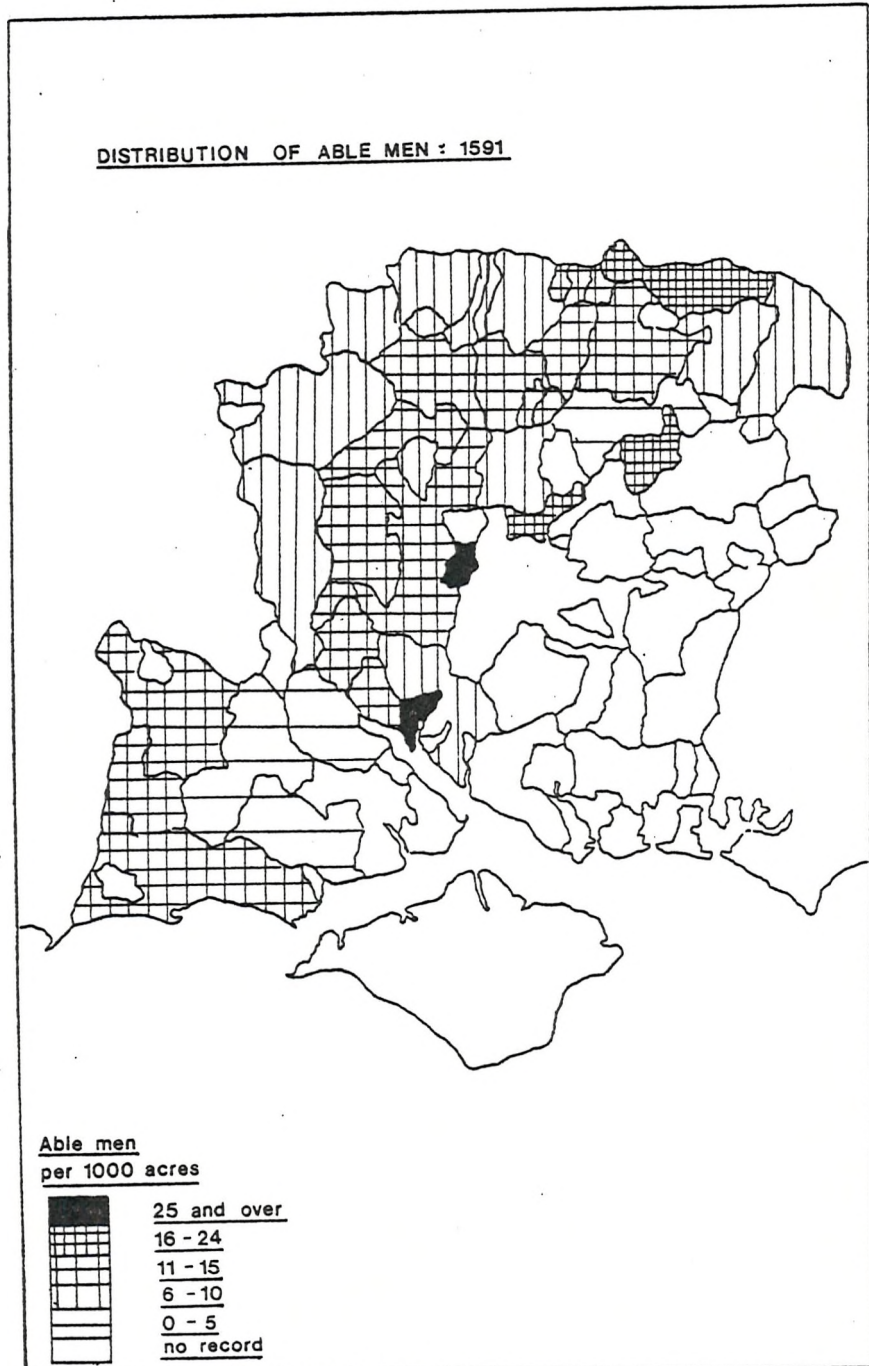


Figure 2/1/14

### Population in 1603

The religious census of 1603 enables a picture to be drawn of population at the beginning of the seventeenth century (Figure 2/1/15).<sup>1</sup> Towards the south-east corner of the county densities were relatively high, taking in the coastal parishes around Portsmouth and Langstone harbours as well as Portsea and Gosport. The demands of a specialised workforce and the shipping which frequented the area meant a ready and profitable market for agricultural produce and facilitated a concentration of population in the south east. However, only a little way inland densities drop very noticeably and the only villages which supported relatively high numbers of people were in the Meon valley and near Petersfield. The coastline between Gosport and Southampton was much less densely populated except for the village of Hamble and the low densities recorded by parishes like Hound, North and South Stoneham and Millbrook point to the declining fortunes of Southampton for the port clearly had much less of a demographic effect on its immediate surrounds than was enjoyed by the expanding centre of Portsmouth. The demands of Southampton for labour and supplies must have diminished with the disappearance of much commerce in the sixteenth century and though the town still grew in size it was a much less effective magnet for population as far as its agricultural hinterland was concerned. With the exception of a small pocket of population in and around Lymington where the salt pans and some small commerce encouraged settlement, the south west coastal districts beside Southampton Water and the Solent were sparsely populated. The same applies to the woods and heathlands of the New Forest, areas of poor soils and little in the way of manufacturing except timber supply. There was, however, a marked concentration of people in the Avon valley, from Breamore and Fordingbridge in the north,

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1. BL, Harleian Ms. 595.

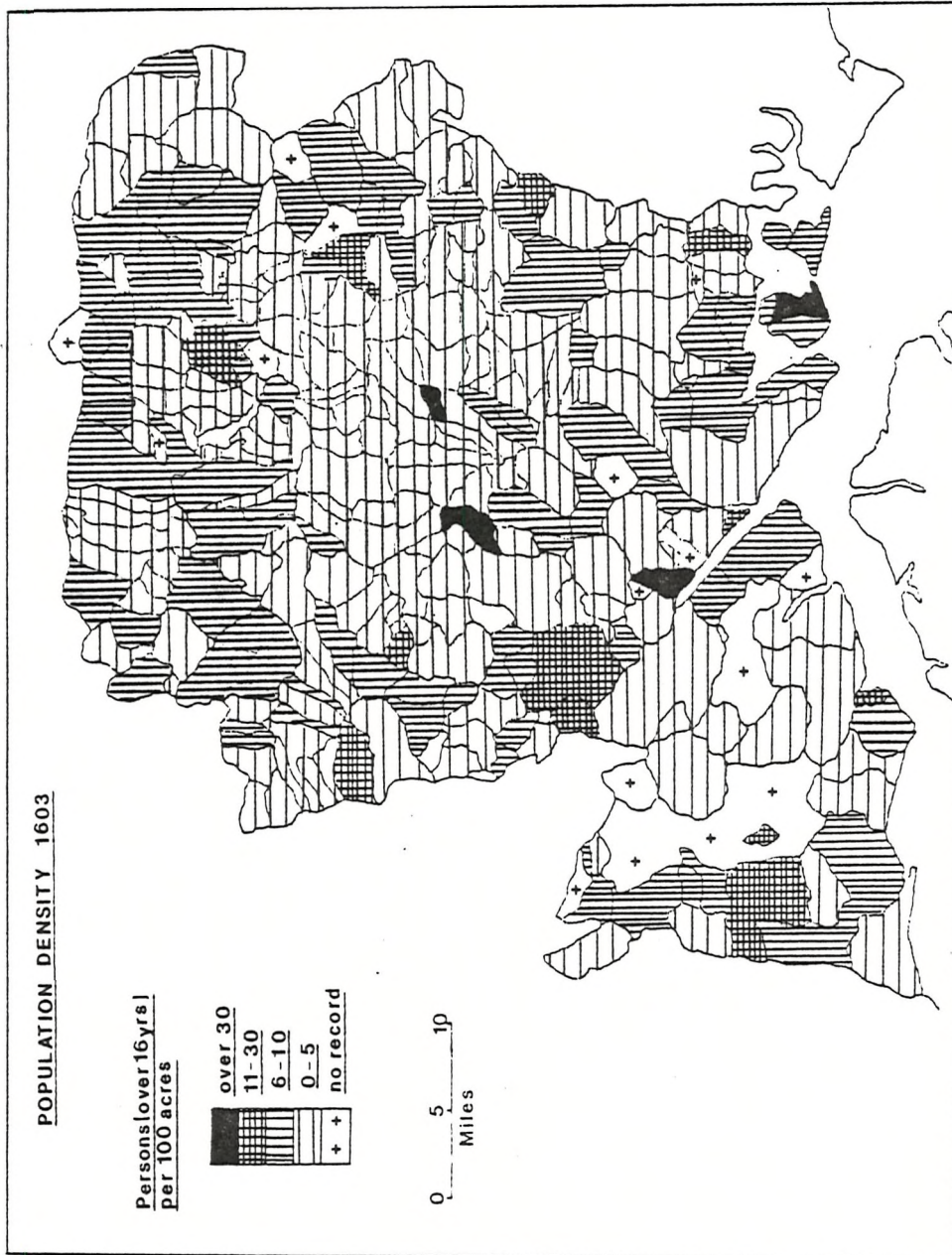


Figure 2/1/15



through Ringwood to Christchurch at its mouth, communities which must have benefitted from their proximity to Salisbury and which were able to combine their prime agricultural dependence with some small-scale textile manufacturing.

The fertile lands of the lower Test valley supported successful mixed agriculture as well as rural weaving and spinning and the whole area within about five miles of Romsey was relatively densely inhabited. Further up the valley, however, population became more sparse and large parishes like King's Somborne had less than five communicants per 100 acres. Only towards the upper reaches, in and around Andover and including villages like Wherwell and Longstock did densities rise. The north west of Hampshire was very patchy in its demographic picture at the start of the seventeenth century. Most of the rural areas were sparsely populated but densities rose in occasional parishes like Fyfield and Appleshaw, perhaps merely the consequence of one large household within the village, or at Over Wallop where the village may have developed a more diversified economy capable of supporting greater numbers of inhabitants. This normally meant textiles but there were other rural trades which could enhance demographic development, such as tanning. Across the north of the county there existed a broad belt from Andover to Odiham where, in general, the land was more densely populated than elsewhere in Hampshire. Basingstoke parish offered the only real concentration of communicants but nevertheless there were large areas on the Berkshire borders where densities in the 6-10 persons category were clearly the rule rather than the exception, as they were in the south and west. This does not mean that the northern countryside was teeming with people, quite the reverse, but it was relatively more densely populated than most parts of the county, probably because of the extensive penetration of textiles into the rural parishes, a fact

which was to become only too apparent when the industry collapsed in the 1630s and caused terrible poverty throughout the region.

The north-east corner of the county was by contrast very sparsely inhabited but a little way further south on the Surrey border, between Alton and Farnham, was a small area of greater population density. Soil here was said to be particularly rich and in the eighteenth century ground was being rented at 15-20s per acre. However, for land on the western side of Alton towards Alresford only 7-8s was being charged, soils here being light and dry and incapable of successful horticulture without heavy manuring.<sup>1</sup> These differences in the quality of arable husbandry were already reflected by population distribution in the seventeenth century, rural parishes east of Alton often having double the number of communicants per 100 acres than those to the west. The small concentrations of population in some small rural parishes in east Hampshire, in the Surrey-Sussex border at the western extreme of the Weald, where soils were often poor, may have owed something to the cottage weaving industry which was a feature of the area in the sixteenth century. Many of these parishes, like Hawkley and Kingsley, had weavers among their inhabitants and were able to use Petersfield as an organisational focus as well as a successful market for their wool and hides.

The lack of population in central Hampshire is one of the most obvious aspects of Figure 2/1/15. In fact, a circle drawn from the parish of Itchin Abbas at the heart of the county with a radius of ten miles and containing about 60 parishes, shows only ten villages and two towns with over five communicants per 100 acres. Other than Winchester and Alresford there were no centres of population and everywhere densities were low. This was an exclusively agricultural area of downland and

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1. P. Russell and O. Price, England Displayed (London, 1769), p. 98.

valleys. The grasslands were very valuable for their crops and sheep but they were sparsely inhabited with large farms and few settlements. Elsewhere agricultural conditions were often poor and it was said in the eighteenth century that "the soil between Winchester and Aylesford [Alresford] is generally poor and around Aylesford land lets from 5-10s per acre".<sup>1</sup> With farming difficult in parts and very capital intensive in others, it is easy to understand why so few people inhabited the countryside of central Hampshire.

The communicants census provides information in the form of parish totals which makes the estimation of town populations particularly difficult in the absence of any differentiation between urban and rural tithings. In these circumstances proportions have been assumed on the basis of population estimates made for 1524-5 and 1664-5 and the resulting figures are set out in Table 2/1/12 using a multiplier of 10/6 to take into account children below the age of communion (Figure 2/1/16). In fact an estimate based on a muster for 1596 puts Southampton's population at the end of the sixteenth century at about 4,200, the peak of its early modern development.<sup>2</sup> Otherwise there were only six towns with over 1000 inhabitants. This is the same figure proposed by Patten, following comments made by Cowley, but their list of towns differs markedly from that described here.<sup>3</sup> Alton, Andover and Basingstoke should certainly be included but they omit Romsey and Ringwood which represented relatively large urban settlements by Hampshire standards at the turn of the century. The exclusion of Romsey from Patten's list is particularly strange for it was probably the fourth most populous town in the county, still a textiles centre and was described not long after by Norden as "a proper market towne, situate in a most fruitfull

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1. *ibid.*, p. 99.

2. T.B. James, *thesis*, *op.cit.*, p. 29.

3. J. Patten, English Towns, *op.cit.*, p. 114.



Ranking of Towns by Population  
(1603)

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1.	Southampton	3563
2.	Winchester	3078
3.	Basingstoke	1617
4.	Romsey	1141
5.	Kingsclere	1111
6.	Andover	1104
7.	Alton	1062
8.	Ringwood	1059
9.	Portsmouth	782
10.	Christchurch	639
11.	Alresford	570
12.	Lymington	542
13.	Petersfield	496
14.	Havant	488
15.	Whitchurch	480
16.	Bishops Waltham	473
17.	Odiham	444
18.	Gosport	437
19.	Fordingbridge	375
20.	Fareham	339
21.	Stockbridge	230

Table 2/1/12

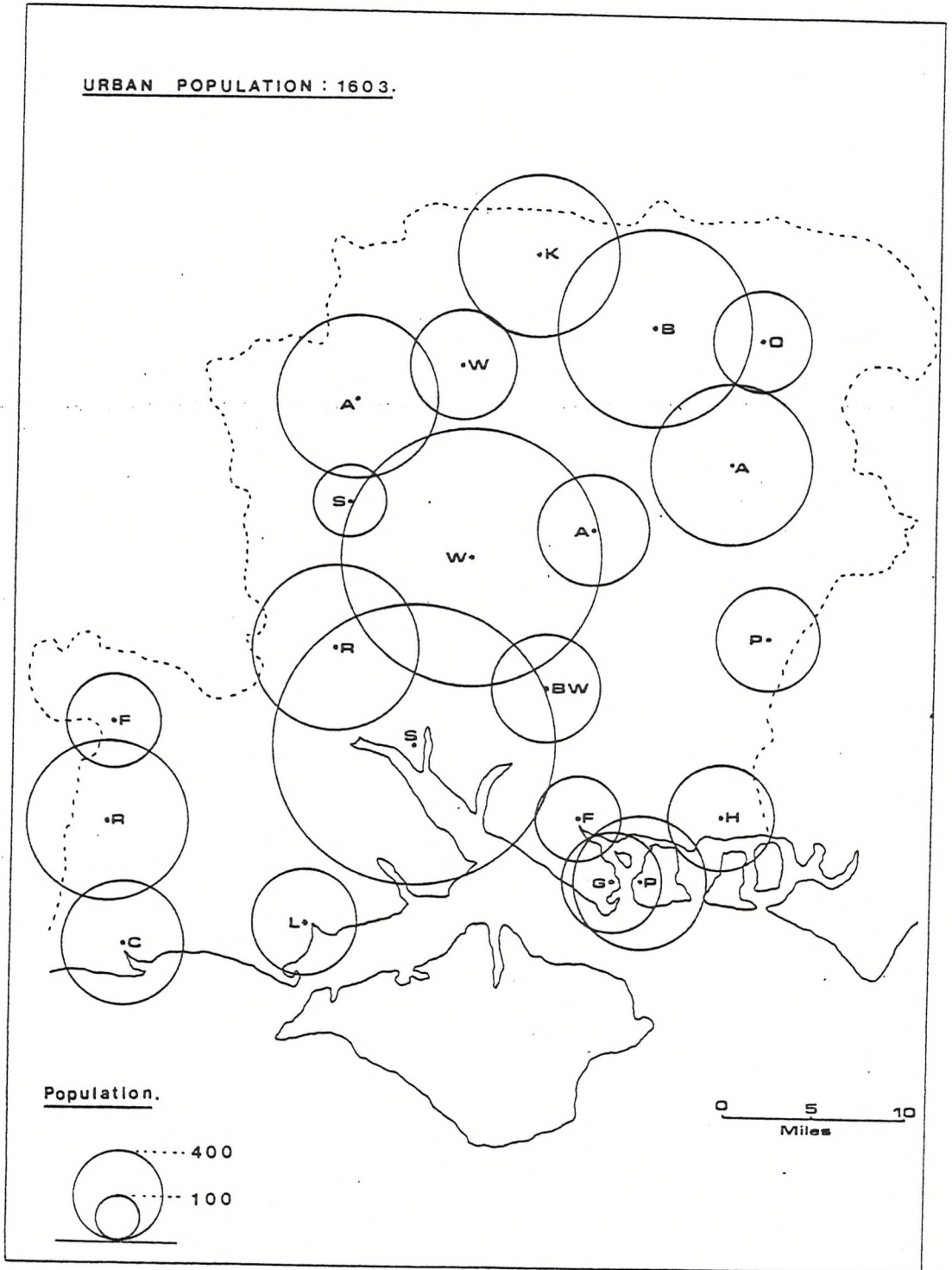


Figure 2/1/16

place nere the New Foreste". Patten also leaves out the northern town of Kingsclere, merely a village today but in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries a market community with some small scale cloth manufacture serving the relatively dense population of this part of Hampshire. The Patten-Cowley list includes three other towns, Portsmouth, Fareham and Petersfield. Portsmouth is always a difficult town to estimate and in time of war it may well have swelled considerably, but its stable population was probably still below 1000 in 1600 before the onset of an amazing demographic expansion under the Stuarts. The naming of Petersfield and Fareham seems quite unjustified. The whole of Petersfield parish recorded 358 communicants and one recusant in the census of 1603 while at Fareham there were 480 communicants and five recusants in the entire parish, so that populations of over 1000 are out of the question. In both cases it is unlikely that there were 1000 people in the whole parish, let alone in the actual towns. In fact there seems to be a clear contrast between the market towns of 1000 and those with less than 700 inhabitants - only the questionable case of Portsmouth falls in the middle of these two groups. A category of "greater" market towns had emerged with distinctly larger populations than other communities, thriving regional markets within the county, in each case diversified by some manufacturing and located on major highways. The smaller towns had between 300 and 700 inhabitants while at the very bottom lay Stockbridge, described by Norden as "a syllye market town".<sup>1</sup>

#### Population 1603-1664

Unfortunately the only figures surviving for Hampshire from the Protestation Returns of 1641-2 are for Southampton and the only

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1. BL, Add. Mss. 31,853.

estimates of population before the 1660s are some contemporary figures recorded in the minutes of the Committee for Plundered Ministers in 1646.<sup>1</sup> Parishes attempted to secure grants of money from the committee to support local ministers where the value of the vicarage was considered adequate for the needs of the community. This sometimes led to great exaggeration in order to obtain higher sums. Andover was said to be "a markett towne" and "there are within the said parish 3000 soules at the least", which would mean a population of about 2280 in the town itself. This is a reasonable total, indicative of very rapid expansion during the first half of the seventeenth century and on a par with the subsequent level of the 1660s. Taking the estimate at face value the population had grown by 1176 people since 1603, a rise of 107% and an annual increase of 2.5%. Even allowing for the round figures and the exaggerated claims prevalent everywhere it would seem that the population had about doubled from its level at the start of the century. For Andover the decades from 1600 to 1640, despite the handicaps experienced by the cloth industry, saw the community growing as an important market and highway town exploiting its position on the main route to the West, and they were the most successful demographic years in the whole of the early modern period.

It was said of Alton that it "consisteth of 2000 soules" which would give the urban population of about 1820, an unlikely total, but, more realistically, Lymington was described as a "port towne and doth consist of about 500 communicants". The assessment of "communicants" rather than "soules" suggests people over sixteen rather than the whole population and prompts an estimate of about 833. As with Andover this is very much in line with totals calculated for the 1660s and 1670s and may well be a fairly close

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1. BL0, Mss. Bodl. 323 ff. 126-9.

approximation to the truth. If so it represents a rise of 291 or 54% on the level of 1603, a rate of increase of 1.3% per annum, a very healthy growth if less spectacular than that of Andover. Both towns seem, therefore, to have witnessed little if any growth between the 1640s and 1660s and illustrate a slowing down in population expansion under the Commonwealth and later Stuart period. The final figure available for 1646 dealing with a market town relates to Christchurch parish which was said to consist of "five thousand soules" which would give the very improbable urban total of 1550. In fact the town was almost certainly still well short of a thousand at this time and it illustrates very clearly the colourful special-pleading which undermines the accuracy of these estimates.

Although it is not possible to obtain any estimates of population, some idea of the relative standing of the market towns in the years prior to the Civil War may be derived from the muster books compiled in the 1620s and 1630s.<sup>1</sup> In 1633, 98 men in Basingstoke were required to serve with corslets, muskets or holbards and two years later 80 men were similarly viewed in Andover. Both these towns had clearly established themselves at the fore of the market communities of the county since other leading towns like Alton and Romsey were recorded as providing 54 or 47 men respectively in 1633. The rise of Andover is therefore confirmed by the military obligations imposed on the town. In 1603 it had still ranked below Romsey in terms of population but by 1664-5 it would be well in excess of its Test valley rival and clearly the emergence of Andover was well established prior to 1640. With the textile trade in difficulties this development must be attributed almost exclusively to the town's enviable position on the routeways to the West. Whilst

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1. HRO, 44 M 69.

towns like Romsey and Alton formed a middle rank of market towns in terms of military provision, they were still clearly distinct from the very smallest communities. In 1633 Petersfield was required to send twenty-three armed men to the muster and Lymington (twenty-five) and Alresford (twenty-four) were similarly rated. At the very bottom was Stockbridge, required to send just six men and, in terms of population at least, indistinguishable from many villages all over the county.

POPULATION IN THE 1660s/1670s

General

The Hearth Tax of 1664-5 offers the first opportunity for a countrywide analysis of population since the communicants census of 1603.<sup>1</sup> It provides excellent coverage of the county although the town of Southampton was not included. Where comparison has been made with Southampton an earlier hearth tax record for 1662 covering the port has been used, although this document excludes unchargeable households and is therefore of limited value. In the calculation of population for Southampton it has been assumed that the ratio of paying to exempt households was the same as Winchester city although there are clear dangers in this approach. Many of the other problems in the use of the hearth tax, such as the imprecise geographical boundaries for taxation units, the foibles of individual assessors and the difficulties in determining the urban and rural parts of parishes are similar to those discussed in relation to the subsidies of the 1520s. Nevertheless, the record is a good one and enables a picture to be drawn of the demography of Restoration Hampshire.

Figure 2/1/17 shows the distribution of population as it appears in the Hearth Tax. Towards the south west, the New Forest and the coastal areas were all very sparsely populated except for the Avon valley which stood out in the region with its concentration of inhabitants especially in Ringwood parish. Holdenhurst, in the extreme south west, was also slightly above average for this part of the county and may have been related to the town and port of Poole, Dorset. The Test valley again revealed greater densities of taxpayers, especially in Romsey and parishes to the immediate north of the town like Mottesfont, Michelmersh and Timsbury, all of which shared in the fertile valley farmland and the cottage textile manufacturing which had its organisational focus in Romsey

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1. PRO, E 179/176/565.

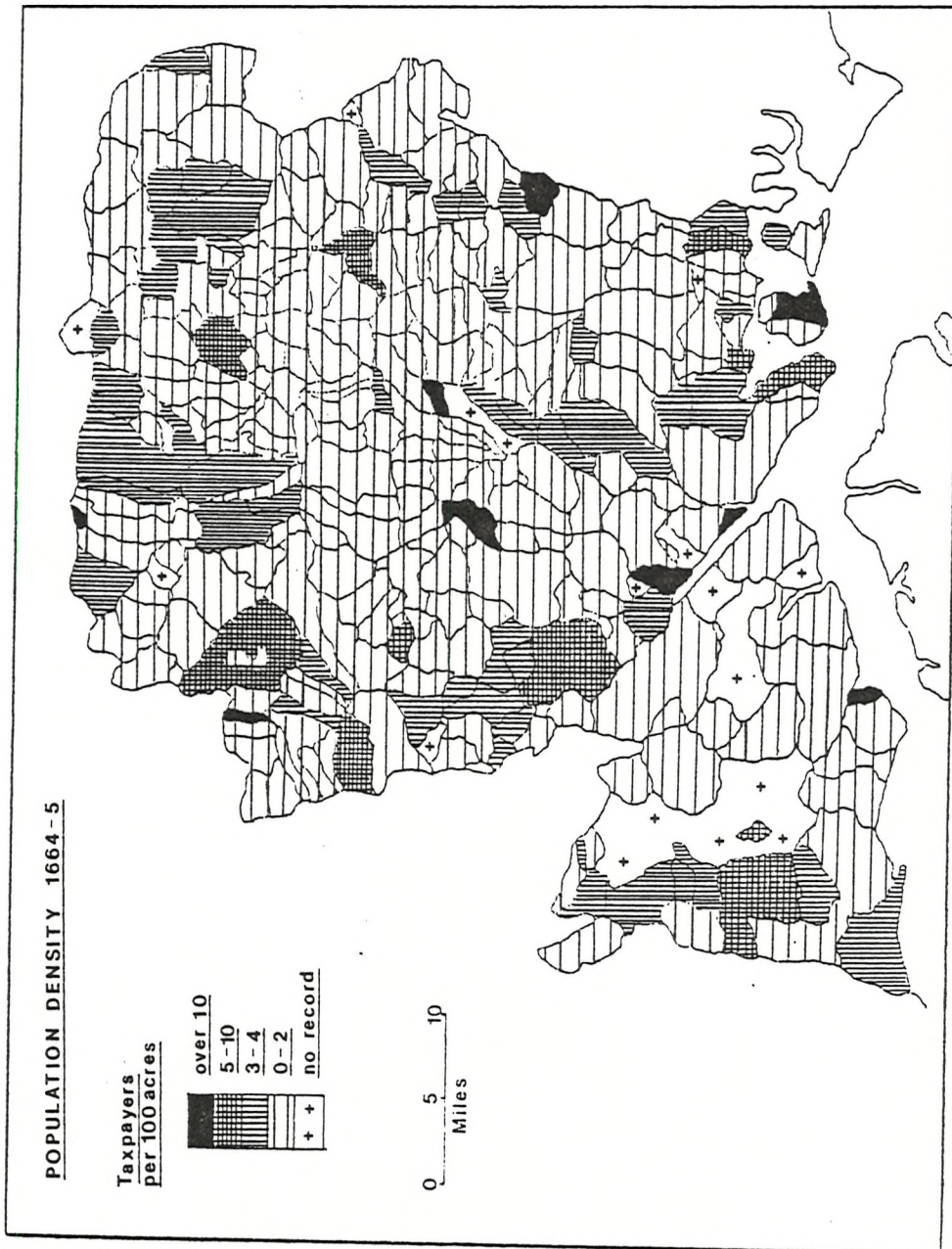


Figure 2/1/17



and nearby Salisbury. Parts of the upper valley were also able to support more people than much of the Hampshire countryside. Both Andover and Romsey seem to have influenced their immediate hinterlands and helped to provide a market and a range of activities which facilitated the settlement of larger numbers of people beyond the town and into the surrounding countryside. There were relatively high densities of taxpayers throughout much of north Hampshire, perhaps a relic of the cloth production which had once thrived in the area but which had never recovered from the depression of the early seventeenth century and in particular the 1630s. Towns could increase and decrease very rapidly but it seems that parishes like Kingsclere and Overton were still comparatively more settled than rural areas elsewhere and it may be that the demographic implications of economic change were slower to take effect in rural districts than in the urban settlements. Interestingly the immediate environs of Basingstoke were very sparsely populated possibly because these rural parishes like Worting and Cliddesdon were the most severely affected by the contraction and virtual extinction of the old draperies and could no longer support other than an exclusively agricultural population. The lands around Odiham, Winchfield and Dogmersfield were able to maintain densities of three or four taxpayers per 100 acres but elsewhere in the north east the poor heathland soils of the Crondall region were unable to support any great numbers in the scattered farming communities.

Throughout east Hampshire agriculture was often difficult on infertile, unmanageable soils. Binstead and Bentley had few inhabitants on heavy clays, further deterred by the Forest of Alice Holt. Further south, parishes like Headley and Selborne possessed light sandy soils whilst the Petersfield area consisted of heathland which, although it provided abundant poor grazing and

fodder as well as wood and peat for fuel, could never support the same density of population as on the richer soils of the river valleys. Only isolated parishes like Kingsley and Steep had more than three taxpayers per 100 acres, possibly another legacy of the small-scale cloth manufacturing which had been characteristic of the sixteenth century villages and which persisted into the seventeenth century with individual weavers settling in the countryside and injecting sufficient economic activity to prompt some clustering of population.

Central Hampshire remained very sparsely inhabited and the open downlands, though they still supported many large agricultural enterprises, rarely supported over twenty taxpayers per 100 acres. The situation was little different a century later when it was said that "the lowlands produce a great quantity of corn, particularly wheat and barley, but the hilly parts, which are less fertile, are only fit for sheep".<sup>1</sup> Indeed, unlike some of the market towns like Romsey, Ringwood, Andover and Petersfield, the city of Winchester does not seem to have encouraged the settlement of population in its neighbouring parishes and villages like Compton and Twyford to the south and Kings Worthy and Micheldever to the north were very thinly inhabited. The only wedge of greater population appears in Cheriton and Bishops Waltham where soils may have been rather more fertile.

Finally, in the south east the parishes around Portsmouth harbour were relatively densely inhabited and so was the area around Hayling Island and Havant where the proximity of population in Chichester as well as Portsmouth enabled a concentration of taxpayers. This part of the coastline, from Southampton to the Sussex border, contained much marshland and although it was said that "the vapours in the low grounds next to the seas are less pernicious than those in other countries, and the air much more healthy than the hundreds of Essex and

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1. Anon, A Description of England and Wales, (London, 1769), Vol. 3-4, p. 159.

the marshy parts of Kent", they were still inhospitable dwelling-places and explain the sparse habitation of parishes like Hound, Titchfield, Farlington and Bedhampton.<sup>1</sup>

The pattern of wealth concurs very closely with that of population - the greatest wealth and the highest density of population usually appeared together (Figure 2/1/18). However, there were some interesting exceptions. The lower Test valley, for instance, although it supported relatively large numbers of people, was not particularly prosperous and no parish had above ten hearths per 100 acres. Similarly some northern parishes like Whitchurch and Overton were very poor despite their relatively dense population, further evidence that the concentration of taxpayers associated with the cloth manufacturing areas lingered after the main fiscal wealth of the trade had diminished. What is very clear, however, is the general poverty of most of Hampshire with very few parishes having over five hearths per 100 acres and even in the south east the wealth of Portsmouth and Gosport as naval centres, in reality, brought very little material gain to the surrounding areas.

Population distribution may also be gauged from the Compton Census of 1676 (Figure 2/1/19). Much the same pattern emerges, although, with the lowest category in the scale rather less widespread, it is possible to be more precise in the analysis of the least populated regions. For example, in the under-populated south west, the Avon valley again stands out but some further concentration of communicants can be seen along the western shores of Southampton Water in Fawley and Dibden which were thus more densely inhabited than the New Forest. The Test and Itchen valleys show high densities but there is a very clear belt of sparsely inhabited countryside between the two valleys and including parishes like North Stoneham and Hursley. It is interesting that neither Winchester nor Southampton seem to have induced any significant

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1. *ibid.*, p. 158.

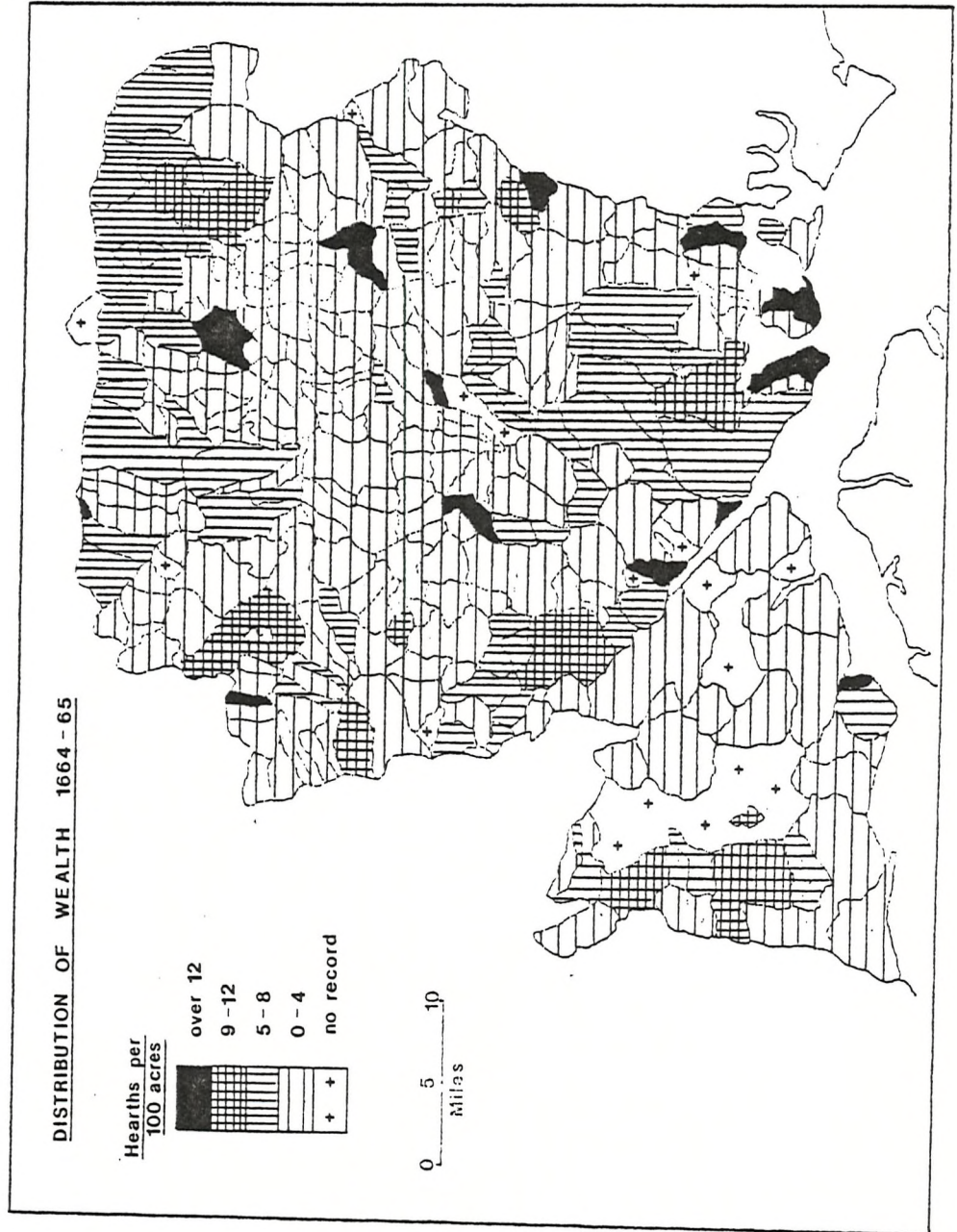


Figure 2/1/18

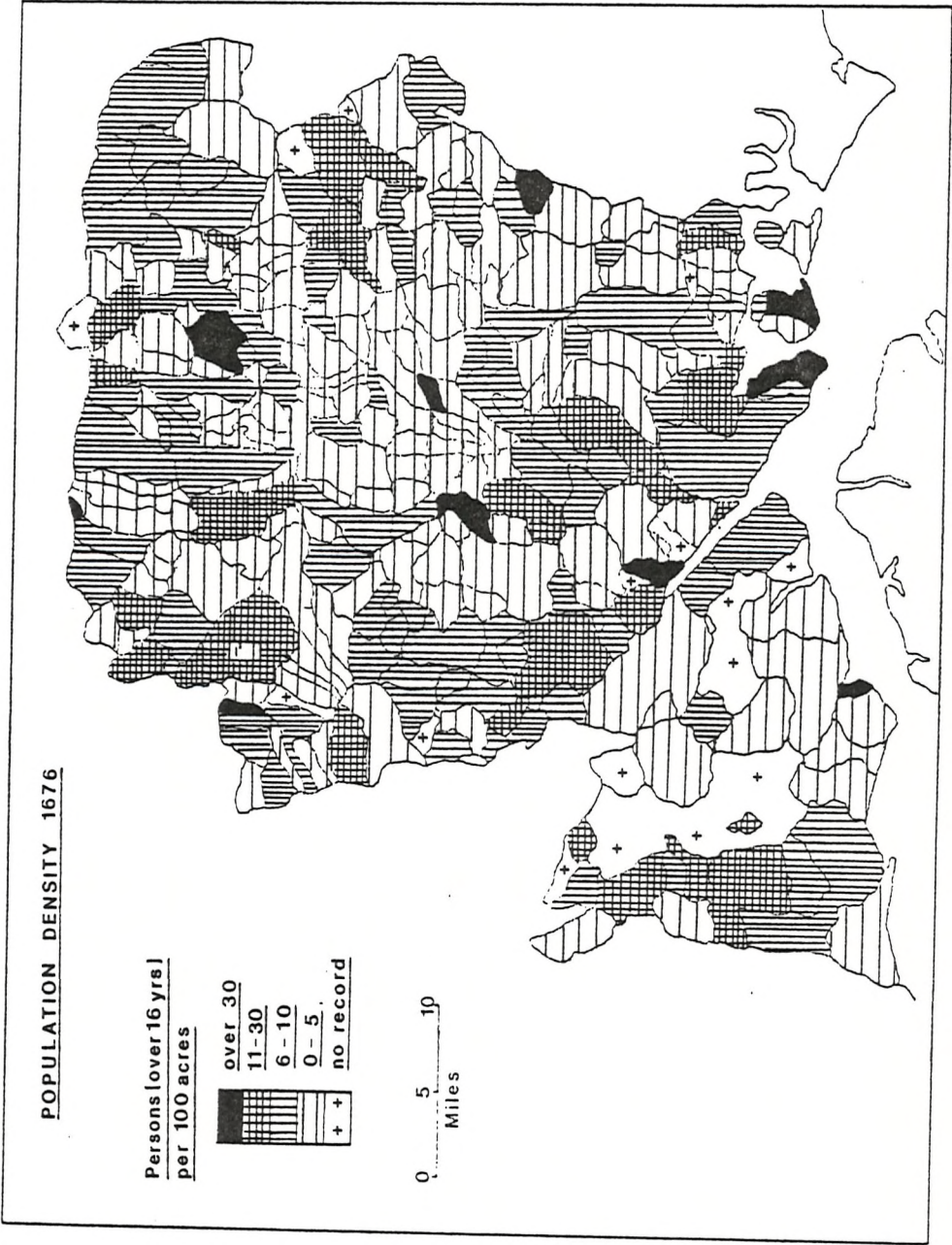


Figure 2/1/19



settlement in surrounding parishes and must have found most of their regular retailers and customers from within the urban population itself, enjoying somewhat less of an inter-relationship with the rural population than was the case with market towns like Romsey and Andover. The north of Hampshire shows the same relatively high density as in 1664-5 but the north east corner, especially on the Berkshire border in parishes like Heckfield, Eversley and Yateley, economically related to Reading and the prosperous Thames valley, were, in fact, slightly more populated than were Crondall and Aldershot on the Surrey boundary. A notable concentration of population appears in Alton and east towards Farnham, an area which enjoyed fertile soils and prosperous agriculture as well as a strategic location on the main route from Southampton and Winchester to London, which clearly encouraged relatively dense settlement. The impression of a thinly populated countryside for most of central Hampshire is reinforced by the 1676 evidence but clearly there was evolving a belt of greater population stretching south east from Winchester to Bishops Waltham and thence to Fareham and Portsmouth. This was south of the chalk downs, an area of gravels and clays which supported mixed agriculture including a thriving production of dairy foods facilitated by its enviable position within trading range of all three major towns in Hampshire. Thus it was that parishes like Botley and Upham were able to record relatively high wealth and populations in 1664-5 and 1676.

### Towns

The calculation of population from the hearth tax figures is fraught with problems. Questions of just how many people can be safely allocated to houses with different numbers of hearths and what is an appropriate multiplier to use in converting a total of households into an estimate of populations are impossible to solve adequately. Contemporaries certainly differed on the subject.

Petty, himself a Hampshire man born in Romsey, in his "Essay concerning the Growth of London" used a figure of 8 per household but this referred only to the capital and later in his "Essay in political arithmetic" he amended it to 6 or just over. Davenant wrote that "six persons ... is the common way of computing". More detailed analysis came from the prolific pen of Gregory King who recorded an average family size for households with varying numbers of hearths and reached an overall multiplier of 4.5. Almost a century later, Pilkington's survey of Derbyshire in 1789 found that in nineteen out of thirty parishes the average family size per house was somewhere between 4 and 5. Some modern students have used figures as high as 6.3 or even 8 but Hoskins multiplied by both 4.5 and 5 in his Exeter study. Most common are figures between 4 and 5. Marshall for Bedfordshire tested the Hearth Tax with the Compton Census and concluded that 4.25 was an appropriate multiplier, whilst S.H.A. Harvey, when producing an edition of the Suffolk Hearth Tax, used 5.<sup>1</sup> More recent work, especially that of the Cambridge Group, tends towards an average household size of 4.5 although central parishes in towns would have had not only a much larger average but also a greater likelihood of houses being subdivided

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1. The Hearth Tax has been the subject of much detailed research and the following are among the most useful for background on the use of these records: W.G. Hoskins, Industry, Trade and People in Exeter 1688-1800, (Manchester, 1935); R. Howell, "Hearth Tax Returns", History, 49, (1964), pp. 42-5; L.M. Marshall, The Rural Population of Bedfordshire, Bedfordshire Historical Record Society, 16, (1934), pp. 2-12 and 52-62; L.M. Marshall, "The Levying of the Hearth Tax 1662-88", English Historical Review, 51, (1936), pp. 628-46; C.A.F. Meekings, Dorset Hearth Tax Assessments 1662-4, (Dorchester, 1951); H.M. Spufford, "The Significance of the Cambridgeshire Hearth Tax", Proceedings of the Cambridgeshire Antiquarian Society, 55, (1962), pp. 53-64; M.M.B. Weinstock, Hearth Tax Returns: Oxfordshire 1665, Oxfordshire Record Society, (Oxford, 1940).

between families. Meanwhile, Peter Laslett has suggested that the average household size in this country stayed fairly constant at about 4.75 between 1574 and 1821.<sup>1</sup> There are several other problems to be overcome - for instance, are charged and uncharged households to be treated in the same way and, even with lists of the exempt, how many people went unrecorded? Clearly the subject is very imprecise but, again, it must be tackled, however imperfectly, if working estimates of population are to be reached.

The method adopted here for the calculation of urban population from the hearth tax assumes an additional 10% to allow for omissions and then a multiplier of 4.75, as adopted by the Cambridge Group. For the Compton Census of 1676, as with the inquiry of 1603, it is assumed that adult conformists and nonconformists made up 60% of the population and thus a multiplier of 10/6 is used. Populations for the Hampshire towns have been calculated from both sources, as well as an average for the two estimates (Table 2/1/13, Figure 2/1/20).

Portsmouth had taken over as the leading town in Hampshire and was among the leading twenty-five English towns, but the county could still boast of only two or three communities with over 3000 people and it remained relatively under-urbanised. Andover and Basingstoke were the leading market towns, the former "an indifferent large borough town extending 3f. on the road and about as much transverse" and the latter "a great thoroughfare for the Western ports ... [with] a market which is good for corn and especially barley".<sup>2</sup> The rise of Gosport from a tiny village in the 1520s to a thriving community in the 1660s is very apparent and its close ties with Portsmouth were aptly described by Macky

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1. P. Laslett, "Mean household size in England since the sixteenth century", in Household and Family in Past Time, ed. P. Laslett, (Cambridge, 1972), p. 126.
  2. J. Ogilby, Travellers' Guide, op.cit., p. 50; anon, New Description, op.cit., p. 55.



Population Estimates

	<u>1664-5</u>	<u>1676</u>	<u>Average</u>
Alresford	16. 690	17. 642	16. 666
Alton	10. 1165	8. 1517	9. 1341
Andover	4. 2205	5. 1972	5. 2089
Basingstoke	5. 1688	4. 2572	4. 2130
Christchurch	12. 878	16. 660	15. 769
Fareham	19. 444	15. 700	18. 572
Fordingbridge	21. 261	19. 424	20. 343
Gosport	8. 1343	6. 1875	6. 1609
Havant	17. 684	20. 400	19. 400
Kingsclere	6. 1494	10. 1219	8. 1357
Lymington	15. 773	14. 897	14. 835
Odiham	18. 590	18. 573	17. 582
Petersfield	11. 1150	11. 979	11. 1065
Ringwood	7. 1359	9. 1223	10. 1291
Romsey	9. 1176	7. 1603	7. 1390
Stockbridge	20. 287	21. 367	21. 327
Bishops Waltham	13. 794	13. 899	13. 847
Whitchurch	14. 779	12. 944	12. 862
Portsmouth	1. 4002	1. 4267	1. 4135
Southampton*	3. 2613	3. 3202	3. 2908
Winchester	2. 3804	2. 3618	2. 3711

\* 1662

Table 2/1/13

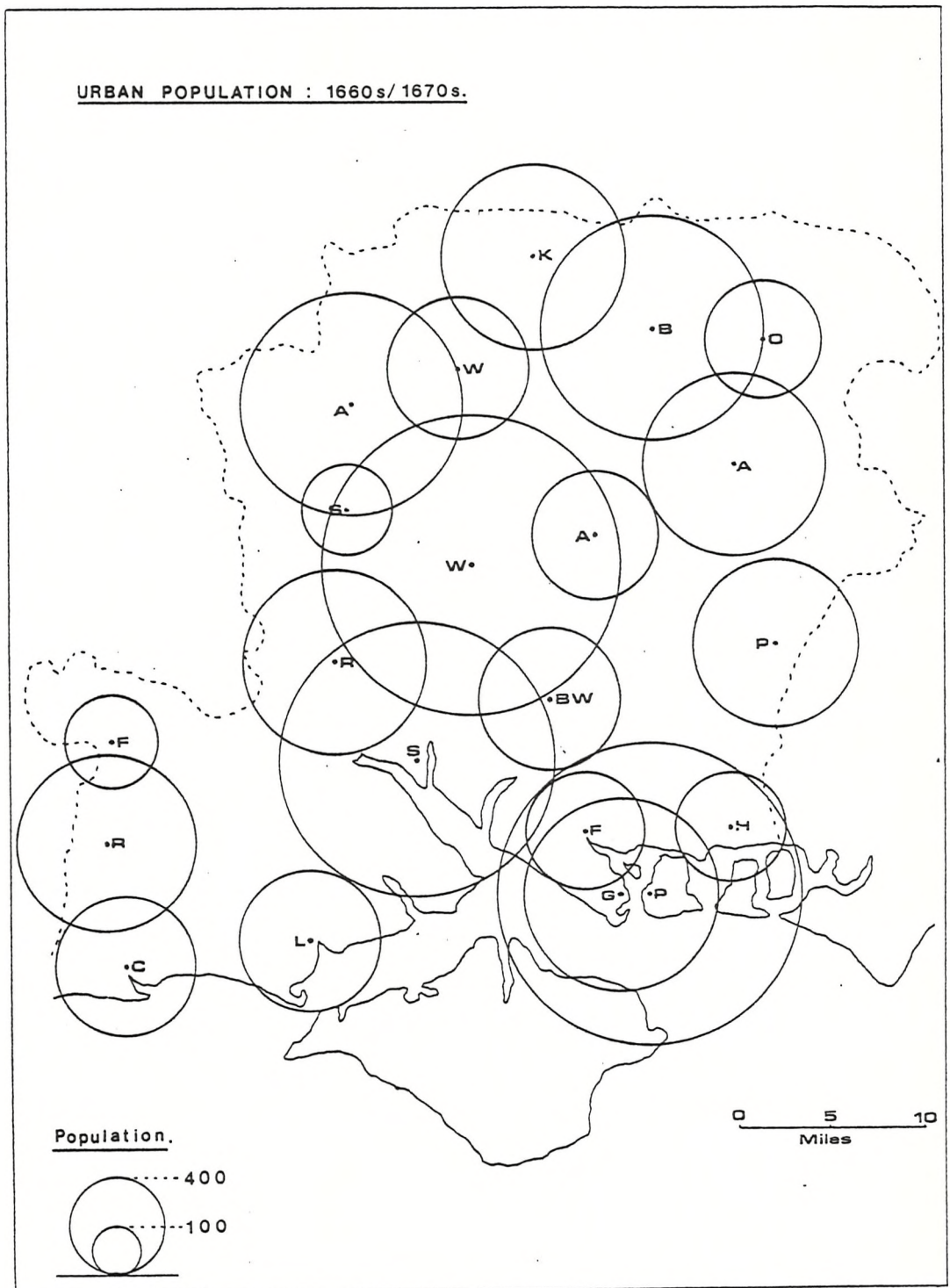


Figure 2/1/20

in 1722 when he wrote of Gosport as

"a little market town ... where the sailors wives generally live, and its most frequented by sailors; but its all called Portsmouth, although different parishes. In the town of Portsmouth live the military and officers of men of war, when ashore; at Gosport, the warrant officers and sailors; and in the Docks, the tradesmen".<sup>1</sup>

There follows a group of market towns including Alton, Romsey, Ringwood and Petersfield, each with over 1000 inhabitants, but clearly there were many urban communities which still had less than 1000 people. Some historians have doubted the classification of such communities as towns especially as late as the 1660s and 1670s. However, it is worth considering just how contemporaries regarded these places. Christchurch for certain had under 1000 inhabitants but it was described by Camden as "a small populous market town" as early as 1610 and in the early eighteenth century it was referred to as a "large and populous town and borough governed by a mayor, recorder, bailiffs, aldermen and Common Council".<sup>2</sup> Alresford seems to have had a population of less than 700 but it was considered important enough for John Ogilby to write of it as "a large town above 3 furlongs long on the road, governed by a bailiff and 8 burgesses [with] a great market on Thursdays, especially for sheep and provisions and 2 fairs on Holy Thursday and Midsummer Day".<sup>3</sup> In 1722 Macky described the town along with Alton as "better built than many corporations I have seen that send members to parliament".<sup>4</sup> Even humble communities like Fordingbridge were worthy of urban status in contemporary eyes, described as "a market town" in 1720, and it may be asserted that there were still some very small towns in Hampshire around the

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1. J. Macky, A Journey through England (London, 1722), Vol II, Letter III.
  2. W. Camden, Britannia, trans. R. Gough (2nd Edn., 1806) p. 126; anon, A New Description, op.cit., p. 51.
  3. J. Ogilby, The Travellers Guide (London, 1699), p. 96.
  4. J. Macky, Journey, op.cit., Vol. II, Letter II.

time of the Restoration.<sup>1</sup>

As far as Romsey is concerned, some additional evidence for population in the 1670s is provided by lists of men "betweene sixteene and sixty years of age" warned to appear personally at Sir John St. Barbes Court at the Market House in the town.<sup>2</sup> For 1676 48 men were listed under Middlebridge Street, 53 under Cherville Street and 111 under the Market Place, a total of 212 householders which compares quite favourably with the 225 names listed twelve years before in the Hearth Tax and endorses the population estimate made from that source. Rather less convincing are similar court leet lists for Basingstoke in the 1650s which tend to average about 240 households, considerably less than the 323 which appears in the Hearth Tax.<sup>3</sup> In neither case, however, does the record of 1664-5 appear as an underestimate.

#### Wealth

A rather less contentious line of inquiry is into wealth and poverty within these towns. The standard of living implied by a particular number of hearths varied according to the relevant type of community, but for the market towns like those of Hampshire it is reasonable to imagine that occupiers with one hearth were most likely members of the very poor, unskilled labouring population, those with two hearths were possibly journeymen or craftsmen only slightly less poor than the first category, those with three to five were fairly comfortable craftsmen, shopkeepers or small merchants, those with fireplaces totalling six to nine held large houses, possessed more wealth, perhaps often inherited and enjoyed a higher status within the town, while those with ten or more hearths can be regarded as the very well off, the cream of local society.

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1. T. Cox, Magna Britannia, op.cit., p. 846.

2. HRO, 20 M 60/M1.

3. HRO, 148 M 71 2/1/117.

This, at least, is the conventional view of the tax ratings.

Table 2/1/14 shows an analysis of households which reveals that in every town except two, Ringwood and Portsmouth, over 25% of the households were not chargeable. This meant that the occupier was not expected to contribute to church or poor rates, had an income of under 20s per year and had property worth less than £10. These were the very poor for whom life must have always been difficult. Stockbridge, one of the smallest market towns, stands out as a particularly unfortunate community which is not altogether surprising for in 1673 its market was described as "disused" and by the 1720s it had become a poor "ragged borough" noted only for its fine inns.<sup>1</sup> However, two of the larger market communities, Andover and Basingstoke, had more than 40% of their houses in this very poor category. Clearly the most populous markets also tended to support the largest proportion of settled poor families. An obvious comparison may be drawn between these towns and the rapidly expanding population of Portsmouth where only 15% were excused payment of the tax. Admittedly the dockyards must have attracted many migrant poor who went untaxed but it is apparent that the resident population contained proportionately far less uncharged individuals than was true of the market towns. Not only was the Royal Dockyard obviously contributing to the physical growth of the town but it was clearly injecting wealth into the community. Other market towns within the hinterland of Portsmouth like Havant, Fareham and Gosport each had about 38% of their households exempt which compared favourably with some of the larger towns in the north of the county, while Petersfield, also in the sphere of influence of Portsmouth, was one of the most prosperous small settlements with only a quarter of its households uncharged. Certainly Petersfield was able by this time to attract the custom of important patrons such as Samuel Pepys who is known to have played "bowles" in the town in 1661 and conducted business there at a later date.<sup>2</sup> The market with the lowest proportion

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1. R. Blome, Britannia, op.cit., p. 110; T. Cox, Magna Britannia, op.cit., p. 854.
  2. S. Pepys, Diary and Correspondence, (London, 1889), Vol. I p. 181 and Vol. IV p. 2.

Analysis of Households

	Households paying	Households Exempt	Total of Households	% of Total Exempt
Alresford	96	36	132	27.3
Alton	123	100	223	44.8
Andover	177	245	422	58.1
Basingstoke	184	139	323	43.1
Christchurch	94	74	168	44.0
Fareham	52	33	85	38.8
Fordingbridge	27	23	50	46.0
Gosport	159	98	257	38.1
Havant	82	49	131	37.4
Kingsclere	156	130	286	45.5
Lymington	68	27	95	28.4
Odiham	77	36	113	31.9
Petersfield	164	56	220	25.5
Portsmouth	650	116	766	15.1
Ringwood	196	64	260	24.6
Romsey	111	114	225	50.7
Stockbridge	20	35	55	63.6
Bishops Waltham	90	62	152	40.8
Whitechurch	96	53	149	35.6
Winchester (city)	319	107	426	25.1

Table 2/1/14

of exempt houses was actually Ringwood with just under 25% of its inhabitants uncharged while both Alresford and Petersfield were only slightly worse off. Otherwise all the market towns had over 30% of their tax entries classified as exempt and thus supported relatively high numbers of poor inhabitants than was true of either Winchester or Portsmouth.

These impressions are confirmed by Table 2/1/15 which shows the average number of hearths per household. Winchester and Portsmouth both had an average over three, above any figure accredited to a market town, with the single exception of Odiham. Most of the small towns had between two and three hearths per household. The lower the average the greater was the problem of poverty within a particular community and it is again clear that some of the more prominent settlements like Andover, Romsey and Alton had large numbers of poor within their midst. Ringwood appears with a low average despite having very few people uncharged indicating that whilst a large majority of the inhabitants paid the hearth tax, very few occupied houses of any size. Stockbridge again emerges as very poor but, on the whole, urban size was not a very good guide to prosperity. Using this measure for Odiham and Havant, two of the smallest communities were also two of the best placed as signified by hearths per household. The contrast between Portsmouth and other towns of Hampshire is very apparent. In fact there were almost thirteen times more chargeable hearths than unchargeable in the port while in leading market towns like Basingstoke and Romsey the ratio was about 4:1 and 2:1 respectively. Petersfield had the best ratio of any of the market towns but even there taxed hearths outnumbered exempt hearths by only seven times. Clearly the poor homes with uncharged hearths were relatively more numerous in the smaller market towns than in the larger centres of population.

Analysis of Hearths

	Hearths Paying	Hearth Exempt	Total Hearths	Total Households	Average Number of Hearths per Household
Alresford	253	41	294	132	2.2
Alton	346	138	484	223	2.2
Andover	592	307	899	422	2.1
Basingstoke	615	148	763	322	2.4
Christchurch	233	87	320	168	1.9
Fareham	142	42	184	85	2.2
Fordingbridge	82	34	116	50	2.3
Gosport	538	173	711	257	2.8
Havant	285	71	356	131	2.7
Kingsclere	429	137	566	286	2.0
Lymington	215	34	249	95	2.6
Oditham	303	52	355	113	3.1
Petersfield	511	73	584	220	2.7
Portsmouth	2544	201	2745	766	3.6
Ringwood	457	68	525	260	2.0
Romsey	329	140	469	225	2.1
Stockbridge	69	35	104	55	1.9
Bishops Waltham	273	89	362	152	2.4
Whitchurch	211	53	264	149	1.8
Winchester (city)	1185	140	1325	426	3.1

Table 2/1/15



The overwhelming predominance of these one and two hearth households is further demonstrated in Table 2/1/16. Most of the leading market towns had about half their population assessed at one hearth, including a figure of 57% at Ringwood. However, several of the smaller communities had somewhat smaller proportions within this bracket and were much less dominated by these poor houses. Instead the largest group in places like Bishops Waltham, Fordingbridge and Odiham were the two hearth households constituting about one-third of the population, a marked contrast from the more populous boroughs like Andover, Basingstoke and Romsey where these ratings represented barely a quarter of the population. It would seem, therefore, that there were distinct differences in the relative constitution of the two poorest groups within urban society, the very poor one hearth families being proportionally much more important in the larger market towns. This was almost certainly as a result of the greater diversification of trades within these towns which brought with it wage labour in the various forms of manufacturing or service, employment found much less commonly in the small community dependent more exclusively on its market function. Not only were the two hearth entries more numerous in the lesser towns but so were the ratings in the three to five hearth bracket, men who enjoyed a fairly comfortable standard of living. They tended to represent about one-fifth of the households but in some of the very small towns like Odiham and Bishops Waltham they were nearer to one-third of the population and at Havant they were actually the most numerous group within the town. This was a characteristic the small towns shared with Winchester and Portsmouth and it was this relative numerical insignificance of the middling groups within society, the craftsmen and shopkeepers, that distinguished the leading market towns from both their smaller neighbours and the boroughs of county status. The six to nine hearth assessments represented

Analysis of Hearths in Relation to Households

	Number of householders returned as having					Total
	1 hearth	2 hearths	3-5 hearths	6-9 hearths	10 or more hearths	
Alresford	52 (39.4%)	41 (31.0%)	31 (23.5%)	7 (5.3%)	1 (0.8%)	132
Alton	92 (41.3%)	74 (33.2%)	48 (21.5%)	7 (3.1%)	2 (0.9%)	223
Andover	216 (51.2%)	113 (26.8%)	71 (16.8%)	15 (3.6%)	7 (1.7%)	422
Basingstoke	162 (50.2%)	61 (18.9%)	77 (23.8%)	17 (5.3%)	6 (1.9%)	323
Christchurch	96 (57.1%)	39 (23.2%)	26 (15.5%)	7 (4.2%)	-	168
Fareham	32 (37.6%)	29 (34.1%)	22 (25.9%)	2 (2.4%)	-	85
Fordingbridge	17 (34.0%)	22 (44.0%)	7 (14.0%)	3 (6.0%)	1 (2.0%)	50
Gosport	31 (12.1%)	122 (47.5%)	87 (33.9%)	17 (6.6%)	-	257
Havant	33 (25.2%)	35 (26.7%)	58 (44.3%)	4 (3.1%)	1 (0.8%)	131
Kingsclere	177 (61.9%)	54 (18.9%)	39 (13.6%)	12 (4.2%)	4 (1.4%)	286
Lymington	30 (31.6%)	27 (28.4%)	30 (31.6%)	8 (8.4%)	-	95
Odiham	30 (26.6%)	34 (30.1%)	34 (30.1%)	10 (8.8%)	5 (4.4%)	113
Petersfield	68 (30.9%)	72 (32.7%)	62 (28.2%)	15 (6.8%)	3 (1.4%)	220
Portsmouth	79 (10.3%)	252 (32.9%)	299 (39.0%)	123 (16.1%)	13 (1.7%)	766
Ringwood	148 (56.9%)	50 (19.2%)	49 (18.8%)	10 (3.8%)	3 (1.2%)	260
Romsey	110 (48.9%)	53 (23.6%)	52 (23.1%)	10 (4.4%)	-	225
Stockbridge	44 (80.0%)	1 (1.8%)	6 (11.0%)	3 (5.4%)	1 (1.8%)	55
Bishops Waltham	45 (29.6%)	52 (34.2%)	50 (32.9%)	5 (3.3%)	-	152
Whitchurch	102 (68.5%)	21 (14.1%)	20 (13.4%)	3 (2.0%)	3 (2.0%)	149
Winchester (city)	116 (27.2%)	128 (30.0%)	115 (27.0%)	52 (12.0%)	15 (3.5%)	426

Table 2/1/16

very few men in any of the market towns, normally only 5% or less and the total number of households, reaching a maximum of 8.8% at Odiham. None of the market communities could match the relative importance of this group in Portsmouth and Winchester where they constituted 16% and 12% respectively of the population. Finally, at the top of the wealth scale were the households rated at ten or more hearths. Several towns had no such taxpayers, including Romsey, and five others only had one or two. Only Basingstoke, Odiham and Andover had five or more, in each case representing less than 5% of the population, proportionately about the same as in Winchester and Portsmouth where there were numerically more of these highly assessed taxpayers.

It is also interesting to look at the geographical pattern of wealth within two of the market towns. At Romsey the market place tithing (Romsey Infra) had 61 chargeable houses compared with 45 unchargeable, and the average house had 2.5 hearths. Here were found the five largest buildings in the town. By contrast, Middlebridge Street to the south had 31 chargeable households and 26 uncharged and an average rating of 1.8. Cherville Street to the north of the town had 19 taxed houses and 43 exempt, with an average assessment of 1.6. Clearly even in a small town like Romsey there was a pattern of wealth within the town with the richest inhabitants concentrated around the market at the centre of the town and the poor people around the periphery of the town. In Cherville Street 69% of households were excused the tax compared with only 42% in Romsey Infra. A similar pattern emerges for Andover, the only other market town for which there are detailed figures for wards within the borough, the highest ratings being clustered in Winchester Street at the heart of the community.

To gain some more precise insight into the material implications of these tax assessments reference may be made to

inventories of townsmen who died soon after the record was made. The number of entries which may be matched is limited because unless the will dates from about two or three years after the tax individual circumstances may have changed and would make the analysis worthless. Meirion-Jones noted that of 243 dwellings in Odiham in 1665, 207 survived nine years later, showing the constantly changing domestic picture of the early modern town with houses always being built, altered or demolished.<sup>1</sup> It must also be remembered that wills and inventories only survive from the wealthiest groups in society. Eight inventories have been studied in detail, four from Petersfield and four from Romsey. Clearly there is some justification in assuming that various tax ratings reflected a different standard of living, with more hearths usually paralleled by larger dwellings and a higher value of goods in the inventory. However, there are some contrasts which are also apparent. In Petersfield, the inventory of Frederick Guphill, a shoemaker who died in 1666 and charged on two hearths, shows a very small home with four rooms and a shop. Most cooking and eating took place in the hall while the buttery seems to have been mainly for storage. The only bedding was in the chamber over the hall and the other chamber included merely a table and form. Furnishing was very sparse and the quantities of linen and clothing were limited. His total possessions amounted to just £18 15s 6d, over half of it in work tools, leather heels and lasts for his trade and debts owed to him. He was, indeed, a poor craftsman and his household enjoyed few, if any, luxuries. Others in the town with the same two hearth rating were similarly placed. Richard Gardener, a blacksmith, had an even smaller dwelling. His main living room was again the hall with a table, chairs and cooking pots and pans but he possessed rather more than Guphill in the way of beds, sheets, napkins and pillowcases. His tools and debts made up £13 4s of the total of £27 in the inventory. Both men were poor shopkeepers who worked and lived in small homes

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1. G. Meirion-Jones, "Hearth Tax", op.cit., p.147.

with few rooms and the minimum of household necessities.

However, in Romsey, Stephen Dallidowne, charged on the same two hearths, occupied a house with his wife and four children which was far from the small cottage which might have been thought of as typical of the one or two hearth home. Like Gardener and Guphill he was an independent craftsman, this time a hosier, and it is indeed fair to associate these small self-employed shopkeepers with the one to two hearth chargeable rating. Yet Dallidowne possessed a kitchen, hall and buttery as well as three chambers, one of which was clearly used for storage, and his shop. Cooking was done in the kitchen rather than the hall and a much finer array of pots, kettles, dishes and skillets was presented. There were beds and bedding in two of the chambers with a large amount of linen. Significantly he alone had any books within his house, indicative of a higher standard of literacy as well as the rare possession of non-essential items. His wool, tools and materials were less important in the inventory but debts owed to him represented a massive £74 18s pointing to the significance of credit within the small town economy. The difference between the quality of life enjoyed by Dallidowne from that of his two contemporaries in Petersfield is a clear warning about assuming some similarity among men with the same tax rating especially when different communities are observed and against necessarily equating any individual taxed on two hearths with the poor. Certainly within the two towns the scale of hearths did reflect standards of living within the individual settlements - Giles Hall, a Petersfield butcher charged on three hearths was clearly much better off than his neighbours with two hearths and similarly in Romsey higher value inventories accrued to those with more hearths. However, it would be folly to equate the meaning of two and three hearths in Petersfield with two and three hearths in Romsey, such were the

different interpretations of local assessors.

It is also clear for these small shopkeepers just how important to them in fiscal terms their business really was, for money and materials often made up three-quarters of their possessions. Another inventory, that of George Hearne a Basingstoke tanner, shows this particularly well. Charged on three hearths he inhabited a small tenement cottage in the town with a hall, buttery and chamber in which were various articles appraised at £10 8s but in his tanyard he had tools worth 13s and a variety of skins valued at a massive £91 13s. Such men had few resources outside their craft and also show no signs of links with the land, few of them possessing the small plot of ground or a handful of animals that could diversify their interests. The small craftsmen in towns like Basingstoke, Romsey and Petersfield were becoming increasingly specialised by the 1660s/1670s and dependent more and more on the marketing function of the town about them.

Some of the largest houses in the early modern market town belonged to innkeepers. Petersfield, for instance, had three buildings with over ten hearths, two of them belonging to local gentry but the largest was occupied by Thomas Jacques, one time mayor of the town. His inn, the White Hart, had sixteen hearths but not all inns were this size and John Pooke dwelt in the Red Lion which was charged on just five hearths and Richard Godden's inn, the Bear, was assessed at only three. In Romsey the inventory of Thomas Chalke shows clearly the lifestyle of a small market town inn. He was charged on five hearths, one of the richest men in the town, and his inn occupied a strategic position near the market place. All his goods were valued at £311 13s, well above any of the shopkeepers around him in the town. His house had five chambers, 'the best', 'the Crown', 'the Rose', 'the Star' and 'the Childrens', all with beds and bedding but little else. In the kitchen were large amounts of pewter and

brassware and an array of pots and pans. His cellar was well stocked and, interestingly, he appears to have done much of his own brewing, for besides vats and tubs he possessed malt and barley to the value of £188. Indeed, he may have supplied other inns and hostelries. His tax rating was not high by national standards but within Romsey it was substantial and his importance is nicely borne out by the inventory compiled early in 1666.

### Government

For the town of Romsey the names of men holding the position of mayor are only known consecutively from about 1650 because of the absence of any earlier detailed borough records. Hitherto only odd names are known for widely separated years. In the thirty years between 1651 and 1680 the office was held by twenty-four different men, most of whom appear in the hearth tax record of 1664-5. Three had died by the time of the tax and two cannot be matched with assessments but the wealth of the remaining nineteen men can be gauged. Their assessments are set out in Table 2/1/17a. The two richest men to hold the office were William Bloyes, mayor in 1654 and 1663, and William Freeman, mayor in 1674, with eight hearths which puts them at the very top of the tax rankings within the town. Although Romsey parish contained large houses like Broadlands, taxed on fourteen hearths, the largest assessment within the town was only eight, indicating the absence of any especially grand buildings or wealthy individuals by county standards and even the comparative smallness of the inns and hostelries of Romsey. Bloyes and Freeman were therefore poor by comparison with leading townsmen elsewhere or with leading rural landowners but within Romsey they were at the very top in terms of hearths assessed. However, there were others who shared this rating and were not office holders, like Avery Maior who was probably an old man in 1664 and Nicholas Turner of whom nothing

Hearth Tax : Local Government

(a) Romsey Mayors 1651-1680

	<u>Number of Hearths</u>	<u>Number of Mayors</u>
Chargeable	8	2
	7	-
	6	2
	5	5
	4	2
	3	5
	2	1
	1	1
Unchargeable	1	1

(b) Andover Common Councillors 1660-69

	<u>Number of Hearths</u>	<u>Number of Common Councillors</u>
Chargeable	20	1
	18	1
	12	1
	7	3
	6	2
	5	2
	4	6
	3	4
	2	1

Table 2/1/17



further is known except that his name first appears in the parish register in 1662 and he was therefore a newcomer to the town. Thus official administrative authority and taxable wealth were not necessarily synonymous in the 1660s. Most of the Romsey mayors fall into the three to six hearth bracket indicative of fairly prosperous craftsmen and shopkeepers, yet not substantially marked off from the rest of the population. However, there is a clear residential pattern to their assessments for of the nineteen men all but two lived in the market place ward, at the very centre of the town with the highest average tax rating and the lowest proportion of unchargeable entries. Clearly the prominent townsman, even in a relatively small urban community, found it desirable to live very close to the church, the town hall, the market house and, the focus of the town economy, the market square. Only Richard Puckeridge, mayor in 1664 and a leading clothier in the town, was assessed under Cherville Street, towards the north of Romsey. However, Henry Squibb, who was taxed for Middlebridge Street is interesting for other reasons. He became mayor in 1678 at the age of forty but in 1664-5, aged just twenty-six and married only two years, he was rated as unchargeable on one hearth, among the poorest people in the town. His life is a reminder of the hazards of static analysis - the hearth tax represents only a snapshot in time - since population was ebbing and flowing all the time and individuals were constantly on their way up and down within urban society. In the case of Henry Squibb the fact that his wife Elizabeth was related to the aforementioned Richard Puckeridge was no doubt significant and there could not have been many men rated as poor as him who rose to high office within the town. However, as with the tax assessments themselves, it serves to show that the gap between rich and poor in a small market town was probably not that wide and certainly less significant than that which prevailed in larger county towns and provincial centres. Indeed, among lower borough officers there was probably

even less conspicuous wealth. Of the aldermen of the ward identified for the 1660s and matched with hearth tax entries, none had a rating of over three hearths and several were charged on just one. Nathaniel Hacker, alderman of market place ward in 1669, was uncharged only four or five years earlier.

Further evidence on the people prominent in local government may be drawn from Andover where about twenty-seven men were elected to the Common Council of the town during the 1660s (Table 2/1/17b). The hearth tax may therefore be taken as a fair guide to the wealth of these men at the commencement of their life as a capital burgess. Most served as bailiff and/or charity chamberlain within a short while of their election and many went on to be mayor or were selected as Approved Men, an inner council of twelve important townsmen. Of the twenty-seven, all but six can be matched with hearth tax entries. The results are very similar to those obtained for the Romsey mayors. The residential clustering is still apparent, though rather less marked than in Romsey indicating a slightly broader spread of wealth within the town: fifteen of the councillors were taxed in Alderman's Row ward, four in Winchester Street, two in Priory ward and, interestingly, one in Hatherden actually outside the town. In the main the Andover councillors belonged to a band of tax ratings between three and seven hearths. There were exceptions like Thomas Westcombe assessed on twenty hearths, but he was landlord of the White Swan, an inn obviously worthy of such an important route town as Andover. The poorest was Andrew Moring, taxed on two hearths. Again, therefore, it was the fairly well off but not extravagantly wealthy shopkeepers and craftsmen who formed the membership of the Common Council, men whose trading backgrounds must have been very much alike and whose lifestyle, while comfortable and secure, was not as remote from the majority of townsfolk as was that of, say, the rural landowners. Nor does wealth seem to have been a criterion in appointment to the

Approved Men of the town with some of the poorest councillors such as William Barlow, William Gammen and Walter Robinson, all charged on three hearths, all securing appointment. Andover clearly did possess some larger buildings and richer inhabitants than Romsey - besides Thomas Westcombe there was, for example, John Rathband, a vintner charged on eighteen hearths - but on the whole the great houses found in larger cities were not a feature of Andover despite it being one of the largest and most vigorous of the Hampshire market towns. In both Romsey and Andover, therefore, the men who governed the towns were most certainly drawn from the richest elements within their respective communities, though not exclusively so, but in both cases this meant individuals of little or no consequence outside their own environment. The distribution of taxable capacity may have been very unequal but the significantly wealthy man was not a characteristic of the market town. Instead wealth and authority were concentrated among taxpayers rated at between about three and eight hearths.

It is possible to delve further into this poverty by combining study of the Hearth Tax with another demographic source - the parish registers. Analyses of the tax such as Chalklin's for Tonbridge or Eversley for Worcestershire have tended to assume that most of the households classified as unchargeable were inhabited by widows or the elderly.<sup>1</sup> In testing the first of these propositions the Hearth Tax itself yields valuable information for although occupations are rarely given, titles are usually included and certainly it is easy to identify female heads of household and widows. These have been illustrated on all the graphs in Appendix I. It is clear that when female

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1. C.W. Chalklin, "A Seventeenth Century Market Town: Tonbridge", Archaeologia Cantiana, 76, (1961), p. 160; D.E.C. Eversley, "A Survey of Population in an area of Worcestershire from 1660 to 1850 on the basis of parish records", Population Studies, 10, (1957), pp. 253-79.

households were assessed at one hearth then most widows were indeed unchargeable, as in Basingstoke and Gosport where there was not a single one hearth household headed by a female that was chargeable. The situation is much the same throughout all the towns, namely that where women occurred with one or two hearths they were among the very poor people who went unchargeable. However, seen as a proportion of the total exempt section of the population females were everywhere, always a minority. The greatest proportion is for Christchurch where twenty-five out of sixty-one exempt households were headed by females. Otherwise women usually made up under a third of the unchargeable population. What also emerges from the graphs is that the financial plight of the widow was not necessarily a desperate one. They were to be found occupying houses of all sizes. In Alderman's Row, Andover, Mistress Mary Shurman was taxed on a five hearth dwelling and a widow Elizabeth Long paid for a four hearth household. The two wealthiest women in the town were found in Winchester Street tithing, widow Bird who paid on six hearths and Mistress Thornborough assessed at seven. Clearly substantial taxable capacity was in the possession of these women who must have been economically and socially important in urban society. In several of the market towns there were just as many, if not more, women charged as were uncharged, and the female head of household could often have been a woman of considerable independent means.

The other suggestion is that the unchargeable households consisted of a large proportion of elderly people. Inevitably the hearth tax records reveal nothing about the ages of those persons whose names are listed other than the occasional description 'old' prefixed to an entry. Yet by using reconstitution from the parish registers considerable family details can be obtained, including the baptismal date of many inhabitants. Romsey has been selected for this analysis in view of its fine register and the three

central tithings, Romsey Infra, Middlebridge Street and Cherville Street have been studied. There were a total of 197 male householders listed under these sections of the town for which the baptism dates for 118 or 60% have been found. In detail, this means that 61 out of 107 chargeable households (57%) and 57 out of 90 unchargeable (63%) have been traced (Table 2/1/18a).

Eversley has stated that most unchargeable houses were occupied by widows and old people and certainly there are several such families in Romsey.<sup>1</sup> Robert Foster of Cherville Street was born in 1605 and married at the age of twenty-four but it is unlikely that any of his children were still at home and probably he lived in his one hearth unchargeable house, now aged about sixty, with his wife Judith. However, of the male householders uncharged whose ages have been traced almost half were in the thirty to fifty age bracket (49%) and the number of householders under thirty was about the same as those over fifty (25% and 26% respectively). It seems, therefore, that within the town of Romsey it would be false to assume that the list of one and two hearth houses which were uncharged and headed by males were occupied largely by older couples whose children had perhaps grown up and left home. In fact there were just as many young families like that of Nathaniel Hacker who had married in 1663 at the age of twenty-one and whose first child had been born a year later. This conclusion is further justified by looking at the family situation of some of the other individuals whose approximate ages are unknown but for whom some details of dependents are recorded, often revealing the presence of very young children. Table 2/1/18a shows that the chargeable households were more evenly distributed among the age groups but it is clear that there were many houses (34%) which were expected to pay the tax and which were headed by

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1. D.E.C. Eversley, "A Survey of Population", op.cit., p. 258.

Age of Taxpayers: Romsey 1664-5

- (a) Summary of the Hearth Tax Entries where the date of baptism of the householder has been traced

Age (years)	Number of male households traced			
	Chargeable		Unchargeable	
	No.	%	No.	%
0-30	16	26	14	25
31-50	24	40	28	49
over 50	21	34	15	26
Total	61	100	57	100

of the 30 households aged 30 or less	16 were chargeable	(53%)
	14 were unchargeable	(47%)
of the 52 households aged 31 to 50	24 were chargeable	(46%)
	28 were unchargeable	(54%)
of the 36 households aged over 50	21 were chargeable	(58%)
	15 were unchargeable	(42%)

- (b) Occupiers of three hearth-plus houses  
(traced)

<u>Age</u>	<u>Number of</u> <u>Householders</u>	<u>%</u>
0-30	5	18
30-50	13	46
50+	10	36
	<hr/> 28	<hr/> 100

Table 2/1/18

men aged over fifty. It has been shown that unchargeable households were certainly not dominated by the elderly. Indeed, it is also true that the proportion of each age group uncharged was lowest for the group of householders over fifty. Old age must have meant extreme poverty for many people and for them survival must have been more difficult than for their younger neighbours who were also uncharged. However, it seems unjustifiable to imagine that old age necessarily implied a greater likelihood of inclusion among the exempt and of the thirty-six men traced as over fifty only fifteen or 42% were unchargeable compared with 47% and 54% for the other age groups. Rather, it would seem fair to conclude that the ranks of the unchargeable males, the very poor of the population, were filled not just with the old, infirm and widowed but with poor labourers and the unskilled of all ages, often with large families to support.

It is also clear from Table 2/1/18b, looking at the inhabitants of some of the larger houses in Romsey, with three hearths or more, those no doubt occupied by the wealthier section of the population, that there were twice as many householders aged over fifty as under thirty (36% compared with 18%). It must have been comparatively rare to find a young man inhabiting a large house and it may be supposed that in a lifetime a man might expect to acquire a more sizeable house, most likely on his father's death. Certainly two of the largest houses in Romsey were occupied by two of the most senior members of society, both aged in their seventies, namely William Munday and Nicholas Blowes who held seven and eight hearth residences in Romsey Infra.

### COMPARISON OF STATIC SOURCES

So far the analysis of population has focussed on the picture presented at various fixed points in time. However, the four main static sources, the 1524-5 subsidies, the 1603 communicants census, the Hearth Tax of 1664-5 and the Compton Census may be effectively compared to illustrate contrasting patterns of growth.

The distribution of wealth and population over the county as a whole remained very similar throughout the period, with the most densely inhabited regions being the south east, the Test valley and the north, with smaller concentrations of people in the Itchen and Avon valleys. The New Forest, the coastal regions away from the towns, the east and north east and the chalklands at the heart of the county remained sparsely populated in the 1670s just as they had been 150 years earlier.

However, this is not to say that there had been no changes in the demography of early modern Hampshire. The overall population had grown by 35% between the 1520s and 1603, a crude overall rate of annual increase of about 0.46% and it rose by 25.8% in the slightly shorter period between 1603 and the 1660s/1670s, a rate of 0.39% per annum. Thus the growth was fractionally slower in the seventeenth century. Over the whole period the number of people living in Hampshire grew from 64,872 in 1524-5 to 110,515 in the 1660s/1670s, an increase of only 70.4% in about 150 years, indicative of the 'stop-go' nature of pre-industrial demographic expansion with a general underlying trend towards growth persistently interrupted by short and often severe periods of recession.

The increase in urban population is clear, though less marked than that found by Patten in East Anglia. In the 1660s just over a quarter of people lived in towns compared with just over a fifth in the 1520s. However, there were some obvious differences in the



rates of growth achieved by urban and rural population. In the sixteenth century the countryside increased by 33.1% and the towns by 44.0% and in fact the pace of urban growth was accelerating, for in the seventeenth century, while the rural parishes increased by only 19.6%, the town populations had risen by 46.6%. Thus while the demographic growth of the Tudor period was a general phenomenon shared quite evenly by both town and country, by the seventeenth century the towns of Hampshire had become a clearly more dynamic element. This may well indicate that the increase characteristic of the whole county in the sixteenth century had subsided and that under the Stuarts only the towns were still growing significantly. If this was so then the countryside might not have been producing the same sort of surplus that had facilitated migration into the towns and may indicate that there was a large measure of natural growth which enabled the urban population expansion to continue into the seventeenth century.

The most successful comparisons are those drawn between similarly based sources, in this case between taxpayers in 1524-5 and 1664-5 and between communicants or conformists in 1603 and 1676. Looking first at the longer period it can be seen that in the subsidy lists the towns had 22.1% of the Hampshire population but this had grown to 25.6% by the 1660s and the proportion of taxable wealth concentrated in the towns had also risen from 23.8% to 30.7% (Table 2/1/19). The growth was shared by both the main towns and the market towns, both of which expanded at a more rapid rate than the countryside. The three largest boroughs grew in population by about 5082, a rise of 95.2% in 140 years or 0.7% per annum, the market towns expanded by 8,699 a rise of 96% or 0.7% per annum and the countryside increased by 30,851, a growth of 60.5% or 0.4% per annum. Thus the large towns appear to be, overall, a dynamic element in the Hampshire population, although most

Comparison between Subsidy of 1524-25 and Hearth Tax of 1664-65

Subsidy of 1524-25

	<u>Taxpayers (parish)</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Taxpayers (town and country)</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Estimated Pop. (town and country)</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Tax paid (parish)</u>	<u>£</u> <u>%</u>	<u>Tax paid (town and country)</u>	<u>£</u> <u>%</u>
Main towns	1092	8.2	1092	8.2	5337	8.2	214.6	9.9	214.6	9.9
Market Towns	2850	21.3	1852	13.9	9061	13.9	457.2	21.1	300.3	13.9
Countryside	9426	70.5	10424	78.0	50962	78.0	1492.5	70.0	1649.4	76.2
Total	13368	100.0	13368	100.1	65360	100.1	2164.3	100.0	2164.3	100.0

Hearth Tax of 1664-65

	<u>Taxpayers (parish)</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Taxpayers (town and country)</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Estimated Pop. (town and country)</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Number of Hearths (parish)</u>	<u>£</u> <u>%</u>	<u>Number of Hearths (town and country)</u>	<u>£</u> <u>%</u>
Main towns	1994	9.5	1994	9.5	10419	9.5	6774	14.3	6774	14.3
Market Towns	5391	25.6	3399	16.1	17760	16.1	11582	24.4	7769	16.4
Countryside	13666	64.9	15658	74.4	81813	74.4	29092	61.3	32905	69.3
Total	21051	100.0	21051	100.0	109992	100.0	47448	100.0	47448	100.0

or all of this impression was the result of the dramatic expansion under royal naval patronage of Portsmouth. Over this long period most parishes recorded an increase in their number of taxpayers with less than a quarter actually showing a decrease. Indeed most of those parishes which saw a diminished population fell by less than 20%. There were 186 parishes, including towns and villages, which recorded an overall rise but 137 of these, or almost three-quarters of all expanding settlements, showed a rise of less than 100%, i.e. in 140 years they had failed to double their population (Table 2/1/20). The pace of growth was clearly steady rather than dramatic.

The rates of growth of individual parishes are shown on Figure 2/1/21. It is apparent that the sparsely populated south west was actually the area of most concerted growth for no parish west of a line from Southampton Water to the Wiltshire border showed a decrease. Similarly, parts of the poor regions in the east and north east around Crondall and Headley on the Surrey and Sussex borders were also uniformly expansive. Thus the least densely settled parishes were, in fact, almost all growing quite significantly, perhaps as population pressure elsewhere squeezed out surplus inhabitants or as inflated food prices made the cultivation of more marginal land a feasible alternative. The southern parishes as a whole were growing far more consistently than elsewhere in the county. Only a few villages on the coastal marshes of the south east declined over the period but otherwise the belt of rural parishes south of the chalk downs were among the most vigorous in Hampshire. Towards the heart of the county on the chalklands there was a good mixture of expanding and declining parishes which probably created a demographic equilibrium over the area. Most of the north west was expansive, with a cluster of high growth rates on the Berkshire border, but elsewhere in the villages of the central north several settlements recorded a

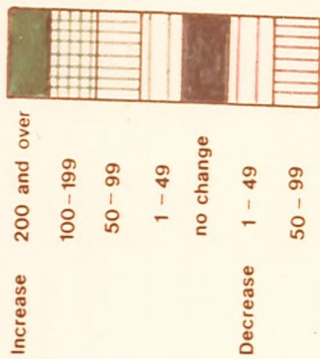
Comparison between the Subsidy of 1524-5  
and the Hearth Tax of 1664-5

	<u>% change in number of Taxpayers</u>	<u>Number of Parishes</u>	<u>% of all Parishes</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%</u>
DECREASE	80 and over	1	0.4		
	70-79.9	1	0.4		
	60-69.9				
	50-59.9	4	1.5	63	23.3
	40-49.9	5	1.9		
	30-39.9	8	3.0		
	20-29.9	8	3.0		
	10-19.9	11	4.1		
	0.1-09.9	25	9.3		
NO CHANGE		5	1.9	5	1.9
INCREASE	0.1-09.9	14	5.2		
	10-19.9	10	3.7		
	20-29.9	16	5.9		
	30-39.9	22	8.1		
	40-49.9	12	4.4		
	50-59.9	14	5.2		
	60-69.9	10	3.7		
	70-79.9	17	6.3	186	68.9
	80-89.9	16	5.9		
	90-99.9	6	2.2		
	100-149.9	21	7.8		
	150-199.9	12	4.4		
	200-299.9	9	3.3		
	300-399.9	1	0.4		
	400-499.9	3	1.1		
	500-599.9	1	0.4		
	600-699.9	1	0.4		
	700-799.9	1	0.4		
NO EVIDENCE		16	5.9	16	5.9
Total		270	100.2	270	100.0

Table 2/1/20

**Comparison between the Subsidy of 1524-25  
and the Hearth Tax of 1664-65**

% Change in number  
of taxpayers



0 5 10  
Miles



decline, possibly indicative of the ailing cloth trade among rural parishes.

Turning to the seventeenth century in particular, comparison may be drawn between the two religious censuses of 1603 and 1676. Over this much shorter period, over a third of parishes showed a decline in population although it was rarely substantial - only five fell by 50% or more, i.e. had their total number of inhabitants decreased by over half. Inevitably the increases recorded were much less substantial and showed none of the dramatic rises revealed in the longer period. Again the main clustering was in the range of up to a 30% change either way showing that while many parishes increased and decreased in the first three-quarters of the seventeenth century, the change was rarely of a dramatic nature. Overall the county population rose from around 87,877 in 1603 to 111,038 in 1676, an increase of 26.4%, representing an annual rate of expansion of 0.4% per annum (Tables 2/1/21 and 2/1/22). However, it is again clear that the most vigorous demographic elements of growth were the towns. The main boroughs grew by 3,664 or 49.4% an annual rate of 0.7% and the market towns expanded by 6,859 or 54.4%, also 0.7% per annum. Thus whilst over the whole period the larger towns were rather more expansive than the market communities, talking in terms of groups rather than individual settlements, in the seventeenth century the smaller boroughs were at least matching their more populous neighbours. The Hampshire rural population was also growing throughout and it certainly expanded between 1603 and 1676 but it was never able to match the rates of growth achieved by the towns and achieved a sluggish 18.6% rise or barely 0.3% per annum. Thus the proportion of population outside the towns fell. In 1603 77.2% of people had lived in the countryside but 73 years later it was 72.5%, a fall of 4.7%; that is, one in twenty more people were urban in 1676 than at the

Comparison between Census of 1603 and 1676

Census of 1603

	<u>Communicants etc. (parish)</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Communicants etc. (town and country)</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Estimated Pop. (town and country)</u>	<u>%</u>
Main towns	4454	8.4	4454	8.4	7423	8.4
Market towns	11880	22.5	7564	14.3	12607	14.3
Countryside	36392	69.0	40708	77.2	67847	77.2
Total	52726	99.9	52726	99.9	87877	99.9

Census of 1676

	<u>Conformists etc. (parish)</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Conformists etc. (town and country)</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Estimated Pop. (town and country)</u>	<u>%</u>
Main towns	6652	10.0	6652	10.0	11087	10.0
Market towns	17679	26.5	11680	17.5	19466	17.5
Countryside	42292	63.5	48291	72.5	80485	72.5
Total	66623	100.0	66623	100.0	111038	100.0

Table 2/1/21

Comparison between the Census of 1603 and the Census of 1676

	<u>% change in number of communicants</u>	<u>Number of Parishes</u>	<u>% of all Parishes</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%</u>
DECREASE	70+	1	0.4		
	60-69.9	-	-		
	50-59.9	4	1.4		
	40-49.9	5	1.8		
	30-39.9	9	3.3	103	37.3
	20-29.9	22	8.0		
	10-19.9	26	9.4		
	0.1-09.9	36	13.0		
NO CHANGE		3	1.1	3	1.1
INCREASE	0.1-09.9	30	10.9		
	10-19.9	22	8.0		
	20-29.9	19	6.9		
	30-39.9	15	5.4		
	40-49.9	13	4.7		
	50-59.9	13	4.7		
	60-69.9	9	3.3		
	70-79.9	11	4.0	169	61.2
	80-89.9	6	2.2		
	90-99.9	5	1.8		
	100-109.9	8	2.9		
	110-119.9	5	1.8		
	120-129.9	3	1.1		
	130-139.9	2	0.7		
	140-149.9	2	0.7		
	150+	6	2.2		
NO EVIDENCE		1	0.4	1	0.4
Total		276	100.1	276	100.0

Table 2/1/22

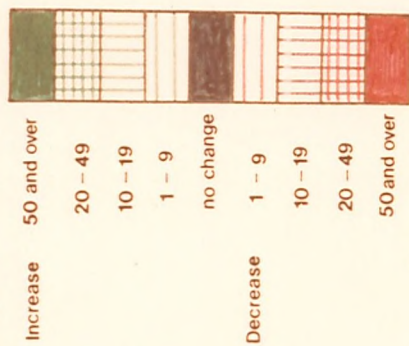


start of the seventeenth century. With more parishes showing a decline, Figure 2/1/22 has a more varied appearance than that for the longer period. Clearly the south west which was growing over the whole period from the 1520s to the 1660s, was actually much less expansive in the seventeenth century and it may be supposed that its main period of growth was during the Tudor era. Indeed, the south-west coast, from Holdenhurst to Southampton Water shows a declining population for most of its length. Portsmouth also offers something of a paradox for whilst the town was growing rapidly and so were parishes like Alverstoke/Gosport, Fareham and Porchester, the rest of Portsea Island and Hayling Island as well as parts of the immediate mainland were declining and possibly losing populations to the dockyard. The most solid area of growth is in the region between Winchester and Portsmouth, whose concentration of population has already been noted. The seventeenth century was also a period of fairly concerted growth in the east and north east, representing demographic expansion in areas of generally low densities. Otherwise the north shows a very patchy appearance and neighbouring parishes often had quite different experiences. Thus whilst Wonston grew by over 50%, Bullington decreased by the same amount.

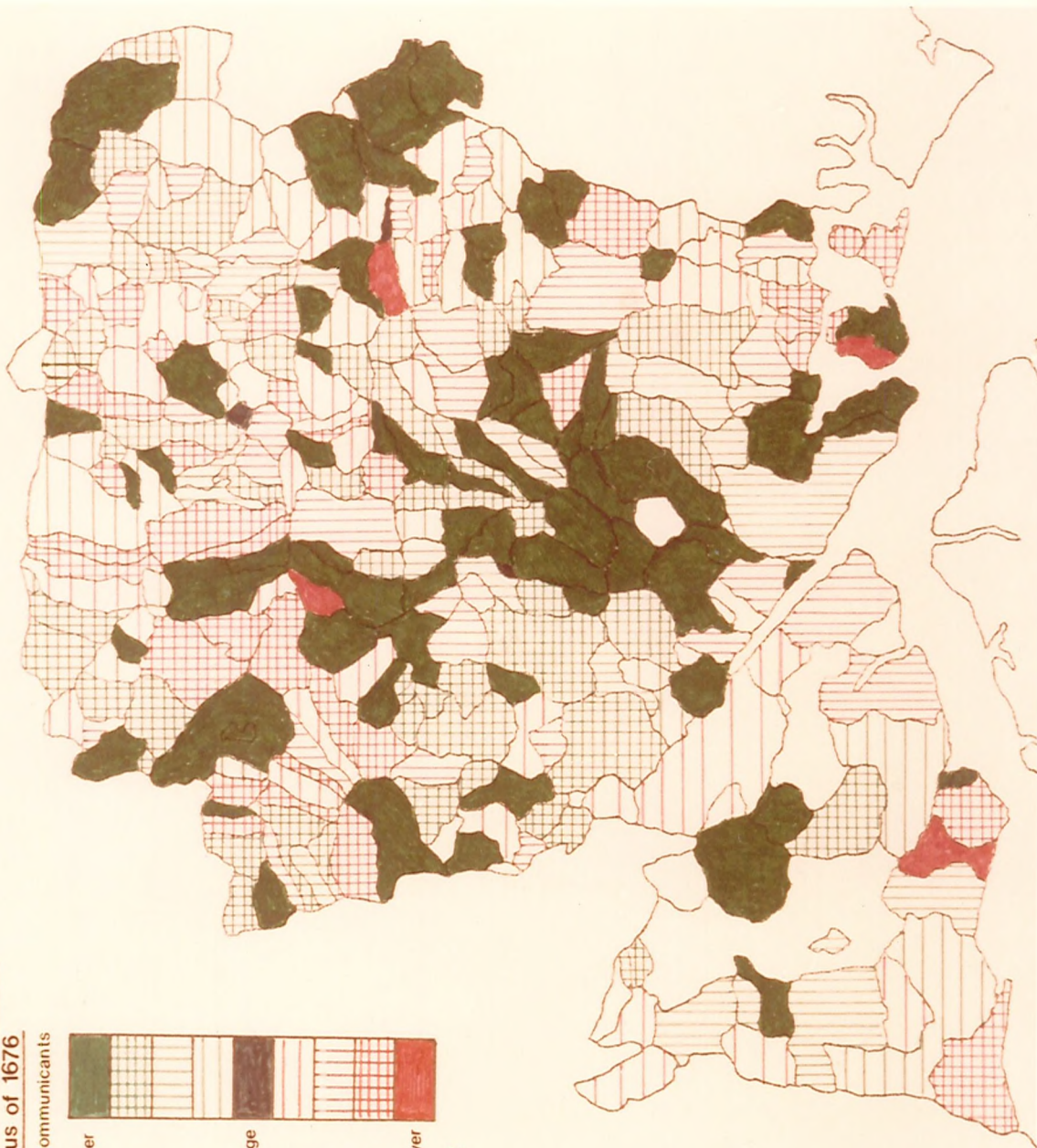
Looking at the towns in particular, a varying range of growth rates can be seen (Table 2/1/23). In the sixteenth century Gosport stands out and Lymington grew by an impressive 117.7% whilst among the other market towns Kingsclere and Ringwood almost doubled in size. Southampton grew by nearly 100% revealing considerable demographic vigour at a time when it was undergoing great economic changes. Most of the small towns grew by between 40% and 70% but some of the larger market settlements were among the more lethargic towns. Basingstoke grew by barely a fifth and Romsey by just a tenth while Alton may have actually fallen in

# Comparison between the Census of 1603 and the Compton Census of 1676

% Change in number of communicants



0 5 10  
Miles



Population Growth in Hampshire Towns

	<u>1524-5</u>	<u>1603</u>	<u>% rise</u>	<u>1660-1670s</u>	<u>% rise</u>	<u>% rise overall</u>
Alresford	401	570	42.1	666	16.8	66.1
Alton	1164	1062	-8.8	1341	26.3	15.2
Andover	743	1104	48.6	2089	89.2	181.1
Basingstoke	1339	1617	20.8	2130	31.7	59.1
Christchurch	386	639	65.5	769	20.3	99.2
Fareham	347	339	-2.3	572	40.7	64.8
Fordingbridge	264	375	42.0	343	-8.5	29.9
Gosport	78	437	460.3	1609	268.2	1962.8
Havant	303	488	61.1	542	11.1	78.9
Kingsclere	557	1111	99.5	1357	22.1	143.6
Lymington	249	542	117.7	835	54.1	235.3
Odiham	552	444	-19.6	582	31.1	5.4
Petersfield	318	496	56.0	1065	114.7	234.9
Ringwood	552	1059	91.8	1291	21.9	133.9
Romsey	1026	1141	11.2	1390	21.8	35.5
Stockbridge	152	230	51.3	327	42.2	115.1
Bishops Waltham	337	473	40.4	847	79.1	151.3
Whitchurch	293	480	63.8	862	79.6	194.2
	<u>9061</u>	<u>12607</u>	39.1	<u>18617</u>	47.7	105.5
Portsmouth	606	782	29.0	4135	428.8	582.3
Southampton	1818	3563	95.9	2908	-18.4	59.9
Winchester	2913	3078	5.7	3711	20.6	27.4
	<u>5337</u>	<u>7423</u>	39.1	<u>10754</u>	44.9	101.5
Total Urban	14398	20030	39.1	29371	46.6	104.0
Countryside	<u>50962</u>	<u>67847</u>	33.1	<u>81149</u>	19.6	59.2
Total County	65360	87877	34.5	110520	25.8	69.1

Table 2/1/23

population during the sixteenth century. Thus it was the smallest communities with well under 1000 inhabitants that experienced the most steady growth. In the period between 1603 and the 1660s/1670s Gosport and Portsmouth enjoyed very rapid expansion, the former growing by 4% per annum and the latter by 6.4% per annum, although both their populations must have fluctuated wildly according to the military requirements of the time. Among the market towns Andover and Petersfield were the most expansive, both benefitting from their locations on major routeways, and in general growth rates were slightly higher than in the sixteenth century. Several of the smallest communities were again particularly healthy, with Bishops Waltham and Whitchurch both increasing by about 80% or about 1.2% per annum. Only two towns seem to have fallen in the period, the humble settlement of Fordingbridge and the town of Southampton which had reached a peak at the turn of the century and had failed to recover from the plague of 1604. In the countryside villages were growing at an average of 19.6%, a rate surpassed by all but four towns.

Over the whole period from the 1520s to the 1670s nine towns more than doubled in size, only one of them a main borough. All the towns grew to some extent but some were noticeably sluggish with the population of Odiham, for instance, changing very little in 150 years and two of the old established market communities, Alton and Romsey, were growing extremely slowly. Southampton and Winchester grew at about the same rate as the rural parishes, just under 60%, a rate exceeded by all but four market towns. It is very clear that almost all the dynamism in the main towns category was provided by Portsmouth and that the small towns were actually growing relatively faster than Southampton or Winchester over the whole of the early modern period. This goes against the urban experience of some other counties where larger centres enjoyed a more rapid growth and were able to outpace their smaller

rivals. Elsewhere the growing scale and complexity of manufacturing and services offered by towns of county status attracted large numbers while improved communications meant that people could travel further in a day and thus reach larger centres. At the same time a greater range of services penetrated the countryside undermining the traditional role of the market town. However, there is little evidence of such a squeeze being put on the Hampshire small towns. Portsmouth is clearly an exceptional case but otherwise the lesser markets were the most dynamic demographic element within the county. Both Southampton and Winchester were in trouble in the seventeenth century, the one unable to generate demographic recovery after the plague and the other evolving painfully from a declining cloth producer into a services, entertainment and administrative centre. By contrast, towns like Whitchurch, Andover and Petersfield, far from being bypassed as a result of improved transport, exploited their roadside locations and grew rapidly. Even a minor settlement like Stockbridge, with a disused market but some renowned inns for travellers, was growing faster than Southampton or Winchester taking advantage of its position on the route from London to Salisbury. Likewise the improving roads in the south west assisted the population growth of thriving communities like Ringwood and Lymington. Hampshire had always been an under-urbanised county so that the transport developments which put pressure on small towns elsewhere, and caused the elimination of several lesser settlements, had much less effect. Rather, improved communications as well as the ailing condition of Southampton and Winchester worked definitely in favour of the market towns of all sizes and was reflected by their relative population growth rates.

Part Two : Dynamic Analysis

Note

The graphs on which this part of the thesis is based are collected together in Appendix III.

The static sources dealt with in part one refer specifically to a single point in time. To gain an idea of the changing population from year to year it is necessary to study dynamic sources, primarily parish registers. Analysis will be confined to six market towns, Fareham, Kingsclere, Odiham, Petersfield, Ringwood and Romsey, which offer the best evidence for this period. Registers from other towns, though consulted and used later in this thesis, are inadequate for studying the longer term changes in population. This does not mean that these six communities offer an unbroken sequence of registration. In fact they all begin at different dates and contain several phases when the record becomes very untrustworthy or even ceases altogether. Some of these breaks are shown on the reliability diagram (Figure 2/2/1). Occasionally deficiencies may be compensated by interpolation, in which a missing month or year can be overcome by substituting an average taken from a period on either side, usually five years. This method has been adopted in the calculation of some moving averages but is a very hazardous procedure especially in the case of burials where the gap commonly occurred at a time of abnormally high mortality.

#### Baptisms and Births

Baptismal records are usually reckoned as the least reliable section of parochial registration. One indication of this would be sharp annual fluctuations but fortunately this is not a common characteristic of registers surviving from the Hampshire market towns. Of course there were clear increases and decreases from year to year but extremes, such as would be expected in the burial records, are very rare (Table 2/2/1).

Both Odiham and Kingsclere reveal a high level of baptisms in the 1540s. Fifty-eight christenings were recorded in Odiham during 1548, a figure unsurpassed before 1620, and the same year saw a similarly high total in Kingsclere. However, by the mid-1550s the numbers of children being baptised began to fall sharply and

RELIABILITY DIAGRAM FOR PARISH REGISTERS

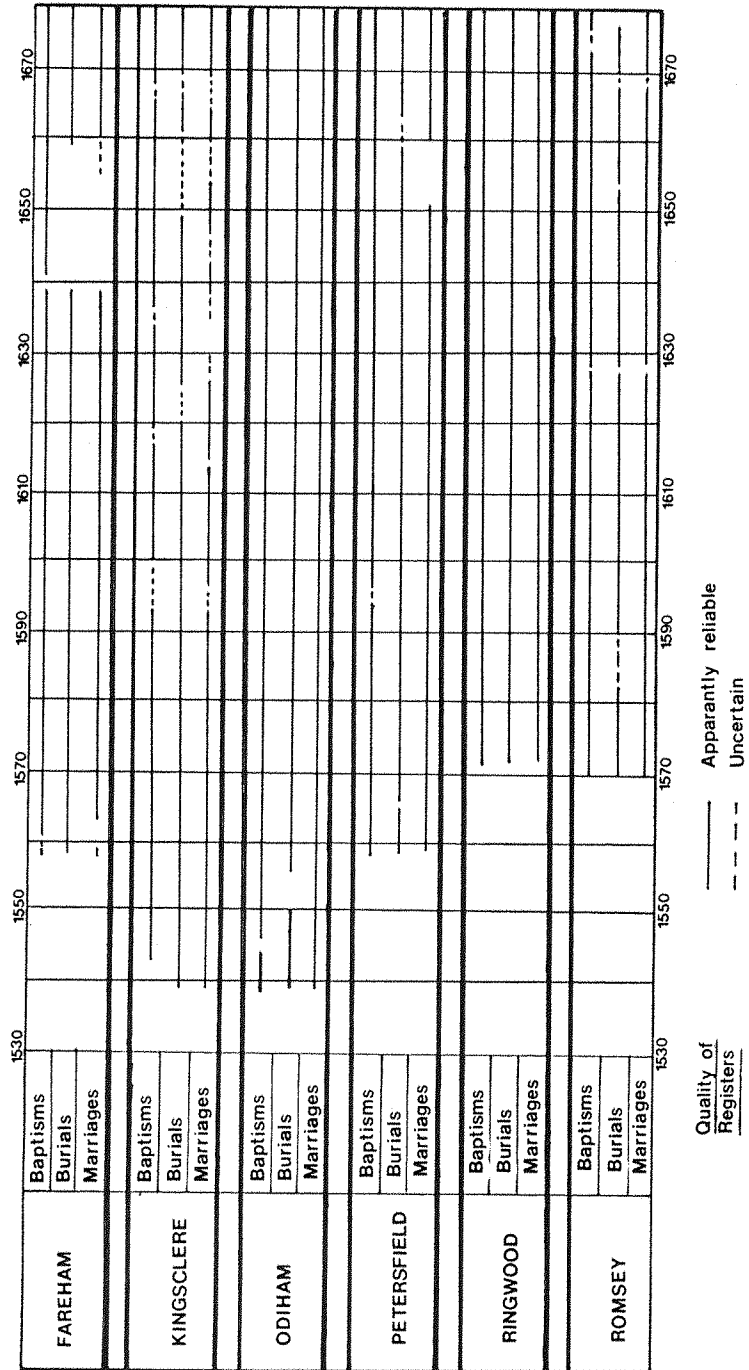


Figure 2/2/1



BAPTISMS PER YEAR : ANNUAL AVERAGE

	Fareham	Kingsclere	Petersfield	Ringwood	Romsey
1540-9	-	45.2	-	-	-
1550-9	-	37.4	-	-	-
1560-9	29.5	43.4	27.2	-	-
1570-9	26.2	39.3	24.6	47.1	62.9
1580-9	23.8	42.4	28.8	52.6	63.5
1590-9	23.2	36.4	29.1	55.3	58.1
1600-9	31.3	43.7	37.4	69.3	73.5
1610-9	36.6	40.0	37.9	61.9	79.7
1620-9	40.2	50.6	38.2	54.4	74.7
1630-9	39.9	44.9	39.5	55.2	76.0
1640-9	28.6	47.1	36.3	61.7	72.5
1650-9	31.4	47.0	41.2	62.9	70.4
1660-9	41.0	44.1	40.0	64.8	63.5

Table 2/2/1

at the end of the decade on average about ten less children were being christened each year compared with the 1540s at Odiham, and about eight less in the case of Kingsclere. This may not seem a large number but in terms of an annual average for Kingsclere of 45.2 from 1543-9 such a drop represents a fall of nearly 20%. Much of the depression in births at the end of the 1550s must have been due to the inhibiting effect of the influenza epidemic which, by forcing the postponement of marriage or by causing the death of a parent, could have dampened the numbers of children being born.

The 1560s saw something of a revival and there was a sharp upturn in Odiham, Kingsclere and Fareham. However, the effects of this slight expansion were only marginal and very shortlived for by the end of the decade the underlying trend in baptisms was again downward in towns like Petersfield and Fareham both of which had suffered severely during the influenza and plague. From 1570 the pattern of christenings seems to vary greatly from town to town. At Kingsclere they remained fairly even for the next twenty years but at Fareham births fell towards the end of the century from an average of 29.5 in the 1560s to 23.2 in the 1590s. At Petersfield, following the drop around 1570 when only sixteen baptisms were recorded, christenings rose slowly but steadily for the rest of the century. Ringwood shows a similar trend, averaging 55.3 in the 1590s compared with 47.1 twenty years earlier, but at Romsey baptisms were more volatile rising to a peak in the early 1580s but declining quite sharply in the 1590s. The plague and food shortages of that decade seem to have had a considerable effect on the level of births in several of the market towns causing a severe trough in christenings at Odiham and Kingsclere and significant reductions in baptisms at Romsey and Fareham. At Kingsclere an annual average of 36.4 children were born, the least for any decade in the whole period and both Romsey and Fareham similarly recorded their lowest averages. In Fareham 232 children were born in the 1590s, 63 less than in the 1560s, a drop of 21%.

By contrast the early seventeenth century brought an upward movement throughout the towns, one of the few times when a demographic

indicator seems to have moved in the same direction simultaneously in all the communities. Each town witnessed more children born than in the previous decade. In Romsey and Ringwood the increase was particularly noticeable and the years around 1610 represented a peak in baptisms for the whole period. 84 baptisms were recorded in Ringwood during 1605 (the highest on record) and the nine year moving average, indicative of the long-term trend, touched the 70 mark for the only time in the early modern period. At Romsey 1608 and 1610 were especially good years with 96 and 94 births respectively, almost double the figures recorded for much of the 1590s. The vigorous upsurge in christenings at the start of the seventeenth century was not confined to these towns for everywhere more children were being born, contributing to the demographic expansion of the small towns in the early Stuart era. In some cases this continued into the next decade and baptisms maintained their increase at Odiham, Fareham and Petersfield, but elsewhere a peak had been reached and thereafter births began to decline. This is particularly noticeable at Romsey and Ringwood where the numbers of children being born fell sharply from an average of 69.3 in 1600-9 to only 54.4 in the 1620s. By contrast, two of the smaller towns, Odiham and Kingsclere, recorded high numbers of births in the 1620s and in Fareham an average of 40.2 children were born each year in the 1620s, the highest since the register began.

This very mixed picture persisted into the 1630s when the poor harvests and economic problems might have been expected to curtail the numbers of baptisms. In fact a sharp decline in christenings is visible only at Odiham and in most other towns baptisms seem to have held their own throughout the decade, falling slightly compared with the previous decade in Fareham and Kingsclere and even rising marginally at Petersfield, Romsey and Ringwood. Certainly the 1630s do not seem unduly pessimistic as far as baptisms are concerned although there are few signs of the increasing numbers of births recorded earlier in the century. By the end of the decade, therefore, the trend in most towns was undoubtedly downwards.

The fall in numbers born at Romsey, apparent since about 1610 but eased in the 1630s, resumed at the end of that decade and into the 1640s. At Fareham baptisms plummeted from an average of about 40 for the 1620s and 1630s to 28.6 for the 1640s. Less children were being born at Odiham and at Petersfield the decline was less dramatic but nonetheless real. Whilst the period witnessed a mounting resistance to traditional baptismal custom, it is also clear that the effects of disease between 1638-44 and the uncertainties of the Civil War period were having a serious impact on the numbers of children being born and were exacerbating what had been an underlying trend in towns like Romsey since earlier in the century. Kingsclere alone seems to have avoided the decline in baptisms for, although Ringwood was able to register a high total of 82 in 1640 and 1644, by the end of the decade the moving average had dropped to nearly 50 per annum, its lowest point since the 1580s. Most towns, therefore, were experiencing lower fertility and a restraint on their demographic growth.

By contrast, the 1650s saw much less uniformity among the towns and several witnessed a renewed upward movement in their baptisms. In both Fareham and Ringwood births moved steadily upwards during the decade with Ringwood recording particularly high figures in 1655-6. Petersfield also began to improve with an average of another five children being born each year compared with the 1640s. The population of these towns had clearly recovered from the rigours of the 1640s and responded to the more settled conditions of the Commonwealth by an upsurge in childbirths, although it should be remembered that this impression would also be created by the improved registration after 1653. Yet this upward trend was not visible everywhere for the decline in christenings continued from the 1640s throughout the next decade at Odiham and Romsey. Certain years stand out as times of high baptisms, such as 1650 in Romsey when 83 children were born, but the long-term trend was certainly downward. In both towns this pattern continued until the end of the period only levelling out for a short while in Romsey. This was a quite different course from the

other small towns for whom the 1660s saw a fairly steady and high rate of baptisms. At Fareham the annual average reached 41.0, the highest in the whole period, while at Petersfield the averages for the 1650s and 1660s were the best on record. 1670 seems to have been something of a turning point for the long-term trend thereafter is downward in all the towns, but it is certain that the first decade of the Restoration saw baptisms buoyant in most of these Hampshire communities.

Indeed, looking at the period as a whole, the increasing number of children being born stands out in all the towns. The annual average of baptisms at Petersfield had moved steadily upwards from 1570, the only temporary decline being in the 1640s. At Fareham there were 41 children born each year in the 1660s compared with less than 30 a century before and another significant increase is apparent at Ringwood. At Romsey during the last 30 years of the sixteenth century 1845 children had been christened but between 1640 and 1669 the figure was 2064, a rise of 12%. Increasing baptisms can be taken as both a cause and effect of population growth and either way, though the pattern was rarely uniform throughout the towns and was very inconsistent over time, it was a common characteristic of all the Hampshire market communities.

The annual fluctuations in baptisms are very apparent from all the graphs. It is, however, impossible to offer any explanation by establishing a clear relationship between baptismal peaks and troughs with changes in disease or famine. Thus, although the troubles of the 1590s were followed by a rise in baptisms at the start of the seventeenth century, the sickness prevalent in most towns in the late 1630s did not result in any similar subsequent widespread increase in births. It is fairly clear that baptisms were stifled during an epidemic, as with the influenza of 1557-9 when christenings dropped sharply in Petersfield, Odiham and Kingsclere, but in each case the years after the epidemic saw only a modest rise in births. Certainly the years of peak baptisms often bear little relationship to a factor such as harvest. Thus in Romsey when baptisms topped a hundred in

1631 harvest conditions for the previous year had been bad with a "dearth" in the West and at the same time the textile trade in the town must have been suffering contraction. Nor was Romsey an exception that year for baptisms also reached a peak in Fareham. Of course, examples can be cited of the reverse situation with birth peaks at Ringwood in 1604-5 and the early 1640s coinciding with good crops and low prices but what can be safely established is that a fine harvest, whilst not deterring baptisms, was not necessarily followed by an upsurge of births in the early modern market town.

Using the population estimates reached in part one and applying an average of baptisms taken from four years either side of the year in question, crude birth rates can be calculated for each town at three dates in the period and are shown below.

CRUDE BIRTH RATE (Births per 1000 population)

	1603	1664-5	1676
Fareham	39.1	27.8	24.7
Kingsclere	29.3	23.8	27.5
Odiham	53.0	29.5	25.1
Petersfield	62.2	30.9	31.0
Ringwood	36.3	22.3	25.1
Romsey	33.7	26.6	18.6

Table 2/2/2

These figures are of little real value such are the vagaries of both the parish registers and the estimated populations. However, they do show the range of birth rates apparent in the towns at the start of the seventeenth century. A rate of 62 per 1000 seems very high for Petersfield but it may point to the vigorous growth in the town at this time. The calculations for 1664 and 1676 are more uniform and probably more acceptable. In each case they show a drop in the

birth rate from the start of the century and point towards a considerable slowing down in the demographic growth of the towns in the third quarter of the seventeenth century.

The male/female baptismal ratio is an interesting guide to the balance between the sexes among the infant population of the early modern town.

MALE/FEMALE BAPTISMAL RATIO

Males per hundred females.

	Romsey	Petersfield	Ringwood
1560-9	-	123	-
1570-9	93	94	100
1580-9	98	118	112
1590-9	109	88	93
1600-9	93	103	119
1610-9	95	96	100
1620-9	105	101	99
1630-9	98	115	107
1640-9	99	131	109
1650-9	108	89	106
1660-9	115	99	107
Overall	101	104	105

Table 2/2/3

It is also a useful indication of the reliability of the registers concerned, for most omissions are likely to have been males rather than females because the former have a lower survival rate in the days after birth. Thus the customary male/female birth rate, which is in the order of 105 males per 100 females, would be upset. In these towns the ratio fluctuates quite considerably but in the long run it conforms very encouragingly with the expected pattern of births and helps to confirm the value of the sources under study. Some of the abrupt changes from decade to decade are also of significance.

Given the dangers of childbirth for women and the high degree of mortality among adult women, it was important for the natural growth of a town that the supply of potential mothers was maintained. An imbalance of men over women could reduce the number of new families being created and would have to be compensated by females from outside the community. Certainly for much of the period girls outnumbered boys being christened at Romsey and the balance was fairly even at Petersfield except in the decade 1560-9. At Ringwood males were predominant in seven of the ten decades although rarely to any great extent and the town probably felt no serious demographic consequences. The ratio of 131 for Petersfield in the 1640s is perhaps more significant. Thirteen boys were christened for every ten girls, an imbalance which, assuming a closed society, and even allowing for relatively high male mortality, would mean that a generation later there would be more potential husbands than wives. Of course, the community was very much an open society with people entering and leaving the town but it may have played some part in the slowing down of population growth towards the end of the seventeenth century.

Another interesting measurement which can be made concerning christenings is the number of baptisms per marriage taken from the "raw" parish register totals. This uses the technique of "overlapping" by which total marriages for one decade are divided into the total baptisms for the succeeding decade (Table 2/2/4). In each of the three towns the underlying trend throughout the period is towards a higher number of baptisms. Romsey shows a steady rise from 1580 to 1649 and at the end of the period baptisms were running at 5.3 per marriage compared with 3.0 during the 1570s, an increase of over two children per marriage. Elsewhere the growth in the number of christenings was similarly pronounced, rising from about four children in the 1570s and 1580s at Ringwood to over five at the end of the period. At Petersfield peaks were reached in this elementary guide to family size during the 1620s and 1630s and again in the 1660s coinciding with the largest annual aggregates of births. In Ringwood



BAPTISMS PER MARRIAGE

	Romsey	Petersfield	Ringwood
1560-9	-	5.6	-
1570-9	4.2	4.1	3.7
1580-9	3.0	3.9	4.3
1590-9	4.4	4.3	5.2
1600-9	4.5	4.2	4.4
1610-9	3.9	3.4	4.6
1620-9	4.7	4.5	4.9
1630-9	5.0	3.5	5.4
1640-9	5.3	5.6	-
1650-9	3.3	-	5.7
1660-9	5.0	5.1	5.3
Average	4.3	4.4	4.8

Table 2/2/4

peaks of baptisms and family size likewise coincide during the 1650s. Thus not only did the number of children being born rise at these periods but the total of children per marriage also increased so that the baptismal rate was the outcome not solely of a larger population and thus more families in the town, but also of some change within the household unit. In all the towns the pattern seems to indicate larger family size and although the upward movement was often irregular, with Petersfield and Romsey both suffering a decline in the second decade of the seventeenth century, it seems that in the 1660s there were on average another one or two baptisms for every marriage compared with the 1570s and this must have been a contributing factor in the urban population growth of the period.

A slight extension of this analysis involves the determination of "the effective family", or the number of children per family who themselves married, and is calculated by multiplying the number of children per marriage at any time with the proportion of those children who later married.<sup>1</sup> An effective family of two means that if the original family consisted of four offspring, half of them must have themselves later married and thus the population would have exactly reproduced itself (Table 2/2/5). Again migration distorts the picture but it is still possible to deduce some interesting figures for the four Hampshire towns. Although in theory an effective family of less than two indicates a decline in population, in practice it probably meant simply that many children baptised in the towns subsequently married outside the community. At Petersfield this doubt does not arise for the figure was over two throughout the years 1570-1609, and a very high proportion of children born at this time later went on to marry, over 60% in each of the periods calculated. This points to a strong impetus towards self growth within the community with families more than able to reproduce themselves. The same is broadly true of Romsey where the children born in 1580-99 may be seen as the parents of 1605-24 and with as

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1. D. Turner, "The Effective Family", Local Population Studies, No. 2, (1969), pp. 47-52.

THE EFFECTIVE FAMILY

Period of Baptisms	Total Baptisms	Period of Marriages	Total Marriages	Average baptisms per marriage	Period of Marriages	Total Marriages	% Marrying	Average No. of children per marriage marrying
<u>ROMSEY</u>								
1580-99	1216	1575-94	349	3.5	1605-24	393	64	2.24
1600-19	1532	1595-14	367	4.2	1625-44	290	38	1.60
1620-39	1507	1615-34	324	4.7	1645-64	325	44	2.10
<u>PETERSFIELD</u>								
1570-89	534	1565-84	131	4.1	1595-14	174	66	2.71
1590-09	665	1585-04	169	3.9	1615-34	204	62	2.42
<u>RINGWOOD</u>								
1580-99	1079	1575-94	266	4.1	1605-24	248	46	1.89
1600-19	1312	1595-14	277	5.9	1625-44	222	34	2.01
1620-39	1096	1615-34	224	4.9	1645-64	195	36	1.76
<u>KINGSCLERE</u>								
1545-64	816	1540-59	195	4.2	1570-89	217	54	2.27
1565-84	832	1560-79	215	3.9	1590-09	188	46	1.79
1585-04	794	1580-99	182	4.4	1610-29	224	56	2.46
1605-24	864	1600-19	214	4.0	1630-49	185	42	1.68
1625-44 *	938	1620-39	236	4.0	1650-69	126	26	1.04

\* suspect figures

Table 2/2/5

many as 64% marrying at this time it is not surprising that the large effective family at the end of the sixteenth century was followed by a peak in baptisms in the town during the first quarter of the seventeenth century. Likewise the effective family of 2.1 achieved from births in 1620-39 helps to explain the slight improvement in population at Romsey towards the 1650s and 1660s. Both towns, Petersfield and Romsey, seem to have had the capacity for natural growth in the years up to 1640. In Ringwood the position is slightly less clear with generally a smaller proportion of children marrying and thus a diminished effective family although on no occasion is it far below the 2.0 mark. This may mean that the town relied for its growth relatively more on the introduction of outsiders into the town and had less of a natural impetus towards population expansion. Although the number of calculations made is small because of the time span covered by this thesis and the deficiencies in the data, there also seems to be a tendency towards the end of the period for relatively less children to marry in their home town, the proportion falling by 20% at Romsey and by 10% at Ringwood. Indeed, the effective family may have been diminishing towards 1640 with relatively less of the baptisms at this time leading to subsequent marriage and the establishment of a new household unit a generation or so later. In the absence of further data this point cannot be taken too far but it may be one further explanation for the downturn in baptisms apparent in several towns, like Romsey, Odiham, Ringwood and Petersfield, in the 1670s.

Parish registers can be used to illustrate monthly fluctuations in baptisms as well as annual variations. Figures derived at three month intervals are set out in Table 2/2/6 and monthly totals for the whole period appear in Table 2/2/7. Various graphs may also be prepared. Figure 2/2/2 shows the aggregate of baptisms for the whole period covered in this thesis for Romsey, Petersfield and Ringwood. In each case births were greatest in February and March, which agrees with the findings of Pounds for Cornwall and by Bradley for Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire. Pounds noted that there was

Table 2/2/6

FAREHAM BAPTISMS  
(% of decade totals)

	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sept	Oct-Dec	Total
1560-9	27.8	23.3	24.7	24.1	295
1570-9	30.2	17.9	26.7	25.2	262
1580-9	24.4	26.9	24.8	23.9	238
1590-9	29.7	25.4	20.7	24.1	232
1600-9	29.7	24.6	22.0	23.6	313
1610-9	29.8	20.2	24.6	25.4	366
1620-9	27.4	22.6	22.4	27.6	402
1630-9	31.1	20.1	22.3	26.6	399
1640-9	31.5	21.3	24.1	23.1	286
1650-9	35.4	22.6	16.2	25.8	314
1660-9	28.8	26.1	22.9	22.2	410

KINGSCLERE BAPTISMS  
(% of decade totals)

	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sept	Oct-Dec	Total
1540-9	27.5	22.7	23.6	26.2	309
1550-9	30.2	23.3	22.2	24.3	374
1560-9	29.0	26.0	22.4	22.6	434
1570-9	32.6	21.1	23.7	22.7	393
1580-9	29.7	20.0	20.5	29.7	424
1590-9	33.5	23.4	18.4	24.7	364
1600-9	32.7	24.0	21.1	22.2	437
1610-9	30.8	22.0	23.5	23.8	400
1620-9	28.3	23.1	23.1	25.5	506
1630-9	29.8	25.2	22.9	22.0	449
1640-9	26.8	25.3	21.0	27.0	471
1650-9	31.1	23.8	20.0	25.1	470
1660-9	30.4	22.9	19.5	27.2	441

PETERSFIELD BAPTISMS

(% of decade totals)

	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sept	Oct-Dec	Total
1560-9	30.1	23.2	22.1	24.6	272
1570-9	34.6	19.5	22.4	23.6	246
1580-9	27.1	26.4	19.4	27.1	288
1590-9	23.0	26.8	25.8	24.4	291
1600-9	30.2	23.3	20.3	26.2	374
1610-9	27.4	22.4	24.8	25.3	379
1620-9	29.8	22.5	21.2	26.4	382
1630-9	32.7	21.5	22.8	23.0	395
1640-9	26.7	19.6	24.0	29.8	363
1650-9	31.8	22.1	19.7	26.5	412
1660-9	33.5	22.0	21.5	23.0	400

RINGWOOD BAPTISMS

(% of decade totals)

	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sept	Oct-Dec	Total
1570-9	37.3	15.3	22.6	24.8	424
1580-9	30.2	20.9	23.8	25.1	526
1590-9	31.8	19.9	21.5	26.8	553
1600-9	30.6	22.5	20.5	26.4	693
1610-9	31.2	24.6	21.2	23.1	619
1620-9	30.7	20.4	19.1	29.8	544
1630-9	30.4	27.2	19.9	22.5	552
1640-9	31.8	24.8	22.4	21.1	617
1650-9	31.5	20.8	19.4	28.3	629
1660-9	29.0	28.5	20.1	22.4	648

ROMSEY BAPTISMS  
(% of decade totals)

	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sept	Oct-Dec	Total
1570-9	26.9	20.3	25.9	26.9	629
1580-9	30.7	21.7	19.5	28.0	635
1590-9	26.0	24.8	25.0	24.3	581
1600-9	31.0	20.3	22.2	26.5	735
1610-9	28.2	22.6	21.8	27.4	797
1620-9	30.9	23.6	22.2	23.3	747
1630-9	30.3	23.8	20.9	25.0	760
1640-9	29.0	24.6	21.4	25.1	725
1650-9	30.4	24.4	21.9	23.3	704
1660-9	27.6	25.2	21.6	25.7	635

BAPTISMS : MONTHLY TOTALS

Romsey 1570-1679

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
705	716	782	679	581	504	494	540	604	647	657	637

Petersfield 1559-1679

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
397	404	439	382	333	260	278	324	329	349	361	368

Ringwood 1571-1679

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
601	642	719	572	478	393	427	461	480	543	496	567

Table 2/2/7



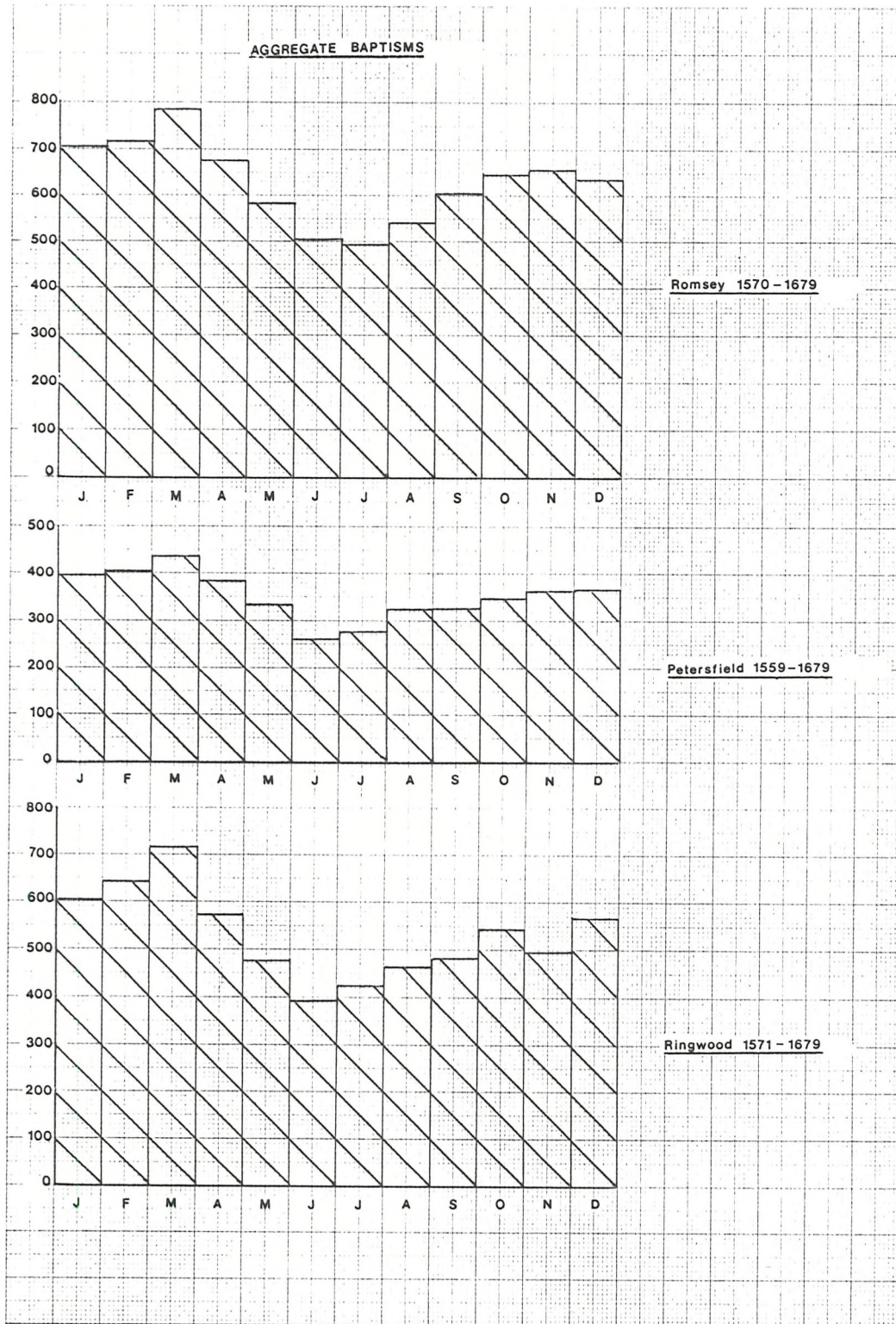


Figure 2/2/2

"almost a 25% probability that a birth would be in one of these two months" and a similar pattern seems to have prevailed in the Hampshire towns.<sup>1</sup> June and July appear as the months with least baptisms and, again, this conclusion applies to all three communities. Figures 2/2/3a and 2/2/3b show the monthly distribution of baptisms for six decades in the period for Romsey and Petersfield and the broad picture taken from the aggregate totals clearly applies to each decade with baptisms at a peak in the late Winter and early Spring before falling sharply in the early Summer and then rising again towards the end of the year. The dotted line in each case represents 8.3% which would be the level if each month registered an equal proportion of the decadal total. Looking at particular months (Figure 2/2/4) January, February, March and April almost always recorded a more than proportionate number of baptisms, while May, June, July and August usually had a less than proportionate share. The regularity with which this pattern emerges suggests that it was a constant feature of the demographic progress of the early modern market town.

To offer an explanation is much more difficult and it is necessary to consider months of conception rather than baptism. Intercourse may have been discouraged during Lent which would reduce the number of baptisms in December or January, but no such depression at the turn of the year is apparent in any of the towns. Thus the influence of the church in this context may be discounted. A second possibility concerns the harvest, the vital event of the year for countryfolk and still of prime importance for the population of the small towns many of whose inhabitants worked in the fields at this time. The long hours of work may have stifled intercourse during August and September with a consequential decline in baptisms during May and June, precisely the pattern found in each of the towns. Of course such a simple cause and effect explanation is impossible but, given the significance of the harvest to the market town, it may have had some effect on human reproduction in the community. There is no apparent connection between the long

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1. L. Bradley, "An Enquiry into Seasonality in Baptisms, Marriages and Burials", Local Population Studies, 4-6, (1970-71); N.J.G. Pounds, "The Population of Cornwall before the first census", in Population and Marketing: Two Studies in the History of the South West, ed. W. Minchinton, (Exeter, 1976), pp. 11-30.



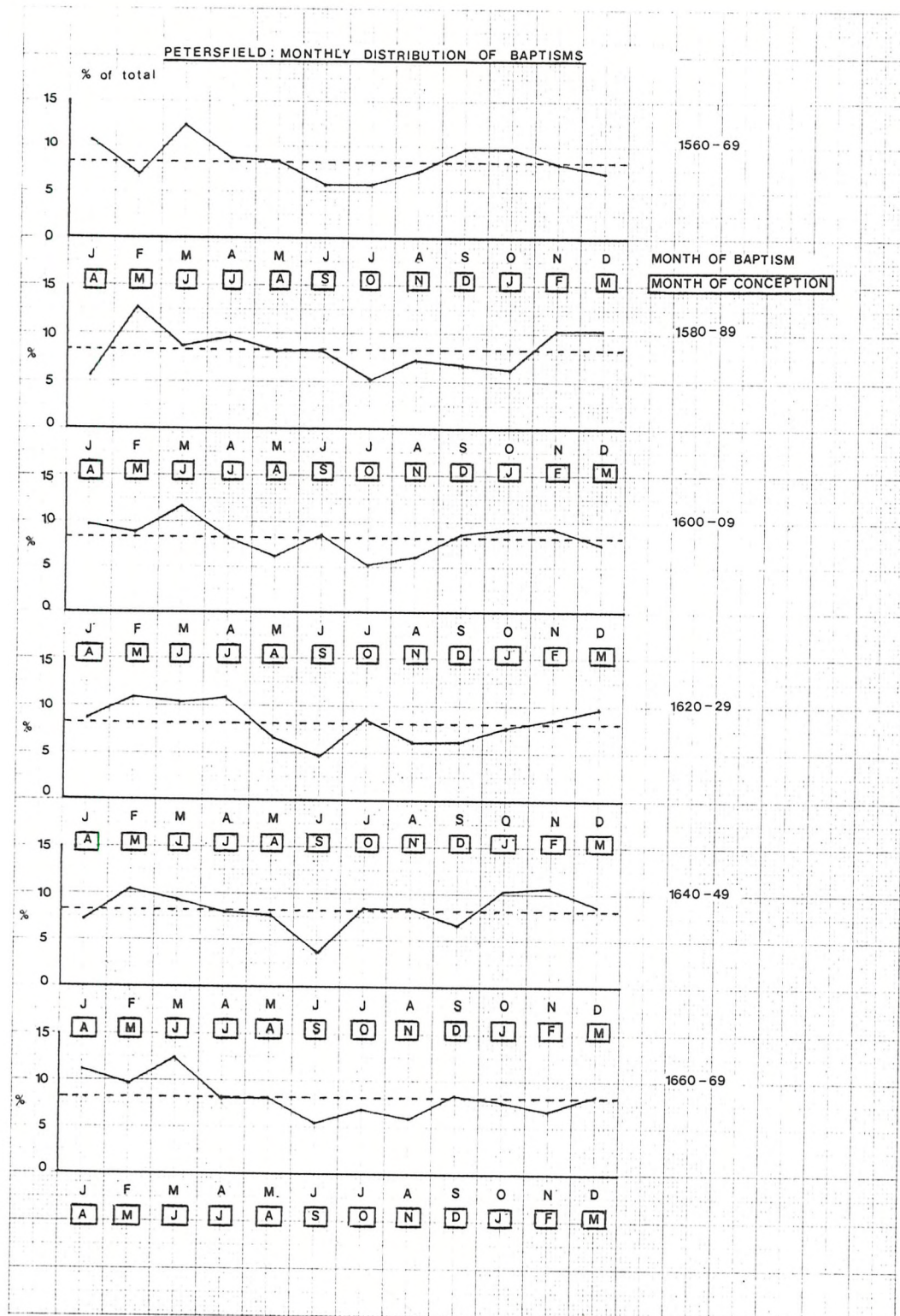


Figure 2/2/3a

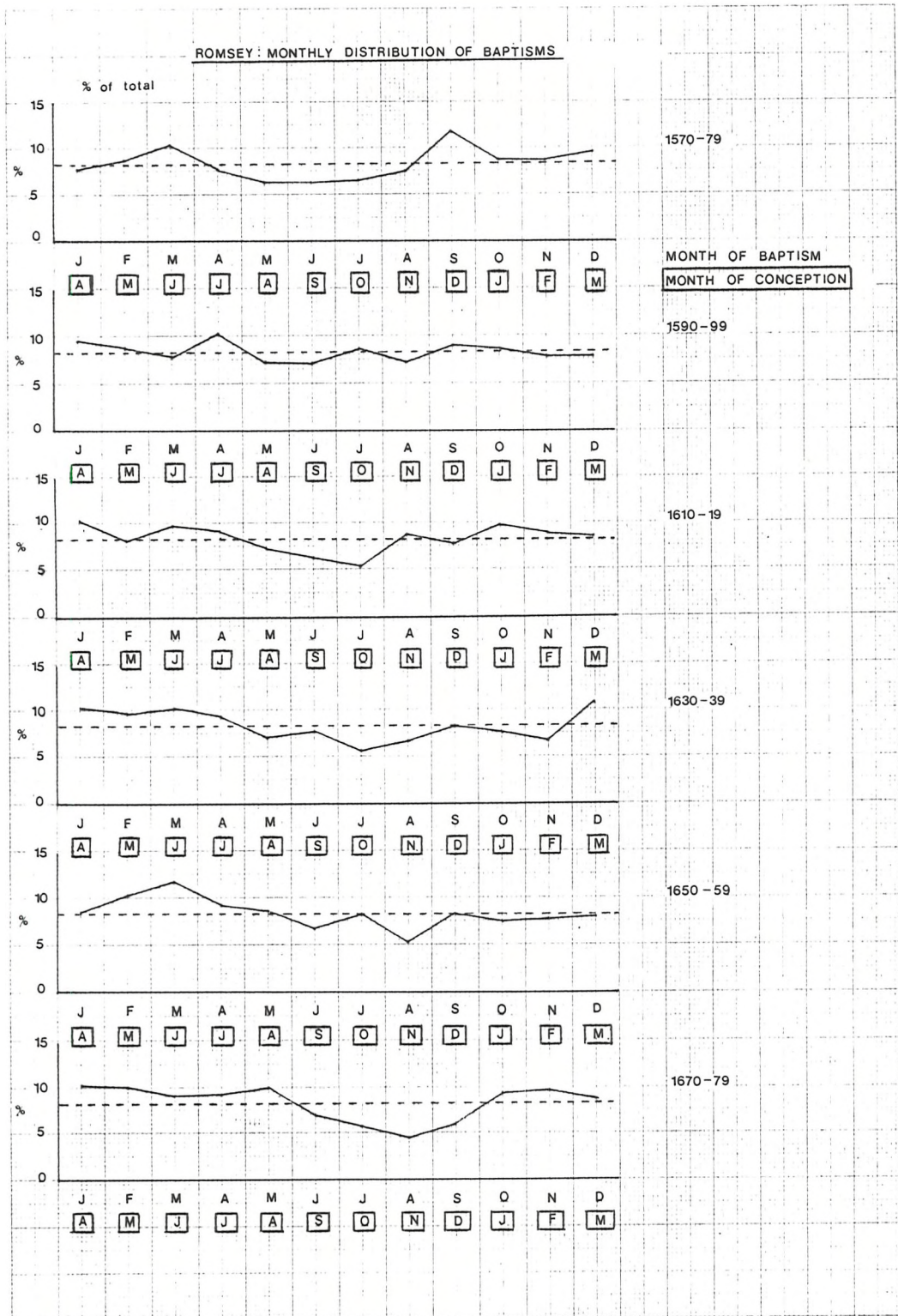


Figure 2/2/3b



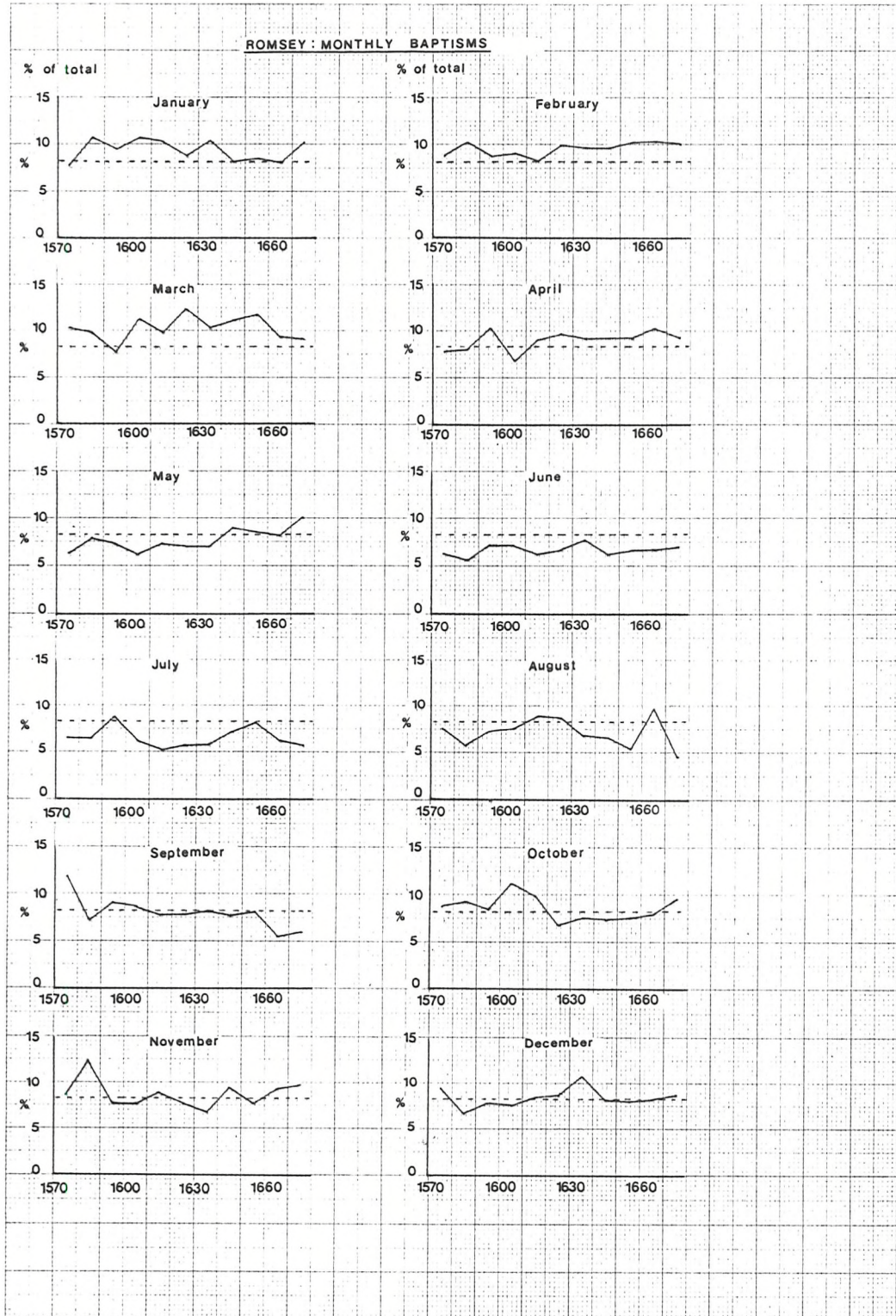


Figure 2/2/4

hours of winter darkness and an increase in conceptions for months like September and October tended to record only a slight rise in baptisms. In each town the peak came in February and March which implies conception during May and June, as the strains of Winter were easing yet before the new season's food supplies had been harvested. The pattern is plain to see but a convincing explanation remains elusive.

### Marriages

Marriage registers are commonly assumed to be the most accurate aspect of parish evidence because of the need to establish the legality of a wedding and thus to legitimise subsequent co-habitation and childbirth. The records for all six towns reveal quite substantial annual fluctuations in the number of ceremonies taking place but when these are evened out in a nine year moving average it can be seen clearly that the number of weddings changes very little during the early modern period.

#### MARRIAGES : ANNUAL AVERAGE

	Petersfield	Kingsclere	Romsey	Ringwood
1540-9	-	10.8	-	-
1550-9	-	8.7	-	-
1560-9	4.4	9.8	-	-
1570-9	7.1	11.7	15.3	14.2
1580-9	7.5	10.0	19.3	12.9
1590-9	8.8	8.2	16.8	13.4
1600-9	9.1	10.6	17.7	14.2
1610-9	11.1	10.8	19.1	11.8
1620-9	8.7	11.6	16.3	11.2
1630-9	10.5	13.3	14.5	11.4
1640-9	7.3	6.5	13.2	7.6
1650-9	-	6.7	19.5	11.4
1660-9	7.7	5.9	12.0	10.8

Table 2/2/8

Both Odiham and Kingsclere show a fairly high level of marriages in the 1540s followed by a slight decline in the 1550s. A relatively low rate of weddings seems to have prevailed during the 1560s, possibly because of the absence of suitable marriage partners in the wake of the influenza epidemic of 1557-9 and the plague of 1563. However, by the 1570s the trend was generally upward. At Petersfield the annual average rose steadily from 4.4 in the 1560s to 8.8 in the 1590s so that the town was witnessing exactly double the number of weddings compared with thirty years earlier. Fareham and Kingsclere show similar, if less pronounced, rises both reaching a peak around 1580 but still finishing the century at a higher level than in the mid-Tudor years. Romsey also shows an upsurge of marriages around 1580 with 29 weddings recorded in 1581, the highest on record before the mid-seventeenth century, and Odiham similarly shows an increase around 1585. This may have been the result of children born just after the infection of the early Elizabethan years now reaching marriageable age and beginning to counteract the effect of sons and daughters lost during the diseases which had kept the number of potential partners low during the intervening period. Elsewhere, however, this increase in the number of marriages towards the end of the sixteenth century is less apparent. Indeed, in Ringwood the annual average fell from its peak in the 1570s, possibly because the town had escaped many of the severe effects of the early Elizabethan diseases but in the absence of parish registration for that date this cannot be said for certain.

Following the high level of marriages during the 1580s another series of peaks appears around 1610. Petersfield recorded an average of 11.1 weddings per annum in the second decade of the century, the highest mean for the whole period, whilst Romsey and Ringwood also recorded high figures around this time. Fareham registered 17 weddings in 1609 and 1611, a figure only surpassed once in the whole period. This must indicate increased survivals from the preceding two or three decades, in particular the relatively

healthy and famine-free 1580s. Thus one marriage bulge seems to have contributed at several of these small towns to a further such peak twenty or thirty years later. Thereafter, however, the number of marriages recorded began to fall in some places. At Fareham, although there were eighteen weddings in 1621 and other individually high years, probably the outcome of local optimism, ample harvests and good health, the long-term trend as revealed by the moving average was downward. The same applies to Romsey where the number of weddings per year fell by a quarter between 1610-19 and 1630-9. In fact during the first two decades of the seventeenth century, 368 ceremonies were registered at Romsey compared with 308 in the next twenty years. Petersfield also saw a decline in the 1620s and although the rate recovered somewhat in the 1630s it was still below the level earlier in the century. No doubt sickness during the early reign of James I had removed many potential marriage partners while the unemployment and poor harvests of the 1620s and 1630s may have deterred others from marrying.

During the Civil War years it is difficult to obtain a clear idea of marriage patterns. The decline seems to have continued in Petersfield and Kingsclere but at Odiham the early 1640s saw a small increase in weddings. Elsewhere the situation is further complicated by the onset of civil marriage after 1653 which served to make certain Hampshire towns particularly attractive centres for the necessary registration. This certainly applied to Alton and seems to have been the case in Romsey where the years 1655-8 each recorded very high levels of weddings, many of them referring to outsiders and thus distorting the picture of marriage within the town itself. By the end of the period, however, marriages everywhere seem to have been at a fairly low level, possibly the outcome of the depressed atmosphere of the 1630s, a generation earlier, which decreased the supply of partners. In Fareham weddings were tending to increase in number during the 1660s but were below the levels achieved earlier in the century and were more akin to the figures



registered a hundred years or so earlier. Odiham and Kingsclere both witnessed fewer weddings than at any time in the early modern period whilst in all the towns except Fareham the trend seems to have been downward. The seeds were being sown, perhaps, for a period of demographic stagnation later in the seventeenth century and outside the scope of this thesis.

In tracing the annual fluctuations of marriages the relationship of this factor with events such as plague or famine is difficult to ascertain. There are many different forces to consider. Logically, an epidemic will cause a depression of marriages followed by an upsurge, the result of postponements, and by increased opportunities for survivors. Yet it is also possible that the psychological stress of disease could cause an air of pessimism which would work against marriage. Fareham suffered badly from the plague of 1593 and, indeed, the number of weddings recorded that year was just two, well below the average for that period and indicative of disruption in the town. The following year nine marriages were registered, above the average, but not markedly so. Ringwood fared even worse in this particular plague year yet it recorded twelve weddings, slightly below average, but well above some other completely disease-free years. It also witnessed an increase in weddings in 1594 but, again, not to any dramatic extent. Thus in one town marriages seem to have been seriously affected but in the other, which actually suffered worse, ceremonies apparently continued unabated. Both towns did show a post-plague rise but in neither case was it anything out of the ordinary. Ringwood was struck by disease persistently between 1610-17 during which time weddings fell away from their peak levels achieved around 1610. Yet the years immediately following, far from witnessing a rush of postponed marriages, saw weddings fall even lower and this absence of any noticeable burst of weddings after an epidemic may be illustrated from all the towns. Disease thus seems to have had little effect on the level of marriage in these towns, at least in the short term. In the longer run, however, more important results may have been possible

for the loss of children reduced the numbers of future marriage partners. Thus the infection of Ringwood during the second decade of the seventeenth century may have contributed to the falling off of weddings in the fourth and fifth decades. Likewise the sickness rife in Romsey in the 1640s may have prompted the downward trend of weddings at the end of the period.

Nor is there any clear pattern when the years of particularly high marriages are studied. Twenty-nine weddings were registered during 1581 at Romsey, the highest figure in the town before the rather misleading years of the Interregnum. It was not a year of especially low mortality but, rather, was about the average for the period, and both 1580 and 1581 were average years in terms of harvest yield. Similarly 1608 was the peak year for marriages in Ringwood but it did not coincide with any notably disease-free conditions because the first effects of the prolonged sickness of 1610-17 may have been felt in that year, and certainly harvests around this period were bad, especially in the West. Again, examples could be multiplied but there appears to be little connection in the market towns between high marriage totals and either good harvests or especially healthy years. Indeed, 1598-9, years of abundance, low grain prices and presumably a hopeful outlook from which to establish a family following the poor conditions earlier in the decade, saw below average marriages in Ringwood and Kingsclere and only a slight rise in Romsey and Fareham.

The seasonal distribution of marriages was affected by ecclesiastical "prohibited" periods. These were from Septuagesima to Low Sunday, roughly the second half of February, all of March and early April; Rogation to Trinity, in May; and from Advent to Hilary, in December and early January. The degree to which these limits were observed, besides being of interest in the study of demographic patterns, may shed some light on the state of conventional religion in the market towns which were often the source of nonconformist innovation in early modern England. The aggregate marriages shows clearly that the number of weddings in March was very low indeed

throughout the towns but February and April were more variable and in the case of Romsey were certainly popular months in which to marry (Figures 2/2/5, 2/2/6a, 2/2/6b and Tables 2/2/9, 2/2/10). Nevertheless, for much of Lent the number of weddings in all three towns was very low. The other prohibited periods were much less observed for May shows no diminution and nor do December and January. In fact, January ranked very high in all three towns, appearing as the most attractive single month at Petersfield. Thus whilst Lent still seems to have had a restricting effect on marriage in these towns the other prohibited periods seem to have lost much of their significance at this time.

July and August rarely recorded many weddings and the summer trough was a feature of all the towns, perhaps because attention among the population was on the harvest, though the timing of marriage had more to do with intangible family custom than with direct economic motives. October and November were always popular for weddings, a trend found in York and in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire but, again, any convincing explanation is elusive.<sup>1</sup>

The seasonal pattern remained fairly constant throughout the decades with peaks in June and in October and November, and troughs in March and July and August. However, there is an obvious exception in Romsey during the 1650s for under the Commonwealth the canon law of the Anglican church lost all its effect and a significant bulge in weddings occurred in March and April. Some of the church rulings on prohibited periods had already been flouted and it was probably an easy step for inhabitants of Romsey and Ringwood, which both had large dissenting elements, to marry all the year round. Interestingly, the summer decline was still present in the 1650s confirming that it was a product of social, economic or psychological forces rather than any ecclesiastical pronouncements.

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1. L. Bradley, "An Enquiry into Seasonality in Baptisms, Marriages and Burials", Local Population Studies, Nos. 4-6, 1970-71; U. M. Cowgill, "Historical study of the season of birth in the city of York, England", Nature, CCIX, (1966), p. 1069.

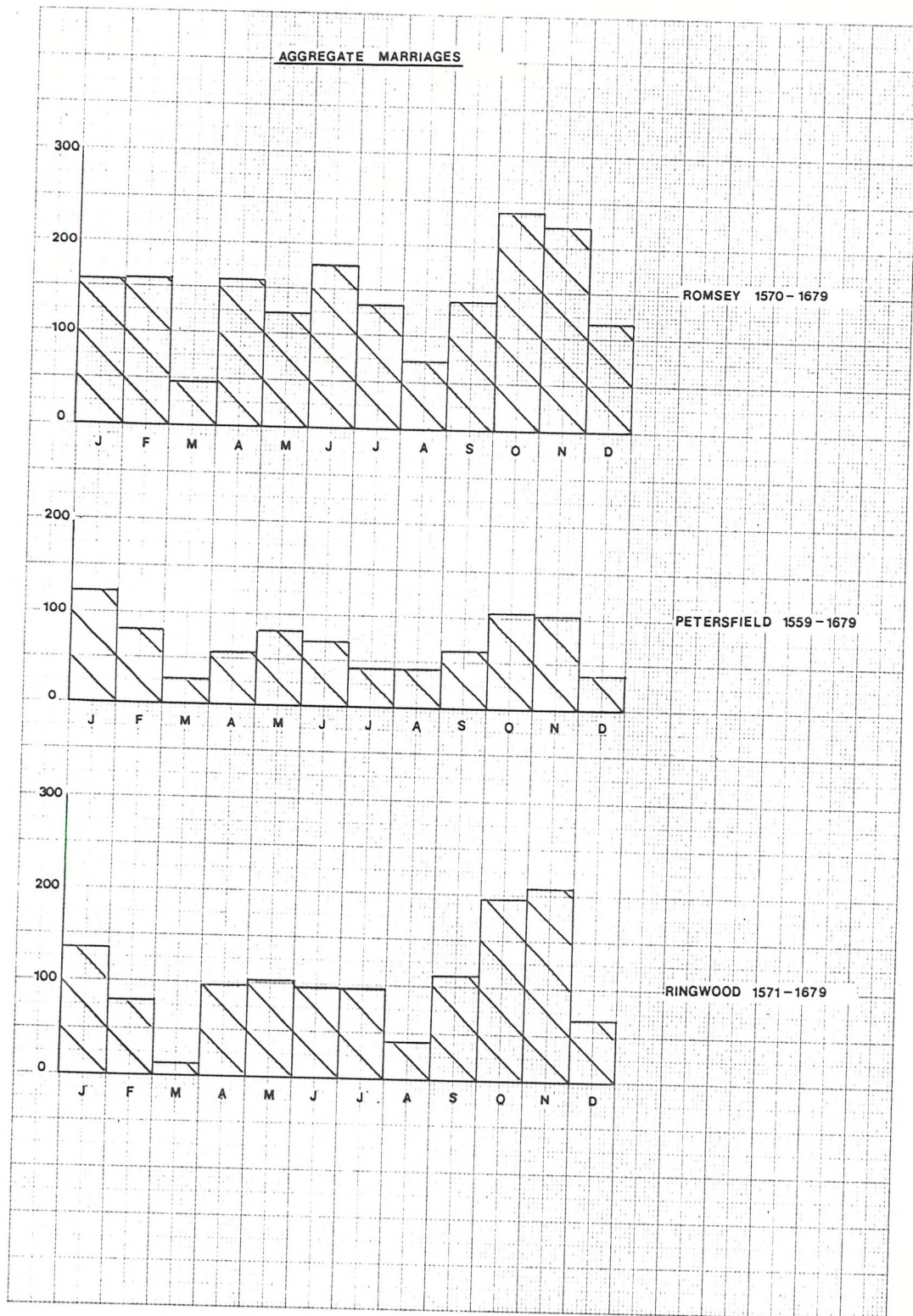


Figure 2/2/5



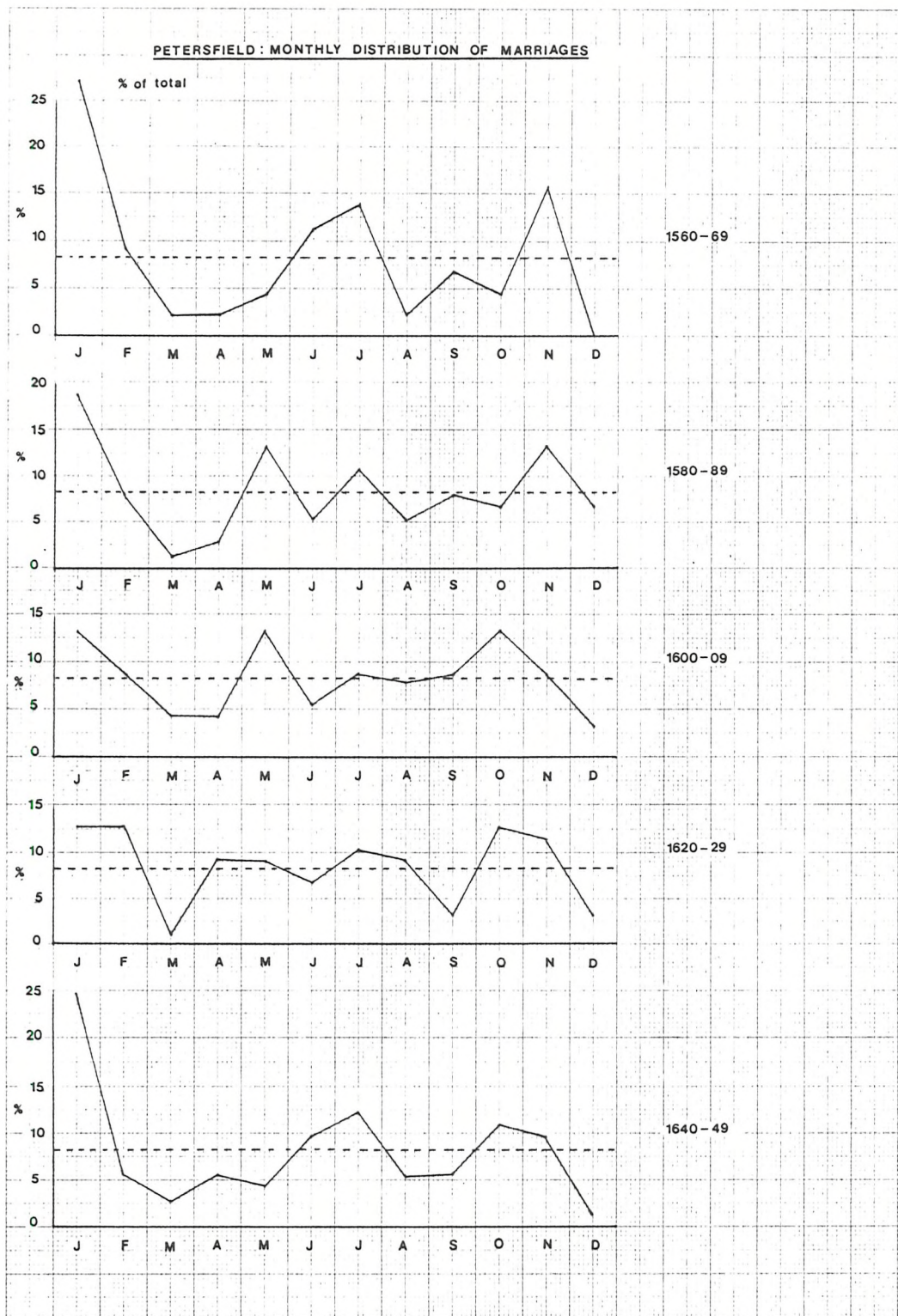


Figure 2/2/6a

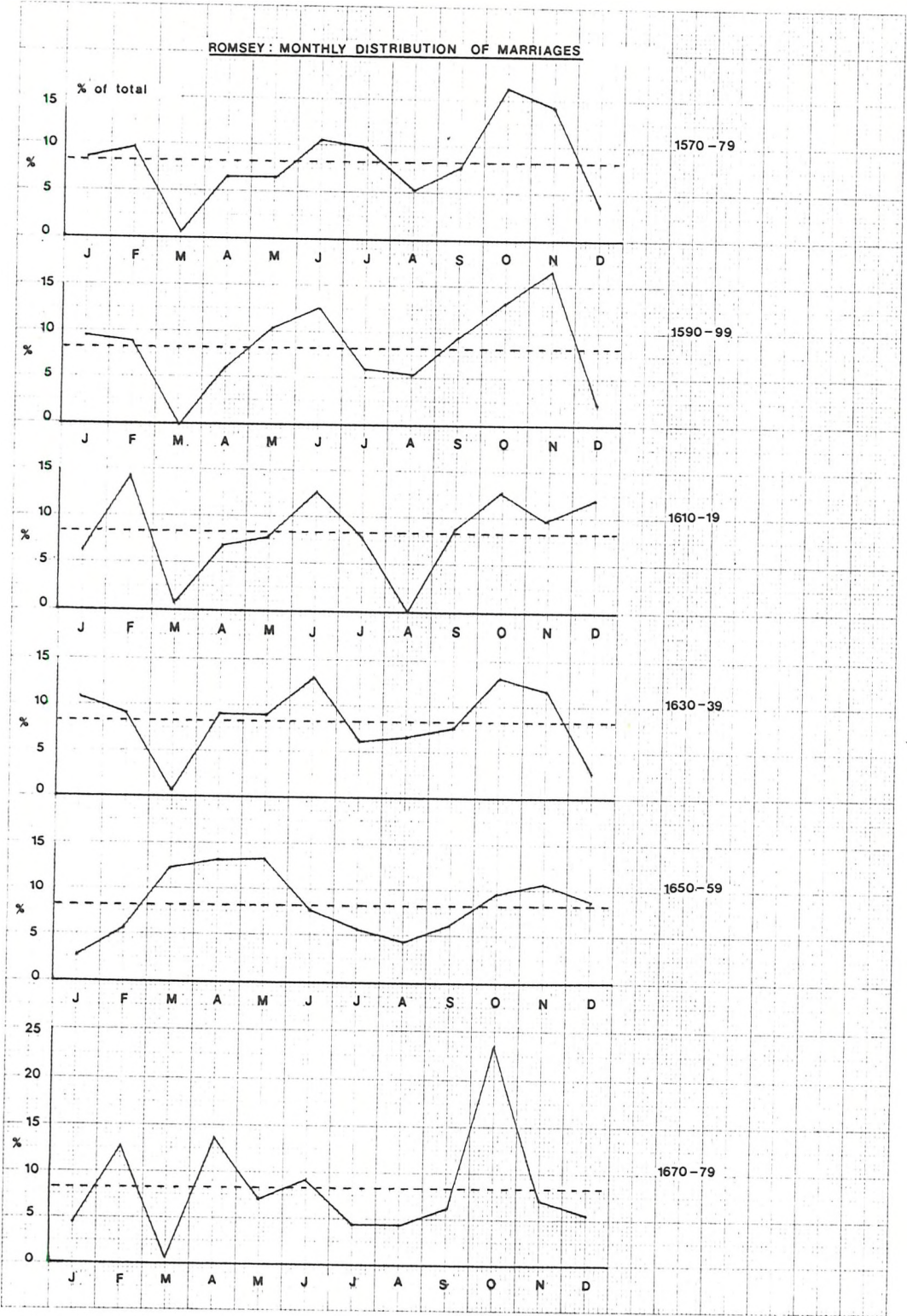


Figure 2/2/6b

Table 2/2/9

KINGSCLERE MARRIAGES

(% of decade totals)

	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sept	Oct-Dec	Total
1540-9	25.0	13.0	21.3	40.7	108
1550-9	16.1	23.0	17.2	43.7	87
1560-9	24.5	18.4	18.4	38.8	98
1570-9	23.1	20.5	19.7	36.8	117
1580-9	24.0	33.0	11.0	32.0	100
1590-9	29.3	20.7	17.1	32.9	82
1600-9	27.4	24.5	15.1	33.0	106
1610-9	27.8	25.0	18.5	28.7	108
1620-9	22.4	23.3	12.9	41.4	116
1630-9	20.0	21.7	28.3	30.0	60
1640-9	29.2	29.2	21.5	20.0	65
1650-9	7.5	26.9	34.3	31.3	67
1660-9	15.3	20.3	28.8	35.6	59

ROMSEY MARRIAGES

(% of decade totals)

	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sept	Oct-Dec	Total
1570-9	19.0	23.5	22.9	34.6	153
1580-9	19.2	22.8	28.5	29.5	193
1590-9	18.5	28.6	20.8	32.1	168
1600-9	23.7	26.0	15.3	35.0	177
1610-9	21.5	27.2	16.8	34.6	191
1620-9	27.0	23.3	14.7	35.0	163
1630-9	20.7	31.0	20.0	27.6	145
1640-9	18.2	22.0	24.2	35.6	132
1650-9	20.5	34.4	15.9	29.2	195
1660-9	18.3	25.0	21.7	35.0	120

PETERSFIELD MARRIAGES

(% of decade totals)

	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sept	Oct-Dec	Total
1560-9	38.6	18.2	22.7	20.5	44
1670-9	22.5	23.9	18.3	35.2	71
1580-9	28.0	21.3	24.0	26.7	75
1590-9	22.7	21.6	23.9	31.8	88
1600-9	26.4	23.1	25.3	25.3	91
1610-9	27.0	22.5	19.8	30.6	111
1620-9	26.4	24.1	21.8	27.6	87
1630-9	18.1	30.5	25.7	25.7	105
1640-9	34.2	19.2	24.7	21.9	73
1650-9	-	-	-	-	-
1660-9	29.9	27.3	13.0	29.9	77

RINGWOOD MARRIAGES

(% of decade totals)

	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sept	Oct-Dec	Total
1570-9	18.0	22.7	17.2	42.2	128
1580-9	20.2	14.7	16.3	48.8	129
1590-9	22.4	17.2	23.1	37.3	134
1600-9	20.4	28.2	19.7	31.7	142
1610-9	17.8	22.0	25.4	34.7	118
1620-9	18.8	20.5	16.1	44.6	112
1630-9	10.5	36.8	16.7	35.1	114
1640-9	19.1	20.6	19.1	41.2	68
1650-9	16.7	25.4	28.1	29.8	114
1660-9	20.4	29.6	23.1	26.9	108



MARRIAGES : MONTHLY TOTALS

Romsey 1570-1679

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
156	159	45	159	123	176	134	72	138	238	221	116

Petersfield 1559-1679 (excluding 1650-9)

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
121	83	27	57	83	70	41	41	63	105	101	39

Ringwood 1571-1679

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
135	80	13	97	103	98	96	40	111	195	206	68

Table 2/2/10

### Burials and Deaths

The registers of burials are perhaps the most striking in their evidence among the three forms of entries made by the parish clerk. It is hard not to notice the clustering of entries around certain dates and thus to identify the effects of a disease or famine within a community. The effects of such natural tragedies in the Hampshire market towns will be considered in a later section for the role of mortality in demographic development requires particular attention. For the present, however, it is the broad pattern of burials which is of interest rather than the close analysis of individual epidemics.

Burials could fluctuate enormously from year to year because of the vagaries of disease and climate and there were few periods when more than two years were alike. Even the nine-year moving average, which should remove the real extremes, still follows a very erratic course in towns like Romsey, Ringwood and Petersfield (Table 2/2/11).

Mortality seems to have been fairly low at the start of the period with both Odiham and Kingsclere recording fairly moderate and stable numbers of deaths through the 1540s and into the early 1550s. However, later in the decade mortality soared with the onset of the influenza epidemic and then plague in 1563. Thereafter burials fell throughout the towns and the 1570s were generally a low phase for deaths. In Romsey they averaged 42.6 per annum, the lowest in the whole period except for the dubiously low figure from the 1650s, and very low figures were also returned by Petersfield and Odiham. For most towns this seems to have been a trough and burials began to climb steadily upwards towards the end of the century in line with the expanding population of these communities. In Romsey 63.5 people died on average each year in the 1590s, a rise of 20.9 or 49% from the 1570s, and a similar upward trend is clear at Petersfield. From the middle 1580s Fareham and Ringwood also began to show a similar pattern. At the end of the century more people were being buried than at any stage since 1557-1563 and,

BURIALS : ANNUAL AVERAGE

	Kingsclere	Romsey	Petersfield	Ringwood	Fareham
1540-9	29.8	-	-	-	-
1550-9	31.3	-	-	-	-
1560-9	24.1	-	30.6	-	23.1
1570-9	28.6	42.6	17.3	40.8	21.7
1580-9	35.2	59.1	21.0	32.5	11.0
1590-9	29.1	63.5	23.0	43.6	14.3
1600-9	27.2	52.4	22.8	37.8	13.7
1610-9	31.8	72.7	29.1	57.6	29.0
1620-9	40.7	62.0	23.6	22.5	32.1
1630-9	40.1	70.1	37.8	37.6	33.6
1640-9	34.9	73.5	35.0	39.8	-
1650-9	26.4	37.8	36.9	62.3	-
1660-9	30.3	51.4	57.4	61.4	34.2

Table 2/2/11

significantly, in years that were free from sickness and famine there were more deaths occurring than in a similar year forty or fifty years earlier. Thus a year like 1600 in Ringwood witnessed 38 burials compared with 25 in 1580, neither year having any obvious exceptional mortality conditions.

The start of the seventeenth century generally saw a break from rising numbers of burials. Some towns like Romsey and Ringwood witnessed a distinct drop in burials while others like Fareham and Kingsclere enjoyed very stable mortality and only Petersfield showed a continued upward movement. In this last instance the long-term trend was increasing because the size of the town population had expanded and burials were settling at this higher level, rather than being the result of the disease and famine which had caused the sharp upward movement of burials in the 1590s. By the second decade of the seventeenth century burials were again increasing in most of the towns and reached figures surpassing those achieved in the late Elizabethan years before falling back again in the 1620s. This ebb and flow was caused by the erratic visitations of disease but there can be no doubt that the number of burials in the towns was growing because the urban population was expanding. Thus when burials in Fareham and Romsey dropped during the 1620s they did not fall back as low as in previous healthy decades and, for instance, the annual average of 62.0 in the 1620s recorded at Romsey represented a rise of ten or almost 20% over the average at the start of the century. Burials could therefore move upwards by quite natural means as well as by the effects of infection and harvest failure. The 1630s saw a renewed upsurge of burials throughout the towns. Fareham and Petersfield both reached their highest annual averages for the pre-Civil War period and the years 1637-44 saw major peaks in mortality in each town except Kingsclere, especially dramatic at Romsey and Petersfield but none the less apparent elsewhere. The fevers and plague of these years caused burials to rise to levels unparalleled

since 1557-1563.

Towards the end of the period the sharp annual fluctuations seem to have become even more pronounced and even the moving average loses any real semblance of a regular pattern. Thus at Petersfield it moves down in the 1640s, up in the 1650s, abruptly down again around 1660 before rising again to take into account the plague of 1666. A similar course emerges at Ringwood where there are significant increases in burials in the 1650s and the late 1660s. Even at Odiham where the average had hovered fairly steadily around 35 burials per annum from 1580 to 1640, there were some sudden movements up to 40 and down to below 25. By the end of the period therefore, beginning with the epidemics of the late 1630s, there seems to be an increase in the number of years in which burials rose sharply above the normal levels. Mortality, besides becoming increasingly erratic, had also settled at generally higher levels in all the towns. Only at Kingsclere had figures changed little over the whole period. In Petersfield 479 people were buried between 1560-79 but in the years 1640-59 there were 719 burials and at Fareham, where deaths had hovered around the 20 mark on average in the late sixteenth century, they were well over 30 by the third quarter of the seventeenth century.

However, this picture can be a misleading one for at Romsey mortality towards the end of the period had fallen back to around the levels of a century earlier. Yet the town population had clearly grown and the decrease in mortality at this time can be seen as a cause of the demographic expansion in that town during the 1650s and 1660s. The role of mortality was therefore crucial in the extent of natural growth within these communities. This may be seen very clearly by comparing the baptism/burial graphs which show the phases of greatest natural growth, with those of burials. Taking Ringwood as an example, there is significant expansion of population around 1580, 1600-5, 1620-35 and around 1645, exactly the years when the moving average of burials reached low points. Looking at the problem from the reverse direction,

the baptisms to burials ratio dips below 100 at precisely the time when burials reach a peak, around 1612-13, around 1640 and in the 1650s and 1660s. This exercise may be done in each of the towns with similar results and is a clear illustration of the importance of mortality in determining the extent of natural growth in these communities.

Using the estimates of population, crude burial rates may be calculated at three points in the seventeenth century.

	<u>CRUDE BURIAL RATE</u>		
	1603	1664-5	1676
Fareham	18.1	33.0	17.3
Kingsclere	18.1	17.1	18.4
Odiham	42.8	26.4	22.2
Petersfield	34.4	17.6	19.5
Ringwood	15.9	19.9	20.1
Romsey	22.4	23.0	12.9

Table 2/2/12

As with the baptismal rates their value is limited but they do show a good deal of fluctuation over the period from 1603 to the 1660s. There is no clear direction in this movement, some towns like Ringwood showing a slight rise and others like Petersfield displaying a sharp fall in their burial rate. In the case of Ringwood this coincides with a fall in birth rate over the same period and the narrowing of the gap between the two measures may indicate a slowing of population growth from its level at the start of the century. Likewise, at Romsey while the birth and death rates had stood at 33.7 and 22.4 respectively in 1603, a gap of 11.3, in 1664-5 they were 26.6 and 23.0 respectively, a difference of just 3.6. Although in some cases the burial rate had dropped from its early seventeenth century level, it did not fall to the same extent as the

birth rate and the narrowing of the gap between these two figures may signify the slowing down of population growth from its level at the turn of the century. However, in the case of Romsey the town may have actually been growing faster in the 1650s and 1660s and it would be unwise to attach too much importance to these crude burial rates other than as an indication of how much such figures could vary at different times and between individual towns. The narrow band of death rates ranging from 25 to 30 per 1000 found by Pounds for Cornwall in 1642 does not seem to apply to the Hampshire towns.<sup>1</sup>

The male/female burial ratio appears to have moved up and down a considerable amount but in the long run it worked out very evenly.

MALE/FEMALES BURIAL RATIO

(Males per hundred females)

	Romsey	Petersfield	Ringwood
1560-9	-	108	-
1570-9	83	101	99
1580-9	98	94	95
1590-9	102	105	105
1600-9	108	124	111
1610-9	87	109	99
1620-9	102	102	130
1630-9	96	98	114
1640-9	102	82	113
1650-9	101	95	95
1660-9	99	96	94
Overall	98	100	103

Table 2/2/13

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1. N.J.G. Pounds, "Population of Cornwall", op.cit., p. 25.

Although marginally more men than women were born, the ratio for burials is almost equal and in the case of Romsey there were actually more women buried than men. There were certainly some periods when there were clearly more male deaths than females as occurred during the 1620s in Ringwood and at the very start of the century in Petersfield but overall there is little out of the ordinary in any of these figures.

What are more interesting are the ratios for different age groups. Unfortunately the evidence is not good enough to produce much data because of the practice adopted by some parish clerks of listing a burial as simply "child of" and in the absence of a christian name it is impossible to derive the sex of the deceased. Nevertheless some calculations can be made. Using the titles "son of" or "daughter of" to identify children it is difficult to be certain just where the division between adults and children really lies but other studies using this approach assume a child to be aged twenty years or below. Parish registers commonly give this type of family status. Appleby noted that "to treat all persons listed as sons and daughters as 'children' and all others as 'adults' is a crude way of determining age".<sup>1</sup> However, in the absence of better information and given the generalised nature of the subject in question and the conclusions to be drawn, calculations on this basis may still be made with some worth (Table 2/2/14). They show that on several occasions the male/female ratio was higher among the children than among the adults at the same date. Thus at Ringwood in 1580-9 overall women exceeded men in the burials but in fact among the children there were more male deaths than females. This coincides with the findings elsewhere that the ratio of males to females was highest in infancy and decreased with age. It tends to suggest that within these market towns, as elsewhere, boys were more at risk than girls during their childhood but that by their adult years there was little difference between the numbers of men and women being buried. However, only twelve such calculations were made in all and the ratios were evenly divided

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1. A.B. Appleby, "Disease or Famine? Mortality in Cumberland and Westmorland 1580-1640", Economic History Review, 26, 2nd series, (1973), p. 413.



BURIALS : SEX RATIOS

		Male	Female	Males per 100 Females
<u>RINGWOOD</u>				
1580-9	Adult	91	116	78
	Child	67	51	131
1590-9	Adult	153	139	110
	Child	70	74	95
1600-9	Adult	128	124	103
	Child	71	55	129
1610-9	Adult	190	203	94
	Child	97	86	113
1620-9	Adult	103	65	158
	Child	24	33	73
1630-9	Adult	159	130	122
	Child	41	46	89
<u>ROMSEY</u>				
1570-9	Adult	96	136	71
	Child	100	94	106
1610-9	Adult	243	265	92
	Child	96	123	78
1630-9	Adult	221	235	94
	Child	122	123	99
1640-9	Adult	235	216	109
	Child	137	147	93
1650-9	Adult	112	112	100
	Child	78	76	103
1660-9	Adult	138	163	85
	Child	118	95	124

Table 2/2/14

with adult ratios higher on six occasions and child ratios on the other six so that it is difficult to reach any firm conclusions on the relative likelihood of males or females to appear in the burial register.

The proportion of total burials represented by children was also a fairly stable factor in all three towns.

# MINOR BURIALS

% of total burials (including stillbirths)

Child/Adult ratio (excluding stillbirths)

	Romsey		Petersfield		Ringwood	
1570-9	45.5%	84	-	-	30.8%	72
1580-9	47.3%	90	-	-	36.3%	57
1590-9	-	-	-	-	33.0%	49
1600-9	33.6%	56	-	-	33.3%	50
1610-9	30.1%	48	-	-	31.8%	47
1620-9	-	-	30.9%	45	25.3%	34
1630-9	35.0%	58	39.5%	64	23.9%	31
1640-9	38.6%	72	34.9%	54	34.4%	52
1650-9	40.7%	75	42.5%	74	40.4%	68
1660-9	41.4%	73	33.8%	51	38.1%	62

Table 2/2/15

Measurement is again difficult because of the tendency of some clerks to lapse from detailed entries into merely a name and no further details. Nevertheless some figures can again be deduced. In most cases children represented between 30-40% of burials, roughly a third of those dying. At Petersfield and Ringwood the proportion is especially even, though there were times when the minor/adult ratio could rise sharply as occurred in the 1650s, when the figure rose to 74 in Petersfield and 68 in Ringwood. In Romsey child burials represented almost half the deaths in the town near the end of the sixteenth century and in 1580-9 there were 90 children

buried for every 100 adults. Conditions for children seem to have improved at the start of the seventeenth century for the percentage drops noticeably to around 30% which may indicate a greater proportion of children surviving into adult years. Population would thus be likely to increase, first because of the larger number of offspring in the town, and secondly because this would mean a larger number of potential families and hence more children a generation later. By the end of the period, however, children were again making up about 40% of all burials and the chances of infant survival decreased, perhaps due to enhanced virulence among child diseases or a general decline in living conditions within the town in the aftermath of the cloth depression and the Civil War. Ringwood also shows something of this increase in burials of minors in the 1650s and 1660s and with relatively more children dying there were obvious longer term consequences for demographic growth in both towns as the supply of future parents was diminished.

This form of analysis may be extended to look at the burials of women by marital status as recorded in the parish registers (Table 2/2/16). The proportions at all the different periods seem to be very stable. At Romsey, for instance, widows regularly made up between 25-30% of adult burials and wives normally constituted just over half the deaths. Overall, married women rarely represented less than four-fifths of the total burials. Very similar proportions existed in Petersfield and in both towns the figures alter very little over time. Only at Ringwood is there any noticeable change for the number of married women dying at the end of the sixteenth century was usually around 70% but, by the middle of the seventeenth century, it was consistently over 80%. This indicates a growing likelihood for women in the town to marry at some time in their lives and could have had an effect on fertility and thus population growth for it was clearly becoming less common for a woman to stay single all her life. One of the reasons for the natural growth of this town in the seventeenth century may have

BURIALS - FEMALES										
	Total Adult Women	Widows	%	Wives	%	"Mrs"	%	Total Married Women	Unknown	%
<u>ROMSEY</u>										
1570-9	122	34	27.9	71	58.2	-	-	105	17	13.9
1580-8	156	47	30.1	85	54.5	-	-	132	24	15.4
1630-9	219	67	30.6	104	47.5	-	-	171	48	21.9
1640-9	190	57	30.0	98	51.6	-	-	155	35	18.4
1650-9	114	34	29.8	67	58.8	-	-	101	13	11.4
1660-9	158	39	24.7	89	56.3	-	-	128	30	19.0
<u>PETERSFIELD</u>										
1576-85	48	7	14.6	31	64.6	-	-	38	10	20.8
1620-9	79	23	29.1	41	51.9	-	-	64	15	19.0
1630-9	115	20	17.4	69	60.0	1	0.9	90	25	21.7
1640-9	120	29	24.2	67	55.8	-	-	96	24	20.0
1650-9	105	19	18.1	57	54.3	-	-	76	29	27.6
<u>RINGWOOD</u>										
1571-8	101	18	17.8	54	53.5	1	1	73	28	27.7
1580-9	106	24	22.6	54	50.9	-	-	78	28	26.4
1590-9	126	20	15.9	59	46.8	1	0.8	80	46	36.5
1600-9	121	36	29.8	56	46.3	-	-	92	29	24.0
1610-9	189	54	28.6	106	56.1	-	-	160	29	15.3
1620-9	63	15	23.8	38	60.3	1	1.6	54	9	14.3
1630-9	129	40	31.0	65	50.4	3	2.3	108	21	16.3
1640-9	120	35	29.2	60	50.0	2	1.7	97	23	19.2
1650-9	196	55	28.1	117	59.7	3	1.5	175	21	10.7
1660-9	207	68	32.9	115	55.6	3	1.4	186	21	10.1

Table 2/2/16

been, therefore, a sharp rise in the proportion of women marrying dating from the second decade of the century. This may have been caused by the general surplus of male over female children in the town which meant more potential husbands but it may have been the result of improving economic prospects in the community. Like the other markets Ringwood was benefitting from its roadside location on the route from London to Poole and may have also developed as an outlet for the new draperies. In such an environment men and women who had previously delayed marriage or remained single may have been motivated towards marriage explaining the jump in the proportion of married women found in the town. On a broader level it is very clear in all the towns that there was a high marriage expectancy among women. Widows were common within the female population and taken with the wives they made up a large majority of the adult female inhabitants. Even if all the unknown entries were spinsters, which is very unlikely, they usually represented 20% or less of the women and the chances of a woman not marrying before death were not very great.

One interesting aspect of the Romsey register is the recording among the burials for a long period of stillborn children, a category omitted by many parish clerks but in this case faithfully entered for most of the seventeenth century. There are doubts about the accuracy of the registers during the 1650s and 1660s when registration of stillborn children became rather erratic but for the first half of the seventeenth century they are apparently reliable. They may be added to the number of baptisms to reach a total of conceptions (Table 2/2/17). It seems that about 5% of all conceptions resulted in a stillbirth and this figure was maintained throughout the period. Put another way, there were about 5 or 6 stillborn children for every 100 live births. Some may have been induced in order to deliberately abort the baby and several may have died in the act of birth. Others may have been caused by natural disabilities, in particular those of the nervous system. Several families were affected more than once within a short space of time. Thus the wife of William Eves saw a stillborn child buried on 9 April 1608

ROMSEY : STILLBORN CHILDREN

	No. of Baptisms	No. of Stillbirths	No. of Conceptions	% of Conceptions	Stillbirths per 100 live
1600-9	735	37	772	4.8	5
1610-9	797	52	849	6.1	7
1620-9	747	27	774	3.5	4
1630-9	760	35	795	4.5	5
1640-9	725	56	781	7.1	8
1650-9	704	19	723	2.6	3
1660-9	635	11	646	1.7	2

Table 2/2/17

and another on 19 August 1609, while the wife of John Colson had three miscarriages in this first decade of the seventeenth century, the last of them soon after her husband's death. One of the main causes of stillbirth, amencephaly, has a high incidence among the first born, where the mother is young, and later when the mother is old. Yet in the case of William Eves, his wife, Alice, had given birth to at least two previous live children and was to give birth to at least two more. Likewise, in the case of John Pike his wife had three stillbirths interspersed with live children during the years 1598-1608. The fact that she was almost permanently pregnant over this period may go a long way towards explaining the high incidence of stillbirths in this and other families. However, in most cases it does seem to have been the young mother who was most likely to experience a stillbirth, such as the wife of George Dallidowne in 1602 and, like other wives who survived the ordeal, she was able to have further children at a later date. The Romsey evidence shows that the proportions of stillbirths was never very high in the town but it still occurred often enough to have been a common feature within urban society and it was a danger that every prospective mother lived with.

The graphs of burials show very clearly the years of crisis mortality experienced by each community. Using the parish register descriptions of family status, it is possible to look at the minor/adult ratio in these years to determine whether the deaths in these years fell proportionately more on adults or children (Table 2/2/18). These crises will be looked at in detail later but for now it is interesting to see if the registers show any broad pattern. In Romsey there was very little change in the ratio between the crisis year and the five preceding years. The number of children dying increased relative to adults in 1580 but fell in the other years. Changes in the ratio were rarely substantial and it is not apparent that significantly more adults than children perished during the outbreaks of disease. Likewise, at Ringwood in 1593 and 1658 the ratio changed very little during the crises whilst in 1613-14 proportionately more children died and in 1638 relatively more adults died, but in neither case was the

Crisis Mortality Years

1.	Romsey 1580	child/adult burial ratio	113/100
	five previous years		93/100
2.	Ringwood 1593	child/adult burial ratio	41/100
	five previous years		42/100
3.	Romsey 1612	child/adult burial ratio	44/100
	five previous years		51/100
4.	Ringwood 1613-14	child/adult burial ratio	54/100
	five previous years		40/100
5.	Ringwood 1638	child/adult burial ratio	22/100
	five previous years		32/100
6.	Romsey 1638-9	child/adult burial ratio	61/100
	five previous years		62/100
7.	Romsey 1644	child/adult burial ratio	75/100
	five previous years		81/100
8.	Ringwood 1658	child/adult burial ratio	70/100
	five previous years		75/100
9.	Ringwood 1668	child/adult burial ratio	32/100
	five previous years		78/100

Table 2/2/18



movement of the ratio especially significant. Only in 1668 is there a large shift with only 32 children dying for every 100 adults compared with 78 in the previous five years, showing this attack of smallpox to be particularly bad for grown men and women. Petersfield also shows a major shift in its minor/adult burial ratio during the mortality crisis of 1639 when 144 children died for every 100 adults compared with 61 over the previous five years. It is clear therefore that the normal ratio could be seriously distorted by a demographic crisis within a particular community. Although it did not always follow that adults suffered worse, nor did the shift necessarily occur in each town or at every mortality maximum.

As with baptisms some comments are possible on the seasonality of burials in the towns (Figure 2/2/7, Tables 2/2/19, 2/2/20). Using the aggregate totals no real pattern emerges and there are some contradictions among the towns. Thus while June and July show up very low in Ringwood and Romsey, they are much higher in Petersfield. However, much of this is because of the very severe plague in that town during these months in 1666 and, if this was excluded, Petersfield would show a similar fall in mortality at this time of the year. Burials seem to have risen slowly towards the end of the year with November outstanding at Romsey and December in Ringwood, but the main peak in burials seems to have occurred towards the end of the winter when hard weather conditions may have coincided with diminishing food stocks. Thus March appears as the worst single month at Romsey and was also bad in Petersfield and Ringwood.

Looking at the graphs for different decades the monthly distribution of burials appears very erratic (Figures 2/2/8a, 2/2/8b). A severe epidemic any time of the year could distort the picture completely as with Petersfield in the 1560s and the 1660s. Romsey, spared such extremes of mortality, is more instructive but, nevertheless, it offers no clear pattern. A mortality maximum could occur at any time of the year according to the vagaries of disease and a relatively healthy decade such as the 1570s shows a

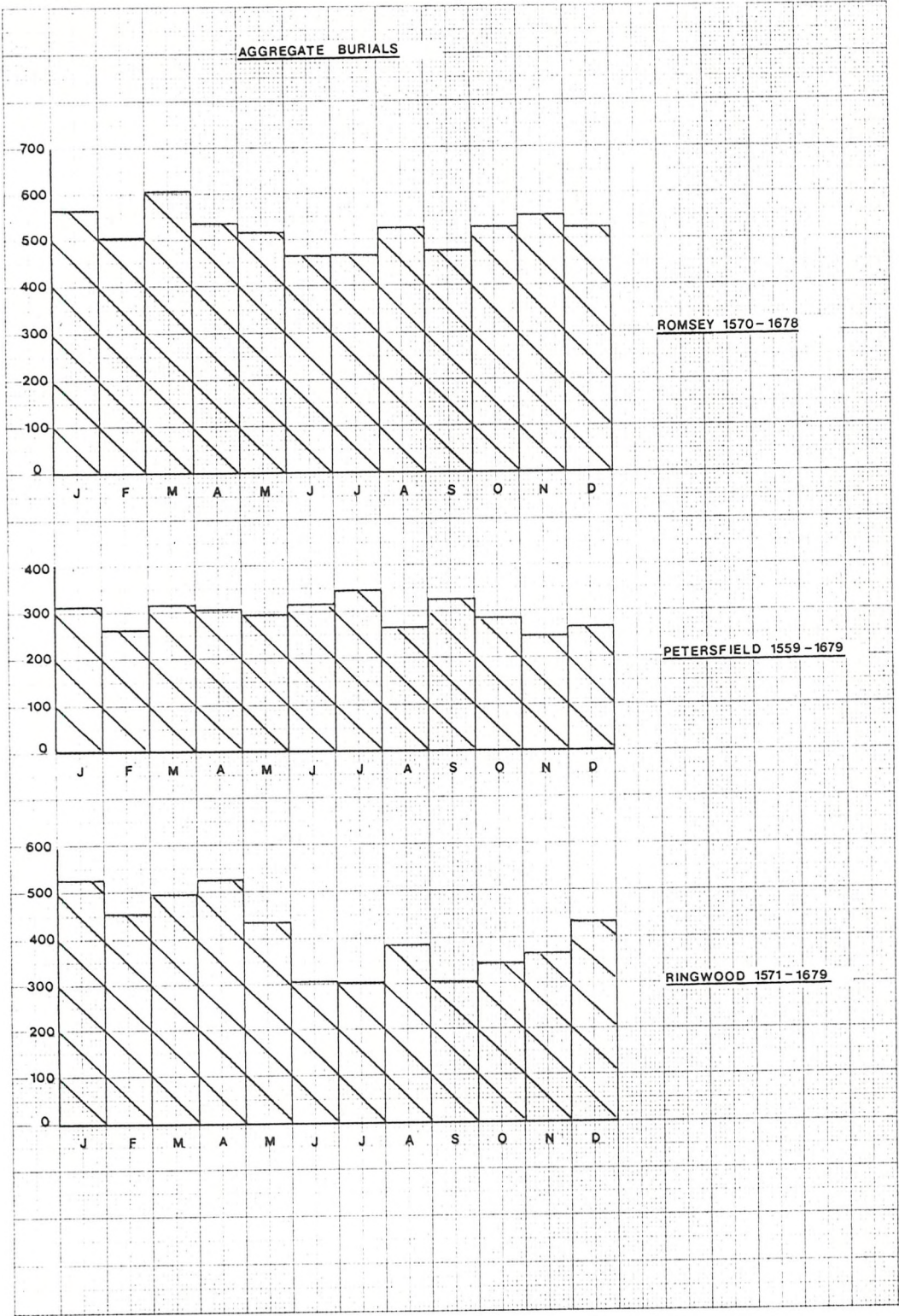


Figure 2/2/7

Table 2/2/19

KINGSCLERE BURIALS

(% of decade totals)

	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sept	Oct-Dec	Total
1540-9	26.2	32.2	19.1	22.5	298
1550-9	23.6	24.6	24.9	26.8	313
1560-9	24.5	24.1	17.8	33.6	241
1570-9	24.1	27.3	23.8	24.8	286
1580-9	22.7	36.1	19.9	21.3	352
1590-9	26.5	26.8	21.6	25.1	291
1600-9	27.9	27.6	23.2	21.3	272
1610-9	30.2	26.1	21.4	22.3	318
1620-9	29.7	21.1	19.2	30.0	313
1630-9	27.2	27.4	20.4	24.9	401
1640-9	29.2	23.5	23.5	23.8	349
1650-9	29.3	20.7	23.3	26.7	232
1660-9	25.7	21.2	24.9	28.2	241

ROMSEY BURIALS

(% of decade totals)

	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sept	Oct-Dec	Total
1570-9	23.2	23.0	23.5	30.3	426
1580-9	27.1	23.2	22.0	27.7	591
1590-9	28.3	21.3	26.0	24.4	635
1600-9	27.3	22.9	25.2	24.6	524
1610-9	28.2	26.0	20.6	25.2	727
1620-9	26.8	24.0	26.6	22.6	620
1630-9	24.8	20.8	25.2	29.1	701
1640-9	27.3	29.5	21.2	21.9	735
1650-9	26.7	26.5	28.0	18.8	378
1660-9	24.3	23.0	22.4	30.4	514

PETERSFIELD BURIALS

(% of decade totals)

	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sept	Oct-Dec	Total
1560-9	18.2	17.1	35.6	29.1	275
1570-9	27.7	34.1	22.5	15.6	173
1580-9	20.5	34.3	28.6	16.7	210
1590-9	27.8	20.9	19.1	32.2	230
1600-9	23.2	28.9	22.8	25.0	228
1610-9	29.6	28.9	21.3	20.3	291
1620-9	30.1	20.8	22.9	26.3	236
1630-9	27.0	25.9	24.6	22.5	378
1640-9	31.1	22.3	19.1	27.4	350
1650-9	28.5	23.6	22.2	25.7	369
1660-9	12.9	29.0	46.2	12.0	459

RINGWOOD BURIALS

(% of decade totals)

	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sept	Oct-Dec	Total
1570-9	34.1	27.5	17.7	20.7	367
1580-9	32.9	26.2	17.8	23.1	325
1590-9	31.2	23.6	22.7	22.5	436
1600-9	33.9	25.9	19.8	20.4	378
1610-9	32.6	22.7	21.5	23.1	576
1620-9	25.3	26.7	27.1	20.9	225
1630-9	35.1	22.6	17.8	24.5	376
1640-9	32.4	27.4	19.8	20.4	398
1650-9	25.0	25.2	22.8	27.0	623
1960-9	24.8	30.8	19.9	24.6	614

FAREHAM BURIALS

(% of decade totals)

	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sept	Oct-Dec	Total
1560-9	18.6	16.5	36.8	28.1	231
1570-9	34.1	22.6	20.3	23.0	217
1580-9	27.3	13.6	35.5	23.6	110
1590-9	37.8	16.8	21.7	23.8	143
1600-9	30.7	20.4	28.5	20.4	137
1610-9	27.2	25.5	21.0	26.2	290
1620-9	28.3	22.4	19.0	30.2	321
1630-9	26.2	23.5	26.5	23.8	302
1640-9	-	-	-	-	-
1650-9	-	-	-	-	-
1660-9	26.9	23.7	25.7	23.7	342

BURIALS : MONTHLY TOTALS

Romsey 1570-1678

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
569	503	605	538	515	465	467	524	472	529	550	523

Petersfield 1559-1679

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
311	264	318	305	291	319	344	268	323	286	248	265

Ringwood 1571-1679

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
529	456	493	524	436	303	301	381	301	343	367	434

Table 2/2/20



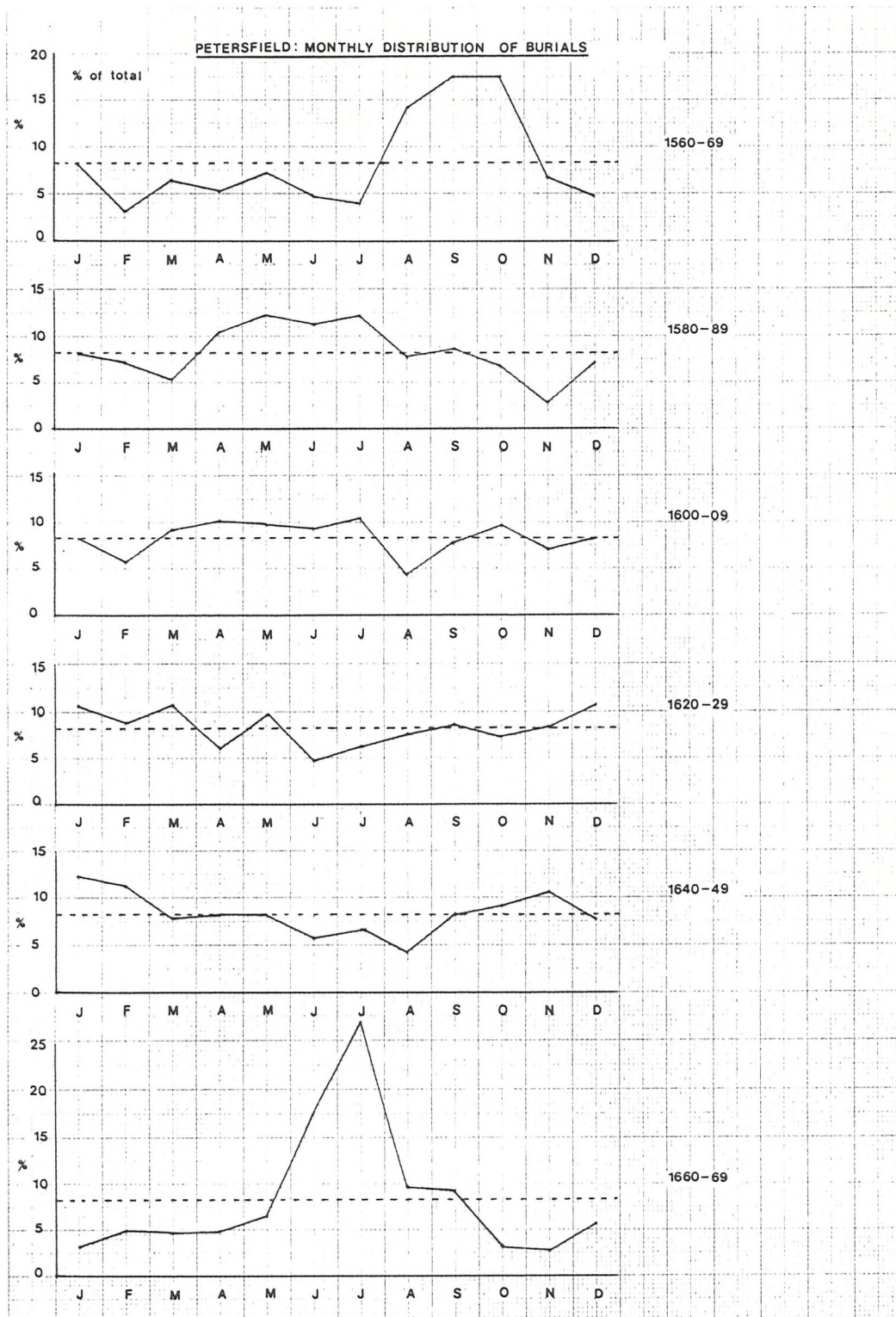


Figure 2/2/8a

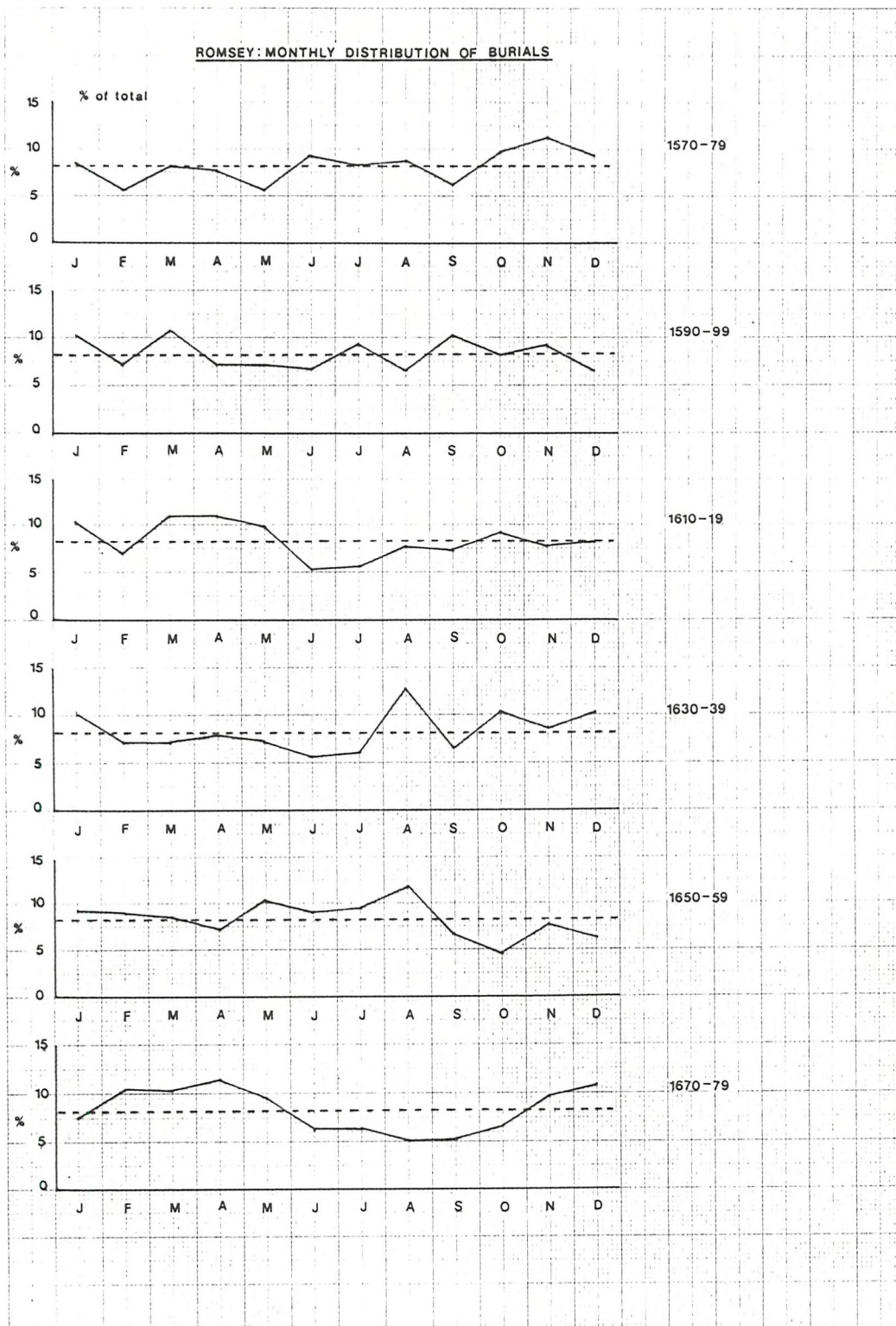


Figure 2/2/8b



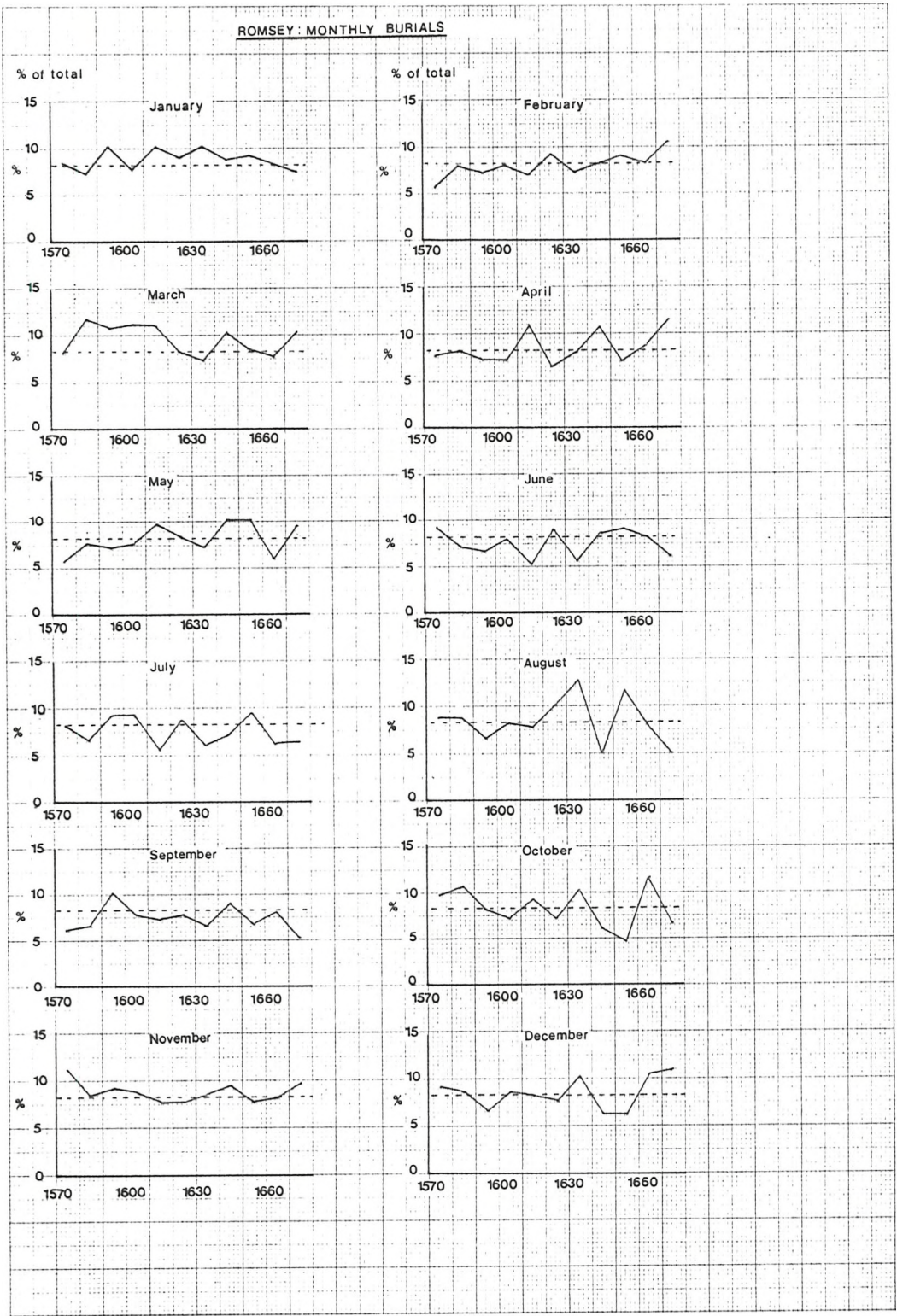


Figure 2/2/9

fairly even distribution of deaths throughout the year. When the individual months are considered (Figure 2/2/9), it is clear that, with the exception of June and July, each month, at some time, claimed over 10% of burials. January and March were consistently recording a more than proportionate share of deaths and tend to indicate that the late winter was the worst period of the year, perhaps when the recurrent respiratory diseases claimed many victims. Other infections such as scarlet fever, diptheria and dysentery were usually at their worst in the cold months. November also shows a fairly high level of mortality in Romsey but, on the whole, each month was very much alike in its burials and a peak could occur at any time of the year.

#### Overall Population

By combining the study of the three vital events recorded in the parish register, an overall picture of population change begins to emerge. Both Kingsclere and Odiham show baptisms well above burials for the 1540s and 1550s but the demographic crises of 1557-63 brought the two measurements very close together and in the case of Odiham deaths moved above births for a short period. Other registers begin at this time or in the early 1570s and all the towns show a similar pattern until the early 1590s. Thus although there were individual years of high mortality the overall trend, as revealed by the nine year moving average, points towards a consistent excess of baptisms over burials and the gap between the two measures on the graph of population remained fairly wide throughout the mid-Elizabethan period. During the 1590s the difference narrowed considerably in each town with baptisms, which had been rising steadily, tending to level out or even decline and burials moving sharply upwards in response to the disease and famine of that decade. At Odiham and Romsey deaths actually moved above births in terms of the long run averages as well as in annual totals.

Ringwood witnessed a drop in baptisms and a rise in burials between 1610-15 which brought the two averages very close but, otherwise, the first forty years of the seventeenth century saw a return, in all the towns, to the Tudor pattern of increasing baptisms and burials separated by a wide gap, indicative of substantial natural growth in each community. By the late 1630s, however, the rise in births began to level out and increased mortality brought the two indicators back together in each town and at Romsey and Petersfield burials moved sharply above baptisms. In both cases births remained relatively stable showing only a slight downward drift and the change in the demographic situation from one of natural increase to natural decrease in population was due to the marked rise in deaths recorded in these towns in the late 1630s and early 1640s. The 1650s saw baptisms again above burials in all the towns except Ringwood. At Romsey and Kingsclere mortality fell considerably and, as a result, the difference between the two measures was relatively large, but in the cases of Petersfield and Odiham the gap was much narrower. A turning point had clearly been reached, for baptisms had levelled out after a long period of increase and were even declining at Odiham, and the rise in burials meant that the wide disparity characteristic of all the towns for much of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries was at an end. Thus the period ends with births and deaths very close to each other in all the towns. At Fareham the two measures had been widely divergent throughout the years from 1570 to 1635, including the 1590s, but by the 1660s mortality had risen and fertility had stabilised bringing the two indicators together and the town witnessed burials moving ahead of baptisms around 1670. Indeed, the long-term averages begin to show an excess of deaths more often and for longer sequences than at any other phase in the period. Natural growth, which had been the norm for all the Hampshire market towns and had persisted almost uninterrupted through the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries had become an irregular phenomenon by the 1660s and 1670s.

The interrelationship of baptisms, burials and marriages is very complex and often contradictory. At Fareham it is no surprise to find that the peak in marriages around 1610 was followed by an increase in baptisms and that as marriages fell away after 1620 so the number of births each year also began to decline. More baptisms is the logical outcome of more weddings and, broadly, this pattern holds true of the other towns. Yet there are a number of exceptions which make the relationship between marriages and baptisms very difficult. The two maxima in weddings at Petersfield, around 1620 and 1640, were both followed by a decline in births and at Romsey the trough reached in marriages around 1600 coincided with the start of a sharp increase in baptisms. The link between burials and marriages is similarly problematical. Theoretically a slump in deaths would seem to indicate healthy, prosperous conditions suitable for marriage and, indeed this holds true on several instances. At Ringwood the low level of burials around 1600 and in the 1620s both coincided with an upsurge in weddings. However, at Fareham the very low mortality of the 1580s, far from inducing more marriages in the town, was matched by some of the lowest totals in the parish. It would also be expected that a mortality crisis would be followed, after a short time lag, by an increase in marriages as couples who had postponed their weddings proceeded with the ceremony. At Odiham the influenza and plague of 1557-63 was followed by a clear increase in marriages and at Petersfield the sickness of 1612-13 apparently stifled weddings in the towns and was followed by an increase towards the end of the decade. Yet for every example cited in favour of this hypothetical cause and effect relationship between deaths and weddings another can be cited against. Thus the high mortality in Romsey around 1640 was followed by a slump in marriages and the same occurred in the years immediately following the mortality crisis of 1612-13 in Ringwood. It seems that where the death rate was particularly severe, as in these two specific crises, the marriage totals in the towns only began to respond after a considerable time lag during which the psychological effects of prolonged disease probably helped to depress the urge to marry. Thus at Ringwood

marriages only began to rise significantly in the mid 1620s, almost a decade after the worst of the sickness was past. Although it is possible to follow, by means of graphs, the overall picture of population in the towns and to trace the movement of baptisms, burials and marriages in each community, it is not possible to reach a model of the interrelationship of all three factors which holds true for each town at every period. There were individual circumstances which dictated the conditions in each town. Every community in early modern England was unique and the course taken by these demographic indicators is a fine illustration of this important point.

Natural growth of population occurred when baptisms exceeded burials, implying that more people were being born in the town than were dying. The annual surplus of baptisms and burials are in the appendices. In all six towns it is clear that most years witnessed natural expansion of population but that interspersed at regular intervals were years of high mortality when burials were in surplus. When this happened it could be on a much larger scale than the usual excess of baptisms. Thus at Ringwood through the 1580s christenings had normally exceeded burials by anything up to 34 in a single year but when disease struck the town in 1593 there was a mortality surplus of 63. Hence although natural growth was the norm for these towns there could be very sharp reversals to this pattern which could wipe out the increase accumulated over a number of years. This particular epidemic in Ringwood nullified the natural growth of the previous three years during which time there had been 55 more births than deaths. These checks to the demographic expansion occurred fairly regularly in each town as can be clearly seen in the graphs. At Petersfield the longest sequence of growth was 16 years, between 1615 and 1630, and at Romsey it was 13 years, between 1650 and 1662. There was also a tendency for the bad years to group together creating an even more significant check to demographic growth. One of the reasons for this was that harvest failure would reduce the seed available for subsequent years and thus precipitate further substandard

crops. Similarly disease, especially the diverse agues and fevers of Tudor and Stuart England, was likely to infect a community for several years at a time. Thus the 1590s were noticeably bad at Romsey with five out of seven years showing a burial surplus between 1592-1598. At Petersfield there were two successive bad years or two years in three on ten separate occasions between 1559 and 1660, or roughly once every ten years, common enough for the inhabitants to have become accustomed to a mortality crisis within their town.

However, although these checks to natural growth were frequent they did little to reverse the main demographic trend within each community. Figure 2/2/20 shows the pattern of natural growth in four towns after 1570, measured at five year intervals, and despite the frequent breaks in expansion the overall pattern of demographic development in each community is clearly towards growth. Between 1570 and 1590 the towns had each expanded, Fareham and Petersfield recording around 150 more baptisms than burials, an average of about 7.5 per annum, and Romsey and Ringwood had registered a baptismal surplus of around 250 representing an excess of 12.5 per annum. All four towns showed that they were capable of more than compensating for the years of high mortality. The 1590s were a decade of little growth and even some reversal of natural growth but the expansion of populations resumed after the turn of the century and the losses of the 1590s were swiftly made up. Likewise, the check in populations between 1610-15 provided little more than a short break in the predominantly upward trend of natural growth in all four towns. With the exception of Ringwood, which seems to have grown particularly quickly in the seventeenth century, it is interesting to see how similar was the rate of natural growth in the other three towns. Each witnessed about 350 more baptisms than burials in the thirty years between 1600 and 1630, a rate of 11.7 per annum. Thus, although their aggregate figures are very different, these three market towns, Fareham, Petersfield and Romsey, all experienced almost identical levels of natural growth in the early



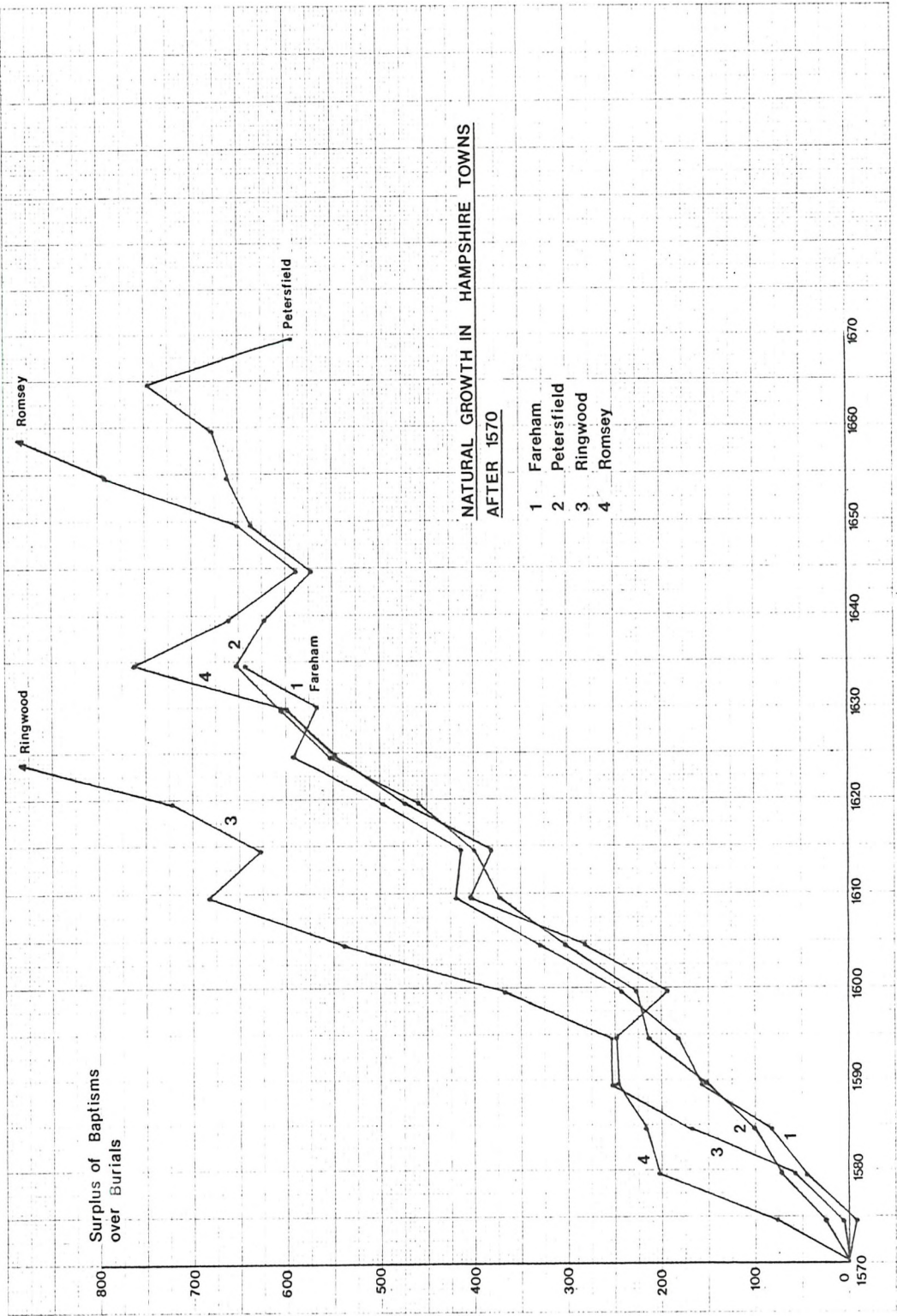


Figure 2/2/10

seventeenth century. After about 1630 this expansion seems to have become more erratic as years of surplus mortality became more frequent and more severe in their impact (Figure 2/2/11). Thus Petersfield saw very little natural growth between 1630 and 1679. Nor was this simply the result of the plague of 1666 for in the thirty years between 1630 and 1659 there had been a surplus of baptisms of only about 75, an average of just 2.5 per annum. Clearly natural growth had begun to even out in the town well before the plague. Romsey and Ringwood continued to grow but from about 1650 expansion in Ringwood became very much less significant. Thus the town had seen 400 more births than deaths between 1630 and 1649, a rate of 20 per annum, but between 1650 and 1679 the growth was barely over 60 and the annual rate of surplus had slumped to about two per annum. Here too natural growth had slowed down considerably at the end of the period. However, at the same time the population of Romsey continued to expand rapidly, with the increasingly depressive effects of mortality that curtailed demographic growth elsewhere apparently making little or no impact in the town, a testimony to the erratic effects of disease on population in the early modern period.

For most of the Tudor and early Stuart years the population of these small towns had continued to grow by natural means despite the setbacks of disease and famine which caused years of excess burials. One of the reasons was the speed with which these years of high mortality were compensated by natural growth and, further, recovery would have been even more rapid if immigration was taken into account (Table 2/2/21). At Romsey the crisis deaths of 1580, 1597 and 1612 were replaced within two years, four years and five years respectively and at Ringwood the mortality surpluses of 1593, 1613-14, 1638 and 1658 were matched by succeeding baptismal surpluses within five years, five years, five years and three years respectively. The towns were apparently very resilient to disease and were able to shake off the effects on the population of often severe epidemics by purely natural means, sometimes within five years.



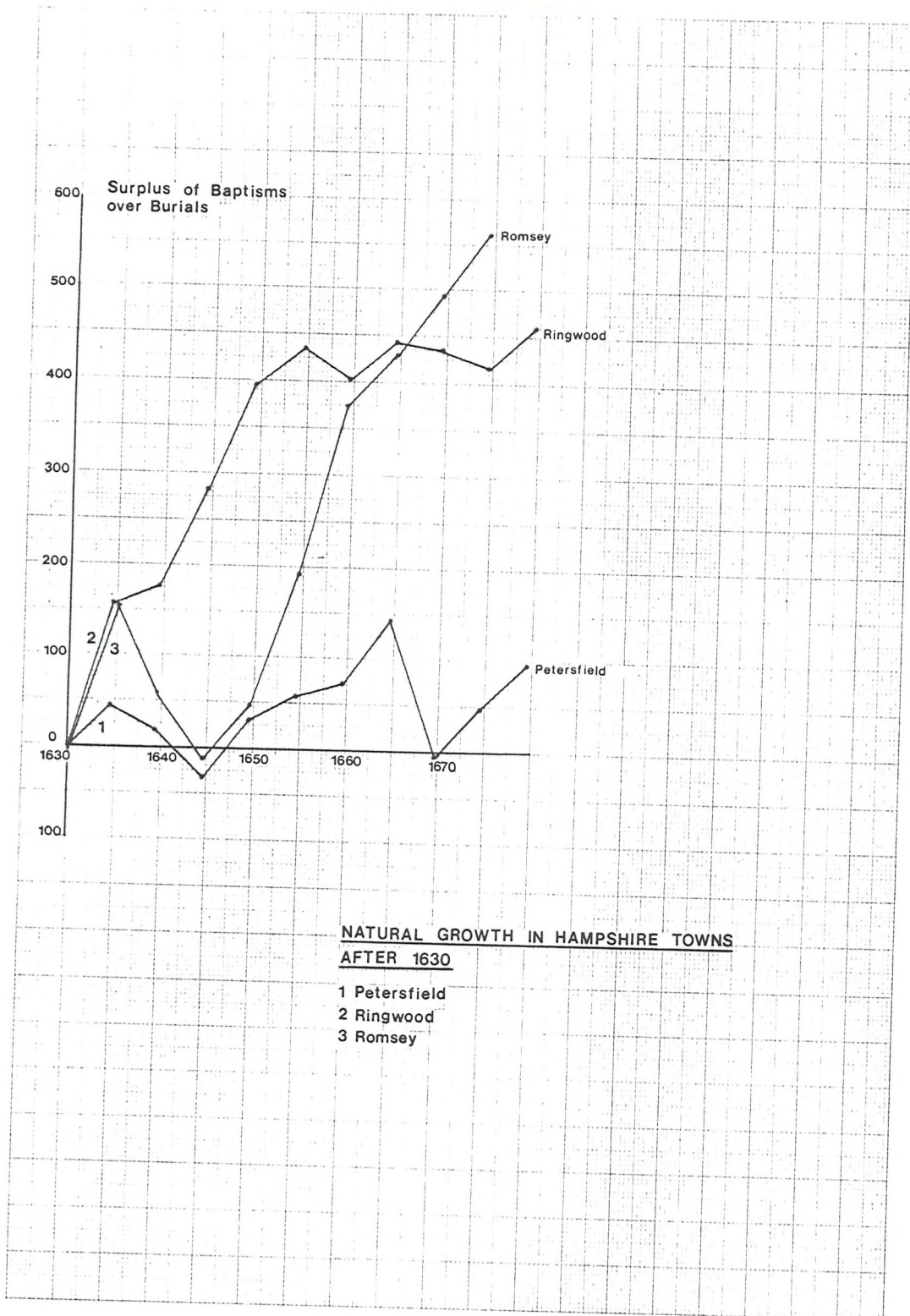


Figure 2/2/11

RECOVERY AFTER CRISIS MORTALITY

<u>Year</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Recovery period</u> <u>(natural growth)</u>
1563	Petersfield	15 years
1580	Romsey	2 years
1593	Ringwood	5 years
1597	Romsey	4 years
1612	Romsey	5 years
1613-4	Ringwood	5 years
1638	Ringwood	5 years
1638-9	Petersfield	not recovered by 1642-4
1638-9	Romsey	not recovered by 1644
1642-4	Petersfield	6 years
1644	Romsey	5 years
1658	Ringwood	3 years
1666	Petersfield	not recovered by 1678-9
1668	Ringwood	not recovered by 1679

Table 2/2/21

Less easily recovered were the losses of especially acute outbreaks such as that of 1563 in Petersfield which had only been balanced in 1578, fifteen years later. Similarly hard-hitting were the combined effects of the 1638-9 and 1642-4 crises which were unrecovered in Petersfield and Romsey by the start of the 1650s. This last instance may be a sign that with fertility levelling out and mortality increasing natural growth was becoming much less able to compensate for mortality crises than had been the case in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

It is possible to identify and rank the phases of demographic growth for the Hampshire market towns in the period under consideration. This has been done successfully by Hodgson in his study of Durham and may be applied equally to Hampshire.<sup>1</sup> The results are shown in Table 2/2/22. Parish register evidence on baptisms and burials has been grouped in twenty year periods where adequate records survive. Absolute figures are of little value either for comparative purposes or for the identification of particularly vigorous years of population growth. Thus within each twenty year period an average annual figure was calculated for both baptisms and burials. The difference between the two can be ascertained and then expressed as a percentage of the average annual burials in order to provide a guide to the relative rise or, occasionally, fall of population within the twenty years. For Odiham and Kingsclere seven such calculations can be made and the figures ranked to show the phases of highest and lowest growth and for the other towns at least five figures can be derived.

What emerges most clearly is the lack of uniformity between the towns as to their growth during the early modern period. A phase of rapid growth as, for instance, in Fareham between 1580 and 1599 was counterbalanced by very sluggish expansion in Kingsclere and even an excess of burials over baptisms in Romsey. Growth in Ringwood was at its peak in the years 1620-39 but this period ranks no better than third in any of the other towns. Similarly, the period of greatest natural population growth in Romsey, 1660-79,

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1. R.I. Hodgson, Demographic Trends in County Durham, 1560-1801, (University of Manchester School of Geography Research Papers, No. 5, May 1978).

PHASES OF POPULATION GROWTH

	1540-59	1560-79	1580-99	1600-19	1620-39	1640-59	1660-79
FAREHAM		3	1	2	4		5
KINGSLERE	5	1	6	4	7	2	3
ODIHAM	4	1	5	2	3	6	7
PETERSFIELD		4	2	1	3	5	(6)
RINGWOOD			2	3	1	4	5
ROMSEY			(5)	3	4	2	1

1 = highest growth  
brackets = negative growth

Table 2/2/22

was the phase of slowest growth in Odiham and of decrease in Petersfield. Clearly the towns of early modern Hampshire each had very distinctive growth patterns, unique to each settlement and it is almost impossible to define short periods of demographic growth or stagnation common to each community.

Records are available for two towns in the earliest period on the table, from 1540 to 1559. The great population expansion witnessed by sixteenth century England may be dated from 1510 at the earliest and many urban communities remained demographically inert for several more decades.<sup>1</sup> As far as Kingsclere and Odiham were concerned they were experiencing sustained natural growth from 1540 although in neither case of any great magnitude, representing the fourth and fifth phases respectively. In total Kingsclere saw 683 baptisms between 1543 and 1559 compared with 513 burials and between 1544 and 1556 there was not one year with an excess of deaths over births. Only with the influenza of the late 1550s was a check applied to population growth and, if these years are excluded, then this first phase, covering the late Henrician and mid Tudor years can be seen as one of particularly vigorous growth for this small market town. Population in the 1540s and 1550s was expanding significantly by natural means and the rather unimpressive performance of the whole twenty year period was wholly the result of the crisis in 1557-9 which must not be allowed to conceal the very real growth already taking place in both communities prior to that date. These two small market towns were certainly growing in pre-Elizabethan years and may have been typical of the lesser urban settlements which felt the effects of population enlargement ahead of some of their larger neighbours.

This expansion continued into the next twenty year phase and, free from disease, both Odiham and Kingsclere enjoyed their largest period of growth in the century and a half under review. Neither town had more than one year with an excess of burials over baptisms.

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1. see I. Blanchard, "Population Change, Enclosure and the Early Tudor Economy", Economic History Review, 2nd Series, 23, (1970), pp. 427-8.

In Odiham there were 816 baptisms compared with 427 burials, a surplus of 389, and in Kingsclere there were 827 births compared with 527 deaths, a surplus of 300. Fareham and Petersfield also have records from these years and both performed moderately well having their third and fourth best periods of expansion respectively. In fact both towns were hit badly by disease in 1563 and but for that setback these years would have emerged as among the best for these communities too. All four towns therefore point conclusively to the existence of a clear trend towards natural growth in the small towns before 1580, able to compensate for all except the most acute outbreak of disease and representing some of the best years for urban demographic expansion in the whole of the early modern period.

Evidence is available for six towns at the end of the sixteenth century and the picture of fairly vigorous overall growth which may be proposed for the forty years from 1540 to 1580 becomes a much less tenable thesis. Natural expansion of population became an inconsistent feature of the towns under consideration. Thus whilst Fareham enjoyed its best phase of growth and both Petersfield and Ringwood experienced their second best periods, for other towns the story was very different and Romsey even saw a natural decrease in population with burials in excess of baptisms. Hence whilst Fareham faced only two years with a mortality surplus, Romsey experienced nine such years, four in the 1580s and five in the 1590s. In Fareham there were 470 baptisms, almost double the 253 burials, a quite different situation compared with Romsey where the same two decades witnessed 1226 deaths, ten more than the number of births registered in these years. Some of the impetus of sixteenth century demographic growth had apparently been lost by the end of the century and, whilst several of the market towns continued to expand at or near their peak for the early modern period, the effects of disease and famine in the 1580s and 1590s made the overall picture for the small towns much less impressive than it had been

in the preceding early Elizabethan period.

The next years in Table 2/2/22 are from 1600 to 1619 and they represent the most general phase of growth for these market towns. Kingsclere fared worst, experiencing only its fourth ranked period, but in most cases these decades were the second or third best and for Petersfield these years were the most successful phase of natural growth prior to 1680. Following the uncertainties at the end of the sixteenth century, the early seventeenth century witnessed concerted expansion throughout the market towns, all of which fared well. Even Kingsclere, for which the period brought only a relatively mediocre growth, recorded 837 baptisms compared with 590 burials. Clearly all the towns were prospering at the start of the Stuart era, each of them growing significantly and several at or near their peak of expansion in the early modern period.

The following twenty years also witnessed generally vigorous growth although mostly on a lesser scale than at the very start of the century. For most of the towns the period 1620-39 was about the third or fourth best phase of growth, though for Kingsclere it was actually the worst period of those under consideration and, to confirm the lack of real uniformity, for Ringwood it was the best sequence of the early modern period. The picture is somewhat distorted by the outbreaks of disease at the end of the 1630s which were severe in their effects on towns like Fareham, Petersfield and Romsey, and it is clear that the 1620s were a much more successful period, more akin to the first two decades of the century. Indeed Petersfield had no year of burial surplus during the 1620s. For Ringwood the whole period was one of growth before it too succumbed to infection between 1637-9, prior to which there had been an unbroken sequence of baptismal surpluses since 1615. Over the period 1620-39 there were 1096 births compared with 601 deaths and a peak was reached in the early modern expansion of this particular market town. For most of the other small urban communities, however, the peak had already been passed and this phase may be seen as rather less impressive than the fine natural expansion achieved at times in

the sixteenth century and at the start of the seventeenth century. Table 2/2/22 is intended to show relative growth phases and it is clear that the leading periods, one and two, were in most cases gone by 1620 and that a comparatively slower phase of growth was beginning in the 1620s and certainly by 1630. Nevertheless, the towns definitely continued to experience healthy natural growth. Romsey, for instance, although it enjoyed only its fourth best period still recorded 1507 baptisms compared with 1321 burials, and all the towns, including Kingsclere, had surpluses of births over deaths which testify to continued natural demographic growth in the market towns throughout the early Stuart years.

In several cases the years from 1580 to 1640 stand out from the following decades and show the Elizabethan and early Stuart years to be relatively more important for population growth than those of the Civil War, Interregnum and Restoration. Both Ringwood and Petersfield had their first, second and third most significant phases of growth in these sixty years and Fareham had its first, second and fourth. Odiham also fared well and the only towns where the years either side of 1600 were relatively less important in the expansion of early modern populations were Kingsclere and Romsey. Urban demographic growth was clearly an individual phenomenon unique in the course it took to each separate community but it does seem that for the market towns natural growth was well under way in the mid-sixteenth century, although distracted by the terrible epidemic of 1557-9, and continued to be vigorous until around 1640, broken in some cases by a deceleration at the end of the sixteenth century but resurgent in the early Stuart years.

After 1640 evidence is unavailable for Fareham but remains for the other five towns. Between 1640 and 1659 Kingsclere and Romsey experienced their second most successful phases in the whole period. Data is not always very reliable during these years but it seems as if Kingsclere witnessed just three years of burial surplus and Romsey certainly went through the whole of the 1650s without any annual



excess of burials over baptisms. For both towns it was in relative terms the most successful phase recorded thus far in the seventeenth century, yet for each of the other communities it was the worst. This dichotomy was reinforced in the period from 1660-79, the last considered in Table 2/2/22. Petersfield actually saw a decline in population, the result of the plague of 1666, but elsewhere these years were clearly much less successful than the start of the century. They rank fifth and bottom in Fareham, seventh and bottom in Odiham and fifth and last in Ringwood, though it must be emphasised that in each town the population was still growing by natural means. Only in Petersfield, with its uniquely severe epidemic, was there any reversal of the predominant upward demographic trend. At Ringwood there were still 1222 baptisms in these twenty years compared with 1164 burials, but clearly the rate of expansion had fallen markedly since the start of the seventeenth century, a situation paralleled in Fareham and Odiham. Yet while population growth had become more sluggish in some market towns, others were actually reaching their peak of development in the early Restoration years. In Kingsclere the decades of most rapid growth had been in 1560-79 but its second and third most important periods were between 1640-79 and the town seems to have experienced some renewed vigour in these years after a less dynamic phase from 1580-1639. Romsey is perhaps the best illustration available of the individuality of each urban community. After a natural fall in population towards the end of the sixteenth century, it grew steadily in the seventeenth century and actually experienced a peak of natural demographic expansion for the early modern period as late as 1660-79. For the years 1660-78 there were 1176 baptisms compared with 913 burials and there can be no doubt of the vigorous self-sustained growth of the town at the start of the Restoration.

The ranking of growth phases in this way illustrates very clearly how difficult it is to reach any general conclusions about the precise timing of the different aspects of urban demographic

expansion. Each town has a different tale to tell but there is little doubt that population growth was a feature of market communities from at least the 1540s and thereafter throughout the period. Nor was it extinguished by the 1660s and 1670s when some towns enjoyed several of their relatively most important years of growth. If the market town was beginning to suffer from the competition of larger boroughs at this time there are few signs of it in the performance of Romsey and Kingsclere or in the experience of other towns like Fareham and Ringwood where natural growth continued in a weakened but none the less important form.

The measurement of baptisms per hundred burials is another useful guide to the main periods of population growth and also serves as an indication of the significant role played by mortality in the overall demographic development of the towns. The statistics for the six towns are shown as a five year moving average in the appendices. The highest ratios show the period of most rapid natural growth of population and figures below 100 point to an excess of burials over baptisms. Despite the averaging process there are still some very sharp fluctuations in all the communities. There were times, as at Ringwood in the early seventeenth century, when the birth rate in the town, in crude terms, stood at double the death rate, yet in the following decade mortality was such that the two rates were about equal. The sharp rise and fall of the ratio, perhaps best indicated by the experience of Fareham but equally apparent elsewhere and caused by the recurrent onset and retreat of sickness, shows just how much of a drag on population growth were the ravages of disease. Malthus proposed that a population could be stifled by phases of high mortality following on periods of low mortality and certainly in these small market towns infection was often able to bring the baptism/burial ratio down to near the 100 mark, indicative of very slow growth.

Nevertheless, the role of natural demographic expansion, the simple fact of more births than deaths, is not denied by these

statistics. In the case of Kingsclere the average never once dips below the 100 mark and in all the other towns it does so very seldom and then only for short periods, normally in the order of two or three years, with the longest sequence being at Romsey between 1637 and 1644. Otherwise the figures all testify to prolonged natural growth in all the towns. Kingsclere and Odiham again show significant expansion as early as the 1540s and 1550s, whilst between 1570 and 1590 no community shows a ratio of below 100. The 1590s were rather less impressive. Plague and famine pulled the average downward in all the towns but in only two cases, Romsey and Odiham, did it slip below 100 and all the other places still maintained a slow but nonetheless positive rate of natural growth during that decade. Sickness again hampered population growth at the start of the second decade of the seventeenth century but, similarly, most towns managed to retain some degree of expansion. Only at the end of the 1630s and into the early 1640s does the average in each town drop to any alarming extent. Romsey, Petersfield, Odiham and Ringwood all saw the ratio slide below 100, indicating an excess of burials over baptisms. Thereafter it returned to a positive level although both Odiham and Ringwood were to witness further figures below 100 before the end of the period. Clearly lower ratios were becoming commonplace towards the end of the early modern years and point to a slowing of the natural population growth in the towns.

However, it is apparent that for most of the Tudor and early Stuart periods these market towns were enjoying healthy natural growth with high levels of expansion often retained for long periods despite the threat of disease. Thus at Fareham the rate stayed above 200 for over ten years on two occasions between 1582 and 1592 and between 1598 and 1608 while at Ringwood it only dropped below 200 for a single year between 1619 and 1636. The early modern town was certainly capable of sustained natural growth often at fairly high levels of expansion. Further, a sharp brake on development could be followed by extremely vigorous growth, giving rise to the

almost cyclical appearance of some of the graphs. Thus at Kingsclere the depressed expansion at the end of the 1550s and into the early 1560s was followed swiftly by the peak of its early modern natural growth around 1570.

Although the low points of expansion do seem to coincide for all the towns, namely the late 1550s, the 1590s, 1611-13, the late 1630s and the early 1640s, the highest levels of growth in these communities could be achieved at quite different times and could assume very contrasting patterns. Thus Odiham reached a peak in the early 1580s, Fareham in the late 1580s, Ringwood in the 1620s and Romsey not until the 1650s. Also, while Fareham and Ringwood show some very steep fluctuations, the average moving from high to low extremes and rising, for instance, from near 100 to around 350 in a comparatively short period, other towns show a much steadier pattern of growth. In Romsey the ratio moved up and down quite freely in the period until 1640 but never above 175 and rarely below 100. Likewise in Petersfield the ratio never rises above 250 and hardly falls below 125 throughout the years from 1567 to 1636. Within these bands the average fluctuates considerably but, nevertheless, the town clearly enjoyed a less polarised demographic history, spared the ups and downs of births and deaths which characterise the growth of Fareham. The unpredictable impact of disease on a town therefore contributed not only to periodic slowing down of natural growth, though very rarely to its reversal, but also to the longer term character of expansion with some urban communities accelerating and decelerating sharply at short intervals and others maintaining a less dramatic, more steady upward course in their population history.

### Wills

Perhaps the only other dynamic sources available for the study of early modern urban population are wills. These have been examined in detail for the town of Romsey but there is no reason

why other market communities should have followed a radically different demographic course. Sylvia Thrupp used the calculation of male replacement rates as a guide to late medieval population and her technique can be applied effectively to the sample of Romsey probate material.<sup>1</sup> It entails the division of the number of male children mentioned in wills by the number of male testators and the resulting figure is a clue to whether the population was able to reproduce itself, a figure of below one indicating failure to replace its male population and a figure above one pointing to natural demographic expansion. However, there are several problems in the study of wills which should be taken into consideration. They tend to reflect the more affluent sections of urban society and may not be representative of the whole population, whilst when total family size is investigated the wills may be unreliable because children who had left home and married, especially daughters who had already received a dowry, commonly received nothing more on the death of their parents. Well over four hundred wills have been studied but there are some sharp fluctuations in the annual totals available which may distort the results. Nevertheless some important conclusions emerge.

The Romsey wills have been studied for the period 1520-1669 embracing the records of 350 male testators (Table 2/2/23). If the date of conception is assumed to be a decade before the father's death then a rough guide to fertility and survival through the period can be deduced. Clearly at the very beginning of the sixteenth century the Romsey population was failing to replace itself with effective reproduction at a very low level, perhaps a survival from the demographic stagnation of the fifteenth century, although the town had not been one of those granted a reduction in the subsidy of 1437. Replacement rates seem to have picked up quickly in the sixteenth century and the urban population was expanding for at least three decades from 1520 into the 1550s.

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1. S.L. Thrupp, "The Problem of Replacement Rates in the Late Medieval English Population", Economic History Review, 2nd series, 18, (1965), pp. 101-19.

MALE REPLACEMENT RATES : ROMSEY 1520-1669

	Number of male testators	Number of sons	Replacement rates
1520-9	13	10	0.8
1530-9	19	23	1.2
1540-9	32	49	1.5
1550-9	49	55	1.1
1560-9	17	15	0.9
1570-9	13	24	1.8
1580-9	22	37	1.7
1590-9	26	30	1.2
1600-9	22	25	1.1
1610-9	24	42	1.8
1620-9	22	31	1.4
1630-9	22	50	2.3
1640-9	21	30	1.4
1650-9	21	27	1.3
1660-9	27	30	1.1
Total	350	478	1.4

Sources: W.R.O. wills: Consistory Court  
Archdeaconry Court  
Unclassified

P.R.O. wills: Prerogative Court of Canterbury

Table 2/2/23

Like its neighbour Southampton, Romsey seems to have grown in size during the first half of the century and, as with Alton, Alresford, Odiham and Kingsclere mentioned earlier, there are few signs of unbroken late medieval demographic depression lingering into the Elizabethan years. There was, however, a sharp jolt in the 1560s when the replacement rate fell below one for the second and last time in the period, a result of the combined effects of the influenza in 1557-9 and the plague of 1563. In fact the reversal was probably greater than the figure of 0.9 implies because many of the children named in wills at this time would have died soon after their parents. The effects may have been such as to nullify the growth indicated by high replacement rates for the preceding decades. By the end of the 1560s fertility seems to have recovered and population was expanding rapidly. The figure of 1.8 achieved in the 1570s was probably the highest for the whole century and that for the 1580s was also a testimony to the rapid natural growth of population. Put in crude terms, it meant that eighteen and seventeen male children respectively were surviving for every ten adult males who died. These figures are in excess of anything achieved by Southampton in this period even though the port was also growing and they point to a much greater level of natural replacement in the market town. The two decades from 1590 to 1609 show a decline in fertility, probably the outcome of the effects of death and disease at this time but, significantly, the replacement rate never dropped below one and although demographic growth may have slowed it was not reversed. Another high figure of 1.8 was achieved in the years 1610-19 while the slight drop in the 1620s may have been the outcome of the infection within the town during 1612-13. However, the relative freedom from disease enjoyed during the 1620s is reflected by the replacement rate of 2.3 for the following decade, the best in the whole period and indicative of a very vigorous level of natural expansion at this time. From 1640 onwards fertility began to drop and the next three decades show a successive fall in the replacement rate, but the figure never fell below one and the

market town maintained its ability to effectively reproduce itself. The wills thus confirm that throughout the century from 1570 to 1669 it had proved possible for a small town to grow, often very rapidly and despite periodic ravages from disease, by natural replacement.

Figures can also be derived for the average number of children referred to in wills and may be compared with statistics drawn from Southampton (Table 2/2/24). At the start of the period the family size recorded in Romsey seems to have been very low, with less than two children per will for the years 1520-39, but in the next two decades it began to rise in accordance with overall population and by the 1550s fertile marriages were producing, on average, over three children. The diseases prevalent in the late 1550s and early 1560s seems to have had an effect on family size which dropped sharply, the effect of increased mortality and depressed fertility. However, there was a swift recovery in the next two decades and by the 1580s family size had reached its peak for the period with almost four children mentioned in each will. It was in this decade that two men died in Romsey with especially large families. Peter Penton, whose will was proved in 1584, left ten children, four sons and six daughters, while John Barton surpassed that with eleven children, six boys and five girls. Such instances were rare but may distort the average although there is little doubt that the numbers of children referred to in wills was rising in this period. The problems of the 1590s temporarily inhibited fertility and survival so that the family size fell somewhat at the end of the century, but thereafter it rose steadily from 1600 to 1639, again surpassing three children in the 1630s. Over the period 1520-39 an average of 1.6 offspring had been recorded in wills but between 1630 and 1649 the figure was 3.2, indicating that in just over a century the number of children appearing in wills had doubled, testimony not only to overall population growth but to increased family size during the early modern period. By the 1650s and 1660s the average was beginning



NUMBER OF CHILDREN REFERRED TO IN WILLS

ROMSEY 1520-1669

	Number of wills	Number of children	Average	<u>Southampton</u>
1520-9	16	21	1.3	2.3
1530-9	21	40	1.9	1.8
1540-9	39	90	2.3	3.5
1550-9	52	163	3.1	3.3
1560-9	19	37	1.9	2.8
1570-9	17	51	3.0	3.4
1580-9	24	88	3.7	2.6
1590-9	30	81	2.7	3.6
1600-9	26	59	2.3	2.1
1610-9	34	91	2.7	4.3
1620-9	25	69	2.8	
1630-9	30	99	3.3	
1640-9	28	88	3.1	
1650-9	24	62	2.6	
1660-9	37	84	2.3	
Total	422	1123	2.7	

Sources: W.R.O. wills: Consistory Court  
Archdeaconry Court  
Unclassified

P.R.O. wills: Prerogative Court of Canterbury

T.B. James, thesis, op.cit., p. 43.

Table 2/2/24

to fall again, just as replacement rates were declining, and it is clear that the high rates of expansion and the impressive levels of child survival, as indicated by family size, were becoming far less commonplace. Thus comparing the 1630s with the 1660s the wills indicate on average one less child per family, a significant factor in the slowing down of demographic expansion in the later Stuart years.

Contrasting the Romsey figures with those of a more populous town, Southampton, illustrates a major difference between the experience of the market community and a sizeable provincial port. For the ten decades when comparison is possible, on seven occasions Southampton had a larger family size and, further, two of the three periods when Romsey was in the ascendancy were decades when Southampton was racked by disease, namely the plagues of 1583-4 and 1604. Yet the replacement rate for the port was at almost every time considerably below that of Romsey. Thus the small market town, although its family size was generally smaller than that recorded in Southampton, was still able to achieve a much higher and consistent level of natural growth. This must have been a consequence of the relative severity with which infections hit the different types of town, able to dramatically reverse the demographic fortunes of a larger urban population but only modifying the underlying natural trend within the market town.

A final point that emerges from the wills tends to point towards increased longevity within the Romsey testators. This is the reference to grandchildren in the wills which implies the co-existence of three generations within the family (Table 2/2/25). In the first three decades under review only about one in thirteen of testators referred to grandchildren and these third generation relationships must have been comparatively rare. During the 1560s only 5% of wills refer to grandchildren, not surprising in view of the high mortality in the early Elizabethan years, but thereafter the proportion rises steadily and by the 1590s 30% of testators made such bequests. The figure dropped somewhat at the start of

PERCENTAGE OF WILLS REFERRING TO GRANDCHILDREN

<u>Decade</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
1520-9	-
1530-9	14.3
1540-9	7.7
1550-9	28.8
1560-9	5.3
1570-9	11.8
1580-9	20.8
1590-9	30.0
1600-9	26.9
1610-9	23.5
1620-9	28.0
1630-9	30.0
1640-9	28.6
1650-9	25.0
1660-9	40.5

Table 2/2/25

of the seventeenth century but thereafter it never fell below 25% so that at least one in four wills refer to grandchildren and in the 1660s the ratio was as high as two in five. This may be the result of changes in willmaking custom so that it became the practice to specify such beneficiaries in greater detail. However it might also point to more parents surviving to an age where they would see their children's children. If so, it may indicate a shift within the age structure of the early modern population with people living slightly longer and the elderly representing a greater proportion of the population. It may be stretching the credibility of wills too far, and they are certainly an imperfect source, but they possibly indicate that people were living longer. This would have had consequences not only for overall population in a town like Romsey but would have had important sociological effects on factors like family structure, with the increasing frequency of three generation units, and on poverty and welfare within the community.<sup>1</sup>

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1. see also p. 529.



SECTION THREE : PARTICULAR FACTORS INFLUENCING THE  
DEVELOPMENT OF POPULATION

1. Disease and Famine
2. Migration of Population
3. Family Structure.

Part One : Disease and Famine

Diseases of various kinds were a constant threat to early modern society and were one of the most important determinants of population development. It is impossible to comprehend the demographic history of any community, rural or urban, without some attempt to chronicle the ravages of disease. Only after 1538 can such a task be realistically undertaken, following the institution of parochial registration of births, deaths and marriages. Whatever the deficiencies of these sources, and acknowledging their infrequent survival from this early stage of development, parish registers offer the first real opportunity to follow the course of disease with any detail and to study the effects on particular communities.<sup>1</sup>

### The Mid-Tudor Period

Before 1538 little can be said for certain about the Hampshire population. There were deaths from plague on board one of the Venetian galleys in Southampton at the end of March 1519 and the infection may have been carried ashore and contributed to a severe epidemic in the Thames valley during the following year. The same disease was apparently rife in Portsmouth in the summer of 1538 when it raged among the dockyard workmen for about six weeks until the end of September.<sup>2</sup> It is also known that there was an outbreak of sweating sickness in Basingstoke in 1521.<sup>3</sup> However, these are isolated references and a more comprehensive study of mortality in Hampshire can only begin with the advent of parish registers.

The first full year of records, 1539, was apparently a healthy one and the few Hampshire registers which begin at this time do not indicate anything to the contrary. The first obvious upsurge in burials related to 1540 in the rural parish of King's Worthy. A chronicler for this year wrote of "laskes and hott agues", which

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1. This section will deal primarily with the course of disease in the towns. However, similar evidence has been accumulated for almost every parish in the county some of which is presented for comparative purposes in the form of mortality indices in Appendix IV.
  2. J.F.D. Shrewsbury, A History of Bubonic Plague in the British Isles, (Cambridge, 1970), pp. 171-2.
  3. F.J. Baigent and J.E. Millard, Basingstoke, op.cit., p. 325.



Creighton equated with dysentery, while Shrewsbury proposed that cholera and typhoid fever may have been to blame. Stow called it simply "the bloody flux".<sup>1</sup> In King's Worthy there were twenty-six burials in 1540, five or six times the annual average for the following decade, with a peak of ten in the month of September and a clear concentration of fatalities within certain families, three Plats, three Plitons and three Erles appearing among the casualties. The only other parish in Hampshire to show high mortality was South Warnborough, a small rural parish towards the north of the county. It would seem therefore that the disease was concentrated in the north of the county and that it was predominantly rural in character for neither of the two northern market towns of Odiham and Kingsclere seem to have been affected. Further south, the parish of St. Maurice Winchester had below average burials that year. This offers an indication, from the very start of the period, that disease was by no means the preserve of the towns in early modern Hampshire.

The early 1540s were generally healthy, helped by good harvests especially in the west of England which enjoyed an abundant crop in 1542. However 1543 witnessed plague in several areas of the nation. Winchester seems to have suffered, with twenty-four burials in St. Maurice's, more than the previous four years put together and the high mortality was maintained throughout the second half of 1543 and into 1544 when there were fifteen burials between September and November. By contrast, in the Hampshire countryside, though there are instances of abnormally high numbers dying, plague was probably not the cause and the two market towns of Odiham and Kingsclere again escaped the worst effects of any epidemic disease.

1545 was free from heavy mortality for most of the county and Winchester, afflicted for the two previous years seems to have been

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1. C. Creighton, A History of Epidemics in Britain from AD664 to the Extinction of Plague, (Cambridge 1891), p. 302; Shrewsbury, Bubonic Plague, op.cit., p. 173.

clear from disease. The south east of the county, around Portsmouth, was rather less fortunate and a letter written from the port in September told of infection among the fleet guarding the Channel. Thirty-four boats were named, eleven of which were said to have plague on board and 903 sailors had been removed with the disease. Soldiers in the port were also said to be "full of the marks" of the plague.<sup>1</sup> Inevitably the outbreak was not confined to the dockyard. Soberton and Chalton both show signs of infection while the badly decayed Farlington register may also indicate an above average number of burials in 1545. In these circumstances it is likely that small towns in the region, like Fareham and Havant, experienced some level of infection. The disease certainly lingered through the following winter and at Soberton four individuals are specifically noted as dying "in the pestilence".

There are no signs of the plague reasserting itself in the ensuing summer outside the larger towns. In April 1546 plague may well have been responsible for a death on board a Venetian ship in Portsmouth and a similar fatality in Southampton.<sup>2</sup> Soldiers and sailors were a notorious medium by which the disease could spread and infection in these ports was always likely to be conveyed to other parishes in south and south east Hampshire. Yet elsewhere 1546 seems to have been surprisingly healthy especially considering that the harvest of 1545 had been bad with prices of grain rising to hitherto unprecedented levels. Certainly any food crisis in 1545-6 is not reflected by the burial registers of other northern parishes and towns like Winchester, Odiham and Kingsclere were similarly unaffected. By the end of 1546 sickness had eased even in the south east and the late 1540s were very healthy throughout Hampshire as a whole. The plague of 1546-7, which was

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1. L.P. Hen. VIII, xx, (2), 346.

2. Creighton, Epidemics, op.cit., p. 303; APC, 1542-7, p. 397.

very severe in Devon and Cornwall, apparently made very little impact on the county. All three towns with registers at this period confirm that the closing years of the decade saw mostly below average burials and no mortality crisis of any kind, reflecting both the national outlook and the abundant harvests of 1546-8.

Sweating sickness had first arrived in England in 1485 and was probably a particularly virulent form of influenza. Also known as "Stop Gallant", "Stoupe Knave" or "Know thy Master" because of its fatalities among the young wealthy notables in society, it could kill within a few hours. Further outbreaks had occurred in 1508, 1517 and 1528 before the fifth and final epidemic occurred in 1551 when its severity was magnified by a poor harvest in 1549 followed by another bad crop in 1550. Although the disease clearly struck in Dorset, its effects are reflected very poorly, if at all, in Hampshire. Ten parishes with registers covering this year show no marked increase in burials and this includes the market town of Kingsclere. Even Winchester does not seem to have been affected for St. Maurice's had just fifteen burials in 1551, just fractionally above the average for the five preceding years. In two other parishes, the rural parish of Eling and the small town of Odiham, there are unfortunate gaps in the registrations for this year, and while this may indicate the onset of crisis mortality, there is no other supporting evidence for such a conclusion. Only two country parishes reveal a clear increase of burials - Froxfield in the east of the county recorded nine deaths compared with a usual rate of about four per year, while at Goodworth Clatford in the west there were seven burials, five of them in June, July and August, when the disease was at its worst elsewhere. Yet even these two hamlets do not offer conclusive evidence of the sweating sickness and no Hampshire record refers specifically to the disease by name. This last epidemic of the dreaded sweating sickness may have been broadly nationwide in its impact, but for the people of Hampshire, whether they lived in towns

or the countryside, the consequences seem to have been very slight or even non-existent.

Hoskins referred to the 1550s as "an unhealthy decade all over the country".<sup>1</sup> In fact for Hampshire the good fortune of 1551 was maintained and the early and middle years of the decade were noticeably free from any excessively high mortality with no signs of anything more than local sickness before the epidemics of 1557-9. These good years were despite the poor harvests of the early 1550s and seem to have been shared by communities of all sorts over the whole county. Certainly the towns of Kingsclere, Odiham and Winchester were comparatively free from disease for long spells. Through almost twenty years from the start of registration in 1538 these communities had been spared any severe or prolonged attack on their inhabitants and population would have increased as a result. The course of disease history therefore supports the contention that these small towns were able to successfully expand in size during the second quarter of the sixteenth century, as has been proposed from the study of population estimates based on chantry certificates, and well ahead of the demographic revival for some larger towns.<sup>2</sup>

#### The Epidemics of 1557-59 and 1563-64

The early 1550s had seen poor harvests but those of 1555-6 were disastrous especially in the west country, the only time between 1465 and 1634 when prices were more than 75% above the average for two consecutive years.<sup>3</sup> Although this period of dearth was followed in 1557 by a good harvest and then by two average crops during which time prices fell steadily, the consequent malnutrition must have contributed to the mortality of the great influenza epidemic which swept Europe in 1557-9. As far as Hampshire

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1. W.G. Hoskins, "Epidemics in Tudor Devon", in Old Devon, (Newton Abbot, 1966), p. 143.
  2. see p. 170.
  3. C.J. Harrison, "Grain price and analysis and harvest qualities, 1465-1634", Agricultural History Review, XIX, (1971), pp. 135-55.

was concerned twenty-two registers have been examined for these years and just four show no apparent sign of the sickness (Figure 3/1/1). Clearly the north, south and west of the county were very severely affected and the only parishes to escape were a few small rural hamlets in the centre and east. Although no records survive for the southwest of Hampshire it may be concluded that the influenza epidemics of 1557-9 affected a higher proportion of parishes than any other disease in the period under consideration. The sickness was devastating in town and country alike and extremely few, very lucky, parishes were not visited. Fisher's work on the outbreak uses wills to reveal something of the mortality and although the Winchester wills are difficult to quantify and did not figure in his study, it is an outstanding impression that the numbers of probate documents extant from these years are well above average.<sup>1</sup>

Most parts of the county were first affected in 1557. The towns of Hampshire certainly witnessed higher than average mortality with St. Maurice's Winchester recording sixteen burials between June and September, well above normal and almost three quarters of the total for the year. At Kingsclere deaths were beginning to creep ominously upwards at the end of the year with five burials in October and eight in November. In these early stages, however, the influenza seems to have been patchy in its coverage for some rural parishes later to succumb, such as Over Wallop and King's Worthy, apparently saw nothing of the disease in 1557. The following year, 1558, witnessed the influenza at its worst, although the extent of the disease in the towns is hard to judge. Curiously the St. Maurice's register in Winchester, although it reveals burials above the norm, does not show mortality on the same scale as elsewhere. Significantly the registration at St. Michael's Southampton comes to a halt in these years,

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1. F.J. Fisher, "Influenza and inflation in Tudor England", Economic History Review, Second series, XVIII, (1965), pp. 120-9.

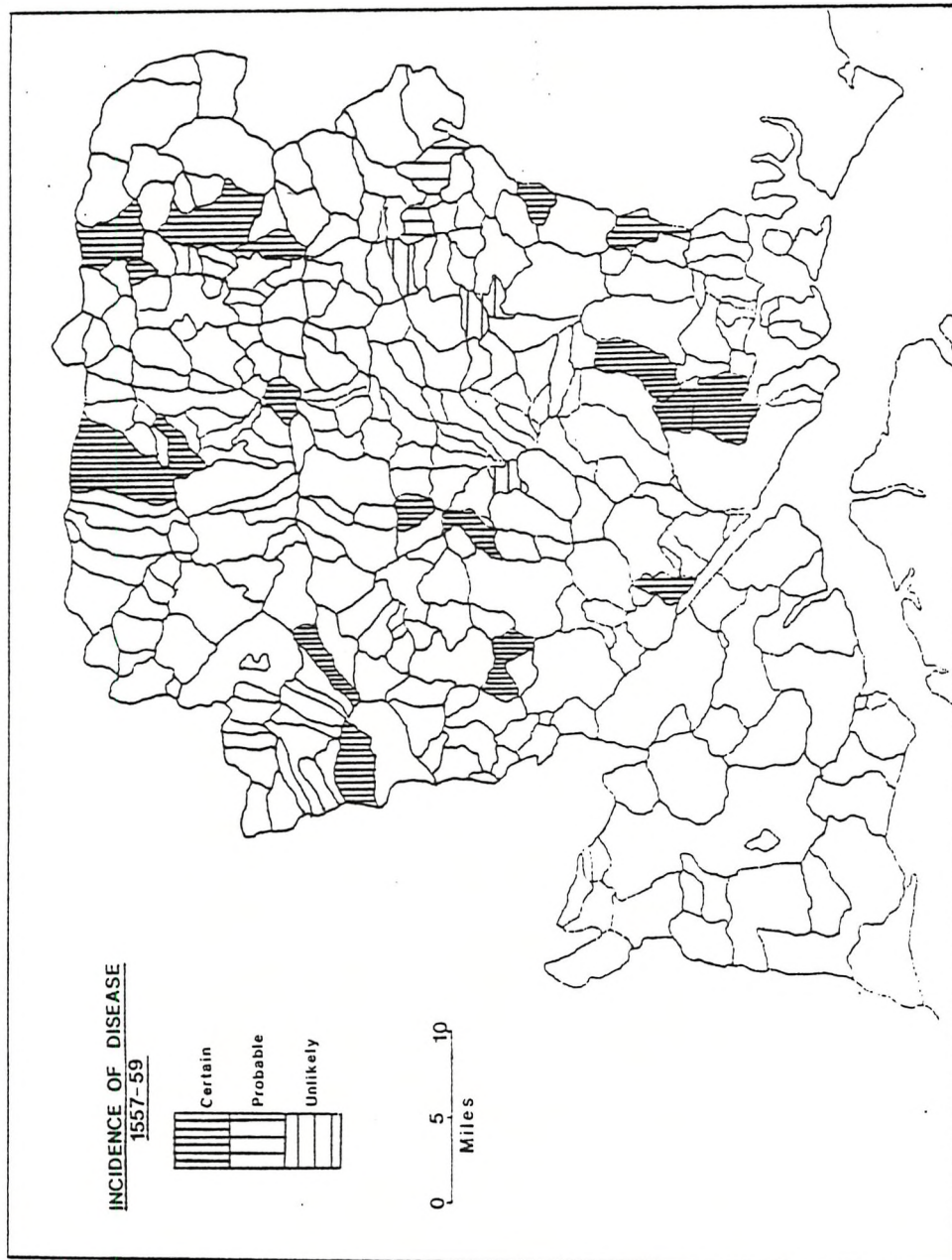


Figure 3/1/1

indicative of the grave situation in the port. Indeed, on 6 September 1558 Lord St. John, Governor of the Isle of Wight, wrote to the Queen that the sickness affected more than half the people in Southampton, Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight.<sup>1</sup> The registers of Fareham and Petersfield both commence during the epidemic. Fareham seems to have been struck in the spring of 1558 when burials were above average from April to June, but the disease apparently subsided in the summer and autumn and the town seems to have missed the worst effects of the disease. Petersfield was rather less fortunate and throughout the second half of 1558 burials were well above average. Thirteen were buried in August, ten in September and twelve in October, the worst totals recorded for these months in the sixteenth century excluding only 1563. The disease continued to be active in 1559 and in some places only reached its peak that year. Neither the registers of St. Michael's Southampton nor St. Maurice's Winchester show any signs of continuing influenza in 1559 or any other kind of disease, but it would be foolish to assume that both towns had recovered by this time especially as the experience elsewhere was often quite the reverse. At Odiham the disease reached its maximum in 1559 and in Petersfield the mortality was heavy throughout the winter of 1558-9 and only in May and June did the burial figures return to anything like normal.

The influenza can best be tracked in Kingsclere where the registration is complete throughout the period. After high mortality at the end of 1557 the disease eased its grip on the parish in the winter and spring of 1558 before returning with renewed vigour in the summer and autumn. Between 5 August and 30 December 48 people were buried and there were 63 deaths in the whole year compared with an annual average from 1556 of about 24. Only three burials are specifically described as being

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1. CSPD, 1547-80, p. 31.

of "the swett" but the prevalence of the influenza in the community is beyond dispute. From November 1557 until January 1559, 85 burials are recorded most of which were probably from the disease which in a community of perhaps about 800 people represented a rate for the town and its parish of slightly more than one in ten. Thirty-six were women and forty-nine were men which indicates a rather greater prevalence of influenza among males, a tentative conclusion which finds some support in the less well documented experience of Petersfield.

As the influenza waned some areas of England were racked by plague but there are no signs of the epidemic entering Hampshire. However, the early 1560s saw several poor harvests reaching a dearth in the West Country by 1563. The price of hay acquired by Winchester College reached 16s per load in 1563, the highest figure in the sixteenth century before the crises of the 1590s and the cost of peas rose well above average.<sup>1</sup> Hampshire clearly suffered in these years and the population must have been weakened prior to the onset of the plague epidemic of 1563. This was probably the most severe national outburst of the disease in the sixteenth century and as far as Hampshire was concerned almost every corner of the county was afflicted to some degree (Figure 3/1/2). However, as was characteristic of bubonic plague, it was always possible for a country parish to escape whilst most of its neighbours were afflicted, a pattern probably caused by the reluctance of plague-carrying rats to move any distance across open ground. This feature is clear in the 1563 outbreak, for in the north west Quarley managed to survive and, amazingly, in the south east, in the hinterland of Portsmouth where the plague was particularly well entrenched and especially severe, the rural parish of Chalton had just three burials in 1563 and six

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1. W. Beveridge, Prices and Wages in England from the Twelfth to the Nineteenth Century: Vol. I, Price Tables - Mercantile Era, (London, 1939), pp. 5-90.



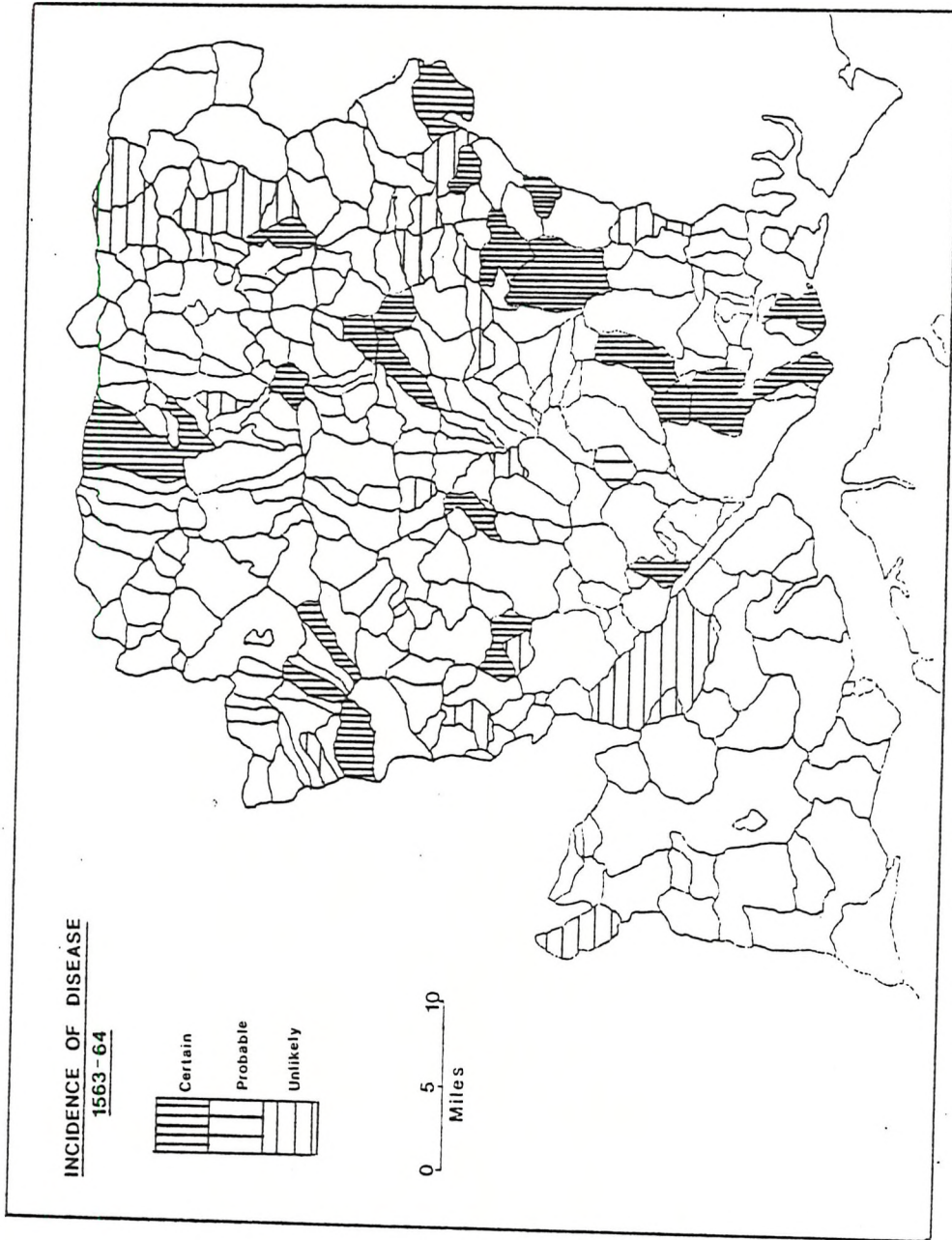


Figure 3/1/2

in 1564. The average for the 1560s as a whole was five per annum and, with no apparent break in registration, it is clear that the parish survived 1563-64 without a visitation of the plague.

In August 1563 the disease began to take hold in Southampton. At St. Michael's 8 burials were registered followed by 17 in September, 22 in October, 14 in November and 18 in December. The total for 1563 was 87 more than the years 1565-74 put together and compared with an annual average of 14 over the years 1560-62. Abnormally high mortality continued through the winter of 1564 with a further 39 burials between January and May suggesting either that many more died from complications of plague or that some other feverous disease was present, multiplying the mortality after the initial bubonic infection had passed (an indication of this epidemiological analysis comes from Soberton where several children died of "the houpying cough"). In Winchester the surviving evidence offers few clues about the plague. The book of St. Bartholomew Hyde, Winchester Soke, shows burials above the norm for both 1563 and 1564 but not on any dramatic scale, while the register of St. Maurice's shows fourteen burials in 1563, the same as 1562 and two less than 1560. Whilst there is a small bulge in April 1564 the total for that year is only nineteen, just marginally above average. That the plague was in the city is, however, beyond doubt for in 1563 the fair held on St. Edward's Day "was suppressed for peryl of the plage" and in April 1564 the supper after the Nativity of St. John the Baptist was cancelled "for avoyding the danger of the plage now raging".<sup>1</sup> If Winchester was affected only mildly in 1563-4 the same cannot be said of the towns of south east Hampshire where the plague was at its worst. The earliest surviving parish register for Portsmouth dates from 1653 but an extract survives from an earlier book dealing specifically

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1. C. Bailey, Transcripts from the Municipal Archives of Winchester, (London, 1856), p. 100.

with the plague of 1563, beginning in March and ending in September.<sup>1</sup> Burials began to rise in June and there were 43 deaths in July, 97 died in August and 82 were buried in September. The extract ends after 7 October but clearly the plague had not abated by that time. It is interesting to note how many of the casualties came from outside the town, not surprising for a port but a likely explanation of how the infection first reached Portsmouth. A Londoner, Hew Pope, was buried on 12 July, about the same time as the disease was beginning to take off in the capital, and subsequently one Edward Simons of Stepney was buried in the town. Men from Sussex, which fared very badly in the epidemic, were also among those buried in Portsmouth.

The course of the plague beyond October 1563 cannot be traced in Portsmouth but in Fareham the situation is much clearer (Figure 3/1/3). The disease first struck in August 1563 when there were twenty burials. There were twenty-seven more in September and sixteen in October and the annual total of eighty-three, almost as many as the years 1564-69 put together was five times the annual average for the decade. The following year was very healthy and there are no signs of the plague lingering into a second year as it may have done in Southampton and Winchester. Alverstoke and Gosport were also very closely linked with Portsmouth and not surprisingly they suffered very badly. The 131 burials in 1563 was the highest total recorded before 1665-66. Like Portsmouth the peak was reached in August when sixty were buried, almost two each day on average, rather than at Fareham where the worst month was September. The Alverstoke registers indicate those casualties who were seamen of some kind and it is noticeable that eight of the fifteen burials in June and July, when the plague infection first took hold, were recorded as mariners or shipmasters. Thereafter the proportion of seamen

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1. R. East, Extracts from Records in the Possession of the Municipal Corporation of the Borough of Portsmouth, (Portsmouth, 1891), pp. 609-17.

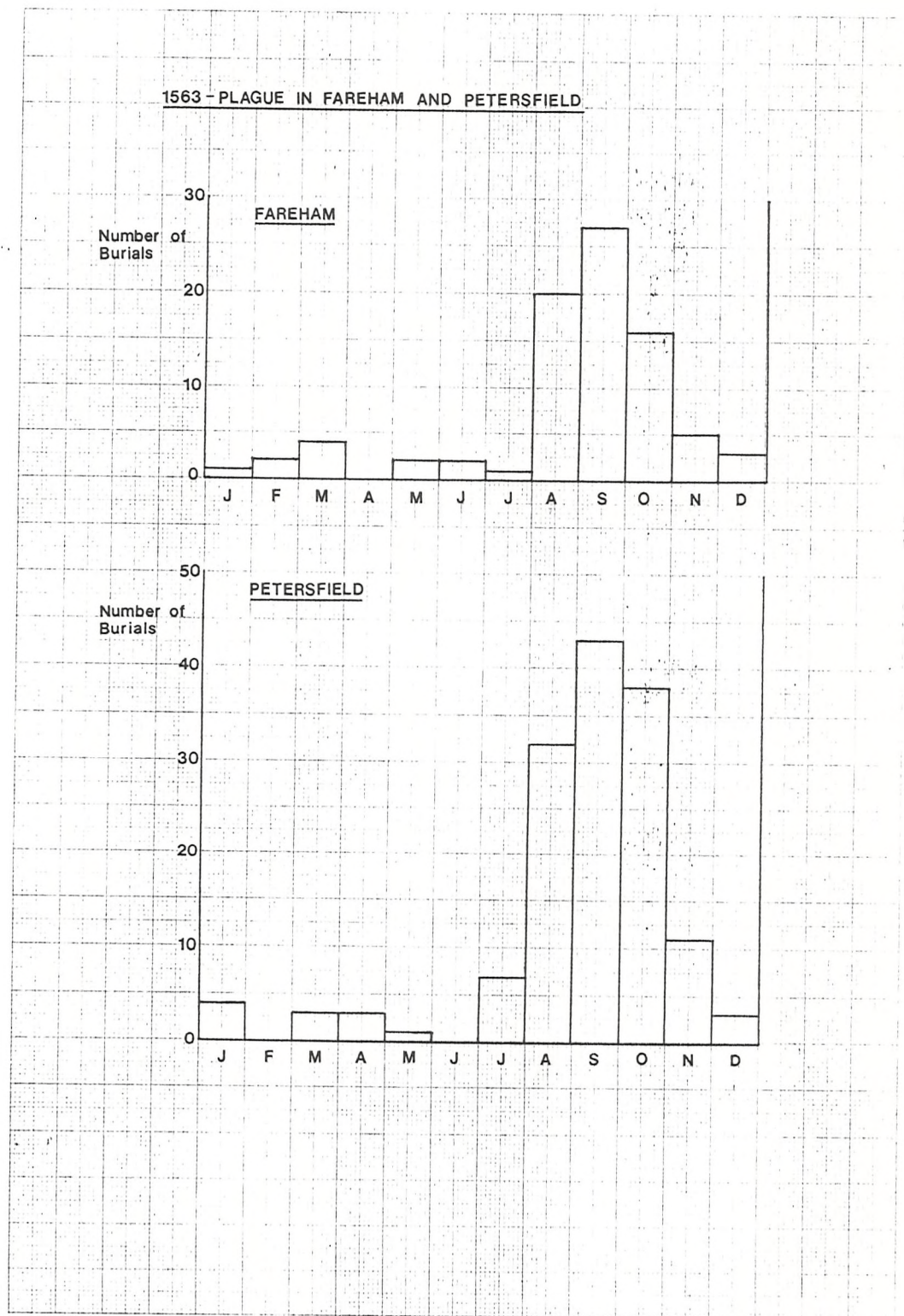


Figure 3/1/3

falls dramatically and only 15 of the next 101 deaths were so listed. This would suggest that it was in the homes of the seamen of Gosport that the plague first originated before spreading to the rest of the community and the same may well hold true for other maritime towns.

Of the other towns for which evidence survives only Odiham shows no signs of the plague. On the contrary, it recorded well below the average number of burials and was apparently the only urban community in the county to have positively escaped what was one of the most comprehensive epidemics to hit Hampshire. The other small town in the north, Kingsclere, was certainly hit by the plague although it came about some weeks after the market communities of the south and south-east. Although six people died in August and ten in September (six of them from one family - the Holdypps), the worst month was actually October when fourteen burials were recorded. Again, some epidemiological complexities are suggested by the lingering high mortality into December and January when eighteen burials were registered. The total number of deaths in 1563 was fifty-six, more than double the average for the rest of the decade which stood at about twenty. In Petersfield burials first began to rise in July but between 7 August and 30 November there were 124 burials and over the whole year 156 deaths were recorded compared with 30 in 1560, 29 in 1561 and just 12 in 1562 (Figure 3/1/3). Significantly, one of the first casualties was "a stranger that said he dwelled at the Three Cups in Bred Strete in London", an indication of how the disease may have entered the town. Three members of the Tribe family died within three days in August and whole families seem to have succumbed as the plague raged for about three months. Six Woodhatches died and four Turners were buried on one day towards the end of the epidemic. Over a hundred people must have died from the plague in Petersfield in 1563 and the indications from the poor registers are that at least the same number had perished five years earlier in the influenza epidemic. It would not be an

exaggeration to suggest that a third of the population of this small market town perished from disease in this short space of time.

Although the parish registers of Fareham and Petersfield begin in 1558, neither offer a complete coverage of the influenza epidemic. Therefore, in order to compare the effects of these two great diseases Kingsclere is again the best small town to study. Between August 1558 and January 1559 fifty-nine people were buried and between August 1563 and January 1564 fifty-six people were buried so that the overall effects were roughly the same although, even allowing for some demographic recovery in the intervening period, it is likely that the plague was proportionately more severe. However, as Table 3/1/1 shows, the family breakdown between the two diseases was very different with forty-four families suffering a death during the influenza epidemic compared with only thirty in the plague.

Kingsclere: Number of Burials per Family  
1558-9 and 1563-4

<u>Number of Burials</u>	<u>Number of Families</u>	
	<u>1558-9</u>	<u>1563-4</u>
1	34 (77.3%)	19 (63.3%)
2	7 (15.9%)	2 (6.7%)
3	3 (6.8%)	5 (16.7%)
4		2 (6.7%)
		2 (6.7%)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	44	30

Table 3/1/1



The contrast is explained by the much greater frequency of one-death families in the influenza epidemic when over three-quarters of families had a single fatality compared with just under two-thirds in the plague. In the epidemic of 1558-9 only three families had three or more burials compared with nine in 1563-64. Clearly the impact of the two diseases on the town was very different. Influenza was likely to have a much wider range of fatality and affected relatively more families, possibly explaining its prevalence among gentlemen, justices and men of worship, a fact upon which the contemporary Strype commented.<sup>1</sup> He reckoned that three out of four people had the sickness at some time and the Kingsclere evidence confirms that it was, indeed, a very broad-based disease but also one which rarely caused multiple deaths within a family. By contrast the bubonic plague fell upon a smaller number of families in the town but in two cases, the Holdypps and the Pettys, caused five burials within the one family. There was perhaps less chance of it striking a particular household but if it did then the effects could be even more catastrophic than those caused by influenza. What also emerges is that surprisingly few families suffered in both epidemics. In fact only six surnames appear in both the lists for 1558-9 and for 1563-4. Obviously in the meantime there would have been movement into and out of the parish as well as other mortalities but it is still a small figure and means that of sixty-eight families with casualties in either epidemic only 9% succumbed to both. It also shows that, taking the town and parish as a whole, very few families could have passed through these seven years without a casualty to either of what were probably the two worst nationwide epidemics of the sixteenth century.

#### Elizabethan Hampshire

The second half of the 1560s was apparently free from any large-scale mortality and the situation was enhanced by a succession

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1. F.J. Fisher, "Influenza and Inflation", op.cit., p. 126.

of good harvests from 1566 until 1572. All six towns for which records are available, Southampton, Winchester, Petersfield Fareham, Odiham and Kingsclere, show a remarkable uniformity in their freedom from disease. Only one year, 1566, offers any tangible signs of sickness in the county with abnormally high burials in rural Heckfield and Eversley, in the north-east of the county, which were possibly the outcome of some kind of winter fever. Moreover, the whole period from 1570 to 1590 was free from major epidemics in Hampshire and as the number of parish registers available for study grows it may be safely asserted that these decades were among the most healthy in the whole of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

This is not to say, however, that the county was free from any kind of sickness. 1570 saw plague in London but there are no signs of infection in any of the Hampshire towns with both Winchester and Southampton having particularly low mortality and the smaller market communities registering about average. By contrast 1571 began badly in the south-east. The winter and early spring saw high burials in Soberton, Wickham and Chalton and the town of Fareham recorded eight burials in February, well above the average for that month. All these Fareham deaths came from different families. The sickness of these months is best illustrated by the parish of Gosport and Alverstoke where mortality had been above average in November and December of 1570 and then increased considerably in early 1571. There were forty-six burials in total for 1571, the highest in the town between 1563 and 1628 and about double the annual average. Thirty-seven of these, or 80%, were between January and May reaching a peak with ten deaths in March and eleven in April. Positive identification of these winter diseases is always difficult. A mild form of influenza is possible and so are typhus or pneumonia. Certainly most of the parishes in the south east were affected and with both Gosport and Hayling Island experiencing abnormally high burials, it seems likely that the town of Portsmouth was struck, though without any register evidence the



extent of any such crisis mortality will never be known. Ringwood seems to have shared the high mortality of the south east. The register only begins in 1571 but it shows eight burials in January, eleven in February, twelve in March and eight in April before the disease began to abate in the late spring, and the annual total of seventy-three was more than double the average of the following decade.

Davies noted that the plague was raging at Southampton in 1573.<sup>1</sup> Crosses were painted on the doors of infected households, victims had to carry white rods in order "to knowe the syke from the whole" and the town employed six men and women as "keepers and bearers" of the sick people at one shilling per week. However, the St. Michael's register offers no clue to the extent of the plague. It records only six burials for the year, well below average, but significantly the record is blank from June until November. The Huguenot register has eleven burials for the year which was above average but the usually informative entries make no reference to plague. Perhaps the disease was in the town but it probably did not achieve any real severity and it may have been fear that prompted more action on the part of the authorities remembering the terrible epidemic ten years earlier. The measures that they took have left more record than have the burials which took place. Winchester does not seem to have been affected and none of the small market towns show any sign of plague in 1573.

Alverstoke and Gosport again suffered a bad winter in 1572-73 although not as bad as two years earlier. High burials in the months from January to April were to become a characteristic of the parish, perhaps indicative of various fevers and agues brought to the town by sailors. Like Portsmouth, Gosport would have been a very unhealthy town and both must have witnessed diseases like typhus striking their population almost every year.

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1. J.S. Davies, A History of Southampton, (Southampton, 1883), p. 480.

Despite the good harvests of the late 1570s, 1580 was probably the worst year in the county for some time. The years 1580-82 may be set alongside 1540 and 1557-59 as a period when various fevers and "hot agues", generally grouped under the generic title of "influenza", swept much of Hampshire. The south east around Portsmouth, which had always been especially vulnerable to such diseases, curiously seems to have escaped relatively lightly. Fareham, Hayling and even Gosport all had below average burials in these years while Wickham and Soberton show no signs of severe sickness. Ringwood in the west and Petersfield in the east both escaped and it was in the centre and north of the county that disease was most prevalent.

Romsey suffered badly and recorded 85 burials in 1580, the worst total since the register began in 1570 and surpassed only once in the next thirty years. It was more than double the annual average for the 1570s. Forty-five of these deaths occurred between January and May, which could also suggest typhus or some other winter sickness. Certainly there was no apparent peak in the disease (Figure 3/1/4). The mortality eased in the summer but returned again at the end of the year and a further twenty-three burials were registered between November and January 1580-81. Another town, Kingsclere, suffered similarly in 1580 experiencing a very bad spring during which the hitherto unprecedented total of fourteen burials was noted for April. It may or may not be significant that two of these fatalities were described as "poor" women, possibly indicating one social group within urban society that was especially at risk. Again the disease returned at the end of the year with thirteen burials in November and December. The annual total of forty-five represented a less drastic increase than at Romsey but it was still well above average.

The closing months of 1580 saw the fevers spread into some of the rural parishes which had escaped in the first half of the year. Eling parish, at the head of Southampton Water and a neighbour of

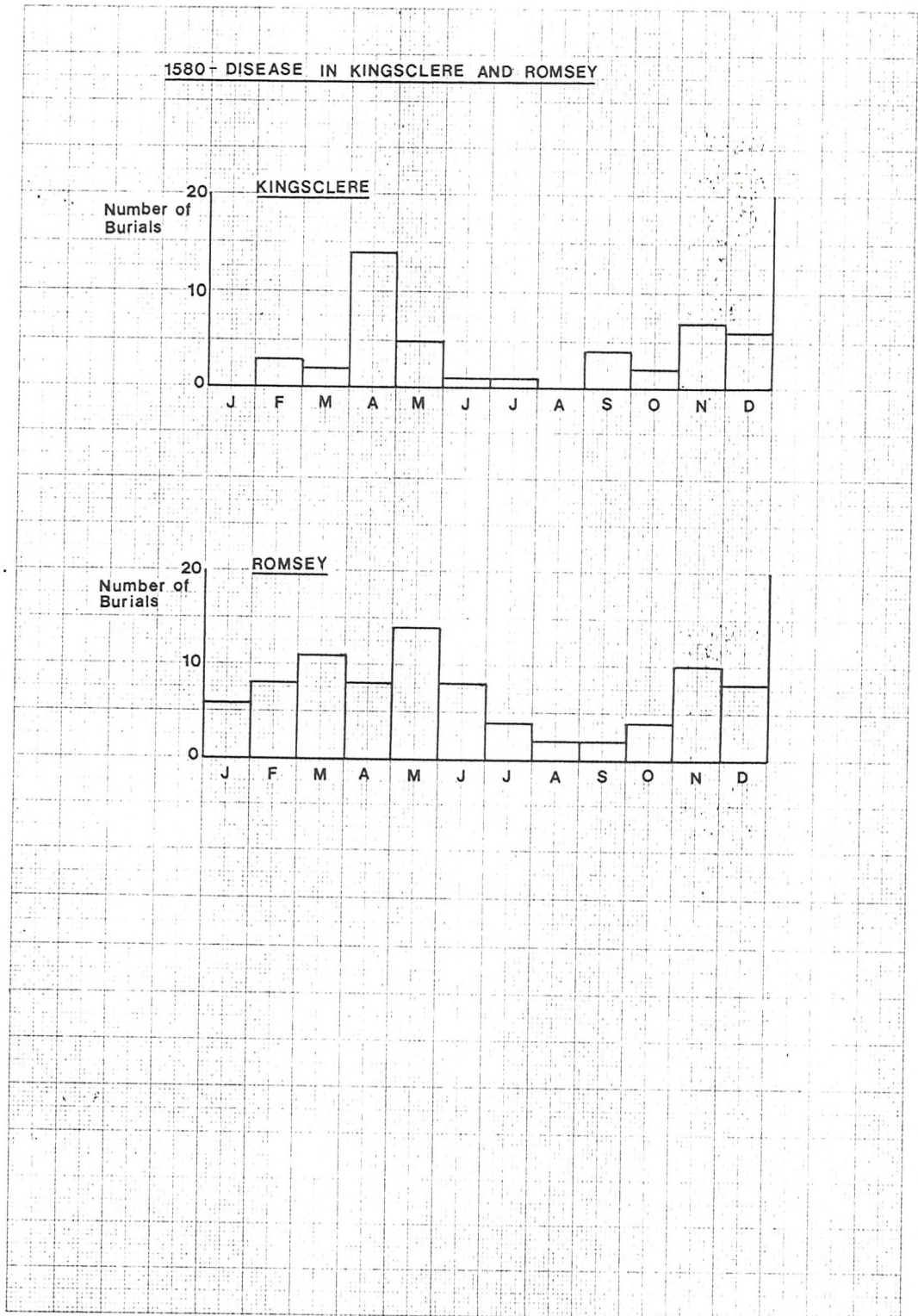


Figure 3/1/4

Romsey, suffered eighteen burials in November to January 1580-81, twelve of them in December, and the gap in the register thereafter is suggestive of further high mortality. Others to suffer included King's Somborne, like Romsey in the Test valley, Over Wallop in the north west and Greatham in the east which had the worst November and December in the history of the parish from 1562-1668. Again the fevers subsided in the summer and autumn and in most rural areas the influenza did not return in the winter of 1581-82. However, the towns of Kingsclere and Romsey experienced their third consecutive winter of high mortality and this time Odiham was also struck having remained immune in 1580 and 1581. In Romsey the disease returned in December 1581 when there were seven burials, and deaths remained above average until the following April although the effects were less severe than in the two previous winters. By contrast the spring of 1582 saw the influenza at its worst in Kingsclere. There were sixteen burials in April and seventeen in May. Certain households were especially badly hit like the Edwards family which lost three members and the Allens who lost four. Even worse affected was the family of Tristram Sparkman, a clothier in the town, who died in May along with four of his relatives and another had died earlier in April. Finally in the summer the fevers came to an end. They had been especially severe in two of the market towns and had flared briefly in several rural parishes. Yet other towns had experienced nothing upward in these years and certainly both Southampton and Winchester seem to have been unaffected.

The respite was actually shortlived. Plague, which had been relatively inactive since 1563, returned twenty years later, although its extent was very limited. In Southampton the Walloon register offers the only evidence for the plague. It broke out in April and the book records that by 12 September about 50 had died from the Walloon community (the actual figure was 47) and 400 in the rest of the town. The last death attributed to the plague was in February 1584 by which time there had been 71 Walloon

casualties. Assuming the same rate as earlier in the epidemic then the mortality for the rest of the town may have been about 570, giving about 640 casualties in total. This represented about 15% of the population of the town based on an estimate for 1596.<sup>1</sup> Clearly, however, there were diseases other than bubonic plague responsible for the longevity of the sickness through the winter of 1583-84. Strangely, only one other town, Romsey, is known to have suffered. There are no traces of plague in the registers of St. Bartholomew Hyde, Winchester or St. Maurice's Winchester, although the latter has an ominously long gap in the burials through the summer months, but the plague was certainly in the city for the St. John's supper was cancelled and a watch set at the time of the Fair.<sup>2</sup> During this particular outbreak the city built its first pesthouse and orders were issued to prevent the spread of infection. As at Southampton the sickness continued into 1584 when burials in St. Maurice's were abnormally high throughout the winter and spring.

The market town of Romsey had barely recovered from the high mortality of 1580-82 when the plague struck in 1583. Above average burials in March and April suggest that some kind of fever was in the town before the bubonic infection which maintained a high level of mortality throughout the customary plague months of June to October. Again sickness lingered on through the winter of 1583-84 finally disappearing at the end of March. Seventy-nine people died in Romsey during 1583, six fewer than 1580, but still about double the usual number.

The plague of 1583 was therefore centred on the main centres of population in the lower Test and Itchen valleys towards the west of the county. Other towns seem to have escaped and even the hinterland of Portsmouth, including Gosport and Fareham, reveals no abnormal mortality. Once the plague and its associated diseases had subsided the rest of 1584 was relatively healthy. Only

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1. T.B. James, thesis, op.cit., p. 48.

2. C. Bailey, Transcripts, op.cit., pp. 104-7.

Petersfield, with a sudden grouping of sixteen burials in July before returning to normal in August, offers any indication of sickness. Otherwise, helped by three good harvests from 1582-84 the county was generally free from disease for the next few years.

The years 1586-87 were ones of severe plague elsewhere in England but the urban communities of Hampshire show no true signs of the disease. Only the northern market town of Odiham may have been affected in 1587 when forty-five burials were recorded, although this figure is still less than the number of baptisms for that year. Nor is the very high mortality at nearby Heckfield a confirmation of plague for of the thirty-two burials recorded in 1587, twenty-six were in the first half of the year indicative of typhus or smallpox rather than plague. Other northern towns like Kingsclere and Andover were unaffected. However, the bubonic plague can be positively identified in and around Romsey which seems to have been a particularly unhealthy town during the whole of the 1580s. Nearby King's Somborne shows some signs of the disease and at Wellow the infection is clear for sixteen burials were recorded in 1583, twelve of these were between July and October and the peak was reached in August when there were five registered, the highest for that month recorded in the years 1570-1668. In Romsey itself the plague possibly began in May when there were seven burials and it was certainly rife by July and August. Eleven deaths were noted in September and sixteen more in October before the disease subsided in November and December, this time without any of the complications which had extended its duration in 1583.

The earlier part of 1588 witnessed a return of the fevers and agues to many parts of the county. Most of the towns escaped but Odiham suffered and Ringwood was certainly affected. There were fifty-two burials in Ringwood, thirty-two of them (61%) in the first five months and on the other side of the New Forest the large rural parish of Eling saw a similar pattern with thirty-seven burials recorded, twenty-eight of them (76%) between January and May. Southampton may have been infected for the Walloon record, the only

register extant for these years, shows several fatalities in the early part of the year. Winchester was definitely hit by the agues which were prevalent at this time for the St. Maurice register shows twenty-two burials in the year, over half of them in the winter and early spring. Among the many rural parishes hit in early 1588 were Over Wallop and Dummer. In this last parish Benjamin Musgrave was married at the end of January and buried on 2 February "being very sick" and the same description was applied to a young unknown vagrant. These winter and spring fevers were much less severe in their total mortality than dramatic diseases like the plague, but they could be very extensive in their geographical coverage and they were certainly prevalent in both the urban and rural parishes of Elizabethan Hampshire.

Sickness continued well into the early months of 1589 when there was above average mortality in Romsey, Odiham and Kingsclere as well as several rural parishes including Hayling and Soberton in the south east, Heckfield in the north and Dummer in the centre. Widespread and persistent though they were, their effects were very mild compared with more dramatic infections and they could have had only marginal consequences for the long term demographic development of any community. The 1580s, like the 1570s, had been dogged by these minor ailments but saw none of the great epidemics which had swept the county in 1557-59 and 1563-64 and for this reason these decades must be seen as very healthy. Natural demographic expansion could progress almost unhampered. Very few places ever had burials significantly above average and crisis mortality levels were rarely reached, something which applied to large and small towns just as much as the countryside around them.

#### The Crisis Years of the 1590s

The harvest of 1589 had been average and that of 1590 was similar, followed by a good yield in 1591. Helped by falling grain prices the relative freedom from sickness that had characterised the 1570s and 1580s persisted at the beginning of the

new decade. However, the start of 1591 was much less healthy in many parts of Hampshire. In St. Michael's Southampton forty-four burials were recorded for the year, twenty-eight (64%) of them between January and May, signifying influenza or one of its related, diverse agues and fevers. Nine deaths were recorded for April, the equal highest total for that month recorded since the start of the register in 1552, matched only in 1564. These diseases seem to have covered much of southern Hampshire especially at nearby Eling where mortality was high throughout the year but peaked in April with twelve deaths. Towards the south east Titchfield and Soberton show a rather different picture for, like Gosport, their burials were well above average throughout the year and, in fact, the worst months were August and September. In these places the sickness appears to have been effective for an abnormally long time and persisted throughout the summer and autumn possibly indicating a minor bubonic infection alongside the influenza. The city of Winchester also shows this confused pattern of high mortality. St. Maurice's recorded thirty-three deaths in 1591, over double the annual average, and the spring and late summer stand out as the worst parts of the year. Clearly it was a very sickly year and several rural parishes towards the centre of the county were also affected such as Old Alresford, East Titherly, Medstead and Selborne. However, the infections do not seem to have penetrated the north of the county. Towns like Andover, Odiham and Kingsclere were free from illness and the countryside appears to have been similarly spared the assorted fevers which covered much of the south and south east of Hampshire.

In Winchester this high mortality lingered on into early 1592 with eight burials in January at St. Maurice's, the worst ever for that month. Thirty burials were recorded for the whole year, well above average and over half of them between January and April. Romsey also had a very bad start to the year with fourteen burials in January and a further eight in February. However the worst of these fevers, possibly supplemented by an infection such as typhus,



came in the winter of 1592-93. Several of the Hampshire towns were sorely affected. Winchester saw less burials than in the previous winter but there was clearly much sickness remaining in the city and soke. Southampton also had a bad period although St. Michael's had less burials than in 1590-91 and the Walloon register does not show high mortality within the community. It was therefore some of the market towns which bore the brunt of the disease-ridden winter and spring. April and May 1593 were bad in Fareham and three members of the Bull family died within a fortnight. At Romsey October to December 1592 had seen above average mortality and the numbers of burials worsened as the winter continued with eleven in January and twelve in March.

However, probably the worst affected town was Ringwood. Again the disease had begun in October or November and reached a peak in February when there were twenty burials. Ninety-seven deaths were registered in 1593, seventy-five of them (77%) between January and May. Based on the estimate of population from 1603, which puts Ringwood's size at about 1000, then, if the closing months of 1592 are taken into account, about one in ten of the inhabitants died in this bout of sickness. Clearly a 10% death rate was a severe blow to the growth of the town and represented a mortality crisis for the town on a similar scale to that which would be associated with plague. Positive identification of the sickness that afflicted the town is impossible but influenza, typhus or smallpox are all possible and the prevalence of these and associated diseases around this time was clearly responsible for the deceleration in urban demographic expansion at the end of the sixteenth century. On an individual level, certain families in particular suffered badly, as with George Fuller, his wife Alice and children Grace and John who were all buried in January 1593, but such concentration of deaths was unusual and a fairly widespread degree of infection within the population seems to have been achieved.

Thus towns like Romsey, Ringwood and Fareham had begun to observe strain on their population at the beginning of the 1590s, a process which had begun before the terrible harvests later in the decade. However, the effects of the high winter mortality were hardly felt at all north of Winchester in either the countryside or the towns (Figure 3/1/5). Kingsclere and Odiham both had about average deaths for the year 1593 and Andover actually had less than the normal number of burials. Rarely had there been such a clear contrast within the county with almost the whole of the north, the chalk downlands and the Thames basin in the north east clear of these assorted diseases which seemed to thrive in the more densely populated lowland areas. The whole of the lower Test valley was affected, much of the Itchen and Avon valleys and the south east coastal zone from Southampton to Portsmouth.

For much of England 1593 was notable as a severe plague year but as far as Hampshire was concerned the effects seem to have been very restricted and much less extensive than the sickness of the preceding winter. Perhaps the most startling case of bubonic plague was in a rural parish, Rockbourne, on the Wiltshire and Dorset border. In the 1580s, including the abnormally high year of 1587, burials had averaged exactly five each year, but in 1593 "a great plage" struck the parish beginning in May when four died, continuing in June when eight were buried and reaching a climax in July when thirty people succumbed. On one day, 24 July, four bodies were buried, more than in some whole years in the 1580s and for a time in late July burials were running at two per day. Several families suffered particularly badly, notably the Colbournes with five burials and the Henstridges with four. The disease subsided in August with five casualties including the wife and two sons of William Grigge. Fifty-three people died in the whole year, more than the rest of the decade put together and ten times the average for the ten years after the disease.

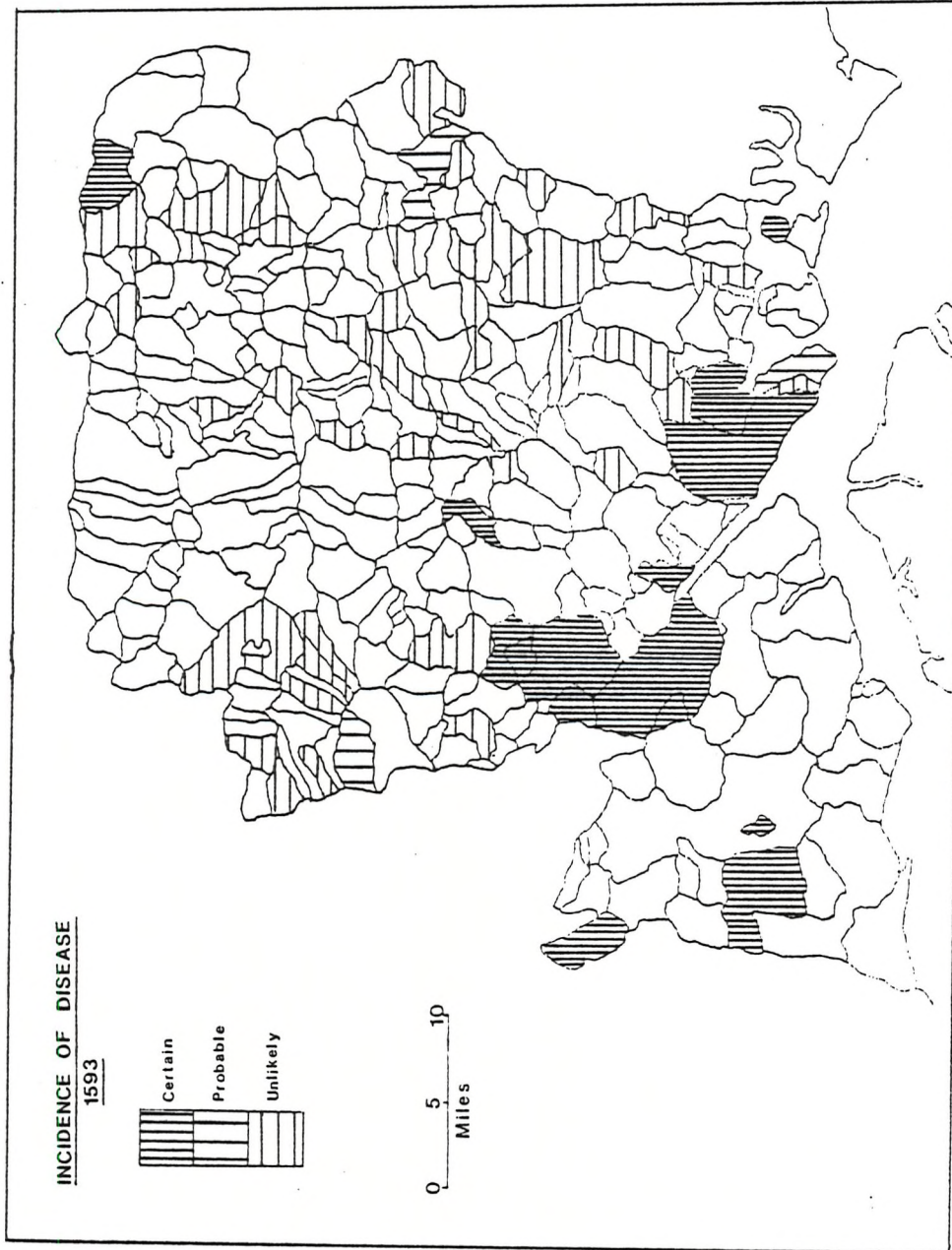


Figure 3/1/5

With this exception the plague seems to have been confined to three towns. The influenzas of the spring seem to have turned into a bubonic attack in the summer at Southampton where the St. Michael's register shows clear family clustering of burials in September. However, the trend is by no means clear and the Walloon register shows nothing out of the ordinary. The same happened at Romsey where there was high mortality in June and September although the lull in July and August and the notable absence of any clear multiple-death families indicates that the plague was neither severe nor continuous in its effects. At Winchester the plague made no impact at all in the parish registers but there was an immense fear of the disease in the city. A guard was put on all the city gates and traders were forbidden "to receive anie wares from London until Michaelmas next nor anie wares of carriers, on pain of imprisonment and having their shoppes closed". The October fair went ahead although a strict guard was to be imposed so that only those from uninfected areas entered the city and among the places said to be infected was the town of Alton. In December 1593 the Corporation built a house for infected people and several houses were shut up but, nevertheless, there are no signs of very high mortality and, like Southampton and Romsey, the city escaped the worst effects of the plague.<sup>1</sup> The reference to Alton is especially interesting for nothing more can be ascertained about the plague in that town. Farnham, also on the London road, was infected and it may be supposed that Alresford, on the same route, was also affected. However, several other market towns like Odiham and Petersfield certainly had no plague in 1593 and, in general, the county escaped unscathed, including the disease-ridden south east where no signs of infection can be found in towns like Fareham and Gosport.

1594 and 1595 were much better years. Burials remained abnormally high in Southampton, probably through lingering plague and

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1. A.B. Rosen, thesis, op.cit., p. 202.

influenza infections, but in all the other towns they returned to normal and there are few signs even of the winter and spring fevers which tormented Elizabethan Hampshire. However, the harvest of both years were deficient and a dearth followed in 1596-97, the worst run of consecutive substandard harvests in the whole century. Prices soared and the general average of wheat which in 1592 had been 17-52 shillings per quarter reached 50-70 shillings in 1596. Clearly the terrible harvests lay at the root of the high mortality of the late 1590s for there are few signs of plague in these years. Malnutrition made the population vulnerable to all manner of maladies. 1597 was a season of influenza in Italy and elsewhere in Europe and quite likely some of its strains penetrated England. However, the most important killer in these years would have been the "bloody flux" or dysentery, identified by name in some parts of the country and most certainly active in Hampshire in the 1590s. It was the most potent of a wide range of "famine fevers" which preyed on the weakened population at this time.

Mortality during the subsistence crisis of 1596-98 was heavy throughout Hampshire (Figure 3/1/6). The winter and spring of 1595-96 saw above average numbers of burials in some rural southern parishes like Wellow and Titchfield where there were ten burials in February 1596. Some of the towns were also beginning to suffer. At St. Michael's Southampton mortality had been high throughout 1595 and continued above normal through the subsequent winter while at St. Maurice's Winchester the low figures for 1594 and most of 1595 began to give way to increased deaths in October and continued to rise through the winter. However, it was at Romsey and Ringwood that the first effects of the bad harvests make their most telling impact. In Ringwood the early months of 1596 were all unhealthy and by springtime sickness had clearly taken a hold in the towns with eleven fatalities recorded for May. Romsey fared even worse with twenty-seven burials between December and

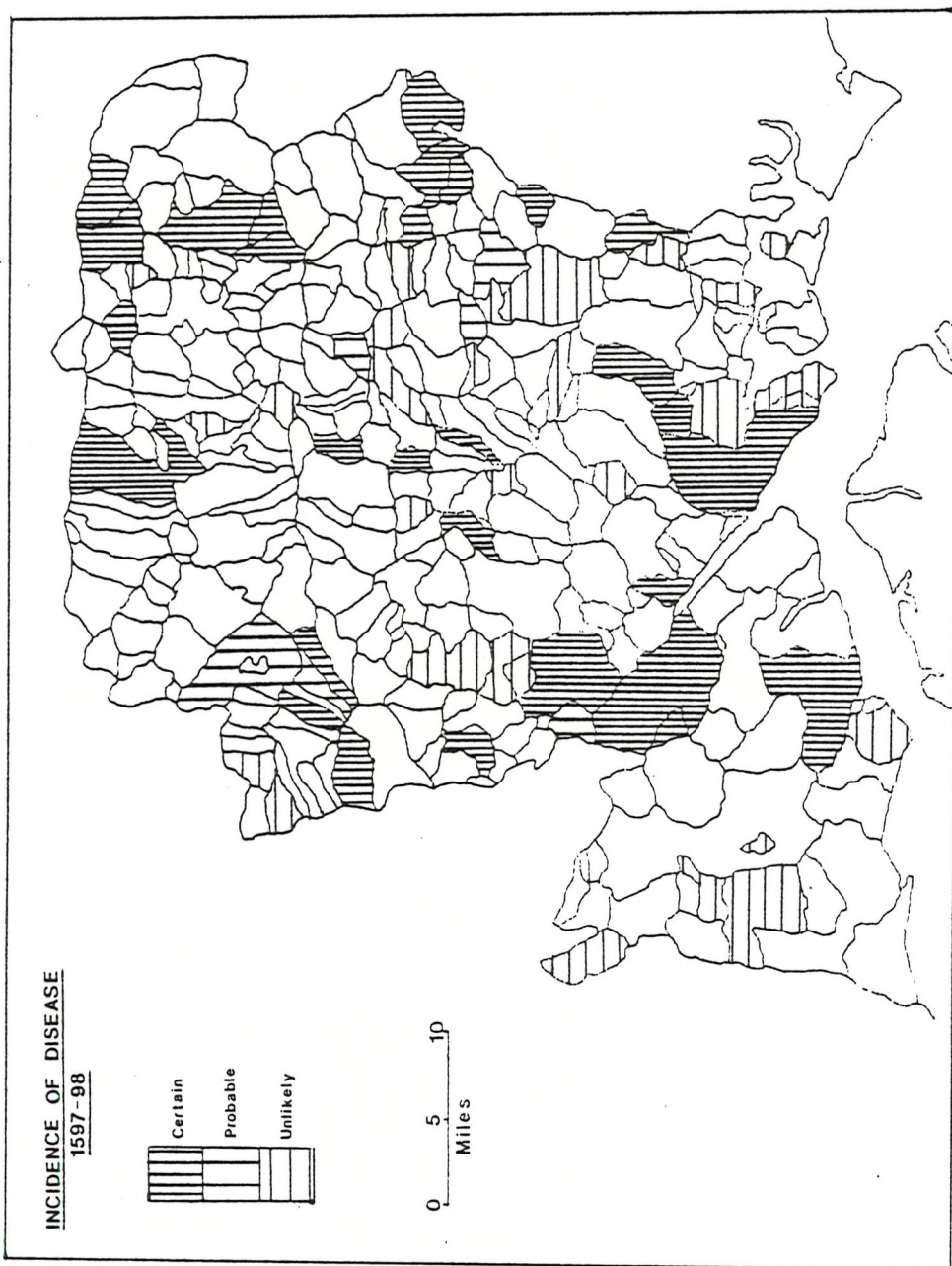


Figure 3/1/6

March 1595-96 (Figure 3/1/7).

In 1597 the crisis reached a peak in most of the towns. The register of St. Bartholomew Hyde Winchester shows some sign of high mortality in January 1597 and burials remained above average for much of the following year. In St. Maurice's there were thirty-one burials in 1597, more than the following three years put together and the first five months of the year had twenty-three of these deaths marking the peak of the dearth as far as the city was concerned. The winter of 1596-97 was especially bad in Southampton with nine burials in November 1596 and eight in March 1597. Overall there were fifty-three burials recorded for 1597, the highest figure since 1563 (1583 is not recorded) and only surpassed twice before 1670, in 1604 and 1644. Again, however, the food shortages, which served to emphasise very clearly how much early modern society depended on the annual harvest and, in turn, on the imponderable factors within the national climate, are best illustrated by the varying fortunes of some of the market towns. Fareham, like some other parts of the south east, clearly survived without undue mortality. Ringwood fared better in the winter of 1596-97 than in the previous year and despite an ominous March with eight burials the situation in the town seems to have progressively eased. There are, however, signs of the time and the burial within close proximity of each other of two "poor boyes" and a "poor strange man" indicates how terribly some of the lowest income groups must have suffered in these years. The larger market town of Andover in the north also shows no major increase in burials in 1597 although the unusually high, if shortlived, mortality in December and January 1596-97, when nineteen people died, suggests that the town was not immune. Indeed, it is hard to believe that the poor textile workers in the town, who could do little to augment their food supplies and who must have felt the brunt of higher prices, did not suffer considerably from malnutrition and its related diseases. In the same way Basingstoke, for which no record survives, must have witnessed much suffering among its poorest



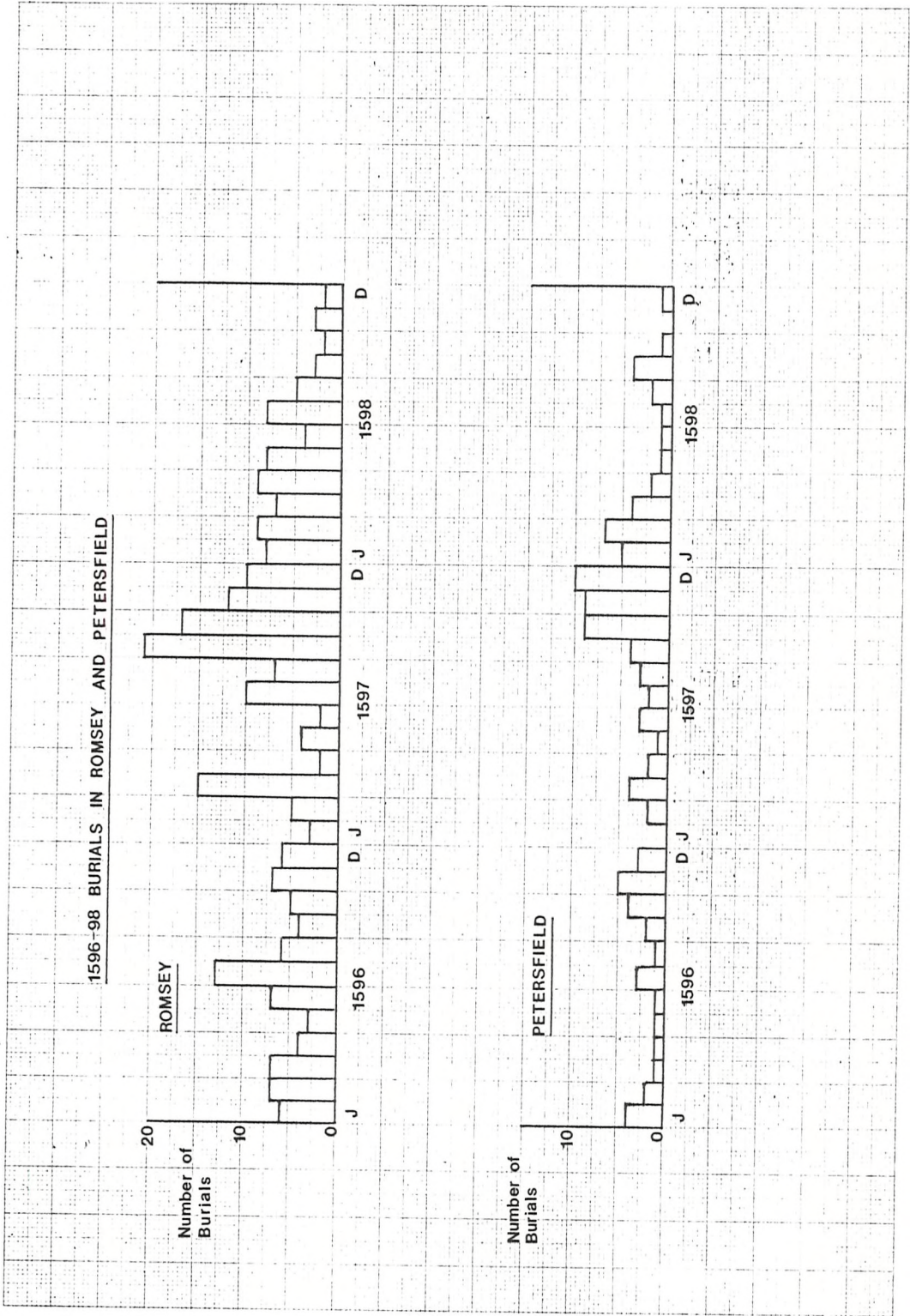


Figure 3/1/7



inhabitants. Certainly Kingsclere and Odiham, two of the smaller market towns in the north, show high mortality in 1597. For Kingsclere the total burials recorded for the year was fifty-four, more than double the average of the previous decade, and the worst month for the town was May when nine deaths were registered. The burial a few months earlier of "Jone Case, a strange beggar" illustrates the aimless wandering and abject poverty that beset many people in these years leading to premature death and creating a great social problem for the late Elizabethan state. In Odiham the peak came later in the year with twelve burials in August, fourteen in September and twelve in October contributing to an annual total of eighty-two compared with an average over the previous decade of thirty. Petersfield had survived the winter of 1595-6 and for most of 1597 mortality stood below average. However, burials began to rise in September and between October and December twenty-eight burials were recorded compared with eleven in the same months in 1596 and only two at the same time in 1598. There was a clear lack of concentration within certain households, typical of the more broad-based attack of famine-related sickness, although one family, the Jowneings, did suffer three fatalities within a fortnight during November. Romsey again suffered badly in 1597. The winter of 1596-7 was probably even worse than its predecessor with thirteen burials in November and December and fifteen in March alone. There followed a lull before a terrible summer and autumn when 77 people perished between July and December, 21 of them in September alone. 108 people died in the whole year, the worst in the register before 1612 and at least twice the annual average.

The winter of 1597-8 was much better than that of 1596-7 and crisis mortality was by no means so widespread. This tends to indicate that the harvest of 1597, which was still classified as a dearth, may have had some local exceptions in parts of Hampshire which enabled the population to survive the following winter in relative comfort. This easing of the subsistence crisis applied to town and country but was certainly not without exceptions. In Petersfield the winter of 1597-8 was very severe and the high

number of burials continued until March but for the rest of 1598 mortality was normal (Figure 3/1/7). Odiham followed the same pattern with a swift return to normality in the summer and autumn of 1598 - of the forty burials recorded for the year twenty-six of them were in the first five months when the effects of the bad harvest the year before were at their worst. Andover, Kingsclere and Ringwood show no signs at all of any lingering strain in 1598 but in Romsey the crisis continued to hit hard at the population throughout the winter of 1597-98 and burials remained high until the following July. Mortality in the town had peaked in the previous autumn but it remained high for many months thereafter running at eight or nine each month until May 1598. It was probably the last of the market towns to emerge from the subsistence crisis of these years and it had been the most severely affected. 251 people died in the town in the years 1596-98 and it would not seem unreasonable to attribute three-quarters of these deaths to famine fevers. An estimate of 200 casualties would mean that about one in six or one in seven of the population died in this period.

In Winchester there were few signs of the crisis after the summer of 1597 and 1598 was a generally healthy year. For Southampton burials remained high in the winter of 1597-98 and the eleven fatalities in St. Michael's in April is the highest total recorded for the parish before the mid-seventeenth century. Only with the summer did mortality begin to move back to normal. Clearly the harvest of 1597 was not as bad as that of 1596 as far as Hampshire was concerned and this explains the less extensive mortality of 1597-98 but nevertheless it was only with the better harvest of 1598 that conditions really improved for many of the Hampshire towns.

#### The Early Seventeenth Century

Following the high mortality of the early and late 1590s, the opening months of the seventeenth century were a welcome relief. Hampshire seems to have been temporarily free from the fevers and

agues which had affected most of the county at some time towards the end of the sixteenth century. In 1600 burials remained above average in Southampton but somewhat less than the critical levels of 1595-98 and no clear disease pattern is identifiable. The same was true of 1601 although eighteen deaths were recorded at St. Michael's in October and November suggesting the onset of some epidemic in the winter of 1601-2. However, the register has no entries after November and nothing more can be deduced especially as the Walloon register shows no marks of severe mortality at this time. Winchester was healthy in these years and the market towns throughout the county fared well. Andover had two of its best ever years in 1601-2 and Fareham was particularly healthy in 1601. Other towns like Ringwood, Petersfield, Odiham and Kingsclere enjoyed below average burials while at Romsey mortality wavered around the norm, rising very slightly in 1602 especially in the winter with eight burials in January and March. If there was indeed some winter disease present in Southampton at that time then it may have also reached Romsey but the effects were only minimal and it does not detract from the clear impression that these were very healthy years for all the Hampshire towns.

Several English towns experienced outbreaks of bubonic plague in 1602 but the disease never reached Hampshire. However, 1603 was a much worse year. In Hampshire the plague was patchy in coverage but it could have devastating effects on town and country alike (Figure 3/1/8). Rural parishes like Abbots Ann, Over Wallop and Eversley were very badly affected indicative of the fact that plague was not wholly confined to urban society. In fact many towns survived relatively well. Fareham suffered very little increase in mortality over the year suffering twenty-six deaths, a little above average. However, the presence of plague in the town is indicated by the burials suffered in September and October 1603 by the Bosle family which saw two deaths and, in particular, the Newe household, five of whose members, Thomas, Jane, Mary, Richard and Anne, all died within eight days followed later by a sixth casualty with this

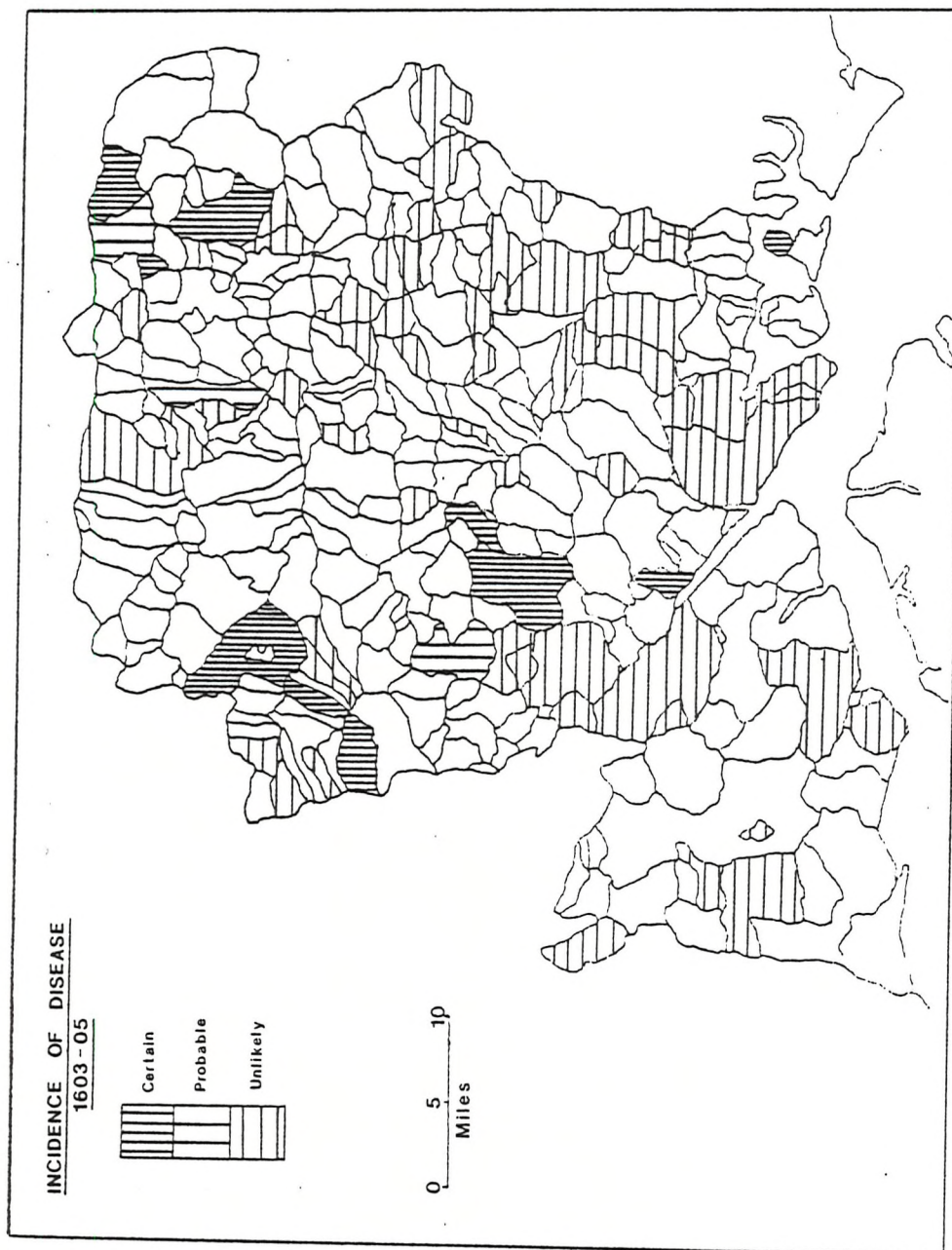


Figure 3/1/8

surname. There is no other confirmatory evidence that their deaths were due to plague and the disease was certainly absent from the rest of south east Hampshire at this time including unhealthy places like Titchfield and Gosport. Fareham, therefore, is uncertain as far as plague mortality in 1603 is concerned. Petersfield tells a similar story with no major increase in burials but an ominous rise in October, when there were ten deaths, four of them from the Shorter family. Both these towns may have had weak strains of plague confined to one or two households, perhaps families with ties outside the town in other, more severely infected, areas. Ringwood showed no sign of plague and nor did Romsey or Kingsclere but the two other northern towns with records at this time were most certainly attacked. In Odiham sixty-eight burials were recorded for the year 1603 compared with an annual average of twenty-eight during the quinquennium 1598-1602. There were eight deaths in August and seven in September, increasing to thirteen in October, eleven in November and thirteen in December before a peak of eighteen was reached in January 1604. At Andover a note in the register tells that the "pest began 10th August" and thereafter all twelve burials recorded for that month were attributed to the plague. Deaths reached a peak in September and remained high until the end of November. Between August and September fifty-four deaths were recorded, most of them victims of the disease, showing a very even split between the sexes with twenty-six males and twenty-eight females. Almost half the deaths were children (twenty-five) and several families were particularly badly hit. Rich and poor could be affected such as Robert Jacques an Andover shoemaker who perished along with his wife and children and the victims within the household of Robert Whittier included one of his servants, Welthian Daniel. Yet fifty-four deaths represented only about 5% of the population, less than the scale of mortality rates which resulted from the famine fevers of the 1590s.

In Southampton the plague clearly erupted in 1603 but it only reached a peak in 1604. The St. Michael's register shows above average mortality in 1603 when forty burials were recorded but in

January 1604, 170 burials were recorded. On a single day, 30 January, twenty-one people were buried. As far as Southampton was concerned this was the most serious epidemic of the early modern period and, combined with the high mortality experienced throughout the 1590s, these years represent a watershed in its demographic history, modest growth giving way to stagnation for most of the following century. The town was unable, either by immigration or natural growth, to replace the vast numbers of dead incurred in these years. 1604 saw the plague at its height. Over 160 people died in the Walloon community which had numbered 197 in 1596. At least 250 people died in St. Michael's parish, representing about 18% of the inhabitants recorded for the parish in 1596, and within the Walloon community alone Dr. James reckons that the plague wiped away over half the total of births over the previous twenty years.<sup>1</sup> Plague could have a devastating effect on these larger towns in a way which seems to have been very rare in the smaller market communities.

Jacob noted that the plague of 1603 did not touch Winchester.<sup>2</sup> This is most definitely untrue. The authorities forbade trade and travel from London and other infected towns and measures were taken for the relief of the infected. In the parish of St. Peter Cheesehill plague burials first appear in October 1603 and are marked by the letter 'P'. The first five casualties all came from the same family, the Pernies. Overall between 22 October 1603 and 4 May 1604 forty-six deaths were recorded, thirty-seven (80%) of them due to the plague. Interestingly, the course of the plague of 1603 through into 1604 at Winchester, Southampton and Odiham, accompanied by contemporary descriptions such as "the pest" and bringing exceptionally high figures for burials, may well indicate the presence of a pneumonic infection of plague rather than the typhus and smallpox which were more

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1. T.B. James, thesis, op.cit., p. 49.

2. A.B. Rosen, thesis, op.cit., p. 203.

commonly responsible for high winter mortality.

By the end of 1604 the plague had disappeared from all the county except for the upper Test valley. King's Somborne was certainly infected and at Hursley several deaths were attributed to "the peste". Clearly plague was still around in the valleys of the west and it erupted again in Andover in 1605, the only town known to have plague that year. Burials had been heavy through the winter but in July forty-two people died and in August a further forty-one succumbed as the town was hit badly for the second time in three years. Again there was an almost even split between the sexes and about equal numbers of children and adults. Andover had been afflicted throughout the period 1603-5 and whole families were wiped out, but looking at the disease in terms of long-term demographic growth then it is clear that, although plague provided a sharp jolt to natural growth, it did not provide any permanent redirection to population development. The town was able to overcome the effects of plague through the natural surplus of births built up prior to the disease or accumulated very swiftly thereafter.

This relative immunity from the potentially devastating long-term demographic effects of plague does not mean that the disease was negligible in its effects on society in the small town. The disease returned to the county in 1608-9 and struck at Odiham and Lymington, both examples giving an insight into the disruption that could be caused. On a very human level Stephen Leaves, a feltmaker from Odiham, was allowed to stay in Southampton away from his wife "for that the plague is in Odiham",<sup>1</sup> and many other such strains must have been imposed on family life. On a larger scale, town life could be effectively halted by the plague. In July 1608 the Assembly Book of Southampton recorded that "it is verie trewlye enformed that the plague is at Lymington in ii or iii houses" and

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1. J.W. Horrocks(ed.), The Assembly Books of Southampton, Vol. II, 1609-10, Southampton Record Series, 21, (1920), p. 60.

the beadles of Southampton were warned not to allow traders or visitors from Lymington to enter the town. At Lymington however, town government had effectively collapsed. The Assembly complained in October that the Mayor and burgesses were not so "assistinge and ryminge together concerning the rule and government of the said town as they ought, by reason of whiche the Inhabitants through the instigation of idell and lewde persons are altogether contemptuous and growne into a rebellious kind of lyfe and behaviour". When it was thought necessary to remind burgesses of their duties it was found that the Book of Town Orders and Decrees was unavailable because it was in the house of Luke Stevens, an ex-Mayor, who had died in the plague "by reason thereof it cannot without danger be had and viewed to putt the same in record".<sup>1</sup> Casualties from the disease may not have been very heavy and could well have been less than those recorded in outbreaks of various fevers which were almost endemic in small urban communities, but the paralysing fear which could be produced by plague was sufficient to throw normal town life into chaos and Lymington was probably not alone in suffering such disruption.

Most of Hampshire had enjoyed a relative freedom from disease in these early years of the seventeenth century. However, 1610 was probably the worst year since the 1590s and parishes all over the county showed above average mortality. In the south west, Boldre recorded thirty deaths in the year, more than double the average over the preceding decade. Seventeen of the burials were in the first five months of the year with March the worst month. Titchfield was a notoriously unhealthy parish, perhaps the outcome of its low-lying coastal location interrupted by marshy inlets, traditionally seen as a haven for disease. It usually succumbed to the "malignant fevers" and 1610 was no exception. The outbreak that year, with its clear spring maximum and widespread effects

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1. J.W. Horrocks(ed.), The Assembly Books of Southampton, Vol. I, 1602-8, Southampton Records Series, 19, (1917), p. 72.



throughout Hampshire, may be attributed directly to influenza rather than to any of its subsidiary 'agues' which tended to be more localised and usually followed in the wake of a bad harvest which does not seem to have been the case in 1610.

The identification of the high mortality of 1610 as a strain of influenza gains weight from the experiences of some towns in the county. In Romsey 83 burials were recorded in the year, particularly bad were March and April when there were 20 deaths. At Ringwood mortality was high throughout the year, but especially in the springtime. Towns in other parts of the county fared similarly with burials usually running at between 50-100% above the norm, not the appalling mortality of a major epidemic but still sufficient to make a significant impact on the population. Only Andover, Kingsclere and Fareham of the towns with records at this time seem to have escaped. At Odiham 51 burials were recorded, well above average, and a total not surpassed again until 1638. Petersfield also saw high mortality with forty-five deaths in the year. The town first began to experience a slight rise in burials during February and March before a steady increase in April and May and a peak in June when eight people died. These were not catastrophic levels but they positively indicate the presence of disease in the town and the deaths of several members of well-established, relatively well-off families within the urban community, such as Gregory Page and Elizabeth Shorter, point towards influenza, a disease which, as was recognised by contemporaries in the great epidemic of 1558, was no respecter of wealth or position. In St. Maurice's Winchester the high level of burials in 1609 continued into 1610 but St. Bartholomew Hyde shows no trace of disease and St. Peter Cheeshill has only a small rise in the winter and spring. Judging by the Walloon register, which may not be typical of Southampton as a whole, and the Winchester evidence, it would seem that these larger towns were affected relatively less than some of the small market towns by the disease of 1610. It was a sickness which found expression

mainly in the countryside and the communities which most closely served the rural population.

The infirmities of 1610 were to herald a succession of very sickly years for the market towns of Hampshire for, although 1611 proved to be a respite, 1612-13 were very unhealthy throughout the county. Abnormally high mortality prevailed over much of the county, the same "ordinary ague" which accounted for the King's son Prince Henry in November 1612.<sup>1</sup> Two of the market towns in the north west, Andover and Whitchurch, showed no trace of the sickness in 1612, Andover maintaining its record of exceedingly good health after the plague had relented in 1605. Petersfield recorded about average mortality in the year as a whole but a slight increase in burials around August and September suggests that the town was not entirely free from the disease which was very active in much of its rural hinterland. However, all the other towns suffered to some degree in 1612. Although the northern countryside had survived relatively well, the market town of Kingsclere was affected with 52 burials in the year, the worst in the seventeenth century before 1629. Mortality, slightly above average in the spring, had increased in August and peaked in September when there were eleven burials and no signs of any family clustering. Odiham was less severely affected but deaths were still well above average for the year. It was therefore the southern market towns which felt the worst of the fevers in 1612. Fareham had enjoyed a very healthy spring and early summer before sickness came to the town in September. Six people died that month and another fourteen perished before the year was out. Likewise, Ringwood first began to experience high mortality in August and September and burials remained high for the rest of the year. However, it was Romsey which probably fared worst of all

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1. C. Creighton, Epidemics, op.cit., p. 536.

in 1612 following on from two more bad years. There were 109 burials in the town during 1612, the highest figure since the register began in 1570 and not surpassed until 1638. Clearly the influenza type ailments of the previous two years had maintained their effects through the winter of 1611-12 and into the following spring when twenty-one people died in April. After a slight easing in June and July mortality rose again in August and October. Winchester was not immune from the diseases of 1612 though it does not seem to have suffered as badly as some of the smaller towns and certainly witnessed nothing on the scale of the mortality experienced by Romsey and Ringwood.

A similar pattern prevailed in 1613. A large number of rural parishes reveal very high levels of mortality but the disease continued to make no progress in communities like Andover and Whitchurch and it still had very little impact on Odiham and Petersfield. Kingsclere maintained its high mortality though the pattern of burials in 1613 suggests that the disease died out completely through the winter and spring and only recurred, probably with a completely new infection, late in the year and especially in a very bad December when there were eleven deaths. Fareham, by contrast, felt no relief from the fever and burials were high throughout the year, peaking around September and October as in 1612. There were forty-two burials in the town in 1613, the worst figure since the plague of 1563 and at least double the annual average over the preceding decade. High death rates in these months may, of course, indicate a bubonic infection but there is no reason to suppose this to be true in Fareham or anywhere else because of the absence of any family groupings, the all-year-round mortality and the rather lower scale of the deaths incurred. Nearby the small embryonic market town of Bishops Waltham also had a high number of burials in 1613, the first complete year of its register. It recorded forty deaths, with an especially severe springtime, characteristic of fevers and agues, and the total was not surpassed again until 1638. However, it was again Romsey and Ringwood that

bore the brunt of the diseases prevalent in 1613. In Ringwood mortality was even higher than 1612 and burials totalled 103, the highest figure for the parish between 1570-1658. Burials were high throughout the winter with thirty-seven deaths in the first four months before a lull during the early summer. However, the fever returned in August and especially September when fourteen people died followed by thirteen in October and nine each in November and December. Again, clear family clustering is absent but the extent of the disease guaranteed that some families suffered badly, often households of local prominence like that of "Thomas Packham, gent.", who died along with his son and either his wife or daughter within a week in September 1613. An identical pattern is visible at Romsey where high mortality continued through the winter of 1612-13 and into the following spring, especially in March when eleven people were buried and May when ten died. There followed a short lull before a terrible late summer and autumn, thirty-three people dying in the last four months of the year. This was the fourth consecutive year that Romsey had faced serious mortality and hardly a month went by without some casualty from the fevers and agues being buried. For Romsey 1613 was a slightly better year than its predecessor but the reverse was true of Winchester where St. Maurice's recorded twenty-eight burials, about double the annual average over the previous decade, and the St. John's register also shows steady mortality in the summer. However, both St. Peter Cheesehill and St. Bartholomew Hyde show nothing out of the normal and the fever still failed to make a serious demographic impact on the city.

1614 generally marked the end of this bout of fever. In Petersfield, where the worst effects had never been felt, there was a short revival in April when nine deaths were recorded but nothing more transpired and the rest of the year was healthy. At Kingsclere mortality remained stubbornly above average through until June but thereafter no more sickness is apparent in the town. Whitchurch and Andover maintained their remarkable immunity from any kind of

high mortality in these years. Both towns lay on the major routeway from London to the West and must have been exposed to the maladies which swept Southern England and the Home Counties in these years but for some reason, perhaps because of especially fortunate harvests in the north west, their populations were very resistant to the threat posed by all manner of agues and fevers in these years. Fareham, Romsey and Ringwood had certainly not been so fortunate and their high mortality persisted into 1614. At Fareham, May and August represented the last months of above average burials before a very healthy autumn. In Ringwood the diseases continued to torment the town throughout 1614 and persisted into 1615. The winter and spring of 1613-14 were especially grievous, thirty-one people dying in the last three months of 1613 followed by another forty-three in the first five months of 1614, more casualties in these eight months than would have been expected normally in two years or more. Burials remained high especially in October 1614 and clearly the infections were deeply entrenched in the town, remaining an active force long after they had disappeared from surrounding rural parishes and from other market towns in the county. Romsey was rather more fortunate for after another bad winter and spring, when forty-five people died, the rest of the year was happily much more healthy, with only another twenty-seven deaths from July to December, and the sickness seems to have finally released its grip on the town.

The only town to witness any further infection in 1615 was Ringwood where the high mortality established earlier on in the decade continued with only a little less severity. February 1615 saw thirteen burials and April witnessed eight more as the fevers returned for what may have been their seventh consecutive year in the town. July and August were also bad and mortality remained high into the following winter when abnormally warm winds brought "perpetual weeping weather, foul ways and great floods", conditions ideal for the spread of disease.<sup>1</sup> December saw seven burials and

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1. C. Creighton, Epidemics, op.cit., p. 537.

there were thirteen in January including another local gentleman, Andrew Persivall. February and March saw another twenty burials between them and it was not until the summer of 1616 that the fevers and agues finally began to relent in Ringwood. This was one of the most prolonged cases of sickness in any Hampshire community in the early modern period and shows clearly how prolonged disease, in this case assorted influenza strains, could stifle population growth in a small town without ever reaching quite the dramatic levels of a plague epidemic. Between 1610-16 there were thirty-six more burials than baptisms. In the case of Ringwood this followed a long period of natural growth and it was succeeded by a similarly long span of good years so that the town may not have suffered any long term consequences. However, in the short run the urban population must have been static from 1610-20 unless there was unusual immigration to the community and over these years natural growth was depressed. Within the town influenza infections of this kind, perhaps complicated by the presence of other winter diseases like typhus, probably created none of the civil disruption that followed from a plague visitation. Yet very few people could have been unaffected. Taking the 105 burials recorded in 1613, an astonishing 85 different families were included showing the widespread nature of these kinds of sickness within society and implying that in this year alone perhaps one in every four households incurred a casualty. Further, given the relatively hopeful recovery rates from these diseases, then a very large proportion of the population may have been directly affected by the sickness. In looking for the effects of disease mortality on population it would, therefore, be wise to consider not only the immediately devastating results of an epidemic of bubonic plague but also to recognise the long-term and deadening consequences of repeated attacks from some of the lesser diseases. Nor was Ringwood alone, for, as has been seen, other towns like Romsey, Kingsclere and Petersfield were similarly affected at this time.

Yet the population of the small towns seems to have been remarkably resilient and even periods of sustained sickness could be swiftly compensated by a succession of healthy years when natural growth could rapidly revive the town's demographic fortunes. Thus the last three years of the decade were for the small towns the best for some time, despite poor harvests in 1617-18, while 1620 was almost unique in the period under study in that all eight towns with registers surviving for the year show below average mortality.

On most occasions in the sixteenth century, the market town had shared closely in the health of its rural hinterland with an intimacy that was much less clear for larger towns. Fevers and agues were endemic in the leading urban communities and their constant presence meant that in effect they played little part in shaping the fluctuations of demographic progress. By contrast, to the rural village and market town, which knew of entirely healthy years, their arrival was relatively more significant. In this context the prolonged sickness of 1610-16 marked a stage in the increasing urbanisation of the disease pattern for the market town with fever becoming deeply entrenched in the community in a way more akin to the large borough than to the country village. The small town was beginning to shed its rural health as it grew in size and acquired the trappings which went with larger urban status one of which was, sadly, endemic ill-health. It was a slow process but one which can be traced in the early seventeenth century.

1621 marks another point in this development with extremely good health throughout the countryside. Only King's Somborne recorded any burial figures noticeably above normal but even here no disease is apparent. However, in some of the towns the year saw a significant rise in burials during winter and spring, most likely a return of the mild influenza type infection with which urban communities had become so familiar. Odiham recorded seven burials in February, the worst total for that month since the

terrible year of 1582, and another eight people died in March. Other northern and eastern towns like Andover, Whitchurch and Petersfield were unaffected but in the south Romsey and Fareham both endured sickly winters. In Fareham twenty-nine people died in 1621, not much above usual, but seventeen of them were between 14 February and 19 April. As was usual with these feverous illnesses mortality was not critically high, but the whole community was at risk and the burials included Arthur Jenings, the son of a local gentleman. In Romsey the disease lingered a little longer. February was again a bad month with eleven burials and numbers remained high through the spring and into June before falling back to normal for the rest of the year. What is important, however, is that these types of complaints, which had been found in town and country alike, were, in 1621, noticeably absent from rural Hampshire. This may mark a contrast between earlier fevers, which were broad-based and usually followed substandard crops, and the increasing number of more localised urban outbreaks which afflicted market communities caused mainly by the squalor characteristic of even the smallest Tudor and Stuart towns.

Not only were influenza type fevers becoming more important to the small town as they grew in size but certain other diseases seem to have been becoming more prevalent. Among these were dysentery, smallpox and, especially, typhus. 1623 was a very sickly year in London and elsewhere with what a contemporary called the "malignant spotted fever", almost certainly typhus.<sup>1</sup> Gosport suffered its worst year between 1563 and the 1660s and well above the mortality levels of the 1590s. Romsey was also afflicted with increased burials for almost every month of the year. March and April were bad and May was particularly sickly with sixteen burials with mortality remaining high thereafter throughout the summer and autumn. A total of 78 burials were recorded in 1623 on a par with

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1. C. Creighton, Epidemics, op.cit., pp. 502-6.



figures from a decade earlier when the town had been racked by fevers which may have also been of a typhus kind.

However, the mortality achieved by the assorted diseases of 1623-24 were to pale into insignificance with the return of bubonic plague in 1625 (Figure 3/1/9). North eastern Hampshire, the area closest to London, was one of the first parts of England to be hit. Although the parish of Eversley, on the Berkshire border, records only eleven burials in the year, not significantly more than usual, an entry on 20 May 1625 is of interest for on that day one Thomas Bodham, son of Richard Bodham, was buried. He had "died of the plague and was buried in a close of his father's", an attempt to segregate plague casualties and a common precaution when there was a threat of disease. However, elsewhere in the countryside, whilst isolated parishes were hit, the disease did not assume any of the proportions of previous epidemics like that of 1563. The towns were very different. Only Ringwood certainly escaped though Petersfield may have also been fortunate, a remarkable escape considering its close ties with London and Portsmouth where the plague ravaged the population. Both the north western towns, Whitchurch and Andover, faced the disease after a long period of good health. In the former, no plague is apparent until 1 September when one Joan Laver died of "the sickness" and there follow thirteen other plague burials, six more in September and seven in October. In fact, this little town could not have suffered very badly for six of the deaths all came from one family and most of the community must have escaped unscathed. Andover also fared reasonably well although the plague was certainly in the town. Burials were high at the start of 1625, possibly the tail end of the fevers and agues of 1624 but clouded from view by inadequate registration in 1623-4. After a lull in early summer they returned in August and in September one Alice Girdler, wife of Daniel, was buried "suspected to die of the plague". She was swiftly followed by Ann Hatlye who "died of the plague and was buried privately". In October there were eight burials, not much

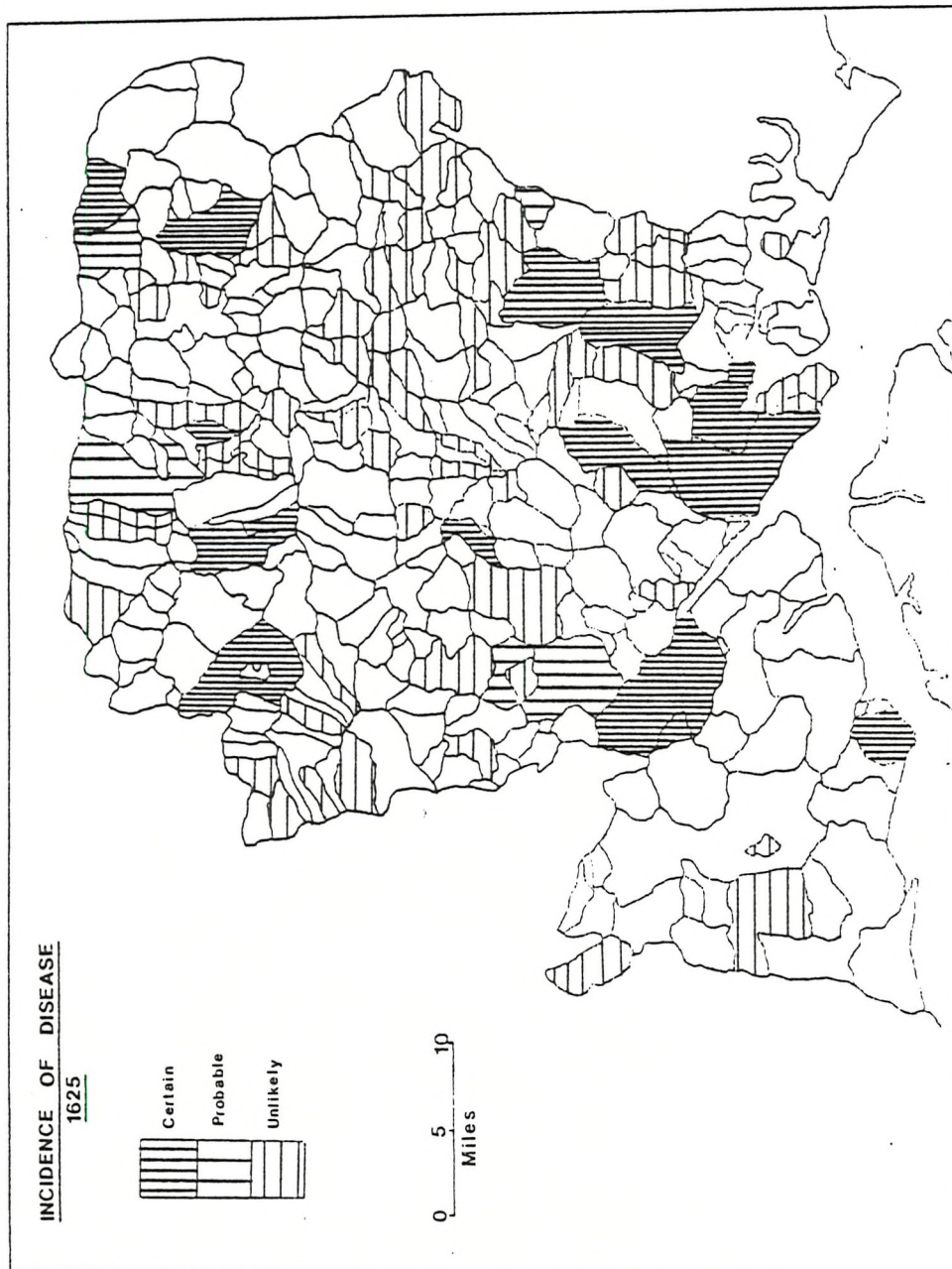


Figure 3/1/2

above average but including a child of Daniel Girdler and two children of widow Edmunds who were "buried in the fields". By such measures Andover may have curbed the worst of the plague and the town may well have suffered much heavier mortality during the fevers of the previous winter. Kingsclere and Odiham both experienced higher than average mortality in 1625 but in neither case was the plague particularly severe. In Romsey the plague was clearly in the town during September when there were sixteen burials including Nicholas and Ann Squibb and three of the multifarious Brownes in the town but, again, the small town suffered very little compared with some larger urban centres. Of the market towns only Fareham experienced a really bad visitation of plague in 1625. Fifty-two burials were recorded in the year, the worst since 1563 and more than double the annual average of twenty-two recorded in the years 1620-24. The plague began in September when there were eight burials and continued into October, when there were twelve deaths, lingering into November and December with seventeen burials between them. A feature of this bout of the epidemic in the town was its failure to cluster burials within certain families. The first fifteen casualties all came from different households and there is not a single case of three deaths in a family among the thirty-seven burials from September to December. It was a very broad-based epidemic, not the customary image of bubonic plague, and it struck hard within the wealthier members of the community, taking away, for instance, two members of the Ludlow family, a wellknown local recusant gentry household. The example of Fareham in 1625 casts doubt over some of the traditional assumptions about the nature of bubonic plague in a small market town.

Whilst the small towns were assuming some of the characteristics of larger settlements in terms of lesser infections there were still contrasts within the urban hierarchy when the effects of plague were considered. Both Portsmouth and Winchester were very severely visited in 1625. Nothing can be deduced about the scale of the epidemic in Portsmouth because of the absence of parochial records

but in September Sir Daniel Norton wrote that the town "was being grievously afflicted with the plague". Administration in the port had broken down and he complained that the mayor and other officials were refusing to take the necessary steps to isolate the infected.<sup>1</sup> Winchester may have suffered even more sorely. Burials at St. Maurice's rose sharply in August when twenty-four deaths were recorded and in September twenty-seven more people died before the plague began to abate in October. Over the whole year 87 people died, by far the worst total for the parish in the early modern period and over four times the average over the previous five years. The corporation petitioned the Privy Council about the "grievous infection" and "great distress".<sup>2</sup> Wealthy inhabitants fled, food became scarce because people feared to go to market and payments were made from the city coffers to relieve the sick and unemployed continuously from August 1625 until January 1626. Interestingly none of these consequences were mirrored by Southampton, so grievously afflicted in 1563 and 1604, but apparently clear from the disease in 1625 when both the St. Michael's and Walloon registers show nothing unusual.

By 1626 the plague had departed from Winchester and most of the small towns were also able to recuperate. In Andover, however, the winter was very sickly. There were nine burials in December 1625 and another thirty-five in the first five months of 1626. These included the daughter of John Harfield who died of "the plague" and was buried in "the Drove" on 5 April and Richard Freemantell was buried in the same place later in the month. However the worst was over by the summer when only Portsmouth witnessed a second successive plague season.

Throughout most of 1627 the Hampshire countryside was noticeably free from any kind of disease but by the end of the year mortality was

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1. CSPD, 1625-6, p. 112.

2. *ibid.*, p. 178.

on the rise in several southern parishes. In Alverstoke - Gosport there were seven burials in November followed by fourteen in December and thirteen in January 1628, in both cases totals which were unprecedented for these months. The winter was one of the most grievous experienced by the parish and it was not alone in its plight for at Titchfield a similar eruption of burials occurred at the same time. Mortality had been high in the previous winter but nothing like the scale of 1627-8 when twenty-two people died in December alone, worse than at any time in the plague of 1625 or earlier epidemics. The answer clearly lies in the smallpox which had swept the Isle of Wight in 1627 though it had made little impact on mainland Hampshire. Like typhus it was largely a winter disease and it clearly made itself felt in these coastal parishes, both of which had close ties with the island, in the winter of 1627-8. Clear evidence that the disease spread through the county comes from the hamlet of Church Okeley in the north of Hampshire where, on 25 May, Henry Nevil, gentleman, was buried "dying of the small pockes".

It is hard to imagine that the smallpox that invaded much of the countryside did not penetrate the boroughs. Yet it was very slow to really take hold of urban society and only Romsey seems to have been severely infected. Records survive for only ten months of 1628 but 82 deaths were registered, the worst total since 1613. Mortality was high at the start of the year and then the disease returned with fifty burials between August and December. Smallpox was a notorious child-killing infection but unfortunately the entries in the Romsey register are uninformative in this respect. However, with the Isle of Wight again racked by the epidemic, it seems likely that it was indeed smallpox which was rooted in Romsey in 1628. Burials remained high in 1629 when 73 burials were recorded, less than the incomplete total for the preceding year but well above the average for the decade. Fareham suffered from the same disease and had an especially sickly spring with seven burials in April and nine in May, both well above normal for these months.

Fifty-one burials were recorded in the town during 1629 the second worst year in the town since 1563, exceeded only by the plague of 1625. Smallpox may also be the explanation for a rise in mortality in two of the northern towns, Andover and Kingsclere. In both communities burials rose well above average and persisted throughout the year, encouraged perhaps by the falling off in quality of the harvests at the end of the 1620s. Kingsclere was especially hard hit recording fifty-nine burials, the worst year since the plague of 1563 and significantly above the annual average. Like typhus and the other fevers, smallpox was no respecter of wealth and when the disease reached its climax in the town at the end of 1629, two gentlemen, Richard Dalle and Henry Goodwin, died in quick succession among the other townsfolk.

The mounting incidence of smallpox is commonly attributed to the second half of the seventeenth century but clearly it had begun to exert an influence on the population of the small towns before the Civil War. It took its place alongside diseases like typhus, dysentery and influenza which afflicted the market communities increasingly as the century wore on and contributed to the slowing of demographic growth. Sickness went with urban size as insanitary conditions multiplied but, at the same time, it began to act as a drag on further population expansion.

#### The Crises of the 1630s

The harvest of 1630 was very bad for many areas of the county and Hampshire was certainly severely affected. Records begin in this year for the price of wheat paid by Winchester College and the figure with which they begin, 48.15s per quarter, was clearly very high and was not surpassed until the late 1640s.<sup>1</sup> For many people rising prices meant a decline in the quantity and quality of food consumed with consequent malnutrition and vulnerability to

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1. W. Beveridge, Prices and Wages, op.cit., pp. 5-90.

disease. Although in January 1631 the Justices of the Peace had reported that wheat in the county was less than 7s per bushel, it had reached 10s in Basingstoke by April and the poverty was aggravated by the slump in the cloth industry over large areas of northern Hampshire.<sup>1</sup> The winter of 1630-1 saw an acute subsistence crisis reflected by increased mortality in one of the textile towns, Andover, and Basingstoke would surely have shown a similar pattern. Eighty-eight burials were recorded in Andover during 1631, the worst total for the town since the start of the register in 1587 and well over twice the level attained throughout most of the 1620s. The severe winter mortality, with fifteen dying in January, eleven in February and twelve in April, indicates that typhus fever and dysentery were active in the town although the coincidence of dearth and unemployment may have meant that, on rare occasions, people also died from sheer starvation. Clearly people in the north were desperate and some resorted to crime as with the poor men who seized a cart travelling between Basingstoke and Tadley with a load of barley.<sup>2</sup> In Kingsclere and Whitchurch burials were well above normal throughout 1631 and other cloth towns also suffered badly in the same year. At Petersfield forty-five burials were recorded, the worst total since the famine of 1597 and almost double the average for the previous five years. Mortality was high throughout the early months of the year and the large numbers of children who died in the town, as at Kingsclere, may indicate the presence of dysentery rather than typhus. Malnutrition and starvation must have affected both towns and the failure to identify any family groupings suggests that these problems were faced by large numbers of poor inhabitants in both communities. At Petersfield seventeen different families appear in the burials for the first four months of the year, not one of

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1. PRO, SP 16/182/39; SP 16/182/55.

2. PRO, PC 2/40, ff. 175-6.

them experiencing multiple mortality, and in Kingsclere fourteen households were responsible for the first fifteen burials in 1631. Alton and Odiham show no effects from the crisis of 1630-1 and Fareham, which had none of the dependence on textiles that characterised Andover and Basingstoke, also had a good year. However, Romsey was less fortunate. Sixty-six burials were recorded in 1631, less than levels reached in the smallpox epidemic of the late 1620s but still above the norm for a healthy year. Winchester and Southampton show less evidence of being affected by the subsistence crisis which could cripple the rural market town and, although registers at St. Maurice's Winchester and St. Michael's Southampton indicate some slight increase, burials did not rise in the same way as lesser communities. Winchester had long since ceased to be dependent on its textiles trade while Southampton was developing the new draperies and neither would have felt the severe coincidence of dearth and unemployment in the same way as Andover or Basingstoke. Moreover, the burials of Henry Martin, "a poor blind man" and Robert Stepto "a poor man", at Kingsclere in 1633 show how the depressed state of the textiles trade must have caused hardship for large numbers of townsmen in the early 1630s.

Towards the end of 1635 mortality began to rise in Andover with nine burials in October and twelve in December. Within four days in mid-November William Butcher saw three of his children buried. The high level of burials continued into early 1636 with another eleven dying in January and nine in March. Clearly the town was infected with either typhus or smallpox, probably the latter in view of the large numbers of children who perished. After something of a lull in the late spring Andover faced a visitation of the plague in July. Twelve burials were recorded during the month, well above normal, including John Moringe by whose name the clerk wrote "pest". This is the only death marked in this way but clearly there were other plague fatalities like John's wife Kathren who was buried a day later and two children of Henry Powell, both buried in August. No burial record is available for September but mortality was back



to normal in October and the disease could not have been especially severe. However, taken in conjunction with smallpox earlier in the year it made 1636 a very sickly year for Andover with 79 burials, a total surpassed only twice since the start of the register in 1587.<sup>1</sup> The Alton register had only begun in 1629 but 1636 was by far the worst year since the start with forty-six burials, more than double the average of 21.3 over the previous years. As with Andover, the preceding spring had been bad with a possible infection of smallpox but the worst part of the year was between June and October which recorded twenty-six (57%) burials, clear evidence of plague, which, again like Andover, reached a climax in August. The pattern is much less clear in Kingsclere where mortality was above average, though not drastically so, throughout 1636 and shows no peak as would be expected with bubonic plague. Nor was there any family clustering in the burials and although a mild infection in the town it did not suffer like Alton or Andover. Whitchurch and Odiham in the north both missed the plague and smallpox, as did Petersfield, Fareham and Ringwood, but both diseases were certainly in Romsey. Eighty-eight burials were recorded there in 1636, the highest since 1612. March, April and May were all sickly with twenty-five deaths between them before a lull in June and July. The plague came to the town in August, when there were sixteen burials, well above normal for the month, and continued into the autumn with fourteen deaths in October. Unlike Andover and Alton the disease persisted rather longer in Romsey and the high mortality continued into December and January, by which time, possibly, pneumonic complications had set in. While the plague was active in these towns both Winchester and Southampton saw none of it, another reminder that epidemiological history must not be written solely from the evidence of larger communities. Neither the city nor soke of Winchester were infected in 1636 while St. Michael's Southampton enjoyed another very healthy year. Even Portsmouth may have escaped for there are no signs of plague in its

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1. The presence of smallpox in the county was said to have curtailed military preparations in 1636 - HRO, 44 M 69, XLI, 17-18.

satellite community, Gosport, or in the surrounding countryside.

Two other market towns were affected in 1637 although in neither case was the disease especially severe. Thirty-nine burials were recorded at Bishops Waltham with thirteen of them in April which may suggest some other disease and, in fact, the summer months showed mortality levels around normal. As was usual on such occasions, the Quarter Sessions imposed a local rate for the relief of the town but the order aroused much opposition in surrounding parishes, especially Droxford where it was claimed that there was a house similarly infected. Delays in assessment and difficulties in collection dragged on into January 1639 and it is doubtful whether any meaningful relief was derived, a situation probably not untypical for any community faced with an outbreak of plague.<sup>1</sup> In Ringwood fifty deaths were recorded in the year, not especially high, but there was a particularly severe start to the year with seventeen burials in July. Three of the names in March are accompanied by the letter 'P' and so is one in April and three in May. A number of houses had to be shut up for six weeks because of the plague and the town incurred "a great charge" because there was "no trading or commerce". This may well have been pneumonic plague, occurring as it did quite outside the bubonic season, although the letter 'P' could just as well stand for 'pox' as for 'pestilence'. Certainly it was very severe in certain families like the Cooches, the Etheredges, the Bemisters and the Witts. By the summer the disease had relented and there are, significantly, no signs of bubonic plague. The evidence for plague in the towns during 1637 is much weaker than in the previous year but the examples of Ringwood and Bishops Waltham both show the turmoil of disease, disrupting the economy of the former and causing boundless administrative obstacles in the latter.<sup>2</sup>

1638-39 were two of the most sickly years in the early modern period (Figure 3/1/10). The cause was an epidemic of fever which Creighton likens to the country fever or spotted fever of 1624 and diagnoses as a form of typhus, although there may well have been other contributing sicknesses present in the county. In fact the epidemic can be seen as the latest outburst of disease in a line which includes the feverous epidemics of 1557-8, 1580-2, 1596-7 and

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1. HRO, QSOB 1628-49, ff. 116, 125, 129, 137, 141, 153-4, 161-2, 163.

2. *ibid.*, ff. 116-117.

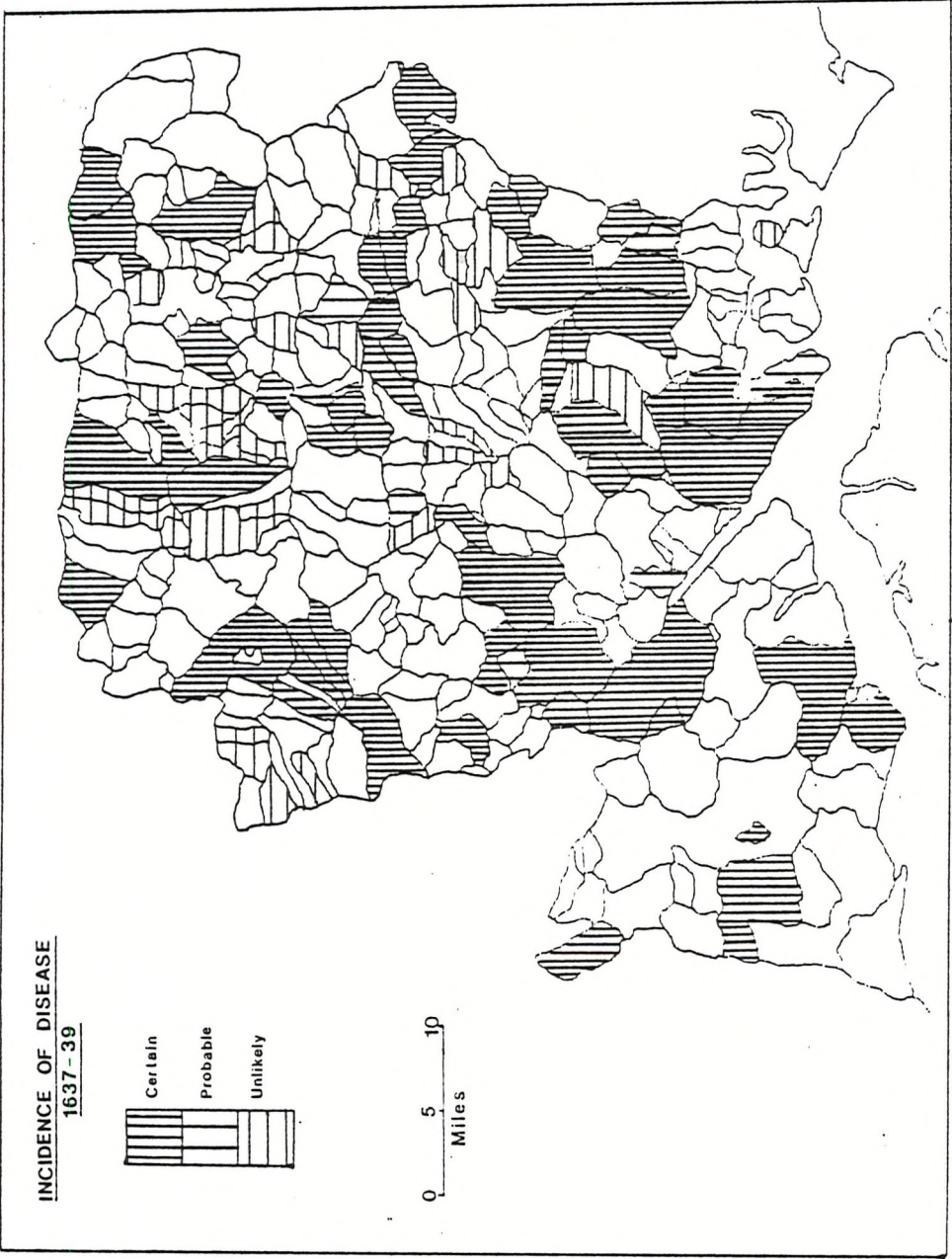


Figure 3/1/10

1612-13 and like its predecessors it made an impact on the towns of Hampshire. Yet the increasing urban character of the market town in terms of mortality meant that the effects were less significant in relative terms than earlier outbreaks and compared with the surrounding countryside. For instance, the fever was very severe in the countryside of south eastern Hampshire and not surprisingly Fareham was affected. Burials were average for most of 1638 but rose sharply in August when twelve people died and they remained above average until the end of the year. Yet the disease never reached crisis proportions. As was typical of several such milder epidemics there is no sign of family grouping with the twelve deaths in August each coming from a different family. Whilst influenza type fevers were becoming less of a factor in shaping demographic progress, other diseases were assuming new importance. Especially notable was smallpox which may well have been in Fareham in the following spring, for after a lull at the start of the new year mortality suddenly increased to seven deaths in March and fourteen in April, one of the worst months on record in the town. Like Fareham, Bishops Waltham was clearly visited by the fever in 1638 but not with any undue severity and clearly the two market towns were both losing something of their rural character in health. A similar pattern is shown by Petersfield where the disease seems to have arrived at the end of August 1638 and continued into September (seven) and October (eight), both months recording about double what might be expected. Although Richard Naino and Joan, his wife, were buried on successive days at the start of September, there are no signs of severe family groupings in the burials and the disease may have only affected the weak or those already infirm. By the end of October and certainly by mid-November the disease seems to have passed and there followed a lull before renewed high mortality from January to April. Sixty-six burials were recorded in 1639, the worst single year for the town since 1563, half of them in the first four months of the year. April was especially bad with twelve deaths, eight of them in the first week of the month. Children

made up almost two-thirds of the casualties in the second bout of the disease which tends to eliminate typhus and points instead towards smallpox. Interestingly there were local gentlemen killed in both the fever and the smallpox, Edward Morley in October 1638 and John Pey in March 1639, and, although neither could be termed rich in national or even county terms, their deaths show that within small town society relative wealth counted for very little during a feverous epidemic.

The northern towns generally fared quite well during 1638-9. Whitchurch shows no sign of any disease and Kingsclere may have escaped the initial fever although it was clearly infected during the following March and April. Odiham certainly experienced the sickness in 1638. Fifty-six people died over the whole year including thirty-two (57%) in the months from June to October. Ten were buried in August, seven in October and ten in October, the worst totals for these months for over twenty years. March and April 1639 were also sickly and clearly smallpox may have been active in the north as well as the south of the county. However, in neither year was anything like crisis mortality reached with burials staying around 50% up on the norm. Andover had a very bad winter in 1637-8 and 1638-9 was no better. Clearly the disease present in the town followed a very clear seasonal pattern throughout both these winters, at its most active in winter between November and May and easing during the summer (Figure 3/1/11). This chronology again suggests typhus fever but as at Petersfield the proportion of adults dying remained very low which favours an identification of smallpox. The question must remain open in the absence of any contemporary description of the symptoms. Meanwhile in the south west Ringwood seems to have been badly affected by disease throughout 1638 and 1639. However, inadequate registration prevents a full appreciation of the extent of the diseases. Probably Romsey was the town which suffered most in 1638 (Figure 3/1/11). 146 burials were recorded in the year, the highest



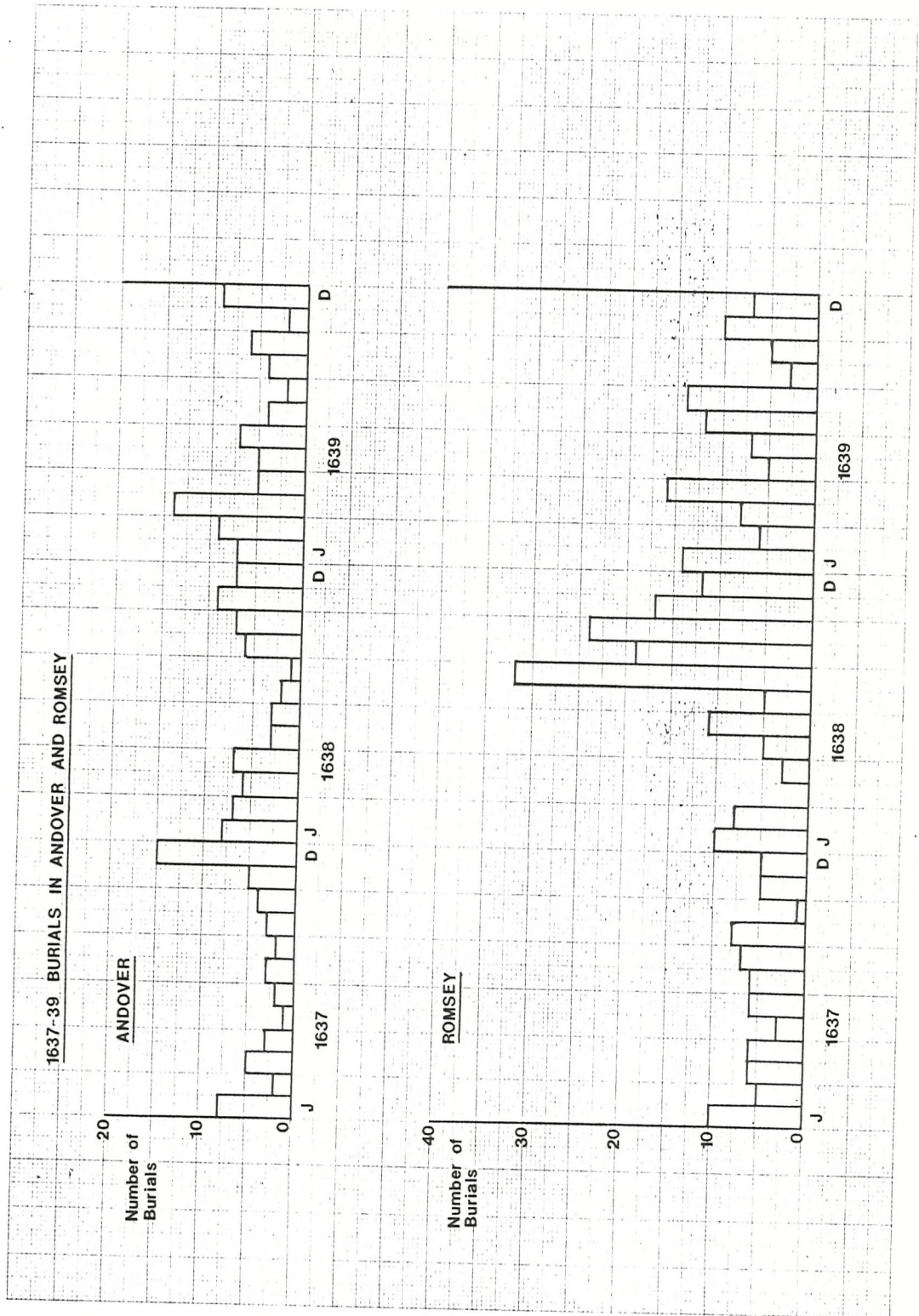


Figure 3/1/11

since the start of the register and worse than any of the feverous epidemics which had racked the town at various times in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Mortality had been slightly high throughout the winter of 1637-8, simmered through June and July and then erupted in August with thirty-two burials. The situation remained bad throughout the rest of the year and into 1639. Although February and March were relatively healthy, sixteen deaths were recorded in April and in the following summer twelve burials were recorded in July and fourteen in August. The spotted fever, probably in conjunction with smallpox, thus held a firm grip on the town for almost the whole of 1638-9. Over 250 people died in these two years, most of them victims of disease, and the close connection of these fevers with the fortunes of the harvest is implied by the fact that in the harvest year from August 1638 to July 1639 172 burials are recorded, the worst on record in the period. Perhaps 10% of the urban population died in this spell of infection, a severe blow to demographic growth.

The early seventeenth century was a period of change for the market towns as regards their susceptibility to disease. Plague had begun to disappear from the urban communities although it may have remained a scourge in the popular mind. However, many of the influenza type fevers had become endemic within the towns and by the 1620s and 1630s were beginning to have a consistently deadening effect on population growth. Moreover, other types of infection were becoming a major and persistent threat to townsmen. Able to recur at regular intervals in the poor quarters of towns, spotted fever, or "the new disease" as it became known, and probably best identified as typhus, and another killer disease, smallpox, became important factors in demographic history and their increasing virulence in the 1630s must be seen as a primary reason behind the slowing of natural population growth. Further, the recurrent character of these infections, unlike plague, gave the urban population less of the long periods of good health which had been a feature of the late sixteenth century and which had facilitated

demographic expansion. The chances of recovery from the effects of disease were increasingly remote as the Civil War years approached.

#### The Civil War and Interregnum

This section on the history of disease in Hampshire from 1540 to the 1660s rests mainly on the evidence of parish registers and, certainly after about 1570, a large number exist giving good coverage of the whole county. Unfortunately the years from 1640 to 1660 were marked by significant disruption to parochial registration. The range of material available for these two decades is, therefore, much more limited and conclusions are necessarily more tentative.

The towns reveal a slow recovery from the epidemics of 1638-9. At Basingstoke the period from February to May 1640 showed above average burials, just as in 1639, and the same was true of Andover. In Romsey burials fell from their level in 1638-9 but were still high due to above average burials in the winter and spring of both 1639-40 and 1640-1. In 1640 seventy-three burials were recorded during the year, forty-one of them in the first five months of the year, and in 1641 eighty-one deaths were registered, forty-six of them in this same period. Without evidence of symptoms it is difficult to determine whether this was due to malignant spotted fever in the town or to smallpox and no doubt both were prevalent as urban infections at this time. However, analysis of the casualties would tend to point towards the former, the so-called 'new disease' or typhus, which thrived among the human lice which lived in winter clothing close to the human body. Unlike smallpox it killed relatively few children. Thus when it is seen that in 1640 only 25% and in 1641 22% of burials were children, much less than in normal healthy years, it may be concluded that in Romsey, where mortality was highest around the new year, rather than in springtime, the main cause may have been typhus fever. Southampton continued to enjoy generally good health in these years though its



poorer parishes must have been infected by typhus and smallpox. The same applied to Winchester where 1640 was apparently free from disease, but in the following year burials rose sharply within the city at St. Maurice's and St. John's although the even spread throughout the calendar and the failure to reach critical levels point towards general ill health rather than any particular epidemic.

For most of the market towns the Civil War began with relatively good health compared with the late 1630s. However, 1642 is outstanding for Petersfield which experienced its worst year since 1563 recording 74 burials, about double the average over the preceding decade. The cause may well have been a mild visitation of bubonic plague, the only case identified in the county for 1642, though the disease was active in other parts of England. Forty-six burials were recorded between September and November, 62% of the total for the year, and there are signs of family groupings which points towards plague. Moreover, the following winter and spring were free from disease, unlike the more prolonged mortality associated with other infections. The plague seems to have begun in September, soon after, significantly, the death of "a stranger soldier" and reached a peak at the end of October. One of the first families to be hit was that of Thomas Jaques who saw two children die before succumbing himself while later on four children of widow Christmas were buried.

The years 1643-4 witnessed a new bout of fever in England due, in part, to the "war typhus" and exacerbated by warm and wet climatic conditions. Accounts of the sickness show it to have caused great weakness with pains in the head and distinguished by spots. For Hampshire 1643 remained generally healthy but by the end of the year mortality began to creep upwards and 1644 was to prove a terrible year, a damaging demographic sequel to the crises of the 1630s for town and country alike (Figure 3/1/12). In Andover thirteen people died in December 1643 and in the following year 170 people were buried,

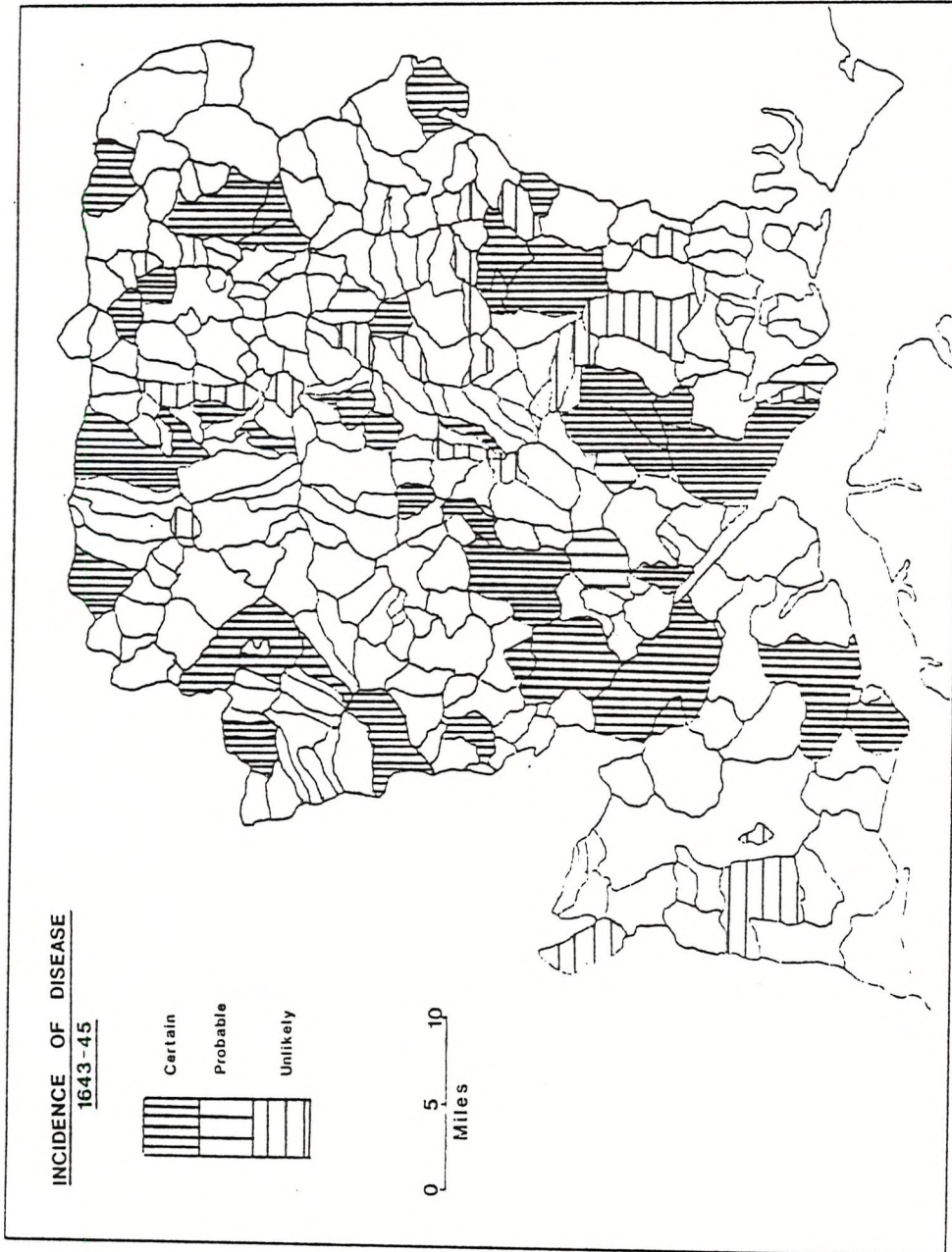


Figure 3/1/12

more than are known to have been killed by the plague of 1605 and almost three times the annual average over the preceding decade of 64.3. Burials were high in the town throughout 1644, not helped by the warfare in the area. In January Charles Reade, a soldier from Warminster, was buried and in the next month Mr. James Morle, a lieutenant from Yorkshire, also died, but the scale of mortality clearly indicates that there was disease in the town. Burials were high throughout the months from February to July and May was especially bad with twenty-five deaths, although this sort of figure did not compare with the monthly totals incurred at the height of the plague in 1605. A slight lull followed in August and September before the year ended with a further three months of unusually high mortality. It would be interesting to know the burials recorded in Alton and Basingstoke, both of which were focal points of military activity, in order to extend the study of how warfare and sickness combined to inflict high mortality on these northern boroughs. Unfortunately the registers are silent for these years and though the small towns of Odiham and Kingsclere did see above average death rates in neither case was it on the scale of Andover.

There is no doubt that both Winchester and Southampton were affected by the fever of 1644. At St. Peter Cheesehill, Winchester burials were very heavy in the first three months of the year after which the register ceases and within the city mortality was also high in St. Michael's parish. At St. Maurice's the position is also clear with high numbers of burials in November and December 1643, a trend which continued through the winter of 1644 and which reached a peak in May. Fifty-two burials were recorded over the whole of 1644 in St. Maurice's compared with an average of 23.4 over the previous five years. In Southampton mortality was very high throughout 1644 and especially at the end of the year, a time when the fever was past its worst elsewhere. At St. Michael's twenty-six deaths were recorded in October, the worst monthly figure since the

terrible year of 1604, indicative of the autumn resurgence of the fever also identified in Romsey.

In Petersfield mortality began to increase at the end of 1643 and continued through the winter and spring before easing in the summer. Fifty-nine burials were recorded over the whole of 1644, less than in either 1642 or 1639 but still well above normal. Unlike plague the disease had no clearly recognisable peaks and deaths were steadily high over the first five months of the year. Nor do they seem to have been enhanced by military casualties. The disease was clearly in the town but it was clearly not so severe as the crisis mortality achieved in Andover where a much larger proportion of the population must have succumbed to the typhus. It may have been the proximity to active warfare which dictated the severity of disease by influencing the level of human movement in and around the towns. This argument is enhanced by the example of Romsey which figured prominently in military activity and which suffered terribly from the fevers of 1643-4. In December 1643 twelve burials were recorded, six of them soldiers "slaine at the routing of the King's forces at Romsey". There followed a year of almost constant infection in which a total of 161 burials were recorded, easily the worst year in the period, even though the town had always had more than its fair share of sickness, and overshadowing other bad years like 1597, 1612 and 1638. About the same number of people died in 1644 as were buried in 1645, 1646 and 1647 put together. Twenty people died in March, several of them soldiers, but in April most of the twenty-three burials were local people and clearly by then the fever had taken hold in the town. Mortality remained high throughout the summer rising again in a new wave of sickness in October and November. Typhus, probably accompanied by relapsing fever and dysentery, maintained the high level of mortality throughout 1644 in Andover and Romsey and in both towns the diseases seem to have been exacerbated by involvement in the war to such an extent as to have made a major impact on the urban population.

The years between 1638 and 1644 had seen a variety of diseases within the market towns of Hampshire. Almost 700 people died in this period at Romsey, compared with about 500 births, robbing the town of much of the natural growth built up earlier in the century. Yet these years were not unique and should be seen, rather, as an extension of the increasingly frequent occurrence of sickness in the market towns which had characterised the early seventeenth century. Nor is Romsey an isolated example. At Petersfield over the same period there were about a hundred more burials than baptisms and Andover shows a similar pattern. Clearly disease was beginning to erode the natural growth which had been characteristic of the market towns.

Just as the small towns had begun to assume an increasingly urban disease pattern with sickness increasingly endemic, especially in the largest communities like Andover, Romsey and Basingstoke, so the traditional interrelationship between population and the harvest which had been especially marked in the market town with its intimate rural connections, began to ease in its effects. This may be illustrated by the late 1640s after the war typhus had left the county. The harvest of 1646 was deficient and was followed by three consecutive bad harvests, the first of which, in 1647, was especially bad in the West Country. Hampshire seems to have shared the substandard crops of these years for the price paid by Winchester College for wheat rose from 29.59s per quarter in 1645 to 48.88s in 1646, a jump of 65%, and the price remained above 50s per quarter for the next three years.<sup>1</sup> In 1597 and 1630 such alarms had been reflected by increased mortality as those on the borderline of subsistence found food more difficult and expensive to come by. This does not seem to have been repeated in Hampshire during the late 1640s for the period 1646-9 is one of good health throughout the county. Among all the towns with available records burials were

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1. W. Beveridge, Prices and Wages, op.cit., pp. 5-90.

mainly average for all four years. Perhaps, as the markets grew in size and communications improved, the towns may have acquired wider trading horizons with the access to more distant food resources, and the isolation of the small boroughs, already eroded in Tudor England, was almost extinguished by the mid-seventeenth century with consequent economic, social and demographic effects.

After these years of relative good health, sickness began to reappear in some towns during 1652-3. Burials began to rise in in Petersfield in March 1653 when ten deaths were recorded and then a more prolonged increase set in towards the end of the year with above average mortality from September onwards. Fifty-three people died in the town during 1653, double the level of the previous five years but not indicative of any severe epidemic in the borough. The same was true of Ringwood where sixty-two burials were recorded in 1653, the highest total since 1638, and in the following year seventy-seven people died, on a par with totals recorded around 1612 when the town had been racked by disease. No real peak is apparent in the deaths recorded suggesting a revival of the fevers which persistently threatened the town nurtured, perhaps, by the low-lying marshes of the Avon valley. Population growth in Ringwood was thus stifled yet again, as it had been earlier in the century, by prolonged disease within the community. It continued to suffer in 1655 and 1656 with almost every month recording above average burial totals. As in previous years this type of mild influenza-type fever was probably felt quite extensively within society although it never reached crisis proportions. There are very few instances of burials clustering in households and the two Millers who died in May 1655 and the two Forrests buried in July 1655 were clearly exceptions. Deaths were thus spread over a relatively large number of families and many more must have experienced the sickness without recording actual fatalities. Such disease was something the small town could live with and it did not

cause the paralysis which followed from plague, yet the long-term effects as a brake on population growth are not to be underestimated. Certainly for Ringwood burials outnumbered baptisms in these years and, unless the town received new immigrants, then the overall population would have temporarily declined.

The years 1655-7 saw a succession of bad harvests which seem to have created severe famine fevers in the rural north of Hampshire. There are signs of hardship in the towns with vagrants and wanderers appearing more regularly in the parish registers, like the stranger buried in Andover in 1657 who "died in the High Street, going from tything to tything". Yet the town as a whole, like its neighbour, Basingstoke, shows no increase in mortality at this time. In fact only Alton and Petersfield may have felt any affects from the food shortages in terms of susceptibility to disease, further evidence of an increasing, if incomplete, immunity from the worst demographic effects of a bad harvest.

This growing distinction from the disease patterns of their agricultural hinterlands is further emphasised in 1658 when poor harvests and bad weather combined to create widespread sickness in Hampshire. However, Southampton certainly escaped any severe affects and the 117 burials recorded in Portsmouth was well below average. Significantly it was with these larger boroughs that the market towns must be grouped for most remained free from the worst impact of the fever that swept through lesser hamlets and villages. Only two towns, Odiham and Ringwood, show particularly high mortality in 1658, in both cases the sequel to a succession of unhealthy years. Indeed at Ringwood the sickness prevalent since 1654 reached a new and more serious peak. 109 burials were recorded in 1658, the worst figure for the town over the whole period studied, even higher than the terrible year of 1613. Mortality, which had been running at 32.8 deaths per year on average in the decade 1643-52, had been more than double that figure for each year since 1654 and in 1658 was over three

times greater. However this was most certainly the sort of typhus fever which had become a feature of the market towns rather than the famine-related sickness which struck rural Hampshire.

Many villages and hamlets registered high numbers of burials in the early Restoration years between 1661-4 with persistent fevers. It would be foolish to assume that these diseases had no effects in the market towns but the essential point is that as these communities had grown in size so the mortality inflicted by commonplace infections such as dysentery had declined in relative importance and was playing a much less significant role in the determination of population growth. Thus towns like Alton, Basingstoke, Romsey and Petersfield recorded burials around normal in the early 1660s. Only in the smallest urban communities did rural disease maintain its influence and Whitchurch serves to illustrate the continued vulnerability of the lesser markets to rural fevers and agues. In 1661 43 burials were recorded, about three times the average for the town. Disease came to the town in August 1661 and persisted through the autumn. The whole of 1662 was also unhealthy, 52 burials being recorded during the year, the worst total in the period, and 13 people died in March alone. It appears that the town was affected by a prolonged bout of influenza or typhus fever, active for about seventeen months, only relenting at the start of 1663. Whitchurch was only a little town with a population of less than 800 in 1664 and to such a settlement the loss of nearly 100 people in such a short space of time, many of them to the sickness, was a very severe blow. It illustrates the effect that these rural fevers could still have on a small market community. Odiham also seems to have experienced disease in 1662, recording 54 burials, well up upon usual. The dramatic events of 1665-6 should not obscure the various forms of sickness which affected market towns and up to the very eve of the last great plague epidemic the towns were being tormented by



a wide range of infections, often unidentifiable on the basis of the information available, which all contributed to shaping the course of demographic history.

1665-66: The last Great Plague

The plague of 1665-6 has been immortalised by the writings of contemporaries like Samuel Pepys and later observers like Daniel Defoe.<sup>1</sup> In fact its effects in Hampshire were very scattered and as far as the countryside was concerned the epidemic was much less severe than its predecessors in 1563, 1603 and 1625 (Figure 3/1/13). Nor were the market towns unduly affected outside of Petersfield which offers an invaluable insight into the potential consequences of plague on a small market community and is considered separately and in detail. With this exception mortality was never as severe as in the "larger" towns of Winchester, Portsmouth and Southampton which each suffered very badly. Nevertheless some interesting evidence may still be drawn from other market towns.

Throughout 1665 Basingstoke seems to have avoided the plague. In April 1666 the county quarter sessions were transferred to the town from Winchester because of disease within the city and presumably Basingstoke was still clear at this time. However on 16 May 1666 the parish register records the passing of "John Cowdry, the shoemaker, buried of the plague". Although this is the first death specifically marked as the result of the plague, Cowdry's daughter had died at the start of May and could have been the first casualty. At this stage the infection seems to have been confined to this one household with Cowdry's son and apprentice dying before the end of the month. A more serious outbreak occurred in August with twenty-four people dying, twenty of them from the plague and in September fifteen people died, twelve of the plague. The disease persisted until November although one death in the following February

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1. S. Pepys, Diary and Correspondence, op.cit.; D. Defoe, Journal of the Plague Year, (Everyman edition, London, 1908).

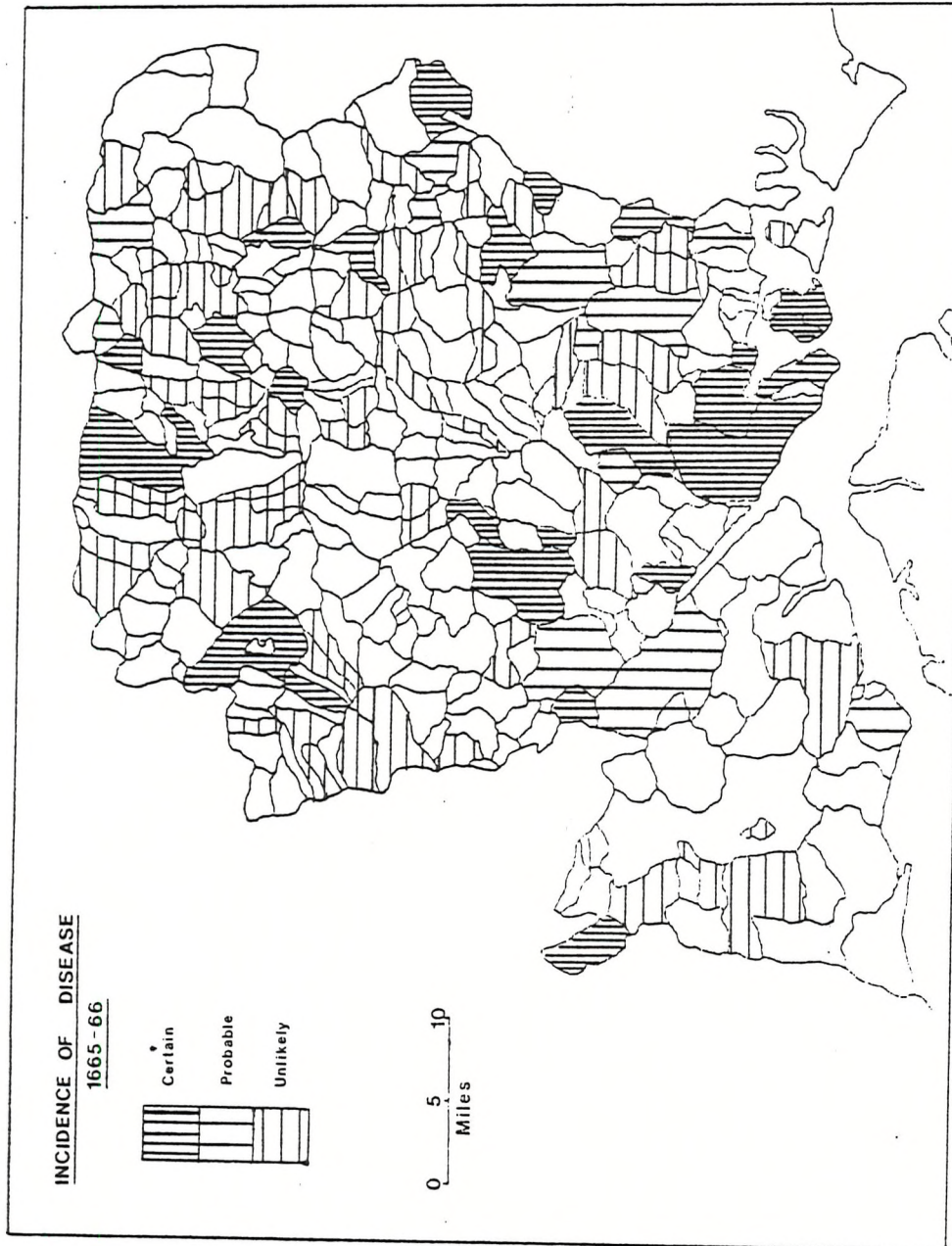


Figure 3/1/13

was also attributed to the pestilence. Over the whole of 1666 80 deaths are recorded in Basingstoke compared with an average of 50.2 over the previous five years, a clear increase but not representative of any crisis within the town. 44 burials were described as from the plague although the visitation may have been more severe for a note in the churchwardens' accounts states that the mortality was upwards of 80. Whether this applies only to plague deaths or is the overall total is unclear but either way the town does not seem to have been severely distressed especially as the Quarter Sessions continued to be held there through the summer. The churchwardens spent 1s 6<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>d for "three chafing dishes, resin, frankincense and tobacco sticks to burn in the church in the time of the Visitation", indicative of the enhanced religious awareness prompted by outbreaks of plague whose latent devastation always aroused fear even in communities which escaped or were only marginally affected.<sup>1</sup> In Basingstoke the disease was probably confined to a very small area but must have been horrific for certain families. The Puckeridges, for example, lost four children in August 1666 before John Puckeridge, an alehouse keeper, also died at the end of the month and subsequently on 15 September his widow was also buried.

Alton and Fareham saw the disease though, like Basingstoke, it had very little effect. Romsey and Ringwood may well have escaped altogether. However a very interesting record is available from Kingsclere. The town first witnessed the plague at the very end of 1665 when burials, which had been normal throughout the year, suddenly rose and ten people died in December. For the whole of 1666 the parish register is hopelessly incomplete noting just nine burials and a short memorandum in the book comments about the many deaths from the pest which went unrecorded. What is of great interest, however, are the figures provided by the parish overseers' accounts into how this small town coped with the epidemic.<sup>2</sup> Much

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1. F.J. Baigent and J.E. Millard, Basingstoke, op.cit., p. 522.

2. HRO, 90 M 72 PO/1.

money was expended on hiring individuals to watch over infected households. Thomas Osman received £1 10s 9d and Edward Clark 5s 0d for watching over the Morris family whilst others were paid to provide food, bedding and other necessities to the sick family. Goody Woolman and Lawrence May received £3 4s 0d for supplying bread, beer, cheese, beef, mutton, suet and faggotts and at a later date they received soap, candles, oatmeal and salt. There is a record of Goody Morris dying and clearly thereafter her family were confined to their home in an attempt to curtail the disease. They were strictly guarded, or at least money was regularly expended for the purpose, but they certainly were not neglected for the supply of provisions to the house seems to have been very regular. Nor were they the only family to be treated in what appears a very humane fashion given the fear that plague always engendered. The Stones and the Bouts were also provided with beer, bread, cheese, candles, sheets and blankets and Goody Read was once paid 1s 6d for "tending" to one of the Stone family.

As in other towns burials no longer continued in the churchyard and at Kingsclere there are several payments made to men for "moving the sick people to the marsh" and Thomas Howard received 3s 0d on one occasion "for diging 3 graves in ye marsh". Families were clearly moved out of the town to nearby wasteland and it was to this place that food and provisions were increasingly taken. Infected houses in the town were shut off and one Dier received 6d "for nailing up of Bouts his doare". It was probably at the marsh that the pesthouse was built and the accounts for its construction survive. £39 4s 9d was laid out on the building which included watches and the provision of food to the infected. It seems to have been a very simple wooden construction, one Mr. Chain being paid £4 1s for timber and various other men being paid for boards. A small sum, however, was paid to John Fikes for "briks". At least five men were employed during the building and received sums ranging from 8s to £1 8s 6d and several others

were paid for unspecified wares supplied to the pesthouse which presumably were essential furnishings like benches and tables. No doubt it was a spartan life for those forced into the building but it is doubtful whether the parish could have afforded anything more lavish. The expenditure on the pesthouse sent the total payments made by the churchwardens and overseers to £110 5s 3d in the year 1665-6 compared with £80 18s 8d in the year 1664-5. The money was raised by rates within the parish of Kingsclere towards the relief of the visited people which totalled £48 19s 8d, contributions from surrounding parishes which amounted to £45 5s 0d and a donation of £20 from the Bishop of Winchester, leaving, in fact, £3 19s 5d surplus on the account. The town had therefore managed to pay for its relief and pesthouse largely by voluntary charity and seems to have coped moderately well in the circumstances.

The first bill of charges relating to the completed pesthouse relates to May 1666 and bills survive for nine weeks until the end of June giving an insight into the plight of the unfortunate people who suffered from the plague. Food made up the main expenditure with cheese, butter, milk, veal, wheat and malt, all supplied to the house in the first week. Although the infected were removed to the pesthouse and closely watched (money was spent on locks to ensure their confinement), it does seem that as much as possible was done to ease their plight and elementary attempts were made to help them as with the 5s 9d paid out "for cordiales and plague water and medicaments for their smoking and other things needfull for them". In the third week "oyntment" was provided for Mary Webb, "plaster" for John Bruce and "angelica water and treacle" for Betie Read. These payments on medicine and food were maintained throughout May and June 1666 - veal, mutton and bacon were commonly supplied and in the seventh week eleven pounds of beef was purchased for the pesthouse. Dairy products, beer and grain were consumed by the infected inmates whilst salt, thread, start, soap and candles

also appear regularly in the accounts. Special notice was taken of waste products from the pesthouse and boys were paid 6d for digging two pits for the "maligne rubbish".

Later in the year the accounts return to their normal form and no specific disbursements for the pesthouse are made, perhaps indicative of an easing of the plague and that use of the building was discontinued. Certainly the infection was not past for the overseers made many payments to sick inhabitants. Widow Beale, for instance, received 7s "in her sickness and for one weakes churgerie and things which shee tooke", another indication of the attempts to aid the infected as much as possible. Clearly life for the plague-ridden inhabitants of Kingsclere must have been very difficult but they were obviously not neglected by the town authorities. Without adequate registration it is impossible to know how severe the epidemic was and therefore the extent of pressure on the town government. Certainly there was no breakdown in the poor law system which seems to have done its best to relieve the infected to the best of its ability and knowledge. The pesthouse was efficiently supplied with food and other necessities and people were employed not only to guard the infected but also to tend the sick. Perhaps in other communities more severely hit by the disease the degree of compassion revealed in Kingsclere may not have been possible but it does show that it was possible for a small town to cope with an outbreak of plague far more capably than the chaos which seems to have ensued in Southampton, Winchester and Portsmouth.

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The years 1665-6 are usually seen as a turning point in the history of English disease for after 1666 bubonic plague effectively ceased to be a threat to the population and although the memory and fear of the pestilence remained for generations the last outbreak credited by Professor Shrewsbury as being specifically bubonic was

a small Cornish one in 1671. This is, therefore, a convenient place at which to conclude this chronological account of disease in Hampshire. Yet, just how much of a turning point was this? For much of urban Hampshire influenza, typhus and smallpox had been a persistent threat to the community in alliance with other diseases like typhoid and new infections like measles. Though lacking the worst effects of plague they represented a more constant menace to society and one which remained just as active in the 1670s as in the 1660s. As if to immediately reinforce this point it is worth considering the fortunes of Ringwood in the late 1660s. For most of the other towns the last three years of the decade, 1667-9, were very healthy but Ringwood, which had completely missed the plague, was sorely infected with smallpox. The first positive casualty was Christopher Cob, a child buried on 4 December 1667 and marked in the register by the description "pox". Twelve people died that month and others must have also been victims of the disease. In 1668 98 deaths were recorded, the highest total since 1658 and only surpassed twice before in the seventeenth century (Figure 3/1/14). In 1669 mortality was only slightly reduced from the previous year with smallpox prevalent from April to July. Ringwood, therefore, is a fine example of a town racked by disease at various times in the seventeenth century, tormented by fever around 1613, in 1638 and for much of the 1650s and then by smallpox at the end of the 1660s, yet it had totally avoided the plague epidemics of 1603, 1625 and 1666. The end of the threat posed by bubonic plague after 1666 was hardly a turning point in the demographic history of Ringwood nor for many of the other market towns which suffered severely from a wide range of diseases other than plague.

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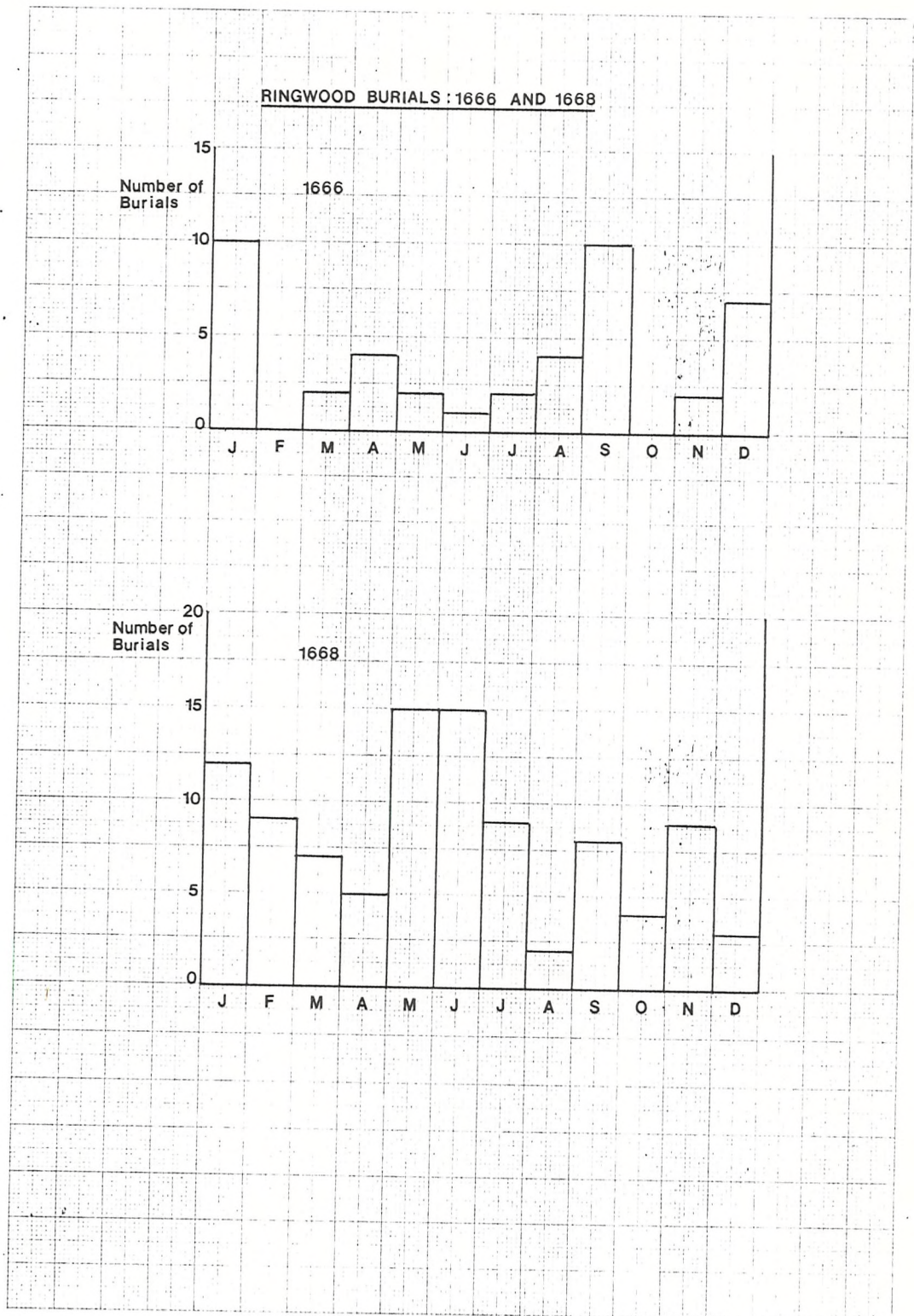


Figure 3/1/14



### The Plague in Petersfield

It is comparatively rare to be able to trace the course of a major outbreak of plague within a town by means of the parish register. Normally some indication of disease is provided by a marked increase in burials, but all too often registration breaks down, either because the clerk himself succumbed or because he simply lost track of all the deaths around him. Some small rural parishes may retain effective records amidst an attack of some deadly disease and the register of Eyam has been studied during the famous plague of 1665-6.<sup>1</sup> However, it is much less usual to be able to make a detailed analysis of an urban population during an outbreak of plague. It is very fortunate therefore that the parish register of Petersfield survives as a valuable guide to the character and effects of plague on one small urban community in 1666. In fact this particular parish is ideal for study for another reason, namely that as a comparatively small parish (1820 acres) compared with, for instance, Romsey (10,216 acres), it may be fairly assumed that a large majority of parishioners were, indeed, townsmen and that the others lived very near to the borough.

The first certain casualty of the plague in Petersfield was Thomas Twine who was buried on April 5th 1666 of whom the parish register records "this was the first man that died of that fatal plague which happened in this town ye yeare above written 1666". Between this date and the end of October 242 burials are recorded in the register most of whom, though not necessarily all, would have died from the deadly disease. This represents about one-fifth of the population as it stood in 1664 although if it is assumed that some deaths went unrecorded, either by error or by concealment, and that some individuals may have died outside the parish and been

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1. L. Bradley, "The Most Famous of all English Plagues: a detailed analysis of the Plague at Eyam 1665-6", in The Plague Reconsidered, (Local Population Studies, 1977), pp. 63-94.

buried elsewhere, then an estimate of one in four of the inhabitants dying is quite possible. Table 3/1/2 shows the monthly burial figures for 1666 compared with the preceding and succeeding periods. The figures for April and May are not excessive but in June 64 burials were recorded, an average of over two each day, compared with a normal monthly average of two or three and far in excess of the next worst figure for June recorded in 1633 and 1674. In July the plague reached its height with 109 burials. The worst single week was from 27 June to 3 July when there were 34 burials while the fortnight from 11 July to 24 July saw 61 burials (Figure 3/1/15). The worst single day was 23 July when 10 people were buried. In August and September burials remained well above average and the plague finally abated in October 1666. Not all these burials would have been of plague and the register offers no indication as to those who succumbed to the disease and those who died from other causes. If 1666 had been an average year then the seven months from April to October would have seen, at the most, about twenty burials. This represents less than 10% of the figure for 1666 so it seems reasonable to treat all the burials recorded as plague deaths - the effect of those who died from other means on the figures and conclusions reached can only be marginal.

The baptismal record for Petersfield shows an increase in the annual average from 37.4 in 1600-9 to 41.2 in the 1650s, a trend continued into the early 1660s with a particularly high baptismal figure of 53 occurring in the year before the plague. However, they were severely depressed in the second half of 1666 and into 1667 before a resurgence at the end of the decade and into the early 1670s. The marriage register also shows signs of the plague outbreak for there was just one wedding in the town between April and October 1666 and even that was early in May before the plague reached its zenith. Yet the December following saw five ceremonies recorded, the second highest figure

Petersfield : Monthly Burial Figures

	April	May	June	July	August	Sept.	Oct.
1666	6*	11	64	109	31	20	3
Annual Average							
1630-9	4.6	2.7	2.5	2.9	3.0	3.4	3.1
1640-9	2.9	2.9	2.0	2.3	1.5	2.9	3.2
1650-9	2.7	2.8	3.2	2.2	2.8	3.2	3.2
1670-9	3.1	2.4	2.1	2.5	1.8	2.5	2.2
Highest recorded for that month excluding 1666	12	9	7	9	6	8	18
Occuring in	1639	1644	1633 1674	1639	1632	1631	1642

\* 2 pre-plague

Table 3/1/2

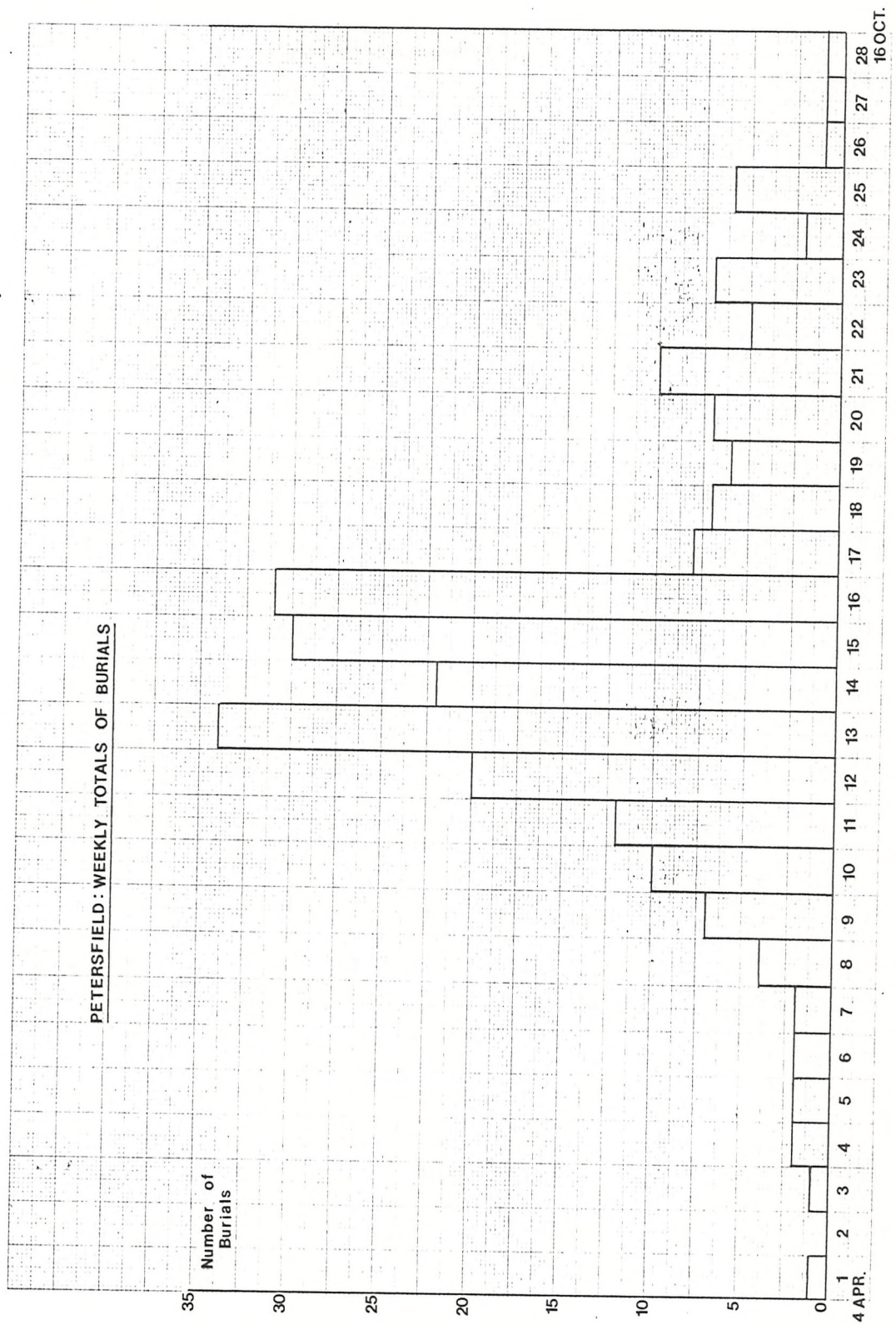


Figure 3/1/15

for any one month since the commencement of the register. Clearly the plague visitation had a profound effect on all the demographic indicators of the town.

This may well be illustrated by the figures for the cumulative natural increase of population. The plague of 1666 completely erased the total natural increase which had been built up since 1630 but it was followed by a period of sharp recovery until the mid 1670s when the rise was greater than at any time since 1630 (Figure 2/2/11). Cumulative natural increase in population is measured simply from the parish register and since it overlooks any immigration or emigration to or from the town it cannot be used as a measure of total population, but it serves to highlight very graphically the catastrophic nature of the plague in Petersfield in 1666 and the rapidity of the recovery in the decade after. In fact using the Compton Census it may be estimated that the parish had a population of about 1200 in 1676, only one hundred or so less than in 1664. Obviously the plague and the recovery thereafter were momentous demographic phenomena in the life of a small town like Petersfield and worthy of a close analysis. The severity of the disease was recognised at the Quarter Sessions in 1666 which imposed the usual rate in aid from five miles around the infected town but also supplemented this by a sum of £120 granted to Petersfield.

Within individual families, of course, the horror of the plague is all too apparent. One of the first mortalities was Alice Goodwin, the wife of John Goodwin and probably aged in her thirties. She was buried on 9 May. Nine days later her mother-in-law, Elizabeth Goodwin, an elderly widow was also buried. On 4 June John Goodwin, having already lost his wife and mother, saw his younger sister buried. Two days later John's brother Thomas and Thomas's daughter Joan were both buried. A week later, on 13 June, another brother, Timothy, died followed by an aunt and a nephew. On 22 June one of Timothy's children was

buried just five days before the christening of Mary Goodwin, a daughter of Timothy's born shortly after his death and never to see her father alive. Later in the plague another of Thomas Goodwin's children was buried. In all John Goodwin lost his wife, his mother, two brothers, a sister, four nieces and nephews and an aunt during the plague and he must have incurred the responsibility of several young relatives outside his own family unit. There is no evidence of him remarrying and he certainly stayed in Petersfield where his eldest daughter Elizabeth, who must have been pressed into domestic duties even earlier than usual and who was aged eleven at the time of the plague, later married in 1677. The grief and sadness can be reflected by countless other examples. John Hunt saw his wife and four children all buried within four days in July 1666. Some families which had escaped the disease through June and July were devastated in the closing weeks of the outbreak, like the household of Richard Walker which lost Richard himself and five of his children all at the end of August and in early September. Children lost parents, husbands lost wives, brothers lost sisters and everybody must have seen friends or acquaintances die in the plague.

Table 3/1/3 shows the distribution of the plague period burials between families. Certain individuals cannot be ascribed to a known family although they may well have been living with affected households. Otherwise 112 families are known to have suffered during the outbreak. The worst effect was on three families, those of Henry Reynolds, Richard Walker and John Girdler, which each suffered six burials, but these were exceptional among the population. In fact fifty families (45%) experienced only one fatality and a further twenty-eight families (25%) had only two burials. The clear majority of households hit by the disease therefore suffered only one or two known burials and the spectre of totally devastated households must have been relatively rare.

Numbers of Burials per Family

Number of Burials	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Number of Families	50	28	18	8	5	3	(112)
Totals	50	56	54	32	25	18	(235)

Table 3/1/3

The 112 families with burials in the plague period are further analysed in Table 3/1/4. The figure for thirty-two families where all the members died is somewhat misleading for it includes several examples where a burial is recorded in the register but few or no other details of the family are known. There are, in fact, very few cases where it is possible to say for certain that a whole family was wiped out; those of Henry Reynolds, John Bridger and Edward Triggs are examples. The turmoil caused to family life is, nevertheless, very clear for in only twenty cases, less than one in five, did both parents survive. About one-third of the families were left with only one parent, a very difficult situation especially when there were children to be cared for. Thomas Perkins, for example, lost his wife and four children in the plague but he himself survived with other offspring to be looked after. Life must have become very difficult for mothers like the wives of Nicholas Knight and William Doling who were widowed and left with young children and no breadwinner in the family. Remarriage was sometimes the answer. Nine of these widows or widowers are known to have remarried in the town but a large number, twenty-three out of the forty-three families which lost one parent, disappear from all the records for the parish. This would indicate that many of the one-parent families moved away from Petersfield either to seek

Families with burials in the plague period

1. Families where all members died*		32
2. Husband and wife survived with or without children		
(a) later baptisms recorded	12	20
(b) no later baptisms recorded	8	
3. Husband survived (sometimes already a widower) with or without children		
(a) remarried after plague	5	19
(b) no remarriage but later evidence of family	5	
(c) no further record	9	
4. Wife survived (sometimes already a widow) with or without children		
(a) remarried after plague	4	24
(b) no remarriage but later evidence of family	6	
(c) no further record	14	
5. Families where only children survived		
(a) later evidence of existence of family	6	17
(b) no further record	11	
		<hr/> 112 <hr/>

\* includes several cases where a burial is recorded and no other details of the family are known. In fact, very few cases where it can be said for certain that a whole family was wiped out, e.g. Henry Reynolds, John Bridger and Edward Triggs.



the moral and financial help of relatives and friends elsewhere or to find a new spouse in alternative parishes where they settled permanently. Many children, however, were left completely orphaned by the plague for there are seventeen known families where both parents died leaving infants and older children behind them or where one parent was already dead and the second perished in the plague. One such case was the Ruffin family where John Ruffin, his second wife Rose and his daughter Joan were buried leaving behind his other children. The plight of such families represents one of the most tragic aspects of the plague and at least fifty children must have been orphaned in this way. Again, it is noticeable that there is no further record of two-thirds of these families and most of these boys and girls must have been taken in by relatives outside the town.

Previous studies of bubonic plague, especially by medical historians, have been fairly unanimous in their conclusions when it comes to the age and sex distribution of mortality. Most authorities agree that there was little variation between the sexes in the incidence of plague and they also concur on the age groups most susceptible to infection. Hirst noted that a majority of bubonic cases occur in persons aged between ten and thirty-five years, the very young and the very old being relatively less affected.<sup>1</sup> Similarly Pollitzer commented that the incidence of bubonic plague was highest in adolescents and adults up to the age of forty-five.<sup>2</sup> The figures for Petersfield are set out in Table 3/1/5 and show a somewhat different pattern. The determination of age from the parish registers is beset by many problems. The ages are, in fact, the time from baptism to burial while exact identification is not always possible from vague descriptions such as 'John Compton's son' or 'Arthur Goldring's child' when the father concerned had more than one son or several children. Nevertheless it is clear that children aged nine or less made up one-third of all those buried in the

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1. L. Bradley, English Plagues, op.cit., p. 73.

2. R. Pollitzer, Plague, (Geneva, 1954), p. 504.

Age and Burials

<u>Age</u>	<u>Number of Burials</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
0-9	78	32.2
10-19	53	21.9
20-29	20	8.3
30-39	25	10.3
40-49	20	8.3
50-59	13	5.4
60 +	10	4.1
unknown	23	9.5
	<u>242</u>	<u>100.0</u>

Age group 10-39 = 40.5% of burials

Table 3/1/5

plague period. Some may well have died from the same causes that every year created high infant mortality but it is still apparent that young boys and girls were by no means spared in the plague. Of those for whom definite ages can be fixed, 45 out of 78, seven were not yet one, twenty-five were aged between one and four and thirteen were between five and nine. The low number of infants below one year old, who were especially vulnerable to death even in healthy years, would tend to suggest that most of the children buried had in fact succumbed to the plague. Returning to Table 3/1/4 it should be noted also that in twenty families only children died. The main explanation proposed for the supposed lesser vulnerability of children to plague depends on assumptions made about the varying possibilities of contact with the disease rather than any intrinsic epidemiological explanation. It is hard to understand quite why when a community was hit by plague children should have been less likely to come into contact with the disease. The infected fleas and rats by which the disease was spread were unlikely to have been respectful of age. If adults up to the age of forty were more likely to meet infection were they not just as likely to introduce the disease, either by the rat flea or the human flea, to their own children with whom they lived so closely in the small cramped houses of the time? In many of the examples of one parent dying, at least one child is buried as well, often after the mother or father who may have first introduced the disease to the household. Children were always exposed to illness of all kinds and their age and lack of natural resistance made them particularly susceptible and it is difficult to understand why plague should be any different. Certainly in Petersfield, 32% of all burials were of children aged below ten and it is much easier to sympathise with Stitt who wrote that "age, sex and race, and occupation are not pre-disposing factors of importance in connection with plague".<sup>1</sup>

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1. quoted in C. Morris, "The Plague in Britain", Historical Journal, xiv, (1971), pp. 205-24.

However, taking children under ten as a percentage of the total burials relative to other age groups, although the 32% was a large proportion, it was actually smaller than would have been expected in a normal year. Throughout the 1650s children and infants had averaged 42% of annual burials and in some bad years like 1650 had reached three-fifths of all burials. Therefore the experience of Petersfield does tally with other analyses, like that of the Hollingsworths on London, which found that the percentage of children dying in a plague year declined relative to other age groups compared with normal years. In Petersfield 40.5% of all the burials between April and October 1666 came from the age groups 10-39 years, far above what would usually be expected. In that those aged forty and over made up only about 18% of all burials some credence can be attached to the hypothesis that the elderly emerged relatively unscathed from a plague epidemic. This may be attributed to greater natural resistance to illness as much as to less exposure to infection. However, it is only to be expected with low life expectancy that these age groups would figure less prominently in the mortality figures simply because there were less of them at risk. It is impossible to ascertain any valid estimates of numbers vulnerable within any particular age group but it seems likely that in carrying off forty-three of the more senior inhabitants of the town, the plague made a considerable dent in the ranks of the over forties in Petersfield. The overall conclusion from the figures available for the incidence of plague on age is, therefore, that all age groups suffered severely and that, while men and women in their 'teens, twenties and thirties did suffer relatively worse than other groups compared with more typical years, it is quite wrong to say that the very young and the very old were unaffected by the plague. It is, perhaps, more important to point to the figure that over half the casualties were unmarried and below twenty years of age, a sizeable blow for

the future childbearing capacity of the town and something with long-term demographic consequences. This is clear from the demographic stagnation of the town in the years between 1676 and 1725 (Appendix II).

As for the incidence of plague on the sexes (Table 3/1/6) there is a slight female majority overall but not of any great significance. The Hollingsworths found a considerably greater male mortality but this is not reflected in Petersfield. If the analysis is restricted to those of ten and over of known age then 69 males were buried compared with 72 females. It is, perhaps, noticeable that in the age groups over forty more men were dying than women but this may be simply because there were more old men than old women at risk, mothers, having spent much of their earlier lives in the dangerous business of pregnancy and childbirth, being less likely to enjoy any real longevity. Overall, however, the balance between the sexes is fairly even.

The hearth tax of 1664 lists 220 households for Petersfield town, 164 chargeable and 56 unchargeable, and burials can be traced to 70 of these families (Table 3/1/7).<sup>1</sup> Using the tax as a guide to the number of families in the town has drawbacks because of evasion and other omissions, but in the absence of any alternative listing it is of value. It reveals that only about one-third of households suffered recorded fatalities in the plague two years later. However, several families which are known to have been hit by the disease do not appear in the tax record possibly by error, possibly because they arrived in the town between the tax and the plague or possibly because they were too poor to be taxed. Several names which occur in the burial record appear in the tax lists under surrounding parishes. Nevertheless, there is little doubt that the majority of families in Petersfield

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1. PRO, E 179/176/565.

Age, Sex and Burials

<u>Overall</u>		<u>Number of Burials</u>	<u>%</u>
	Male	98	40.5
	Female	113	46.7
	Unknown	31	12.8
	Totals	242	100.0
0- 9	Male	18	23.1
	Female	29	37.2
	Unknown	31	39.7
		78	100.0
10-19	Male	25	47.2
	Female	28	52.8
	Unknown	-	-
		53	100.0
20-29	Male	9	45.0
	Female	11	55.0
		20	100.0
30-39	Male	9	36.0
	Female	16	64.0
		25	100.0
40-49	Male	11	55.0
	Female	9	45.0
		20	100.0

Table 3/1/6

		<u>Number of Burials</u>	<u>%</u>
50-59	Male	7	53.8
	Female	6	46.2
		<u>13</u>	<u>100.0</u>
60+	Male	8	80.0
	Female	2	20.0
		<u>10</u>	<u>100.0</u>
Unknown	Male	11	47.8
	Female	12	52.2
		<u>23</u>	<u>100.0</u>

Table 3/1/6

Hearth Tax

Number of Households:		chargeable	164	
		unchargeable	56	
			<hr/>	
			220	
Households with burials (overall)		70/220		(31.8%)
		(chargeable)	36/164	(22.0%)
		(unchargeable)	34/36	(60.7%)
Chargeable hearths	1	8/29		27.6%
	2	18/55		32.7%
	3	7/33		21.2%
	4	1/16		6.3%
	5	1/13		7.7%
	6	1/9		11.1%
	7	1		
	8	4		
	9	1		
	10			
	11			
	12	1		
	13			
	14	1		
	15			
	16	1		
Unchargeable hearths	1	26/39		66.7%
	2	8/17		47.1%

Table 3/1/7



suffered no deaths in 1666. Using the tax as a guide to wealth indicates a clear tendency for the plague to strike most commonly in the poorest households. Just over one-fifth of the chargeable families were hit but three-fifths of unchargeable households succumbed. Overall there were 140 one or two-hearth homes in the town in 1664 of which 60 (43%) had a mortality in 1666. Within the ranks of the chargeable houses only ten families taxed on three or more hearths suffered plague deaths out of 80 at risk (13%). The wealthiest casualty was young Norton Holt, son of Mr. John Holt, who was buried on 8 July, but he was just nine months old so it is possible that he actually died for reasons other than the plague. More certain is the case of Alice, wife of John Durrant who was a prominent local figure and onetime mayor assessed on five hearths. The wealthiest individual to suffer a multiple burial in the plague was Giles Stocker, taxed on four hearths, whose wife Jane and young son Richard both died. Like Durrant, he was a leading member of the ruling elite in the town. Thus while it seems that the poor were more likely to die than the rich, there were several exceptions including the families of some important townsmen.

Just why the plague was less virulent among those who were assessed as chargeable households and, in particular, among those possessing three or more hearths, is unclear. Paul Slack has shown some correlation between plague mortality and wealth among the parishes of Bristol but such zoning would not have occurred in a small town like Petersfield where "rich" and poor inhabitants would have co-existed side by side.<sup>1</sup> In a town so small there can have been few variations in standards of housing and hygiene between different streets and tenements. Nor is it likely that there were many in the town who could afford to leave Petersfield to seek sanctuary elsewhere, although some may have lodged temporarily with friends or relatives. Conditions of hygiene could not have

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1. P. Slack, "The Local Incidence of Epidemic Disease: the case of Bristol 1540-1650", in The Plague Reconsidered, (Local Population Studies, 1977), pp. 49-62.

varied to any significant extent in such a small community but it is possible that there were contrasts between individual houses according to wealth rather than between parts of the town. These differences could have been reinforced by contrasts in the type of diet, quality of clothing and other slight improvements in the standard of living which came from a higher level of possessions and which may have made the poorer inhabitants rather more susceptible to infection. Perhaps the better-off inhabitants troubled more about the elementary precautions against disease, perhaps the very poor simply did not care. Possibly the answer lies in the disputed question of how the disease was transmitted. The black rat which carried the plague flea was a weak, shy animal which tended to dwell in "the thatch roofs and clay walls of the poor man's cottage and ate ... his grain". Its nature was not migratory so that while the disease could easily pass from one house to another through the thin joining walls, any short break, such as a road or a vacant plot, could deter its progress beyond the poorest tenements. Certainly it would seem that even a small gap between houses could be enough to divide a sick household from one that escaped mortality and this fact did not go unnoticed by contemporaries. Samuel Pepys recounted how when he was eating "one at the table told an odd passage in this late plague, that at Petersfield, I think, he said, one side of the street had every house almost infected through the town, and the other not one shut up".<sup>1</sup> In this way some of the wealthier houses may have been protected for they only needed a slight separation from the poorest houses, where the rat found his most favourable habitat, to in fact enjoy an effective, if not perfect, defence. It is noticeable that men like Durrant and Stocker whose families were hit, as local officials, may have had some reason to frequent the homes of the sick and suffering, while other relatively well-off people in Petersfield may have come

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1. S. Pepys, Diary and Correspondence, op.cit., Vol. III, p. 99.

into closer contact with the disease through their occupation. Quite why one family suffered and a neighbouring household was spared is one of many imponderables in disease history but the lesson from Petersfield in 1666 is clearly that there was much more likelihood of the poorer population suffering in the plague than the better-off inhabitants, even in a very small town.

However, this interpretation can be further qualified by relating age to the wealth of those who died in the plague (Table 3/1/8). Of 78 children of less than ten years of age who were buried, half came from chargeable households and several such families lost more than one of their offspring. John Winter, assessed on three hearths, saw three children die and his brother William, taxed on two hearths, lost four children during the plague. Similarly in the 10-19 age group about half the burials came from chargeable households. Thereafter, however, in the older age groups the proportion of mortalities coming from unchargeable and poorer backgrounds increases considerably. Taking the ages 30-49, twenty of the forty-five burials (44%) are known to have come from exempt households compared with fifteen (33%) from chargeable families. The sample size is clearly small and the number of unknowns is high but it may be tentatively proposed that whereas children were fairly equally susceptible to plague in Petersfield, amongst the older age groups it was those from the poorest backgrounds who were at most risk.

This impression is further strengthened by looking at the figures from the point of view of the actual casualties (Table 3/1/9) rather than the households affected. Of the 242 deaths, 102 were from known chargeable houses and 85 from unchargeable families, a ratio of about 6:5, whereas the ratio of chargeable to unchargeable households overall in 1664 was about 3:1. Clearly the proportion dying from poor families was greater than the proportion from better-off households. When the mortality below the age of

Age and Hearth Tax households hit by plague

	<u>Hearths</u>	<u>Chargeable</u>	<u>Unchargeable</u>	<u>Unknown</u>
1. Age 0-9	1	13	21	10
	2	22	8	-
	3	2	-	-
	4	1	-	-
	5	-	-	-
	6	1	-	-
		<u>39</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>10</u>

39/78 50%

29/78 37.2%

10/78 12.8%

i.e. 50% of children aged 0-9 who were buried  
came from chargeable households

2. Age 10-19	1	2	16	7
	2	18	4	-
	3	5	-	-
	4	1	-	-
		<u>26</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>7</u>

26/53 49.1%

20/53 37.7%

7/53 13.2%

3. Age 20-29	1	3	5	6
	2	1	-	-
	3	4	-	-
	4	1	-	-
		<u>9</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>

9/20 45%

5/20 25%

6/20 30%

Table 3/1/8

	<u>Hearths</u>	<u>Chargeable</u>	<u>Unchargeable</u>	<u>Unknown</u>
4. Age 30-39	1	3	9	5
	2	4	4	-
		<u>7</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>5</u>
7/25 28%				
13/25 52%				
5/25 20%				
5. Age 40-49	1	1	5	5
	2	5	2	-
	3	1	-	-
	4	-	-	-
	5	1	-	-
		<u>8</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>5</u>
8/20 40%				
7/20 35%				
5/20 25%				
6. Age 50-59	1	1	4	3
	2	1	3	-
	3	1	-	-
		<u>3</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>3</u>
3/13 23.1%				
7/13 53.8%				
3/13 23.1%				
7. Age 60+	1	-	2	4
	2	1	1	-
	3	2	-	-
		<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
3/10 30%				
3/10 30%				
4/10 40%				

	<u>Hearths</u>	<u>Chargeable</u>	<u>Unchargeable</u>	<u>Unknown</u>
8. Unknown age	1	2	1	15
	2	1	-	-
	3	-	-	-
	4	4	-	-
		<u>7</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>15</u>
7/23 30.4%				
1/23 4.3%				
15/23 65.3%				

Total Casualties :	242	chargeable	102	42.1%
		unchargeable	85	35.1%
		unknown	55	22.8%
			<u>242</u>	
		102:85		6:5

<u>Chargeable burials (N=102)</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>
	0- 9	39	38.2
	10-19	26	25.5
	20-29	9	8.8
	30-39	7	7.0
	40-49	8	7.8
	50-59	3	2.9
	60+	3	2.9
	Unknown	7	6.9
		<u>102</u>	<u>100.0</u>

i.e. of chargeable burials 63.7% were under 20  
17.7% were aged 30-59

<u>Unchargeable burials (N=85)</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>
	0- 9	29	34.1
	10-19	20	23.6
	20-29	5	5.9
	30-39	13	15.3
	40-49	7	8.2
	50-59	7	8.2
	60+	3	3.5
	Unknown	1	1.2
		<u>85</u>	<u>55</u>

i.e. of unchargeable burials 57.7% were under 20  
31.7% were aged 30-59.

Table 3/1/9

twenty is considered in isolation it can be seen that these deaths represented 63.7% of chargeable burials compared with 57.7% of unchargeable fatalities. However the position is reversed in the case of those dying between the ages of 30-59 which made up 17.6% of chargeable burials and 31.8% of unchargeable deaths. Proportionally more well-off children died than poor children in 1666 and at the same time proportionally more poor adults died in Petersfield than their wealthier counterparts. Relative wealth and the comparative comforts it could bring clearly offered little defence for a child and only began to materially influence health at a later stage in life.

One of the most active debates among plague historians concerns the relative merit of the rival rat flea and human flea interpretations of the transmission of plague among humans and the subject has already been touched on in this study of Petersfield.<sup>1</sup> The former stresses the spread of infection by movement of rats and would probably produce a strong clustering of disease by household while the latter emphasises the role of the human flea as the prime vector and would be reflected by a strong association of plague with household size. There are a large number of factors for which no evidence is available - it is, for instance, quite impossible to know anything about the variations in the density of the rat population - but it may be fairly assumed that the pattern of the disease, the clustering of plague in certain households and its relationship or otherwise with household size, does offer some clue to the means of transmission. In Petersfield the majority of families experienced only one or two burials and the multiple death household was an uncommon occurrence, something which tends to point the finger of guilt at the rat flea. Shrewsbury suggested that with the rat flea theory the time interval

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1. L. Bradley, English Plagues, op.cit., pp. 77-8.



between the first and second case within a single family would be about a fortnight, perhaps followed by a number of cases in a relatively short period. This theory was tested by Bradley for Eyam and may again be examined from the Petersfield evidence. Using families with two or more fatalities the time interval between the first and second burial can be plotted (Figure 3/1/16a). There is a clustering around the 0-4 day period and a second grouping about the 12 day mark. It can be assumed that deaths in the first four days were from the same infection so that in Figure 3/1/16b these are omitted and in cases where a third burial followed, the interval between the second and third burial was taken into account. The period around the 12 day mark again stands out, quite close to Shrewsbury's rat flea timetable. However, there is also a high frequency around the 4-6 day period which tends to negate any firm conclusions.

It has been seen that the plague in Petersfield was very selective in its victims. In a small urban community like Petersfield it is hard to imagine that during the outbreak Edward Rooke's household never came into contact with the family of his brother Richard, yet while Edward apparently escaped the infection completely, Richard died and so did two of his children. Such examples could be repeated from many other families in the town. For the six months or so that the disease was in Petersfield everybody must surely have at some time met with sick persons, yet two-thirds of families escaped without mortality, tending to support the rat flea theory. However, the intervals between burials are ambiguous and could be seen as indicating the shorter time gap that would be expected from human flea transmission. Could not both have been in existence in Petersfield and could individual susceptibility have been influenced by other factors? As Schofield writes, "the chance of catching a disease may be influenced by habits of diet, dress or hygiene

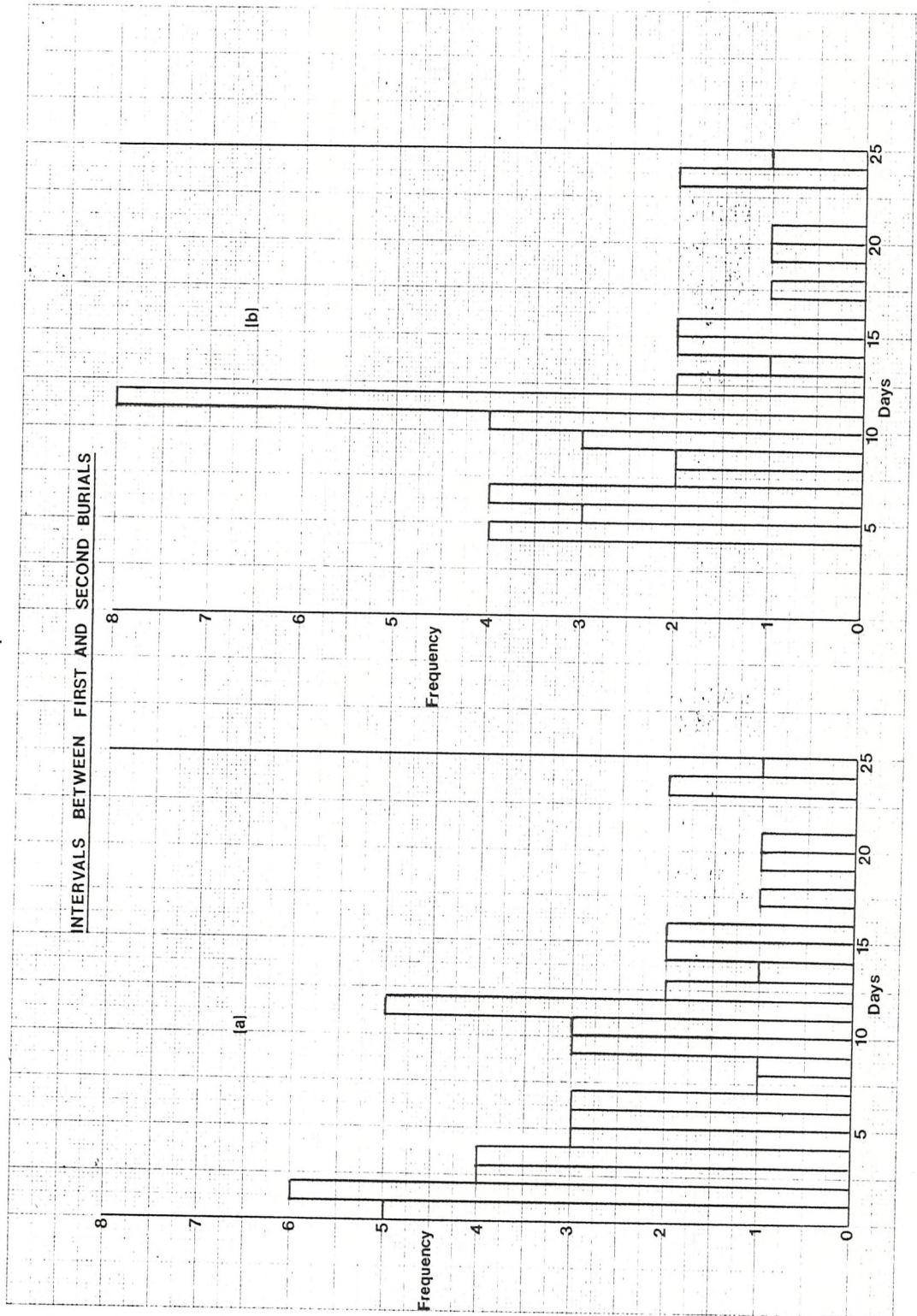


Figure 3/1/16

which may vary systematically with the social and economic status of the household".<sup>1</sup> Might not some of the variations in mortality, the escape of one family but not another, also be put down to simple good fortune or the hand of God?

What of the families that escaped unscathed during the plague? Using the hearth tax, 150 families (68.2%) were unaffected, although they must have shared much of the fright and horror of the epidemic. Comparing this list with the next hearth tax record of 1674 and some rentals from the intervening period, some indication of the subsequent fortunes of these families is possible (Table 3/1/10). About a third of these families did not reappear in the town after the plague. In a few cases, like that of William Dennier, the head of household had actually died in the short period between the tax assessment and the plague, but in most examples the family had clearly left Petersfield. There is a clear wealth pattern to these emigrants though it is impossible to say whether they were simply fugitives from the plague or on the move for some other reason. The wealthiest of the families to disappear from the town records were those of Mr. John Rose and Mr. Thomas Vallor, both taxed on six hearths, and in total it can be said that twenty-four chargeable families are known to have departed compared with only seven unchargeable households. Among the two dozen taxable families only five were one-hearth households and about half could be classified among the lower middle classes with three to six hearths. It would seem, therefore, that among the families which escaped the plague and left the town, it was those groups slightly above the poorest sections of the population that were the most mobile. Several may have been prompted to leave Petersfield because of infection in other branches of their families other than their own particular household unit. Certainly in the cases of William Dallimer, George Goldring,

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1. R.S. Schofield, "An Anatomy of an Epidemic", The Plague Reconsidered, op.cit., p. 103.

Families without burials in the plague period but known to  
be in existence in the five years preceding the plague

1. Families with recorded marriages or baptisms after the plague.	50
2. Families with burials, marriages of children or hearth tax recorded after the plague but no baptisms.	69
3. Families which had no record in the register, rentals or hearth tax after the plague.	<u>31</u>
	<u>150</u>

Table 3/1/10

Edward Rooke and many others they witnessed plague in the homes of brothers or sisters in the town which may have encouraged their own departure. It also serves to re-emphasise the point that while two-thirds of the families escaped, almost everybody must have had at least one relative or friend who fell to the disease. A final characteristic of many of the individuals that left Petersfield is that they tended to be names whose roots in the town did not go back very far, men like Roger Fletcher or Robert Street, the former a poor soul exempt in 1664 and the latter taxed on five hearths, neither of whom could trace their family connection in Petersfield back beyond a few years. It must have been much easier for these families, poor or wealthy but without many local ties of kindred, to leave the town in 1666.

The Petersfield register also allows a detailed analysis of the demographic recovery in the following years and a study has been made of the five years from 1667 to 1671. These were years of population growth when aggregate baptisms totalled 208 compared with 142 burials, a birth surplus of 66. Table 3/1/11 shows that the majority of baptisms in this period were to families who had lived in the town before the plague (113 out of 208, 54%). However, the proportion accredited to new families grew dramatically with the five years from about a quarter of births in 1667 to two-fifths in 1671 and at the end of the period it was clearly these newcomers who were taking the lead in Petersfield's population recovery. The high level of children from old established families in the years 1667-8 can be explained in two ways: first, that it reflects under-registration during the actual plague year when children may have been born but their baptism was deferred, and, second, that the inhabitants actually postponed having children while the plague was at its height. It is impossible to tell whether the baptismal services for many children were delayed.

Baptisms 1667-71

	<u>To pre-plague families</u>		<u>To post-plague families</u>		<u>Total</u>
	No.	%	No.	%	
1667	23	74.2	8	25.8	31
1668	34	69.4	15	30.6	49
1669	23	51.1	22	49.9	45
1670	20	40.0	30	60.0	50
1671	13	39.4	20	60.6	33

	<u>Pre-plague families baptisms</u>	<u>with burials</u>	<u>without burials</u>
1667	23	4 (17.4%)	19
1668	34	7 (20.6%)	27
1669	23	4 (17.4%)	19
1670	20	2 (10.0%)	18
1671	13	1 (7.7%)	12

Gap between Baptisms

	<u>Pre-plague with Burials</u>	<u>Pre-plague without Burials</u>	<u>New related Families</u>
1667	30.3	29.1	-
1668	38.7	30.6	-
1669	30.0	30.6	15.6
1670	30.0	26.9	18.0
1671	-	34.2	22.4
	(months)	(months)	(months)

Table 3/1/11

Whilst it seems quite likely in view of the crowded burial schedule of the vicar and the risks of contagion involved in any public gathering, it should also be remembered that contemporaries were always anxious to baptise their offspring as soon as possible, especially if mortality was likely. Nobody could be sure that their child would escape the plague (it has already been seen that wealth was no guarantee) and most parents were probably still very concerned to have their children christened. These, of course, were children conceived before the plague. There is, however, some evidence that the number of children conceived at the time of the disease in Petersfield was depressed, not surprising in the air of foreboding which must have prevailed. Between May and October 1666 only twelve children were conceived compared with an average for these months in the rest of the decade of twenty-one. Yet at the end of the year, in November and December, after the end of the plague, conceptions were well above average and the boom continued into early 1667, creating the majority of the thirty-one births registered in that year. This is, therefore, some tentative evidence that conceptions were postponed during the plague months and that the high level of baptisms in 1668 reflect a renewed vigour in the pre-existing population before the post-plague families began to really make an impact on baptisms in 1669-70.

Table 3/1/10 shows that one-third of pre-plague families without burials went on to have children after the disease. There were, in fact, clear differences in the pattern of baptisms between these households and those which had suffered mortality. These contrasts can be seen in Table 3/1/11. Of total births to pre-plague families those that had suffered burials made up only a small part, averaging about 15% and only once, in 1668, reaching 20%. Clearly the plague had an inhibiting effect, both psychological and medical on future childbirth among parents who had lost children in 1666. Both Creighton and, more recently,

Wrigley have commented on the decreased fertility of women who survived the plague and there is no reason to doubt this from the Petersfield evidence. For those that did continue their families the average gap between baptisms of children in the five years after the plague was usually higher than for families which had experienced no direct mortality. Thus the families which figure among the burials in Petersfield during the plague were not only producing less children than their neighbours who had been spared but they were producing them at a slower rate.

With demographic stagnation among some of the pre-plague families in the town much of the emphasis in the population recovery fell upon the 'post-plague' or 'new' families, namely those where the head is not recorded as marrying or as a father before April 1666. In the five years after the disease 60 such families can be identified (Table 3/1/12). In most cases the new head of household can be positively identified as the child of a pre-plague family, like William Westbrooke, the son of a very old Petersfield family who married in 1667 and had his first child the year later. The first newcomer to the town was John Osborn whose daughter Ann was baptised in late 1667 but there were few other families entirely new to the parish and they represented less than a quarter of all the new households established in Petersfield after the plague. Clearly the town was quite capable of reasserting itself demographically and returning to a positive upward trend in population without the help of any sizeable immigration from outside. Indeed, some of these unrelated families do not appear to have stayed very long and many disappear from the parish records after only a very brief stay in the town. Rather, the demographic emphasis falls on the members of old Petersfield families, both those which suffered in the plague and those which escaped, who were marrying and establishing new households in the months and years immediately after the disease had abated.



New Families

	1667	1668	1669	1670	1671	
Son/related	7	11	10	14	4	(46)
No apparent relationship	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>(14)</u>
	8	14	15	17	6	(60)

Table 3/1/12

In the aftermath of the plague the population of Petersfield recovered swiftly. There was, however, no noticeable effect on the overall average interval between baptisms (Table 3/1/13). This had been running at about twenty-nine months in the five years before 1666 and in the five years after the plague fell to about twenty-eight months, but this small change was of very little consequence for the population many of whom were clearly not encouraged to adapt their conjugal habits in the wake of the mortality crisis. However, the importance of the new families is further emphasised in this context by Table 3/1/11 which shows that their fertility as indicated by the average time interval between baptisms was far higher than for pre-plague families with an average gap of usually one to two years compared with two to three years for the older households. Whilst the average for the whole town can be shown to be very stable compared with the years before the plague it is clear that these important new families were somewhat unrepresentative of general family life. Perhaps reacting to new opportunities in the town which had lost many adults, they responded by having children much more frequently than their predecessors and the surviving pre-plague families around them. Another marked difference which had an effect on fertility was the gap between marriage and the baptism of the first child (Table 3/1/13b). During the early 1660s the first child was usually born about a year after the wedding. However, the new families established immediately after the plague in 1667 and 1668 were baptising their first child barely nine months after marriage and there is a greater regularity in the number of pre-nuptial conceptions. John Ayling was typical of many such new families. He married his wife Mary in April 1667, both of them coming from long-standing Petersfield families and their first child, a son also called John, was christened ten months later in February 1668. Their second child, a daughter named after her mother, was baptised a further nineteen months later. These new

(a)

Average Gap between Baptisms  
(i.e. not first children)

	<u>No. traced</u>	<u>months</u>
1661	24	29.8
1662	29	32.6
1663	26	30.5
1664	20	26.0
1665	34	27.4
1666	19	34.0
1667	20	29.4
1668	33	31.6
1669	25	27.2
1670	29	24.2
1671	23	27.0

(b)

Average gap between Marriage  
and first baptism

	<u>No. traced</u>	<u>months</u>	<u>PNP</u>
1661	3	9.3	1
1662	2	11.0	-
1663	3	14.3	-
1664	5	11.4	3
1665	4	13.8	-
1666	3	10.7	-
1667	4	9.5	1
1668	7	9.4	1
1669	6	11.7	2
1670	7	12.9	2
1671	3	11.0	-

Table 3/1/13

families were having their first child earlier than average and were having subsequent children quicker than average. One might have suspected that they were also marrying at an earlier age but this is not borne out by the available evidence.

Table 3/1/14 shows that, if anything, there was a slight increase in the age of first marriage especially for women, a factor which, paradoxically, decreased the fertility of these new families.

The main factor involved seems to be the first wedding of several women in their thirties which distorts the average so that whilst most females married at about the same age a shortage of potential wives may have led to the marriage of some women who in other conditions may have remained spinsters.

Several of these new families were, of course, the result of remarriage by one or both of the spouses. The loss of a husband or wife during the plague was a severe blow to the family unit and many widows or widowers sought to remarry very quickly after the disease had ended. Many others may well have remarried outside the town and cannot be traced. Of known examples, every widow who married for a second time after losing a husband in the plague, did so within the period of six to twelve months after her first husband's death. It is noticeable that this was not always necessitated by the presence of young children and the need for a family breadwinner. On the contrary, most of these plague widows took no known children into their second marriage although many went on to have subsequent families. It would seem that the young widow with several childbearing years ahead of her tended to find a new husband very quickly in the years after the plague. The widowers also tended to remarry quickly although some, like Roger Goldring, postponed the event until 1669 even though he had been left with young children to care for after the death of his wife in June 1666. Most men, however, especially those with children, soon found a new wife. Peter Heather's wife Joan was an early plague victim, being buried in May 1666 and two of their children

Age of first Marriage

		<u>Male</u>		<u>Female</u>
1660-6	(19)	25.6	(13)	23.8
1666-71	(11)	26.0	(16)	25.2

Table 3/1/14

also died, one in June and one in July, leaving him with two surviving offspring, the elder of whom could not have been over ten years of age. In November 1666 Peter remarried and thereafter he and his new wife Ann seem to have left the parish. At a time when a mother fulfilled an economic role as well as a maternal function, it was necessary for men like Heather to find a new spouse as soon as possible. It is also very noticeable that they tended to find their new wives in families that had also been hit by the plague. John Glasier's second wife Joan Roakes came from a plague family and so did Peter Heather's new wife Ann Ford. William Naino had married in the early 1660s about the same time as Patience Rooks. Both were in their early twenties. William lost his wife Anne in July 1666 and Patience lost her husband in the same month. Mutual misfortune may have brought them together for they were married in December 1666. Clearly remarriage was very common and important to both parties and many of the new family units formed were part of the demographic revival of Petersfield after the plague.

\* \* \*

The case of Petersfield in 1666 is very interesting both as a study of one particular community and on a wider level as an illustration of the effects and consequences of plague within a small urban community. It therefore fulfils a justifiable purpose within the context of this thesis but at the same time it must be emphasised that such a catastrophic epidemic was very rare and that a clear impression of mortality in the early modern town can only be obtained when the significance of other diseases is fully appreciated.

Part Two : Migration of Population

One of the main themes pursued in this thesis is that the predominant force behind the demographic expansion of the Hampshire market towns was natural growth, namely the relative standing of births and deaths, influenced, in turn, by fluctuations in the levels of fertility and mortality. However, this does not mean that migration of population should be overlooked. Indeed, the importance of mortality in early modern society has been firmly established by recent research and in his study of Southampton Dr. James concludes that the town only maintained and expanded its population by extensive outside recruitment.<sup>1</sup> Several other researchers have concluded that large numbers of people experienced at least one change of abode during their life and migration must have been a common characteristic of the market town communities.<sup>2</sup>

Some idea of the turnover in personnel may be ascertained from the analysis of surnames from lists of inhabitants. In this case, the taxpayers in the subsidy of 1524-5 may be compared with those assessed for the hearth tax of 1664-5. Five towns have been selected for surname analysis, dictated partly by the quality of data and partly by the need to produce a cross section of the different types of market towns. Thus the sample includes Romsey and Andover, two large boroughs, Petersfield, a small rapidly growing town, Alresford, another lesser market, and finally a port, Lymington which, given the significance of seaborne communications, might be expected to produce different results. The figures are set out in Table 3/2/1. In his analysis of Southampton Dr. James discovered that only 13% of names listed in 1454 survived to 1585, a slightly shorter period than that used for the market towns.<sup>3</sup>

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1. T.B. James, thesis, op.cit., p. 49.
  2. e.g. P. Clark, "The Migrant in Kentish Towns", in Crisis and Order in English Towns, 1500-1700, eds. P. Clark and P. Slack, (London, 1972); P. Spufford, "Population Mobility in Pre-Industrial England", Genealogists' Magazine, xvii, (1973-4), nos. 8-10.
  3. T.B. James, thesis, op.cit., p. 35.



Survival of Surnames in Hampshire Market Towns

	<u>No. of Surnames 1524-5 (A)</u>	<u>No. of Surnames 1664-5 (B)</u>	<u>No. of Surnames Common to (A) and (B)</u>	<u>Common surnames as a % of</u>	
				<u>(A)</u>	<u>(B)</u>
Alresford	68	90	13	19.1	14.4
Andover	122	250	34	27.9	13.6
Lymington	41	78	4	9.8	5.1
Petersfield	68	139	14	20.6	10.1
Romsey	164	139	39	23.8	28.1

Table 3/2/1

His findings are clearly very different from those relating to smaller urban communities where the survival rate is much greater. In Alresford, Petersfield and Romsey around one-fifth of surnames recorded for the towns in the 1520s remained 140 years later and in Andover almost 28% of names listed in 1524 had a counterpart in the Restoration town. Clearly there was a much higher level of stability and continuity among families in these smaller settlements than in a larger town like Southampton. The one exception is Lymington where less than 10% of surnames survived from the 1520s to the 1660s which suggests that turnover of population in a maritime town of any size was likely to be greater than amidst an inland community.

By the 1660s the market towns had grown considerably from their size in the Henrician era. However, it is apparent that in most cases a sizeable minority of the population could trace their ancestry back in the same town for almost a century and a half. This applied to between 10-15% of the population of Alresford, Petersfield and Andover. At Romsey surnames tended to appear several times over in the 1664-5 list to a surprising extent and this meant that, although population had expanded, the number of names was actually reduced. This resulted in the very high proportion of the Restoration population that had connections in the 1520s. Romsey was perhaps exceptional but it is a feature of all the market town lists that names which occur once or twice in the first compilations appear perhaps half a dozen times in the 1660s, something which implies that sons were increasingly inclined to stay within their home community. Of course there are drawbacks to surname analysis because of the presence of common names which need not indicate the survival of individual families by direct descent from 1524 to 1665, but nevertheless the impression remains that, although the

urban personnel was changing, there was a much higher degree of continuity in the market town than in larger boroughs.

This conclusion is reinforced by looking at some of the families which appear in only one list. At Romsey among the surnames present in 1524 but not in 1664 were Page, Sharp, Salt, Holmes and Barwick whose descendants lived in the parish for most of the early modern period. This is even more true of names recorded in 1664-5 but not in 1524-5 which included Brasby, Barton, Chapman, Gasse, Hayward, Holloway, Kent, Pace, Penton, Pile, Post, Saunders and Waldron, in each case families which figure prominently in the parish register from 1570. These and many other families had been represented in Romsey for almost a century and they enhance the degree of continuity achieved between 1524 and 1664.

An extension of this analysis is a process which may be called surname linkage in which the number of names common to towns are plotted for any one year. Again, some of the connections made between two towns may be false because the name in question was very widespread, such as Smith, Brown, Newman or Knight. However, there are sufficient other names to suggest true family links between different towns and these indicate a previous movement of personnel among the various communities. The number of such connections for 1524-5 and for 1664-5 are shown on Figures 3/2/1 and 3/2/2. Not surprisingly there were very few links between either Petersfield or Alresford with Lymington. There were two surnames common to both Alresford and Lymington in 1524-5 including Fisher which was a sufficiently uncommon name to suggest a kindred connection. Overall, however, Lymington appears to have been quite remote from the main lines of movement within the county and may have had little in common with the other inland market towns. Inevitably the greatest linkage in the 1520s was between Andover and Romsey, two relatively large communities and geographically

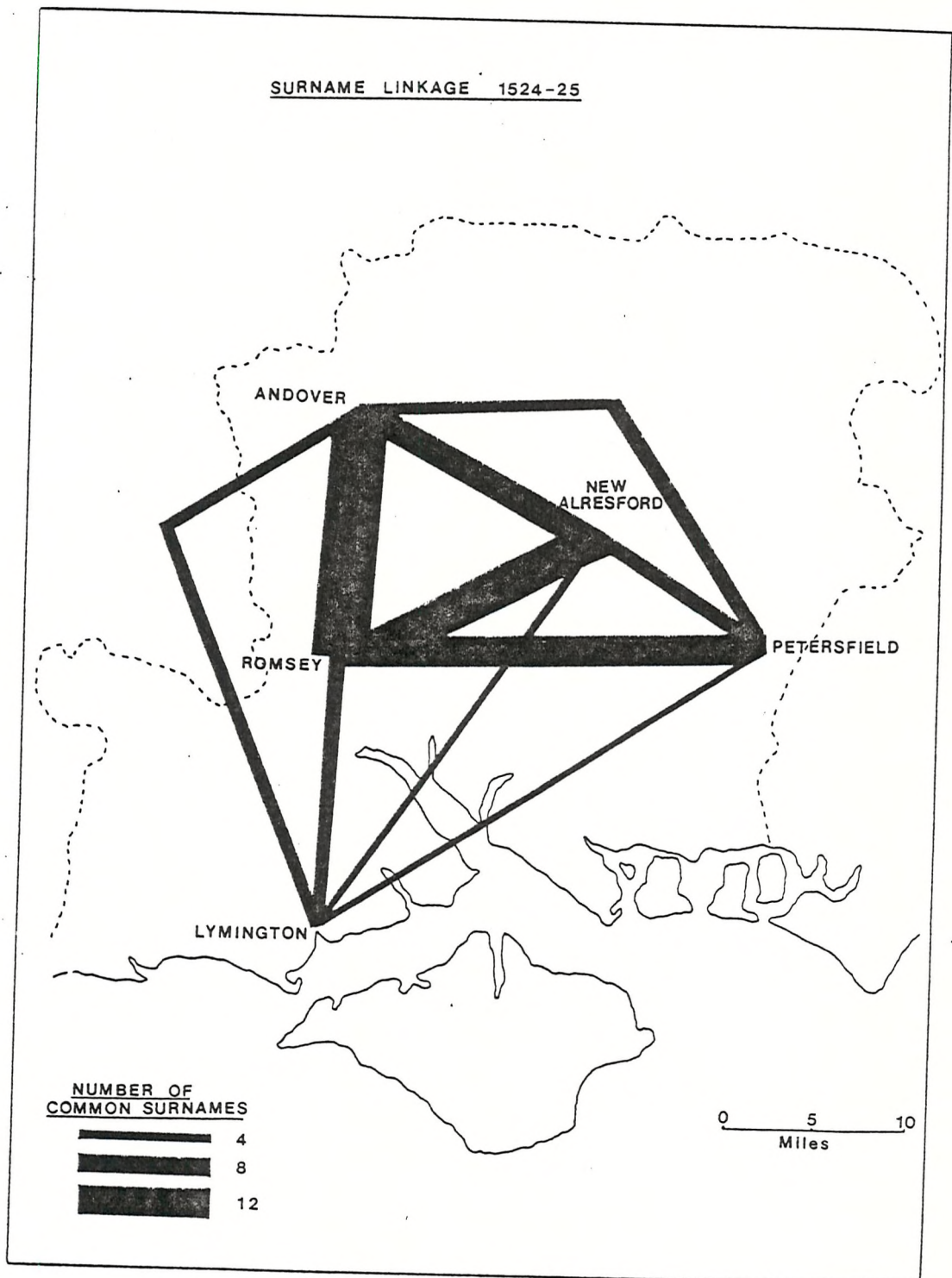


Figure 3/2/1

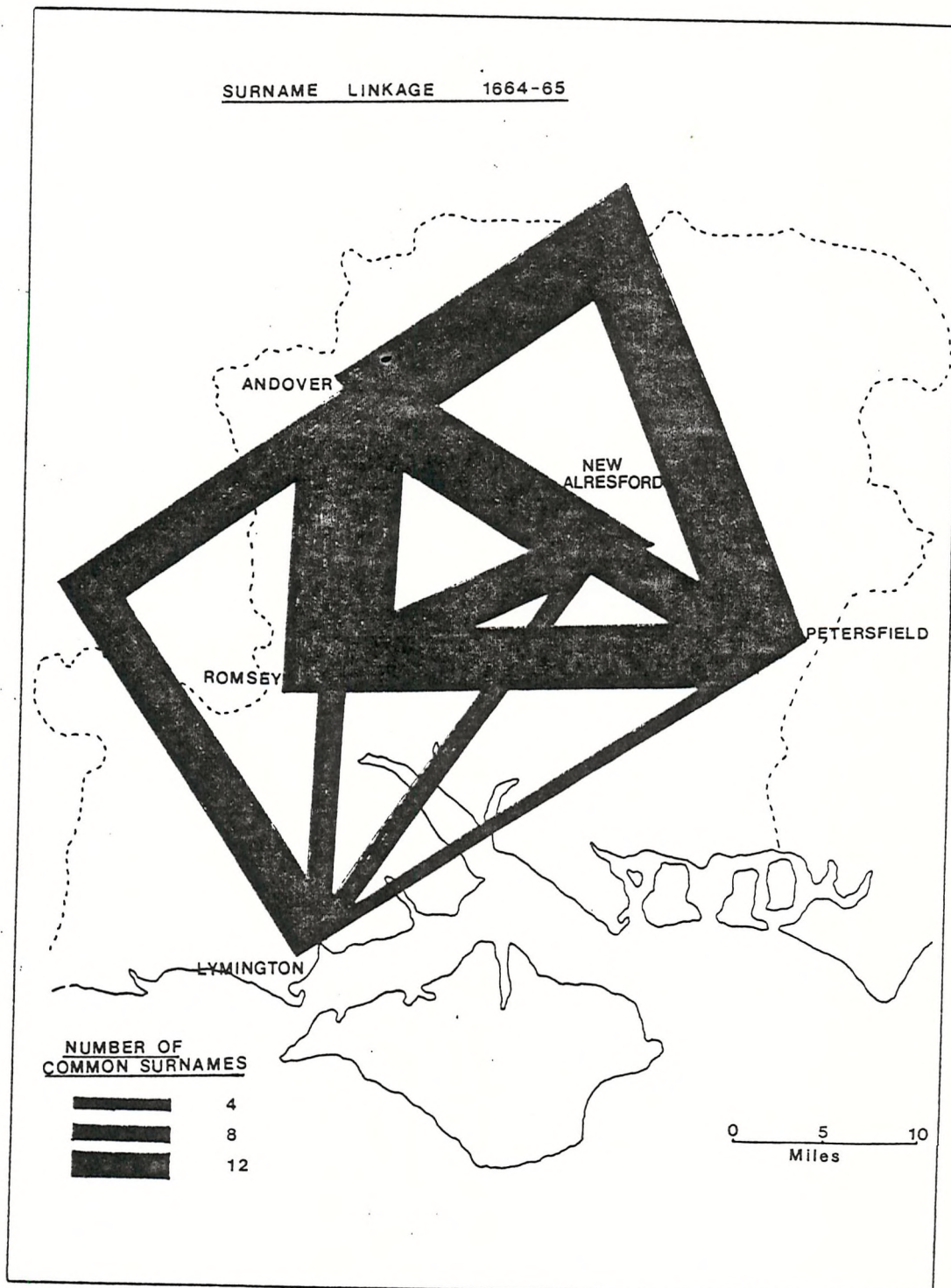


Figure 3/2/2

related within the Test valley. There must have been considerable migration between these two settlements and some instances can be suggested from the lists. The name Palmer appears on lists for both towns and a family connection is likely. There are examples of names in both Romsey and Andover in 1525 but in neither for 1665, such as Gibbons, implying that a family could disappear from two different communities. More frequent are the names which appear solely in the hearth tax list. The Dyap, Drew, Kent, Lawrence, Mountain and Waldron families are among those which moved into both towns during the early modern period. Thus a family could establish itself in more than one market town by 1664, indicative of some movement between the boroughs in the interim. Lastly, there are cases of surnames disappearing from one town and appearing in the other. Hence the Barwicks, Cookes and Fords were all taxed in Romsey in 1525 but in 1664 they were assessed in Andover while there were also movements in the opposite direction, for the Baldwins and Freemans were in Andover at the time of the subsidy but in Romsey for the hearth tax. Such instances are not positive instances of migration but they are suggestive of movement and indicate that surname linkage may be the outcome of movement between towns.

The 1524-5 diagram is interesting therefore in that it shows that the ties between Romsey and Andover were only slightly greater than those between Romsey and both Alresford and Petersfield. Alresford, a much smaller community, had seventeen common surnames with Romsey, only six less than Andover. This was possibly the outcome of its position on the road from London to Southampton and Winchester which encouraged the movement of population to and from the town. Thus surnames like Edmunds, George and Tylle appear in both Romsey and Alresford in 1524-5 and the Wise family, taxed in Alresford in 1525, appears in Romsey in 1664-5. With

larger populations the number of surname links is naturally greater by 1664-5. It is clear that a town like Petersfield had drawn on other towns during its significant demographic expansion and it had developed close ties with both Romsey and Andover though the linkage with distant Lymington had hardly changed. Dallimer, Gammon, Silvester, Humphreys and Jacques were among the families common to Andover and Petersfield in 1664-5 while the name Booker appears in Andover for 1525 but in Petersfield 140 years later. Romsey had further developed its links with Andover but there appears to have been little evolution in its links with Alresford which stood at seventeen names in 1524-5 and had increased by just one to eighteen in 1664-5. Perhaps as communications through the whole county improved so the ties between Romsey and Alresford diminished in relative importance.

By the 1660s there were also some surnames, besides common examples, which can be traced in more than two of the five towns. Thus the Penton family, initially based in Andover, seems to have developed branches in Lymington and Romsey, while two surnames, Drew and Dyap, appear in the hearth tax lists for Alresford, Romsey and Andover. Surname linkage had clearly increased by the 1660s and may be taken as a sign of rising inter-migration between the market towns of Hampshire.

Property deeds and leases can reveal much about small town society and illustrate many of the external connections enjoyed by all market communities. It becomes immediately apparent that much land was owned, though not necessarily occupied, by men who lived outside the town. Figures 3/2/3 and 3/2/4 show something of the range of property contacts enjoyed by Petersfield and Andover.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Information for these two towns has been derived from the large number of deeds deposited in Hampshire Record Office and Andover Public Library.



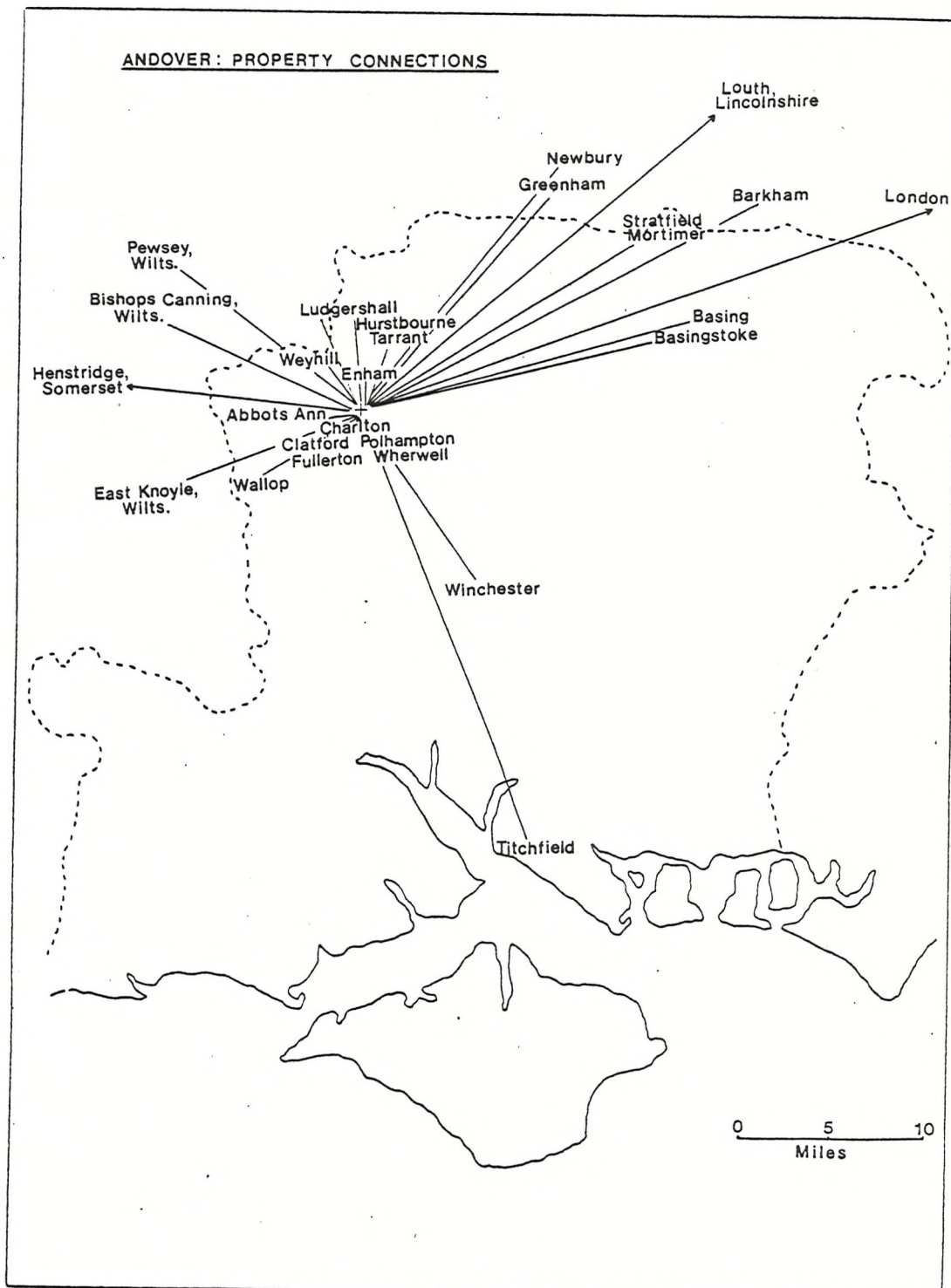


Figure 3/2/3



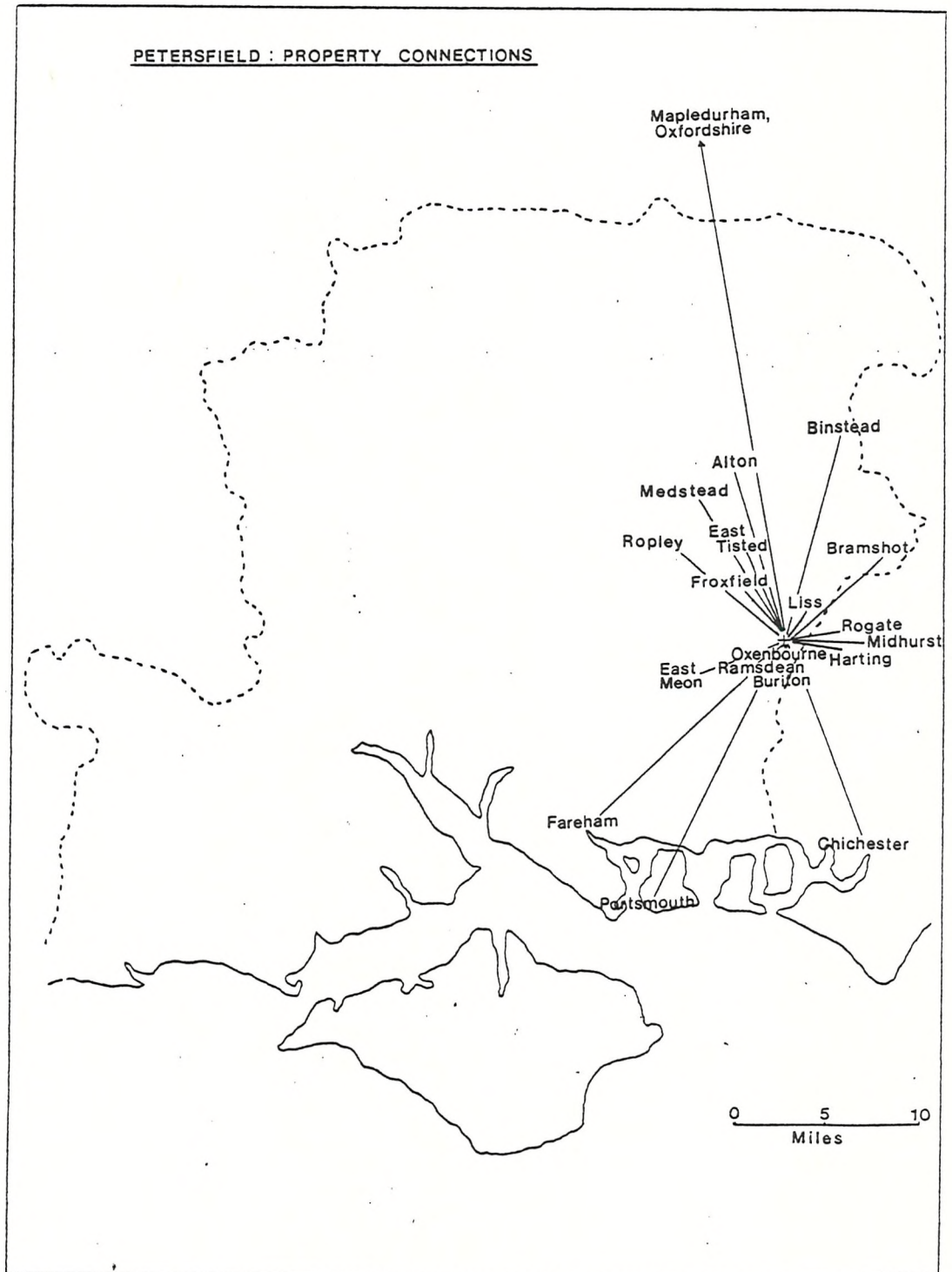


Figure 3/2/4

Whilst it cannot be overstressed that these owners were rarely residents, these links inevitably did much to reduce the insularity of any small town. Interestingly Winchester and Southampton do not appear on either map and links tend to be with other market towns or rural areas which endorses a comment by Rosen that "urban property in other Hampshire towns was rarely held by inhabitants of Winchester".<sup>1</sup> The role of Londoners in Andover is interesting and probably to be expected in view of the town's growth during the period and its position on the main route from the capital to the West Country. In 1592 Thomas Fettiplace, a London ironmonger, acquired nine messuages occupied by, among others, two shoemakers, a syvier and a school-master.<sup>2</sup> Other Londoners acquired lands in towns with which they had some existing family contact. Peter Blake, for example, of Inner Temple, London, who sold three messuages in New Street, Andover, came from a very well-established King's Enham family.<sup>3</sup> Many of the property ties were, of course, to local villages close to the town concerned, but there were also several transactions which linked the different market towns. At one time in the early seventeenth century John Fydler, a Petersfield dyer, held two messuages in Alton while Thomas Betsworth of Alton held a shop in the market place of Petersfield.<sup>4</sup> There must have been many other such interconnections. Common trades may have similarly brought people together in the property market, like the agreement reached in 1642 between three Basingstoke clothiers to lease land to another clothier, Richard Borne of Romsey.<sup>5</sup> Ownership and occupation of property in any single town was a very complex pattern but it was not closed to outsiders and it represented one means by which market towns maintained associations with other

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1. A.B. Rosen, thesis, op.cit., p. 126.

2. HRO, 11 M 56/13.

3. HRO, 15 M 56/1.

4. HRO, 18 M 67/198; HRO, 20 M 67/1.

5. HRO, 9 M 48/52.

boroughs and other counties.

However, records from particular buildings show that property offered little real continuity within the market town. Where it is possible to follow the line of ownership of lands and houses there was often much stability, especially where institutional landlords, like Winchester College, or particular boroughs, were concerned. Yet in terms of actual occupation, leases and deeds indicate that the continuous habitation of one house by the same family for much more than one generation was exceptional. One house in Winchester Street, Andover, passed through the hands of three different blacksmiths and a weaver between 1629 and 1667.<sup>1</sup> Examples of families occupying the same house for any great length of time are rare and point to a considerable turnover of population by death and/or migration.

Property therefore points towards mobility within the small town but a greater degree of long-term continuity can be found in occupations. Dr. Palliser has noted the rarity of businesses continuing for even three generations in Tudor York but his conclusions are not mirrored in Romsey, a totally different form of urban society.<sup>2</sup> A trade was usually passed to a son and it is common to find examples of businesses continuing much longer within the closeknit environment of the market town. The Bulls were bakers throughout the sixteenth century and into the early seventeenth century but thereafter the family apparently moved away from the town. Several other such examples may be cited. In 1602 Richard Puckeridge, a clothier, came to Romsey and married. Two of his sons were clothiers and possibly a brother too, and a grandson, Richard, was still an active clothier in the 1670s. Nothing, however, can match the Gasse family, who were

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1. APL, 8/CD/9.

2. D.M. Palliser, Tudor York, (Oxford, 1979), p. 154.

butchers in Romsey from around 1540 when Walter Gasse is first mentioned until at least the 1670s, over 130 years, and not one other occupation is known for any of the sons who stayed in Romsey. Indeed, there were other cases where one or two families must have dominated a particular trade in the town. Peter Penton, a tanner, had four sons, Thomas, Peter, Christopher and John, who were all active in the same craft around 1600 and, at the same time, two or three members of the Reynolds family were also tanners. In many cases, therefore, long family traditions in one trade were built up and a business could commonly extend to a third generation or beyond.

It was clearly apparent that the son would follow his father's trade and in a small town like Romsey there were less attractions from an array of other crafts than was the case in larger cities. A milling business was passed by Edward Sprage to his son, Steven, while Thomas Adams was a joiner like his father Nicholas. Where the son did not follow directly in his father's footsteps he sometimes entered related crafts like John Prowse, an innholder in the middle of the seventeenth century, whose father had been in the food trade as a baker. In other cases it was clear that sons were forced to look elsewhere when the paternal business had gone to a brother, as with the farm of Christopher Waldron which passed to his son Richard, leaving his other son Matthew to become a Romsey shoemaker in the 1630s. Lastly there was Thomas Loader who may have simply been attracted by the lure of a new trade within the town when he became a sergeweaver rather than continuing like his father as a cooper. Thus even where the opportunity of inheriting the paternal business was closed off many sons sought alternative employment within the same location and for large numbers the market town remained an attractive proposition. In this way the personnel of a community like Romsey remained more stable than that of a larger county town or

port.

Although migrants were a relatively less important component in the demographic growth of the market town, they still represented a significant element within the population. Many newcomers were very unwelcome in these small communities which faced the same problems of vagrancy and poverty which tormented larger boroughs. The Elizabethan Acts of 1563, 1572 and 1576 had developed the concept of parish collections to assist the poor and had provided for the establishment of houses of correction and houses of industry. At the end of the century the legislation of 1598 and 1601 confirmed the responsibility of the parish for alleviating the plight of the sick and aged by means of a poor rate levied by elected overseers of the poor. The parish was also charged with the maintenance and apprenticeship of young paupers, orphans and illegitimate children.<sup>1</sup>

Strangers could therefore become an additional burden on the poor rates and their presence was not always appreciated. At Petersfield the town court ruled in 1614-15 that "we pain all the inhabitants that they receive no foreigner tenant without the consent of the mayor and burgesses on pain of 20s" and at the same court one Thomas Hogeflesh was fined 20s for receiving Nicholas Carter without consent.<sup>2</sup> The order was repeated regularly and it is unlikely to have had much effect in stemming the inflow of migrants to Petersfield. Similar legislation was in force at Andover where it was "ordered that no person do entertain any stranger into their houses but that they give surety to some justice of the peace of this town within 10 days next after such entertainment upon pain of 5 pounds".<sup>3</sup> In 1665 the tithingman of Winchester Street presented that "Thomas Mukson

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1. For an introduction to the development of the Poor Law in this period see J. Pound, Poverty and Vagrancy in Tudor England, (London, 1971).
  2. HRO, 6 M 56/46.
  3. APL, 2/JC/2.

and his wife and child came hither about a month since ... also divers strangers at Thorneburg's house ... also Richard Milliscum came about a fortnight since".<sup>1</sup> In the following year one Charles Tomkins was said to have entertained a "stranger woman" in his house and she was immediately summoned before a bailiff, while it was ordered that John Baith, a stranger entertained by Robert Painter in the house of Martin Hayne, should be removed within twenty days.<sup>2</sup> Such hostility to outsiders even extended to family of town residents. Thus the Andover court heard of William Knight who "has a son come about a week since and Thomas Hodges, his son".<sup>3</sup>

Despite these attempts to curtail entry, the market towns of Hampshire saw their population swelled by vagrants and wandering paupers as well as by more permanent migrants. Two vagrant women with five children were found begging in Alton in 1638 and, though the two women were removed to the county gaol in Winchester on suspicion of felony along with two of the infants, the other three children remained in Alton "to the great charge thereof".<sup>4</sup> Some poor individuals found themselves shunted around the country by authorities unwilling to incur new expenses. Thus a child aged just five years moved periodically between Alton and Shalden and a "poor impotent man" who had wandered through London, Bath, Burfield (Berkshire) and South Mortimer (Hampshire) before reaching the market town of Kingsclere was swiftly returned to South Mortimer.<sup>5</sup> Andover and Basingstoke, on the main road from the West to London, the magnet for many of the travelling population, must have faced particular problems and they seem to have been especially hostile in their response to unwanted immigrants. A

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1. APL, 2/HC/34 - 1665.

2. APL, 2/HC/34 - 1666.

3. APL, 2/HC/34 - 1665.

4. HRO, QSOB 1628-49, f. 138

5. HRO, QSOB 1628-49, f. 54; HRO, QSOB 1628-49, ff. 79-80.

sick man at Andover was forced to leave "by threats of some of them of Andover".<sup>1</sup> On another occasion two vagrant children were found in the town whose origins could not be traced and Andover insisted that if they were to stay in the town then the charges should be met by the county "untill it should appeare where they ... were borne or last resident".<sup>2</sup> In 1665 Richard Smith and his wife appeared before the town court and were said to be "wandering people and do often frequent this town and are very suspicious persons under pretence of pedlars, selling pedlars wares and have no certain habitation".<sup>3</sup> It was ordered that they be punished as wandering rogues if ever they were found again in the town. The court at Basingstoke heard similar cases and one example may be cited to illustrate the people who found their way into the Hampshire market town. In 1657 John Ponder of Hayes, Middlesex, arrived in the borough having drifted through Maidenhead and Reading. He had met up with Mark Pitt with whom he had been a soldier in the Civil War but neither had a certificate to travel. He claimed to be a chairmender who had come to Basingstoke to buy rushes before travelling to Southampton, but in the meantime he and his companion had gone from house to house begging for a cup of beer and money.<sup>4</sup> Markets were focal points for the wayfaring population and the small towns of Hampshire certainly included within their midst large numbers of transitory inhabitants.

This movement was not all one way of course and many vagrants reported elsewhere had originated in the market towns of Hampshire. The register of passports for vagrants compiled at Salisbury between 1598 and 1669 shows that many itinerants entered that

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1. HRO, QSOB 1628-49, f. 112.
  2. HRO, QSOB 1628-49, f. 184.
  3. APL, 2/HC/34 - 1665.
  4. HRO, 148 M 71 2/6/1.

city from Hampshire.<sup>1</sup> In 1600, for example, Simon Reeves, joiner, a vagrant and wandering person, was punished and a passport issued for his return to Ringwood where he was born.<sup>2</sup> Epidemics often caused a major social upheaval and contributed to periodic increases in the level of vagrancy. Thus in 1608, Alice Ingram, wife of John Ingram of Lymington, was found wandering in Salisbury and affirmed that she had the plague.<sup>3</sup> She was said to have run into divers houses to the great terror of many people and was accordingly punished and ordered to return to her husband in Lymington. Clearly the threat of disease was a further consideration for towns when they viewed immigrants within their community. Romsey had a direct road link with Salisbury and not surprisingly several of its townsfolk filtered into the city. Thomas Wheler, a wandering vagrant was punished in 1599.<sup>4</sup> He claimed to be a glass bearer but had no licence to travel and was accompanied by Elizabeth Carpenter, "a lewd woman" who he falsely asserted to be his wife. A passport was issued for his return to Romsey where he claimed to have been born. Although no evidence exists to confirm his birth, a Thomas Wheler had been married in Romsey in 1590, to Alice Yealden, not Elizabeth Carpenter, and he was the father of a stillborn child in 1600, the year after his expulsion from Salisbury. Nothing else is known of him except that he certainly died in the town in 1624 and he may therefore have settled again in Romsey after his experiences in Salisbury. By contrast, Gilbert Hobbye, who was returned to Romsey in 1617, shows no sign of having stayed in the town.<sup>5</sup> He may have been the son of Henry Hobbs, an inhabitant in the 1570s and 1580s, but the family had died out and it is unlikely that he had any remaining ties

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1. P. Slack (ed.), Poverty in Early Stuart Salisbury, Wiltshire Record Society, Vol. 31, (1975).
  2. *ibid.*, p. 27.
  3. *ibid.*, p. 42.
  4. *ibid.*, p. 24.
  5. *ibid.*, p. 51.



in the town by 1617. The experiences of these two vagrants sent back to Romsey are in marked contrast therefore, the one with family connections who seems to have settled back into town life and the other, without such links, for whom Romsey was probably just another temporary abode.

Natives of Salisbury could also be forced from the city under some convenient pretext and thus become immigrants to the market town. Stephen Poole deserted his sick wife and travelled to Romsey "because the parish would not give more for his wife's maintenance", whereupon a passport was issued for his wife to follow after him.<sup>1</sup> Neither appeared at any time in the Romsey register and it is unlikely that they stayed permanently in the town. Many other people drifted away from the towns of Hampshire and appeared among vagrants taken all over the country but especially in the south east. Certainly the small markets never suffered the great intrusion of large numbers of poor wanderers as was suffered by larger provincial centres and by London, but they clearly witnessed a steady turnover of itinerants entering and leaving their bounds and there was little they could do to alter that situation.

One expedient adopted in many towns was the settlement bond by which an individual and his family was allowed to settle provided an agreement was reached excusing the town from all liability for their subsequent welfare. The bond was signed by the immigrant and his sureties on the one hand, the constables and churchwardens on the other. Twelve survive for Kingsclere from the period between 1617 and 1667.<sup>2</sup> They represented migrants from a wide range of occupations, including husbandmen, yeomen, a tailor, colier, turner, tanner, carpenter and trencher-maker

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1. P.A. Slack, "Vagrants and Vagrancy in England, 1598-1664", Economic History Review, Second Series, Vol. 27, (1974), p. 363.
  2. HRO, 19 M 76A P02.

and clearly people from many different backgrounds faced these obstacles to settlement before they could permanently reside in the town. The bond concluded in December 1617 for John Higham junior, a trencher-maker, was typical.<sup>1</sup> He was said to have been born at Wasing in Berkshire and spent most of his life there and at Thatcham and Brimpton in the same county. He had come to Kingsclere with "his wife, his wife's mother being an aged woman, and many small children by reason whereof it was much doubted that in time to come ... [they] might be a charge to the inhabitants of Kingsclere". To avoid this likelihood three sureties, Nicholas Hunt of Thatcham, Francis Britwell alias Spencke of Crookham and William Elliott of Kingsclere, pledged to "discharge and save harmless all and every of the parishioners of Kingsclere from all charge, taxation and relieving" of John Higham or his family. Yet such arrangements must have applied to only a minority of even the bona fide settlers in the early modern period and did little to stem the movement of vagrants and paupers who moved into the market towns. The economic existence of these settlements depended on the draw of a market or fair on the surrounding area and its population. However, the roads and tracks which conveyed trade and custom inevitably also brought migrants and the two could rarely be divorced.

Further evidence on migration is available from the short biographical information recorded in the consistory court deposition books. Those for Winchester diocese have been examined and supplemented by other examples from the Salisbury and Chichester jurisdictions.<sup>2</sup> In total almost 400 instances of movement into Hampshire market towns have been extracted and

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1.    ibid., John Higham.

2.    Salisbury Diocesan Record Office, Deposition Books; West Sussex Record Office, Deposition Books.

a further 127 examples of emigration. These entries refer to changes of residence which occurred between 1491 and 1631 and, depending on the quality of each particular record, details can be derived about the age, occupation and past movements of the deponents. The drawbacks involved with this particular source have been explored at length elsewhere and they are no less relevant to Hampshire.<sup>1</sup> There is a plethora of vague terms used by the clerks who compiled the biographies. In 1545, for example, Robert Byggan of Chawton was said to have dwelt there "since boyhood".<sup>2</sup> On other occasions information was either unavailable or forgotten, as was the case with a Whitchurch butcher, Nicholas Brexton, who was aged 22 in 1582 and had lived in the town for seventeen years but whose birthplace was said to be "unknown".<sup>3</sup> However, as with clerks elsewhere, there is no reason to suppose that the Winchester officials were especially slack in their duties, nor were Hampshire deponents likely to have been unusually dishonest in their evidence. A major weakness in the sample surveyed here is the absence of women who represent barely 5% of the movements under review. This may or may not be typical of the small town movement patterns but it should be appreciated that most of the conclusions reached here refer to male migrants. It must also be realised that the deposition books make no distinction between the market town itself and the parish as a whole.

Forty-five different occupations can be attached to individuals moving into the towns and twenty-one trades were represented among emigrants (see Tables 3/2/2 and 3/2/3). Taken together, forty-eight occupations were found among the migrants. Husbandmen were by far the most numerous single group and with the yeomen and farmers they made up 35% of immigrants and 49% of emigrants.

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1. e.g. P. Clark, "The Migrant in Kentish Towns", op.cit., pp. 117-63.
  2. HRO, Consistory Court Book, 6, f. 466.
  3. HRO, Consistory Court Book, 50, f. 382.

List of Occupations found among Immigrants

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Average age on entry* (years)</u>	<u>Average distance travelled* (miles)</u>
Brazier		
Brewer		
Butcher	35	8
Carpenter	26	14
Chandler		
Clothier		
Collarmaker		
Currier		
Cutler		
Draper	20	12
Dyer	25	50 (and over)
Farmer		
Fellmonger		
Feltmaker		
Fuller	41	10
Gentleman	32	32
Glazier		
Glover	21	
Haberdasher		
Husbandman	24	13
Innholder	37	29
"Keeper"		
Labourer	29	11
Loader		
Mason	34	
Mercer	34	50 (and over)
Merchant		
Miller	28	22

Table 3/2/2

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Average age on entry* (years)</u>	<u>Average distance travelled* (miles)</u>
Millwright		
Ploughmaker		
Sailor		
Sawyer		
Servant	22	6
Shearman	28	20
Shipwright		
Shoemaker	26	41
Smith	25	38
Tailor	23	22
Tanner	26	27
Thatcher		
Turner		
Vintner		
Weaver	24	44
Wheeler		15
Yeoman	32	48

\* where sufficient examples exist for a reasonable calculation.

Table 3/2/2

List of Occupations found among Emigrants

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Average age on departure* (years)</u>	<u>Average distance travelled* (miles)</u>
Carpenter		
Chandler		
Chapman		
Clothier		
Fletcher		
Gentleman		
Glover		
Husbandman	29	9
Innholder		
"Keeper"		
Labourer		
Miller	29	15
Sailor		
Sawyer		
Shearman	24	9
Shoemaker		
"Singingman"		
Tailor	24	2
Tanner	27	12
Weaver	34	12
Yeoman	29	16

\* where sufficient examples exist for a reasonable calculation.

Table 3/2/3

Otherwise the range embraces almost all the occupations found within the market town. The food and drink trades do not figure very prominently among the migrants. Only five butchers and one brewer were included but no bakers or fishmongers appeared and these occupations may well have been among the most stable within the small towns. The distributive shopkeepers also do not figure prominently among the immigrants. Chandlers, drapers, mercers and merchants constitute just eleven instances, only 4% of the total, but the numerical strength of these men was never great in the small boroughs and never matched their economic significance as employers of labour. Their wealth and influence were very important within small town society and their local prominence may have encouraged them to stay within their community. At the same time the more ambitious members of these trades were likely to find more lucrative outlets within larger towns and ports, and immigration to the small towns must have been rare. Significantly five of the eleven examples refer to people entering Basingstoke and Andover whilst for the smallest markets a newcomer from one of the distributive trades was a very infrequent occurrence. However, the departure of a single merchant could create a significant dent within the local market economy. In 1562 William Barwick, a mercer and chandler left Romsey for Southampton.<sup>1</sup> His family maintained their connections in the market town but his wealth, which totalled £476 when he died in 1593, was concentrated in the seaport where his son John followed his father's trade as a chandler.<sup>2</sup> However, there is no evidence of another chandler operating in Romsey before the seventeenth century and the emigration of traders like Barwick could leave a significant gap in the occupational structure of the small town.

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1. HRO, Consistory Court Book, 44, f. 252.

2. T.B. James, thesis, op.cit., p. 427.

The metal working trades were not prominent in the market communities and only the smiths appear in the list of migrants. Building occupations like carpenters, glaziers, masons and sawyers represented only ten of the immigrants, less than 4% of the total, and no instances of movement into the market towns of joiners have been found. Again they would seem to have been relatively stable trades in the small towns. Thus Thomas Hurst, a mason, who moved into Ringwood around 1575 at the age of 27 was to remain there for the rest of his life.<sup>1</sup>

Given their prominence in towns like Andover, Basingstoke and Romsey and the cyclical nature of employment, it would be expected that the textile trades would appear relatively frequently among the immigrants and emigrants. It was an uncertain trade beset by recessions yet there are no signs of a high level of movement in the small towns, probably a tribute to the under-developed division of employment among the inhabitants which created less dependence on the fluctuations of a single business and helped to cement roots within a small community. Clothiers, dyers, fullers, shearmen and weavers represent twenty-nine instances of immigration to a market town (10%) and fourteen cases of emigration (14%). Thus although members of the textile trades were only a small proportion of immigrants entering these boroughs, they were rather more important among those leaving, indicative that while, like other craftsmen, they were likely to seek an outlet in the market, the textiles personnel were relatively more likely to move on at a later date. Interestingly the weavers and shearmen, the least specialised sides of the manufacturing process, were also the most mobile, possessing crafts which could be practised in the countryside and which were less dependent on the facilities of the market town.

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1. HRO, Consistory Court Book, 50, f. 39.



One of the occupational groups that figures most prominently among the migrants is that of the leather trades. The curriers, fellmongers, glovers, shoemakers and tanners totalled thirty-three (12%) of the deponents entering the market towns, a greater proportion than the textile workers who would have been numerically far superior within each community. Both the craftsmen who prepared the skins and the manufacturers of gloves, purses and shoes at the end of the production process were among the most mobile inhabitants of the market town. Clearly the opportunities for these traders opened up regularly in these communities. At Alton two new curriers arrived in 1591 while at Andover two glovers moved to the town in 1550 and there seems to have been a considerable turnover of personnel among these crafts in the market towns, sometimes over relatively short periods.<sup>1</sup> Tanning and shoe-making were carried on in communities of all sizes throughout Hampshire and the rich resources of wood in the county, essential to the tanning process, enabled traders to move at their will, making them some of the least static of all small town craftsmen.

However, it is three of the service trades which appear as some of the leading individual occupations among the immigrants to the small towns. Twenty-two of the migrants were tailors, second only to the husbandmen recorded in the deposition books. New Alresford is particularly interesting for between 1559 and 1565 four different tailors moved into the town and three years later another left which surely implies that within a decade there had been a complete turnover among these tradesmen within the community due solely to the movement of population.<sup>2</sup> Innkeepers also appear to have been a mobile section of the population. Ten different instances of immigration

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1. HRO, Consistory Court Book, 62, ff. 174-8; HRO, Consistory Court Book, 67, f. 276; HRO, Consistory Court Book, 24, ff. 724-6.
  2. HRO, Consistory Court Book, 24, ff. 25, 713, 715, 721; HRO, Consistory Court Book, 44, f. 163.

to the towns have been identified but only one example of emigration, which suggests that these traders, once they had entered the small town, tended to retain their position. Their occupation was very important to the market community offering accommodation and refreshment to the travellers who passed through the town yet it is clear that in some of the boroughs the innholders were predominantly outsiders to the community. The lucrative trading position of Andover must have attracted prospective innholders to the town and at least two new men entered in the 1550s.<sup>1</sup> At Romsey between 1563 and 1570 three immigrants took up the trade which means that at this time the majority of innholders in the town were not natives and the same may well have been true of other market towns.<sup>2</sup> Other service traders who appear to have been especially mobile were the millers among whom there seems to have been a significant turnover in the small towns. At Romsey in the 1560s there are three instances of immigration and two of emigration, whilst the importance of Havant as a milling centre is reflected by the fact that this little market also witnessed three new millers in this decade and the loss of another three.<sup>3</sup> Milling was a more numerous occupation than innkeeping and more movements are to be expected, but it nevertheless seems to have been particularly unstable with traders entering and leaving at fairly regular intervals. However, Romsey still managed to retain some long-standing milling families, like the Sprages, and it is probably more accurate to look upon these itinerant millers as the buyers and sellers of grain who incurred the wrath of the authorities, especially at times of scarcity. Various other service trades appear among the migrants to the market towns, including a cutler,

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1. HRO, Consistory Court Book, 44, f. 113; HRO, Consistory Court Book, 44, f. 163.
  2. HRO, Consistory Court Book, 24, ff. 779-781; HRO, Consistory Court Book, 50, f. 30.
  3. HRO, Consistory Court Book, 24, ff. 275, 285-6, 438, 783.

a loader, a wheeler and a small group of labourers. As a group they were by far the most important category of immigrants and must have regularly settled in and around the markets upon which they were largely dependent for custom. It is not surprising therefore to see that, with the exception of the millers, the service trades do not figure prominently among the emigrants from the small towns.

The short biographies provide some information about the origins of these migrants entering the market towns. In most cases the birthplace is given and sometimes further details of intermediate movements are also recorded, but the actual course of migration is impossible to determine and distances must be measured "as the crow flies". The largest number of immigrants had travelled five miles or less from their place of birth but those who had come from up to fifteen miles also represented a significant proportion (see Table 3/2/4). Thus the market community exercised its strongest lure among the population living within a fifteen mile radius of the town, a sphere of influence which probably coincides with the prime commercial hinterland of the borough. It may be supposed therefore that the majority of immigrants to the small town had frequented the location previously for social, economic or religious reasons and were not complete strangers to their new neighbours, a great asset in facilitating their successful settlement. Above fifteen miles the number of migrants falls away sharply although there were a fairly large number of travellers who had moved over fifty miles from their birthplace.

The two leading northern market towns drew on a wide area for their immigrants although neither seems to have enjoyed many contacts with the south of the county (see Figures 3/2/5 and 3/2/6). Thus no settlers from the Portsmouth area appear and the south west of Hampshire also seems to have provided very few new settlers.

Distances Travelled by Migrants

<u>Miles</u>	<u>Immigrants</u>	<u>Emigrants</u>	<u>Total</u>
0 - 5	49 (22.6%)	39 (30.7%)	88 (25.6%)
6-10	45 (20.7%)	33 (26.0%)	78 (22.7%)
11-15	36 (16.6%)	20 (15.7%)	56 (16.3%)
16-20	20 (9.2%)	13 (10.2%)	33 (9.6%)
21-30	20 (9.2%)	18 (14.2%)	38 (11.0%)
31-50	16 (7.4%)	3 (2.4%)	19 (5.5%)
50+	31 (14.3%)	1 (0.8%)	32 (9.3%)
	<u>217</u>	<u>127</u>	<u>344</u>

Table 3/2/4

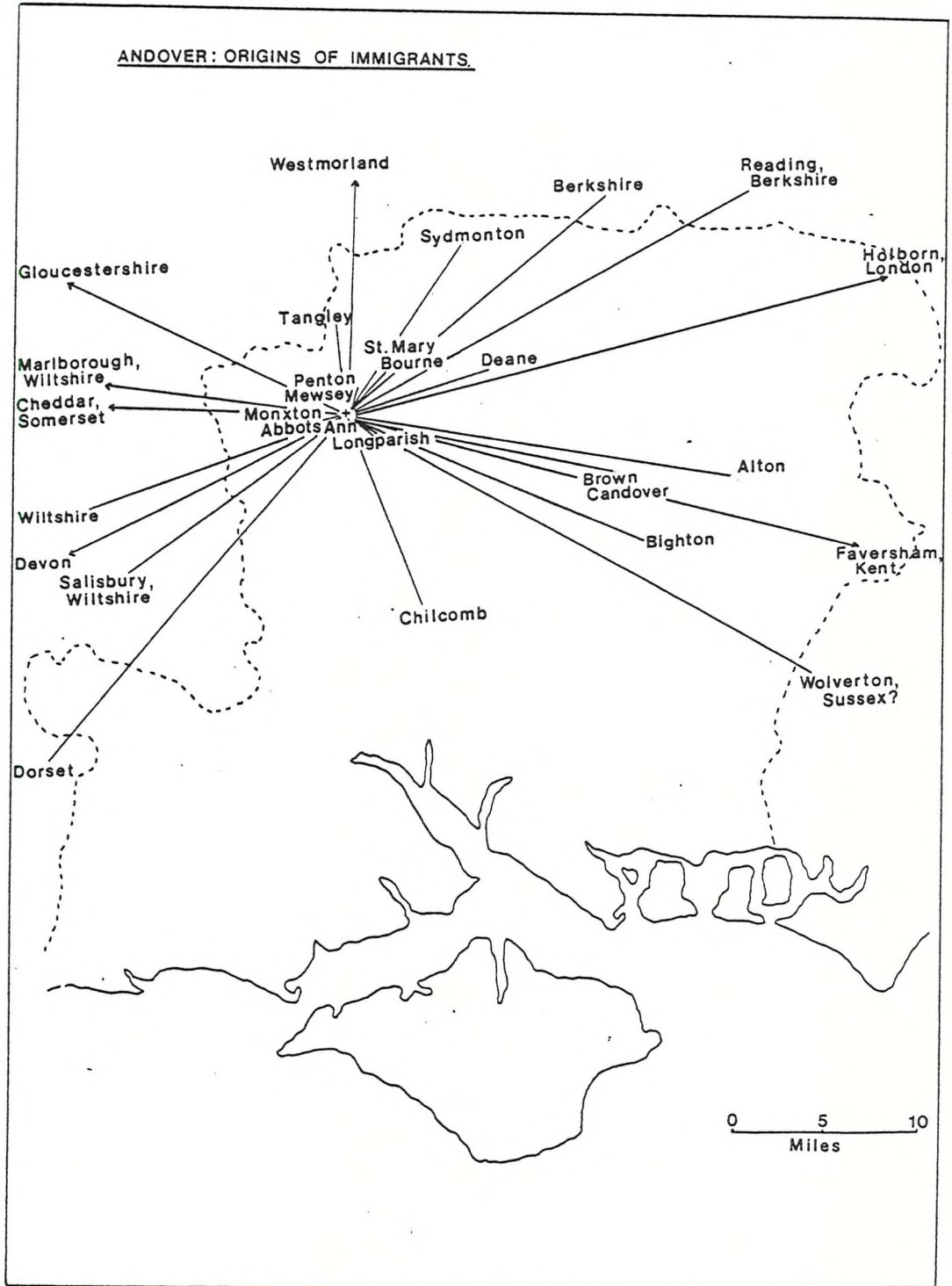


Figure 3/2/5

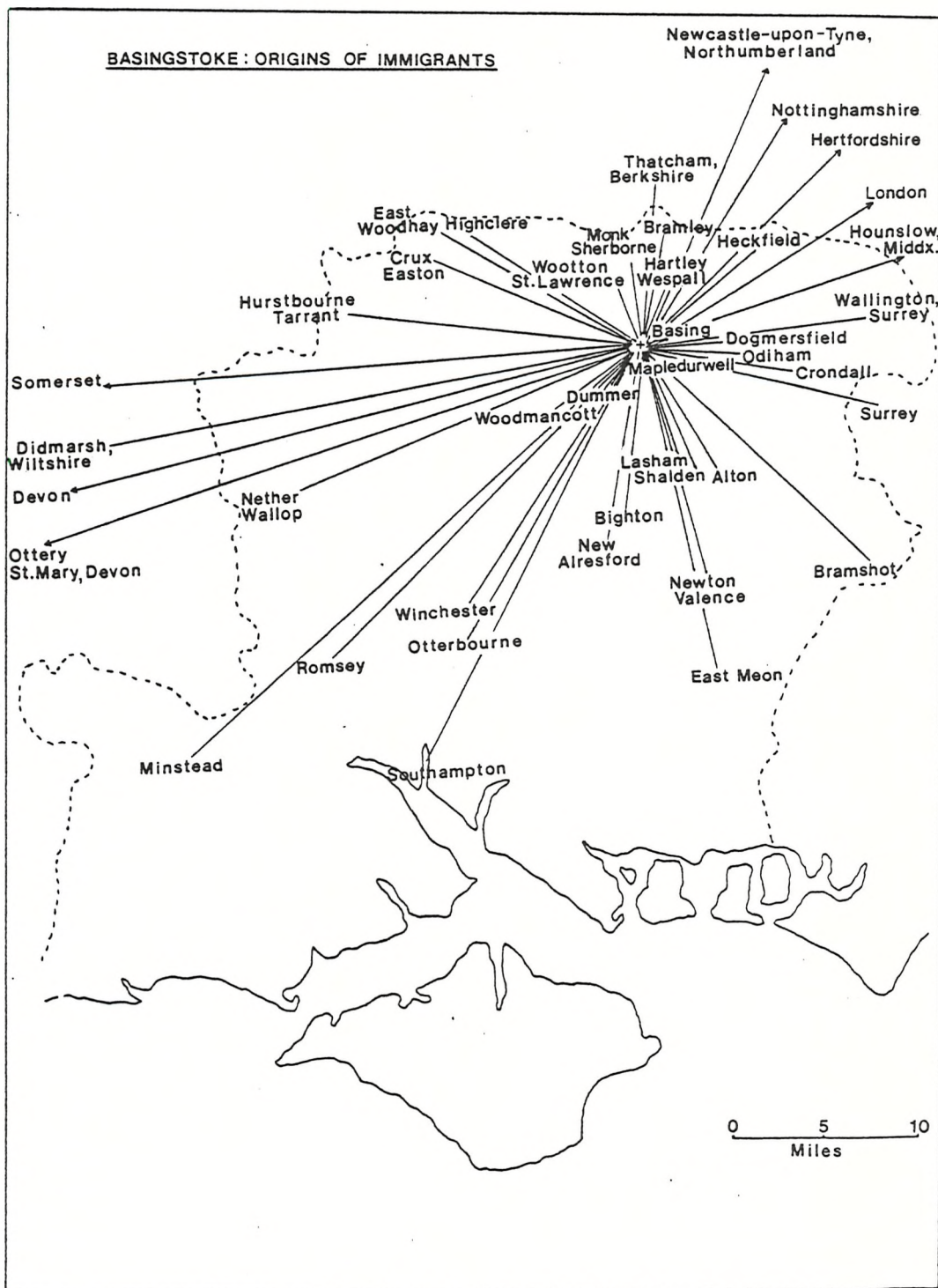


Figure 3/2/6

More significant were the connections which flourished because of their location on the Great West Road and migrants from Wiltshire, Somerset and Devon appear in both towns. These long distance migrants were not necessarily male and among the immigrants to Basingstoke was Joan Herne from Ottery St. Mary, Devon.<sup>1</sup> However, other travellers had strayed even further from home, like John Row, a yeoman who had been born in Newcastle upon Tyne, or William Matkyn, a dyer who originated in Nottinghamshire but had moved to Basingstoke in 1540 at the age of thirty-one and had spent the rest of his life there, at one time becoming bailiff of the town.<sup>2</sup> Both Andover and Basingstoke drew heavily on their own market areas for their immigrant population and small villages like Abbots Ann, Monxton, Longparish and Penton Mewsey provided a steady stream of entrants to Andover. Although a general west to east drift of population, with London as the ultimate magnet for migrants, existed within the southern counties, these two northern markets show no marked directional bias in the origins of their deponents. Londoners appeared in both towns, although several may have been returning to their native counties after a short stay in the capital. Thus the immigrants to Andover included a cutler who had dwelt in Holborn but who originated in Dorset.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, the range of migrants, with origins as diverse as Westmorland, Norfolk, Kent and Dorset is an impressive testimony to the opportunities available in this market town. Romsey had a rather less widespread range of immigrants (Figure 3/2/7). It drew heavily on the Test valley and regions to the north and east of the town. Again the New Forest appears to have provided very few settlers, which is contrary to the normal picture of

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1. HRO, Consistory Court Book, 13, f. 38.

2. HRO, Consistory Court Book, 62, ff. 429, 474.

3. HRO, Consistory Court Book, 24, f. 610.



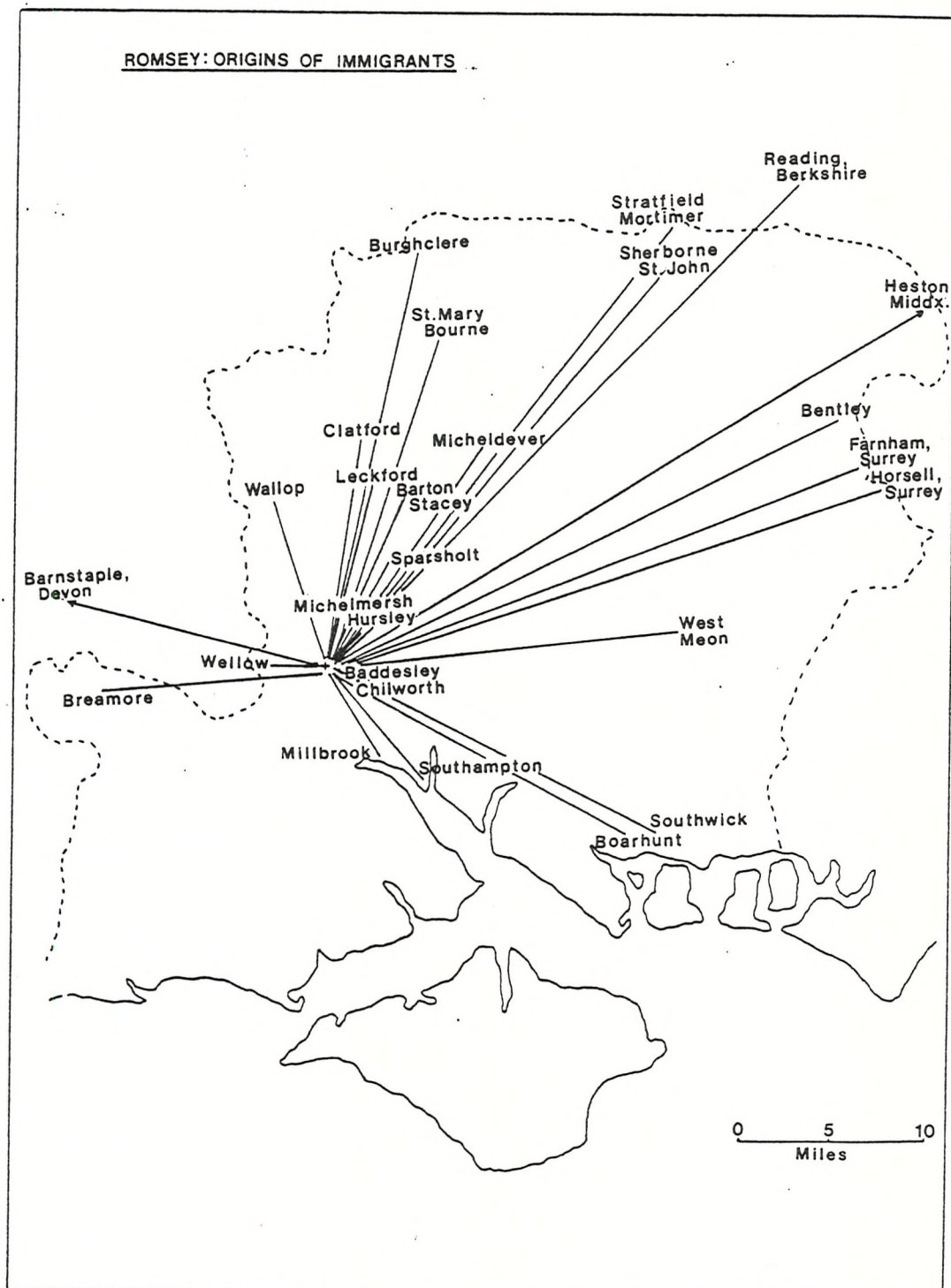


Figure 3/2/7



emigration from heavily-wooded areas into the towns. This points to the sparse population of that region and also implies that the market town drew mainly on the better off parts of the county, leaving the poorest travellers to move towards the larger communities like Southampton and Winchester where the better developed manufacturing offered a greater prospect of employment. As with Andover and Basingstoke, Romsey witnessed the immigration of people from a wide variety of backgrounds. Migrants from at least fifteen different occupations moved to the town while their origins varied from Devon to Berkshire, Middlesex and Surrey.

These were three of Hampshire's most important market towns but the smallest boroughs were also able to attract migrants (Figures 3/2/8 and 3/2/9). Alresford shows less of the preponderance of short distance immigrants and the new settlers seem to have been largely specialised in their occupations, able to fill a distinct gap within the town economy rather than simply moving in search of work. Thus the town witnessed the entry of, among others, a chandler, a sawyer, a clothier and a ploughmaker.<sup>1</sup> Like the larger markets, their geographical origins were very varied ranging from Somerset and Cheshire to Berkshire and Surrey, and a small community like Alresford included craftsmen from many different regions apparently able to integrate successfully into local society.<sup>2</sup> Fareham and Lymington were small ports and, given the importance of seaborne communications, their settlement pattern may have been rather different. Fareham certainly seems to have drawn on some of the other lesser ports of the south coast, but these contacts were no more important than immigration from the mainland. Also, like Alresford, these towns were able to attract

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1. HRO, Consistory Court Book, 24, f. 582; HRO, Consistory Court Book, 44, f. 103; HRO, Consistory Court Book, 55, f. 164; HRO Consistory Court Book, 112, f. 45.
  2. HRO, Consistory Court Book, 6, f. 72; HRO, Consistory Court Book, 37, f. 230; HRO, Consistory Court Book, 62, ff. 47, 142.

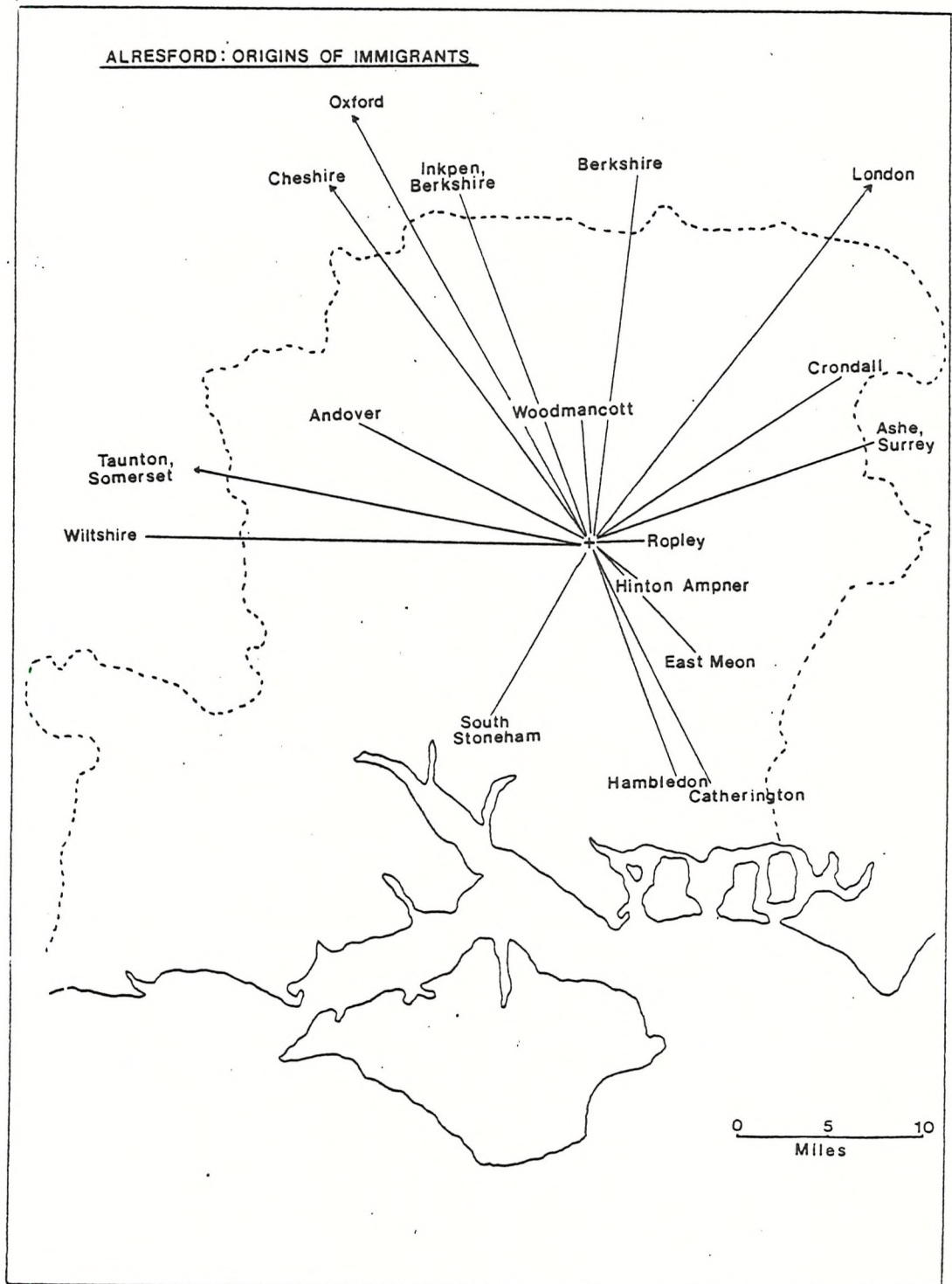


Figure 3/2/8

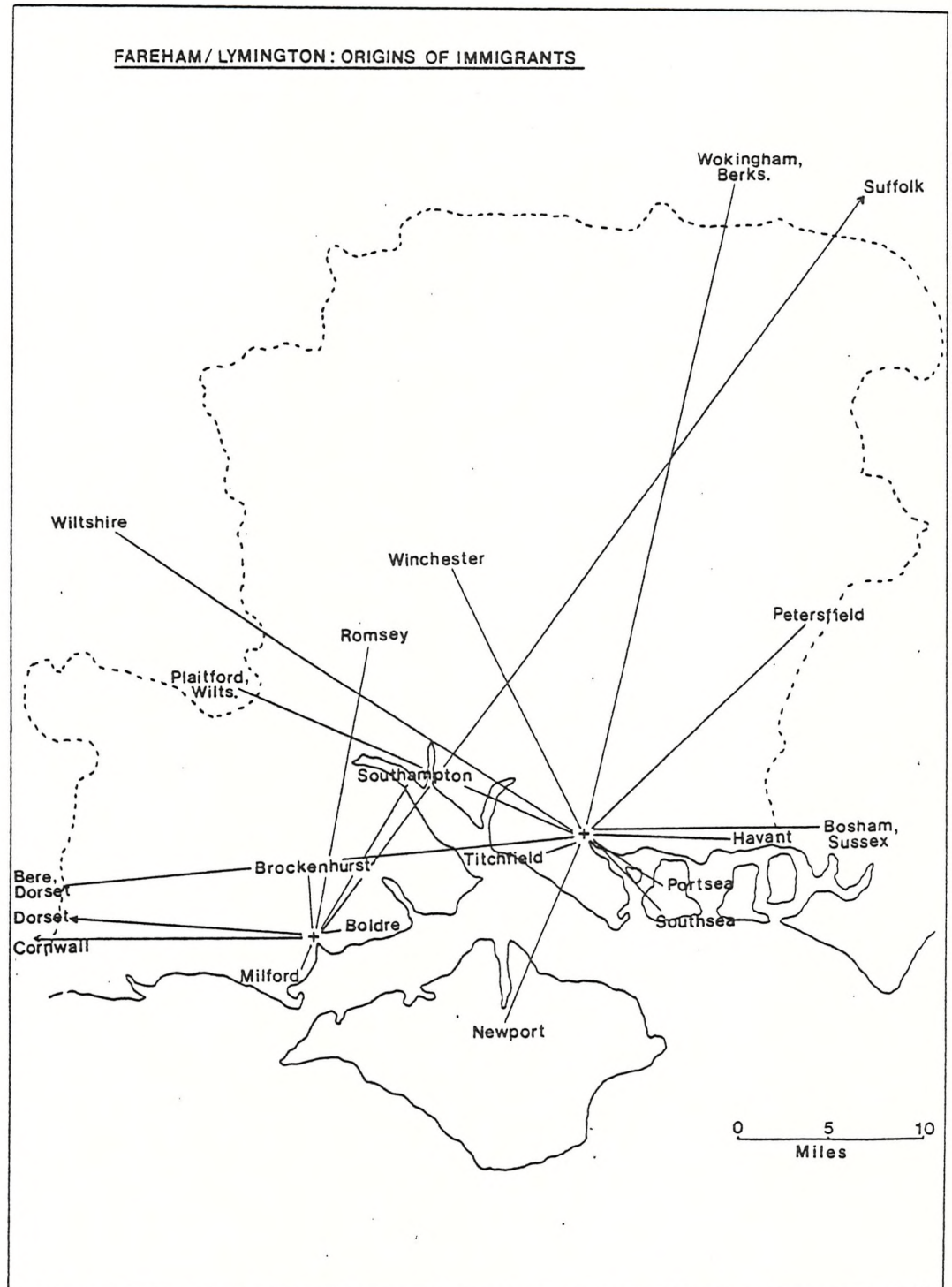


Figure 3/2/9

migrants from long distances, either by sea or land, and Lymington witnessed the arrival of migrants from Suffolk, Dorset and Cornwall.<sup>1</sup> Judging from this small sample of movements, the ports were little different from their inland counterparts.

For many of these migrants the market town represented their first taste of urban life (see Table 3/2/5). Of 161 immigrants for whom details are available, 100 (62%) had not resided in a town before. The market town was also commonly the first move for transitory people and 104 (65%) of the immigrants were making the first change of residence of their life. However, there was also a significant proportion of migrants for whom the market town was their third home and a further seventeen were hardened travellers for whom the small town was their fourth, fifth or seventh dwelling place. Most of these people had dwelt in at least one town earlier in their lifetime but, nevertheless, six of the seventeen migrants had never inhabited a town before in their life. Thus for most people entering such a community, the market town represented both their first destination and their initial experience of urban society although there was always a minority of others for whom the town was just one of many moves.

Especially significant among these migrants making their fourth or fifth movement on entry to the market town were the millers. Some particular instances reveal the mobility which seems to have been a feature of this trade. John Haris gave evidence before the court in 1567 at the age of thirty when he was resident at Alresford.<sup>2</sup> Born in Somerset, he had moved to Wimborne Minster, Salisbury, Fordingbridge, Southwick, Romsey and

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1. HRO, Consistory Court Book, 44, ff. 92-3; HRO, Consistory Court Book, 55, f. 201.
  2. HRO, Consistory Court Book, 24, f. 275.

Number of Moves Before Entering Market Town

<u>Number of Moves</u>	<u>Number of Migrants</u>	<u>Number with previous urban experience</u>
0*	104	26
1	40	24
2	11	6
3	5	4
4	-	-
5	1	1

\* i.e. people making first move

Table 3/2/5

South Stoneham before arriving at Alresford, all these movements occurring since he was about fifteen years old. His longest single stay, at Romsey, was for seven years but otherwise he never remained in one place for more than three years. Similarly William Justice was a miller in Havant in 1565 prior to which his wanderings had taken him to three other counties.<sup>1</sup> Born in Pangbourne, Berkshire, his adult life had been spent at Streatly, in the same county, at Caversham, Oxfordshire and Marlow in Buckinghamshire. Millers were clearly no strangers to town life and they moved around the small markets, rarely staying long in one place. Thus of the fifteen examples of millers moving into towns, ten had made at least one previous migration earlier in their lives. By contrast, of the fifteen shoemakers entering the market towns only one had changed his residence before. Further, the majority were townsmen by origin. Thus they appear to be craftsmen based firmly in urban society for whom the market offered a vital outlet for their skills. One group of migrants who did not share these town origins were the young servants for whom the market community was usually their initial experience of town life and, in all but one example, the move was also the first of their lives. There were, therefore, some distinct contrasts among the different occupations in the way that market towns fitted into the overall patterns of population movement (see Table 3/2/2).

This also applied to the distances travelled by the immigrants to the small towns. Those who had moved furthest from their origins tended to be those at the upper end of the social scale. In the agricultural elements of urban society many yeomen farmers

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1. *ibid.*, f. 286.

had moved very long distances with individuals from Wales and Shropshire moving to Christchurch, and Kingsclere drew a migrant from Herefordshire, while the larger markets had similarly wide contacts within the English countryside.<sup>1</sup> Among the more exclusively urban occupations some of the longest distances were also covered by members of the wealthiest trades. Thus the Hampshire towns included mercers from Devon and Northamptonshire.<sup>2</sup> Members of the textile occupations were also relatively long-distance travellers, probably the outcome of fluctuations within the industry, although the fullers were more static. Two of the least mobile of the trade categories, the building and food occupations, show a low average mileage endorsing the view that these crafts maintained strong local traditions within the small towns. At the base of the social scale were labourers and servants and neither of these groups contained any long-distance migrants. At Christchurch servants were drawn from neighbouring parishes like Sopley whilst at Romsey they tended to enter from surrounding villages such as Chilworth.<sup>3</sup> A similar situation existed among labourers who found employment in Andover and who originated in hamlets like Monxton.<sup>4</sup> Clearly the market town absorbed many of the poor from its immediate hinterland and in general these people seem to have travelled shorter distances than those within the more prosperous occupational groups. This offers a direct contrast with Clark's conclusions for the much larger city of Canterbury where short distance travel was correlated with the wealthiest elements.<sup>5</sup>

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1. HRO, Consistory Court Book, 55, f. 376; HRO, Consistory Court Book, 62, ff. 80, 479-507.
  2. HRO, Consistory Court Book, 24, f. 792; HRO, Consistory Court Book, 62, ff. 474-7.
  3. HRO, Consistory Court Book, 13, f. 165; HRO, Consistory Court Book, 19, f. 211.
  4. HRO, Consistory Court Book, 67, f. 353.
  5. P. Clark, "Kentish Towns", op.cit., pp. 129-31.

Lacking the services and entertainments of social centres like Winchester, the market towns of Hampshire were less of a lure for neighbouring gentry and thus these local migrants were more often among the poorest elements in urban society. This is, therefore, an interesting distinction between the movement patterns of the market town and the larger borough of county status.

Not surprisingly most migrants entering the market towns were young, partly the inevitable outcome of the age composition of the whole population and partly an essential requirement for the physical problems involved in movement (see Table 3/2/6). 40% of the migrants were aged in their twenties but there was still a significant proportion who entered the towns at the age of thirty. These were movements by men well established in their trade and usually supporting a wife and family. This applies, for instance, to William Pratt, an innkeeper who arrived in Romsey at the age of thirty-four.<sup>1</sup> About a fifth of immigrants to market towns were aged between ten and nineteen, most of whom were probably apprentices arriving to serve their indenture with masters within the borough.

Several of the men who had moved furthest from their birth-places were aged over thirty including many migrants whose last residence was beyond the county boundaries. Among the immigrants to Hampshire towns from Somerset were a thirty-nine year old innholder from Cheddar who moved to Andover and a thirty-eight year old weaver who entered Alresford from Taunton, whilst a Basingstoke tailor entered the town from Devon at the age of thirty-seven.<sup>2</sup> In fact, of twelve thirty-year old immigrants with known origins only four were Hampshire natives. By contrast, very few of the

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1. HRO, Consistory Court Book, 24, f. 779.

2. HRO, Consistory Court Book, 55, f. 274; HRO, Consistory Court Book, 62, f. 47; HRO, Consistory Court Book, 67, f. 441.



Age of Immigrants to and Emigrants from  
Hampshire Market Towns

<u>Age</u>	<u>Immigrants</u>	<u>Emigrants</u>
0 - 9	13 (4.0%)	5 (4.5%)
10-19	67 (20.9%)	18 (15.1%)
20-29	129 (40.2%)	38 (33.9%)
30-39	78 (24.3%)	31 (27.7%)
40-49	26 (8.1%)	12 (10.7%)
50+	8 (2.5%)	8 (7.1%)
	<u>321</u>	<u>112</u>

Table 3/2/6

newcomers aged under twenty had travelled more than fifteen miles. This implies therefore that the long-distance migrant to the market town was normally older as well as wealthier than his counterparts who had moved much smaller mileages.

Much less can be said about emigrants from the market town (see Table 3/2/3). The sample of biographies is considerably smaller than for immigrants but service trades like millers and tailors again stand out as relatively more mobile and, likewise, sections of the leather and clothing trades figure prominently among the emigrants. Well over half of those leaving these communities moved ten miles or less and must have retained their ties around the market. Relatively large numbers travelled between eleven and thirty miles but very few people moved further away and the long-distance emigrant must have been a rare phenomenon with barely 3% of the deponents migrating over thirty miles from the market town (Figures 3/2/10-14). Basingstoke was typical for the deponent emigrants were concentrated exclusively within the north of Hampshire. Andover migrants spread over a wider area extending south to Boldre and Millbrook and east to Bentley, but movements within the county certainly predominated and a similar situation prevailed in Romsey. The towns show very little westward movement and although no cases of migration to London have been found, the apparent trend for people leaving these larger markets was in an eastward direction. As was true of immigration, the smaller towns like Alresford enjoyed rather less significant ties within their immediate environs. Their emigrants tended to look further afield, to the Portsmouth and Southampton regions and towards the capital. One such departure was Thomas Frampton who left Alresford at the age of twenty-two and took up his trade as a glover first in Whitechapel, London and then in the parish of St. Leonard without Shoreditch.<sup>1</sup> Thus while the larger

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1. HRO, Consistory Court Book, 24, f. 48.

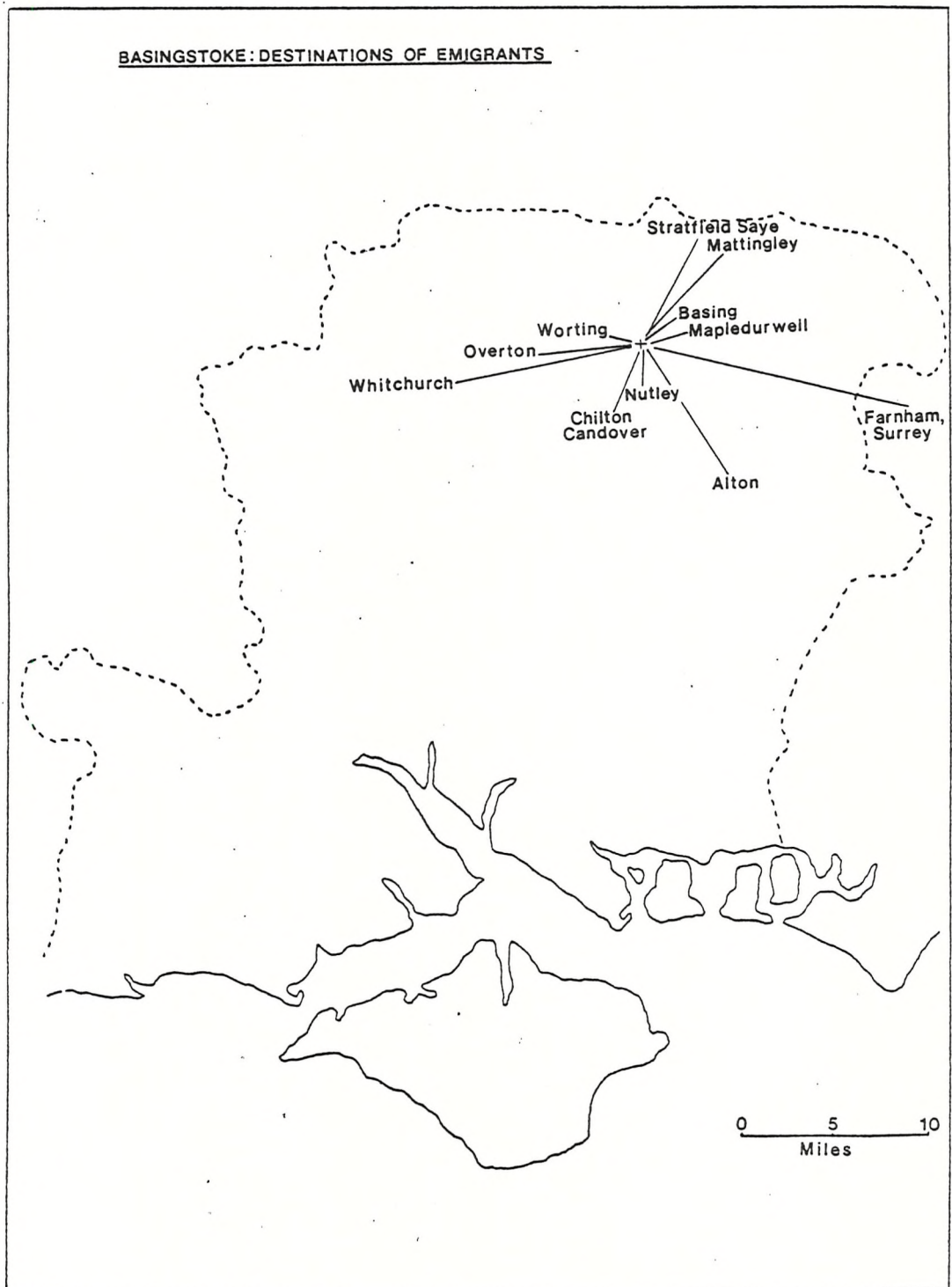


Figure 3/2/10

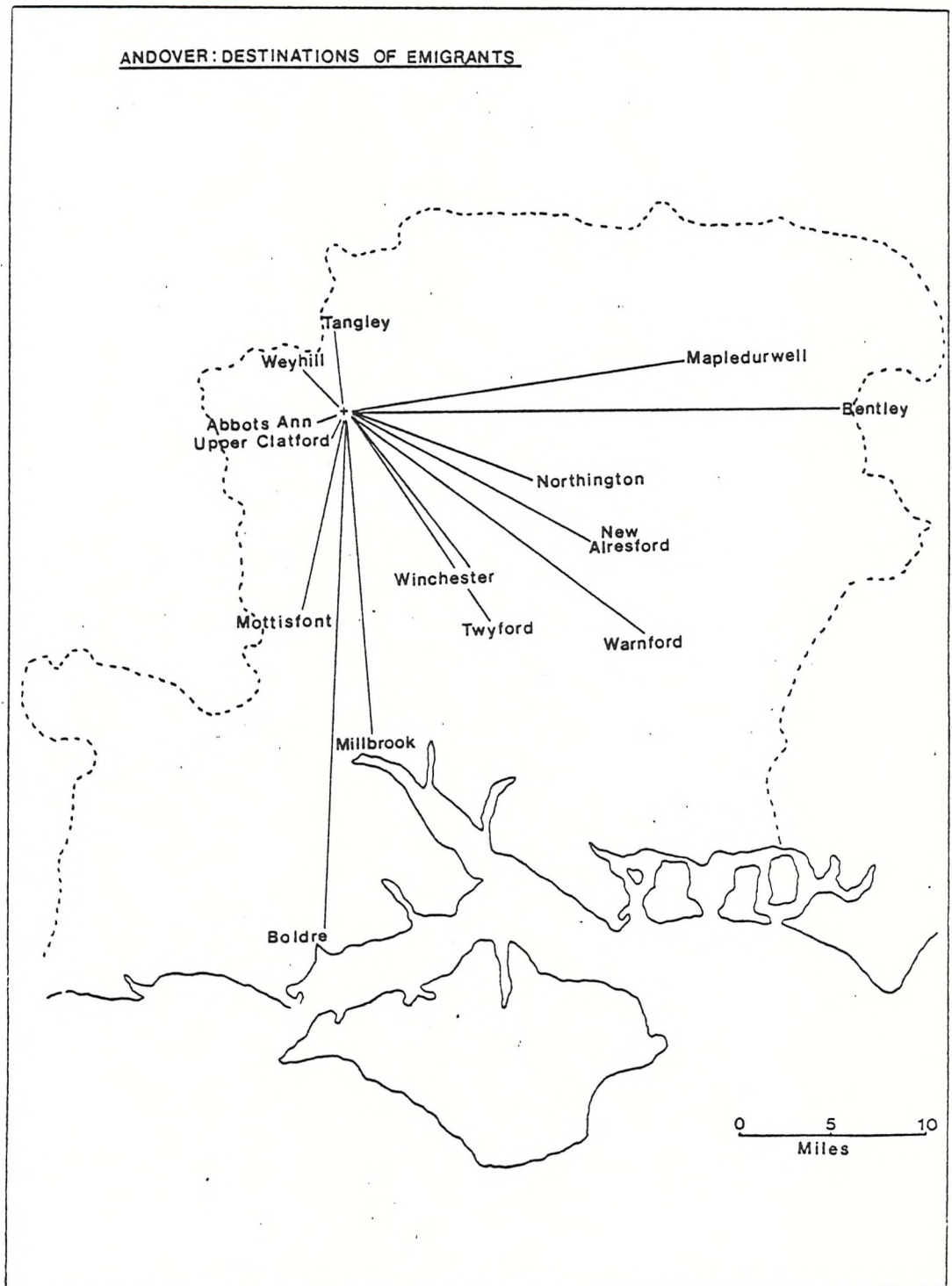


Figure 3/2/11

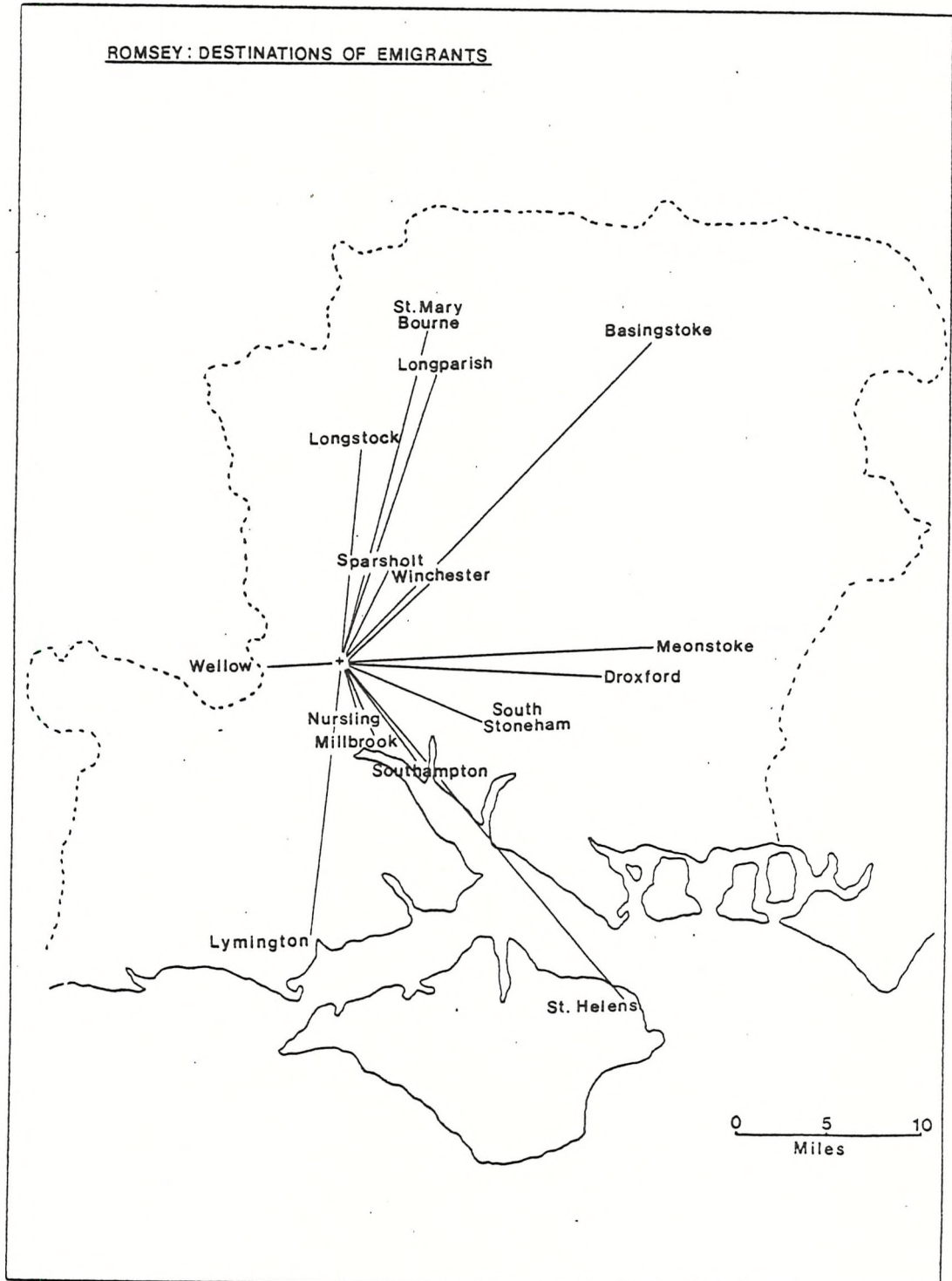


Figure 3/2/12

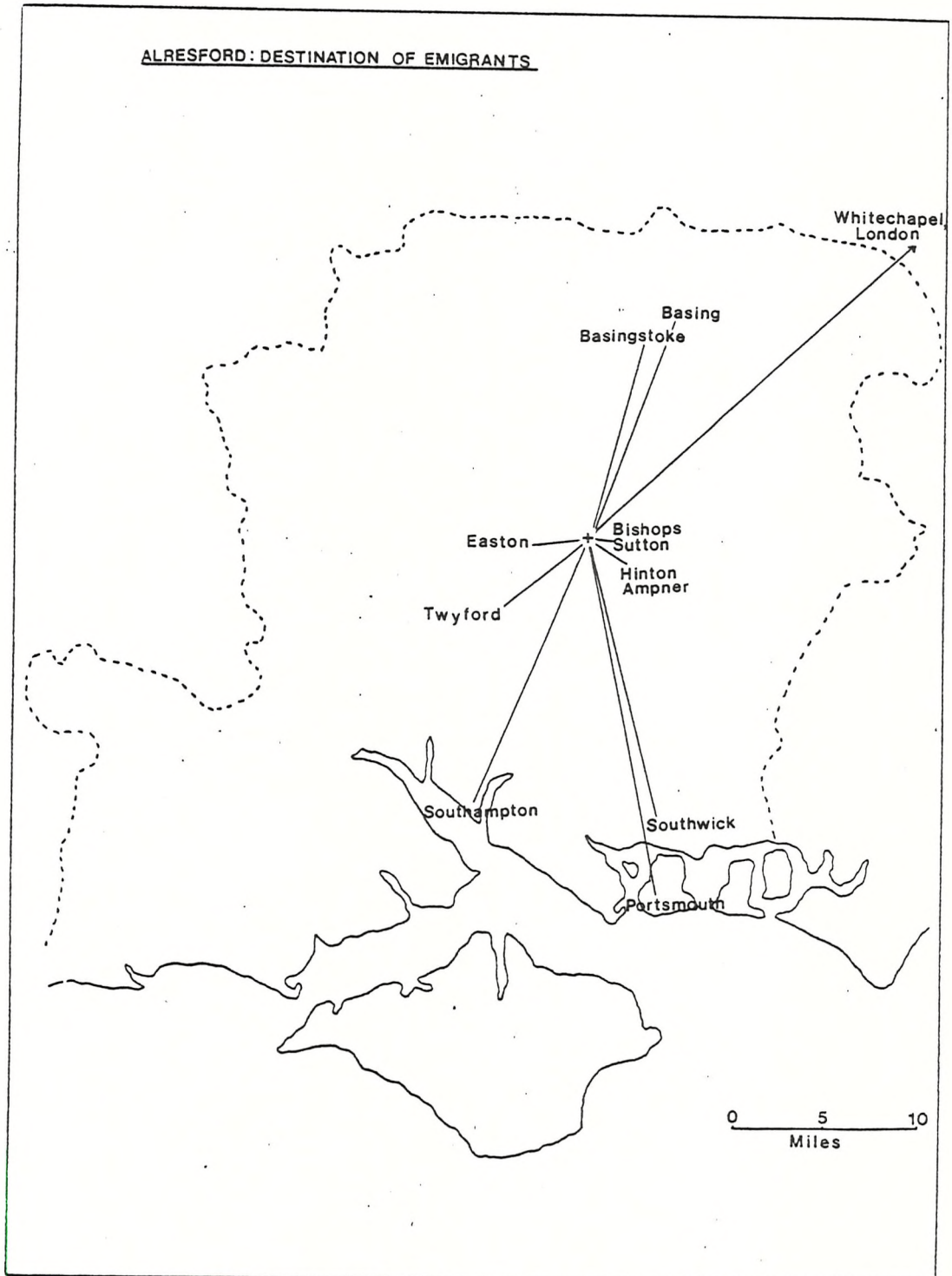


Figure 3/2/13



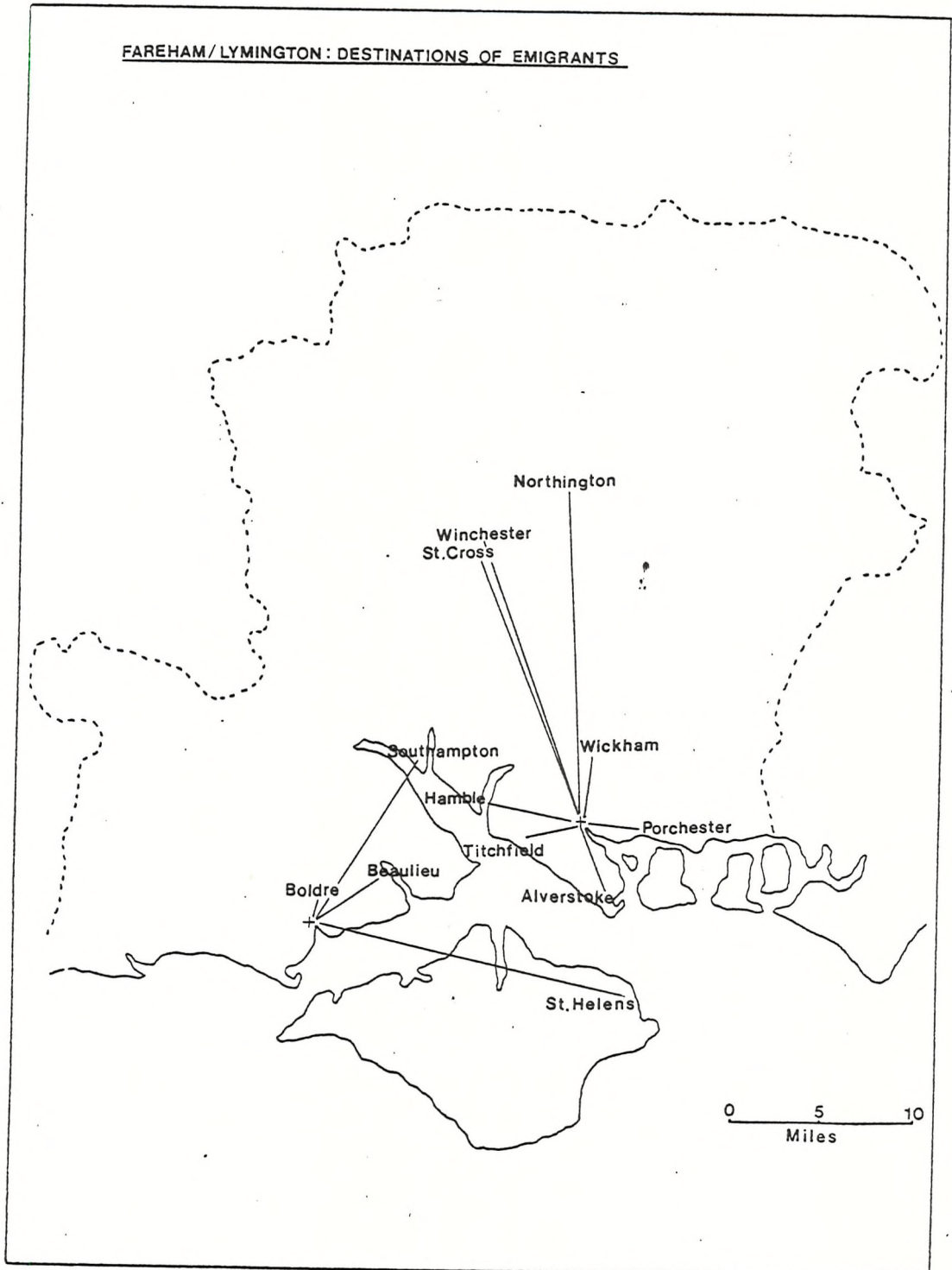


Figure 3/2/14

towns lost population to their own hinterlands, where it was possible to continue with home town activities, the smaller markets tended to lose completely a relatively larger proportion of their emigrants. For the port of Lymington the seaborne connections of the town must have influenced and attracted many of the population. Only four emigrants are known but three of them moved to other coastal locations and, likewise, Fareham seems to have enjoyed a considerable interchange of population with surrounding inlets and ports such as Hamble and Titchfield.

The large majority of emigrants leaving the market towns were making their first movements (see Table 3/2/7). This applied to 84 (67%) of the departures. Thus few of those people emigrating were the experienced travellers making their fourth or fifth moves and it would seem that many of these regular migrants, once they had settled in a market town, tended to stay permanently within the community. Of the 126 cases of emigration, 35 (28%) were to stay within an urban environment elsewhere and clearly for some of these men town life was essential for the pursuit of their occupations. Richard Brackley, for instance, moved to Basingstoke in 1601 and became a leading clothier in the town while other members of his family continued to practise the same trade in his home town of Romsey.<sup>1</sup> Similarly the urban nature of their businesses must have encouraged several Alresford emigrants to look towards other towns. Thus a shearman went to Basingstoke in 1559, a weaver travelled to Southampton in 1590 and a Chandler migrated to Portsmouth where the dockyard must have given him much greater opportunities than were available in a small market town.<sup>2</sup> Even some men who moved initially to the countryside later found their way back into town life as with a Petersfield weaver,

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1. HRO, Consistory Court Book, 112, f. 82.

2. HRO, Consistory Court Book, 24, f. 266; HRO, Consistory Court Book, 67, f. 97; HRO, Consistory Court Book, 112, f. 45.



Number of Moves Before Leaving Market Town

<u>Number of Moves</u>	<u>Number of Migrants</u>	<u>Number moving to other towns</u>
0*	84	26
1	27	7
2	10	1
3	3	1
4	2	-

\* i.e. people making first move.

Table 3/2/7

William Collier, who left the town and settled in Hursley, but by the time of his deposition in 1571 he had moved on again and was living in Winchester.<sup>1</sup> Others, like Nicholas Taylor of Romsey, moved to a rural village, in his case St. Mary Bourne, before returning to his home town.<sup>2</sup> This was a familiar pattern with emigrants spending a period of varying length away from their birthplace before returning at some time in the future. Nevertheless it is apparent that the majority of people leaving the small towns actually moved to and stayed in rural areas. This is a testimony to the deep-rooted agricultural connections of the market communities and suggests that many of the craftsmen who practised their trades in these boroughs could survive quite adequately beyond the urban environment. Thus among the Andover emigrants a glover's family moved to Millbrook, a weaver to Twyford, a sawyer to Mottisfont and a tanner to Northington.<sup>3</sup> However, in no case did these migrants move to areas completely remote from town life and many people leaving urban society, especially those moving only short distances, seem to have shown both a preference for living in rural districts and also a reluctance to sever all their ties with the economic facilities of the market town.

The age structure of people leaving the small boroughs broadly coincides with that of immigrants with the largest number in the age range of 20-29. However, relatively larger numbers appear to have been aged above thirty. Thus 34.9% of immigrants were over thirty compared with 45.5% of emigrants. It would seem that the elderly elements within society were more likely to move away from the market town than to move into the borough. At Havant all the emigrants whose ages are known were aged over thirty.

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1. HRO, Consistory Court Book, 24, f. 865.

2. *ibid.*, f. 134.

3. HRO, Consistory Court Book, 24, f. 917; HRO, Consistory Court Book, 44, f. 69; HRO, Consistory Court Book, 50, f. 332; HRO, Consistory Court Book, 55, f. 382.

Considering their numerical insignificance within society, the fact that 7.1% of emigrants were aged over fifty is especially surprising and indicates that these may have been men whose working life was over but who preferred to spend their "retirement" away from the main urban focus. They do not seem to have moved far although a weaver who left Lymington at the age of fifty-eight in 1571 went to live in Southampton.<sup>1</sup> One deponent from Basingstoke, aged eighty-six, told the court how he was now staying with his son in Winchester and it may be that it was common practice for the old and infirm to show a high degree of mobility as they moved to live with their families during their last years.<sup>2</sup>

Most of the market towns had strong connections with Southampton and Winchester, and sometimes such evidence points to other more distant relationships. Ralph Allport was an immigrant to Southampton from Staffordshire but he held land in Romsey and was linked with the Salte family which dwelt in Romsey for most of the early modern period but which also originated in Staffordshire.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, Thomas Crowder, a Southampton fletcher, had godchildren and relatives in Romsey but also a sister in Cheshire.<sup>4</sup> Several of the emigrants from the market towns were able to establish themselves among the upper echelons of Southampton and Winchester commercial society. William Budd, mayor of Winchester in 1610 and 1619, came from Bishops Waltham and Christopher Genens, bailiff in 1566 and 1567 originated in Basingstoke.<sup>5</sup> At Southampton William Barwick, a mercer and Chandler from Romsey, became a Burgess in his adopted town in 1566

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1. HRO, Consistory Court Book, 44, f. 141.

2. HRO, Consistory Court Book, 62, f. 429.

3. T.B. James, thesis, op.cit., p. 423.

4. ibid., p. 441.

5. A.B. Rosen, thesis, op.cit., p. 112.

and was mayor in 1582.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, Robert Reneger, a Basingstoke merchant, not only became a burgess but was one of the originators of the Brazil trade from the port and was a renowned attacker of the Spanish New World fleets.<sup>2</sup> The Sedgewick family was well entrenched in Southampton at the start of the sixteenth century but Nicholas, who became a burgess in 1510, was actually born in Andover and died as a resident of Romsey. His brother possibly lived at Fareham and his son probably became a merchant in Portsmouth, while the family also had branches in Alresford and Petersfield.<sup>3</sup> Instances such as these show clearly that Southampton society was open to immigrants from the small towns of the county. Other people were much less welcome, however, like Alice Knight who arrived in Southampton in 1577 from Romsey inquiring after her husband but was promptly locked up by the constables.<sup>4</sup> Likewise Thomas Westmill, a journeyman from Andover, was forced to appear before the justices of Southampton in order to explain the purpose of his travels and his destination.<sup>5</sup>

Several prominent members of Southampton society also moved away from the port and entered the market towns. Thus Peter Westbrooke, a burgess and merchant, went to live in Romsey where he died in 1550, ten years after serving as mayor of Southampton.<sup>6</sup> For him, at least, someone who had enjoyed life in a large county borough, small town society held an attraction. The same applied among many leading families from Winchester where opportunities were often limited for sons in government and commerce. Thus of

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1. T.B. James, thesis, op.cit., p. 427.
  2. ibid., p. 495.
  3. ibid., p. 501.
  4. G.H. Hamilton (ed.), Book of Examinations and Depositions 1570-1594, Southampton Records Series, Vol. 16, (Southampton, 1914), p. 23.
  5. ibid., p. 94.
  6. T.B. James, thesis, op.cit., p. 514.

the three sons of Robert Hodson, a woollen draper and three times mayor, two left the city, one of them moving to New Alresford.<sup>1</sup> The son of another mayor, Charles Newbolt, moved to Alton where he became a tanner.<sup>2</sup> There would seem to have been a steady stream of migrants, often from prominent business backgrounds leaving towns like Southampton and Winchester and establishing themselves in the market towns of the county. For them urban society and its benefits implied more than simply the larger county boroughs.

Apprenticeship was one of the most important reasons for migration to or from the market towns of Hampshire and applied predominantly to those in the age range of 10-19 years. Unfortunately cities like Salisbury, Winchester and Chichester do not possess detailed apprenticeship registers but information is available for Southampton after 1609 and this reveals several instances of apprentices entering the town from the market communities of the county.<sup>3</sup> Between 1609 and 1670 there are forty examples of apprentices coming to Southampton from the market towns out of a total of 511 indentures registered, only 7.8%, which tends to confirm Merson's view that although most apprentices came from Hampshire they were most likely to come primarily "from rural places rather than from other corporate or market towns".<sup>4</sup> Relatively few young people found their way to Southampton from the lesser markets, an indication of the range of occupations and the high level of development within most of the small towns which diminished the need to look elsewhere for training and prospects. Every one of the forty apprentices was male which suggests that there were ample outlets for young

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1. A.B. Rosen, thesis, op.cit., p. 116.

2. *ibid.*, p. 117.

3. A.L. Merson, A Calendar of Southampton Apprenticeship Registers, Southampton Records Series, Vol.12, (Southampton, 1968).

4. *ibid.*, p. xxx.

girls to be apprenticed to "huswifery" or as servants within the market communities. Mostly these migrants came from fairly wealthy backgrounds. Seven were the sons of gentlemen, another seven were the offspring of yeomen farmers and several others were the children of mercers, merchants or innholders all of whom were near the top of urban society and were clearly anxious to see their sons brought up in a larger town with the chance of further family improvement. Thus Robert Bold, the son of Arthur Bold, a prominent Petersfield gentleman was indented as the apprentice of Humphrey Ryman, a Southampton merchant, and Thomas Peachye from a mercantile family in Gosport served under John Collyns, a mercer, for seven years from 1610.<sup>1</sup> Family connections in Southampton were obviously important in many of the movements. John Rigges son of Ralph Rigges of Fareham was indented to his brother Francis Rigges to be instructed in the trade of a grocer "as alsoe to be enstructed in all other trades or sciences as the said Frauncis Rigges shall use during the said terme". Francis, however, died after only one and a half years and John became an apprentice to another Southampton grocer, Nicholas Pescodd.<sup>2</sup> The connections could span much greater distances for Joseph Mason, the son of a Kingsclere yeoman, was also indented to his brother in Southampton, one Thomas Mason, a grocer.<sup>3</sup> Some Southampton masters seem to have had close ties with particular towns which may have induced subsequent apprenticeship migration. Thus Henry Bracebridge, a draper, received Thomas Borne of Basingstoke in 1619 and another Basingstoke boy, John Holmes, eight years later.<sup>4</sup>

Very few of these apprentices who left their home town to learn a trade in Southampton seem to have followed the occupation

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1. *ibid.*, p. 29.

2. *ibid.*, pp. 2, 4.

3. *ibid.*, p. 3.

4. *ibid.*, pp. 10, 15.

of their fathers. Only four (10%) continued in the paternal profession, like John Forest the son of a Ringwood tailor who was apprenticed to Edward Cushin, another tailor, in 1608.<sup>1</sup>

Most, however, followed completely different pursuits.

Christopher Gibbons from Ringwood and the son of a carpenter was attached to a sergeweaver while the son of an Alton glover was trained as a cooper.<sup>2</sup> For many children from agricultural families in the market towns, movement to Southampton offered a chance to follow a new trade and there are instances of boys from yeoman or husbandman backgrounds being apprenticed to occupations as diverse as glovers, drapers, shipwrights, grocers, tailors and weavers. Two indentures are particularly interesting for they relate to the Gasse family of Romsey, prominent as butchers in the town from around 1540. Alexander Gasse, like his father and brothers, was a butcher but he clearly wanted two of his sons, Daniel and Alexander junior, to follow a different trade and the former was apprenticed in 1649 to Peter Seale, a Southampton merchant, and the latter in 1648 to Nicholas Clement a Southampton ironmonger.<sup>3</sup> Apprenticeship therefore seems to have been a means by which young migrants from market towns could break free from the father to son occupational pattern which may have been especially prevalent in the small communities.

Further details can be derived for some of the emigrants by reference to the parish registers. Eight apprentices left Romsey for Southampton in this period and information is available for seven of them, a small sample taken overall but probably not unrepresentative. Two of them left at the age of eleven, one at thirteen, one at fourteen, one at sixteen, one at seventeen and one at nineteen. Four of them were eldest sons and in the case of the

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1. *ibid.*, p. 7.

2. *ibid.*, pp. 7, 20.

3. *ibid.*, pp. 39, 41.

Gasse brothers they were the eldest two sons in a family of six. Only George Raynoldes, who was fourth of six children, was a young member of a family and it seems that in most cases sons who left Romsey to follow a trade elsewhere were the eldest children within a family for whom, presumably, the prospect of taking over their father's business was most distant. Although they probably retained ties in their birthplace these apprenticeship movements were clearly permanent in most cases. Edward Sherlocke and Philip Eedes, both apprenticed to Southampton tailors, never returned to live in Romsey and three of the others similarly departed from the town. Daniel Gasse never reappears in the parish register as either a bridegroom or father, though his brother may have dwelt in Romsey during the 1660s. Only Gabriel Spratt definitely served his apprenticeship to a Southampton tailor and then moved to Romsey to practise his trade. He married, had at least three children baptised in the town and died there in 1663 at the age of forty-six. In most cases, however, these young boys who left the town in their teenage years do represent permanent migration away from the market community and the child who returned may have been a rarity.

Southampton was, of course, only one of many boroughs which received emigrants from the Hampshire market towns. John Dyke the son of Nathaniel Dyke of Petersfield was apprenticed to Obadiah Wickes, a tanner of Kingston-upon-Thames in 1644 and William Holdernys, son of a Basingstoke husbandman was apprenticed to Nicholas Jesson, a baker in Bristol.<sup>1</sup> Others joined the inevitable drift of young apprentices to London. The Carpenters Company shows the entry of migrants from Alton, Basingstoke, Christchurch and Kingsclere in the years from 1654 to 1670 while

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1. A. Daly (ed.), Kingston-upon-Thames Register of Apprentices 1563-1713, Surrey Record Society, Vol. XXVIII (1974), p. 59; D. Hollis (ed.), Calendar of the Bristol Apprentice Book 1532-1565, Bristol Record Society, Vol. XIV (1948), p. 91.



in 1590 Richard Holt in the same company presented as his apprentice Robert Gaskin, the fifteen year old son of John Gaskin, a Gosport butcher.<sup>1</sup> A prominent Romsey innkeeper, Richard Symmes, sent his son Anthony to be the apprentice of Robert Howcott, a master in the Company of Stationers.<sup>2</sup> Another innkeeper, William Cooke of Andover, sent two of his sons Richard and William to be apprenticed in the same trade.<sup>3</sup> In total, between 1605 and 1670 the Stationers Company accepted as apprentices twelve boys from Hampshire market towns, three the sons of innkeepers, four the sons of gentlemen and two the sons of yeomen farmers. Clearly the boys who left the small towns for London companies, like those going to Southampton, came mostly from affluent backgrounds.

The market towns did not only lose population by means of apprenticeship for large numbers of young people entered their bounds to follow a trade. Without any registers the evidence that is available tends to occur when the apprenticeship system broke down for some reason. This happened, for instance, when the joint court of Andover ruled that Thomas Turner, son of an Andover tailor, be discharged from his apprenticeship with Robert Humfries als Julians an Andover sergeweaver because Humfries had maltreated him, withholding food, overworking the boy and beating him "not only in the said apprentice's health but also in his sickness".<sup>4</sup> The court ordered that the boy's father should cease to pay any more money to Humfries for his son's upkeep

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1. B. Marsh (ed.), Apprentices' Entry Books 1654-1694, Records of the Worshipful Company of Carpenters, (Oxford, 1913), pp. 35, 69, 72, 90, 93; B. Marsh and J. Ainsworth (eds.), Court Book 1573-94, Records of the Worshipful Company of Carpenters, (Oxford, 1939), p. 274.
  2. D.F. McKenzie (ed.), Stationers' Company Apprentices 1605-1640, (Virginia, USA, 1961), p. 85.
  3. *ibid.*, pp. 58, 76.
  4. APL, 2/JC/2.

and that the indenture should be cancelled.

Unfortunately the only other records which survive relate to children apprenticed as a result of their poverty and for whom the poor law overseers had assumed responsibility. These are particularly good for the small town of Kingsclere. Between 1619 and 1653, twenty-five indentures survive.<sup>1</sup> They were the result of an agreement between the churchwardens and overseers, and a master who undertook to provide "convenient meat, drink, apparell, lodging and all other things fit and necessary for such an apprentice". The child was to be taught a trade and was to be restrained from visiting taverns and alehouses, keeping dishonest company or playing "cards, dice or any other unlawful games". Nor was the apprentice allowed to contract marriage but at the end of the term he or she was to receive "two suits of apparel neet and convenient for the said apprentice". The Kingsclere indentures show both immigration and emigration from the town as the overseers sought to attach poor or orphaned children to honest trades. All the children were aged between ten and sixteen. The boys were tied until they were twenty-four while the girls were apprenticed to the age of twenty or twenty-one. Five of the indentures refer to children leaving to be brought up away from the town and, as with the privately arranged agreements, it is unlikely that these young people ever returned permanently to their home town. Movement applied to girls and boys. In 1620 Alice Woodach was apprenticed to Jane Keene of Wolverton until she was twenty-one years old and was to be instructed in "the work of huswifry" and Anne Nicholson was sent to Basingstoke at the age of fifteen to be an apprentice to John Gardner a husbandman.<sup>2</sup> Some masters were found surprisingly

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1. HRO, 19 M 76 A/PO8.

2. *ibid.*, Alice Woodach, Anne Nicholson.

far afield. William Churchman, the son of a deceased Kingsclere labourer, was apprenticed to Robert Hunt, a tanner of "Heath" (Hythe?) Kent and in 1653 Elizabeth Turberfield was apprenticed to a baker in Southwark, Surrey, until she was twenty-one.<sup>1</sup> In this way arranged migration for the poor children could involve travel over fairly long distances.

Marriage was another important factor in the mobility of population among the inhabitants of the early modern town. Men and women commonly found partners outside their own communities although the parish registers rarely give any idea of the origins of couples married in the towns. The only detailed records relate to the troubled period of the Commonwealth when the introduction of civil marriage distorts the value of the evidence. Rather, it is necessary to look to the more limited sample of the marriage licences from both Winchester and Chichester dioceses. The home parishes of men and women who married natives of Romsey and Alresford are shown in Figures 3/2/15 and 3/2/16. Clearly both husbands and wives could be drawn from long distances. Richard Greene, for instance, originated in Frome, Somerset, from whence he came to marry Alice Farlie of Alresford, and Joan Bowen, a Bristol widow, found a new husband in Romsey.<sup>2</sup> In general, however, most marriages at Romsey were contracted between couples both of whom originated within a five or ten mile radius of the market town, indicative perhaps of the function of the market as a social focus. At Alresford these local ties were relatively less significant and the smaller market town probably had much less of a command over social contact within its hinterland. Men were slightly more likely to have come from distances of over ten miles

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1. *ibid.*, William Churchman, Elizabeth Turberfield.

2. A.J. Willis, Hampshire Marriage Licences, (Folkestone, 1958), pp. 18, 85.

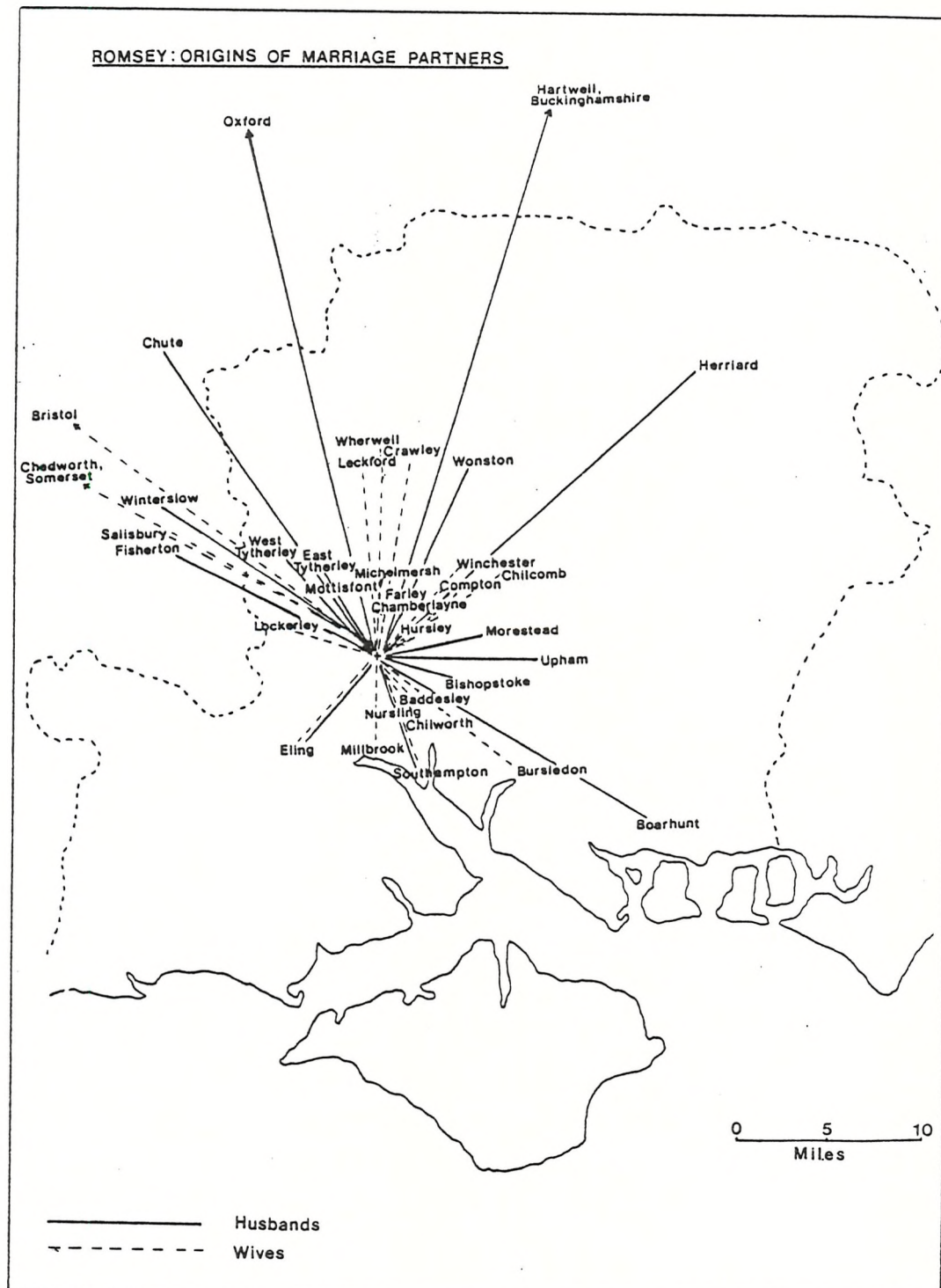


Figure 3/2/15

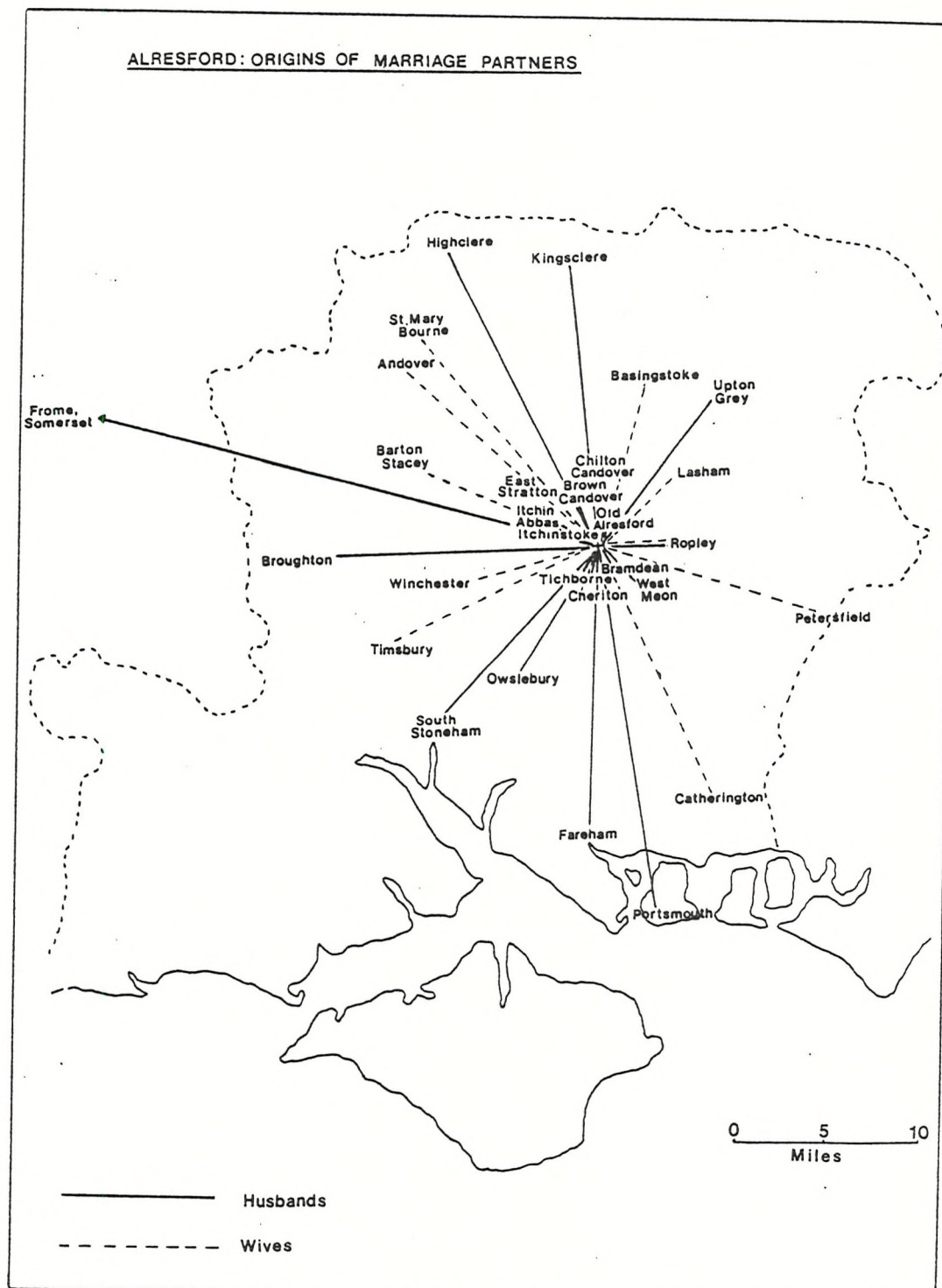


Figure 3/2/16

and it is also of interest that some of the marriage partners whose roots lay furthest from the home of their spouse came from the wealthiest elements of urban society, as with Thomas Lee of Hartwell Buckinghamshire who in 1622 married Lady Mary Fuller of Sparsholt Romsey,<sup>1</sup> adding further substance to the view that, as far as the small towns were concerned, the longest distance migrants tended to be found among the more affluent members of the population.

Clearly population movement was an important and interesting aspect of society within the early modern market town and was present to some degree throughout the period. The towns were certainly witnessing a net inflow of population, just like the larger cities and provincial centres, though never on the same scale. At times movement may have been particularly influential on the overall urban size such as around 1558 and in the 1590s when the number of movements recorded among the Consistory Court deponents swells considerably. Yet these were exceptional periods when poverty and disease sent people towards the towns in a vain search for relief. For most of the early modern years immigration, whilst always a factor in population growth, was never the major force that it seems to have been in a larger town like Southampton.

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1. *ibid.*, p. 33.

Part Three : Family Structure

The third and last of the particular factors underlying the population of the small urban communities in sixteenth and seventeenth century Hampshire which will be reviewed in this thesis is family structure. To this end a partial reconstitution analysis has been made from the parish register of Petersfield and subsidiary information has been drawn from other towns in the county.

Analysis of aggregate christenings has already shown that throughout the market towns there was a definite increase in the number of baptisms recorded in the early modern period. This may simply be seen as the logical outcome of a larger population containing more potential parents but it could also have been the consequence of variation in the size of families during the period. The average number of children christened in each family (excluding childless families) in each decade from the 1570s to the 1630s shows that marital fertility in fact remained fairly stable through the period (Table 3/3/1). Over the whole 70 year span the average woman in Petersfield christened just under four children and during the seventeenth century the figures for each decade are almost identical. Only in the late sixteenth century did the average fluctuate to any great extent. The high figure of 4.5 achieved for couples married in the 1570s coincides with the relatively disease free, optimistic conditions of that decade and of the 1580s. This tends to indicate that comparative good health and adequate harvests, allied to encouraging local economic prospects as Portsmouth expanded under the patronage of Elizabeth I, could have a marked effect on family prospects within a small town. Childbearing was not the spontaneous ad hoc activity often envisaged and for many mothers and fathers it was related directly to their considered capacity to support a larger family. Similarly, marriages made in the 1580s and at their most fertile through the disastrous 1590s show a marked drop in the numbers of children christened. Certainly



PETERSFIELD: NUMBER OF CHILDREN PER FAMILY

	Number of Children	Number of Families	Average	Number of Childless Families	% of all Families	Number of Families with Children	Average
1570-9	130	41	3.2	12	29.3	29	4.5
1580-9	83	40	2.1	13	32.5	27	3.1
1590-9	212	62	3.4	6	9.7	56	3.8
1600-9	142	57	2.5	17	29.8	40	3.6
1610-9	229	78	2.9	19	24.4	59	3.9
1620-9	199	64	3.1	13	20.3	51	3.9
1630-9	229	78	2.9	18	23.1	60	3.8
	<u>1224</u>	<u>420</u>	<u>2.9</u>	<u>98</u>	<u>23.3</u>	<u>322</u>	<u>3.8</u>

Table 3/3/1

for the population of late Tudor Petersfield family size may be seen as the product of broad economic and social experience and forethought. This, in turn, significantly influenced the overall demographic course of the town for, on average, a marriage made in the 1570s produced almost one and a half more children than a household formed in the 1580s, creating a sharp acceleration and then deceleration in the growth of the population.

Marital fertility may, therefore, have been quite significant in determining the demographic character of the late sixteenth century. Yet for the early Stuart years the average is very stable and family size must have had much less effect on the total size of Petersfield leading to a possible assumption that by the pre-Civil War years the emphasis in population growth had shifted sharply towards fluctuations in mortality rather than changing patterns of fertility. This would, of course, be in line with the increasing severity of disease already noted.

Turning to individual families it is clear that the largest proportions of households fell into the one, two, three and four child categories (Table 3/3/2). Husbands and wives producing over four offspring in their completed family, though never rare, were always in a minority. The relative position of different family sizes seems to have been fairly constant with, for example, two child households wavering between 9.8% in 1570-9 and 17.9% in 1630-9 and the other family totals also maintained a fairly stable share of the population. There were occasionally odd periods when rather higher proportions were recorded such as the 1590s when over one in five of families established went on to record just one birth, possibly due to interruptions to family life from disease and famine, or the 1620s when one fifth of all new households produced three children. By contrast there were periods like the 1630s when very few households are recorded with three children. Such fluctuations were, however, usually small and do not represent any marked developments in family structure.

PETERSFIELD: NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN COMPLETED FAMILY

	<u>Number of Children</u>							Number of Families in sample	
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6 over 6		
1570-9	12 (29.3%)	4 ( 9.8%)	4 ( 9.8%)	4 ( 9.8%)	5 (12.2%)	3 ( 7.3%)	2 ( 4.9%)	7 (17.1%)	41
1580-9	13 (32.5%)	5 (12.5%)	6 (15.0%)	4 (10.0%)	7 (17.5%)	2 ( 5.0%)	2 ( 5.0%)	1 ( 2.5%)	40
1590-9	6 ( 9.7%)	14 (22.6%)	10 (16.1%)	4 ( 6.5%)	6 ( 9.7%)	4 ( 6.5%)	9 (14.5%)	9 (14.5%)	62
1600-9	17 (29.8%)	8 (14.0%)	6 (10.5%)	10 (17.5%)	4 ( 7.0%)	5 ( 8.8%)	4 ( 7.0%)	3 ( 5.3%)	57
1610-9	19 (24.4%)	11 (14.1%)	12 (15.4%)	7 ( 9.0%)	8 (10.3%)	6 ( 7.7%)	6 ( 7.7%)	9 (11.5%)	78
1620-9	13 (20.3%)	7 (10.9%)	8 (12.5%)	13 (20.3%)	7 (10.9%)	6 ( 9.4%)	2 ( 3.1%)	8 (12.5%)	64
1630-9	18 (23.1%)	8 (10.3%)	14 (17.9%)	4 ( 5.1%)	11 (14.1%)	13 (16.7%)	5 ( 6.4%)	5 ( 6.4%)	78

Table 3/3/2

Within the population there was always a significant number of very large families although, given the mortality conditions of the sixteenth and seventeenth century, they were never likely to become the rule. At any one time probably about 10% of completed households recorded over six children although their number was clearly likely to drop at times when the death rate was increasing. - This explains the relatively few large families established in the 1580s, 1600s and 1630s which represented the households reproducing in the last decade of the sixteenth century and the second and fourth decades of the seventeenth century. For the mothers who produced some of these larger families life must have been a constant strain with the persistent dangers inherent in childbirth. Margaret, wife of John Hooke, had eight children in fifteen years after their marriage in 1575 while Joan Woolger had nine children in sixteen years beginning in 1577. The largest family recorded in Petersfield during the period under review was that of William Inkerbee whose wife Mary had ten children in thirteen years at the end of the sixteenth century and she must have been expecting a child for most of her adult life. Such instances were not uncommon in the early modern town but nevertheless they do not give the true picture of a typical family in a place like Petersfield where numbers of offspring more commonly numbered two or three. Of all the families established in the period and for which details are available, including childless couples, those with one to four children usually represented at least 50%, those without children up to 25% and those with over four children also up to 25%.

So far mention has been made primarily of child-producing families but it is interesting that there was always a fairly high number of marriages which remained childless. Over the whole period almost one in four produced no recorded children. This was partially the result of some shortlived marriages caused by the death of one or other partner, but it also suggests a fairly high level of male and female sterility. Its relative familiarity

within Petersfield society seems to run contrary to the picture of the early modern male determined at all costs to ensure the continuation of his family by creating a large progeny. This image, derived largely, one suspects, from the experience of Henry VIII, could not have held true for a substantial proportion of families and the small market town contained within its midst many men and women who lived together for long periods without ever producing any children.

Notwithstanding this fact, children were still the norm for newly married couples and the majority of women did bear at least one child. It has been estimated that roughly 70% of households throughout the country had children under the age of majority at any one time.<sup>1</sup> Clearly precise figures for Petersfield are impossible. However, given the likelihood that at least 75% of marriages bore a minimum of one child and taking into account new households moving into the town with young children as well as the fairly short overall marital life expectancy, then, even if families whose offspring had grown up and childless couples are also allowed for, it seems a broad assumption which could fairly be extended to Petersfield and probably to other small towns. Put another way it means that young households were the predominant influence on population within the town and that the sort of economic factors which seem to have partly dictated their family pattern were thus an even more significant force in overall demographic developments.

One of the most important determinants of marital fertility was the length of time over which wives were able to bear children. Figures showing the time span between marriage and the baptism of the last child can be deduced (Table 3/3/3). Again the general health of the different years under review is a prime factor to be considered for in the 1570s stretching into the 1580s

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1. D.G. Hey, An English Rural Community, (Leicester, 1974), p. 205.

PETERSFIELD: CHILD BEARING SPAN

	<u>Families</u>	<u>Average span (years)</u>
1570-9	29	10.3
1580-9	27	8.6
1590-9	56	9.5
1600-9	40	9.6
1610-9	59	9.4
1620-9	51	9.8
1630-9	60	8.9
	<u>322</u>	<u>9.4</u>

Table 3/3/3

PETERSFIELD: LENGTH OF MARRIAGE

	<u>Number of Marriages</u>	<u>Length (years)</u>	
		<u>Mean</u>	<u>Median</u>
1570-9	37	21.1	21.0
1580-9	33	20.1	18.0
1590-9	52	20.0	20.0
1600-9	48	18.9	20.0
1610-9	72	18.4	12.0
1620-9	52	22.0	20.0
1630-9	62	14.1	12.0
	<u>356</u>	<u>19.2</u>	

Table 3/3/4

the fertile period of marriages was comparatively long. However, in the subsequent years the depressive effects of disease and famine in the 1590s are apparent in the fall to 8.6 years for weddings recorded in the 1580s. Child-bearing span and overall family size are obviously very closely related and both show this response to the extra-familial factors which influenced demographic growth. Thereafter fertility was fairly stable averaging around nine and a half years, but the families begun in the 1630s show a renewed drop to below nine years, probably the result of disease before and after 1640 and the subsequent disruption of the Civil War. Whatever the exact cause, a fall in the average number of childbearing years could only serve to decrease population growth in the middle of the seventeenth century.

Broken marriages seem to have been rare and may have been frowned on by contemporaries even more than illegitimate children or prenuptial conceptions. However, death from both natural and unnatural causes was a constant threat to long marriages. Approximate durations have been calculated for 356 marriages registered in Petersfield between 1570 and 1639 and the numerical average length was 19.2 years with the median being slightly less (Table 3/3/4). The average for the late Tudor period was relatively high with partners normally able to expect at least twenty years together as man and wife but in the seventeenth century the figure began to fall, broken only by a rise for weddings registered in the 1620s. At the end of the period, however, the average duration was just 14.1 years further signifying the disruptions caused to family life by the troubles of sickness and war that marred the early 1640s. Nevertheless there were always several couples living in the town who had lived together for long periods. Of the thirty-seven marriages traced from the 1570s, one lasted over fifty years, four more over forty and another seven over thirty years so that almost half the couples for which details are known spent three decades or more together. Nor did

large families and the risks of childbirth preclude a long married life. Henry Stoy and his wife Mary married in 1592 and lived together for forty-six years in which time they had seven children, while the marriage of Henry Duke and his wife Parnell lasted for fifty years from 1594 and they had six children.

Overall, however, the average length of a marriage was quite short. These figures are significant in the study of family structure for they also provide a clue about the position of grandparents. The myth of the extended family within early modern society has long been exploded and certainly it must have been rare for a marriage to last long enough for both husband and wife to become grandparents.<sup>1</sup> However, a child probably had a fairly reasonable chance of knowing one grandparent and possibly two grandparents, one from either side of the family. Returning to the study of wills made for Romsey it is interesting to see the increasing regularity with which grandchildren figure among the beneficiaries. In the middle of the sixteenth century at times less than one in ten wills refer to grandchildren but by the seventeenth century the figure never drops below one in five and by the 1660s had reached as high as 40% of all wills. This indicates either a change in testamentary custom or an increasing likelihood of three generations co-existing with a family.<sup>2</sup>

The length of a marriage was not simply dictated by factors governing the death of one or other spouse for it could also be influenced in another way. If increased fertility did indeed play a role in population growth within Petersfield and the other market towns then one of the main factors inducing the change would be the age at which people, and, in particular, women married (Table 3/3/5). This directly affected the number of potential

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1. P. Laslett, The World We Have Lost, (London, 1970), p. 103.

2. see p. 318.



PETERSFIELD: AGE AT FIRST MARRIAGE

	<u>Male</u>		<u>Number</u>	<u>Female</u>	
	<u>Mean (yrs.)</u>	<u>Median (yrs.)</u>		<u>Mean (yrs.)</u>	<u>Median (yrs.)</u>
1600-9	28.7	27.0	15	24.6	23.3
1610-9	25.3	25.0	16	24.7	24.3
1620-9	26.3	25.0	21	23.6	23.0
1630-9	24.4	25.0	18	23.1	22.0
1640-9	24.0	24.0	26	23.6	21.0

Table 3/3/5

childbearing years a woman had in front of her and thus the size of the family created. There were some very clear changes occurring within Petersfield in the first half of the seventeenth century which must have had an effect on the overall population of the town. As today, it was customary for men to be older than women at marriage although there were always some occasions when the reverse was true. In 1630, for instance, James Pace aged twenty-four married Bridget Chapman aged thirty-three. Nevertheless, looking first at the female age of first marriage it dropped from just over twenty-four and a half at the start of the century to just over twenty-three by the 1630s and 1640s. In fact, the median age of marriage by the middle of the century was even lower pointing to the increasing occurrence of very young brides. In 1627 Joan Frost married at the age of seventeen, Anne Yaldinge was seventeen when she married in 1631 and Grace Browne was just sixteen at the time of her marriage in 1638. Teenage brides were always in a minority but they were becoming more common in the 1620s and 1630s. There had, therefore, been a fall in the customary age of marriage for women with a consequential increase in the possible childbearing period. Among the men the falling age of marriage was even more marked, declining from an average of 28.7 in 1600-9 to 24 in the 1640s, and, as with the women, the phenomenon of teenage bridegrooms, always very rare, was becoming slightly more common, as with William Foord who was aged eighteen when he married in 1621. Clearly the normal age difference between the sexes on marriage was narrowing and it may well have been the improving economic prospects of the town which increased the opportunities for young men and gave them the necessary security for marriage at an earlier age. As regards overall population growth the downward trend for men probably had little effect, except by lessening the chance of early widowhood, but it gives a further emphasis to the direct interrelationship between factors such as income and employment, both of which were probably improving in early Stuart Petersfield, with the decisions which influenced family structure.

However, although the age of marriage for men and women fell in the early Stuart years, marital fertility has been shown to have been fairly constant and possibly even declined, the reverse to what would normally be expected. The answer must lie in the course taken by increased mortality which began to have a severe dampening effect on population in the 1630s. A rise in fertility did not take place because, while the age of marriage dropped, there was no corresponding increase in the childbearing span of the average family due to the increased likelihood of premature death for either the husband or wife.

Remarriage was a very common phenomenon in early modern society. Put in cold terms, for the widow it could be a financial necessity especially if she was left with young children to support while the widower left with offspring often needed help just as much. Moreover, husband and wife were commonly an economic unit sharing in the running of a small business. Of course more compassionate reasons for remarriage were also apparent and it is all too easy to dismiss the wedding in early modern England as an economic fact of life without any regard to the role of affection and companionship. There is no clear pattern to remarriage (Table 3/3/6). Some men and women found new partners with extraordinary speed. Henry Yalden, for instance, whose wife Jane died in Petersfield on 31 January 1614, married again on 13 March and John Ratlif married on 24 November 1617 just two months after his first wife was buried. Yet others were apparently happy and able to continue alone for several years and this applied equally to widows and widowers. For men the average gap between marriage works out at between one and two years, although the median is rather lower and a period of about a year was probably the most common for widowers who remarried. For women the period was slightly longer, indicating relatively less need to remarry than existed among men. The average is about two years and the mean around one and a half years. However, the range of gaps is such that it was clearly something which was dictated by individual circumstances, such as the size of a legacy from a

PETERSFIELD: AVERAGE GAP BETWEEN MARRIAGES (months)

	<u>Male</u>		<u>Female</u>	
	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Median</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Median</u>
1600-9	16.2	16.0	17.0	13.0
1610-9	15.6	9.5	31.7	24.0
1620-9	22.8	16.0	35.7	35.0
1630-9	17.7	10.0	19.7	20.0
1640-9	28.6	16.0	12.0	12.0

Table 3/3/6

husband to his widow, rather than corresponding to any clear pattern. One thing that does emerge from Petersfield is that widows and widowers often intermarried. In 1618 John Austin whose wife died nearly four years earlier married Margaret Hunte whose husband had died nine months before while Richard Parker a widower of two months married Elizabeth Clothier, a widow of four months, in April 1621. Clearly these single parents were not only common in the early modern town but also seem to have shared many of their experiences and many went on to have further children in their subsequent marriages.

Analysis of the gaps between births is a further useful indicator of family life within the small urban community (Table 3/3/7a). The mean intervals seem to have remained fairly stable throughout the period with a slight tendency for the gaps to lengthen towards the middle of the seventeenth century. Thus, although the figure of about twenty-seven months seems to have been fairly standard for the interval between first and second children, that between the second and third increased from about twenty-eight months in the late sixteenth century to about thirty-three months in the years between 1610 and 1620. About thirty or thirty-one months normally lapsed between the third and fourth children but the gap between the fourth and fifth was more volatile ranging from 25.1 in the 1580s to 39.7 in the 1590s, perhaps indicative of the caution and delay imposed by death and disease in the latter decade. It is clear that there was little tendency for the time gap to lengthen as the size of family increased, with about thirty months a rough norm which can be applied to all the children. Family formation proceeded at about the same rate at whatever stage it had reached.

The intervals recorded for some of the last children born are especially interesting for it is from the gap between penultimate and ultimate births that E.A. Wrigley drew some of his evidence of deliberate family limitation in his study of Colyton.<sup>1</sup> Many of those

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1. E.A. Wrigley, "Family Limitation in pre-industrial England", Economic History Review, 2nd series, XIX, (1966), pp. 82-109.

PETERSFIELD: AVERAGE GAP BETWEEN CHILDBIRTH (months)

Stage of Family (e.g. gap between third and fourth child)

	<u>1-2</u>	<u>2-3</u>	<u>3-4</u>	<u>4-5</u>	<u>5-6</u>	<u>over 6</u>	<u>unknown</u>
1570-9	27.6	16.8	31.5	30.0	27.0	19.5	31.3
1580-9	25.8	27.5	30.5	25.1	27.8	15.3	32.1
1590-9	29.3	28.1	33.5	34.7	32.1	26.6	31.5
1600-9	27.6	29.3	26.1	27.4	26.3	17.0	28.7
1610-9	29.8	33.8	33.3	27.1	27.1	28.2	30.1
1620-9	28.5	33.8	32.1	32.4	27.1	32.3	30.0
1630-9	25.3	27.5	30.4	34.8	31.1	32.4	29.4

Table 3/3/7a

Petersfield children who were fifth, sixth or higher in the family were indeed last children and the intervals before their registration are, as a result, particularly significant. It is notable therefore that the gaps during the 1570s and 1580s were very low, falling to under twenty months in the 1580s. In the 1590s the interval rises before dropping again at the start of the seventeenth century, a pattern which can be recognised as similar to the mortality history of the town. The rise in the interval before the last birth at the end of the sixteenth century may therefore indicate a greater propensity to delay childbirth at a time of poverty and sickness and thus points to the practice of deliberate family limitation. It was the means by which a household responded to strain imposed on their level of subsistence. At the end of the period under review the figures rose again and then levelled out around the thirty-two month mark, similarly pointing to a further conscious decision by parents to defer childbirth and a factor in the slowing down of demographic expansion for mid-seventeenth century Petersfield.

Evidence drawn for family limitation from a comparison between the years 1570-89 and 1620-39 is far less conclusive (Table 3/3/7b). Both periods show a peak of births in the 25-30 month bracket with substantial proportions in the 19-24 and 31-36 categories. Neither show any later bulge, possibly around fifty months, which would be the case if a significant number of households were limiting their families. The "natural" distribution of births seems to have been the rule throughout the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and the number of children born after forty-two months only increased from 10.1% of the total to 12.9%, hardly a shift which merits any firm deduction of any increase in family limitation.

An indication of another form of restriction on family growth can be the infant mortality rate. One of the prime factors influencing survival among the newly-born children was the prevalence or otherwise of breastfeeding which substantially increased an infant's

PETERSFIELD: GAP BETWEEN CHILDREN

		<u>Gap (months)</u>										
		9-12	13-18	19-24	25-30	31-36	37-42	43-48	49-54	55-60	over 60	Total
1570-89		6 (7.6%)	15 (19.0%)	11 (13.9%)	21 (26.6%)	12 (15.2%)	6 (7.6%)	5 (6.3%)	-	3 (3.8%)	-	79
1620-39		4 (2.0%)	25 (12.4%)	45 (22.3%)	50 (24.8%)	33 (16.3%)	19 (9.4%)	14 (6.9%)	6 (3.0%)	3 (1.5%)	3 (1.5%)	202

Table 3/3/7b



chance of survival.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, however, it seems that when a baby is entirely breastfed the mother's post partum amenorrhoea is prolonged and fertilisation is avoided. Thus a low infant mortality rate from increased breastfeeding could lead to longer gaps between childbirth and thus limitations on the family by means of lactation-induced amenorrhoea. In the 1570s infant mortality was at a very low level, about 114 per 1000 live births, rising slightly to 118 in the 1580s and falling to as low as 93 in the 1590s. These are very low levels though not far out of line with those found by McLaren in Oxfordshire and by Wrigley at Colyton. Figures for the rest of the period until 1640 show infant mortality in a similar sort of range, evidence, first, that infant mortality may not have been quite as horrific as is sometimes imagined and, second, that breastfeeding may have been a constant factor in domestic life throughout the period. If this was the case, although there is no specific evidence that it was practised by those families which furnish the statistics on birth intervals, it may have been influential in lengthening the gaps between childbirth and thus played a part in the restraint of population growth in the small town throughout the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. There is no reason to suppose that women were not unaware of the fact that breastfeeding both improved the chance of their baby's survival and enhanced their prospect of reasonable immunity from an early pregnancy.

Certainly pre-industrial society was capable of limiting its reproduction. Family growth could be averted by means of coitus interruptus, by abortion and by infanticide and all were probably well known to the inhabitants of market towns like Petersfield. Evidence of deliberate control of fertility is by its very nature tentative but certainly parents had the means at their disposal

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1. D. McLaren, "Fertility, Infant Mortality and Breast Feeding in the Seventeenth Century", Medical History, 22, (1978), pp. 378-96.

to restrict their family and in making their decision their thoughts must have been governed by various criteria such as famine or infection which dictated the lifestyle of early modern communities and in particular its demographic fortunes. In other cases childbirth could have been delayed by medical causes such as lactation-induced or disease-induced amenorrhoea. Both must have been prevalent in Petersfield, as elsewhere, and helped to stifle the growth of population throughout the period. What is especially clear is that the family did not simply develop in a vacuum but its size and rate of growth were subject to forces both natural and unnatural, from within and without the household unit.

In considering overall population it is not sufficient to look at only births, for life expectancy also needs to be considered. Large numbers of those recorded in the baptismal register of Petersfield, as elsewhere, soon disappear from view and no more details are known. Others may appear later as a bride or bridegroom or as a parent but their complete life-history is missing because there is no record of them dying in the town. Nevertheless a sizeable sample can be built up of children christened in the last thirty years of the sixteenth century whose date of burial is known and therefore whose approximate age at death can be deduced (Tables 3/3/8a and 3/3/8b). Altogether 368 such individuals have been analysed for this particular market town, separated into the three decades. In fact the figures for each group are remarkably similar and tend to indicate that a fairly accurate picture of urban life is being portrayed.

Commonly at least 10% of all children born alive died within the first month. The first few days were particularly dangerous and many died within hours of birth. Joan Feelder was probably one such baby, baptised and buried on the same day in February 1588. Multiple births were especially vulnerable and twins like John and Frances Bould who were born on 20 September 1574 were both buried

PETERSFIELD: AGE AT DEATH

	0-1	months		under 1 year	1-5	6-9	1-9	10-20	21-40	41-60	over 60	Total
		1-5	6-11									
1570-9	14 (12.7%)	10 (9.1%)	4 (3.6%)	28 (25.5%)	8	12	20 (18.2%)	9 (8.2%)	24 (21.8%)	16 (14.5%)	13 (11.8%)	110
1580-9	16 (12.7%)	5 (4.0%)	13 (10.3%)	34 (27.0%)	16 (12.7%)	8 (6.3%)	24 (19.0%)	12 (9.5%)	28 (22.2%)	17 (13.5%)	11 (8.7%)	126
1590-9	15 (11.4%)	7 (5.3%)	5 (3.8%)	27 (20.5%)	17 (12.9%)	9 (6.8%)	26 (19.7%)	20 (15.2%)	23 (17.4%)	20 (15.2%)	16 (12.1%)	132

Table 3/3/8a

PETERSFIELD: LIFE EXPECTANCY (years)

At birth		Those who lived to over :					
		10	20	30	40	50	60
1570-9	25.3	42.8	47.4	53.1	59.8	63.2	68.4
1580-9	22.8	40.2	45.5	50.6	59.9	64.4	71.6
1590-9	24.5	39.2	47.1	51.4	58.4	65.7	70.3

Table 3/3/8b

before another three days had passed. Lack of medical knowledge and unhygienic conditions were obvious reasons for the high level of mortality in the first month of life and very often the mother was also endangered. Thus Agnes Prat, daughter of Thomas, was christened on 26 July 1576 and buried a day later and on the 28th her mother, Mary, was also buried. There can be no doubts about the risks for mother and infant during and immediately after childbirth.

Young babies were susceptible to all kinds of sickness and had none of the natural resistance acquired by their elders and it may be fairly assumed that in late sixteenth century Petersfield about one in four children born and christened had died before their first birthday. Almost another one-fifth had perished before they were ten years old and at least another one-tenth by the age of twenty. This meant that well over half of all children born never reached childbearing years themselves, a significant factor when considering the ability of a population to reproduce itself by natural means. For replacement to occur the surviving children had to establish families of their own and if this process was interrupted, as with an epidemic or even a more mild outbreak of disease, the depressive effects on demographic growth could be severe. In small towns this fact was all the more apparent for with less families available to generate new inhabitants, a comparatively insignificant sickness, robbing the town of a small number of potential parents but set against the background of high mortality among the under twenties, could have a more than proportionate effect on urban population.

Of those who lived to over ten years of age most died in the twenty-one to forty bracket. However, there is some clustering of deaths in the late thirties which does not show up in the figures which are intended to separate the twenty-one to forty group representing the mass childbearing years. In fact, if a group from ten to thirty was taken this would almost certainly show

the lowest levels of mortality for any of the age brackets, years when men and women were at their strongest and most able to overcome the threat of sickness and infection. From the initial sample 13-15% survived into their forties and fifties and slightly less, 9-12% reached their sixties. This meant, of course, that although the overall life expectancy was low, there was always a handful of old men and women within urban society. Arthur, son of William Bould and born in Petersfield in 1572, was probably the same Arthur Bold who was buried in 1652, making him eighty years old, and Edward Harris may have been as old as eighty-five when he died in 1666. There were certainly several other inhabitants of Petersfield who reached their sixties and seventies. Most of these were male. Some women, like Anne Turell who died at the age of seventy-five, lived beyond the sixty mark but they were very rare, a testimony to the ardour of childbirth and motherhood in early modern society. Old age therefore, though rare, was always apparent to some degree in town life. Just how some of these people supported themselves, whether it was by their own means, by charity or by the help of their families, remains uncertain.

The important role of the age and length of marriage on levels of fertility has already been mentioned but underlying these assumptions are further notions about the relatively insignificant numbers of children conceived outside wedlock. It is therefore necessary to look at pre-nuptial conceptions and illegitimacy, both for their influence within the development of population and for the further insight they provide into the society of the early modern town.

The average period between marriage and the birth of the first child fluctuated quite considerably in the period from 1570 to 1640, dropping from over twenty months at the beginning, to about seventeen months at the turn of the century and falling as low as about fourteen

months at the end (Table 3/3/9). This may be an indication of improved living conditions in the early Stuart town which created the confidence to begin a family at an earlier date. Certainly the gap between marriage and first child was much more erratic than the periods which elapsed between the births of other children. The number of pre-nuptial conceptions were similarly volatile. Throughout the period, of 315 first births where a wedding is recorded 55 are known to have been conceived before marriage (17.5%) but there were, in fact, considerable changes from figures of 7.1% in the 1570s and 1580s to a peak of 27.7% in the 1590s before a steady 21.2% at the start of the seventeenth century and then a fall, back to 12.2%, at the end of the period. It is possible that these changes may represent the state of opinion prevailing within a community at any particular time and the degree to which the ecclesiastical courts and their officers enforced the oversight of sexual conduct.

Of these 55 births in Petersfield, 51 are suitable for closer analysis. They represent children christened eight months or less after marriage although this method clearly omits a large number of other pre-nuptial conceptions belonging to parents who moved from the town, who delayed baptism in order to legitimise further their child or whose offspring died as a result of abortion or stillbirth. An exhaustive study of the subject by Dr. P. Hair has concluded that one-fifth of all brides in the countryside of early modern England were pregnant.<sup>1</sup> To extend this statement to include the small towns would be very speculative. However, as far as Petersfield is concerned, if the experience of untraced brides was the same as that for those whose family details are known, then a figure of 110 pre-nuptial conceptions for the 628 marriages recorded between 1570 and 1640 may be proposed or about

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1. P.E.H. Hair, "Bridal Pregnancy in Rural England in Earlier Centuries", Population Studies, 20, (1966-7), pp. 233-43 and, 24, (1970), pp. 59-70.

PETERSFIELD: GAP BETWEEN MARRIAGE AND FIRST CHILDBIRTH

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Average gap (mths.)</u>	<u>PNC</u>	<u>%</u>
1570-9	27	21.6	2	7.4
1580-9	32	22.2	4	12.5
1590-9	47	16.9	13	27.7
1600-9	43	17.3	9	20.9
1610-9	54	14.7	12	22.2
1620-9	52	17.2	8	15.4
1630-9	60	13.7	7	11.7
	<u>315</u>		<u>55</u>	<u>17.5</u>

Table 3/3/9



17.5% of all brides, not far removed from Hair's estimation of 20%. In Petersfield therefore between one in five and one in six of all brides may have been expecting children at the time of their marriage. It is unlikely to have been less and may well have been more if one is of the belief that a larger proportion of untraced brides were pregnant than applied to those who stayed in the town, emigration being related to the shame of bridal pregnancy.

Certainly premarital intercourse was contrary to the teaching of the church and there are examples of cases which appeared before the Consistory Court such as Thomas Worram and his wife who were charged with "incontinence before marriage" in 1623 and Philip Harvie who was charged with "begetting his wife with child before marriage".<sup>1</sup> They admitted the offence and were ordered to publicly acknowledge their guilt before the minister and other parishioners. Such cases are, however, rare by comparison with the numbers charged with incontinence, adultery or bearing an illegitimate child. Given the apparent frequency of pre-nuptial conception but the absence of substantial subsequent litigation it would appear that husbands and wives, whilst perhaps exposed to short-term scandal, faced no long-term penalties of any importance and there was seemingly a high degree of tolerance of pregnant brides in the early modern town. Clearly marriage was often prompted by premarital sex. One William Hill, for instance, admitted to the court that he had promised marriage to Christian More "for fear lest he should come to court and be troubled because that he had carnal knowledge of her" which implies that he at least assumed that subsequent marriage would put him in the clear and hundreds of others must have thought likewise.<sup>2</sup>

Marriage may have been very much the key to the number of pre-nuptial conceptions. In early modern society a custom of

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1. HRO, Consistory Court Book, 94, f. 18; HRO, Consistory Court Book, 96, f. 2.

2. HRO, Consistory Court Book, 19, f. 51.

formal betrothal existed by which tokens and words were exchanged by the partners. In 1578 Thomas Harrys of Ringwood told how, at the request of his brother Michael, he went to the home of Agnes White. Michael gave Agnes a piece of gold and she gave him an old grote, they took each other by the hand and kissed and thereafter "they were commonly reported and taken as man and wife".<sup>1</sup> Such ceremonies were commonly recited in the church courts usually because one or other of the partners had subsequently backed out of the agreement. Intercourse must have been common after such a betrothal even though the wedding could be some time off. Many of the women cited for having a bastard child actually claimed that the father had promised them marriage and, like Margery Hall of Stockbridge, went on to sue the man for breach of contract.<sup>2</sup> Yet most men and women must have gone on to formal marriage after the betrothal and they help to explain the relatively large number of superficial pre-nuptial conceptions where the child was born six to eight months after marriage. These made up 25 of the 51 examples studied and clearly at least half of the sample may represent intercourse after betrothal, something which was probably "bending" rather than breaking the laws of the church and widely accepted within urban society. One such example may have been Thomas Hollis and his wife Margery (nee Sigewick) who married in Petersfield in 1618 and whose first child was registered eight months later. They subsequently had seven more children and both spent the rest of their lives in the town apparently undisturbed by any repercussions from the pre-nuptial conception of their first child.

It was, significantly, among those whose child was born within six months of the wedding that some shame may have been attached. These made up about half of the recorded examples.

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1. HRO, Consistory Court Book, 50, ff. 37-9.

2. HRO, Consistory Court Book, 96, f. 121.

They include instances of families for whom no further reference is found beyond the christening of their first child, such as Henry Goldsmith, whose child was born in 1634, three months after his wedding. Of course, the family may have left the town for various unknown reasons but possibly early modern society was rather less tolerant of these more blatant examples and it could not have helped him to settle within the community.

Although pre-nuptial conceptions may have been relatively common and fairly well tolerated in Petersfield, it is also true that certain families occur repeatedly in the records. Two sisters, Elizabeth and Mary Neave, both gave birth to children in the 1590s after being pregnant at their marriage and their brother Nicholas was the father of a child born four months after his marriage in 1592. Similarly, Guy Marsh was the father and his sister Anne Marsh was the mother of pre-nuptially conceived offspring in the early seventeenth century. There would seem to have been differences between individual families in their attitudes towards pre-nuptial and, as will be seen later, extra-marital relationships.

Where ages are known for mothers there are no signs of large numbers of young girls among the pregnant brides although the average of 21.9 is below the overall average age of marriage for women and several of the mothers were certainly under twenty. For men, the average age of fathers was 25.4. Both Laslett and Hair have concluded that there is little evidence of promiscuity among young people and there is no reason to suggest that Petersfield or any other market towns were different.<sup>1</sup> Widows do not figure prominently among the examples but interestingly there are several instances of widowers whose second wives were pregnant at marriage.

To conclude, it is noticeable that the sample of pre-nuptial conceptions shows no apparent seasonal distribution. The harvest

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1. P.E.H. Hair, "Bridal Pregnancy", op.cit.; P. Laslett, "Long-term trends in bastardy in England", Family Life and Illicit Love in Earlier Generations, ed. P. Laslett, (Cambridge, 1977), pp. 102-159.

months of August and September were among the lowest as far as conceptions were concerned possibly indicating a preoccupation with the needs of work but there is little of significance in the other months with December and June the months responsible for most pregnant brides and the springtime from March to June generally the most likely months. Yet this June peak with birth in the following March is just the same as was found for overall births in the towns and the distribution of pre-nuptial conceptions seems little different from the general picture of fertility.

As far as overall population is concerned one of the main elements which emerges from analysis of premarital intercourse is the importance of the wedding within early modern urban society, whether it be the formal church ceremony or a previous betrothal, as the impetus to intercourse. Only when conception was not followed by marriage are there signs of significant contemporary hostility. A second important point is that premarital intercourse, in terms of ages and seasonality, was very similar to the broad picture of fertility already built up. Clearly with possibly one in five brides pregnant at marriage it was a very important phenomenon but it was also one which fitted easily as an integral part into family life in the early modern market town.

It is also necessary to consider illegitimacy, both with regard to its effect within the overall population and as an indicator of some of the attitudes prevalent in the early modern town. The Petersfield sources do not appear very reliable in this context and it is necessary to concentrate attention on the town of Romsey (Figure 3/3/1). Between 1570 and 1640 the Romsey parish register records the baptism of 125 illegitimate children out of a total of 4890 (2.6%). They can be distinguished by accompanying descriptions such as "nothus" or, more often, the

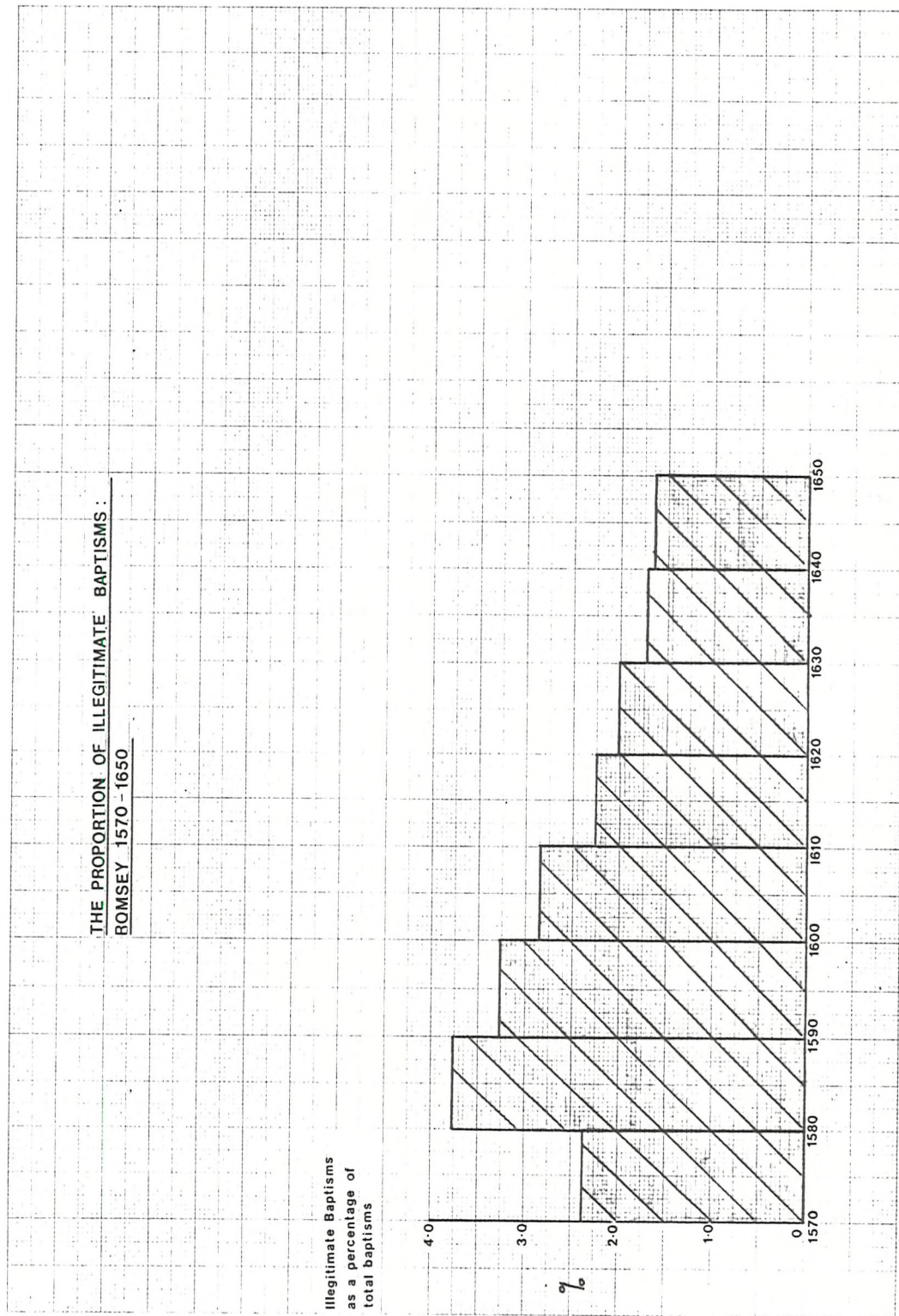


Figure 3/3/1

condemning words "base born". Others may be identified by the absence of a paternal christian name and its replacement by a note of the offending mother. This is contrary to the normal practice in this register where for most christenings only the name of the father is attached to that of the newly-born child. There is no way of determining the precise number of bastard children born in these years. Although the Romsey register appears to be fairly consistently kept, the burial record notes certain other illegitimate children who were obviously born to Romsey families for whom no baptismal date exists. In such cases the child may have been born outside the parish, there may have been no baptism or the service may have gone unrecorded. Whatever the explanation it would be wrong to see the 125 children noted in the parish register as the sum of illegitimate births in these years.

Taking the period as a whole the level of illegitimacy ran at just over 2.5 for every 100 baptisms. However, there was in fact a marked decline from almost 4% in the 1580s to less than 2% in the years after 1620. The number of bastard baptisms was remaining steady or slightly falling while the total number of christenings was rising as the population of the parish grew. There were wide contrasts between different years. Sometimes there were no illegitimate children baptised but in other years, such as 1589, five or six might be christened. It is hard to reach any convincing explanation to these fluctuations - the child was, after all, the outcome of emotional interactions to which it is impossible to attach any qualification or explanation. Other factors which might have had an effect include the conscientiousness of the local church wardens in a particular year and the attitude of the midwives who were supposed to interrogate the mother as to the identity of the father. Nor can any firm conclusions be drawn about the effects on the level of bastardy of economic and demographic determinants such as the

harvest or plague which clearly affected the general levels of baptisms and burials in the parish. The 1590s, a difficult decade for harvests and with particularly high mortality in 1597, saw the start of the decline in bastardy which continued until 1650. It will be shown later that illegitimacy, like pre-nuptial conceptions, owed much to attitudes and precedents within particular families. Perhaps the hardships of this decade deterred premarital and extramarital intercourse to some small extent and the results of this small brake acted as an example for subsequent generations. In this context it is interesting that 1598 and 1599 saw just two bastard baptisms, one of them almost certainly the child of an outsider. Similarly the next acute mortality crisis, 1612, was followed by two years with just two illegitimate christenings. 1597 and 1612 were therefore both years of high mortality in Romsey and were succeeded in each case by years of few bastard births. The connection is at best tentative but it is possible that the spirit of religious repentance usually engendered by a visitation of plague or famine had some effect on the sexual morality of the community, for a couple of years at least.

This possible relationship with the general level of mortality appears from other individual years. 1573, a year when five bastard children were baptised, followed three years of below average mortality and 1589, with six illegitimate christenings, came after four years, three of which showed a low level of burials. In fact 1589 had the highest number for any year between 1570 and 1604 and it may be that the healthy years of the late 1580s led to a general swelling of births, including those conceived illegitimately. 1619 which saw a high figure of five bastards baptised was similarly a year of below average mortality and succeeded another such year. There are, therefore, signs that the level of bastardy moved according to the mortality conditions of the town, dipping downwards at times of disease and famine but moving upwards in more healthy times when a more relaxed atmosphere may have prevailed in the town.

This may also underlie the falling off in illegitimate births in the sickly years around 1640, rather than the adoption of a more puritan code of conduct. What is certainly clear is that the number of illegitimate baptisms did not increase with the number of baptisms in the seventeenth century and they represent a falling proportion of children. On other occasions there was no relationship between bastardy and the general level of births. In 1608 and 1610, for instance, both of which saw well above average totals of christenings, there were just two and one bastard births respectively, showing the failure of this small section of the fertility spectrum to follow the overall pattern.

As far as the monthly distribution of illegitimate births is concerned it is clear that relatively few bastard children were conceived in the months August to November and that the highest levels were recorded during April and May with baptisms in the following January and February. Certainly the winter months and early spring saw the greatest number of extra-marital relationships. In this the monthly distribution of illegitimate children is closely in line with the overall baptismal situation, lacking only the clear maximum of christenings in March.

Almost all the illegitimate children recorded in the parish register disappear from view almost immediately and very few indeed can be traced in their adult years. Many died soon after birth like Frances Barlow (Barling), the child of Alice, who was born on 17 September 1591 and was buried three days later and others died within months of their christening, such as Alice Smyth, the illegitimate daughter of Agnes, who was buried when she was about five months old. Of course infant deaths were commonplace in the early modern town but the undoubted impression from instances that can be followed is that the bastard child had even less of a chance of survival and that he or she was possibly subjected to scorn and neglect from parents or relatives. From the 125 examples barely



10% are known to have grown up in the town and even if some of those for whom no record exists did survive there is still a clear impression that mortality among illegitimate children was exceedingly high.

Certainly an illegitimate child brought shame upon the offending parents but it could also lead commonly to litigation unlike the pre-nuptial conceptions to which the courts seem to have turned a blind eye. Women could be brought to the church court before the child was born, like Clara Brase, the servant of widow Burrell of Romsey, who in 1593 was charged with incontinence with one John Davis of Salisbury "by whom she is with child".<sup>1</sup> Others seem to have moved in order to escape some of the repercussions such as Alice Biston of Ringwood who left the town and "was delivered of a bastard at Milton or Christchurch".<sup>2</sup> Such cases occur frequently in the church court records and normally resulted in excommunication of the guilty parties or perhaps a public admission of guilt. Likely to have been of more significance to the parents was the interest taken in illegitimate births by the town courts and ultimately by quarter sessions. At Basingstoke the justices were concerned about bastardy and often reviewed such cases. In April 1663 a spinster of the town, one Mary Spier, told the sessions court that she had a male child born on Shrove Tuesday last, "begotten by Richard Spittle innholder who had twice had carnal knowledge of her body in the chamber called the Maidenhead chamber in the inn called the Maidenhead, in Basingstoke, about Whitsuntide last, the first time a week before, the second a fortnight after".<sup>3</sup> At the time she had been a servant of Richard Spittle: a large number of illegitimate births were the result of such "master-servant" relationships.

Much of the concern of the courts stemmed from an interest in the possible future expense should the child become a charge on

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1. HRO, Consistory Court Book, 64, f. 40.
  2. HRO, Consistory Court Book, 75, f. 6.
  3. HRO, 148 M 71, 2/6/1.

parish poor rates. There were certainly instances when the mother seemed uninterested in the upbringing of her infant. One such case was related by Elizabeth Turner of Basingstoke in 1658 who told of her sister Joan Ingram who had given birth to a bastard child in Basingstoke but who had moved first to London and then to Middlesex.<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile the child was nursed by the wife of Richard Watmore in Basingstoke and then by the wife of one Burdam of Basing. Moreover the grandmother of the child, Joan Illingworth of Sherborne St. John, "doth pay or hath undertaken to pay for nursing the child". On other occasions it is clear that the father took elaborate precautions to avoid publicising his guilt by arranging for his bastard offspring to be raised away from his home town. In 1607 the Consistory Court was told of William Ellinor, a gentleman living in Havant, who was said to have fathered the child of one Frances Smith.<sup>2</sup> The mother and infant were smuggled away by Ellinor's brother-in-law and went to London where three years later Ellinor was sending monthly sums towards the maintenance and keeping of the child. The mother apparently returned to Havant for she was said in 1607 to be the mother of another bastard by William Ellinor, who this time sent his servant to take the mother and child to Ichiner in Sussex where they were living at the time of the court case. Clearly in this example the father could afford such expensive procedures, which in themselves indicate the shame which could follow an illegitimate birth, but very few other parents could have been in a similar position.

More commonly the parish attempted to circumvent its welfare obligations regarding children by means of a bastardy bond. This was negotiated between the churchwardens and overseers of the poor on the one hand, the mother of the bastard child and her sureties on the other, and took a similar form to that agreed for settlement.

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1. *ibid.*, 2/6/1.

2. HRO, Consistory Court Book, 75, ff. 76-7.

For instance, following the birth of a bastard daughter to Alice Woodach in Kingsclere in 1620 the bond discharged the town of "the keeping and bringing up" of the child and the sureties undertook to provide the child with "necessary and sufficient meat and drink, apparell and lodgings, both in sickness and health" until she was twenty-one years old.<sup>1</sup>

Only under these terms could the mother and her daughter remain in the town. Similar bonds exist even when the parents subsequently married as with Thomas and Debora Horneblowe of Kingsclere regarding their son Zephthah born in 1648. They undertook to "for ever acquit and discharge the said parish of Kingsclere and the inhabitants thereof and all and every of them of and from all manner of collections, taxations, penalties, sum and sums of money whatsoever ... towards the relief of the said child". Clearly the hostility of parishioners to the bastard child in early modern society sprung as much from fiscal as from moral reasoning and could not have helped enhance the prospects of the illegitimate offspring surviving in the intimate society of the market town.

Although little more is known of most of the children, something is known about the subsequent lives of the parents. A bastard child does not seem to have necessarily hindered a woman's chances of marriage. Many of the mothers married quite soon after their offspring were baptised but there is usually no way of knowing whether the husband was also the father of her illegitimate child. Joan Rusbridge, whose daughter Dorothy was baptised in Romsey in October 1570, married William Flower eighteen months later and thereafter had at least four more children, one of which, Richard, went on to establish his own family in the town. What happened to Dorothy is unknown for we have no more

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1. HRO, 19 M 76, PO 7.

information on the child, but if the girl lived then it seems likely that she was brought up with her mother's legitimate children. A bastard child must have deterred some prospective husbands, either because of the reputation its mother had incurred or simply because it represented an additional unwanted mouth to feed. Yet the frequency with which women like Joan Rusbridge married points to a willingness by husbands to come to terms with the consequences of their wives' previous entanglements and may illustrate the strength of the social convention that a man should find a wife and have children, whoever she might be and whatever she might have done in the past. Similarly fathers could marry soon after the birth of bastard children. Francis Besant of Romsey, whose daughter Anne was christened in 1627, married for the first time two years later to Elizabeth Yorke although there is no evidence of him fathering other children before he died in 1646. Both men and women could apparently marry quite freely and many went on to have lawful offspring. In these circumstances it seems unlikely that any ostracism or stigmatisation by the community was either effective or long-lasting.

A similar point may be made with regard to parents who were married at the time when a bastard was baptised. Many of the children resulted from extramarital relationships and adultery was a prime target for the churchwardens and ecclesiastical courts. In 1615 Margery Freeborne, wife of Thomas, had an illegitimate son christened in Romsey having already had lawful children, and she was to have another son before her husband died in 1621. Two of her children, John and Margaret, both founded their own families in the town later in the century. Likewise, Anthony who fathered a bastard born to Any Tooke in 1602, had other lawful children by his wife Alice both before and after his illegitimate son. It is almost as if life went on regardless although it is hard to believe that there was no ill-feeling and

sadness engendered by such incidents. Certainly the rebukes no doubt issued by the church had little apparent effect on the parents who were responsible for more than one bastard. These people were not very numerous but they were clearly able to continue their lives in Romsey. George Phillips fathered the child of Margaret Barling in 1603 and was probably responsible for two other children in 1581 and 1592 but in 1593 he still managed to marry Joan Humfry and their first child, Simon, was born six months later. This particular man managed to live through the recriminations of three illegitimate offspring and a pre-nuptial conception. Women could also survive a chequered past. Cicely (Sence) Gilliam mothered two bastard children in 1604 and 1611 but she went on to marry Thomas Collins in 1614 and they proceeded to have another son and daughter in 1615 and 1617. Family life it seems could be maintained even with the problems imposed by a bastard baptism.

Family reconstitution enables us to understand a little more about the men and women who together broke the social conventions and ecclesiastical laws of the time. From Romsey the ages of twelve mothers can be ascertained with some degree of certainty at the time when their illegitimate offspring were baptised. With the exception of Elizabeth Simons who was just sixteen when her son Robert was christened, all of them were aged between twenty and thirty. Indeed, most were over twenty-five indicating that these were not just young girls who got into trouble. In view of the relatively late age of marriage which prevailed at the start of the period, it might be expected that there would be a predominance of young men among the fathers of these children. However, this is not the case for of the fifteen males that can be traced, four were in their thirties, one in his forties and one was aged fifty-one; all but four were over the age of twenty-five. Naturally with such small samples conclusions rest on a very fragile base but it certainly seems that more often than not the

mothers and fathers of bastard children were well into their adult years and certainly of marriageable age. They were not young people frustrated in their desire to establish separate families of their own or ignorant of the outcome of their actions; on the contrary, they were in the main of an age where they would have been fully aware of the alternatives before them and the responsibilities they might incur.

When the family background of some of the parents is investigated it immediately becomes clear that certain families occur quite regularly. Jane and Elizabeth Rusbridge, who both had bastard children between 1616 and 1619, were daughters of John Rusbridge and were no doubt related to Joan whose illegitimate daughter was christened in 1570. Nor were they the only sisters with illegitimate children for in 1631 and 1633 Alice and Mary Chapman, daughters of Thomas and Joan, had bastards baptised in Romsey. It seems likely that attitudes towards illegitimacy and its acceptability were passed on through families, not necessarily by any actual encouragement on the part of the parents, but through the moral environment in which the children grew up. There are certainly several cases where bastard children went on to have bastards of their own, like John Valence, baptised in 1592, whose illegitimate daughter Jane was born in 1615 to one Elizabeth Croppe. In other cases legitimate children with a parent or parents who had other illegitimate offspring went on to produce bastards. Emma Potter had a daughter Joan in 1573 before she married John Rusbridge in 1580 and later she was to have two illegitimate grandchildren. One of the lawful offspring of George Phillips, who fathered three bastard children, began to follow his father's example in 1628 with the christening of an illegitimate child, Hugh Phillips. In these families it is likely that lawful and unlawful children grew up together and conditioned by this family background many of them went on to

produce more bastard children.

Likewise, when the parents of illegitimate children came to be married in the town it is hardly surprising to see them finding their matches in similar families. Thomas Stile, who fathered an illegitimate child in 1587, found a wife in Alice West whose sister Joan had a bastard son in 1572 whilst when Elizabeth Adams married in 1613, her husband Zachary Foster had an illegitimate child as a close relative. It seems that illegitimate children were often born to parents who came from and later established families in which a bastard child, if not necessarily very welcome, would hardly have been a particularly unusual phenomenon. These families must have come to terms with any ecclesiastical or civil censure within their community, either tolerating the presence of the child or coldly accepting some means of its disposal.

It is also clear that many of the parents came from a very disturbed family background within the small community of Romsey. Elizabeth Simon who bore a son, Robert, in 1605 and later married John Sharpe, whose family also had an illegitimate child was one such example. Elizabeth's childhood must have been an unhappy one for her mother died when she was just one year old and her father died when she was six. Similarly, both the parents of Elizabeth Bound were dead when she had her bastard daughter baptised in 1616. The death of both parents, then as now, must have had a troubling effect on the upbringing of a young child. Brought up by relatives or apprenticed out at a very young age they must have been less likely to have enjoyed a stable home environment and may have been more prone to find themselves in trouble. The loss of either a mother or father could also unsettle a child and contribute towards their subsequent rebellion against the moral and social conventions. This may have been true of Alice Barling whose father died when she was just two. Her bastard child was christened when she was aged twenty, nine

years after her mother, Margaret, had remarried. It is significant that where a troubled background is clear then the ages of the mothers tend to be well below average. Elizabeth Simons, for instance, was almost certainly a teenage mother. Obviously the sample is small but the signs are that a broken childhood, leading to a possible lack of affection and direction, could be the background from which emerged some parents of illegitimate children in the small market town.

Such cases would always exist within society but it is apparent that overall the level of bastardy in Romsey and possibly the other towns was falling in the late Tudor and early Stuart period. The rise of Puritanism and the advance of nonconformity, in which Romsey was to the fore in Hampshire, may have played a part and so might the high mortality conditions which prevailed in the years preceding the Civil War. Thus illegitimate births, whilst they remained an integral part of family life in the town, were becoming relatively less important in terms of the overall population development.

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The history of the family is most commonly reviewed over a relatively long period but it is clear that changes were occurring within the seventy or eighty years which have formed the core of this study. Some of the trends appear at first glance to be contradictory: whilst the age of first marriage was falling, for instance, there was no corresponding increase in childbearing span or in overall fertility. The answer lies surely in the decisive effects of disease on the inhabitants of the early modern market town which served to negate social developments which would normally have prompted fairly rapid population growth. Family structure was most certainly a factor in the demographic course



of the small towns and would have been decisive in shaping the natural growth of population which was always apparent within society. However, disease not only influenced the pattern of family development but could also erase very easily the expansive effects of factors such as family size - the emphasis in explaining the demographic history of the small town must lie therefore with mortality rather than fertility.



SECTION FOUR : CONCLUSION

The Tudor and Stuart periods witnessed major strides in the development of market towns. They were in the vanguard of many important social and economic developments and consistently played an important and often underestimated part in local, regional and national commercial life. An appreciation of their demographic history is crucial if a better understanding of all aspects of their evolution is to be obtained and it is with this aim in mind that this thesis has explored, first, the course of population development and, secondly, some of the particular factors influencing these changes.

The century and a half which this study embraces is, of course, a relatively long span of time, necessarily so in view of the nature of demographic development. It means, however, that individuals within the small towns of Hampshire would probably have had little or no concept of the changes of which they were part. Not that the world of the 1670s would have been noticeably very different from that of the 1520s. It has been demonstrated that the distribution of wealth at both times was grossly unequal with most taxable capacity concentrated in the hands of relatively few inhabitants. Similarly, first the subsidy lists and subsequently the Hearth Tax records indicate that political power in the small towns tended to rest not with the very richest inhabitants but with those of slightly above average wealth, men whose lifestyle and origins could not have been totally divorced from those enjoyed by the mass of town dwellers. A further strand of this continuity seems to have been the incomplete but nonetheless apparent geographical divisions between different categories of taxpayers in the market community. In any small town men and women of all backgrounds inevitably lived in very close proximity but there are signs, from Andover and Romsey, that the wealthier elements were concentrated on and immediately around the market place and along the main arterial routes, leaving the poorer inhabitants largely confined to the urban fringe. It would be interesting to know just how real this pattern was in the mind of the contemporary

townsman. Most important, perhaps, is that the quality of life as a whole could have changed very little for the average family in any of the market towns - in material terms the home and the domestic way of life altered marginally if at all; relatively few new occupations evolved to enhance the local economy; and, whilst the prospects of education and the character of religious worship may have changed, the urban environment in general, from the livestock in the town streets to the physical dominance of the church and the market place, seems to have been remarkably static. The weekly market was, no doubt, the focus of town life in the 1660s and 1670s just as it had been 150 years earlier.

Turning to specifically demographic factors there are, again, many elements of continuity, features of urban society which would have been familiar to town dwellers in the Restoration years, just as they were to their predecessors in the early Tudor period. Disease and famine remained a constant threat, even if the character of these attacks may have changed somewhat - contemporaries had little or no idea of the nature of the diseases to which they succumbed, nor had any true progress been made in terms of medical treatment or expertise. Single people and families continued to enter and leave the market towns and there are no signs that migration was relatively more significant at either end of the period. Their motives would have also remained much the same - self-enhancement, subsistence, apprenticeship, crime and marriage were just some of the enduring reasons for population movement. At a very simple level, men and women continued to marry and have children, just as they had always done, with new families establishing themselves and old families dying out. In essence, the general context within which people lived their daily existence remained fairly constant and most townsmen would have been wholly oblivious to the social changes which were slowly taking shape, developments which are only apparent to the historian, blessed as he is with the gift of hindsight.

The most obvious change revealed in this thesis is the simple growth of population which occurred within each of the Hampshire towns. Over the whole period the increase in population ranged from a relatively insignificant 5% at Odiham to a staggering 1963% at Gosport, and at least nine towns had doubled in size. It has been shown that the urban population was growing at a much faster rate than that for the rural areas of the county and that by the 1660s and 1670s a higher proportion of the Hampshire population lived in towns than had been true in the 1520s. Moreover, this growth was concentrated in the market towns and in Portsmouth rather than in the two old established centres of the county, Southampton and Winchester.

Population change of this nature may be ascribed to a rise in fertility, a fall in mortality or an increase in net immigration, or a combination of all three. The argument underpinning most of this thesis is that the strongest determinant of demographic development as far as the small towns of Hampshire were concerned was mortality and, in particular, the role within urban society of disease. It is clear that natural growth, whereby births outnumbered deaths, was the normal state of affairs in the small towns, unlike many larger cities. Yet within this pattern of natural growth the emphasis must lie with mortality for it was in years of disease that the growth of population could be reversed and the gains made in previous years eroded. By the same argument it was when mortality was low that natural demographic growth was strongest. The close connection between natural growth and years of disease is convincing evidence of the guiding role played in long-term population development by fluctuations in the level of mortality.

Within this general statement there are many interesting aspects to the demographic history of the market towns which require further emphasis. It is sometimes possible to identify different types of disease and it is clear that whilst popular attention, then as now, has focussed on the ravages of plague, a very important role was

played in determining the level of mortality by various other diseases such as influenza, typhus, dysentery and smallpox. These infections could often strike for several consecutive years and the net effect could be just as severe, if not considerably worse, than an epidemic of bubonic plague. It may, therefore, be concluded that the last great outbreak of plague, that of 1665-6, was less of a turning point in demographic history than is sometimes imagined. It is also interesting to see the increasingly urban character of disease which the small towns assumed in the period. For much of the sixteenth century the periodic bouts of fever which swept the Hampshire countryside made a significant impact on the numbers of burials in the small towns, indicative of the close ties between market community and rural hinterland. By the seventeenth century, however, it is apparent that the towns had grown in size and had acquired the same endemic sickness, derived from the unhygienic overcrowded living conditions, which typified country and provincial towns. Against this permanent background of disease, therefore, the mild rural fevers began to play a relatively less important role in shaping demographic growth. Whilst this increasing urbanisation of disease is a feature of the small towns in the period there remained significant contrasts between their experience and that of larger cities. The more self-sufficient, introverted nature of society within the small towns enhanced their isolation from several widespread epidemics and may have contributed to their relative freedom from the sort of catastrophic mortality levels which could afflict London and provincial centres. In this way, though disease could periodically diminish and occasionally reverse the underlying natural demographic growth in the market towns, it could not achieve any permanent downward trend in population. Thus, at the end of the period annual burials in the market towns were actually little different from the mid-Tudor years despite the growth in population which had occurred, indicative of a relative decrease in mortality and a major contributory factor to the overall growth of urban

population.

Looking more closely at the pattern of mortality recorded within the various outbreaks of disease it is apparent that all sections of the urban community could be affected from all kinds of social and economic background. Age and sex likewise played relatively little part in determining overall casualties. Severe family clustering was also relatively uncommon which meant that diseases of all kinds could have a very wide base within each town - it is reasonable to conclude that every family in the early modern market community suffered deaths as a result of disease at some time or another. Sickness and death were frequent occurrences with which every inhabitant was familiar.

The emphasis which has been laid on mortality as the prime determinant of demographic development should not be seen as excluding totally the influence of both changes in fertility and migration on population growth. Clearly there were more children being baptised in the 1660s compared with a century earlier and there is also some evidence of a small increase in the size of families within the market towns, mainly caused by the fall in the age of marriage and the consequent increase in the childbearing potential of mothers. However, the effects of this development on overall population growth do not seem to be very significant with disease posing a constant brake on family size and representing a persistent threat to mothers and young children in particular. Hence, although the potential for a significant increase in fertility always existed its influence was consistently undermined by the effects of increased mortality which meant that neither childbearing span nor actual family size ever changed sufficiently to affect overall population. In simple terms, it seems that the numbers of children surviving to form their own families in the market towns depended less on how many children were actually being born and more on how many were not dying as a result of the multitude of infections to which they were exposed. Indeed, the effects of



disease may have influenced fertility in other ways for when factors such as intervals between childbirth and birth control are investigated it seems that conscious decisions may well have been taken by parents related to the general mortality conditions, as well as to other economic and social factors which affected them.

Turning to migration of population, there is certainly evidence that the settlement of new families helped to stimulate population growth in the market towns. New names appear constantly in the parish registers and it is only to be expected that communities which relied for their economic existence on attracting outside custom would attract a level of permanent immigration. However, there is also evidence of a very high degree of continuity within families, with a sizeable proportion of the population being drawn from old established families with roots extending over several generations. Given this high degree of permanence, something which distinguishes the market town from larger boroughs, and taken together with the clear evidence of natural population growth, it seems fair to conclude that the role played by immigration in the growth of population within the small town was relatively unimportant, certainly when compared with the experience of a town like Southampton.

Changes in mortality, therefore, are the key to understanding the population growth of the early modern market town. Rather less convincing is the influence on demographic events sometimes ascribed to the harvest. Certainly harvest failures often brought disease in their wake and the famine fevers were a familiar feature of Tudor epidemiology. Their worst effects, however, seem to have been felt in the countryside and by the seventeenth century the market towns were often immune from the diverse ailments which followed a poor harvest, something which is especially clear in the 1640s and 1650s, and a development which can best be attributed to the improved communications which opened up national markets, as well as to the

relative increase in importance of other diseases. In other aspects of urban society the role of the harvest seems to have been small or non-existent. Years of peak baptisms, for example, bear little relationship to the quality of the harvest and, to take just one instance, in 1631 baptisms reached a peak in Romsey and Fareham, soon after a terrible harvest and the reverse of what would normally be expected. Likewise, within the calendar year, the connection between conceptions and harvest time is tentative to say the least. It may be true therefore that the annual cycle of events culminating in the harvest which had traditionally been very important in rural society had, by the early modern period, already begun to lose its pre-eminence within the lives of men and women in the small towns.

One of the other important factors in determining the character of family life was the influence of the church within local society. There seems little doubt that in most towns the majority of inhabitants owed at least a nominal allegiance to the established church, although nonconformity represented a growing force in the Hampshire towns. Precisely what form this allegiance took is less clear and in many cases probably extended little further than occasional attendance at church services. In terms of family life the regularity with which registers were usually maintained suggests at least a paternalistic concern with domestic life and it certainly seems to have been true that most townsfolk were anxious to have vital events recorded, whether it be for spiritual satisfaction or material convenience. However, in other ways the strictures of the church seem to have had little effect on family life. There is little evidence that the monthly distribution of marriages conformed closely to the forbidden periods as laid down by the church, nor that Lent had any noticeable effect on the level of conceptions, and there seems to have been a high level of tolerance afforded to illegitimate and pre-nuptial conceptions despite the regular hostile pronouncements of the church courts. The shape of family life was, apparently, being moulded less by the traditional influence of the

church and more by the individuals concerned and the socio-economic forces which affected them.

Demographic growth was one of the foundations for the growing influence of market towns in the early modern period. It remains, however, a subject which, by the very nature of the source material, is clouded with uncertainty. The application of multipliers to lists of taxpayers or communicants is a procedure which has to be adopted despite the obvious imperfections whilst parish registers, which could tell so much, are often irregular and uncertain in the information they provide. Questions remain about those too poor to be taxed or those who escaped payment, and about the numbers of baptisms, burials and marriages which slipped the attention of even the most diligent of clerks. It would be foolish to disguise the doubts which exist about such sources but it would be far worse to make no attempt to unravel the complicated course and contributory factors behind the growth of population. Not until the advent of a regular national census does the demographic historian have a more authoritative base from which to work. Yet, arguments remain about the actual mechanism of population growth for the nineteenth century as much as for the sixteenth century. In short, the study of demographic history for any period and for any place, remains one of the liveliest and most contentious fields of historical investigation - it is hoped that this study has shed at least some light on the story of one group of communities, the small towns of Hampshire.

