UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

ABSTRACT

FACULTY OF ARTS

HISTORY

Doctor of Philosophy

THE ISLE OF WIGHT 1558-1642

by Jack Davies Jones

One of the main features of this period was the notable growth of the town of Newport which nearly trebled its population and acquired a new town hall, new school, new harbour installations, and a mayoral charter.

One unusual quality of the Island's social structure was the absence of a landed aristocratic family. The Tudor policy of withholding sales of royal land in the Island contributed towards a rigid and introverted social structure, but the accelerating sales of farms and manors under the early Stuarts introduced fluidity with many new owners coming in.

One of the main Tudor industries, leather processing, faded away in the 1600s, probably because the rapidly dwindling woodland cut supplies of oak bark for tanning.

The rapid collapse of the Royalist cause on the Island in 1642 is attributable to the town of Newport, with its radical puritan character, which served as a focus for Parliamentarian support.

Chapters

Detailed bibliography in pouch
inside back end cover

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to look at the Isle of Wight in the century before the English Civil War, and to attempt to isolate and examine some of the factors at work - social, religious, economic, and political - in this compact and clearly-defined community, and any influence they may have had in aligning the Island with Parliament at the outbreak of war in 1642.

Sources

Most of the source material is in manuscript form because relatively little has been published about this area in this period. Apart from the normal range of State Paper material in the Public Record Office, which of course includes much Isle of Wight material, there are three important groups of documents:

(1) The MSS. of the Earl of Dartmouth

On 20 November 1559 a commission was issued (Cal. of Patent Rolls... Eliz., vol. 1, 1558-1560 (1939), Cal. p. 443) to Sir Francis Knolles, Sir Edward Warner, and John Goodwin "to survey the state of the isle of Wighte and the fortifications and castles by the sea in the county of Southampton". The articles of inquiry were very comprehensive, covering populations, towns, villages, churches, land use and land tenure, shipping, and fortifications. Of the Island's eleven tithings[1] that

1 Or "centons": groups of — usually — 3 or 4 parishes

answered the commission, four survive - Arreton, Mottistone, St. Helens, and Newport - in the Public Record Office (SP.12/7/58, 59, 60 and 61 respectively); and the commission's own report 'The generall Survey of the state of T(hisle) of Wight...' is among the MSS. of the Earl of Dartmouth in the William Salt Library at Stafford. It is comprehensive and informative on the state of the Island at the beginning of this period, and ends with a set of proposals on the economy and administration of the area, some of which were duly incorporated in the Patent of the next Captain.[1]

(2) Newport Borough Manuscripts

The town papers of the old Borough of Newport are very detailed and helpful, comprising court books, minutes of the corporation, and various town accounts of this period. They are now owned by the successor Borough of Medina, and are kept at the office of the Chief Executive, 17 Quay Street, Newport. The main sources used for this study have been:

45/2	The old Ledger Book, 1567
45/3	Register book of leather searched, sealed and sold in Newport 1567-8
45/16a	Convocation Book 1609-59
45/20	Borough Court Book 10-37 Henry VIII
45/21	Borough Court Book 4-30 Elizabeth
45/22	Borough Court Book 30 Eliz. - 15 James I
45/99	Terrar Book of Corporation Estates 1563 (this item was published by the Rev. S.F.Hockey in Proc. of the Hants Field Club...Vol.19, part 3 (1957), pp.227-239)

1. Pat. 2 Elizabeth, part xv, 8 April 1560. On the captaincy see pp. 39-46 and 56-7 of this thesis

(3) The Oglander papers

This fine collection of family papers of the Oglander family at Nunwell House near Brading covers the whole of this period, though of course bearing particularly on the 1600s during the lifetime of the voluminous diarist Sir John Oglander (1585-1655). The letters and loose papers are now in the Isle of Wight County Record Office at Newport. The account books, with their ample insertions of Oglander's comments on the Island past and present, are at Nunwell House, but bound photostat copies are in Carisbrooke Castle Museum (accession no. 11.1965) and reference is made to these copies, where applicable, because they are conveniently paginated.

Of the printed materials, use has been made of the Victoria County History of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, especially Vol. 5 (1912) which contains the parish histories of the Island; Percy G. Stone: Architectural Antiquities of the Isle of Wight, (1891) which has many helpful details of manuscript sources; S. F. Hockey: Quarr Abbey and its lands 1132-1631 (Leicester 1970) which is important for details of the dispersal of the extensive Quarr properties in the post-Reformation period; and the various regional and urban studies covering this period, many of which have appeared in the last ten years.

Editorial notes

Original spelling has been kept, but standard contractions have been expanded.

Unless specially indicated (e.g. 21 February 1631/2) year dates have been adjusted to New Style: so the example in parenthesis will normally read 21 February 1632.

Place of publication of printed works is London unless otherwise stated.

Abbreviations used

PRO	Public Record Office
HRO	Hampshire County Record Office
IWCRO	Isle of Wight County Record Office
Brit. Mus.	British Library
CCM	Carisbrooke Castle Museum, Isle of Wight
CCM. Og	Bound volumes of photostats of Oglander notebooks, in Carisbrooke Castle Museum
Dartmouth MSS.	Manuscript survey of the Isle of Wight, 1559, among the MSS. of the Earl of Dartmouth in the William Salt Library, Stafford
DNB	Dictionary of National Biography
VFP	View of Frank Pledge
VCH Hants & IW	Victoria County History of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight
APC	John Roche Dasent (ed.): Acts of the Privy Council of England.

CHAPTER 1

THE ISLE OF WIGHT IN 1558

A small appendage to the south coast of England; a mere 38,000 hectares of downland, enclosed fields, and forest; with a population of some 9,000; the Isle of Wight had in 1558 an importance out of proportion to its size and deriving rather from its position.

The physical appearance of its countryside, though superficially affected by human activity, was basically determined by the surface geology. The main division here was between the northern part of the Island, where the tertiary clay sustained a natural cover of oak forest, and the southern part comprising the fertile greensand exposed by the erosion of the chalk anticline, where the better-drained ground allowed a less dense vegetation. The lower-contoured greensand lent itself well to arable farming, while the chalk downs bounding it to north and south - the exposed edges of the eroded anticline - served equally well for sheep-grazing.

Within this setting the appearance of the Island in 1558 would have seemed one of embattled decay. The Tudor and Jacobean manor houses and large farms, later a feature of the landscape, were mostly still to appear, and the main examples of domestic architecture were decaying moated sites such as that at St. Urian's Copse near Bembridge, or the original Wolverton House at Shorwell; or else first-floor halls such as that today surviving in the grounds of Wolverton near St. Lawrence. Recent building had been

mostly military, and the medieval castle at Carisbrooke in the middle of the Island was now joined by a string of coastal forts at West and East Cowes, Sandown, Yarmouth, and Worsley's Tower and Sharpnode just west of Yarmouth: all part of an ambitious scheme launched by Henry VIII[1]. Some, like Yarmouth Castle, had been started on an over-ambitious scale and remained incomplete in 1558[2]. This abundance of military building and the dearth of elegant domestic architecture was in tune with the times, for as recently as 1545 the Islanders had seen some of their homes burnt in the course of a French landing[3] and the risk of French invasion had seemed immediate earlier in 1558[4].

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1 Plans of all the forts except East Cowes are attached to a survey by the Knolles Commission, dated December 1559, among the manuscripts of the Earl of Dartmouth in the William Salt Library at Stafford (henceforth abbreviated as Dartmouth MSS.

2. Ibid. f. 8

3. Letters and Papers...of the reign of Henry VIII (henceforth abbreviated as L & P) 20 (2), 225.

4. Calendar of the Spanish Archives at Simancas (henceforth abbreviated as Simancas) vol. xiii, 402, 404, and 405 (Calendar pages 356, 358, and 361 respectively).

The presence in Yarmouth Castle of a piece of stone with ecclesiastical carving[1] serves as a reminder that, while forts were being built, monastic buildings were being dismantled[2]. The Winchester College manuscripts give a picture of the progressive dereliction: from Chale on 16 June 1562 the College bailiff wrote to the Warden about the little oratory and chantry chapel on St. Catherine's Down "yf hit shall plise youer worship the stones of the chapyll cared away styll and douthe no plesere there yf hit shall plise you to geve me leyve to fech them doun I wollde ocapy them about youre tenement"[3]. Just fifteen years later the ruins of the chantry chapel were serving as a shepherd's bothy[4].

The most substantial monastic ruin on the Island was Quarr Abbey, dissolved in 1536[5]. Most of the Quarr property was bought by George Mill of Southampton, and there is every indication that the partial demolition of the Abbey quickly followed the dissolution. According to Sir John Oglander the

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1 S.E.Rigold: Yarmouth Castle, Isle of Wight (H.M.S.O. 1958)

2 P.R.O., SP.1/51, page 159 refers to the re-use, on the building of West and East Cowes Castles in 1539, of stone from the Abbeys of Beaulieu and Quarr.

3 Winchester College manuscripts, no. 3676

4 Ibid. no. 3677, 13 December 1577

5 S.F.Hockey: Quarr Abbey and its lands 1132-1631, (Leicester University Press 1970) p.231.

position of the Abbey church was untraceable in 1607[1]. Certainly the Abbey buildings must have presented a picture of advanced dilapidation in 1558. Quarr was not specially mentioned in the Knolles report, which was in any case concerned more with the parish churches; and even here there is evidence of neglect and decay. The Knolles commission found the small chapel at Standen, between Newport and Arreton, still with its font but empty and derelict, no service having been held there for thirty years[2]. The parish church of St. Helens was "almost utterly decayed, so that oon may loke in at oon end & owt at the other"[3]. Of the Yarmouth churches, said to have numbered three[4], there "remained onlie the ruinated Chancell of one of the said Churches"[5]. Newport parish church was so rickety that in 1578 carts were prohibited from passing near its east end "to avoide the daunger of shakinge the Churche"[6]. The reason for this harvest of decay was probably simply that the

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1 Carisbrooke Castle Museum, photocopy of Oglander notebooks (henceforth abbreviated as CCM Og.) p.318 b.

2 P.R.O., SP.12/7/58, centon return for Arreton, 1559.

3 P.R.O., SP.12/7/60, centon return for St. Helens, 1559.

4 Carisbrooke Castle Museum, Sewell MSS., vol.iii, p.56: Letters Patent, dated 4 September, 9 James I (1611), authorizing a local collection towards the building of a new church at Yarmouth.

5 Ibid.

6 Newport Borough Manuscripts 45/21 (Borough Court Book, 4 - 30 Elizabeth I), f.232^{v}, 8 April, 20 Elizabeth I.

existing population was too small and too poor. The numerous Island churches - 25 in 1559[1] - seem to reflect not a decline from a larger medieval population but rather a possible decline from an earlier rich source of endowments. In this respect it is perhaps significant that Norfolk, with its many "wool" churches, was also meeting an acute problem of fabric maintenance at this time[2]. In the case of the Isle of Wight the Knolles commission did not consider the area over-churched. "There be more parishe Churches then can be well mayneteyned at the presente, yet we thinke yt more mete by goode pollycy to encrease habitacon of people, then to demynishe the Churches, for that they stande very far dystaunte one from an other and hath bene heretofore well mayneteyned"[3].

If the buildings were unsatisfactory, at least most churches were well served with priests. Of the 25 parish churches the Knolles report named five - Brading, St. Helens, Wootton, Bonchurch, and Yarmouth - as not having divine service as required by law[4]. In some cases it was merely because of an absent priest. At Whippingham and Wootton services were kept going by a lay man reading the epistle and gospel, "withe procession"[5]. The Whippingham parson, John Glasier, had not

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1 Dartmouth MSS. f.1[r]

2 C.Bridenbaugh: Vexed and troubled Englishmen 1590-1642 (Oxford 1968) p.281.

3 Dartmouth MSS. f.1[v]

4 Ibid. It is apparent from the return from Arreton centon (P.R.O., SP.12/7/58) that Whippingham church also was not served by a priest. Its omission from Knolles's report may be in tactful deference to the fact that it was a royal benefice.

5 P.R.O. SP.12/7/58

been resident there "this many days"; and at Wootton there was even less chance of a resident priest, for Thomas Lisle the lord of the manor and patron of the living had let the parsonage house out on lease; and the manor house, apparently now intended for occupation by the parson, was in 1559 "holley dekeyd and no abode have byn there many yeres nor lyke to be". Binstead, which had an absentee rector, was served by a "Frenche Curat", acceptably to the Knolles commission.

As for the physical appearance of the countryside, this was in 1558 in process of some changes owing to enclosures. Only the extent and pace of this change is debatable. Such evidence as there is suggests a steady trend during the 1500s, accelerating slightly towards the end of the century, rather than a spectacular surge at any one period. An obvious starting-point for an appraisal is the statute of 1489[1] in which complaint is made that "many towns and villages have been let down, and the fields dyked and made pasture for beasts and cattle"; but the reason for this early legislation for the Island could have been the military vulnerability of its position, rather than any exceptional speed with which rural enclosure was taking place. In his paper on "The 1517 Inquisition on enclosures and evictions"[2] I.S.Leadam argued that on the available evidence for the Isle of Wight it would seem that the severity of the enclosure process has often been overstated. Although in fact Leadam

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1 4 Henry VII, cap. 16

2 Transactions of the Royal Historical Society (N.S.) Vol.7 (1893) pp. 277-292, and table on p.283, fig.iv

undercalculated his percentage area of Island enclosures by a factor of ten, even the corrected percentage of 0.4% enclosed of the total area of the Island seems to be an innocuous figure. Yet the inferential evidence from the special legislation of 1489 seems to find support in such occasional glimpses of the country landscape as that of Sir Edward Bellingham, concerned with its defence against the French in 1545. He found it unfit for moving artillery or for marching, being "fowle, full of egerowse, lans, dyks, wods, yll and dale, and in sum placys marys"[1]. Moreover the evidence given to the Knolles commission in 1559 does support the picture of progressive and damaging enclosure, albeit the comments are subjective and non-quantitative[2].

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1 L & P 20 (I), 1329

2 We find enclosure in its generally understood sense when the centoners of St. Helens complain that "thenclosing of coman feildes Abowt townys & villagis....hath altred myche comon land to pastur wherby myche tylladge hath decayed, that setteth a worke many people" (P.R.O. SP.12/7/60). A variant of this appears in the Knolles report: "We finde further, that the waste of the saide Forest, hath heretofore bene employde, to the fedinge and someringe of grete bestes to the grete benefyte and mayneteynance of tyllage, and presently ys imployed and fed wyth shepe, to the greate annoy and hinderannce of thinhabytanntes there" (Dartmouth MSS. f.2^{v}). Another aspect of rural depopulation was the engrossing of farms, and there is evidence of this too: "A nother cawse we suppose, and yt is the ingrossyng of fermes & small tenementes to gether which in deade is to myche in generall althowgh hit may be somewhat suffered (for) some" (P.R.O. SP.12/7/60, return for St. Helens centon). The centoners of Arreton thought on the same lines: "We canne thinke no lesse but by Reason many men Covetithe to have many holdes & tenementes in theyr handes And then put owt the howse only to some pore man and ocupiethe the grounde (and) kepeth the halfe voyd without a tenure So that yf thos that be knowne to this ower to be a tenement were replenished with a tenante and dweller yt muste nedes encrease the nomber of people and Laborers" (P.R.O. SP.12/7/58).

The picture from the centoners' testimony was of small farms being swallowed up in larger ones, with houses standing empty; and armies of sheep nibbling the country population out of its subsistence.

Of the detailed returns in 1559 from various parts of the Island, four of the eleven survive: from the hundreds of Arreton[1], Mottistone[2], St. Helens[3], and Newport[4]. Of these the Newport return concerns only the urban area, and the Mottistone return is a partly defective document, in addition to taking in the town of Yarmouth. The Arreton and St. Helens returns, relating to nearly all the northern part of East Medine, are detailed and complete, giving information not only for the clay land of the extreme north but for the arable land farther south on the chalk and greensand. They gives the following figures for empty dwellings:

CENTON	NUMBER OF DWELLINGS	NUMBER EMPTY	% EMPTY
Arreton	170	43	25.3
St. Helens	92	16	17.4
TOTAL	262	59	22.5

1 P.R.O. SP.12/7/58
2 P.R.O. SP.12/7/59
3 P.R.O. SP.12/7/60
4 P.R.O. SP.12/7/61

Taken in conjunction with the figures for the town of Newport - 21 empty dwellings, or 8.75% of the total of 240 houses - this evidence does support the inference that depopulation was a rural rather than an urban trend. People were moving from country to town, and the Knolles commission tried to isolate the cause. One economic factor does seem to emerge clearly: the unprofitability of cereal cropping. It is significant that one of the empty buildings listed in Arreton centon was Horringford mill; and, whatever the wage factors in arable farming might have been, the price incentives seem to have been missing. St. Helens in its return blamed restraints on the free export of corn from the Island: "We thynke that if order myght be taken that.. a sufficient stower of grayn...be laid upp to (provide) the market, at a reasonabell price, that the owners myght have leve to sell the rest wher they wolde, that wolde cawse many to use more tilladge, & kep the grett howses & set the mo men at worke, for that most nedis to be done by men & of the best"[1]. In fact one of the petitions passed on to the Privy Council by the Knolles commission was for "libertie to be graunted to the ploughmen of Thysley for the cariage away and sale of ther grayne there growen, when the price of a quarter of wheate shalbe under xiij^{s} iiij^{d} in the markettes and so that they convey no corne into Thysley out of the mayneland"[2]. ~~This recommendation was duly incorporated into the~~

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1 P.R.O. SP.12/7/60

2 Dartmouth MSS. f.13^{v}

This recommendation was duly incorporated into the royal warrant to the new Island Captain, Richard Worsley, on 2 April 1560[1].

The farming picture in 1558, then, is one of mixed agriculture with arable increasingly giving way to grazing, and with more hedged enclosures steadily appearing.

Apart from the main forest (Alvington, today called Parkhurst) and the two impaled parks (Carisbrooke and Wootton) the woodland on the Isle of Wight in 1558 was extensive but not dense. In 1559 the centon of St. Helens had about 205 acres (82 hectares) of woodland and copse[2] and Arreton had 284 acres (114 hectares). These two centons between them comprised about 18,786 acres (7,603 hectares) or 20% of the total area of the Island; so the listed woodland as a proportion of the two centons was about 2.6%, and it was distributed in 33 copses, generally fairly small. The St. Helens return goes further and gives the age of the

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1 Pat. 2 Elizabeth I, part xv, 8 April 1560

2 The return actually lists 200 acres plus 100 tons of timber; 5 acres are here estimated for the additional tonnage

plantations, from which it is possible to construct the following table of planting within that centon in the preceding years[1]:

YEAR	ACREAGE PLANTED	NO. OF PLANTATIONS
1499	2	1
1500	8	3
1519	3	1
1529	1	1
1539	6	2
1545	5	1
1547	25	3
1551	13	6
1553	5	2
1554	11	4
1555	12	3
1556	13	5
1557	2	1

1 As the figures relate to timber surviving in 1559 they are of course only minimum figures, but they at least show a continuity of planting.

At this eastern corner of the Island, then, there was a high proportion of young timber, and it was from this cluster of woods and copses that much of the timber came for the building of Charles I's new fort at Sandown Bay in 1632-36[1]. Where the evidence is available, the general picture of tree cover seems to have been a scatter of fairly small parcels of woodland; and the centon returns also specify that the hedges were strengthened with trees[2].

As for towns, there were four in the Isle of Wight in 1558: Yarmouth, Newtown, Newport, and Brading. Cowes was as yet in embryo, a cottage or two near the newly-built castle. The four town sites had in common a position at the limit of tidal access, and consequently all had an interest in maritime traffic. Their status in 1558 was however far from equal. Newtown now made no pretence of corporate urban existence. It does not, for instance, accompany the other three towns in the list of royal fee-farms in 1507[3] and by 1559 "ther is now nother market nor almost no good

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1 J.D.Jones: 'The building of a fort at Sandown, Isle of Wight, 1632-1636' in Proceedings of the Isle of Wight Natural History & Archaeological Society, Vol. vi, part iii (1968) pp. 166-188

2 There were in Arreton centon "trees disperside alongeste every hedge rowe only for mayntenance of the same" (P.R.O. SP.12/7/58; and in the St. Helens return "greit wod & tymber in hedgrowes & other places sparsid" (SP.12/7/60)

3 Richard Worsley: History of the Isle of Wight (1781), appendix 25: 'The annual state of the Crown lands in the Isle of Wight, 23 Henry VII'

howse standyng"[1]. The same survey stated also that "ther is not past a dosen hosis in yermothe"[2] and this is confirmed in Knolles's own report that "the Towne of Yarnemouth is in grete decay"[3]. The detailed return for the area including Brading does not survive, but some index of its commercial activity is suggested by its annual fee-farm rent of £2.13.4d[4] compared with the Yarmouth fee-farm of £1[5]; and this sum Brading assembled by an annual levy on tradesmen, ranging from victuallers at 3s 4d and tanners at 2s 0d, down to glovers, weavers, coopers, chandlers, tailors, carpenters, barbers, collar-makers, and pewterers, all at 4d[6]. It seems then that Brading was small but active; and, by comparison, Newport was large and metropolitan, with a fee-farm rent of £24.2.2d and with a population, in 1559, of 1175 in 240 houses[7]. This compares, for example, with a tally for Winchester at the end of Elizabeth's reign, of 647 dwellings and an estimated population of 2,750[8] and

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1 P.R.O. SP.12/7/60

2 Ibid.

3 Dartmouth MSS. f.14[r]

4 Brading Town Manuscripts, 'Ancient custom of the King's Towne of Bradinge' (undated but with shield of Sir William Oglander which dates it to between 1566 and 1609). Richard Worsley, op. cit. (1781) appendix 25 gives the fee farm in 1507 as £2.3.4d.

5 Richard Worsley (1781), loc. cit.

6 Brading Town Manuscripts, loc. cit.

7 P.R.O. SP.12/7/61

8 Tom Atkinson: Elizabethan Winchester (1963) pp.32-33

was by no means negligible in terms of contemporary town sizes. It comes within W.G.Hoskins's category immediately below county towns: "towns which had no administrative functions but served as market centres for a wider radius than the average....somewhere between two and three hundred households"[1].

Its size is reasonably clear; but what did the town look like? The sources of information are various but generally mutually confirmatory. Two quite early drawings exist. There is the sktech plan of the town as an inset in John Speed's printed ~~map~~ sketch of the Isle of Wight in 1611; and there is a drawing of the town, dated about 1600, among the Winchester College manuscripts[2]. The Winchester plan, as far as it can be checked from other sources, is quite accurate as far as the harbour area is concerned - and this was where most of the College property lay - though the delineation of the town centre is sketchy and inaccurate. The Speed plan comes out well at every point where its accuracy can be tested, and it shows very clearly the shape of the town, the neatness of its street grid betraying its origin as a medieval plantation. Newport lies in a hollow at a point where the valley of the Medina River slices through the east-west chalk ridge. Most of the town area is quite level, but the streets

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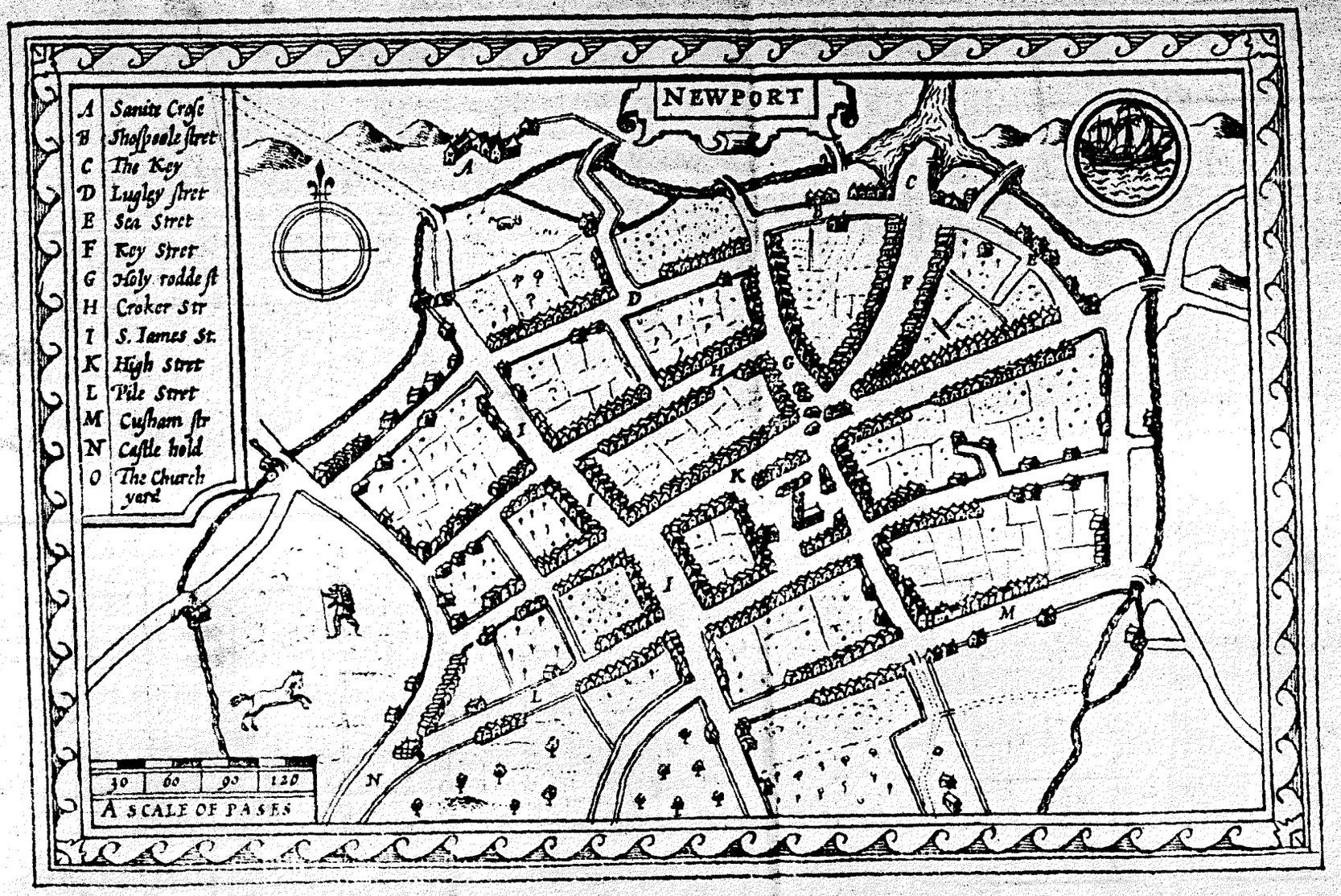
1 J.H.Plumb (ed.): Studies in social history: a tribute to G.M.Trevelyan (1955), containing 'An Elizabethan provincial town: Leicester'; this reference at p.38

2 Published in Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club, Vol.18, part I (1953), plate II facing p.21



Reproduction from Speed's Map of "Wight Island," 1611. It will be observed that Lugley Street and Crocker Street are wrongly indicated in transposed positions.

start dipping towards the river at the eastern end of the town, this contour feature and the bend of the river explaining the less regular pattern of the streets in this part of Newport. Basically the plan of the town comprises four main streets aligned south-west to north-east: Crocker Street, Lugley Street, High Street, and Pyle Street, with their connecting cross-streets. Such was the plan in 1559 and it is substantially unchanged today. In Speed's 1611 plan much of the grid of streets is fringed with houses and shops, 476 buildings in all. In view of the proven accuracy of detail in this plan it seems unlikely that the buildings on it are scattered at random. The town by this date is shown as substantially built up along the main streets. Its appearance in 1559 would have been more open. Writing in 1633 Sir John Oglander observes: "Since my Memory it wase a very poore Towne the Houses most Thatched, the streetes unpaved, and in the Hyghstrete where now be fayre Houses weare Garden Plottes"[1]. Oglander's memory here presumably goes back to his return to the Island in 1608, for although he was born at Nunwell in 1585 he was still only four when his family went to live at Beaulieu. The town terriers and rentals[2] do take us farther back and tend to confirm Oglander's recollection, for the surveys of the 1560s indicate that many of the street frontages

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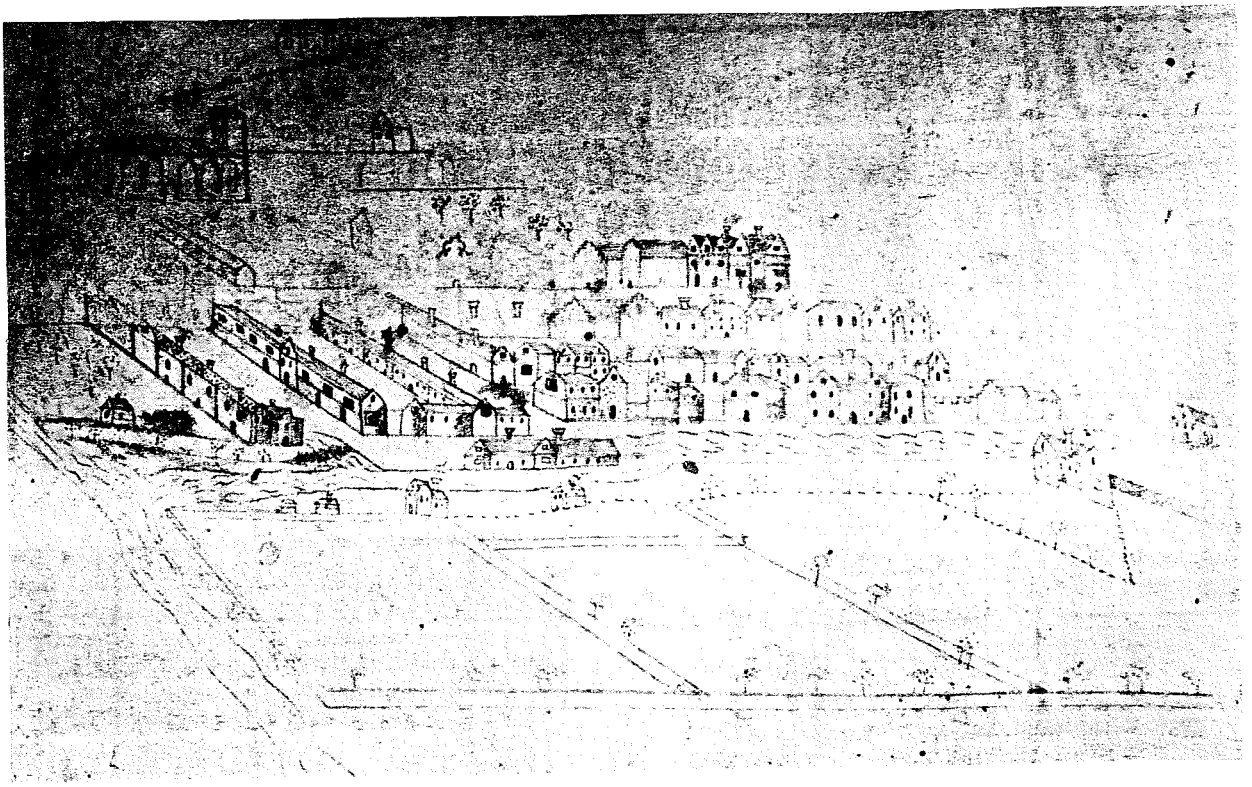
1 CCM. Og., 274b

2 Newport Borough Manuscripts, 45/99, Terrar Book of Corporation Estates 1563; 45/2, Ligger Book (1567) 25-26^{v}; and 45/22, Borough Court Book, 30 Eliz.-15 James I, ff.120-123.

must have been unbuilt at that time[1]. The 16th-century roofing, if we may trust Oglander on this point, was predominantly thatch. As for the other building materials, the evidence is less clear.



The Winchester College drawing (above) which is carefully detailed, at least for the harbour area, shows little or no trace

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1 For example a survey of 24 October 1567, where the Town lands in Quay Street and in Shispoole (i. e. Sea Street) include a store house, a new shop, a new house, a house, a garden plot, a pale, a meadow, and two places to be built upon (Town Ligger Book, 45/2, ff. [illegible]-26).

of timber-frame construction. All the evidence tends to suggest that the shops and houses were of brick and stone [1].

Newport seems never to have been a walled town, though the 16th-century terriers do indicate two main gates. One, shown on the Speed plan of 1611, was the 'Town Gate' at the foot of Hunnyhill on the road to Cowes [2]; the other gate was at the Carisbrooke end

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1 For example recently-surviving buildings such as the brick-built Hazards House which remained in High Street until the 1960s; the presence of a brick industry as shown by edicts of the town courts against operating brick kilns within the town area itself (View of Frankpledge, 19 October 11 James I, in Newport Borough MSS. 45/22, ff.319 et seqq.); mixed stone and brick shops in such early drawings as the view of Newport centre by John Nixon, circa 1790 (printed in Carisbrooke Castle Museum: a guide to the collections (Newport 1960 and later editions) plate 18);
Celia Fiennes, commenting on the Isle of Wight in the 1690s, remarked that "most of the houses are built of Stone, some few Brick" (Christopher Morris (ed.): The journeys of Celia Fiennes (1949) p.53). Against this, Lambert Doomer's 17th-century drawing of Newport shows many examples of timber-frame building, though its rather German style of architecture does not suggest veracity of detail (printed in P.H.Hulton (ed.): Drawings of England in the seventeenth century ..... (Walpole Society, Vol.35, Glasgow 1959), plate 41, from an original in the National Library in Vienna).

2 Newport Borough Manuscripts 45/22, f.120, survey of town lands, November 1592. The purpose of these gates was for trade control, access by country carts to the town markets being tightly controlled.

of the town, a few yards west of the junction of Pyle Street and High Street[1].

Of the public buildings in 1558 the central one was the 12th-century church of St. Thomas, shown in Speed's 1611 plan. This building, demolished in 1854 for the erection of the present church, is shown in various early drawings and engravings of the town. In 1558 it was a chapel of ease to Carisbrooke, the town of Newport then lacking parochial status. Writing about Newport in the 1500s Sir John Oglander implies that the maintenance of the church fabric was a heavy burden to the townspeople: "Mutch a Dooe they had to Patch up the Church, every Trade undortooke to Bwyld a Pece witnes on the walles the (signes) of the yarde And Taylors sheeres, and the horseshooe anvill, and Hammor, etc."[2]

Then there was the town hall, seat of civil government. At the point where Holyrood Street widened at its junction with High Street there was a little island of houses called the Falcon. In 1405-6 the bailiffs let a piece of waste ground just to the east of this for the building of two shops with a first-floor solar for a new court house in which the bailiffs and commonalty were to hold their courts[3]. It became known as the Audit House. The only surviving representation of it is the little drawing on Speed's plan, but some

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1 Newport Borough MSS., loc. cit.

2 CCM. Og. 274b

3 Victoria County History of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, Vol. 5, p. 254, footnote 15

idea of its appearance may be retrieved from an inventory of its salvaged building materials at the time of its demolition in 1638. These indicate that the roof was of "slatts", the building was of Flanders brick, and the interior was wood-panelled[1].

There were hardly any other public buildings in Newport in 1558. The harbour installations were as yet little developed, and the quay was muddy and unpaved. The archery butts were in one of the open spaces on the south side of South Street (then called Cosham Street); there was a market house in the main square, just opposite the west end of the church[2]; there was a solitary alms house on the east side of Sea Street, near the quay[3]; and there was a cattle pound at the western junction of High Street and Pyle Street, just inside the gate on the road to Carisbrooke[4].

Of the private houses and shops, some individual buildings can be distinguished. There was the Chantry House on the south side of the eastern end of Pyle Street[5]; and one or two named houses

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/16a, ff.357-359

2 Ibid., 45/99, f.3 (1563). This projecting building can be seen on Speed's plan

3 Ibid., 45/99, f.7^{v}

4 Ibid., 45/99, f.3^{v}. Also a terrier of 1592 in 45/22, f.121^{v}. This too can be seen on Speed's plan.

5 Ibid., 45/99, f.2. This building can be seen on the Winchester College drawing.

occupied by some of the more prosperous citizens. Hazards House, at the eastern end of High Street on the north side, was described in 1567 as "late in the hands of Mr Porter"[1]. William Porter had property throughout the town[2], his subsidy assessment in 1568 was well above average at £10[3], and he also served as bailiff[4]. Hazards House as it survived until 1968 had a 17th-century brick facade but traces of the earlier merchants' cellar in the lower courses suggested an original building of stone rather than brick. On the south side of South Street, next to the town butts, was a house called Coppid Hall, held of the town on a nominal rent by Robert Brackley who seems to have been the richest townsman of his day. In the subsidies of 1563 and 1568 he had much the highest assessment in Newport - £30 in goods[5] - and he had property in various parts of the town[6]. Coppid Hall itself was occupied by a dyer called John Lysney as a subtenant of Brackley[7].

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/2 (Ligger Book) f.26

2 Ibid. 45/99 passim

3 Isle of Wight County Record Office (henceforth abbreviated as IWCRO), SW/1716. The average assessment was £7

4 He is in fact one of the two bailiffs shown in a drawing in the Town Ligger Book (45/2) being sworn in by the Island Captain, Edward Horsey

5 IWCRO, IW/27 and SW/1716

6 Newport Borough MSS., 45/21, f.68; 45/22, f.122; 45/2, f.25. Brackley is reputed to have died from a fever contracted through his overnight stay in a church porch, he grudging the expense of an inn, after missing the last ferry from the mainland (CCM. Og. 205a)

7 Newport Borough MSS., 45/99, f.1

As for shops, those of the butchers were concentrated in a little row along the south side of High Street[1] to the north of the church and just to the right of letter K on Speed's plan. The fishmongers were close to them, and the whole area of this church square was regarded as the flesh shambles and market[2].

This then was the town in 1558: a compact saucer of low ground spreading south and west from the quay; as yet, only partly developed and with its buildings punctuated by gardens and meadows. It had its handful of more notable houses, in the hands of the prosperous merchants, but the town books suggest a large amount of rickety and poorly-maintained property. Oglander's scornful comment, written in 1631, that in the 16th century "the streetes weare not paved, but laye most wett and Beastelye, with greate stoppelles to stepp over the kennell from the one syde to the other"[3], does find some support in the town records.

Bearing in mind, then, the appearance of Newport, as far as it can be reconstructed, at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, the overriding impression is perhaps of the features that are missing. There is no substantial public assembly room; the harbour is less than adequate; there is no school; and a solitary alms house, with no work-house, provides for the needs of the indigent citizens. If we are to believe Oglander, the shops too were poor affairs[4].

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/2, f.25

2 The town bull ring was on the west of this square (ibid., 45/22, f.121[V])

3 CCM. Og., 300a

4 Ibid., 274b where he writes (in 1633): "The meanest shopp now in Nuporte hath farr moore wares in it, Then all the shoppes then had".

The absence of evidence of foreign trade with the Isle of Wight in 1558 is compatible with the preceding picture of depopulation and of commercial stagnation. Apart from the coasting trade, the focus of foreign trade from the Island would be northern France in general and Normandy in particular. Such was the pattern in the later 1500s, and it would thus seem probable that the Island shared in the growing Channel trade with Normandy resulting from the negotiations at Picquigny in 1475[1]. It is not surprising, then, that with such an orientation the English Channel ports should find themselves in a depressed state after the foreign policy adventures of Philip and Mary; and the Knolles survey in 1559, though not including a specific article on trade, in fact gathered some information on commercial activity in the course of its study of depopulation. The picture that does seem to emerge is one of stagnation, reflecting not only the interruption of the Normandy traffic but, even more forcibly perhaps, the decline of its neighbouring port of Southampton. The prime reason for this is now accepted to be the capture by London of much of the profitable Levant and Venetian trade[2]. The Islanders in 1559 apparently took a longer historical view. "We thynke", wrote the St. Helens centoners, "the chiffe cawse of this decay was the takyng away of the Staple from Wynchester to Calais[3], for then a greit nomber

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1 Michel Mollat: Le commerce maritime normand a la fin du moyen age: etude d'histoire economique et sociale (Paris 1952), p.133

2 L.A.Burgess, R.A.Pelham, A.L.Merson, & A.Temple Patterson: A survey of Southampton and its region (prepared for the August 1964 meeting of the British Association), p.221

3 In 1363: see VCH Hants & IW, Vol.5, p.42

'The History of Southampton' in F.J. Monkhouse (Ed.)

of marchantes masters & marynors had trafewike & lyvyng by the se"[1]. The Arreton centoners replied in the same terms: "When all these howses stoode and people replenished The Staple was kepte at Winchester and thonly porte at Hampton which Filled allso this Countrey with see men & vessells"[2]. From Mottistone hundred came the same opinion: "We conseve the dekey of the people to be partely in removing of the staple from Wynchester"[3]. It is interesting that the Arreton return so clearly admits the dependence of the Island on the prosperity of Southampton as a port, though of course this was nothing more than realism, for none of the Isle of Wight harbours seems to have had the capacity for admitting and handling the deeper-draught carracks with a full cargo. There was however a complaint in the Newport return, not about the imposition of great customs at Southampton but about the absence of a deputy customer on the Island[4]. This particular petition was not even passed on to the Council by the Knolles commission.

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1 P.R.O. SP.12/7/60

2 Ibid., SP.12/7/58

3 Ibid., SP.12/7/59

4 The town's petition was "that all shipes crayers and botes wch carrieth owt or bringith in any kind of marchanndis to the porte of Newporte, maye not be constrained to carre the said marchanndeys to suthe hampton to be costomide but that we maye have a deputie within the towne of Newporte for the hole Ile....." As it was, the town bailiffs complained, "we cannot pase owt with eny thing to Suthe hampton or other place withe owt the Ile without dannger of yor graces lawes" (P.R.O. SP.12/7/61)

The Isle of Wight exports that are mentioned or implied in the Knolles survey are corn, kerseys, and fish. Trade in corn was evidently controlled quite strictly, and the St. Helens centoners advised that, subject to price safeguards for the domestic corn market in the Island[1], the owners should then have freedom to sell the surplus where they chose. As we have already noted, this idea was commended by the Knolles commission and duly written into the warrant of the new Island Captain.

While there is no evidence of a large, organized cloth trade in the Isle of Wight at this time, some such trade must have had a footing in the town of Newport, for the bailiffs petitioned "that all kersis made within the said towne maye be discharged of all the greate custome that will cause the more ocupiers to inhabite their and the more people shalbe sete and found working appon the gaine ther of"[2]. This petition was adopted by the commissioners, who in turn recommended that "Thinhabitanntes of thysley do make peticion to have the lyke Fredom of custome that Winchester hath, touchinge all Clothes made on thysley of the woolles growen in the same"[3]. This does not seem to have survived to the stage of action by the Council, though it is one of the few testimonies to the existence of a textile industry in the Island.

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1 That 'a sufficient stower of grayne to be laid upp to provide the market at a resonabell price' (SP.12/7/60)

2 P.R.O. SP.12/7/61 (1559)

3 Dartmouth MSS., f.14

Fish was another actual or potential export, with the Island's seaboard of 100 kilometres[1], and the petitions to the Knolles commission made it clear that fishing was basic to the economy of the little towns of Yarmouth and Newtown[2]. The Newport bailiffs in their turn recommended that there should be a free market for fish exports from the Island: "this shalbe occasion to in courage and provoke maryners to the sae"[3]. The Commissioners likewise recommended that liberty should be given "to fyshermen of thysley to cary and sell all kindes of fyshe taken by them where they lyst"[4] and this concession too was incorporated in Richard Worsley's warrant[5].

There is inferential evidence also of an existing export trade in timber, for the St. Helens centoners advised "that woode nor tymber be not caried owt of the Isle"[6] and this was adopted by the commission[7] and threaded its way into the Captain's warrant in 1560.

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1 "Not to mention that the sea is well supplied with fish" (William Camden: Britannia.... 2nd ed. 1806, Vol.I, p.174)

2 The commission reported in each case that the town "standeth well for fishinge" (Dartmouth MSS., f.14)

3 P.R.O. SP.12/7/61

4 Dartmouth MSS., f.13[v]

5 P.R.O. SP.12/12/37

6 P.R.O. SP.12/7/60

7 Dartmouth MSS., f.13

With the exception of the export of kerseys, then, the Island's external trade on the export side was dominated by raw material as opposed to manufactured products; and perhaps in this bias is to be found some partial explanation of the problems of depopulation. We have seen too that, as a result of the Knolles inquiry of 1559, the pattern of trade was changing under the impulse of government action at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign. Thirdly, the Islanders recognized, tacitly or explicitly, their economic interest in the commercial fortunes of Southampton, and indeed one of the petitions to the commission was that "the grannte of Quene Mary[1] unto the Towne of Southampton for thunladinge of all maulmseys there, be....straightly mayneteyned"[2].

One further point that arises is the extent of shipping resources in the Island. Did the external trade travel in mainland or in Island ships? It happens that a census of shipping was taken by the Knolles commission[3] and the tally for the Isle of Wight and its neighbouring creeks was 39 boats, with a total tonnage of 140 thus giving an average size of $3\frac{1}{2}$ tons[4].

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1 L.A.Burgess, R.A.Pelham, A.L.Merson, & A.Temple Patterson, op. cit. (1964) p.221

2 Dartmouth MSS., f.14

3 "What nomber of shypes & botes be within the Centon and what passadge botes ther be to trasport men if neid be" (P.R.O. SP.12/7/60)

4 Dartmouth MSS., f.5

The detailed information in the surviving centon returns confirms the small size of the boats:

HAVEN	12 ton	10 ton	7 or 8 ton	2 or 3 ton	1 ton
Binstead[1]				1	2
Newport[2]			6		
St. Helens[3]	1			3	
Wootton[4]					3
Yarmouth[5]		1		4	3

The same size of craft is encountered in the adjoining havens of Hurst, Keyhaven, and Lymington, which were taken into this inquiry and which had no boat larger than 4 tons[6]. These were evidently fishing boats, adaptable for coasting trade but unlikely to serve as sea-going craft; in their native creeks and harbours they would be at home in every sense, for larger vessels would

1 SP.12/7/58

2 SP.12/7/61

3 SP.12/7/60

4 SP.12/7/58

5 SP.12/7/59

6 Dartmouth MSS., f.5

have to thread their way carefully to such a port as Newport[1]. The shipping picture, then, is of a large number of small boats. This was soon to change as mercantile effort developed.

In addition to the customes levied at Southampton the town of Newport enjoyed under its charter the right to levy petty custom on all trade in and out of the Island. As the town's fee farm rent payment tended to be static, the petty custom grant was a potential source of considerable profit for the burgesses, and an incentive for them to encourage as much trade as possible. A detailed customary of July 1549 is preserved in the town's Ligger Book[2] and it shows a predominance of farming products, with manufactured materials mostly confined to textiles. The scale of charges[3] is such that a moderate level of trade would go far to pay the fee farm rent, and the expansion of trade that was to come in the later 1500s would produce a useful income for the town.

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1 In the mid-19th century the harbour could accommodate vessels of up to 40 tons (William White: History, Gazetteer and Directory of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight...(1859) p.601). In 1971, with negligible present and recent dredging, the depth at the Town Quay at high water was between 2.45 and 2.6 metres, and up to 2.75 metres at spring tides.

2 Newport Borough MSS., 45/2, f.12 & 12^{v}

3 For example 4d on a sack of wool, 2d on a cwt. of butter, 1d on a cow.

From the evidence of the Knolles commission and from the Newport and Brading town books, the basic industries in 1558 seem to have been farming and fishing. Such manufacturing trades as are mentioned are those with an agricultural base. Thus the livestock farming supported on the one hand the fullers and weavers, and on the other the various leather trades of tanners, shoemakers, cobblers, and glovers; and on the fringe of the meat market were the tallow-chandlers. Then, based on the arable farming, there were the millers, the bakers - as yet representing a small industry but with a potential for growth which becomes apparent by the time of Charles I - and the brewers who seem to have represented an export industry even early in Elizabeth's reign (see below, pp.159-160).

The population of the Island in 1559 was 8,767,[1] the only considerable urban concentration being in the town of Newport with a population of 1175 or 13.4% of the Island total. Contemporaries apparently regarded as beyond argument a decline in the Isle of Wight population from a high figure in the medieval period, and such a view was one of the main predicates of the Knolles inquiry . Article eleven of the questionnaire to the individual centons asked "wheruppon the cawse of the decay of the people hathe byn growen & howe the same may be reparid agayn"[2]; and there are hints in some of

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1 Dartmouth MSS., f.1[v]

2 P.R.O. SP.12/7/60

the returns that the decline could have been a recent trend. The Newport bailiffs thought it possible that "all the mesuag voide within the said towne of newport wher in hath byne housis within this iij^{xx} yeres maye be redyfied and billded up a gaine"[1]. to accommodate the growing population that would follow the various reforms for which petition was made. Even so, the same return indicates elsewhere that the number of empty messuages was just 21 ~~or~~ out of a total of 240, not evidence of a catastrophic decline. Nor does a return in Edward VI's reign[2] that Newport "hath in houseling people besides great resort of mariners viii^{c} people" much alter the picture, for a figure of some 800 communicants is not out of keeping with the 1559 return of 1175 total population.

Moreover the references to a decline go back farther than the time of Edward VI[3]. An obvious piece of evidence is the Statute on Enclosures, 4 Henry VII, c.16, which boldly states that the Isle of Wight "is late decayed of people". Coming when it did, this legislation could have been a remedial measure after the

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1 P.R.O. SP.12/7/61

2 VCH Hants & IW, Vol.5, p.261, footnote 120 quoting Chan. Cert. (Augmentations Office) 52, no.42

3 The Knolles report indeed agreed that "we find that the decay of thinhabitantes in the said Isley hath not bene of late dayes, but of long tyme and contynuance, and is at this present in as good estate, and better then yt hath bene these hundreth yeres" (Dartmouth MSS., f.5)

disastrous battle of St. Aubin in Brittany the previous year, 1488, when the English force of Sir Edward Woodville, containing Isle of Wight levies of between 400 and 700 men[1] was massacred and only one boy returned to the Island to tell the tale[2]. The Statute however gives as the reason for depopulation "that many towns and villages have been let down, and the fields dyked and made pasture for beasts and cattle..."; and the St. Aubin debacle seems to have left no scar on the Islanders' historical folk-memory, for in 1559 one return after another lays the blame on the enclosures. There are examples in the Island of deserted medieval villages, though apparently no clear evidence of disastrous population decline resulting from the Black Death in the 14th century. The only firm evidence of a dramatic decline seems to be the Island petition to Parliament in 1450[3]: "the whiche Ile withynne feive yeres was at the nombre of x^{m} of fensable men, and xxx^{ti} Knyghtes and Squyers dwellyng withynne"; and now in 1450 there was "skante xii^{c} of fensable men, and Knyghtes never on". A drop of this

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1 J.D.Mackie: The Earlier Tudors 1485-1558 (Oxford 1952) p.87

2 Richard Worsley: History of the Isle of Wight (1781) p.72, apparently quoting Bacon's Life of Henry the Seventh *

3 Rotuli Parliamentorum ut et Petitiones et Placita in Parliamento ab anno Decimo Octavo R. Henrici Sexti ad Finem ejusdem Regni (1832) Vol. 5, pp.204-205

* Francis Bacon: The Historie of the Raigne of King Henry The Seventh (1622) p.62, says that "Lord Wooduile, and almost all his souldiors" were killed.

magnitude strains credulity, yet this seems to be the only such petition that places the Island's golden age within such a short span as five years, or within recent verifiable memory rather than in the distant and unplumbed past. For this reason alone the explanation given is of more than passing interest. It is in fact a compound one. Addressing itself to the loss of 10,000 able men, the petition claims they "are anentised thorough Pestellence and Werres, and some woyded because of oppresson of extorcioners". A reasonable assumption here would seem to be that, for a variety of reasons, there had been some upheaval that perhaps gained adventitious colour in the narrating of it but kept still a core of truth. It may be seen, then, as something of a jolt in an already prevalent tendency to declining population suggested by so much other evidence at this period[1]. Certainly the idea of a large medieval population in the Isle of Wight died hardly. "What manor of Island it wase in those dayes", wrote Sir John Oglander, about the 13th century, in 1631, "I knowe not, butt I am sure it wase mutch more populous, both for Gentery and olso Comunities then now it is"[2]. Elsewhere Oglander gives a list of the "Awntient Centenors" datable by the names (e.g. William Russell of Yaverland) to the 14th century, and adds the footnote: "Their wase butt in those dayes but 9 Companies and they Consisted of 2700 Able men that could Drawe a Bowe and handle a Browne bill"; and a marginal note: "I have spoken with those that have reported to have sene sutch a moustor booke

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1 E.g. M.Postan: 'Some economic evidence of declining population in the later Middle Ages' in Economic History Review, 2nd series, Vol.2, no.3 (1950), pp.221-246

2 CCM. Og. 232a

Contay: 2700[1]". Eventually Oglander saw the evidence for himself. In about 1632 he wrote: "I have seene a Mowstor booke[2] of 3000 : Bowes and Billes"[3]. This would seem to imply that some decline of numbers occurred between the 14th and 16th centuries. At the beginning of our period, in 1558, there are signs that the pendulum is beginning to swing back.

In terms of the government of the Island the history of its Lordship is basic; and the beginning of Elizabeth's reign is a crucial point because, the mechanism of Island government having gone out of gear, this was a time of review and re-appraisal.

The grant by William I to his former seneschal William FitzOsbern of the Lordship of the Isle of Wight was an extensive one. No written instrument survives, but some idea of the extent of the lands granted can be obtained from the inventory of estates in the King's hands at the time of the Domesday survey (the Crown having resumed these lands in 1075 as a result of rebellion by Fitz-Osbern's son and successor Roger of Breteuil). Until the death of William II the lands and Lordship remained with the Crown, until at the beginning of Henry I's reign a new grant was made to Richard de Redvers in whose family it was to remain for two centuries.

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1 CCM. Og. 200b

2 Of Edward III's reign

3 CCM. Og. 337b

Again no written instrument survives, but the ambit and functions of the Lordship are in fact progressively defined by [redacted] case-law as the powers were challenged at various times in the 12th and 13th centuries. The castle built at Carisbrooke by William FitzOsbern[1] was refortified in stone by Baldwin de Redvers in the 1130s[2], a symbolic gesture by a family that was proceeding to establish a quasi-royal position in its small Island domain. It was the Lord who had all rights of wardship within the Island (an issue that was to be revived on the eve of the English Civil War in the 17th century). He had the return of the King's writs. He nominated his bailiff, the constable of Carisbrooke Castle, and the coroner. He had rights of wreck. He even had his private park for hunting[3]. He had rights of free warren, though only in West Medine[4]. When, under the litigious last of the line, the Lady Isabella de Fortibus, the King's soldiers could enter the Island only by agreement of the Lord, the Crown must have felt that this little feudal enclave was ripe for reversion to central control; for the chief land-holders held of Carisbrooke Castle and did knight-service to the Lord of the Island. The King's chance

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1 The Domesday survey, under the Island manor of Alwinestone, mentions the appearance of the castle since the time of Edward the Confessor.

2 Gesta Stephani , under the year 1136

3 Carisbrooke Park, part of Alvington (later Parkhurst) Forest

4 The part of the Island west of the River Medina

came in 1293 when, just before her death, Isabella agreed to the sale of all her estates to the Crown[1]. The reversion to the Crown remained unaltered for the remainder of the reign, for Edward I had no taste for a viceroy in the Isle of Wight. Then, during the 14th century, with intervals of resumption by the Crown, grants of the Lordship were made to various holders for life or at the King's pleasure. Under the pressure of a French military threat to the Island, the need for a resident commander at Carisbrooke was self-evident. What is perhaps surprising is that the cessions of the Lordship were still so comprehensive, and the Lord indeed enjoyed many of the privileges with which the de Redvers family had exasperated the Crown, with the important difference that the grant was revocable and certainly not hereditary.

It was in the 16th century that the Lordship merged into the office of Captain, and this was attributable mainly to some administrative confusion after several disturbed changes of office-holder. The title of Captain seems to have appeared as early as Sir Nicholas Wadham's patent in 1509[2] and in 1520 Wadham was succeeded by Sir James Worsley[3], the first of that family to be associated with the Island. He in turn was followed by Thomas Cromwell in 1538,[4] a term of office obviously

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1 N.Denholm-Young: 'Edwxard I and the sale of the Isle of Wight' in English Historical Review, Vol.44 (1929) pp.433-438

2 Pat. 1 Henry VIII, pt.2, m.3

3 L & P Henry VIII, iii, 854(14)

4 Pat. 30 Henry VIII, pt.2, m.14

cut short by the execution of the incumbent in 1540. Here the succession becomes unclear, with the first term of office for Richard Worsley as Captain of the Island[1]. The grant of 1540 to Richard Worsley does not survive, but he is named as Captain in a royal letter of 9 December 1540[2]. With the accession of Mary in 1553 Worsley resigned the office, apparently on religious grounds[3]. His successor William Girling[4] again has no traceable grant, and with his tenure the administrative position becomes really confused. He seems to have been involved at least on the fringe of the Dudley conspiracy in 1556 and is named among the list of prisoners committed to the Tower, the Fleet, and Newgate in March of that year[5]. Though released on 5 June on £50 bail to remain in London[6] he was not reinstated as Captain of the Isle of Wight, and the Island seems to have remained in limbo for two years. Again a military threat forced the issue, and with a French

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1 Richard Worsley: History of the Isle of Wight (1781) pp. 93-94, says that Richard Worsley succeeded his father James as Captain in 1538, and Cromwell as constable of Carisbrooke Castle in 1540; but Cromwell's patent was that of Captain.

2 British Museum, Additional MSS., 46501, f.1.
During the French landings on the Island in 1545 the military commander was Sir Edward Bellingham who had a limited commission as "lieutenant of the Isle of Wight" (L & P Henry VIII, 20 (2), 368: the commission expired on 16 Sept 1545); but Worsley was referred to still as "captain of the Isle of Wight" (L & P 20 (2), Appendix, 20: May 1545)

3 Richard Worsley (1781), loc. cit.

4 Ibid.

5 P.R.O., SP.11/7/45

6 Dasent (ed.): Acts of the Privy Council 1554-1556, Appendix, ~~Calendar~~ p. 371

attack imminent in 1558 the Island defences were being organized by Thomas Tresham. On 30 January 1558 the Queen appointed him "to take the chief charge and rule of our Isle of Wight"[1]. This was no occasion for careful recitation and revocation of previous patents: the accompanying instructions were addressed to the military situation; and before the appointment could be properly drawn and enrolled Mary had died. It was not surprising, then, that the beginning of the reign of Elizabeth found the Crown Office in some perplexity about the government of the Island.

Just how great their uncertainty was is apparent from the questions committed to the Knolles inquiry, and from the phrasing of the reply: "Concerninge the governemente of the Isley, we finde by olde presydentes, that the sayde Isley hath bene of aunciennte tyme belonging to a noble man, that was lorde thereof, but how yt came to the Crowne, we knowe not, but sins yt was in the same, we finde that the Kinges of this realme, have gyven the said Isley, by lres patente to the Capteynes thereof, with all maner of proffites and comodyties, that might thereby growe, by anny manner of meanes, as well by sea as by lande"[2]. The same commission elsewhere laid down what they saw to be the proper functions for the office: "The Capteyne to have power and authorytie as the Capteynes there heretofore have bene accustomed to have, that is to say to be Stewarde Receyvor and M^{r} of the game, And that he uppon his

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1 P.R.O. SP.11/12/41

2 Dartmouth MSS., f.5^{v}

accompte in each yere may be allowed all the Fees and wages dewe unto him selfe and all other wythin his rule, and also yf his receiptes shall not countervayle the dew of all his allowannces that then he be paide the remayne at the Receyvors handes of the same County"[1]. It went on to recommend that the Captain "be vyceadmirall as the Capteynes heretofore hath bene"; and to list his functions in the training and inspection of the militia and on the defence of the Island generally. The existing practice as far as it could be traced, along with the recommendations of the Knolles commission, were stitched together in the letters patent finally issued to Richard Worsley on 8 April 1560[2]. This long Latin patent, with an accompanying English schedule of instructions for repairing the defence and the economy of the Isle of Wight, shows how the office of Captain has now been brought unambiguously under the control of the Crown. Even after the purchase of the de Redvers estates by Edward I, the Lords subsequently appointed had enjoyed an effective power within the discretion of the royal grant. The "totum dominium" that was the object of the grant is well illustrated for instance in the patent of Philippa of York in 1415[3]. The patent to Richard Worsley in 1560 in contrast lays down the fact that he is a salaried officer. For a daily wage of 6s 9d he is appointed Captain of all the Isle of Wight, captain of Carisbrooke Castle and of all the forts in the Island, constable and janitor of Carisbrooke Castle, steward of all the royal manors, keeper of Carisbrooke Park with rights of herbage and pannage, and coroner

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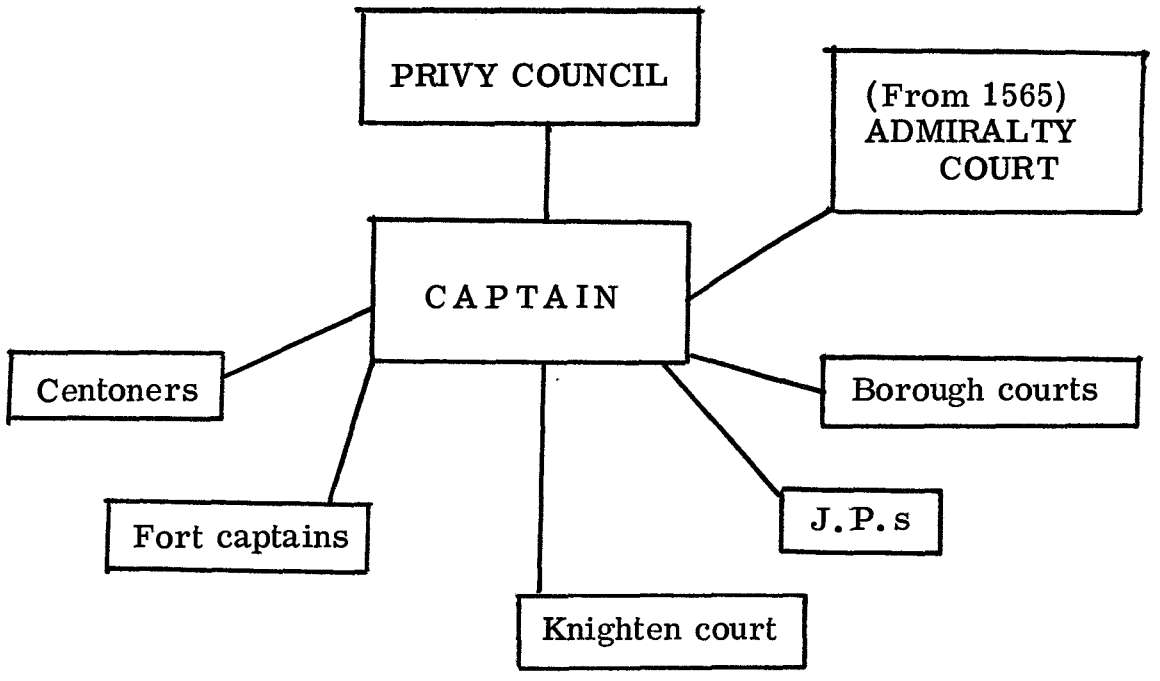
1 Ibid., f.13

2 Richard Worsley, op.cit. (1781) appendix 39 *

3 Ibid., appendix 23

* Pat. 2 Eliz. I. part xv, 8 April 1560

for the Island. From the receipts of all this, in addition to his own pay he was allowed a deputy at 2s 0d a day, a household of 13 at 6d a day, and various administrative and garrison charges, making a total of £567 per annum. Accounts were to be rendered to the Exchequer officers twice a year, at Easter and Michaelmas. The functions have thus changed, from those of a licensed princeling in the medieval period, to those substantially of a Lord Lieutenant with vicarious use of royal authority but immediately answerable to the Privy Council. A simplified scheme of Island administration in 1560 would be as follows:



Knolles's recommendation that the Captain should be Vice-Admiral was finally implemented in 1565, with far-reaching results. Meanwhile the Captain is seen as the channel for both military and civil administration. On the military side he had to supervise the

exiguous permanent garrisons under the command of the captains of the forts at Sandown, West Cowes, Yarmouth, Sharpnode, and Worsley's Tower; while the basic defence, the local militia, was administered through the company commanders or centoners who were in fact the local gentry and often doubled as J.P.s. On the civil side there were two main vehicles for the judicial process: the Curia Militum, and the Newport town court.

The Curia Militum is a strange, feudal survival from the early days of the Norman Lordship, merging in 1806 into the Court of Requests for the Isle of Wight, and in 1847 into the County Court[1]. This Knighten Court, though not included in the Captain's patent, seems to have operated without any substantial interruption, though its practice varied from time to time. It was kept by the Captain's steward, and took its name from the fact that its judges were the holders of a knight's fee in capite from Carisbrooke Castle[2]. Some idea of its procedure is given when in 1626 Lord Conway the incoming Captain received a report on it[3]. He was told that "it hath been always kept" in Newport town hall every third Monday; that its jurisdiction included the whole Island except the corporation of Newport; that it dealt with all actions of debt and trespass under the value of £2; and that the

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1 VCH Hants & IW, Vol.5, p.259

2 The number varied from about 15 to 18

3 Richard Worsley, op.cit. (1781), pp.81-83

freeholders who were the judges had been appointed by the Captain to take turns sitting four or five at a time[1].

Above this was the quarter sessions court; below were the leet courts of the various manors, and the jurisdiction - generally modest - of the towns. Newport was the most substantial both in size and in the range of its privileges. Planted as a new town by Richard de Redvers, 4th Earl of Devon, in about 1188, it enjoyed from the outset privileges that were judicial as well as commercial: freedom from tolls and customs at fairs and markets, and freedom from suits at shire and hundred. There was also a grant of common grazing in Parkhurst Forest[2]. All pleas belonging to the Lord arising within the borough were to be pleaded there, and no one was to be amerced except by the burgesses, nor for more than 30d. Finally the burgesses were to choose their own reeve. For these privileges they paid 12d per year on each messuage.

The next extension was in the confirmation charter[3] granted by Isabella de Fortibus to 'novo burgo de Medina"[4]. Existing grants were confirmed, but the burgesses were now empowered to elect a reeve or a bailiff[5]. The town was granted the West Mill

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1 By 1626 in fact a need was felt for the election of additional judges, "some being aged and impotent, one under age, some live out of the isle, and some of the rest being negligent of that service" (Richard Worsley, op. cit. (1781) p. 83)

2 VCH Hants & IW, Vol. 5, p. 256

3 Undated, so between 1262 and 1293

4 Newport Borough MSS., 45/4

5 "Praepositus aut balivus"

near St. Cross Priory, and half of Ford Mill on the east of the town "ad feodi firmam perpetue duratur"[1] and there was a grant of "totum theolonium et custumam quae ad me pertinent in praedicto burgo et extra burgum", the last two words being the basis of the petty custom grant claimed throughout the Island by Newport. Another important innovation in Isabella's grant was the exception of $13\frac{1}{2}$ places granted to God "et capellae beati Nicholi in castro meo de Caresbroc et vicario ejusdem capellae", the origin of the 'Castlehold' enclave, outside the town's jurisdiction, at the western end of High Street.

From this grant until 1559 there were generally straight confirmations[2] though in 1489 Henry VII granted the goods and chattels of outlaws, felons, and fugitives, and petty custom in all ports and creeks in the Island; and this grant also saw a change of style of address from "the burgesses of the borough" to "the bailiff, burgesses and inhabitants of the town"[3]. Finally the charter of Edward VI in 1549 confirmed the grant of tolls and

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1 The town may hitherto have leased them, for an extent of 1262, post mortem Baldwin de Redvers, stated that the burgesses held $1\frac{1}{2}$ mills (George Hillier: History of the Isle of Wight (n.d., circa 1850), 'The borough of Newport' p.2)

2 Martin Weinbaum: British Borough Charters 1307-1660 (Cambridge 1943) p.46

3 VCH Hants & IW, Vol.5, p.257. By the 1550s Newport had 2 bailiffs: a senior and junior bailiff (see Borough MSS., 45/20, f.1) but from 1584 onwards there was only one (ibid. 45/2, f.2)

petty customs as granted by Isabella and Henry VII[1].

Newport the main town, then, had carved out only a few of its liberties by 1558. It elected its own bailiffs, and enjoyed the modest jurisdiction of the View of Frankpledge - little more in fact than the rights of other manorial lords. The significant franchise was the grant of petty custom, clarified and repeated by Henry VII and Edward VI, for with just 13.4% of the Island population in 1559 the town could look to any general expansion in the Island's population and economy to give the town a transfusion of wealth and prosperity. As an earnest of privilege to come, even the bailiff elections in the 1500s were attended by much ceremonial. The Thursday preceding the Sunday before Michaelmas, the bailiffs and burgesses met at the town hall and about 10 in the morning went in procession to the church for prayers. For the election the former office holders would take their seats in the chancel and agree among themselves the names of two candidates for senior burgess. The parchment with the names was then taken down to the junior burgesses in the nave, to elect by pricking the names. The senior bailiff having thus been chosen, the senior burgesses then chose the junior bailiff "by voyces onlye". The following Sunday the whole company would attend at Carisbrooke Castle for the Captain there to administer the oath to the new bailiffs[2].

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/2, f.12 & 12^{v}. It would seem that the original petty custom grant of Isabella was disallowed under Edward I's Quo Warranto inquiry, 8 Edward I (Richard Worsley, op.cit. 1781, p. xlviii) so the privilege would perhaps need restating.

2 Newport Borough MSS., 45/2, ff.16-17^{v}. A drawing of the Captain Edward Horsey swearing in Porter and Serle in 1567 is on f.8^{v}

Yarmouth was a town of equal antiquity though of more modest population in 1559[1]. Its original charter, datable by internal evidence to about 1177-1179[2], was from Baldwin de Redvers, 3rd Earl of Devon; and it granted the liberties and customs of free burgesses, and freedom from tolls and customs in fairs and markets. At the confirmation by Edward III in 1334 Yarmouth remained a mesne borough; but a major extension came in 1440 when Henry VI settled for a fee-farm rent of 20 shillings per year, and the town apparently acquired a mayor[3]. The charter from Elizabeth in 1560 was a straight confirmation of the 1440 grant[4].

Newtown or Francheville traced its earliest charter to the 13th century. Aymer de Valence, Bishop elect of Winchester, was in 1255 given a royal grant of a market and fair at his manor of Swainstone[5] which included the site of Newtown, and in 1256 Aymer granted his burgesses "of the borough of Franchevill in the Isle of Wight" all liberties and free customs that were enjoyed

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1 "Not past a dosen hosis" (SP.12/7/60)

2 VCH Hants & IW, Vol.5, p.286

3 The fee-farm in 1449 was paid by "the mayor, bailiff and burgesses of the borough" (VCH Hants & IW, loc.cit.)

4 Martin Weinbaum: British Borough Charters 1307-1660 (Cambridge 1943), p.51

5 VCH Hants & IW, Vol.5, p.265

by his other towns[1] and this charter was confirmed by Edward I in 1285[2] and by various of his successors[3]. ~~The grant of a market and fair was already hedged, in, however, with implications of a degree of subservience, for it was qualified with the words: "Nisi mercatum illud et feria illa sint ad nocumentum vicinorum mercatorum et vicinarum feriarum"~~[4]. The charters, while reciting the trading privileges, do not throw much light on the constitution of the corporation, but it would seem that by 1559 it had a mayor[5]. The constitution as existing at the time of the suppression of the borough under the Reform Act is fully set out in the report made at the time[6]. As for earlier periods, it can be stated that the earliest court rolls, dating from 1636[7], seem to

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1 A. Harbottle Estcourt: 'The ancient borough of Newtown alias Franchville, Isle of Wight' in Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club, Vol. 2 (1890-1893) at p. 90

2 VCH Hants & IW, Vol. 5, p. 265

3 Martin Weinbaum, op. cit. (1943) p. 47

~~4 Charter of Edward II, 1318, in A. Harbottle Estcourt, op. cit. (1890-1893) p. 108. It was a weekly market, on Wednesday, and an annual three-day fair on 21-23 July.~~

5 The exemplification of the charter in 1598 (7 July, 40 Eliz. I) refers to the Mayor and Burgesses "in villo de Newton"; and two Mayors of Newtown appear as witnesses to deeds in 1444 (VCH Hants & IW, Vol. 5, p. 266)

6 Report of the Commission on Municipal Corporations (1835), appendix 2, p. 793

7 IWCRO, SW/311

distinguish (1) capital or chief burgesses (2) free burgesses and (3) inhabitants. The fact that the town apparently held only a leet court is an indication of the modest judicial status of the borough.

Brading, while never having a Mayor, acquired at least a more substantial status than Newtown. In 1285 Brading obtained from Edward I the grant of a weekly market (on Wednesday) and a four-day fair in late August [1]. Just as Newtown established its identity against the parent manor of Swainston, so did Brading from the royal manor of Whitefield of which it had formed part [2], and by the reign of Elizabeth I the bailiffs were exercising rights of leet and frank pledge courts, and assize of bread [3] as covered by the fee farm rent to the Crown.

Municipal jurisdiction in 1558, then, comprised two Mayor towns - Yarmouth and Newtown - apparently with nothing more than manor courts; and two bailiff towns one of which, Brading, seems to have had more substantial commerce if little more legal privilege, while Newport, the other, had a unique exception from jurisdiction of the Captain's Knighten Court, and a unique privilege in the grant of petty custom which gave it an important stake in the economic growth of the Island as a whole.

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1 Calendar of Close Rolls 1279-1288, p.344

2 VCH Hants & IW, Vol.5, p.158

3 For example, Brading Town Manuscripts, minute book entry 24 August 1596

CHAPTER 2

SOCIAL STRUCTURE

The social structure of the Isle of Wight in 1558 does seem to suggest a dearth of higher gentry and absence of landed aristocracy. The latter class in fact does not seem to have survived the surrender of the de Redvers estates in 1293, and the only possibility of a counterpart was the presence at Carisbrooke Castle of a rich and influential Island Captain. In 1558 of course there was as yet no Captain at all. As for the gentry, they do not seem to have been abundant. The lay subsidy roll for 1559[1], apart from the Worsleys at Appuldercombe[2], lists just eleven gentlemen, a number that would seem to spread at just one per centon. The country gentry were of course regarded as a reservoir of officers for the militia, and at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign these resources were often thinly stretched[3]. The position in the Island was seen as fairly satisfactory: "We finde that althoughe divers of the first inheritours of the said Isley, be altered and decayed, yet other gentes beinge placed and inhabitinge, wythine the Circuyte of every Centon, hath bene appointed in the place of Centoner"[4]. Of the spectrum of 8,754 people thus graded below the status of gentry[5] the Knolles report offers no illumination. The commissioners were concerned with only one quality: the number of "able men for the warres" was 1,880[6].

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1 P.R.O. SP.12/9

2 Richard Worsley, about to be designated Captain, is listed as Esquire, and his mother as Dame

3 Lindsay Boynton: The Elizabethan militia 1558-1638 (1967) pp.96-97

4 Dartmouth MSS., f.5

5 Taking Knolles's total population figure of 8,767

6 Dartmouth MSS., f.1^{v}

The Island population, ranging from some nine thousand at the beginning of our period to perhaps fourteen thousand at the outbreak of the Civil War, showed on the whole a high degree of cohesion and stability. We must now look at the nature and constitution of this particular county community, and attempt to see whether it offers any clue to the behaviour of the Island in 1642. Any survey of different social groups in a society must stray into occasionally arbitrary assumptions: real life rarely complies with taxonomic neatness. Yet the various tiers of Island society were real enough, and were readily accepted, at the time; and there is enough contemporary evidence at least to help in charting the path. So, with a measure of caution appropriate to the exercise, we start with the top of the pyramid.

A. The nobility.

One feature that is important to any understanding of Island society is the absence of a hereditary, landed aristocracy: the "nobilitas major" of Sir Thomas Smith's social analysis in the 1560s[1]. In the early medieval period this element had been represented by the family of de Redvers who for some two centuries put their stamp on Carisbrooke Castle and on the

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1 Quoted in Peter Laslett: The world we have lost (1965) p.30

Island generally; but when the last of them, Isabella, Countess of Devon, executed the deed of sale to the Crown just before her death in 1293, this reversion of the Lordship and its Island estates cut off at a stroke this particular aristocratic element in local society, in this particular hereditary form. It was replaced by the nominated Lordship: a series of people of aristocratic, even of royal, connections, but without roots in the Island, and enjoying the Crown estates and their revenues only during the pleasure of the Sovereign. Their function as nominees was underlined by the change, early in the 1500s, from the title of Lord to that of Captain. It was an office with great potential for filling the place of landed nobility in Island society, but its realization depended very much on the individual holder of the office. It is worth looking at the occupants of the post during this period:

1558-1560	William Paulet, 1st Marquess of Winchester[1]
1560-1565	Richard Worsley (second term)[2]
1565-1583	Edward Horsey[3]
1583-1603	Sir George Carey, later 2nd Baron Hunsdon[4]

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1 His predecessor Thomas Tresham had been appointed by Mary on 30 January 1558 (SP. 11/12/41). Winchester's appointment has not been traced but is inferred from Cal. of State Papers Domestic 1547-1565 Addenda, p. 432

2 Pat. 2 Eliz. I, part xv, 8 April 1560

3 Pat. 7 Eliz. I, part v, 6 August 1565

4 Pat. 25 Eliz. I, part ix, 6 July 1583

1603-1624	Henry Wriothesley, 3rd Earl of Southampton[1]
1624-1632	Edward Viscount Conway of Ragley[2]
1632-1633	Richard Lord Weston, later 1st Earl of Portland[3]
1633-1642	Jerome Weston, 2nd Earl of Portland[4]

Of these Horsey, Carey, and Southampton had the more long-lasting effects on the Island. Horsey created the climate for vigorous privateering activity and all the victualling services and prize-marketing that attended it. Carey brought the Island to some extent into the main stream of national affairs, and gave tangible expression to this by endowing it with six M.P.s in 1584. Southampton continued this patronage, making Newport and Yarmouth into Mayor towns in 1608, and supporting the endowment of the new grammar school in Newport in 1618; but perhaps the most significant factor towards shaping the local society of the Civil War period was his increasing disinclination to live on the Island. In this he set the pattern for his successors, with notable effects on the social and political balance of the county community.

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1 Pat. 1 James I, part xiv, 7 July 1603

2 Pat. 22 James I, part xv, no.13, 28 December 1624

3 Pat. 6 Charles I, part vi, no.12, 8 February 1632

4 Pat. 9 Charles I, part xiii, no.2, 18 November 1633

How far, then, did the Captain fill the part of the nobility in the Island? To varying degrees the holders of the office exemplified a quality of housekeeping that would have been foreign to the average manor house of the kind that was to speckle the countryside in increasing numbers during James I's reign. Horsey was by the nature of his career a man of action rather than a man of letters. His tomb effigy in Newport church could well be the type of any of Elizabeth's more buccaneering courtiers. His social ambit was largely though not exclusively among sailors and privateers. He seems to have been disinclined to occupy the Captain's residence at Carisbrooke Castle, and with good reason in view of its rather derelict condition; and he spent the later years of his life at Haseley near Arreton, with Mrs. Dowsabell Mills, "not without some taxe of Incontinencye", remarked Oglander, "for nothinge stopped theyr maryadge, but that he had a wyfe alive in Fraunce"[1]. When Carey succeeded him as Captain the social level of the office was hoisted. A surveyor was brought in from Portsmouth to assess the gaunt accommodation at Carisbrooke, repairs were put in hand, and it was not long before the castle was the hub of Island life. "This Lord Hunsdon wase a brave Gentleman, and Greate howsekepor at the Castle of Carisbrooke, where he kept a howse no Nobleman in England like unto him"[2]. He kept "the best retinue, and most vast expence, that evor wase, eythor in Castle or Island.

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1 CCM. Og. 316b. His French marriage dated presumably to the time of his exile during Mary's reign

2 CCM. Og. 326b. Carey succeeded to the title of Baron Hunsdon on the death of his father in 1596

Wyne wase as Common as beare, and his desire wase to have the Gentlemen of the Island most Commonly at his Table, and to that end once a month he woold have a Generoll meetinge both of the Gentlemen and theyre wyfes, whoe weare my ladyes Gwestes, but the worst wase before they parted most of the Gentlemen showld retourne with ackinge heds"[1]. Oglander records elsewhere that "his weekely Expence in wheate Corne For Bred and Pasterye wase Constantly Thre Quartors, but when Lordes and Ladies weare there, (as he wase seldome or nevor without the Greatest and Most Honorablest in the kingdome: as my Lord of Leyster, Essex, Darby, Mountioye, South-Hampton, with many others, and all the sowldiors of the kingdome, as Generoll Norris etc.) he spent Treble as mutch, for then woold he have all the Gentlemen of the Island and theyre wyfes olso there. He wase a most Free Man in his house kepinge, and his Meate wase alwayes served upp to his Table with a Consorte of wynde and still Musike. He spent aftor the rate of 4: Hogshedes of wyne weekely, Insomutch as the Lawndery wase nevor without a Hogeshed of wyne, and a Colde Pastie of venison for the maydes, Judge of the rest For all thinges weare to these Proportionable"[2].

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1 CCM. Og. 216a

2 CCM. Og. 280b:
Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, 1532-1588
Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, 1567-1601
Ferdinando Stanley, 5th Earl of Derby, 1559(?)-1594
Charles Blount, Lord Mountjoy, 1563-1606
Henry Wriothesley, 3rd Earl of Southampton, 1573-1624
Sir John Norris, 1547(?)-1597 who was Leicester's deputy in the Netherlands campaign

Summing up, Oglander remarked about Carey that "he kept the best hospitalitie at the Castle as evor wase or will be kept there"[1]. This lavish style of living was equally in evidence elsewhere. There were "many meetinges olso both in the Parke and forrest, where of his venison he wase no nigard"[2]. His hunting was evidently a social and convivial occasion, such as his duck-hunt - with various members of the Island gentry - at Nettlestone Pond on 7 June 1586 "where in the Battel 200 were killed"[3]; or his deer-hunt in Parkhurst Forest towards the end of his life, when the party comprised some members of his family, even the ladies being equipped with crossbows[4]. The outstanding forest occasion of course was the spectacular party that he gave there for many of the Islanders before leaving for London in 1596[5]. The festivities were adequate almost for a royal progress: a stage play, a display by the militia including a feu de joie from the cannons, morris dancing, food in abundance and, a typical conceit of the period, rose water to drip from an oak overshadowing the high table after grace was said, as if the tree were giving up its sap in tribute. This turned out to be the memorable feature of the party, for the guardian of the bowl of rose water succumbed to boredom and to the heat of the day and fell asleep in his roost among the branches. Grace was followed by a pregnant silence,

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1 CCM. Og. 24a

2 Ibid., 26a

3 Ducks, of course. The phrase is Carey's ironic reply to a solicitous inquiry from the Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire about reported civil disturbances in the Isle of Wight (John Strype: Annals of the Reformation... 2nd edition, Vol. 3 (1728), p. 392

4 CCM. Og. 285a. This hunt nearly brought an abrupt end to Carey's career. His sister, who had been placed in cover behind a bush, turned to watch Carey and accidentally fired her bolt straight at him; but did so just as Carey's horse reared and took the bolt in its head

5 Carey's father, Henry 1st Lord Hunsdon, died in July 1596. The following March Carey succeeded to his father's office of Lord Chamberlain

amply broken when a helpful attendant tried to rouse the sleeping sap-scatterer by prodding a pike up into the branches. His victim, understandably awakening with a start, spilled the entire basinful of rose water over the assembled nobility below; and no one seems to have minded[1].

In all his activities Carey seems to have shown the same style: his stud for thoroughbred horses, in Elmsworth Wood[2]; his large and unusually comprehensive library[3]; his award of handsome prizes for winners at his newly-instituted military games on the Island[4]; his foreign privateering ventures on a scale comparable with those of Cumberland; his alleged eviction from the Island of an immigrant lawyer "with a pownd of candles hanginge at his breeche lighted, with beles about his legges[5]; and his assumption of the title of Governor[6] which affronted the Island gentry and led Oglander to write of him as "a man beyand all ambitions".

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1 CCM. Og. 326

2 Ibid., 205a. Oglander claims that Carey sold some of his horses for as much as £100 each

3 Sears Jayne (ed.): Library catalogues of the English Renaissance (Berkeley 1956) p. 43. Carey's collection, which covers history, classical studies, theology, geography, mathematics and music, is now in the Bodleian

4 Brit. Mus. Lansdowne MS. 40, no. 8: for the champion pikeman a "fair pike well armed with crimson velvet, fringed with green silk and silver"; for the musketeer a "fair double muskett parcel gilt, the stock, flask and touch box of walnut tree"; for the caliver shot a "fair caliver throughly furnished, and a gilt morion"; and for shooting at the butt "a rapier and dagger gilt"

5 CCM. Og. 97a

6 Ibid., 24a

Hunsdon died on 9 September 1603 and his successor Henry 3rd Earl of Southampton inherited something of the aura of courtly life now associated with Carisbrooke. "Not willinge to loose any of his predecessors Greatnes", wrote Oglander, "att his first comminge he lived at the Castell"[1]. His disenchantment with this rural life was gradual but steady. In July 1605 he was inviting the Earl of Salisbury to visit the Island[2]. By September he was complaining from Carisbrooke that "the barrenness of this place affords nothing to discourse of but heat in summer and storms in winter, which is now with us begun....I wish myself also often at the Court to enjoy the presence of your lordship and the rest of my friends, though otherwise I am enough pleased with the quiet life I lead here"[3]. By 1610 he was living in the Isle of Wight only during the summer[4] and his visits now became more widely spaced, with quite long periods of absence. To some extent he maintained Hunsdon's style of living and his scatter of patronage, and Oglander - latterly one of his two deputy-lieutenants - described him as "truly noble"[5]; but the recent tradition of a resident Captain was allowed to lapse, and during the eight years' office of his successor Lord Conway the Captain's absence grew from a joke into a scandal.

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1 CCM. Og. 24a

2 HMC Calendar of MSS. at Hatfield, Vol. xvii (1938), p. 333, Southampton to the Earl of Salisbury, 22 July 1605

3 Ibid., p. 423, Southampton to Earl of Salisbury, 16 Sept 1605

4 CCM. Og. 115a

5 Ibid., 55a

What then was the result of this on Island society? There was, firstly, an obvious withdrawal of the free spending attendant on a noble occupant of Carisbrooke Castle. When in 1607 the Island Commissioners of Subsidy found themselves apologizing for an unusually low tax yield, the first of twelve excuses they offered was that "the Captayne of the Isle (who in former tymes was asseised here att a great rate) hath not beene in these later tymes to be asseised here"[1]. They had an arguable case. In the lay subsidy of 1571 Edward Horsey paid £8.17.10d out of the total Carisbrooke assessment of £41.7.10d. The next highest payment in Carisbrooke was Andrew Ilman's £3.11.8d, and most of the payments there were 6s 8d[2]. In 1594 Carey paid £8 out of a total Carisbrooke assessment of £36.13.4d, the next highest payment there being John Serle's £1.12.0d[3]. Bearing in mind the apparent tendency of the subsidy assessments to underestimate the larger concentrations of wealth, the Island Captain clearly represented a substantial amount of money.

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1 CCM Clarke MSS., 6

2 P.R.O. E.179/174/388

3 P.R.O. E.179/174/414

Another result of an absentee Captain was the beginning of a substantial dispersal [redacted] of Crown lands. Since it had absorbed the de Redvers estates in 1293 the Crown had enjoyed the use of large tracts of the Island. The other factor serving to inhibit the growth of a landed gentry class was the extent of monastic land in the Island, notably that owned by Quarr. At the dissolution of the religious houses in the 1530s this property had gone to swell the already extensive royal estates, and in spite of some sales of land the amount remaining in the Crown's hands was considerable[1]. Clearly there was more than could be comfortably digested by the Island Captain, its immediate inheritor, and there was increasing pressure both from the local gentry and from mainland speculators for some of it to be let out in fee farm. The Earl of Southampton resisted these moves, but when in the summer of 1624 he went out to the Netherlands (in the campaign on which he was to die of a fever) his policy was reversed[2]. As a result Richard Baskett acquired (from the main entrepreneur the Earl of Holderness) the manor

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1 See the surveys of Crown lands in the Island in 1583 (Cambridge University Library, Kk. v. 5 (no. 2047)); and in 1608 (P.R.O. E. 315/359). The tenures were mostly copyhold of inheritance, and this would reduce the Island ratio of socage holdings

2 CCM. Og. 29a

of Apse in which his family had had an earlier interest[1]; on the advice of the Earl of Anglesey, Henry Knollys was granted the manor of Bowcombe[2]; and this was the start of a continuing process.

One effect of this was further to diversify and strengthen the local gentry and conversely, in Oglander's words, "it hath mutch abated the greatenes of the Captayne"[3]. It also carried the seeds of trouble when, as in 1631, the Crown threatened to put this policy into reverse by prohibiting the felling of timber on royal woodland sold out on fee farm[4]. One of the complainants in this case was Sir Thomas Barrington of Swainston[5] who was later to be an active proponent of the Parliamentarian cause.

By the end of the period, then, the Isle of Wight was a community without a resident aristocracy. Such power vacuum as this created was to be filled by the local gentry.

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1 P.R.O. Close 22 James I, part vi, no.21 (1624)

2 P.R.O. Pat. 1 Charles I, part xi, no.10 (1625)

3 CCM. Og. 29a

4 Ibid., 237b

5 IWCRO, SW/238 (Weston to Barrington, 1 September 1631)

B. The gentry

Definition of the word gentry is so dangerously loaded with assumptions that almost any formula is liable to break down at some point. We know at least that we are dealing with the 'nobilitas minor' of Thomas Smith's classification, a stage below the aristocracy: but who comprised it? In the case of the Isle of Wight it is perhaps easier to provide an answer than to find the true grounds for it. There is for example the exercise of Lord Burghley who in his own hand inserted, on a manuscript map of the Island dating to about 1590[1], the names of the leading families. It is a short enough list for a population of some ten thousand: Bowerman of Brook, Cheke of Mottistone, Dingley of Shorwell, Earlsman of Calbourne, Lisle of Wootton, Oglander of Brading, Richards of Yaverland, Worsley of Appuldercombe, Worsley of Ashey, and Meux of Kingston: ten families in all. The list was obviously not exhaustive. Given more space on the map, Burghley would probably have added the Leighs of Shorwell. Broadly though, this map gives Burghley's conspectus of the local gentry. Another perspective is that of Sir John Oglander in the 1620s. He names sixteen families: Lisle, Oglander, Worsley, Dennis, Dillington, Baskett, Cheke, Richards, Dingley, Meux, Bowerman, Wayte, Leigh, Earlsman, Hobson, and Harvey. With complete certainty he writes: "The Gentlemens names ar these and no others"[2]. He did not define a gentleman but he knew one when he met him. What were the attributes that instinctively led Burghley and Oglander in thus distinguishing their ruling class?

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1 Brit. Mus. Maps, 18.D.III, ff.17^{v}-18

2 CCM. Og. 237a

A family might of course have its coat of arms. If we look at the heralds' visitation in Oglander's time we find in 1622 a slightly more extended list of 22 families with coats of arms.[1] Harrison's description of English society in the previous reign however suggests that, given enough money and the ability to live without manual labour, one could obtain a coat of arms from the heralds "who in the charter of the same do of custom pretend antiquity and service, and many gay things".[2]

Perhaps the most constant factor is mere wealth: "in England gentry is but ancient riches"[3]; and according to Laslett "ancient" can mean only one generation of enough substance to live without manual work. The lay subsidy lists, though dubious evidence as economic indicators, do show a broad correlation between higher social classification and higher tax assessments; and they do offer, through the eyes of the local subsidy commissioners, another estimate of the number of the gentry in the local community:

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1 W. Harry Rylands (ed.): Pedigrees from the visitation of Hampshire (Harleian Society, Vol. 64 (1913)

2 Lothrop Withington (ed.): Elizabethan England (n.d.) p. 8

3 Quoted by Peter Laslett in The world we have lost (1965) p. 34

Date	Knights	Esquires	Gentlemen	Source
1559	-	1	11*	PRO, SP.12/9/ff.108^{v}-109
1563	-	3	15	IWCRO, IW/27
1568	-	6	20	IWCRO, SW/1716
1571	1	(+)	(+)	PRO, E.179/174/388
1576	-	6	8	PRO, D.MSS., No.114
1594	1	8	21	E.179/174/414
1606	5	6	10	E.179/175/466
1610	5	9	23	E.179/174/369
1621	8	5	17	E.179/175/493
1642	13**	4	1	E.179/175/545

* comprising in the original 5 indicated as 'generosus' and 6 as 'gent'

(+) not shown

** comprising 5 baronets and 8 knights: the new baronets were presumably a result of the sale of titles to finance Buckingham's Rochelle venture (see CCM.Og. 61b)

Allowing for the vagaries of individual selections, some sort of quantitative picture of the county gentry thus begins to emerge. Various accounts seem to agree on a number of families, varying between one and two dozen, and without a noticeable numerical trend during our period. One may however turn to such evidence as the propensity of a prosperous gentry class to spill forth

substantial new houses and furniture[1]. Of the large country houses usually classed as 'manor houses', which were beginning to replace the moated medieval sites, perhaps only four in the Island are datable with reasonable security to Elizabeth's reign. One, Appuldercombe, was on a quite palatial scale[2] and some idea of its compass can be obtained from an inventory of the furnishings in 1566[3]. Another, Wolverton at Shorwell, built alongside its medieval predecessor, was the work of Sir George Carey's deputy, John Dingley, and was built in the customary E-pattern and certainly on a grander scale than the average country house. Oglander records with some awe that it cost Dingley "800£ in those dayes"[4], and although this information can have been only secondhand gossip from the ordinary there still seems no reason to doubt it. Indeed the house itself testifies to the extreme demands on its builder's purse, for the north wing was left as an uncompleted shell, to be finished off at a less indigent time which never arrived. Apart from these two quite impressive houses, there is not much to show for the period. Mottistone and West Court are modest by

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1 The conditions that led to the surge of building in this period are discussed in Lawrence Stone: The crisis of the aristocracy 1558-1641, pp. 549-555; and in Malcolm Airs: The making of the English country house 1500-1640 (1975), pp. 1-14

2 Richard Worsley: History of the Isle of Wight (1781) prints Robert Worsley's drawing of it as he found it in 1690. He went on to demolish it in the early 1700s

3 IWCRO, SW/151

4 CCM. Og. 230a

comparison. These four houses do however begin to set the distribution pattern, for these prosperous country houses are to be found mostly on or near the broad, exposed band of ferruginous sands running east-west through the middle of the Island, a fertile area today intensively cultivated for market-gardening.

From the beginning of James I's reign the pace of such building increased. The end of the war with Spain and the diminished threat of invasion obviously helped to encourage more ambitious building, but the extension in numbers of large houses[1] also reflected a real measure of wealth, the evidence for which will be discussed later. During the Jacobean period in particular there was a rash of new building, and this again followed the geographical pattern of the 16th-century houses, reflecting the basic farming interest of the local country gentry. In the adaptation of the older houses too there was a more business-like approach: the former chapel of the old house at Knighton near Newchurch was in Sir John Oglander's time converted into a brewhouse[2].

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1 The main houses of the period 1603-1642 are Barton, Arreton, Merstone, Haseley, Yaverland, Budbridge, North Court (Shorwell), Kingston, Billingham, and Nunwell

2 CCM. Og. 141a

The gentry occupying these houses were the residuary legatees of any prerogative of leadership that the Island Captain might allow to go by default. This was the class that made up a majority of the working justices[1] and which regarded itself as having a particular responsibility for legal and social administration, and for matters of the local militia companies, apart from the running of their own estates.

The flexibility that was a feature of so many county communities in their social structure at this time is a noticeable attribute of the Isle of Wight. Not only were many of the yeoman class attaining to the level of gentry[2], but other gentry were moving in during the 16th century. What Alan Everitt describes as the "group of native families at the heart of local society who had, as it were, grown up out of the soil of the county with the passing of the centuries"[3] was here a minority. Among the Island families of Jacobean times the Worsleys, Basketts, Robsons, Dennises, Rices, Searles, Richardses, Dillingtons, Leighs and Barringtons had all settled there within the past century.

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1 J.H.Gleason: The Justices of the Peace in England 1558 to 1640: a later Eirenarcha (Oxford 1969) p.120

2 Mildred Campbell: The English Yeoman under Elizabeth and the early Stuarts (London 1967 - originally Yale 1942) pp.33-63 discusses this aspect of social osmosis

3 Alan Everitt: 'The county community' in E.W.Ives (ed.): The English Revolution 1600-1660, p.50

Certainly wealth, ancient or otherwise, was an access route to gentility. "I have sene and knowen", Oglander observed, "men contemned, of no repute, base, and unwoorthie, sutch as most men scorned to kepe companie with all, havinge eythor owt of theyre penurious livinge gott wealth, or by other base and sinistor meanes, or honestly followinge at last soom vocation and betakinge them selves wholie to that: as repentinge of the time they so longe spent Folischly; and in idlenes, have come to that wealth and honor, as the best woold vouch safe his companie"[1]. There are many of Oglander's contemporaries and immediate predecessors who could fit such a description. Robert Dillington by careful housekeeping[2] amassed enough money to establish his place in society. He bought Mottistone manor from Thomas Cheke, reportedly for £3,500[3], in 1623; then he gratefully bought a baronetcy to go with it, at the time when Buckingham was hawking titles in aid of his French venture[4]. He certainly eased his way into the company of Island gentlemen, though Oglander in private dismissed him in a scornful marginal note as "the foole Barronett"[5]. Another who bought his way onwards was German Richards who made

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1 CCM. Og. 74a

2 Ibid., 61b

3 Ibid., 289b

4 Ibid., 61b

5 Ibid., 197b

a profitable marriage, set up a brewery next to Brading church and made his fortune there by naval victualling, finally ploughing much of the profits into the purchase in the 1560s of an interest in Yaverland manor, later bought in its entirety by his son[1]. A well-judged marriage was commonly the means of elevating the fortunes and social status of a family. The classic example perhaps was Emmanuel Badd a shoemaker's apprentice who "by gods blessinge, and the losse of 5 wyfes....Grewe very rytch" and earned the respect of his fellow gentry[2]. Others may not have equalled this uxorious record but they followed the same path to fortune: yeomen like Wavell of Atherfield who married the daughter of a New Forest gentleman named Ogden and "woold willinge take upon him the name of a Gentleman"[3]; young John Hobson at Ningwood, marrying the widow of Captain Keeling "by whome he had mutch Monyes"[4]; Barnaby Leigh of North Court at Shorwell who augmented his estate "by his good housbandrie and by his 3 wyfes"[5]; John Lisle of Wootton, who was reported to have collected a dowry of £4,000 with his wife in February 1632[6]; and Sir Henry Worsley who gained also £4,000 when in the following June he married the daughter of Sir Henry Wallop[7].

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1 VCH Hants & IW, Vol. 5, pp. 207-208

2 CCM. Og. 305b where Badd is described as "a very honest man and a very good Frynd of myne"

3 CCM. Og. 346a

4 Ibid., 308a

5 Ibid., 194a

6 Ibid., 173a, describing how Lisle's father "Improvidently with 2 men and him selve one Tyored Horses brought it all into Ower Island from London in Readye gould"

7 Ibid., 316a

Reciprocally there were the "old families...falling on evil days and sinking into obscurity"[1]. The decay of the Chekes of Mottistone made a deep impression on Oglander. Thomas Cheke, a scholar and a lawyer, had taken as his first wife the daughter of a Newport merchant. One of his two daughters was later to marry the landlord of the Bugle Inn at Newport, while her brother Thomas "an Idle Cockwitted Fellowe" showed no grasp of business when he inherited the estate, and finally sold it to the acquisitive baronet Robert Dillington[2]. In the same way Thomas Lovibond's new house at Osborne, built in 1610, was soon sold by his son to Captain Eustace Mann[3]. There were the Earlsmans at Calbourne: old John Earlsman lived in some style, and was in fact godfather to Sir John Oglander who ruefully wrote: "these 3 descentes since hath mutch degenerate so that I am Doubtfull of the longe succession"[4]. Thomas Worsley of Chale, the natural son of the Island Captain Richard Worsley by his dairy maid, was another doleful example. By careful husbandry he built up his estate, but his son turned out to be "a folisch cockheded Drunken beast" whose own son "proveth like the Fathor a most deboysed Drunken foolisch younge man: whoe I thinke will be the last of that Famely"[5]. Again, recalling the decline of the Harvey family of Alvington, Oglander observes that they were in the earlier 1500s self-styled yeomen, and only more recently "wryghten Gentlemen"; "and I feare If this

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1 Lawrence Stone: The crisis of the aristocracy 1558-1641 (Oxford 1965) p.38

2 Og. 307a

3 CCM. Og. 305b

4 CCM. Og. 309a

5 CCM. Og. 220b

man liveth longe he will be woorse than a yeoman"[1]. There were of course families stable enough to weather spasms of social eccentricity, like the Lisle and the Dillingtons. In 1632 Bridget the daughter of Sir William Lisle of Wootton eloped with the son of a London ironmonger - and the second son at that[2]; while Anthony Dillington of Knighton took as his second wife the widow of Goddard "a Mecannicke merchant" of Southampton[3]. More vulnerable was the Hobson family of Ningwood: young John Hobson took as his second wife "his mayde a poore wench taken into the Howse by his Former wyfe in charitie, I feare will be the last of that Famelye"[4]. The pages of Oglander's notebooks leave one still in some doubt as to whether the cause of these declines was genetic or fiscal or a blend of both. Occasionally an insight is given, as with the old family of Wayte of Waytes Court at Brighstone: "this man Alexander Weyght now living is mutch indebted, and will be forced to sell it"[5]. What does emerge clearly is that, while he chronicled the phenomenon with reasonable objectivity and acute observation, this aspect of social mobility had a painful fascination for him. Like Harrison who observed that some over-eager gentlemen "go in wider buskins than (their) legs will bear"[6], Oglander was alive to the dangers of premature

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1 CCM. Og. 221b

2 Ibid., 320a

3 Ibid., 303b

4 Ibid., 308a

5 Ibid., 309a

6 Lothrop Withington (ed.): Elizabethan England, p. 8

or incautious spending: "I have often observed 2 younge men come into the wordle," (sic) "havinge equall fortunes, the one desiered to live moore gentilie and therfore aplauded of all: the other penurious and close, after 20 yeres the gentilie man grew in debt behind hand, and therefore lost what he had bought to deere" while the other "tooke a harde Breakfast that he myght gayne a good suppor"[1]. The fate of the spendthrifts was depressing. "I have observed divors men of good accoumpt and repute, nobles, knyghtes, gentlemen & Farmers, fallinge into wantes have bene slyghted, contemned, and scorned, even not only of theyre best Fryndes and acquayntance butt of theyre servantes sutch as hath bene raysed by them"[2]. He records without comment the "Famelyes Decayed and that have sowld theyre Estates since the memory of Sir John Oglander": Cheke of Mottistone, Sir Bowyer Worsley of Ashey, Colenet of Pan, Lovibond of Whippingham, Coke of Budbridge, Earlsman of Calbourne, Wavell of Atherfield, Worsley of Chale, and Wayte of Wayte's Court[3]. Significantly, a page or two later, he writes: "So well affect my successors, and the advauncement of the Name of the Oglanders, that I hertely wisch there maye come seome from mee in time that maye overtopp and owtgoe mee both in wealthe, witt, wisdome, and Honnor; but accursed be the declynors"; and, to add force to this manifesto of his deepest feelings, he signed it[4].

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1 CCM. Og. 74b

2 Ibid., 74a, echoes of Timon of Athens

3 Ibid., 289b

4 Ibid., 293b

The quality of social mobility, then, was as much a feature of the local community in the Isle of Wight as it was elsewhere in Elizabethan and Jacobean England. Many ancient families were decaying, as they had done indeed in the medieval period at a less perceptible pace, and the vacuum of wealth and civil power was being filled from elsewhere. What in fact were the sources of this pressure nudging into the gentry class from the lower social strata?

They seem to have been diverse. Notable among the aspiring country gentlemen were the more prosperous yeoman farmers. The surviving Jacobean farms in the Island are eloquent evidence that many of these yeomen were people of some substance: Rowborough, Sheat, Walpan, Bridge Court, Little Yafford, Saynham, Hale, Kern, and Ford are mostly minuscule versions of the more ambitious manor houses. They are sturdy and functional but not lacking in style. Their window-mullions are elegantly chamfered and often surrounded by well-proportioned drip-courses, and the emphasis is on elaboration rather than size[1]. The - in most case - modest dimensions reflect the small number of resident servants[2]. Yet the inhabitants of some of them were on social terms with Sir John Oglander, whereas he dismissed the occupants of the imposing manor house of West Court at Shorwell as "now none butt Fermors"[3]. Gentility

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1 C.f. M.W.Barley: The English farmhouse and cottage (1961) p.134

2 Joan Thirsk (ed.): The agrarian history of England and Wales, Vol.4 1500-1640 (Cambridge 1967) p.741

3 CCM. Og. 308a

comprised more than stone and mortar. Several of the more prosperous farmers were evidently edging into the fringe of the gentry: the Rices of Bathingbourne "alwayes good honest men, and in the Faschion betwene a Fermor and a Gentleman"[1]; William Shambler of Hale who, though "butt a yeoman", was conceded by Oglander to be "a Gentile Fellowe and a pretie schollor"[2]. Others, like Thomas Knight of Landguard Farm, were seen as potential gentlemen. The family, Oglander records, "weare nevor accoumpted any Gentlemen"[3] and Thomas's father Michael never used any other title than Goodman Knight; but Thomas married the daughter of "a Rytch Fermor, and in time he (gettinge wealth) may tourne Gentleman".

Another source of prospective gentry was to be found in the group of prosperous merchants, mostly based on Newport. Such were the Serles of Cosham (i.e. South Street in Newport). The main family interest was in brewing, but in 1559 John Serle senior was described as a merchant, and also occupying the farm of Bonchurch[4]. Uninterrupted wealth seems to have brought them social promotion, and Oglander remarks in the 1620s: "they were nevor called Gentile or woold evor assume it unto them tell of late"[5]. Emmanuel Badd, already referred to, also achieved

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1 CCM. Og. 305b

2 Ibid., 306a

3 Ibid.

4 P.R.O. SP. 12/7/61

5 CCM. Og. 198b

financial fortune and some social acceptance through his lucrative exploitation of his brewing interests[1]. Oglander describes him as "an honest man although meanely desended"[2] and records that Badd lived to be High Sheriff of Hampshire[3]. He owned and leased various properties in Newport, being tenant in 1583 of a house near the church[4], and in 1592 he had a house and brewery on the north side of Sea Street as well as sharing with Thomas Page a warehouse at the Town Quay[5]. The particular path of a merchant to gentility is exemplified by the case of Stephen March[6] and William Newland, two Newport tradesmen who "by well Imployinge theyre Tallent at the Cowes...owt of litell or nothinge Raysed them selves to a greate Fortune"[7]. These men had the acumen to exploit the increasing resort of shipping to Cowes for victualling and warehousing, and both indeed prospered. Newland however seems to have ploughed most of his money into his business, particularly his marine salvage ventures which seem to have been on quite a large scale. When in 1629 a Dutch ship bound for the East Indies sank off the Needles, Newland bought the wreck of the 800-ton vessel for £300

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1 It was he who supplied beer in the field to the Island militia when the Spanish Armada was sighted in July 1588 (Newport Borough MSS., 45/2, f.42v)

2 CCM. Og. 115a

3 Ibid., 301b

4 Cambridge University Library, Kk.v.5., f.54

5 Newport Borough MSS., 45/22, ff. 121v-122

6 Oglander's contemporary, not the Stephen March who was bailiff of Newport in 1576 (Newport Borough MSS., 45/21, f.216

7 CCM. Og. 300a

and at one time had 50 men and 12 pumps at work on refloating the hulk[1]. When on 18 October 1635 the Phoenix of Hamburg with a rich cargo of hides, cochineal, silver bullion and silver coin foundered in Brighstone Bay, Newland bought the wreck and "built a Watchhouse of dealeboardes upon the shoare and kept labourers and watchmen there day and night whoe att lowe water wadeinge into the Sea, and with Engines grapplinge, and Sweepinge upp, and downe in the Sea, att times recovered out of the Sea foure Chestes of Spanish money peices of eight, and foure, containeinge within some small number twoe thousand five hundred peices of eight each Chest; and afterwardes by Ladles made for that purpose digginge into the Seasande and by mens handes digginge into the Seasande there was fetched out of the Sea, first foure thousand one hundred peices of eight in loose moneyes And afterwarde by the like meanes in loose moneyes there was taken out of the Seas and Sande three thousand one hundred peeces of eight"[2]. At the end of this operation Newland was left with the impressive total of 17,455 pieces of eight[3], though most of it was finally surrendered to the Exchequer[4]. Throughout his life Newland seems to have remained a merchant and a venturesome entrepreneur on a fairly large scale. Stephen March,

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1 CCM. Og. 305a

2 P.R.O., SP. 16/305/94

3 IWCRO, OG/16/47

4 Brit. Mus., Add. MSS., 74461, p. 114

in contrast, put much of his trading profits into the purchase of land. Occasionally Newland was associated with these transactions, as with the sale of Whippingham manor by Worsley of Chale[1] and with various other unspecified freeholds[2]; but March is notable as a land purchaser. In 1616, in association with a colleague named Streapor, he bought the fee farm of Thorley[3] and in 1623 - again with Streapor - he bought Uggaton at Brighstone, another royal manor[4]. His social recognition was in step with his purchases of land. He was Mayor of Newport in 1613, 1623, and 1631; he was designated as "gent" in the town minutes in December 1616[5]; in the later 1620s under Lord Conway's reorganization of the Island militia he was given command of the Newport company[6]; in 1631 he bestowed on St. Thomas's church, Newport, a richly-carved pulpit[7]; in 1633 Oglander described him as "a Good Neyghbour"[8];

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1 CCM. Og. 289b

2 Ibid., 237a

3 VCH Hants & IW, Vol. 5, p. 285; CCM. Og. 29a

4 John Albin: History of the Isle of Wight (1795) p. 625; CCM. Og. 223a

5 Newport Borough MSS., 45/16a, p. 55

6 CCM. Og. 337b

7 Percy G. Stone: Architectural Antiquities of the Isle of Wight, Vol. 2, The West Medine (1891) p. 44

8 CCM. Og. 280a

and by the early 1640s he was writing himself as Esquire[1]. Other merchants, though, apparently failed to emulate March. Daniel Broad of Newport was said to have lavished £1505 on the purchase of Alverstone manor from Richard Baskett[2], and Broad's children seem to have married consistently into gentry families[3]; but to Oglander he was "a Pedler of Nuport"[4].

Another reservoir of recruitment to the gentry was the growing number of lawyers settling in the Island, in themselves a reflection of the increasing fluidity in the ownership of land and the resultant spate of conveyancing. The legal profession of course embraced a wide social range. George Oglander (1498-1566) was a qualified but non-practising lawyer, serving instead as a Justice of the Peace, and in this respect Sir John Oglander emulated him. At the lower limit of respectability were the professional country lawyers, distinguished in Oglander's writings by the slightly pejorative "Attourneyes"[5] contrasting with his more generous "Councelor at lawe"[6]. If we judge from Oglander's account, Sir

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1 IWCRO, SW/311 (Newtown court book 1636-1656: meeting on 19 October 1640;
P.R.O., E.179/175/545 (Tax roll, 1642)

2 VCH Hants & IW, Vol.5, p.160; CCM.Og. 288a

3 Two daughters married into the Leighs and the Chekes respectively (CCM.Og. 305b and 304b); and his son Richard married a Baskett (Ibid., 305b, and VCH op.cit., p.280)

4 CCM.Og. 288a

5 Ibid., 10b

6 Ibid., 198b

George Carey in Elizabeth's reign had a short way with professional lawyers, but under his successor Southampton they appear to have prospered and settled in growing numbers[1]. Some of them appear only as names: Skinner, Gesson, and Pettis; but one at least, Redman, profited by James I's fee farm sales to buy Borthwood Forest[2]. There were too some of the sons of prospering local merchants, entering the legal profession with some finance behind them. These included one of the Serles of Newport who, wrote Oglander, "if he had lived woold have prooved as Greate a man as Flemminge, for he wase a Councelor at lawe, an excelent good one, and had purchased 300£ per Annum and marryed Sir Bowyers Woorseleyes Daughtor"[3]. Another example was Thomas Fleming himself (1544-1613) whose father, in Oglander's disparaging phrase, "sold wares by retayle in Nuporte decimo Eliz:"[4] and elsewhere is described as "a mearsors sonn (whoe dwelt at the corner shopp, a gaynst the Butchers, now Mr Nulandes) at nuport in Queen Elizabethes Raygne"[5], who became eventually Lord Chief Justice, a benefactor of Newport's new grammar school[6], and reportedly the means of securing Newport

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1 CCM. Og. 10b

2 Ibid., 202b

3 Ibid., 198b

4 Ibid., 42b

5 Ibid., 131a; described elsewhere as "at the cornor Howse as you goe to the Corne Market" (ibid., 327b)

6 CCM. Og. 4a

a mayoral charter early in James I's reign[1]. He and his son Thomas both attained to knighthoods[2] but Oglander still dismissed the family as "Dru: Fleminges"[3]. Grudging as he may have been, their progress from merchants to gentry seems to have been a steady one, with the ownership of the former Quarr grange of Haseley to put a territorial seal on their gentility.

Another element on the fringe of the gentry was supplied by some of the fort commanders and other military officials. They were of varying backgrounds and some evidently fitted more comfortably than others into the county community. William Keeling (1577-1619) the discoverer of the Keeling-Cocos Islands was persuaded by Sir John Oglander to retire to the Isle of Wight, where he occupied two lucrative royal posts: captain of Cowes Castle and Keeper of the Park[4];

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1 CCM. Og. 291b

2 Ibid., 288b

3 Ibid., 333a: Oglander's intended adjective is "drunken" - he uses it elsewhere for the Flemings

4 CCM. Og. 294a. This latter post evidently carried a residence with it, for Keeling's will describes him as "of the Park, in the parish of Carisbrooke" (Dict. of National Biography)

"a worthie man", according to Oglander[1]. Another retired sailor was Captain John Gibbons who went to live at Ryde and was described by Oglander as "my good Frynde"[2]. He was a distinguished navigator who had been employed by Prince Henry (then heir to the throne) to explore the north-west passage. Yet another was Captain Mann who bought Lovibond's new house at Barton[3] and who served in the Island as one of the Commissioners of Sewers responsible for the sea defences[4]. He must have kept the Island gentlemen entertained with his colourful stories from Sumatra and other parts of the East Indies[5].

Of the gentry and potential gentry in the Isle of Wight, a noticeable proportion arrived in the Island first as servants, more particularly as servants of the various Captains. Sir Nicholas Wadham who was Captain 1509-1520 had among his servants the founders of the Island family of the Harveys[6] who finally became established there with the sale by Wadham's son John, to John and Alexander Harvey, of the property of Alvington manor[7]. James Worsley who was Captain 1520-1538 settled two

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1 CCM. Og. 105b

2 Ibid., 331b. Gibbons bequeathed his journal as a legacy to Oglander, but regrettably it does not seem to have survived

3 Ibid., 289b and 297b

4 Ibid., 234b

5 Ibid., 191a & b

6 Ibid., 221b

7 VCH Hants & IW, Vol.5, p.229, footnote 212

more families from among his servants: his bailiff Serle was given the smallholding of Stone near Arreton and some other copyhold property[1], thus founding the local family of that name; and another of his servants, Rice, was through Worsley's influence provided with the lease of the farm of Apse[2] which was subsequently exchanged, with the Basketts, for the manor of Bathingbourne[3]. The Colenets of Pan first came to the Island as part of the household of Edward Horsey, Captain 1565-1583[4]. There were other channels of patronage too in establishing such families. German Richards was servant to the Earl of Lincoln who was Lord High Admiral, and through his intervention Richards obtained the vice-admiralty of the Island[5]. The Leighs of North Court at Shorwell had founded their fortune on a small inheritance from an uncle who had been steward to the Abbot of Quarr[6]. Even for established families a servant's place in the right household could provide the necessary opening for a cadet branch to prosper. Robert Dillington the miserly baronet, being the son of a younger brother, was put as a servant into the household of Sir Thomas Lake, and "both by reason of his little chardge and extraordinarie close livinge and thriftines is from smale estate like to be one of the Richest men if he lives"[7].

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1 CCM. Og. 198b

2 VCH Hants & IW, Vol. 5, p. 180, footnote 28

3 CCM. Og. 305b

4 Ibid., 130b

5 Ibid., 303b

6 Ibid., 193b

7 Ibid., 46a

Within the rather restricted compass of the Island there were ample opportunities for the county community of gentry to meet and exchange views. A gentleman might ride into Newport, the only town, and be reasonably sure of meeting some close acquaintance with whom to discuss the latest news of, perhaps, the military operations in Germany by the King of Sweden[1]. The periodic militia musters provided another social focus, not always a harmonious one as we shall see later. Again, there was the ordinary held every Tuesday and Thursday on St. George's Down two miles south-east of Newport, where the gentlemen could amuse themselves with bowls, gossip, dice, and cards[2]. This flourished most, of course, when the Island Captain was resident, and the knights and gentlemen of the Island would be joined by mainland guests staying at Carisbrooke Castle: only this, or unintentional hyperbole, would explain Oglander's account of the ordinary in the late 1500s attended by some thirty or forty knights and gentlemen[3]. Writing from his own recollection of the Earl of Southampton's time, Oglander claimed in 1627 that he had known twelve knights and as many gentlemen from the Island at the ordinary in Newport[4]. Another rallying point was any focal occasion in one of the Island churches, such as the Bishop of Salisbury's dedication on 11 March 1627 of the new church at Yarmouth, in the presence of "a greate many of Gentlemen of

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1 CCM. Og. 249a

2 Ibid., 59a

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid., 39a

owre Islande"[1]. A good funeral could usually be relied on to bring out the gentry, as at William Oglander's burial at Brading in 1607 "where all the Gentlemen of Owre Island weare"[2]; Sir John Meux's funeral in December 1629, with Parson Briors preaching from Hebrews ix 27[3]; Sir John Leigh of North Court whose "Funerales weare performed with greate solemnitie" on 8 March 1630 with a sermon by William Jones the minister of Arreton. "I remembor not", Oglander recorded, "that evor I wase at Greator Entertaynement in the Island (espetiallie) it beinge in the Lent, it there wase of all sortes both of Fisch and Flesch in aboundance"[4]. When on 3 January 1632 the 84-year-old Thomas Urry was buried in Thorley church "There wase a Greate Funeroll, Sir Will Lyslie Sir Robert Dillington Sir John Leygh the sonne of Mr Barnabye Leygh weare there"[5]. Another spectacular funeral was that of Edward Cheke of Merstone, buried in October 1648 in Newport church near the tomb of his godfather Sir Edward Horsey. The service was "at 2 in the after noone with a Greate assembly of the Gentry, and all the Towne and Gloves and Ribons geven to all"[6]. The structure certainly existed for a cohesive community of gentry.

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1 CCM. Og. 94a

2 Ibid., 227a

3 Ibid., 197b

4 Ibid., 194b

5 Ibid., 292a

6 Ibid., 468b

Among this community there was a varying standard of living according to the means or inclination of the households concerned. None of it could compare with Carey's lavish hospitality at Carisbrooke Castle, but those in the Isle of Wight's manor houses lived well enough. The richer gentry like Sir John Oglander, with a position to maintain, spent quite freely. Oglander ruefully records about himself that "He lived at a Greate rate of expences in his Housekepinge, for he alwayes kept 3 servingmen and a Footebwaye besyde retaynors, alwayes his Coach & well horsed"[1]. Sir Richard Worsley of Appuldercombe (1588-1621) to Oglander's own knowledge "spent in his Howse weekely 2 Quartors of wheate and all thinges thereunto proportionable"[2]. As for his father Thomas Worsley (1560-1604) Oglander reported that he lived on rather the same scale "but not so neately as the soone, for the Fathor wase aftor the Owlde Englisch Fascion"[3]. The distinction implied by this phrase is perhaps demonstrated by Captain Keeling who "gave the Royolest entortaynement when he did Invite that evor I sawe with all sortes of wine perfumed sugor all other Daynties that London could yelde"[4]. Another of the "old English" school was Sir William Lisle of Wootton (1575-1648), described as "a very good howsekepor in dede one of the best in owr Island but after a homely slovenly waye... but aftor that waye he wase very Free, and bowntifull, and his

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1 CCM. Og. 228b

2 Ibid., 280a

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid., 294a

seller allwaye full of Good Beare"[1]. Other housekeepers were more careful. The parsimonious baronet Robert Dillington, when he received visitors with horses, "hath beene often fownd in the maunger & racke takinge away the haye"[2] and by such means he is reported to have managed to keep his annual expenses (food excluded) down to £150[3].

Island houses seem to have been sparing in their internal decoration. An inventory of the great house at Appuldercombe in 1566 records several elaborate tapestries[4] but the smaller houses show little evidence of tapestries or pictures. The guest room over the hall at Knighton Gorges had its wall painted with historical scenes, and the parlour at Shalfleet farm was painted with a representation of the Sibyls' prophecies about the birth of Christ[5]. In February 1633 the Island was visited by a portrait artist called Cottington who "Drewe Many Pictures"[6], so the walls of Island houses may have started to fill with frames at this time.

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1 CCM. Og. 468b-469a
2 Ibid., 61b
3 Ibid., 160a
4 IWCRO, SW/151
5 CCM. Og. 315a
6 Ibid., 300a

The richer gentry like Oglander were beginning to have access to a wide range of consumer goods, such as the watch that Oglander bought in London for £7.10.0d in February 1627[1]; and with the Solent as a posting stage for colonial-bound shipping, he acquired "sheles and hornes and Chiena disches" from a ship returning from the East Indies[2] in April 1633. Lady Oglander also profited from her husband's London visits, and on 1 May 1627 he bought "a hat band and a hatt for Franck"[3].

Several of the Island gentlemen enjoyed indulging in what Notestein has called "the luxury of antiquarianism"[4]. As far as Oglander was concerned the whole of the Island's past came within the ambit of his curiosity. His researches, though not systematic by modern standards, were anything but haphazard, and his frequent marginal note "Quaere..." shows his grasp of history in its root meaning of learning by inquiry. When did the Island separate from the mainland?[5] What was the origin of its name?[6] Was the Solent ever fordable?[7] The Island's prehistoric antiquities all provoked inquiry from Oglander, who brought his conjectures to bear on medieval and bronze age period alike[8].

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1 CCM. Og. 49a

2 Ibid., 283a

3 Ibid., 52b

4 Wallace Notestein: The English people on the eve of colonization 1603-1630 (New York 1962) p.53

5 CCM. Og. 348b-349a

6 Ibid., 116a

7 Ibid., 130a

8 Stuart Piggott: 'Antiquarian thought in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries' in Levi Fox (ed.): English historical scholarship in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Oxford 1956), at p.105

One mound, Gallibury, he assumed from the etymology to contain French dead from a battle during the Hundred Years' War, but he also faithfully recorded that it was the site of the gibbet for the execution of a 16th-century tenant at Brook who indulged in some highway robbery and murdered his landlord Bowerman[1]. Of the barrows in general he wrote: "Wheresoevor you see a Burie in any eminent place, Most Commonly on the topp of hiles you may presume that there hath beene soome buried accordinge to the etemolligie of the woord. Digge and you shale find theyre bones"[2]. He followed his own precepts. "I have digged for my experience soome of the moore Auntientest and have fownd many bones of men formerly consumed by fyor acordinge to the roman coustome, and many peeces of Romish Quyne"[3]. Equally he turned his attention to the medieval remains at Quarr Abbey, visiting the site as a

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1 CCM. Og. 30a. The account of the murder is ibid., 197a and 345b

2 Ibid., 29a

3 Ibid., 25a. Oglander's fallacious dating of these Wessex period bronze age tumuli from inserted secondary material was amply repeated by later antiquaries in the early 1800s (see Brit. Mus., Skinner MSS., and CCM, Dennett MSS.)

young man in 1607 and questioning the oldest local inhabitant about the site of the abbey church[1]. It was on written sources however that he concentrated; and although he was familiar with Camden and Bede he was aware of the value of primary and contemporary sources. He started setting down notes on Island history based on "many owlde Awthers and Manyscriptes I have reade"[2], or in another place merely set down "Breyfe undigested noates taken owt of Divors Histories Evidences and recordes"[3]. At one stage he confesses "I had a resolution to have wryghten a Tract of the Antiquities of the Island and to that pourpose tooke som confused Noates, but beinge discouraged by Cawse men weare Jealous to shewe theyr evidences, Desisted"4. Were there, then, other local gentlemen with designs of writing such a history? There was one such: Richard James of Newport (1592-1638), a nephew of Thomas James the protestant apologist and first keeper of the Bodleian Library. Richard James was an associate of Sir Robert Cotton[5] and evidently took full

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1 CCM. Og. 318b

2 Ibid., 349a

3 Ibid., 347b

4 Ibid., 353b

5 Samuel R. Gardiner: History of England from the accession of James I to the outbreak of Civil War 1603-1642 (1884) Vol. 7, p. 139

advantage of his access to manuscripts, for he bequeathed to the Bodleian his own uncompleted manuscript history of the Isle of Wight, in Latin, covering mainly the Saxon and early Norman periods and citing its sources[1]. There is no evidence that James's work impeded Oglander's plans. The problem lay rather in the insular inertia of the document owners. The Island was dotted with manuscript-owning gentry, though in some cases the papers had been acquired in the normal process of legal conveyancing. A document held by Stephen March, relating to a grant by Isabella de Fortibus of the tithe of rabbits at Thorley[2] probably came with his other deeds at his purchase of the fee farm of Thorley manor. The "many wryghtinges" that Oglander expected Sir John Leigh of North Court to leave behind him "which to have copies of them woold bee mutch for the good of the countery"[3] were likely to have related mainly to Leigh's long period as a deputy lieutenant of the Island since Carey's time. There are other cases, though, of local gentlemen apparently setting out to acquire old papers, and with few qualms about the sanctity of their source. Sir William Meux of Kingston had "a Longe Rowle in Parchment Longe since taken owt of the Tower shewinge the Tenure of all mens Landes in the Isle of Wyght"[4].

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1 Bodleian Library, James MSS., 9 'Antiquitates Insulae Vectae'

2 CCM. Og. 293a

3 Ibid., 194a

4 Ibid., 201b

Sir Thomas Fleming, having an interest in Carisbrooke Priory through his ownership of the lease, "gott the Blacke Booke owt of the Excheccor and 400 smale Deedes"[1], evidently a use of rank to pillage the national archives. Oglander was well-informed about the location of primary sources both in London[2] and in the Island[3]. According to Oglander the Carisbrooke cartulary was then in the hands of Fleming, Kingswell, and Glover; and Alexander Ross, sometimes vicar of Carisbrooke, had some other documents. Oglander added that "many good Antiquities" could be found in Worsley's study at Appuldercombe[4]. The Isle of Wight well illustrates Maclagan's statement that "The principal

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1 CCM. Og. 295a

2 Ibid., 244a: "Se the booke in the excheccor called Doomsdaye"

3 Ibid., 222b: "If thou wilt knowe mutch of the Antiquitie of the Island gayne the owld Booke beinge called the ligior Bookes of the Abbye of Quarr, and Priorye of Carisbrooke and St Hellens"

4 Ibid., 194a and 222b. This claim was later verified by the rich selection of documents printed as appendices to the famous Island history published in 1781 by one of Worsley's descendants, Richard Worsley

difference between the seventeenth and the sixteenth century lies in the growth of a class of scholarly gentlemen...with a genuine interest in antiquities extending beyond their own ancestry"[1]. The early 1600s saw an awareness of and curiosity about the past, which received some measure of official blessing from Charles I's order in council that "the study of antiquities is by good experience said to be very serviceable and useful to the general good of the State and Commonwealth"[2]. In 1559, when it would have been equally serviceable, the Knolles commission was obliged to report "concerninge the governemente of the Isley, we finde by the presydentes that the sayde Isley hath bene of awnciente tyme belonginge to a noble man, that was lorde thereof, but how yt came to the Crowne, we knowe not"[3]. Such a reply could not have been written in Charles I's reign.

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1 Michael Maclagan: 'Genealogy and heraldry in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries' in Levi Fox (ed.): English historical scholarship in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Oxford 1956) p. 43

2 Glyn E. Daniel: A hundred years of archaeology (1950) p. 19

3 Dartmouth MSS., f. 5[v]

The Island scholars tended to cut across the ordinary social divisions. On the one hand there were gentlemen of ancient families such as Sir William Lisle, so unkempt that "you woold take him for a Fermer rather then a knyght"[1]; and Sir John Meux (d.1629) "the veryest clowne (of a Gentleman) that evor the Isle of Wyght bred, As he wase destitute of learninge so of Humanitie and Civillitie"[2]. In contrast there was Edward Scott of Shalfleet farm, one of the lesser gentry at the end of Elizabeth's reign[3]. Oglander describes him as "without compare the Best Scollard Generolly for all mannor of Learninge, and one that had redd more, then any that wase evor knowne to have lived in owre Island"[4]. Scott's interests were mainly historical, but Island scholars were typical of their age in their omnivorous approach to information, worthy of Bacon's Instauration. Oglander made a short list of the best mathematical instruments[5] and worked out how to compute with his pocket watch the times of high tide at various places[6]. He and his colleagues had literary interests too. Oglander himself of course was a brother-in-law of John Donne, and Oglander's notebooks are laden with his poetic compositions in Latin and English. An interesting literary effusion

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1 CCM. Og. 469a

2 Ibid., 197b

3 P.R.O. E.179/174/414, tax roll for 1594 in which Scott is assessed fairly modestly at £6 in lands

4 CCM. Og. 315a

5 Ibid., 224a

6 Ibid., 10b; thereby getting full value for his expenditure of £7.10.0d on the watch

is to be found in a booklet published to commemorate the death in the Netherlands, late in 1624, of Henry Wriothesley[1]. The initiative for this tribute to the Island Governor evidently came mainly from the local clergy who bulk large as authors of the pieces in the collection. The book is edited by William Jones the vicar of Arreton, and contains contributions from "Ar. Price" who was rector of Calbourne[2], and from William Petty the rector of Thorley[3]. There was also included an epicedium by Francis Beale, a burgess of Newport[4]. The style of the contributions is of its period, full of classical allusions and of such conceits as anagrams in English and Latin[5]. Petty's verse style is suitably

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1 The Teares of the Isle of Wight, shed on the Tombe of their most Noble, valorous, and louing Captaine and Gouernor, the right Ho nourable Henrie, Earle of Southampton.... (London 1625). A copy is in Carisbrooke Castle Museum (accession no.S.30)

2 CCM.Og. 105b and 292a

3 A box of his papers 1613-1617 (sermon and theological notes, and letters to his friend Archdeacon Thornburgh of Worcester) is in the British Museum (Lansdowne MSS., 70). It is believed to be this Petty who was sent to Greece by Lord Arundel, to collect antiquities

4 Beale in this publication is styled Esq. It was the same Beale who three years later thwarted Southampton's successor Lord Conway by persuading his fellow-burgesses of Newport to reject the Governor's nominees for the town seats in Parliament

5 E.g. HENRYE IAMES WRIOTHESLEY
(Anagram) HERE I SEE MANY WORTHIES LY
HENRY SOVTHAMPTON
(Anagram) THE STAMPE IN HONOUR

prolix and Spenserian:

> "Since twelve long Winters I, my little Flock
> Fed in that Isle that (wal'd with many a rock;
> And circled with the Main) against her shore,
> Hear's the proud Ocean every day to rore"[1]

Apart from its interest as a curiosity, this book does give some sign of the growing literate awareness of the county community. It would be wrong to stretch this argument too far because, even in the case of the Teares, the authorship is with the local clergy rather than with the lay gentry; and the Island clergy seem to have been generally an erudite fraternity[2]. Nevertheless the number of local gentlemen who did spend hours in their study, or at least had a study well-stocked, was growing to more than a handful.

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1 Op. cit., pp. 38-39

2 A list taken in 1603 (Brit. Mus. Harleian MS. 595, no. 30) includes two doctors of divinity (the famous Richard Edes, then rector of Freshwater, and the also distinguished Christopher Hampton, rector of Calbourne), seven masters of arts, and three bachelors or arts. Alexander Ross, who was vicar of Carisbrooke from 1634 until the Civil War, was the author of many learned works on philosophy, theology, and comparative religion, now immortalized in Samuel Butler's couplet:

> "There was an ancient sage philosopher
> That had read Alexander Ross over"
>
> (Hudibras part 1, canto 2)

In this predominantly masculine society we have occasional glimpses of women in the community of the greater and lesser gentry. They tended to be less often from home, having no counterpart of their husbands' ordinary or their militia exercises. They did, it is true, accompany the gentry to Carey's banquets at Carisbrooke Castle[1], but they did so as guests of Lady Carey who was a rather exceptional lady and of quite a haughty spirit that would not accept easily the society of her husband's friends only. When in 1632 Oglander was instructed to visit Yarmouth to make an official survey of the accommodation in the castle there, he took his wife and daughters along because they had never seen Yarmouth[2]; yet Lady Oglander had lived in the Island since 1607. Within this subfusc background, something of the local ladies' personality can be discerned: Lady Lisle of Wootton, who having quarrelled with her husband took industrial action, refused to undertake any household task, and left Sir William to shamble around looking after his guests[3]; and the often-quoted story of how Dowsabell Mills and Ursula Worsley, those merry Tudor widows, "to handsome tale proper women...woold Dawnce after a poore Tabor and pipe from hasely howse to the foote of the hill"[4]. In Sir George Carey's time there were, according to

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1 CCM. Og. 216a

2 Ibid., 303a. Compare Simon's wife in Thomas Deloney's story Thomas of Reading: "Good Lord husband, will you never be so kind as to let me goe to London with you? Shall I be pend up in South-hampton, like a parret in a cage, or a Capon in a coope?" (cap. 6)

3 CCM. Og. 468b

4 Ibid., 216a. This incident dates probably to the 1560s

Oglander, only three Island women regarded as fitted to be close companions for Lady Carey: old Mrs. Meux the mother of Sir John Meux of Kingston, Mrs. Hobson of Ningwood, and Lady Ann Oglander (mother of the diarist)[1]. If the local ladies were not strong on intellectual conversation, part of the fault would lie with the educational deprivation that was their lot at this time[2]. Even so, when Sir John Oglander was away from home, his wife Frances was able to continue inscribing the day-to-day accounts in his journal. One obvious result was that Sir John's arabic numerals gave way to the roman numerals that were surviving, in conservative accounting, well into the 17th century[3]. The entries are painfully written in an unpractised hand, and Sir John later added the marginal gloss "my wyfes hand"[4].

Any attempt to analyse the wealth of the gentry is of course made more difficult by the scarcity or imperfection of the source material. One obvious point of departure is the tax assessment allotted by the subsidy commissioners. Taking three of the leading

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1 CCM. Og. 299a

2 Wallace Notestein: 'The English Woman, 1580-1650', in J.H. Plumb (ed.): Studies in social history (1955) p. 82

3 Lawrence Stone, op. cit. (1965) p. 278

4 CCM. Og. 51b

gentry families over the tax years for which assessments are reasonably complete, the following assessments emerge (all in lands):

	MEUX	DINGLEY	OGLANDER
1563	£120	£25	£20
1568	£60	£25	£6
1571	£60	£25	£7
1594	£13	£13.6.8d	£10
1610	£16	not assessed	£10
1621	£18	£5	£10

The trend towards a lower assessment, in the context too of a period of price and rent inflation, must lead to a suspicion that the assessments are a formal gesture with little relation to actual wealth or estate income[1]. In the case of the Oglanders, whose estate accounts survive, it is possible to test the validity of the assessment. At 20 February 1624[2] Sir John Oglander had

1 This falling yield was of course general: see Frederick C.Dietz: English Public Finance 1558-1641 (London 1964) pp.388-393

2 CCM. Og. 5b et seqq. Oglander here as elsewhere gives the Old Style date (1623) which in this dissertation is adjusted to the modern calendar year

the freehold ownership of East and West Nunwell, Sandown Farm, Hardingshute, Park Farm, Smallbrook, a small estate in Sussex, a plot of land at Brading, and a house in Newport; bringing in an annual income of £363.15.0d. In addition, from his fee farm estates at Barnsley and Whitefield, his annual rent income was £160. Oglander's own fee farm rent to the King was £20.3.8d, and even allowing for the cost of the original purchase this must have represented a good bargain for Oglander and may help to explain the inadequacy of royal finance under the early Stuarts. Taking this rent income, then, in conjunction with Oglander's 1621 assessment of £10, it is clear that this is one of the cases, mentioned by Lawrence Stone, in which "the discrepancy between assessment and reality is so great as to render the material utterly useless"[1]. Apart from his rent income Oglander assessed his own livestock at £370.13.4d, his crops at £237, and his household goods at £520, making a total of £1,127.13.4d[2]. When he made another appraisal of his estate on 18 October 1626 he reached a total of £5,585; and this was not the capital value, merely the tally of ready money in hand, rents and reversions immediately due, and timber marked for sale[3]. On the other side his annual expenses, which he usually bewailed as excessive, tended to fluctuate. For the year ending midsummer 1630 the figure was £588.1.3d[4], for 1631 £1,000.4.4d[5], for 1633 £683.9.6d[6],

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1 Lawrence Stone, op. cit. (1965) p.131

2 CCM. Og. 6a

3 Ibid., 31b

4 Ibid., 160a

5 Ibid., 168b

6 Ibid., 287b

and for 1643 £668.5.11d[1].

The range of wealth within the broad band of the greater and lesser gentry was extensive. On the one hand there was Robert Brackley the miserly Newport merchant who, missing the return ferry to the Island, spent the night in a church porch at Beaulieu to save inn charges, caught his death of cold, and died worth some £2,000[2]. By contrast there were indigent gentry such as Sir Thomas Sherly, a distant kinsman of Oglander, who was knighted while serving under the Earl of Leicester at the siege of Zutphen in 1586, dabbled in privateering, subsequently got into debt, and ended his life squalidly in a house in South Street at Newport[3]. Oglander's account books in the 1620s are a running record of Sherly's debts: in March 1627 he had some carpets and a silver bowl in pawn to Oglander against a loan of £8[4]. In June 1632 Sherly and his wife had a debt of £4.10.0d against the pawn of a long carpet, a pillow, and some rugs[5]; yet Sherly was obviously trying still to maintain the life of a country gentleman, borrowing small sums from Oglander to pay the expenses of his ordinary[6]. The socially acceptable source of wealth was of course

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1 CCM. Og. 430b

2 Ibid., 205a. Alderman Brackley seems to have owned or occupied considerable property in Newport. He leased from the town a house, a stable, and orchard in Pyle Street near the south door of the church (Newport Borough MSS., 45/21, f.68; 45/22, f.122) and also occupied a building called Coppid Hall in South Street (Ibid., 45/2, f.25)

3 CCM. Og. 126b

4 Ibid., 35b

5 Ibid., 258a

6 Ibid., 259b. D.W.Davies: Elizabethans Errant (New York 1967) gives a general account of the Sherly family

from the land. It is true that Oglander claimed it was "Impossible for a Meere Countrye Gentleman evor to growe rytch"[1] and that he several times urged his descendants to adopt a vocation[2]; but he himself did well out of simple farming and estate management. At the same time he clearly regarded capital enterprise by a country gentleman as not out of place. In the absence of a vocation a gentleman should "gett a shipe and judiciously manage her"[3]. There was some moral latitude as to the choice of a gentleman's enterprise, as illustrated by the case of old Thomas Bowerman of Brook. He went into partnership with a "curious Artist in London" on the counterfeiting of French coins[4] and their subsequent circulation abroad. The coining was actually done at Brook. The goldsmith seems to have provided the skill, while Bowerman put up the capital and the access to outlets for the completed forgeries. It was on the latter enterprise that the scheme broke down. A local sailor, John Burley, captain of Yarmouth Castle, happened to be courting one of the Bowerman girls at the time, and she guilelessly invited him to co-operate in shipping their products across the Channel. Burley's reaction was to inform the authorities; but the result was that Bowerman received a pardon "and Bourly the Discredite"[5]. Clearly no social stigma attached to the Brook enterprise. Only Burley's treachery was unacceptable, and the contumely was heaped on him.

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1 CCM. Og. 300a

2 Ibid., 50b, 74a, and 102a

3 Ibid., 300a

4 "Cardecues"

5 P.R.O. SP.14/15/57, 11 September 1605; CCM. Og. 345b

For those gentlemen who had money, the mere physical handling and storage of it presented problems. We have seen in the case of John Lisle's dowry that large cash transfers were a matter of pack-horses with sacks of gold. Men of substance like Oglander had their houses stuffed with money: on 18 October 1626 he had £2,250 in gold in his upper study at Nunwell, behind the books and "in the Parliament boxe"; he had a further £70 in silver in an iron-bound chest; and the odd £5 in his lower study[1]. In this context the phrase embarras de richesse takes on a particularly loaded meaning. Some thought must have been taken before the whole family could contentedly leave such a house, as on the occasion of the Oglanders' visit to Yarmouth in 1632. As for those with wealth but with a less elaborate house, a common resort would be to bury surplus cash for safe keeping. In May 1631 two masons digging in a barn at Princelett Farm near Newchurch found "a pewtor Plattor and Undorneath a Brase pott and in the Brase pott an earthen poot Full of Elizabeth shillinges"[2]. This was a case beyond doubt because the finders by their over-free spending of the treasure fell foul of Oglander in his capacity of Justice of the Peace. Another story is related by Oglander as widely told in the Island though, he cautioned, "I for my part give littel credence unto it"[3]. Richard Garde of Binstead, a parvenu gentleman of miserly disposition, was so suspicious even of his own household that he buried his store of money in one of his fields. According to this story, which is uncannily close to the incident of Harpagon's money-box in Moliere's L'Avare (1668), Garde's fretting over the secret hiding-place advertised its location and

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1 CCM. Og. 31b

2 Ibid., 223a

3 Ibid., 204a

one of his neighbours, Smith, profited by the information and exhumed the money for himself, to the subsequent mortification of the miser. There was, clearly, a large amount of idle money in the Island, and apart from a few individuals such as March, Newland, and Bowerman there is little evidence of its application as capital for commercial enterprise locally or even as raw material for the Cheapside and Ludgate Hill scriveners. Oglander seems to have adopted his own precept and gone into the shipping business, if only in a small way, for he had a cargo of butter and cheese taken by pirates in 1635[1]; but the Island gentry do not seem to have been notably connected with industrial or commercial enterprise. To what, then, did they apply their income from rents and farming? All the evidence seems to point to the fact that those gentlemen and aspiring gentlemen with money to spare in this period were putting it into land. Whether or not they were alive to the theoretical equation of land and political power[2] the Island gentry seem never to have been reluctant to invest in it. The thinking behind this attitude is condensed in Oglander's advice to his descendants: "Be sure whatsoevor misfortune befalle thee sell not thie land which wase with mutch care and paynes provided and kept for thee and have continued so many adges in thie name, rathor Feede on bredd and wattor then to be the confusion of thie howse"[3].

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1 P.R.O. SP.16/300/61

2 D.C.Coleman: 'The 'Gentry' controversy and the aristocracy in crisis, 1558-1641' in History, Vol.51 (1966) p.165

3 CCM. Og.189b

Finally, to what extent was the county community of Island gentry indeed a community? We have already noted some of the cohesive elements present in the daily life of the local gentleman; and there was the further element of inter-marriage. Of the leading gentry families in the Island about a half were connected by marriage[1]. Against this must be set the divisive factors. Firstly, the older local families were rather slow to accept the spate of newcomers during the 1500s, and Oglander's notes occasionally list the foreign gentry. There are no obvious overtones of xenophobia about this, but evidently the older Island families were at least aware of the distinction. Some immigrant gentry were accepted more easily than others, and this points to a second and perhaps more significant factor against cohesion: sheer difference of temperament. One of Oglander's lists of the gentry distinguishes "The merry Gange of Gentlemen...that when they mett at Nuport woold not parte tell monday morninge...These weare the Blades that loved a Coupp of Sacke and a wenche"; and on the other hand the more sober gentry, who in turn divided into scholarly and unscholarly "Cyvill men"[2]. Partly, of course, this represented the generation gap. Looking at the tomb effigies of some of the older men - Edward Horsey at Newport, William Oglander at Brading, Sir John Leigh at Shorwell - some common features are observable:

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1 Alan Everitt: 'The County Community' in E.W.Ives (ed.): The English Revolution 1600-1660 (1968) p.54

2 CCM. Og. 299a

the rugged, rather puritanical features and the staid, severe dress, out of tune with the more eclectic and easy-going fashions of the early 1600s. Often indeed filial duty was not equal to the strain imposed by the different backgrounds: Sir John Leigh's son Barnaby was often heard to remark that he wished he could say the beginning of the Lord's Prayer[1]; Richard Garde junior, taking his father Peter Garde to court, exchanged vituperation that took his hearers aback[2]; and Robert Dillington of Knighton never got on with his nephew Robert (subsequently the baronet)[3].

There was also a certain jealousy about status, which found recurring expression at the periodic militia musters. The first recorded trouble was at the general muster in the summer of 1627. The general practice at such parades was that the different companies took precedence according to the social rank of their captain. On this occasion Robert Dillington (the parsimonious nephew) of Knighton approached Oglander and Dennis the two deputy lieutenants and stated the case that he, as senior in terms of captain service for the East Medine, should have his colours flying first of all the East Wight companies. Oglander and Dennis, momentarily taken aback by such revolutionary thinking, pointed out that this was against ancient custom, but that they would refer the question to Lord Conway for a decision. They asked Dillington

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1 CCM. Og. 194a

2 Ibid., 204b: "nevor did I here the like woordes betwene Fathor and sonn"

3 Ibid., 61b

in the meantime not to press the point "for feare of breedinge of some mutinie in the feild"[1] and he appeared satisfied to let his case rest. When however Oglander and Dennis gave the order for the two battalions to deploy (i.e. the East and West Medine forces) Dillington remained obdurate and refused to move his men, saying he would rather lead them off the field than march on in an inferior position. The dispute was now an open one and Oglander and Dennis, feeling the affront to their authority before an eager audience of all the Island's militia, warned Dillington that such a mutinous act would reflect equally against Lord Conway, and that they "would then comitte him to the Castle". This seems to have stemmed the demonstration for the time, and the deputy lieutenants promptly referred the matter to Lord Conway[2]. He replied on 28 August that he would hear the case in full on his next visit to the Island - with Conway, always a distant prospect - but that in the meantime the ancient custom was to be observed: that is, militia precedence should be regulated by social rank rather than seniority of service[3]. This goes far to explain Dillington's precipitate purchase of a baronetcy[4] thus ensuring his precedence by either criterion. The next trouble came the following year, in the form of a dispute between two of the

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1 P.R.O. SP.16/74/52 20 August 1627

2 Ibid.

3 P.R.O. SP.16/75/39

4 CCM.Og. 61b. Date of creation was 6 September 1628 (John Bernard Burke: Extinct and Dormant Baronetcies of England, Ireland, and Scotland, 2nd ed. 1841, p.161

company captains. In the course of a reorganization of the Island militia Lord Conway had increased the number of companies from twelve to sixteen[1] and one of the new companies was allotted to John Harvey of Alvington. Soon afterwards, on the death of Barnaby Leigh, Leigh's Yarmouth company was given to John Urry of Gatcombe[2]. The Urrys were an old family, having held the manor of East Standen in the 14th and 15th century[3] but had since reduced to yeomen. "This 200 yeres", wrote Oglander, "they have lived in meane Faschion and nevor assumed the Name of a Gentleman"[4]. Then Thomas Urry, the father of the militia captain, married Jane Day a connection of the Oglanders, and began to call himself Master. When John Urry acquired his militia company he evidently regarded this as supporting his raised status, and was soon involved with John Harvey in a dispute over precedence. Harvey claimed that Urry was not a gentleman, with the result that Urry went to the Heralds, ferreted out the ancient family coat armour, and proceeded to parade it at every opportunity, including his father's funeral where "there weare Divors scutchins, and his Armes Quartered with his wyfes"[5]. The militia dispute was referred to Conway for arbitration, and he ruled that Urry should take precedence on the grounds that his company was an older one and that Urry himself was a senior

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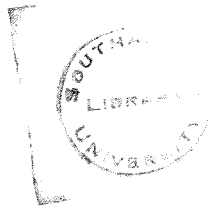
1 CCM. Og. 337b

2 Ibid., 307b and 337b

3 VCH Hants & IW, Vol. 5, p. 147

4 CCM. Og. 307b

5 Ibid.



captain, having evidently held command of another company before he inherited Leigh's. The dispute finally flared at a general muster on 9 October 1628 when Sir Edward Dennis called up Harvey's company ahead of Urry's. Urry stood on his dignity and refused to muster his men whereupon (he claimed) Dennis called him base clown, base Jack, and puppy "before the whole companie in raylinge manner"[1]. On a complaint from Urry, Conway ruled that his prescript on Urry's precedence still stood, on grounds of seniority of service, but that he would again look into the matter[2]. He evidently did, and was just as evidently talked round into accepting the original policy of ranking by social status; for his final order, dated 24 March 1628/9[3], shows the captains in pecking order of social status, and in the West Medine division "Mr. John Urrey" comes behind "Mr. Harvie, esq."; meanwhile in the East Medine division Robert Dillington, the cause of the previous fracas in 1627, has now bought his way nearly to the top with his baronetcy, giving place only to "Barronnett Worsley"[4].

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1 P.R.O. SP.16/118/84

2 P.R.O. SP.16/118/85, 17 October 1628

3 Richard Worsley: History (1781), appendix xv, pp. xxxii-xxxiii. Worsley's version of the date, March 24, 1628, is clearly in the Old Style because the list uses the title "Barronnett Dillington" created in September 1628. It is also consistent with Worsley's customary way of dating

4 Richard Worsley, created a baronet 29 June 1611 (Burke, op.cit., p.580)

What these incidents do seem to show is that, while there was some measure of social fluidity, the degree of status actually attained or thought to have been attained could be a matter of obsessive importance. The Island community, then, was not without its tensions, which could indeed erupt occasionally into violence, as when Sir Edward Dennis and Philip Fleming attacked each other with their sticks in the open street[1]. Although the area was relatively small and compact - or perhaps indeed because of this - and although the gentry shared a common protestant tradition with a strong puritan flavour; although the immediacy of the threat of Spanish, later French, invasion could act as a bonding agent; yet, the Island gentry seem to have found it difficult to trust each other fully. "It wase a Taxe in my Tyme Layde upon owre Island knyghtes, and Gentlemen, That they did not Love one the other, I confesse for my parte aftor the death of Sir Rychard Woorselley I coould not fynde any to place my true Fryndship upon Butt Certaynely they did all in a Generoll love respect one the other, but not by waye of true Fryndship"[2].

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1 CCM. Og., 325b: c.f. Lawrence Stone: 'The face of violence' in The crisis of the aristocracy 1558-1641, pp. 223-233

2 CCM. Og. 271a

The people

So far we have examined only a handful of the Island population. The remainder tend to be, historically, a silent majority in that they leave often only an inferential record of their presence. Knolles's census-takers in 1559 counted 8,767 people, and one of the few fairly safe assumptions to be made is that the great majority lived at a very modest level of subsistence. If we take the 1563 lay subsidy list for the Island, with an assessment date near enough to 1559 to relate to the census figure, the Island total of 762 people assessed for tax is 8.7% of the total. Allowing for the possibility that many who should have been assessed for tax were not - and in such a tightly-knit community as the Island it is not very likely that many got through the collectors' net - we are still left with many thousands whose means of livelihood was untaxable.

All too often these are just names, unfamiliar ones; and they occur exceptionally on occasions like the Newport plague of 1582-3 when the charity account is in two parts: the payers, 121 of them, many familiar enough from the normal tax lists; and the recipients, impossible to count accurately because some exist just as unnumbered groups[1]. Even many of the listed poor people do not come with as much identity as a Christian name: they are

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/249 (Charity account 1582)

"Mother Leaper", "Father Currier", "Conawayes Child"; and "Ales Coles that dyed in the plage" has a Christian name, but has no one other than the churchwardens to pay the 1s 10d for her shroud.

Newport, which probably had the poverty problem in its most acute form in the Island, tried various expedients to ease hardship. In 1589 the chandlers were ordered to sell candles to the poor at a special, cheap rate[1]. Some concessions though brought their problems. There was a local custom called the "Wood Ovis" by which every May the people of Newport could go into Parkhurst Forest and gather fallen timber for fuel. By 1613 the forest was visibly shrinking, and the town court observed that many of those going in to collect wood were taking tools with them, quite against the rules, to hack branches down. "Many of the pore people doth not spare greedelye to stripp & Ryne the trees standinge to the utter distroyeng & killinge of those trees"[2]. By 1621 not only the forest but the town poor were suffering: "The custome is founde rather to encreace the nomber of idle poore in the toune, then to relieve the poore (they too much relying uppon the benefytt thereof and so breeding upp their children in Idleness that they be unfitt for anie service, whoe otherwise might be educated in some honest vacacon to gett their living"[3].

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/22, f.35v (VFP 28 Oct 1589)

2 Ibid., ff.321v et seqq. (VFP 19 Oct 1613)

3 Ibid., 45/2, ff.53v-54 (VFP 31 August 1621)

A spate of activity came in the 1630s, impelled partly by the low harvests and high corn prices. In 1631 a note was taken of able inhabitants "for the placeing of poore children"[1], and at the end of that year the poor rate was doubled for a six-week period[2]. By 1637 the town was looking around for a building suitable as a workhouse[3] and by that summer the administrative details were all being worked out[4]. In 1638 a register was made of all the poor in the town, with details of their "names ages necessities and abilities to woorke"[5]. Having considered this, the Mayor and corporation were to produce an approved list of beggars: those licensed to beg being given "some badge or token to weare uppon them wherby they may be knowne"[6].

Meanwhile over at Nunwell at about this time Sir John Oglander was committing to one of his notebooks a piece of his own philosophy about this problem: "There is no losse by settinge poore men to woorke if thou hast Judgement in the Imployment"[7].

Alas, we have still not caught up with the real majority who actually worked for their meagre subsistence. Some village-Hampden is in obscurity, with no cause for his name to be taken. His time will come, perhaps, in 1642.

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/16a, p.247 (22 March 1631)

2 Ibid., p.253 (9 December 1631)

3 Ibid., p.330 (20 January 1637)

4 Ibid., p.338 (5 May 1637); p.339 (7 June 1637)

5 Ibid., p.365 (14 December 1638)

6 Ibid.

7 CCM. Og. 187b

CHAPTER 3

TOWN LIFE

One of the notable features of the period 1558-1642 in the Island is the dynamic expansion of Newport. The town size did not change much overall because its limits were effectively dictated by its physical setting of a shallow bowl in the lateral ridge of chalk downs. While the town area, though, was sparsely settled in 1558, it had filled up by 1642, with few blank frontages on the streets. The population virtually trebled in size, from 1175 in 1559[1] to 3000 in 1641[2]. The ramshackle assembly room was replaced by a handsome new audit house; the streets were now paved; and, symbolically, the medieval bailiffs were now replaced by a Mayor.

The growing prosperity is reflected in the various building enterprises to which the town papers witness. Not least of these, and important for the morale of the town, was the new Town Hall or Audit House, with its arcaded market at street level. Its predecessor, a late medieval brick structure, stood on the north side of High Street at the junction with Holyrood Street. There were various attempts to refurbish this ageing building, the most extensive repairs dating to the years 1586-88. The western external face of the hall was rough-cast in 1586[3] and the royal coat of arms was hung above the bailiff's seat inside[4]. In 1587 the ceiling was

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1 P.R.O. SP.12/7/61

2 Newport Borough MSS., 45/16a, p.406, 2February 1640/41: "about three Thousand soules there inhabitant"

3 Ibid., 45/2, f.41^{v}

4 Ibid. From 1584 the two bailiffs were reduced to one

lime-washed, and carpentry work done on the main doors[1]. Finally in 1588 another royal coat of arms was fixed inside, and the glass windows were repaired[2]. The next main repairs to the building came in 1618[3], when it was described as "growen verie ruinous"[4]. In January 1637 there was a further proposal to repair it[5] but the survey must have killed any optimism, for at a town meeting in March of that year the plan adopted was "to newe build and finish the decayed audit howse"[6]; and the following month it was agreed that the old structure be "forthwith taken downe in respect of the danger of falling of yt"[7]. This new town hall built in 1638-39 was of Purbeck stone[8] and its external appearance with its street-level arcade is recorded in early engravings[9]. The building was finally in its turn demolished for the construction in 1816 of the present town hall, designed by Nash[10].

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/2, f.42^{v}

2 Ibid., f.43

3 Ibid., 45/16a, f.123

4 Ibid., 45/2, f.48^{v}

5 Ibid., 45/16a, f.332

6 Ibid., f.333, 13 March 1636/7. This minute indicates that the town expected the Island as a whole to contribute to the cost of the new hall

7 Ibid., f.337, 20 April 1637

8 Ibid., ff.358 and 374

9 E.g. CCM accession no.S.4., f.129, containing an engraving by J.Walker, published 1 January 1798 and based on an original drawing by John Nixon; also an engraving by J.Greig from a drawing by J.Hassall and published 1 March 1816

10 VCH Hants & IW, Vol.5, p.254

At the beginning of this period the town was without a school. In 1559 Newport petitioned for the income from the Newport chantry lands to be applied "to the sallarie or stipend of some good lernid man to be a Scholemaster to brynge uppe yowthe in lerninge and vertue"[1]. Although there is no record of the Chantry land income being diverted to endow a school, the town certainly achieved its intention of having one, and without much delay. The site of its first building was in the Petty Judas, the triangular island of buildings between the church and the south side of High Street[2]. This area was given over mainly to the flesh shambles and the butchers' shops, and must have offered an uninspiring environment for the school. At a View of Frank Pledge in 1575 it was reported to the court that there wase "a greate Annoyance in Petit Judas for lacke that the dores be not kepte Lockte wherby therby noyesome savers unwholsome for the children and the bootchers"[3]. In 1583-84 the town spent 1s 4d on "nailinge up the bords about the schole house"[4] and some more extensive carpentry work was done in 1587-88[5]. Not only the building was grim. In 1604 Captain Barnaby Rich quarrelled with a Captain Gosnoll, against whom he had laid information of treasonable conversation. Rich's son, a child of ten, was at school at Newport, and he quickly felt the effects of the dispute. He was "severall tymes mysused &

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1 P.R.O., SP.12/7/61

2 Newport Borough MSS., 45/21, f.81[v]

3 Ibid., f. ~~180~~ 191

4 Ibid., 45/2, f. ~~35~~ 36

5 Ibid., f.42[v]

beaten, & bydden to send worde to hys father that Gosnoll had frendes in the Isle of Wyght to be revenged of me and myne, though Gosnoll hymself wer away"[1].

A suitable site for a new school building, on the west side of High Street at its junction with Lugley Street, was eventually found, and building was in progress by June 1614[2]. The cost of the new building and of the school's maintenance was provided

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1 Salisbury MSS. at Hatfield, CP.109, f.97^{v}

2 The site is described in Newport Borough MSS., 45/22, f.338^{v} (Curia Regis, June, 12 Jas.I):

> "It is founde that the walle nowe beinge building for a scoole house adioyning to the west side of St James's street is set forth uppon the towne land beyonde the boundes of the half place of grounde belonging to the towne at the south ende of the same wall twelve foote of assise & that the wall of the saide scole house adioyning to Lugley streete standeth owt uppon the towne land beyonde the saied half place of grounde & so all along as it goes four foote of assise and that the sayd wall next to St James streete standeth beyonde the said half plac at the middle of the same wall nine foote of assise & at the north ende of the same wall it standeth owt uppon the towne lande twooe foote of assise.
>
> The whole length of the grounde so as aforesaied taken in by the saied wall next to St James streete is in length 163 foote of assise from the south to the north
>
> The whole length of the Ground taken in by the saied wall uppon Lugley streete is 46 foote of assise".

for by an assembly of endowments. Thomas Fleming and John Erlsman, the then owners of the Newport chantry lands, gave all or most of them to provide income for the school[1]. Some adjoining land to the north of the school, at the foot of Hunnyhill, the property of the town since 1413[2], was in 1619 allowed to be enclosed by permission of the Island Captain the Earl of Southampton[3] and its income, now expected to increase from £8 to £20 in annual rent[4], was allocated to the school. By 1618 the building was so far advanced that it was already outstripping income, and in April Robert Newland who was in charge of the construction was authorized to recover expenses directly out of the endowment money then coming in[5]; and when in December 1619

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1 The deed, dated 24 July 1617, is reproduced in facsimile in P.W.F.Erith: A brief history of the ancient Grammar School at Newport, Isle of Wight (Newport 1950)

2 Richard Worsley: History of the Isle of Wight (1781) appendix 43: copy of the deed of conveyance of Hunny Hill to the Corporation of Newport, 1 Henry V

3 Newport Borough MSS., 45/2, f.50 (30 August 1619)

4 CCM.Og., 4a

5 Newport Borough MSS.,45/16a, f.99. The previous year, after a dispute with Godshill about the claim to £100 endowment - Godshill claiming the money for their own school then being founded - Newport was awarded £48 of this money, which was immediately applied to the building expenses (ibid., 45/2, f.27, 4 September 1617)

Robert Dillington gave £5 it was agreed that this money "shalbe imployed by Mr Robert Newland about the fynisshing of the Schoole in this towne erected"[1]. Financial resources were fully stretched but the project was indeed carried through, an enterprise that would have been unlikely in 1559 in view of the apparent lack of likely sources of endowments. The school, once built, became a show piece of the town. When, for example, Lord Conway in September 1627 made one of his rare visits to the Island as Captain, he was first received at the school door with an oration scripted by the schoolmaster and delivered by one of the scholars[2].

Newport's school, founded at some date between 1559 and 1567, had thus finally achieved the intention of the petitioners in 1559 for the use of the chantry lands, though in fact through the medium of private benevolence rather than Government action. The school in its modest beginnings was one of a whole series of such foundations in the immediately post-Reformation period[3], ranging from Northampton in the 1550s and Liverpool in 1556[4], Southampton in

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/2, f.51^{v}. Doubts were later cast on Newland's probity in the handling of the money: ibid., 45/16a, f.271, 5 April 1633/4; 45/16a, f.335, 24 March 1636; 45/2, f.64^{v}, 16 April 1634

2 CCM. Og. 44b, 19 September 1627

3 J.Simon: Education and Society in Tudor England (Cambridge 1966)

4 J.H.Thomas: Town Government in the sixteenth century (New York 1969, reprint of London 1933) p.124

1554[1], and Leicester (refounded) in 1573[2], to Exeter in 1633[3].

In 1559 the town had one alms house, on the north side of Sea Street - then usually known as Shispoole - just to the east of the quay[4]. It was a building of quite long street frontage but of little depth[5]. By 1592 this was still standing and probably in use, but there was by now another alms house on the triangular plot of land at the junction of High Street and Pyle Street at the western end of the town[6]. This new house was evidently an old building converted, for there were some repairs to it in 1594-96[7]. By the early 1600s it is apparent from the references to it that it was now

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1 VCH Hants & IW, Vol.2 (1903) p.368

2 W.G.Hoskins: 'An Elizabethan provincial town: Leicester' in J.H.Plumb (ed.): Studies in social history: a tribute to G.M.Trevelyan (1965), p.52

3 Wallace T.MacCaffrey: Exeter, 1540-1640: the growth of an English county town (Harvard University Press, Cambridge 1958), p.118

4 Newport Borough MSS., 45/99, f.7[v]

5 Ibid., 45/22, f.122[v]: "the olde Almes howse which conteyneth xviii yerdes to the streate side & in bredth from the gronsell of the howse backwardes ix foote" (November 1592)

6 Ibid., f.120[v]

7 Ibid., 45/2, ff.44[v] and 45[v]

the only alms house in the town, and that it was occupied by women[1]. The first trace of ~~an~~ any kind of house of industry or institutional provision for men is in 1637 when two of the burgesses are requested "to viewe the house that John Meech late dwelt in by Somers Brooke, or anie other house they shall think fitt for to sett the poore on worke, and to certifie the Maior and Company at the next meeting of their opynions of yt"[2]. A few months later a payment of £20 "for setting the poore on worke" is lodged with John Welch "upon his owne securitie if he undertake that ymployment"; and it is agreed that Welch should "have a convenient house rent free and 40^{s} with everie child putt to him for five yeares to be apparrelled for him during that time and shall have lodging and necessaries for them to worke withall during that terme"[3]. A month later two of the burgesses, Moses Read and George Strong, were appointed "Treasurers and Overseers for the Worke House for the poore to receave the moneys and provide the necessaries and to take accompt of the stocke and to see howe yt is imployed for one yeare"[4]. The nature of the work house products is not indicated.

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/16a, f.223 where money left to the "Almes house" was distributed "to the women in the said Almeshouse" (26 October 1627); and ibid., f.646, money spent "for reparacon of the Almeshouse and other reliefe of the poore widdowes therein" (17 May 1621)

2 Ibid., f.330 (20 January 1636/7)

3 Ibid., f.338 (5 May 1637)

4 Ibid., f.339 (7 June 1637)

Newport does then reflect to some extent in its buildings the increasing pace of commercial, judicial, and social activity in this period.

As for town government, perhaps the basic activity was the maintenance of law and order, whether internally against thieves and vagrants, or externally at times of threatened invasion. Provision against the latter was made by the existence of a Newport town company of the militia[1]; and internal vigilance was the responsibility of the watch, which seems to have worked on a rota basis with most households contributing to the manning of the patrols[2]. The survey of 1559 had reported that the town had "a watchbell with sufficient watchmen accordinge to the anncient custome hanging openlly in the midle of owr towne the whiche place hathe and ys countyd mooste meteste"[3]; and the exact site of the bell was on the side of the old Audit House at the junction of Holyrood Street and High Street, for the list of salvaged materials at the demolition of this building in 1638 includes "the frame of yron wherein the watch bell hanged"[4]. This was the centre of the town's watch and ward, and it was here that the duty watch for each night had to assemble, at a time when most of the citizens would be settling down to sleep[5]. On an uneventful night they would ring the

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1 CCM. Og., 337b

2 Newport Borough MSS., 45/21, f.165 (date 1574) and other references passim

3 P.R.O., SP.12/7/61

4 Newport Borough MSS., 45/16a, f.357. The site is still indicated in the name of Watchbell Lane, the narrow alley cutting across from Holyrood Street to High Street, to the east of the old 'Falcon' island of buildings

5 9 p.m. in summer (Newport Borough MSS. 45/21, f.309v) and 8 p.m. in winter (ibid., f.344v)

bell on only one occasion: for fifteen minutes before they went off duty the next morning[1]. The watchmen were equipped with lanterns, for the town books include a regulation of price for the supply of candles to the watch[2]. The equipment of weapons is usually not specified, but the town seems to have been typical of so many of its kind in the recurring implications of the ineffectiveness of the watch[3]. Unlike Winchester where a "great horn" was used to sound an alarm[4], Newport relied on the prolonged ringing of the bell; but this could produce only an exasperating crowd of curious and unarmed bystanders. In 1586 the town court decreed: "Where at everie soddeyne ringinge of the watche bell the Inhabitantes of this towne hathe hiretofore come out in the streetes very bare without weapon by meanes whereof for lacke of sufficient ayde the Constables officers & the watche are diverse tymes by lewd & evill persones put in greate daunger & hassard: It is therefore ordeyned that all thinhabitants of this toune upon everie suddeyne ringe of the watche

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1 The usual times were 3 a.m. in summer and 4 a.m. in winter (Newport Borough MSS., 45/22, f.319). The city of Gloucester by comparison woke up rather more tunefully to the sound of the town band (William Bradford Willcox: Gloucestershire: a study in local government 1590-1640 (Yale University Press, New Haven 1940) p.232)

2 Newport Borough MSS., 45/21, f.183 (View of Frank Pledge 26 May 1575)

3 Compare the instructions at Exeter that they are to "watche and not sleepe all night" (Wallace T. MacCaffrey: Exeter 1540-1640: the growth of an English county town (Harvard University Press, Cambridge 1958) p.91); and the helplessness of the watch in face of a murder at Tewkesbury in 1607 (W.B.Willcox op. cit. (1940) p.222)

4 Tom Atkinson: Elizabethan Winchester (1963) p.224

bell or commandement of the officers hireafter shall come foorthe & be ready with Clubbes staves & other weapons in their hands to ayde & assiste the officers in kepinge the Queenes Majesties peace"[1]. Some similar kind of night watch was evidently in force at Brading, where in 1610 the bailiffs made an order for the "keeping of the clocke, and ringing of the belles to be continued from time to time"[2].

If the watch did happen to make any arrests there was a whole armoury of humiliating deterrents in store for the offender. There was of course the town prison, which in the 16th century was in the Petty Judas near the church[3]; but a whole spectrum of minor offences was also provided for. In Newport High Street stood the Cage[4], a temporary prison offering the minimum of privacy, and the stocks. From time to time during the period these were allowed to go out of use and to decay, but consistently they were repaired or rebuilt and brought back into use. The kind of offence that could qualify for a spell in the stocks was stealing apples, being drunk and disorderly[5], or stealing wood[6]; the town pigherd was threatened with the stocks for neglecting his duties[7]. In 1568 Francis Waterton, a substantial but contentious merchant of the town, was put in the stocks by the bailiffs[8]. The specific offence is not recorded, but Waterton was presented by

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/21, f.341[v] (VFP 18 October 1586)
2 Brading Town Hall, town minute book 1593-1622: 13 Dec. 1610
3 Newport Borough MSS., 45/2, f.44
4 Ibid., 45/16a, f.253 (9 December 1631)
5 Ibid., f.134 (16 April 1619)
6 Ibid., f.368 (1 February 1638/9)
7 Ibid., 45/22, f.319 (VFP 19 October 1613)
8 Ibid., 45/21, f.304[v]

the vintners during that year for allowing his dog to roam free in the streets[1] and for being responsible for a dung heap near the watch bell[2]. The cage seems, from the number of renewals, to have been a not very substantial structure. In 1578 a new cage and stocks were ordered to be "sufficiently and decently placed" by the bailiffs[3], their predecessors being evidently no longer effective. In 1631 it was again "agreed that there shalbe a pillory in the Highe Streete where he did stande and shalbe made with a Caige under it"[4]. Ten years earlier the corporation of Yarmouth had found it necessary only to repair theirs[5]. Strangely the only explicit reference to the use of the cage in the Island is in 1540, the victim being Dorothy Trafford after a confused indictment apparently involving petty theft and false pretences; she was "set yn the cage & ther ponysshed accordyng as it was thought mete to her offence"[6].

Other penal sanctions against minor offenders included whipping at a cart's tail[7] and, for scolding women, the cucking stool which seems to have been a piece of necessary equipment in Elizabethan

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/21, f.91^{v}

2 Ibid., f.100^{v}

3 Ibid., f.232

4 Ibid., 45/16a, f.253 (9 December 1631). It was on this structure that Lord Goring made a speech of mock recantation after a bibulous party at Sandown Fort in August 1639 (CCM. Og. 289a)

5 Brit. Mus., Additional MSS. 5669, f.51 (10 April 1621)

6 Newport Borough MSS., 45/20, f.237^{v} (Curia Regis, April 1540)

7 Ibid., 45/16a, f.218 (7 March 1625/6)

towns[1]. At Newport's View of Frank Pledge in 1580 the bailiffs were ordered to "cause a Cowkinge stoole to be made out of hande"[2]. Payment for making another - or the same one very belated - is recorded in 1587-8[3]; and yet another is ordered to be made in 1591[4]. It is not clear whether they were wearing out through neglect or through over-use, but they were certainly employed as a deterrent. In October 1591 the town court ordered "yf Tockers wyf doe scoulde anye more to have the payne of the kookinge stoole"[5].

Another function of town government was the maintenance of the streets. To some extent of course the towns shared the duties laid on individual parishes under Tudor and Stuart highway legislation and custom. The particular problems for the towns lay in the more intensive use of the road surface, and in the spread of pollution and litter that an unrestrained urban population was capable of producing. As to the first point, the beginning of our period happens to coincide with a growing use of heavy carts, and these vehicles were soon to make an impression on the town. The replacement of the solid wooden wheel by the metal-tired one was already drawing punitive by-laws

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1 For example, Leicester: see W.G.Hoskins, 'An Elizabethan provincial town: Leicester' in J.H.Plumb (ed.): Studies in social history: a tribute to G.M.Trevelyan (1955), p.50

2 Newport Borough MSS., 45/21, f.26^{v} (VFP 20 October 1580)

3 Ibid., 45/2, f.42^{v}. It cost twelve shillings

4 Ibid., 45/22, f.76 (VFP 26 April 1591)

5 Ibid., f.80^{v} (VFP 11 October 1591)

from such towns as Oxford, Ipswich, Manchester, and Southampton[1]. In 1578 Newport made it illegal for any cart "to travell out of the Carteways"[2] and the side streets were evidently poorly surfaced. The kind of massive and systematic programme of street surfacing undertaken by such towns as Valladolid[3] at this period is not detectable in Newport[4], though work on the maintenance and repair of the roads and streets did take place in periodic spurts[5]. On such occasions a special rate was levied, and citizens were required to work or provide proxy labour. There was also provision for commandeering all boats and carts within the jurisdiction of the town to provide for the carriage of necessary materials. The progress of paving the streets in the town centre is uncertain. Oglander remembered the Newport streets unpaved "since my Memory"[6] and he was born in 1585. On the other hand the presentment of William Kennett for "taking up stones out of the high waie" in Lugley Street in 1573[7] implies that the street surface in the town centre was more than mere gravel.

Apart from the problem of physical maintenance of the roads and streets, there was the parallel need to keep them clear for traffic.

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1 J.H. Thomas: Town government in the sixteenth century (1933: New York reprint 1969, p. 46

2 Newport Borough MSS., 45/21, f. 234 (VFP 8 April 1578)

3 Bartolome Bennassar: Valladolid au siecle d'or: une ville de Castille et sa campagne au XVIe siecle (Paris 1967) p. 158

4 Nor, to be fair, in most English towns

5 For example see Newport Borough MSS., 45/21, f. 200 (VFP 22 May 1576); ibid., 45/16a, f. 110 (12 October 1618)

6 CCM. Og. 274b

7 Newport Borough MSS., 45/21, f. 155 (VFP 12 October 1573)

Too many of the townsmen regarded the street as an extension of their business premises, and the throughfare could become cluttered. The spectacle of pigs roaming loose in the streets was evidently common enough to produce restrictive legislation in Newport[1], Yarmouth[2], and Brading[3]; and ducks and geese were another hazard. It was the industrial activity however that usually proved most troublesome. Three townsmen were presented in 1563 for winnowing corn in the street "ad nocumentum legiorum Dominae Reginae"[4]. By 1599 a working compromise seems to have been reached, under which it was illegal to winnow corn in High Street and Quay Street, the main arteries of internal and external trade. The various side streets seem to have been open for winnowing, though with a time limit of 24 hours for the removal of the chaff[5]. In 1577 a blacksmith caused such a blockage in the street outside his house and smithy that he was ordered not to display any of his wheels in the street[6] and was rationed to no more than two horses at a time at his smithy door awaiting shoeing[7]. Other recurring

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/22, f.263 (VFP 23 October 1599)

2 Brit. Mus., Add. MSS. 5669, f.6 (6 September 1603)

3 Brading Town Hall, town minutes 1593-1622 (2 March 1617)

4 Newport Borough MSS., 45/21, f.23^{v} (VFP 28 Oct 1563)

5 Ibid., 45/22, f.264 (VFP 23 Oct 1599)

6 Further evidence of iron-shod carts

7 Ibid., 45/21, f.225^{v} (Cur. Reg. 14 December 1577)

items of litter were blocks and baulks of timber[1], straw[2], and a "cheste with salte & planks"[3] in 1580. There was the further nuisance that the townspeople readily regarded the street as an acceptable midden, and it was used for the disposal of garden weeds[4], wine lees[5], and even for night soil[6].

The question of public health was of course a constant concern of town government, though it did of necessity come to the foreground at times of epidemic. Throughout the sixteenth century there were two sources of water in Newport: direct extraction from the river, and ensuing delivery by water carriers;[7] and more commonly the use of well water[8]. Even the latter probably involved some use of the water carriers, though in the town centre at least there is evidence of the presence of a well at the back of every substantial house[9]. The poorer sections of the community certainly did make

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/22, f.264 (VFP 23 Oct 1599)

2 Ibid., 45/21, f.146 (VFP 16 Oct 1572)

3 Ibid., f.263 (VFP 19 April 1580)

4 Ibid., f.172^{v} (VFP 5 Oct 1574) and f.182 (VFP 26 May 1575)

5 Ibid., f.278 (VFP 31 Oct 1581)

6 Ibid., 45/22, f.238^{v} (VFP 24 Oct 1598) where complaint is made that the streets are daily defiled "cum luto, fimeto, et alio stercore ad magnum nocumentum" of the inhabitants

7 Mainly by the brewers, who occasionally took the water at full tide and incurred complaints of brewing salty beer

8 Ibid., 45/22, f.79 (VFP 26 April 1591)

9 At the clearing of the County Hall extension site in High Street in 1968 (when old buildings demolished included Hazards House) four wells were found, in association with pottery of the late 16th and early 17th centuries (personal observation of the writer)

use of communal wells, and in 1591 the town intervened to prevent the pollution of the water in "the Towne wells" by the use of "any kittles bockets or anye other vessell uncleane to the annoyance of the water"[1]. It was not until James I's reign that the first attempt was made to tap the Lukely and Somers Brooks upstream of Newport and pipe fresh water into the town, Newport thus being later on the scene than many other towns[2]. Like some other towns, though, it found that the enterprise did not go smoothly[3]. In 1618 a lease was granted to Philip Fleming[4] "for the breaking of anie place or places of the Streetes & waies within this Towne & libertie thereof for the convenient carryeng & conveying of holsome spring water into this towne & so into everye mans house that shall compound with the said Phillip for the same". There was also provision for Fleming to build "a Cesterne or receptacle for the said water in any convenient place within this Towne"[5]. A condition of the lease was that the water supply should be available within three years. Evidently Fleming failed to meet this contract, for in 1623 the town granted a licence to Andrew James the younger[6] "to dig and breake the streetes to bring water into & through this Burrough, and to build

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/22, f.79 (VFP 26 April 1591)

2 J.H.Thomas: Town Government in the Sixteenth Century (1933 & 1969) pp.59-64

3 For example Worcester (Alan D.Dyer: The City of Worcester in the Sixteenth Century (Leicester 1973) pp.206-7); Chester (J.H.Thomas, op.cit., p.61); and Southampton: J.W.Horrocks (ed.) The assembly book of Southampton (Southampton Record Society), Vol.I (1917) 1602-8, p.17, footnote 9 on Roger Pedley's scheme

4 Eldest son of the Lord Chief Justice: BM Harl.MSS 1544 f.138v

5 Newport Borough MSS., 45/16a, f.113 (16 Oct 1618)

6 The concession was being kept in the family, for Andrew James was related by marriage to Fleming (Brit. Mus., Harleian MSS., 1544, f.149)

Cisterns Cisterne howses and other convenient Receptacles for the same water, and under such provisons covenantes and agreements as was latelie graunted by the Maior & Burgesses of this Burrough to Phillip Fleminge Esquire"[1]. Whether or not this scheme in turn was completed, work on it was at least well-advanced, for in 1662 there is a record of the demolition of the cistern house in the beast market[2] ; and the remains of this, when rediscovered in the 18th century, were described in 1795 as "a large reservoir"[3]. Moreover some of the conduit pipes have been discovered in various parts of the town during subsequent excavation. A section of one of these, from the premises of Upward and Rich on the south side of Pyle Street, is now in Carisbrooke Castle Museum[4]. It is a piece of elm trunk, oval in section with a diameter ranging from 25 to 32 centimetres, with a nearly circular central bore 55 millimetres in diameter. Newport, then, was starting to catch up with the increasing number of towns with piped water.

With the uncertain attainment of a piped water supply, it followed of course that sewerage was a thing of the future. The contents of domestic privies were, as we have seen, sometimes merely deposited in the street; and the rough and ready standards of hygiene that could have been adequate in country areas produced rather noxious conditions

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/2, f.54^{v} (18 June 1623)

2 Ibid., 45/16b, f.55 (12 December 1662)

3 John Albin: History of the Isle of Wight (1795) p.324

4 Accession no. 5.1960

in Newport[1]. The town does seem to have acted to the extent of providing municipal privies: the earliest reference to one is in 1583-4[2] in connection with its demolition. In 1591 the town assembly concluded that "we do finde there is a greate inconvenience in the Toune for want of a Privie"[3] and that one should be built by midsummer that year. The problem of domestic sewage was met by having prescribed tipping points. In 1613 these were "above John Goter's Barne in the South syde of Pile Streate And alsoe att the lower end of Cossam streate[4] in the south syde betwene the well there & Simondes house"[5].

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/22, f. 290v: "It is ordeyned that no person or persons shall at any tyme hereafter make water in the schole house yeard or without the same yeard at the utter dore or pale that for the same is fownd to be not onlye a greate anoyaunce unto such as shall have occasion to goe into the sayde scole but unto such as shall passe by the sayde pale by reason of the filthie smele coming by pissing and making water there" (VFP 20 April 1601)

2 Ibid., 45/2, f. 36v. The demolition was by the town carpenter but the privy could possibly have been only a domestic one

3 Ibid., 45/22, f. 77v (VFP 26 April 1591)

4 Now known as South Street

5 Newport Borough MSS., 45/22, f. 322v (VFP 19 Oct 1613)

There were other sewage deposit points that were hallowed by popular usage though understandably never under the blessing of the municipality. The vicinity of the watch bell was a regularly vulnerable area[1], and in 1613 the town court even complained about great abuses "in castinge of soile and filthe aboute the Churche & walles thereof to the greate discreditt of the Towne by reason of straingers which resorteth thereunto"[2]. Although the town was sensitive about the pollution of the River Medina and its fresh-water feeder streams by industrial waste, attention to sewage pollution seems to have been only occasional[3]. This compares with the more sedulous care shown by a town such as Rouen towards its river at this period[4].

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/21, f.100^{v} (1568)

2 Ibid., 45/22, f.321 (VFP 19 Oct 1613).
Yarmouth also had to make an order prohibiting the tipping of soil around or near the new church (Brit. Mus., Add. MSS., 5669, f.62: VFP 1 April 1624)

3 For example in 1584 two inhabitants were fined one shilling for "making of a house of office over the streame" in Sea Street (Newport Borough MSS., 45/21, f.308: VFP 19 May 1584)

4 Rouen, Bibliothèque Municipale: MS. Délibérations de la ville de Rouen, A.17 (Registre, 1555-1559), f. lvi^{v}, 11 April 1556 (O.S.):
"Mandemens envoyés aux trésoriers des parroisses, afin de faire assembler les parroissiens pour délibérer les moyens comme et à quels dépens les fanges pourront estre portez et mises hors la ville pour éviter aux inconvenients de la peste, et pour empescher que la Rivière de Seine Qui est le plus Riche Joyau que peult ou pourroit avoir la Ville, No soit Remplie des ordures que l'on y Porte ordinairement, afin quelle soit en tous endroictz Navigable & accessible"

The effectiveness of public health administration is of course seen with some definition at times of particular pressure such as major outbreaks of plague. During our period the Island had one such, in 1582-4, and the town of Newport seems to have been the most severely hit of any part of the Island[1]. The epidemiology underlying plague precautions at this time was basically the application of strict quarantine to affected houses. As the immediate cause of bubonic and pneumonic plague is now known to be the incidence of blocked fleas from affected rats which would be infesting roofs and thatches, the results of the 16th-century measures would normally be merely to ensure the subsequent infection of everyone else in the house. Certainly the isolation of the plague-visited houses in Newport seems to have been effectively applied. There was not perhaps the efficient machinery of the public health department that moved into action for this purpose, for instance, at Amiens during the plague of 1596[2], but within the limits of their resources the Newport bailiffs made their precautions as valid as possible. That affected houses were quarantined is explicit in a note among the plague relief accounts, of a payment "for drynke for the sycke peple that be comanded to kepe in for the plage"[3]. By requiring people to remain within their houses the town was of course cutting off their livelihood, and it recognized its obligation to the people so affected. Within a six-month period in 1582-3 a local tax in Newport brought in £10.12.7d from 121 people, and individual payments were made to 51 people in addition to unlisted groups, such as "the power pepell of the sowthstrete", who

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1 Collections were made from rural parishes for the relief of Newport (see George Hillier: History of Newport, p.23)

2 Pierre Deyon: Amiens, capitale provinciale: étude sur la société urbaine au 17e siècle (Paris 1967) p.18

3 Newport Borough MSS., 45/249 (Charity accounts 1582-3)

were paid from particular bequests[1]. House quarantine seems to have been the only main measure applied, and there is no evidence of people from affected houses having to identify themselves while abroad in the streets, as at Winchester in 1583[2]. Newport was still of small enough size to allow fairly easy control and surveillance, without such devices as a division into wards at Lincoln in 1587[3]. The Newport plague seems to have been moderately severe. In its first eruption in the early winter of 1582 there were 150 deaths; and in the second, from Michaelmas 1583 to May 1584, a further 56 people died[4]. Assuming a slow but steady growth from the town population of 1175 in 1559[5] this gives a mortality of approximately 16%. The difficulty of any comparison lies in the disparate estimates

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/249, Charity accounts 1582-3. This was the town relief only. The general rate for the Island outside Newport brought in £25.2.6d (George Hillier: The borough of Newport' p.23, quoting a 'Book of the collection of all the parishes in the Isle of Wight toward the relief of the poor people of the town of Newport visited with the plague'. This document is not now traceable in the town records)

2 Tom Atkinson: Elizabethan Winchester (1963) p.213

3 J.W.F.Hill: Tudor and Stuart Lincoln (Cambridge 1956)p.91

4 George Hillier, op.cit., p.24

5 ~~Extract~~ P.R.O., SP.12/7/61

for other towns, produced then and since[1]. It does at least seem safe to say that the Newport mortality was enough to have some effect on the economy of the town and to check, if only temporarily, the steady population growth. The wave of epidemics that affected much of Europe in the years 1628-33[2] involved the Isle of Wight, and the illness was diagnosed at the time as smallpox[3]. In fact the country areas seem to have been more affected than the town of Newport. Among his accounts for 1629 Oglander noted: "In the yere of owre lord 1627 younge Thomas Urry of Gatcome, brought the smale poxe downe from London and infected others so from him

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1 J.F.D.Shrewsbury: A history of bubonic plague in the British Isles (Cambridge 1970) quotes F.Blomefield's The history of the city and county of Norwich (1741) as giving a mortality there of between 800 and 900 in 1583. A.L.Rowse: The England of Elizabeth (1950) p.188, quotes W.Hudson and J.C.Tingey: Records of the City of Norwich, II, cxxvi-cxxvii as estimating the plague mortality of 1579-80 at 5,000 with between 12,000 and 13,000 survivors. If these figures are valid the Newport outbreak of 1582-4 falls midway between Norwich's mortality of 29% in 1579-80 and 6.9% in 1583. Newcastle-upon-Tyne in 1588 is said to have suffered a mortality of upwards of one-third (J.F.D.Shrewsbury, op.cit. (1970) pp.241-2)

2 J.Meuvret: 'Demographic crisis in France from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century' at p.509 in D.V.Glass and D.E.C.Eversley (eds.): Population in history: essays in historical demography (1965)

3 On the inexactitude of clinical diagnosis see J.F.D. Shrewsbury, op.cit. (1970) p.1

there weare in all parts infected over the whole Island 2000 in nomber at lest, and many 100 dyed thereof it became so generoll that fewe howses escaped it, and at that time both in London and other places Infinyte died thereof so that it became to be an universoll disease over all England"[1]. The Newport town books suggest that there the epidemic was being kept in check. On 24 May 1628 the corporation resolved "Forasmuch as it is reported that the Plague of pestilence is and is suspected to be in some townes wherof the Inhabitantes might have recours to this towne at Whitsun faier: It is therfore thought fitt and ordered for avoideing the infection and for some other weightie consideracons that the said Faier for this present yeare be forborne and not kept, and that the same be openlie published in this towne & other neighbouring townes to avoid concours of peeple to the said faier"[2]. The illness did eventually get a foothold, for on 5 January 1628/9 it was agreed "that in regard of the great infeccion and danger of the small pox in this towne" the visit of a travelling show should be cancelled[3]. The church registers[4] do show a steep increase in the mortality figures from Whitsun 1628 onwards, rising from a monthly average of about six in normal conditions to 19 in July and with another peak of 16 in December, but the abnormality of the figures is not extreme and the burials that might be associated with this outbreak did not reach the unexplained peak of 27 recorded in January 1626.

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1 CCM. Og. 134a

2 Newport Borough MSS., 45/16a, f.226

3 Ibid., f.232

4 St. Thomas's church, Newport: Register of baptisms, burials, and marriages from 1623

The other great scourge of towns at this time, fire, seems to have been avoided. The town records are full of the usual precautionary measures, but there is no trace of the kind of major outbreak that afflicted such towns as Tiverton[1], Nantwich[2], Stratford and Banbury[3], or Valladolid in Spain[4]. Presiding over a huddle of well-timbered buildings, some with thatch roofs, the Newport bailiffs and Mayors were fully aware that they were surveying a potential bonfire. They sensibly directed most of their efforts towards preventive measures, and the recurring target for their concern - as with so many other towns - was the inadequate chimney flue. There is a stream of legislation requiring adequate chimneys and flues to be made[5], and almost equal care was

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1 G.V.Blackstone: A history of the British fire service (1957) p.19

2 J.H.Thomas: Town government in the 16th century (1933 & 1969) p.108

3 W.B.Willcox: Gloucestershire: a study in local government 1590-1640 (Yale 1940) p.229

4 Bartolome Bennassar: Valladolid au siecle d'or: une ville de Castille et sa campagne au XVIe siecle Paris (1967) p.147

5 Newport Borough MSS., 45/21, f.1, five inhabitants of Crocker Street told to build their house chimneys "cum lapidibus aut bricke" as a precaution against "periculis ignis" (1562); ibid. f.32^{v} a resident told "de nova facere unam sufficientum camina aut Flewe in domo" (1564); ibid., f.68^{v} a resident of South Street fined for unlawfully having a fire in certain flues "contra ordinacionem inde factam" (1566); ibid. f.79^{v} (1567); f.100 (1568); f.201 (1576); f.263^{v} (1580); f.290 (1582); 45/22 f.33^{v} (1589); f.264 (1599); 45/2 f.54 (1622)

given to the need for chimneys, though adequately built, to be swept[1]. Fines were readily imposed on any citizen whose chimney happened to catch fire[2]. As an additional precaution it was ordered in 1613 "that all flewes that are made, or here after shalbe made, by anye within this Towne shalbe made three foote above the topp of the howse"[3]. There were special precautions too against risks arising from any industrial use, bakers' premises being regarded as specially vulnerable. The concern here was chiefly to ensure the safeseparation of the necessary stocks of faggot fuel from the ovens. In 1576 a baker was told to "make a stone wale or a bricke wale behinde his oven, that is to saie betwine his furse house & his oven that his fursome maie not come nier his oven"[4]; and seven years later the same baker was allowed to reconvert his house into a bakery on condition that he "shall before he do bake therin consent to be covered over the oven with blewe stone And to make a sufficient walle of stone over the oven & the place where they have accustomed to laye their Fewell"[5]. In 1613 the manufacture of brick within the town was prohibited[6]; and in 1653 a Carisbrooke brewer was ordered to "amend his brew-house in his backside covered with fearne (which may bee a cause of fireing the whole streete"[7]. Stacks of fuel anywhere were regarded with some

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/21, f.341^{v} (1586); 45/22, f.262 (1599)

2 Ibid., 45/21, f.344^{v} (1586) & 45/22, f.288 (1601)

3 Ibid., 45/22, f.320^{v} (VFP 19 Oct 1613)

4 Ibid., 45/21, f.208^{v} (VFP 30 Oct 1576)

5 Ibid., f.300^{v}

6 Ibid., 45/22, f.322^{v} (VFP 19 Oct 1613)

7 IWCRO, View of Frank Pledge for the Isle of Wight, Oct 1653

mistrust. In 1578 William Browne - the baker just referred to - was told to "Remove his Furse Rike in the highe streate"[1]; and in 1589 a resident of Quay Street was presented for having furze in the street "as periculum totius opidi comburendi"[2]. In 1596 a shoemaker was fined for leaving "truncos ante domum eius vocatum a furse house"[3]. In an age of flint, steel and tinder it was not uncommon to kindle fires by carrying burning embers from house to house; in Newport as elsewhere the only proscription was against carrying it uncovered[4]. Most of the corporate concern, then, was to prevent fire starting. If the worst happened, and the town were roused at night by the watch bell, much obviously depended on the individual householders. To encourage such enterprise the town ordered in 1587 "that every householder of this towne shall have every daye from the proclamacon hereof untill the first daye of September every yeare from henceforth one Tubbe or Covell of water continually standing at his dore in the streete syde"[5].

The corporate control of trade was a notable feature of town government, by no means lacking from the smaller towns of the

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/21, f.237 (Curia Reg. 6 Sept 1578)

2 Ibid., 45/22, f.19^{v} (VFP April 1589)

3 Ibid., f.190^{v} (VFP 28 Oct 1596)

4 Ibid., 45/21, f.220 (1577); 45/22, f.263 (1599); ibid. f.319 320 (1613). The town of Yarmouth had similar legislation: Brit. Mus., Add. MSS. 5669, f.99^{v} (7 Oct 1634)

5 Newport Borough MSS., 45/21, f.355^{v} (VFP 2 May 1587)

Island but particularly identified with Newport. The interesting point about Newport is that it seems to have been just under the threshold of population that could give rise to merchant guilds. Winchester for example, only marginally larger in size, had its guilds inherited from the town's illustrious past. Newport, struggling to develop commercially, had its trade and craft associations on an informal and less organized basis. If a tanner died, a fellow tanner would come in to make the valuation for probate. It is noticeable too that in several cases of complaint about the quality of craft goods, the defendants are arraigned not individually but in batches according to their craft, again the shadow of a true guild.

The day-to-day control of trade in Newport however was in the hands of the corporation both before and after it became a Mayor town in 1608. The town determined the number of each craft and trade to be allowed to practise. This of course was a prerogative of towns large and small, an aspect of the controlled economy that was a feature of Tudor life. The measure of general supervision of the conduct of a trade, however, was considerable. If a merchant or manufacturer allowed the quality of his goods to drop unduly, he was promptly called to account for it to one of the town courts - and town officers such as the bailiff were by no means exempt. Time after time we find the courts confronting chandlers with selling candles with black wicks, brewers producing weak or brackish beer or ale, inn-keepers using fraudulent measures, tanners selling badly-processed hides, and butchers selling sub-standard or perhaps unbaited meat. The resultant fines were at least substantial enough

to provide a disincentive even if the effect was only temporary. The machinery of control did not always work without friction, and the constables and searchers who had the job of implementing it occasionally met with sarcasm, abuse, or worse. In 1596 Richard Bull, one of the bakers at Brading, jeered at the constables who came to take samples of his loaves for weighing, "& in railinge sorte saied the Constables ande officers wer to weie the bredd at his oven & not els wher"[1]. Yet the apparatus of civic control was basically accepted by most merchants and tradesmen as a necessary feature of local commerce, and it is not difficult to determine why this should be so. There was the initial obstacle of obtaining from the town a licence to trade: thus for instance Newport decreed in 1599 that there should be six bakers in the town[2] and Brading in 1606 allowed two[3]. In return for the privilege the tradesmen had to make a contribution towards the fee farm rent paid by their town; but the privileges were indeed apparent, for the appointed tradesmen were allowed a favoured position in a captive market. The Newport market was the largest single retail outlet in the Island, and the town made sure that too many of the benefits did not go to outsiders. In 1589 it was ordered that "noe foreigne butcher which shall come to our market but he shall from Michaelmas to Shrovetide ridde by too of the clock in the afternoone and from Easter to Michaelmas ridde by three of the clock in the afternone"[4]. Interloping tradesmen were restricted

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1 Brading Town Hall: town minutes 1593-1622 (24 August 1596)

2 Newport Borough MSS., 45/22, f.262^{v} (VFP 23 Oct 1599)

3 Brading Town Hall: town minutes 1593-1622 (10 Oct 1606)

4 Newport Borough MSS., 45/22, f.34^{v} (VFP 28 Oct 1589)

not only in their marketing time but in their site. In 1611 the Newport butchers, then five in number, agreed to make an annual payment of ten shillings each to the common box "in consideracon that the Countrie butchers shalbe enforced to stand with their meate to sell in the highe streete next to the Butchers Shambles"[1]. The bargain was kept, and the town ordinance appeared on 2 August 1613: "For as much as Divers Contrie butchers have of late used to come to this Burrough with their fleshe uppon markett daies and to stande to sell the same in obscure places wheare yt cannot convenientlie be viewed By reason wherof they divers time sell corrupt and unwholsom fleshe to divers of the Kings Majesties liege people It is therfore now orderd that at all times hearafter all butchers no Inhabiting wihtin this Burroughe that shall bring anie fleshe to sell within this toune on markett daies shall stande therwith and shall shewe the same to sell in the Highe streete right before or in the butchers shambles and not elswhere"[2]. The town had already in 1599 laid down "that noe forroner shall sell or retayle any wares within this towne but uppon the Saterdaye"[3].

Apart from the normal care for municipal privileges the Newport town records do show, increasingly in James I's reign and perhaps most of all in Charles I's, a resistance to economic pressure from outside, not only from the country tradesmen wishing to come in and benefit from the markets, but from immigrants wishing to settle and

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/22 16a, f.15 (23 September 1611)

2 Ibid., 45/2, f.39[v] (2 August 1613)

3 Ibid., 45/22, f.263 (VFP 23 Oct 1599)

to set up in trade in the town. In 1599 an order was made that no one might take in an under-tenant without leave from the Bailiff[1]. In 1625 the corporation resolved that "Whereas it is founde by Comon experience that by meanes of newe commers to the Towne of divers trades and occupacons and manie poore people that resort to dwell in this towne the settled tradesmen and artificers are much impoverished and the number of poore in the Toune exceedinglie encreased: It is nowe therfore agreed and ordered by the Maior and Chiefe Burgesses nowe assembled that noe person whatsoever that hath or shall have anie house within this Burrough shall at anie time heerafter lett or dispose of anie such howse or anie part therof to anie person newe coming to the Toune which is of anie trade or occupacon, or is likelie to be chargeable to the toune without the consent and allowance of the Maior for the time being and the xxiij[tie] Chiefe Burgesses of this Burrough or the more parte of them"[2].

A test case arose in 1629 when a merchant called John Wavell applied to the borough to have permission to set up a draper's and mercer's shop in the town. The corporation flatly refused the application, overtly for the reason that "there are so manie of that trade within this Burrough which are heere settled Inhabitants, that it is generally thought there are more alreadie then can well lyve therby"[3]. A codicil explained however that "this was so ordered

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/22, f.263[v] (VFP 23 Oct 1599)

2 Ibid., 45/2, f.58 (28 September 1625)

3 Ibid., f.60[v] (1629)

because the said John Wavell was not borne nor apprenticed in this Burrough"[1]. There were contrary views. A disgruntled citizen named Kennell was heard to express contempt for the corporation. He told a fellow townsman John Jerome that "he would goe lyve in the Castle hold[2] in spite of them and come into the towne and get bastards when he list"[3]. To two other citizens he remarked that "hee wondered that John Wavell should be denyed to sett upp shopp in the toune for yt was noe Corporacon and that it should cost Wavell and him ten pounds a peece to trie the strength of the Corporacon. And that there was never a true hearted man borne in the Isle of Wight". It would not be a month, he added, before he would come and set up his trade in the town in spite of any of them. Certainly Wavell won his point, for the following March the corporation agreed to his setting up a mercer's shop in the town, "paying v£ to the toune before he be admitted"[4]. Indeed the apparent growth of Newport during this period must presuppose the periodic injection of immigrant people and capital, a tendency for which there is further evidence in the steady appearance of new names in the subsidy lists for the town.

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/2, f.60v. The person in question is presumably Wavell of Atherfield, described by Oglander as one "that woold willinge take upon him the name of a Gentleman" (CCM.Og. 346a)

2 A small area at the western end of High Street reserved to Carisbrooke Castle and not part of the town fee farm

3 Newport Borough MSS., 45/16a, f.241 (13 Nov 1629)

4 Ibid., f.243 (5 March 1629/30)

How was wealth distributed within the town? In attempting any assessment there are certain problems about the evidence. Surviving probate inventories are rather intermittent and thus not comprehensive. Subsidy rolls, which are reasonably comprehensive, are impaired by the somewhat formalized approach to individual assessments. Yet with these imperfections they do reflect the distribution of wealth in relative if not absolute terms. Those who accepted high assessments apparently without much quibble were presumably at least as wealthy as the assessment claimed. The tax lists, used with caution, can give us some equations in terms of algebra if not arithmetic. There is then the further problem of reading through the names of the subsidy payers to the trades and occupations they represent. Of the various subsidy lists for the town of Newport in the period 1558-1642 only one - for 1568[1] - coincides with a period at which the town records give very full information about occupations, enabling a nearly-complete census of trades to be superimposed on the gradation of tax assessments, and this can be supplemented with information from other sources. The result, now appended, shows that in 1568 at least the wealth seems to lie where the concentration of capital could be expected: chiefly with the merchants, and next with high-capital industries like brewing and tanning. The broad range of average assessments covers such family businesses as shoemaking, baking, butchering, and milling (for the millers were tenants of the town and did not own their plant).

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1 IWCRO, SW/1716

Distribution of wealth in Newport, Isle of Wight, 1568

Tax assessments are taken from the second lay subsidy payment, 1568 (source: IWCRO SW/1716)

Excluded from the list are three assessments on land (all other assessments are on goods) and six assessments on aliens at the minimum figure of £2 (8 Eliz., c.18, para.4)

The average assessment on the remaining 56 is £7

Name	Assessment £	Occupation	Source
HUDSON, Arthur	3		
LYSENEY, John	3	Dyer	45/21, f.187
BALAM, Henry	5		
GILES, Lawrence	12		
GOTER, Thomas	7	Artificer	PRO SP.12/7/61
VALLEY, John	5	Shoemaker	45/3
WOODNETT, David	4	Shoemaker	45/3
LANE, John	3	Weaver	45/21, ff.58 & 187
BARNES, Edmond	5	Tanner	HRO Wills, 1568
COOKE, Thomas	8	Glover	45/21, f.123
VAWSE, Nicholas	10	Shoemaker	45/3
COOKE, Robert	7	Ale brewer	45/21, f.299
BYDDLE, Thomas	5	Butcher	WCC 1585
POPE, Richard	6	Candlemaker	45/21, ff.1, 14, 101
BURRELL, William	5	Wine-merchant(?)	45/2, f.25
THOMAS, William	15	Brewer	PRO E.190/814/3
FEVER, John	7	Candlemaker	45/21, f.1
BASE, George	3		
FROSTE, Humfrye	5		
BOWLER, James	5	Tanner (?)	45/21, f.165
BARTON, William	3	Ale brewer Ship owner	45/21, f.299 PRO SP/12/71/54
WATERTON, Francis	10	Merchant	45/21, f.228

(continued)

Name	Assessment £	Occupation	Source
CROSSE, Thomas	5	Shoemaker	45/3, f.7^{v}
HALLE, John	8	Shoemaker	Ibid., f.7
BRACKLEY, Thomas			
DRAPER, John			
KENT, John	10	Brewer	PRO E.190/814/1
BROWNE, William	3	Baker	45/21, f.207
PETERES, Robert	5		
GAGGER, Thomas	8		
BADD, Joan	6	Shoemaker	45/3
ANDREWS, Thomas	3		
BAKER, William	3	Butcher	45/21, f.207
BISHOPPE, Richard	3		
HANCOKE, William	3	Miller	45/2, f.25
CHAMPION, Richard	3		
WESTMILL, John	10	Tanner	45/3
WOODFORD, Peter	5	Butcher	45/21, f.7^{v}
JAMES, Mark	5	Merchant	PRO E.190/814/3
ERLESMAN, Richard	5	Merchant	Ibid.
FULLER, Richard	8	Fishmonger	45/21, f.33
JAMES, Thomas	5	Merchant	PRO E.190/814/2
FLEMYNGE, John	20	Mercer (?)	CCM. Og. 327b
CLARKE, Henry	3		
JOLLYFFE, John	7		
GEFFEREY, William	10	Merchant	PRO E.190/814/3
ACLAND, John	3	Leather searcher	45/3
WHITE, Elizabeth	3		
BRACKLEY, Robert	30		
COLMAN, William	8		
ORWELL, Henry	3	Mariner	45/21, f.152^{v}

(continued)

Name	Assessment £	Occupation	Source
VAUGHAN, John	5	Gentleman	45/21, f.116^{v}
PORTER, William	10		
SERLE, John	8	Merchant	PRO SP.12/7/61
NEWNAM, William	10	Merchant	Ibid. & E.190/814/2
JAMES, Richard	18	Merchant	PRO E.190/814/3

Abbreviations used:

45/	Newport Borough Manuscripts
PRO	Public Record Office
HRO	Hampshire Record Office
IWCRO	Isle of Wight Record Office
WCC	Depositions in Winchester Consistory Court, at Hampshire Record Office
CCM.Og	Bound and paginated volumes of photocopies of Sir John Oglander's account books: photocopies in Carisbrooke Castle Museum; originals at Nunwell House, Brading

(Continued)

List of occupations, from highest assessments downwards:

1	-	29	Tanner
2	Mercer (?)	30	Butcher
3	Merchant	31	Wine-merchant (?)
4	Brewer	32	-
5	-	33	Tanner (?)
6	Merchant	34	Shoemaker
7	Merchant	35	-
8	-	36	-
9	Merchant	37	Butcher
10	Tanner	38	Merchant
11	Brewer	39	Merchant
12	Merchant	40	Gentleman
13	Shoemaker	41	Shoemaker
14	Glover	42	-
15	Shoemaker	43	Dyer
16	-	44	Weaver
17	-	45	-
18	Fishmonger	46	Ale brewer & ship owner
19	-	47	Baker
20	Merchant	48	-
21	Artificer	49	Butcher
22	Ale brewer	50	-
23	Candlemaker	51	Miller
24	-	52	-
25	Candlemaker	53	-
26	Shoemaker	54	Leather searcher
27	-	55	-
28	Shoemaker	56	Mariner

CHAPTER 4

TRADE, SHIPPING, AND PIRACY

The external trade of the Isle of Wight being of course entirely in the form of maritime traffic, it might be supposed that it ~~is~~ would be readily susceptible to record and analysis.[1] In fact however its commerce is merged in that of its custom-port of Southampton, from which it is not always easy to extract the Island's share. Two recent studies covering the commerce of Southampton within our period[2] do not of course address their inquiries specially to Isle of Wight trade; but even if one approaches the Port Books with this question in mind, the limitations of the source material are soon apparent. Island ships are well recorded over most of the period, and this is reflected in the two theses. The real difficulty is in keeping track of local cargoes and the operations of local merchants. On these the Elizabethan Port Books - especially the earlier ones - are helpfully explicit. Under the early Stuarts the only chance of retrieving information is by identifying the local names from the general list of shippers, and this of course is a patchy procedure. Within these limitations, some picture of Island commerce may be attempted.

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1 There were two tiers of duty payable on goods passing in and out of the Island. In addition to the Queen's customs there was a tariff of petty custom; (Newport Borough MSS., 45/2, f.12 and 12^{v}) but records of these payments, which went to the town of Newport, do not survive for this period

2 Miss J.L.Wiggs: unpublished M.A. thesis (University of Southampton) The seaborne trade of Southampton in the second half of the sixteenth century (1955); and David F.Lamb: unpublished M.Phil. thesis (University of Southampton) The seaborne trade of Southampton in the first half of the seventeenth century (1972)

Helpfully an official survey of Island trade was made in 1569 and the report survives in the British Museum[1]. According to this the Island's direct trade abroad was entirely with Rouen. The port of Rouen, far up the fast-flowing Seine, had fluctuating fortunes during the 16th century. It suffered of course from the establishment of Le Havre in 1517 on the Channel coast[2] but regained some prosperity with the opening of the Rouen Bourse by Henry II in 1556-57[3]. Further setback came with the Wars of Religion, naturally unsettling for foreign trade, alternating with damaging river floods in 1564 and 1571, the former one particularly destroying bridges and shipping. There was nevertheless a steady resort of English merchants there, and in April 1572 Charles IX by the Treaty of Blois set out even more inviting terms for them[4]. Later in the century however, much English trade including that of the Isle of Wight tended to move west to Brittany and to La Rochelle,

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1 Lansdowne MS. 11, f.72

2 Jean Lagarde: Le Port de Rouen: sa fonction commerciale: sa fonction industrielle (Rouen 1937) p.22

3 A. le Corbeiller: Histoire du Port de Rouen et de son commerce depuis les temps les plus recules jusqu'a nos jours (Rouen 1902) p.72

4 Beatrice Reynolds: 'Elizabethan traders in Normandy' in Journal of Modern History Vol.9 No.3 (September 1937) p.289. The treaty provided, among other things, for the transfer of the English Cloth Staple from Antwerp to Rouen. The effects of the agreement were largely diminished by the 'St. Bartholomew' massacre later that year

and it is probably valid to see in this a mirror image of the adherence of Rouen to the Catholic League from 1582 onwards[1]. It was one of the last places to open its gates to Henry IV, and when it did so the port was found to be almost deserted. When its foreign trade did pick up in the early 1600s the pattern had shifted. Only London, Hull, and Newcastle of the English ports had anything like a regular trade with Rouen[2]. Isle of Wight ships were now to be found more on the Biscay and Channel coasts.

In the first half of Elizabeth's reign however, Rouen was the Island's point of contact on the continent. What was the nature of the trade? The 1569 report said that it was carried on by five or six merchants, all of Newport, and it was unambitious to the extent that the trade was "comonly for such merchaundise as they sell by reteyle in their shoppes"[3]. One turns then with more than usual interest to the Southampton Port Books for details of Newport's stock-in-trade in the 1560s, which in fact represents a fair spread of Normandy products. There is canvas, needles and pins[4]; paper,

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1 A. le Corbeiller, op. cit. (1902) p.74

2 Pierre Dardel: Le traffic maritime de Rouen aux XVII^{e} et XVIII^{e} siecles : essai statistique (Rouen 1946) p.67

3 Brit. Mus., Lansdowne MS. 11, f.72

4 P.R.O. E.190/814/1 and 2, passim. On Rouen pin and needle manufacture, see E. Gosselin: Documents authentiques et inedits pour servir a l"histoire de la Marine Normande et du Commerce Rouennais (Rouen 1876) pp.98-99

and playing cards[1]; Normandy glass in the form of drinking glasses and wicker-bound bottles[2]; twine and thread; woolcards (another product of the wire and pin industry) ; and prunes[3]. The balancing exports were woollen textiles (Hampshire kerseys), and glovers' clippings.

There was of course some foreign trade to the Island other than from Rouen. In January 1566 John Vaughan of Newport imported some bay salt from La Rochelle[4], a trade that was to grow during our period; and the Island brewers were very active in commerce. At Brading German Richards grew rich by selling beer to visiting ships[5]; but two Newport brewers, John Kent and William Thomas, made regular shipments to Guernsey in the 1560s. Kent sent shipments of about eight tons of beer almost monthly[6] and Thomas also took imports of cloth

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1 W. Gurney Benham: Playing Cards: history of the pack and explanations of its many secrets (n.d.) p.28 et seqq. illustrates some of the Rouen cards of the 1560s, which he claims were the origin of the English card designs

2 E. Gosselin, op. cit. (1876) pp.126-130 gives an account of the Rouen glassworks

3 "Proynes"

4 "Bay salt" (origin uncertain, according to O.E.D.) means salt obtained from evaporation as opposed to rock salt. E.190/814/2, f.24 relates to Vaughan's cargo

5 CCM. Og., 303b

6 E.190/814/2, ff. 3^{v}, 5, 7^{v}, 9^{v}

in exchange for his beer[1]. The reason for this single-minded application to the Guernsey market was that, under a provision in the Guernsey Captain's patent, such trade was duty-free[2].

Camden in 1586 said that Isle of Wight wool was "reckoned the best after that of Leinster and Cotswold, and is in great request among the woollen manufacturers, which brings great profit to the islanders"[3]. According to the 1569 report the Islanders "spare yerely a great quantitie"[4] and it went on to identify two main markets: the West Country and Kent. From the Port Books it would seem that in the 1560s at least, Kent absorbed most or all of the Island wool crop. At the beginning of July the Cranbrook clothiers would come over for the wool sales, and six or seven shiploads would go from Newport to Rye. This trade was still continuing in 1576[5], as indeed was the Island's link with the then flourishing West Country broadcloth industry with its voracious demands for suitable wool[6]. About this time an agreement is on record between the bailiffs of

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1 P.R.O. E.190/814/2, f.25

2 Brit. Mus. Lansdowne MS.11, f.72

3 William Camden: Britannia, or a chorographical description of the flourishing Kingdoms of England, Scotland & Ireland (2nd ed., 1806) Vol.1, p.174

4 Lansd.MS.11, f.72

5 E.190/814/1 to 10

6 Peter J.Bowden: The wool trade in Tudor and Stuart England (1962) pp.45-46

Newport and the clothiers of Shepton Mallett, revising the petty custom charges on wool[1].

By way of reciprocal imports from the Sussex ports, the Island took the products of the Wealden ironworks - such items as nails and cannons - which were shipped through Newhaven (Miching).

As we move into the 17th century the exact destination of individual ~~im~~ex port cargoes, and the source of ~~ex~~im ports, becomes more difficult to identify; but those that can be traced certainly show a widening of commercial activity, weighted towards the Biscay coast and with persistent Island imports of bay salt from La Rochelle, as evidence of the local commitment to the fishing industry. This salt was still coming in in 1638[2] and long before then its price was raising local hackles. "December the 24 Anno Dom. 1629" wrote Oglander, "Baysalt wase solde at Nuporte for 10^{s} a Buschell, and it wase aftorwardes cryed at Bradinge that one of the botemen woold sell at Ryde for 9^{s} a Buschell and it wase well accepted of and many went and bought for it wase verry hard to gett any for mony"[3]; and elsewhere: "I payde in September 1630 for baysalt 6^{s} the Buschell Therefore it is a good poynt of housbandrye to be alwayes provided of a 2 or 3 Quartors of Baysalt"[4].

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1 Richard Worsley: History of the Isle of Wight (1781) appendix xlvi. The regnal year, if correctly transcribed, would date the agreement to 1579, though the year 1578 is stated in the text.

2 E. 190/824/8

3 CCM. Og. 125a

4 Ibid., 145b: the backwash of Stuart policy on the salt industry: see William Hyde Price: The English Patents of Monopoly (1906) pp. 112-118

By 1638 some of the Island merchants had extended their activities to the Newfoundland fishing grounds, from where they imported fish and train oil[1].

Camden had described the Island soil as "very rich and profitable to the cultivators, producing corn enough for exportation". The main source of this would be the band of exposed ferruginous sands towards the south of the Island offering good arable husbandry, where Camden refers to "common fields inclosed with hedges and ditches". As a result of the Knolles inquiry in 1559 the local farmers had secured the right to free export of corn, subject to low enough domestic prices in the Island; and the 1569 trade survey shows this still in force, reporting that "wheate being under xx^{d} the b. & beinge of the groinge of the Ilande is transported out of the Iland without entrie with the Customes by a cocket from the Captaine by vertue of his patent"[2]. In 1587 the Captain, Sir George Carey, assumed more arbitrary control of the corn trade[3], provoking a group of local people to petition the Privy Council that "the generall trade between hir Majesties subjects and forreners unto whome it shalbe transported, shalbe open"[4]. An interesting aspect of this petition was a reference to the "pryvate gayne of such particular persons as it hathe pleased the said Captayne to

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1 E.190/824/8

2 Brit. Mus., Lansdowne MS.11, f.72

3 P.R.O., SP.12/199/89

4 Richard Worsley: History of the Isle of Wight (1781) p.99

license agaynste the restraynte aforesaid". It was in this frame of mind that many sections of the community were to react, in the next century, against some of the Stuart policies on monopolies. Meanwhile the Island Captain continued to have considerable discretion in the control of trade, though in the 1600s - with an increasing share of day-to-day administration falling on the deputy lieutenants - this function devolved on them, along with other of the Captain's powers. Sir John Oglander, by nature a confirmed free-trader, did not hesitate to control the market when prices got out of hand, but it did run against his instinct: "Corne hath bene at a Hygh Pryce 2 or 3 times whilest I have had Command In the Island, Insomutch as I wase forced to forbidd the exportinge to any Place in the Mayne, Butt this I must tell you by the way that I woold wisch all men to be very Provident in it, my reasons ar these, first you infinitely hindor the Countery In ventinge theyre Corne at the Best rates and thereby stopp a great deale of monyes that woold helpe to sett the poore a woorke, and thereby wher as you think to helpe you may undoo the Poore. Next you will make the meanor sort (whoe are Alwayes apt to Rebell and Mutinie) of People so Insolent, that thei will hindor thereupon the transportation of all victuals & will not suffer Bredd and Beare for the victualinge of owre owne shipes"[1].

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1 CCM. Og. 222a

It was not merely the deputy lieutenants who sought to control the grain market. In January 1638 so much corn had been exported from the Island that prices on the market became distressingly high - 6s 8d a bushel for wheat, 5s for barley, 2s 8d for oats - and the Mayor of Newport gave an order "for the stay of some quantityes of Corne which was engrossed in the Island and came through Newport to be sold for supply of the necessity of the time"[1].

Corn exports, then, leave no documentary trace in the Port Books, and only the occasional stoppage and its accompanying furore testifies to the continuing traffic. However in view of the considerable arable acreage indicated by the various land surveys, grain must have been a staple export from the Island.

Who were the merchants involved with this commerce? The 1569 survey mentioned five or six, all of Newport. The Port Books in the 1560s name eleven Islandersas "merchant English": nine from Newport, one from Brading, and one described as "of Wight".[2] By the 1570s there were three more trading, all of Newport[3]. As might be expected, most of them are to be found

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/16a, p.350

2 Mark, Richard, and Thomas James, William Newnham, John Harris, Stephen March, Richard Erlsman, William Jefferies, Richard Markes, all of Newport; Richard Mountlowe of Brading; and Francis Pieres "of Wight". There was also Philip Andrews "of Whight husbandman" who imported 3 tons of iron from Newhaven (E.190/814/1, f.21^{v}) and brewers like Kent and Thomas, overtly trading in beer but also diversifying their trade (E.190/814/2,f.25)

3 Henry Jolliffe, Richard Newnham, Augustine Novy, all of Newport

among the higher assessments in the subsidy rolls, and among the occupants of various offices in the government of the town. Thomas James for example seems to have been a person of considerable and growing affluence. In the subsidy lists of 1563 and 1568 he was assessed in goods at £12, well above the Newport averages of £7.10.0d and £7 respectively[1]. He lived quite near the town quay, in Holyrood Street[2], in 1568 but he also leased a stitch of land in South Street in 1567[3], and in 1583 his wife Margery leased a house and garden in High Street[4]. By 1592 he was a tenant of a barn and garden in Lugley Street[5]. His store house is mentioned in 1574[6]. He was town bailiff in 1565, 1573, and 1581. His brother Mark, another merchant, held even more town offices: he was highway warden in 1574, constable in 1572 and 1574, and bailiff in 1580 and 1586[7]. Late in 1590 he was one of a syndicate of three who sold to Oliver Knott the 35-ton ship Brave, subsequently used for privateering[8]. Richard,

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1 IWCRO, IW/27, m.5b, and SW/1716, m.3^{v}, respectively

2 Newport Borough MSS., 45/21, f.100

3 Ibid., 45/2, f.26

4 Cambridge University Library, Kk.v.5 (No.2047), f.22^{v}

5 Newport Borough MSS., 45/22, f.120 121^{v}

6 Ibid., 45/21, f.165

7 Not altogether successfully. On 2 May 1587 he was fined ten shillings "pro male gerend. offic. Ballivi" (Ibid., f.358)

8 K.R.Andrews: Economic aspects of Elizabethan privateering (unpublished London University Ph.D. thesis, 1951) p.279

the third of the James family, was a fishmonger[1] and again owned and leased property extensively in the town[2] but is remarkable mainly for his enterprising reclamation lease of "the Ose" waste ground on the east of Newport haven[3]. He was bailiff in 1560, 1564, 1569, 1576, and in addition to his town property he held a croft at Fairlee about a mile north-east of the town[4]. William Newnham, who was bailiff in 1562 and 1577, was a farmer[5] whose town shop, to judge from his Rouen imports, combined a mercer's business with general household supplies[6]. He had property in Lugley Street in 1567[7] and land on the south side of High Street in 1583[8].

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1 His wife was fined for forestalling the fish market in 1568 (View of Frankpledge, in Newport Borough MSS., 45/21 f.91^{v} et seqq.) and in 1580 he was presented "for his cheste wth salte & planks under his windowe & pentise" (ibid., f.263)

2 Newport Borough MSS., 45/21, ff.285 et seqq.; 45/22, ff.120 et seqq.

3 Discussed in connection with town harbour development, below

4 Cambridge University Library, Kk.v.5., f.25

5 In 1559 he had a farm and 40 acres at Whitwell (P.R.O. SP.12/7/61)

6 E.g. prunes, drinking glasses, "xj grosse trencheres of the comon sorte", paper, thread, fustian (E.190/814/1)

7 In 1567 he was presented for winnowing corn in the street (Newport Borough MSS., 45/21, f.79)

8 Cambridge University Library, Kk.v.5, f.51^{v}

The Tudor merchants were, not surprisingly, at the richer end of the social range; and the same is equally true of their counterparts under the early Stuarts. Carrying the flag for the James family by this time was Richard James junior, who was town bailiff in 1603 and Mayor in 1612. He traded with French ports, importing such items as buckram, writing paper, and resin in the 1630s[1]. Then there was Eustace Mann who retired to the Island after being a ship's captain in the East Indies trade[2], bought Osborne manor from the Lovibonds[3], reportedly for £1800[4], in 1634; and served as a commissioner of sewers, helping to advise Bevis Thelwall on the sea defences in Brading harbour and Sandown Bay[5]. He worked the Newfoundland fishing grounds, importing fish and train oil. One of his trading partners was Robert Newland, a salt importer and salvage merchant, who served as town constable in 1614 and Mayor in 1628 and 1636[6].

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1 P.R.O. E.190/824/8

2 CCM.Og. 191 a & b

3 VCH Hants & IW, Vol.5, p.200

4 CCM.Og. 289b

5 Ibid., 234b

6 He died in office, on 25 March 1637

He made much of his money by ships' victualling at the growing port of Cowes in the early 1600s, and earned sour and possibly envious comments in the Oglander notebooks by putting some of these profits into land purchase in the Island. Recording Neland's gift of a hogshead of white wine to Lord Weston, the Lord Treasurer, on his first Island visit as Captain in August 1631, Oglander added the gloss: "The reason that moved Nuland and Jolliff to send in their wine to my Lord Tresuror wase a Pryce[1] they lately before bought undor hand and they Doubted my lord woold cale them to an accoumptt"[2].

Facilities for handling cargoes were improving during the 16th century. The nucleus of Newport harbour was the town quay (letter C of Speed's 1611 plan shown in chapter 1), a snout of land at the tidal limit of the River Medina, at the junction between the fresh-water Medina River from the south-east and the Lukely stream (then known as Somers Brook) from the west. In the late medieval period the sanctity of the haven was maintained by a chain across the river a little way downstream from the quay[3]. The opposite river bank to the quay, on the north-east side, was an area of soft, alluvial ground, covered by the sea at high

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1 Prize

2 CCM. Og. 235b

3 Newport Borough MSS., 45/21, f.287

tide, known as the Ose. Up to about 1542 it was "a place for old botes & crayers to lye in for the use of the towne"[1], but about that time it was leased to Richard James in return "for the wynninge of the said grownde"; and this operation was successfully completed, for the Ose is described in a terrier of 1592 as "inclosed with a banke"[2]. Similarly the land to the north-west of the quay was reclaimed and developed into the built-up area known as Little London[3]. The expansion of mercantile enterprise was mirrored more particularly in the progressive building up of some of the empty land along both limbs of Sea Street, with both dwelling houses and warehouses[4]. The largest of the latter seems to have been the town store house at the south-west angle of the town quay, and occupied at the time of the 1563 terrier by the brewer/merchant William Thomas[5]. The quay itself was kept in good repair. It was paved for the first time in 1572[6] and in 1587-8 it was spread with gravel[7]. Efforts were made to see that its area did not become cluttered with unloaded cargoes awaiting collection.

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/21, f.287

2 Ibid., 45/22, f.120

3 VCH Hants & IW, Vol.5, p.253

4 C.f. the 1563 terrier (ed. Father S.F.Hockey) in Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club & Archaeological Society Vol.19, part 3 (1957) at pp.236-7; and the 1592 terrier in Newport Borough MSS., 45/22, ff.120-122v

5 Father S.F.Hockey, op.cit. (1957), 1563 terrier. This is the long building in the foreground of the Winchester College drawing (see chapter 1) which is a view from the north

6 Newport Borough MSS., 45/21, f.152

7 Ibid., 45/2, f.42v

In 1571 Anthony Dillington was fined "pro lapidibus et meremiis jacent super le key"[1], and in 1586-7 the town even moved away some paving stones, belonging to the Island Captain Sir George Carey, that were causing an obstruction on the quay[2].

We have already noted in chapter 1 the small size of Island ships at the beginning of our period - Newport's six ships, for example, being of 7 or 8 tons. The average tonnage soon began to increase. When in July 1570 the Island Captain Edward Horsey was told by the Privy Council to take a census of English sailors and ships in port at the Isle of Wight, he resorted to Mead Hole[3] and reported finding several ships, of mostly modest tonnage: the Bowe of 60 tons, belonging to John Vaughan[4]; an unnamed ship of 40 tons owned by William Barton[5]; and the 40-ton Elnor of Thomas Betten[6]: all of these, local merchants. There were in fact two much larger ships at Mead Hole but their connection with the Isle of Wight was incidental. One was of 200 tons, "a hulke that was ones Kyles" arrested for piracy about fifteen months

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/21, f.136

2 Ibid., 45/2, f.42

3 A creek between East Cowes and Wootton: see further under "Piracy', pp. 191-3

4 A gentleman promoter who had dealings with pirates (see further under 'Piracy', pp. 183-4)

5 A Newport ale-brewer (Newport Borough MSS., 45/21, f.1)

6 Of Whippingham (ibid., f.229^{v})

earlier, and not now seaworthy[1]; the other was the Carricke Sidney, 160 tons. This was the property of the Lord Deputy of Ireland, Sir Henry Sidney, and a few others, but it was in process of being sold to a syndicate led by Ralph Lane[2]. Its fittings had been sold separately, but some of the ordnance belonged to the Queen, and so the ship had been worked through Milford, Penzance, and Falmouth to the Isle of Wight, where the guns were to be handed over to the Captain, Edward Horsey, for the Queen's use in the Island[3]. These two larger ships then were not typical of the local fleet. Horsey did mention that "there are divors of the best barkes belonging to this Isle, And their men in them abroade a fishinge which we dayly looke for"[4]; and he did not list the shipping of less than 30 tons. "The nomber of suche as gayne theire lyvinge by the sea here in this Isle be aboute viij or ix skore, of the which there is about xl[tie] presently abroade in fishinge"[5].

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1 P.R.O. SP.12/71/54, I: list of ships as Meadhole, 23 July 1570

2 He took part with Grenville on the Roanoke voyage in 1585

3 Historical Manuscripts Commission: Report on the manuscripts of Lord de L'Isle and Dudley preserved at Penshurst Place: Vol. 1 (1925) pp. 411-412;
Newport Borough MSS., 45/21, f.229[v]

4 SP.12/71/54, I

5 SP.12/71/54. This may be compared with the Island total of 220 sailors (and 13 ships) supplied for the French war in 1345 (VCH Hants & IW, Vol. 5, p.364)

The next occasion for local shipping to be counted was in 1588. When in the spring of that year a series of appeals for ships went out to the various coastal towns the Isle of Wight was invited to supply a ship and a pinnace[1]. The Captain Sir George Carey replied on 6 April that the Island could not meet this commitment, as it had no ship above 20 tons, and Newport was only a poor, market town[2]. In fact the Island finally provided five ships: in addition to the well-known instance of Gilbert Lee's ship the Rat[3] for which he claimed six weeks' service against the Spaniards, four ships - Merget, Elizabeth, Raphael, and Flyboate - are listed among Burghley's papers as receiving pay for such service[4]. This corresponds with the number of ships known to have been based on Newport at that time and listed by Miss Jean Wiggs[5]. She also quotes figures for the average tonnage of Newport ships:

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1 Acts of the Privy Council, ~~Eliz. I, vol. 7 (Council Office Series, p. 194)~~ xvi (1588) p.10, 1 April 1588

2 P.R.O. SP.12/209/71, Carey to Walsingham

3 Ibid., SP.12/219/58

4 Historical Manuscripts Commission: Report on the Manuscripts of the Marquess of Salisbury at Hatfield... Vol.3, p.341, no.707B

5 Miss Jean L. Wiggs unpublished M.A. thesis for Southampton University (1955): The seaborne trade of Southampton in the secon d half of the sixteenth century, Section V (Privateering)

Year beginning Michaelmas	1565	1573	1578	1585	1588	1593	1600
No. of ships	5	8	7	2	4	3	2
Average tonnage	16.5	32.2	15.9	108.0**	34.0	12.0	15.0

** In this year the George of 200 tons came in from Newfoundland with fish for Sir George Carey

Apart from confirming the prevailing small tonnage of Newport ships, these figures provide an interesting comparison with ships from Southampton. Up to 1573 Newport was very little below the average Southampton tonnage, but after that the disparity is very noticeable. Was the Island's light tonnage caused by restricted harbour facilities or by limitations of merchants' capital? It seems likely that Newport could accommodate quite large ships: the 200-ton George cited in the Wiggsthesis is a case in point; and Carey's converted prize Commander was of the same size[1]; though it is not certainly known that these in fact came up to the quay at Newport, for the haven included the whole of the tidal river down to Cowes. There was probably enough depth of water at the town quay[2] but the manoeuvring of 200-ton ships in the inner harbour would have been tiresome and time-consuming.

1 P.R.O., HCA 25/2, pkt.5, 29 January 1586/87

2 2.45 to 2.6 metres in 1971 (see chapter 1)

There must have been inducements for any local merchant to put his capital into more and smaller ships rather than high-tonnage vessels, but it remains possible that restriction of capital may have been an important factor. The size of Island ships remained fairly small throughout the period 1558-1642, as can be seen if Miss Wiggs's table is continued on the basis of 17th-century figures since given in Mr. Lamb's thesis[1]:

Year	1602	1613	1619	1637
Average tonnage (Newport ships)	11.0	14.5	18.0	18.5

At the time of Buckingham's survey of available shipping in July 1626 the Isle of Wight was reported as having ten ships, the largest being 70 tons[2]. This tally compared quite well with Portsmouth and Gosport, though it was dwarfed in size and numbers by the West Country ports. By 14 January 1629 however a muster book of ships and seamen within

1 David Frank Lamb: unpublished M.Phil. thesis for Southampton University (1972): The seaborne trade of Southampton in the first half of the seventeenth century, appendix D 'Analysis of shipping'. This gives separate tables for incoming and outgoing shipping, so, to harmonize with Miss Wiggs's table, an average of Mr. Lamb's two tables is given; the figures coming respectively from pp.391 & 419; 393 & 421; 403 & 428; 406 & 430

2 VCH Hants & IW, Vol.5, p.379

the vice-admiralty of the Isle of Wight[1] listed 24 ships of various kinds, 33 small passage boats, and 184 sailors - almost the same as in Horsey's census of 1570. By this time however there were some larger ships in evidence. Island shipping figuring in the register book of warrants for issuing letters of marque shows the following tonnages[2]:

	Tonnages				
Port	150	100	60	50	40
COWES	1	-	-	1	-
NEWPORT	-	2	2	2	1

Towards the end of the period 1558-1642 a significant part of the Island's external trade took the form of victualling passing ships[3], and this trade is reflected in the noticeable growth of Cowes during the period, from a few scattered houses into a cohesive town. The settlement had begun with the building in about 1539 of forts at West and East Cowes[4], and these proved to be the necessary catalyst for

1 P.R.O., SP.16/132/20

2 SP.16/130/pp.7, 17, 27, 29, & 37 (November 1628 to December 1629)

3 SP.16/205/55

4 SP.1/151/pp.159-160

urban growth. Although the East Cowes blockhouse was ruined by 1586[1] Edward Horsey had on 13 November 1576 reported on the state of West Cowes with a view to its repair[2]; and the protection of the castle's guns - the "loud thunder" of Leland's famous reference - made the mouth of the Medina that much safer for shipping to lie at anchor. Ships led to victualling, bartering, and the gradual appearance of storehouses, shops, and houses. There are occasional glimpses of this early settlement. A George Pratt, who was born there in about 1611 and died in 1693, was reported as saying that he could remember when there were only seven houses there: three were "at the north side of the field or mead, adjoyning to Carvey Lane[3]. Two other houses, he said, were "west of the High way to the Castle". The spread of houses towards the castle was indeed causing some Government concern, and in January 1625 the Surveyor for Hampshire was asked to investigate "tenements lately erected without warrant" on the waste ground near the castle[4]. The matter was referred to the Island Captain Lord Conway[5] and passed by him to his deputy lieutenants, who reported on 23 February 1625 that there were a few cottages within thirty or forty yards of Cowes Castle, but that

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1 William Camden, op. cit. (1586, 2nd ed. 1806, Vol. 1, p. 174)

2 P.R.O. SP. 12/109/29, I

3 IWCRO: Sketch of the rise & begining of the Sea Port Town of Cowes, a manuscript by Richard Thorold, surveyor of custom there in about 1750. Carvel Lane is today opposite the Red Funnel ferry terminal

4 SP. 14/182/76

5 SP. 14/183/45, I

the remainder were a quarter of a mile away[1]. These two nuclei ran together and by August 1635 a visitor referred to "their new white built Maritime towne of Cowes"[2]. An Island petition dated 23 July that year refers to "one hundred families settled at the Cowes for accommodating strangers"[3], so the development since the seven houses of George Pratt's childhood recollection - approximately in 1620 - had been rapid. The same period falls within the lifetime of Sir John Oglander (1585-1655) who confirms the picture: "I knewe when there wase not above 3 or 4 howses at Cowes, and I wase and am perswaded that if Ower warres and troobles, had not unfortunately hapened itt woold have growen as Famous as Nuport. For it wase by all the Eastron partes of the wordle mutch aprouved as a place fitt for them to victuall, and to make a Randevaus. Where I have seene 300 shipes at an Ancor; and if the countery had butt so mutch discreation as to make good use of that Harbor as first to have an honest man to be Captayne there, to Bwilde storehowses to have, by a Joynt stocke a magasen of all provisions, and to deale with the Dutch to have that their randuvous and to victuall theyre, they need no other markett or meanes to make the Island hapie and fortunate"[4].

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1 P.R.O. SP.14/184/35

2 Brit. Mus., Lansdowne MS.213, p.369

3 SP.16/294/40

4 CCM.Og. 97b

The urban pretensions of Cowes were already being closely watched in Newport, where early in 1641 the Mayor and burgesses produced a petition complaining "that about Forty yeares past, at the East and West Cowes at Newport haven's mouth within three miles of Newport or therabouts there were not wont to be above foure or five houses and noe trading there but a taverne and a victualling house or twoe, and nowe there are about 150 houses, many of them fayre Innes and Tavernes, Bake houses, Brewe houses, Mercers shopps, and many other shopps of trades and occupacons to supply strangers with victuall and all other necessaryes, which dayly doth encreace more and more, wherby the resort of strangers to Newport is soe forestalled by the East and West Cowes that seeldome any come to Newport, and soe as the Cowes have growne in trade Newport hath decayed for this many yeares togeather and nowe is growne out of trade and very poore"[1].

Meanwhile Oglander reflected rather cynically about the newly-rich merchants at Cowes: "Then the Cowes came into request and there they gott many good bargaynes both imported, and exported mutch of owre commodities, settinge their pryses to the Country as they pleased and sellinge itt a gayne at hygh rates, these fedd them with mony and Honnor, Insomutch as now they ar altogethor irrestpectfull of the Country men, proud and sekinge to ingrose theyre Comodities at lowe rates, and them selves to Ingrose it to straungers, and to vent theyre owne Commodities as they themselves please, wealth

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/16a, p.408

getes honnor - & honnor begets Pryde, but I woold be lost to be a trewe Prophett butt I have some reasons, thereby Coniecturable, that in time this Cowes that hath raysed them to wealth and honnor, and bene a meanes for them to gayne by countrymans labour If it be well handled will not only bringe them agayne in statu quo pryus butt olso be an excelent Garnary & storehowse to vent all the country Commodities at good and vendable rates"[1].

Oglander, disliking the politics and puritanism of Newport, was not averse to the town having some competition from Cowes; but the brashness of some of the Cowes merchants evidently grated on him. There is no doubt that the commercial miracle of the first forty years of the 17th century had given Cowes high ideas, and the Mayor of Newport complained in his petition of 1641 "that it is given forth by some of the Inhabitants of Cowes that they will make it a Corporacon"[2].

It remained no more than an ambition. Newport, with its periodic gifts to the Island Captain at Carisbrooke Castle, knew better where the seat of power was.

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1 CCM. Og. 212b-213a

2 Newport Borough MSS., 45/16a, p.408

Piracy

In a period when piracy was commonplace the Isle of Wight acquired during Elizabeth's reign a peculiarly sinister reputation for interference with shipping. No part of the period 1558-1642 was free from Channel piracy, but a graph of recorded incidents would show a time of intense activity from 1565 to 1603. This in turn divides into an earlier phase, up to 1585, dominated by plain piracy and the self-help efforts of merchants to take reprisals; and the period from 1585 to 1603 marked by rather more organized privateering, initiated with letters of marque and culminating in the appraisal of cargoes and the payment of the Lord Admiral's tenths. In many cases however the dividing line between piracy and privateering is difficult to discern.

A fruitful ground for attacks on shipping was provided by wars of various kinds: the French wars of religion, the revolt of the Spanish provinces, and later the English privateering war against Spain. Much of the activity went on under foreign flags, but the polyglot assembly of protestant corsairs that infested the Channel in the 1570s[1] included many English sailors. When in the summer of 1577 a fleet of some fourteen ships of the King of Navarre put in to the Isle of Wight, Sir Amyas Paulet reported to the Queen that the only part of the fleet that was not English was in effect

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1 J.A.Froude: History of England from the fall of Wolsey to the defeat of the Spanish Armada (1901) Vol.9, pp.303-4

the flag[1]. The situation had its irony when English ships were the victims, as when in April 1588 the English pirate Gilbert Lee, sailing his ship Rat under commission from the King of Navarre, captured an English ship with a cargo of wine which he subsequently sold in the Isle of Wight[2]. French Huguenot sailors on the other hand were accustomed to making themselves at home on the Island. When Edward Horsey made his count of shipping at Mead Hole in July 1570 he reported that "the frenche Captins have x sayle of shippes well trymed in warlicke order, and aborde them as I canne Lerne CCC of their Nation aswell Marriners as others"[3]. In December 1569 the Venetian ships Giustiniana and Vergi were only an hour out from the Isle of Wight when they were seized by four armed ships "in the name of the Queen of Navarre and the Prince of Conde"[4]. In 1575 the famous 200-ton Castle of Comfort, with its extended history of privateering ventures, was taken over by an Isle of Wight merchant Henry Jolliffe to operate under licence from the Prince of Conde[5]

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1 Historical MSS. Commission, Calendar of the manuscripts of the Marquess of Salisbury preserved at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire, Vol. 2, 472 (p. 158): Amyas Paulet to the Queen, 6 August 1577

2 P.R.O., HCA. 13/28/f. 24^{v}

3 SP. 12/71/54, I

4 Rawden Brown and G. Cavendish Bentinck (eds.): Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts relating to English affairs existing in the archives and collections of Venice... (Vol. 7, 1558-1580 (1890), No. 472 at p. 444): Alvise Contarini, Venetian ambassador in France, to the Doge and Signory, 17 February 1570

5 K. R. Andrews: Elizabethan Privateering (Cambridge 1964) p. 17

but the Queen got news of this and Horsey was instructed to have the ship laid up in the Island[1]. With Alva's arrival in the Netherlands in 1567 and the consequent intensification of the war there, the 'Sea Beggars' made their presence felt with some indiscriminate raiding of Channel shipping. In 1571 their victims included various Italian merchants, and some ships of the 'Steelyard' company. The merchants were importunate and the Queen was in one of her anti-Flemish moods, so the Council instructed Edward Horsey, along with all the other piracy commissioners, to look to their charges[2]. Horsey did go as far as admitting, in a letter to Burghley on 20 October, that the Prince of Orange's ships were getting out of hand[3].

There was a continuing background, then, of piracy and privateering under foreign flags; but there was also abundant native talent, from various parts of Island society, which deserves closer examination. There were first of all the gentlemen promoters of the kind who financed and sailed their own ships as privateers. One such was Captain Edward Denny who, like many of his kind, seems to have worked on rather slender capital, leaving him vulnerable to any setback. When in September 1577 he brought in to the Isle of Wight two prizes, a French and a Spanish ship, these were impounded by Edward Horsey and Denny himself was required to discharge his crew, lay up his ship, and make his explanations to

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1 Acts of the Privy Council, ~~Eliz. I Vol. 2, p. 388~~ ix (1575-77) p. 32 (23 Oct 1575)

2 ~~Ibid., p. 72~~ APC viii (1571-75) p. 44 (20 Sep. 1571)

3 P.R.O. SP.12/81/50 (20 October 1571)

the Council[1]. Within two months he found it necessary to sell the ship in order to pay his debts[2]. The following March the sale of some of his fish at Newport came under the scrutiny of the piracy commissioners[3]. Apart from his trading activities he does not seem to have had any property links with the Island. Another gentleman, John Vaughan, appears as an owner-captain in June 1569[4], and his 60-ton boat the Bowe was one of those counted at Mead Hole by Horsey in 1570[5]. Something of his volatile character may be judged from his appearance before the bailiffs at Newport in November 1568 for wounding his opponent with a dagger in the course of a fight with a sailor named Edward Clayse[6]. Unlike Denny, Vaughan seems never to have been short of money. His house in Newport was apparently a large one, for a reorganization of the town watches in 1574 specified that "Mr. Vaughanes house as longe as ther are ij howseholdes to paie ij watches as longe as they do dwell in hit"[7]. He also had a house at Ryde, with storage for merchandise[8]. He was involved with

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1 Acts of the Privy Council, ~~Eliz. I, Vol. 4, Council Office series, p. 18~~ × (1577-78) pp. 26-27 (5 September 1577)

2 Ibid., pp. ~~87~~ 91-92 (17 November 1577)

3 SP. 12/123/12, I (24 March 1578)

4 P.R.O., HCA. 13/17

5 SP. 12/71/54, I (23 July 1570)

6 Newport Borough MSS., 45/21, f. 116^{v}. The indictment was that Vaughan "cum pugione suo caput ipsius Edwardi fregit et de eo extraxit sanguinem"

7 Ibid., f. 165

8 SP. 12/71/54, I

one of the ventures of the Castle of Comfort[1] and, whether or not as a result of this, he spent four months in prison in 1574[2]. Later that same summer he was making himself useful to Edward Horsey (and through him to the Council) by scouting for some sign of the Spanish fleet[3]. In October 1581 when Bernardino de Mendoza reported to Philip II that "the pirate Vaughan" was at the Isle of Wight[4] he had four ships, as part of a larger squadron. Vaughan does not appear in the 1563 lay subsidy assessment for the Island, but in 1568 he was assessed at £5 in goods, slightly below the town average of £7[5].

Apart from the gentlemen promoters there were also the more prosperous Newport merchants who mixed piracy with general trading. One of the chief of these was Henry Jolliffe, whom we have already encountered dabbling with the Castle of Comfort. As a merchant he engaged in the Normandy trade, and in the summer of 1576 a French pirate Captain Gilliam captured a ship of his loaded mainly with wine and canvas[6]. Although he was on this occasion

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1 P.R.O. SP.12/71/54, I

2 SP.12/97/23 (? June 1574)

3 Acts of the Privy Council, ~~Eliz. I, Vol. 2, p. 458~~ viii (1571-75) p. 280 (5 Aug 1574)

4 Martin A.S.Hume (ed.): Calendar of Letters and Papers relating to English affairs, preserved principally in the Archives of Simancas: Vol.3 (Elizabeth, 1580-1586), (1896), No.139, p.178; 1 October 1581

5 IWCRO, SW/1716, m.3[v]

6 SP.12/109/3 (6 Sept 1576); APC Eliz., ~~Vol. 3, p. 77~~ ix (1575-77) p. 200 (7 September 1576)

granted letters of reprisal, Gilliam evidently eluded him, for in 1579 he was still petitioning for the recovery of this loss[1]. In 1578 he shared a warehouse in Newport with another local merchant Richard Markes, at which time he made sales of suspected stolen goods - bales of paper to a London merchant, and bell metal which he sold in Lewes - that he had acquired in Newport[2]. In 1581 he acted for Edward Horsey as an entrepreneur to recover a pirated ship for its French owner[3]. The years 1589-90 brought several successful ventures. In 1589 he took a Catholic League ship with a cargo of fish[4] and also captured a Spanish ship which he took into Cork[5]. On 18 June 1590 he intercepted the Renard on a voyage from St. Malo to the Isle of Wight and helped himself to the cargo of canvas, with some loose change and fifty gallons of sack as a bonus[6]. Later that year, in the Brave of the Isle of Wight, he took another French ship[7].

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1 Cal. S.P.Dom. (Addenda) Eliz. 1566-79, p.561 (? May 1579)
2 SP.12/123/12, I (24 March 1578)
3 Brit. Mus., Lansdowne MS.33, No.75, ff.183-183[v]
4 Brit. Mus., Harleian MS. 598
5 Brit. Mus., Lansdowne MS.144, ff.51 and 440
6 Newport Borough MSS., 45/22, f.53
7 P.R.O., HCA/13/29

Another prominent merchant-captain was Thomas Page. He was one of a group of young Island merchants who petitioned about piracy of their cargoes in May 1579[1]. By 1590 he was captain of Sir George Carey's privateer Commander[2], and in 1592 he was sharing with Emmanuel Badd the large town warehouse at Newport quay[3]. He prospered to the extent of becoming bailiff of Newport in 1595[4] but he obviously had a reputation for keeping dubious company, and in 1589 a Newport butcher, John Hallet, told him in public that he was "a Raskall, Roage Knave Theif and that thou hast got thy goodes by theft"[5].

This then was some of the native talent, with money to back it. At another level were the practising pirates who were always described as "of the Isle of Wight" but tended not to stay long in any one place: Baily and White in 1574[6]; Austen and Daye in 1577[7]; Yard and Gaskin in 1578[8]; Nutshawe and Hooper in 1579[9];

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1 Cal. S.P.Dom. (Add.) Elizabeth, [illegible] (1566-79) p.561

2 K.R.Andrews: Elizabethan Privateering (1964) p.250

3 Newport Borough MSS., 45/22, ~~ff.120 et seqq.~~ f.122

4 Ibid. f.157

5 Ibid. f.37

6 APC, ~~Eliz. Vol.2, p.[illegible]~~ viii (1571-75) p.329 (29 December 1574)

7 Ibid., ~~Vol.2, p.122~~ ix (1575-77) p.270 (18 January 1577)

8 Ibid., (10 March 1578) x (1577-78) p.180

9 Ibid., ~~Vol.4, p.[illegible]~~ xi (1578-80) p36 (3 February 1579) and p. ~~[illegible]~~ 83 (19 March 1579)

White and Foster in 1580[1]; Corporall, Sawyer[2], Gisborne, Bord, and Pierce[3] in 1581. The Isle of Wight served as their shop counter, and connections ashore are not easy to trace, though some turn up in surprising contexts. The well-known pirate John Callis[4] for example does not seem to have had a residence on the Island, though he did operate from there; but his German colleague Kurt Hecklenburg, with whom he worked in the 1580s[5], did in fact occupy a house and garden in Lugley Street at Newport in 1583[6].

In the accommodating moral climate for the practice of piracy at this time, these people might at one time be regarded as criminals, at another as benefactors. In 1581 for example Horsey reported to Walsingham that John Story had captured a pirate named Fludd[7]. In 1582 however it was the pirate Story and his crew who were now filling the Newport town prison[8]; as for Fludd, in 1585 Sir George Carey was referring to him as a valiant and skilful pirate "and now in mynde to be an honest man"[9], able to do service against Spain.

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1 APC, ~~Eliz., Vol. 4, p. 774~~ xi (1579-80) p. 420 (17 March 1580)

2 APC ~~Ibid.~~, ~~Vol. 5, p. 294~~ (18 January 1581) xii (1580-81) p. 316

3 Brit. Mus. Lansdowne MS. 33, No. 75

4 David Mathew: 'The Cornish and Welsh pirates in the reign of Elizabeth' in English Historical Review, Vol. 39 (1924), pp. 342-343

5 Brit. Mus., Lansdowne MS. 143, No. 96

6 Cambridge University Library, Kk. v. 5, f. 53

7 SP. 12/150/40 (13 October 1581)

8 HMC, Cal. of Salisbury MSS. at Hatfield, Vol. 2, No. 1254 (pp. 531-532), Horsey to Burghley, 15 November 1582

9 SP. 12/179/36, Carey to Walsingham (June 1585); and Brit. Mus., Lansdowne MS. 158, f. 66 (letter from Carey, 25 June 1585)

Provisioning a privateer was a costly undertaking[1] and it may be wondered how the ordinary practising pirate, without merchant or joint stock backing, was able to get to sea. An interesting illustration of the potential rewards of ingenuity and duplicity is seen in the methods of George Bord who in 1581 found himself at Cowes with a ship and with something of a crew, but without provisions. In May that year another pirate, Nicholas Gisborne, arrived at Cowes with a French prize containing a Flemish-owned cargo. He was closely followed by the French owner of the captured ship, who duly applied to Edward Horsey for restitution. Horsey referred the matter to Henry Jolliffe, who had some experience of brokerage in such matters[2] and had the additional qualification of being able to speak French. Jolliffe now passed the commission on to George Bord, who successfully arranged for his crew to seize Gisborne's captured ship while Gisborne was entertaining him to supper below hatches. Bord now transferred to his own ship all that was left of the Flemish cargo in the prize, delivered the ship itself to Newport for the French owner, and went on to Poole to sell the cargo. He now needed provisions, so he returned to Newport to collect his fee from Jolliffe. Jolliffe in fact received £52 from the French owner, out of which he paid Bord £10 in cash along with "ij caste peeces of Ordenance called minniones and in vytalles an oxe & ½ of bred and ij hogeshedes of beer"[3].

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1 K.R.Andrews: Elizabethan Privateering (1964) pp.45-50

2 R.G.Marsden: Select Pleas in the Court of Admiralty (Selden Society), Vol.xi, pp.164-165 (1897)

3 Brit. Mus., Lansdowne MS.33, f.183^{v}

Jolliffe had made a quick and easy profit, but in fact Bord now had just what he needed. He put to sea, and returned to the Island six days later with a captured French prize serving as his pinnace. Putting to sea yet again, within two days he had taken a Spanish ship: he now had a fleet of three. He next assimilated another Cowes ship as consort, and when last heard of he was planning an attack on two 100-ton French ships at St. Helens.

Loot, once acquired, found a ready market in the Isle of Wight. Such shore-based support had long since been recognized and condemned by the Council. A proclamation of 1565 complained that "the said pyrattes...are at the handes of a nomber of disordred persons, dwellinge within or nere the havens, crekes and landinge places of this our realme, secretly refresshed with vitualles, furnyshed with munytion and other necessaries, and sundrye other wayes by byeng of the stollen wares ayded and relyved"[1]. There were in fact several places in the Isle of Wight that served as a nexus of stolen merchandise and legitimate trade. The examinations by the piracy commissioners show that many of the cargoes coming in to Newport town quay were of dubious origin[2]. Thomas Becket's house at Cowes was another disposal point for cargoes of all kinds. Becket was apparently at one time an Admiralty officer. When, on the sale of the Carricke Sidney in

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vii (1558-70) p.278

1 APC, ~~Eliz., Vol. 1, pp. 280-281~~ (3 November 1565)

2 SP.12/123/12, I

1570, the royal ordnance aboard was put into the custody of Edward Horsey on the Isle of Wight[1], it was Becket who received the guns[2] from Thomas Finche (one of the former owners). A letter from Jasper Swift to the Earl of Lincoln in 1577 reported the drying, sorting, and housing of 1346 hides at Thomas Becket's house[3]; and Swift was himself at some time an Admiralty officer[4]. On 5 June 1581 he was working in consultation with an agent of Burghley's on the Isle of Wight, planning the arrest of some pirates[5]. On the other hand, Becket's house was in 1588 the scene of some trading over stolen cargo brought in by a pirate[6]. A possible explanation of the paradox will be discussed later.

It was common practice also for trading to take place actually on board the prize, and this was the method used by Gilbert Lea in 1588[7].

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1 HMC, Report on the MSS. of Lord de L'Isle & Dudley... Vol. 1 (1925) pp. 411-412

2 Newport Borough MSS., 45/21, f. 229^{v}

3 HMC, Calendar of the MSS. of the Earl of Salisbury..at Hatfield House Vol. 2, No. 480 (p. 161), 25 September 1577

4 Brit. Mus., Lansdowne MS. 39, No. 52 (23 December 1583)

5 Ibid., MS. 33, f. 186

6 P.R.O., HCA. 13/28, f. 25

7 Ibid.

In fact the Island had a centre for both shipboard and shore-based trading in stolen cargoes, at Mead Hole[1]. This was a not particularly sheltered anchorage and cluster of victualling and warehouse buildings ashore, between East Cowes and Wootton Creek(see, on next page, a map of about 1590, Brit. Mus. Maps 18.D.III). Knolles's survey in 1559 described it as a mile west of Shofleet Creek and two miles west of Wootton Creek with "fayre londinge at full see iij quarters of a mile towardes the est at a faddom water and at lowe water dry and osy"[2]. The survey of Island trade in 1569 referred to it, along with Yarmouth, Cowes, and St. Helens, as an anchorage apparently already used for "the stayeng of the shipes as well Englyshe as Straungers...be reason of contrarie wind"[3]; and it was obviously the main anchorage at the time of Horsey's shipping census in 1570. By this time it had become a byword for felony[4]. There was the Southampton fishmonger who in 1577 protested that his barrel of eels was "no Mead Holle goods nor thief-stolen"[5]; and a deposition in the Admiralty Court in 1589 explained that "meade holle...is a

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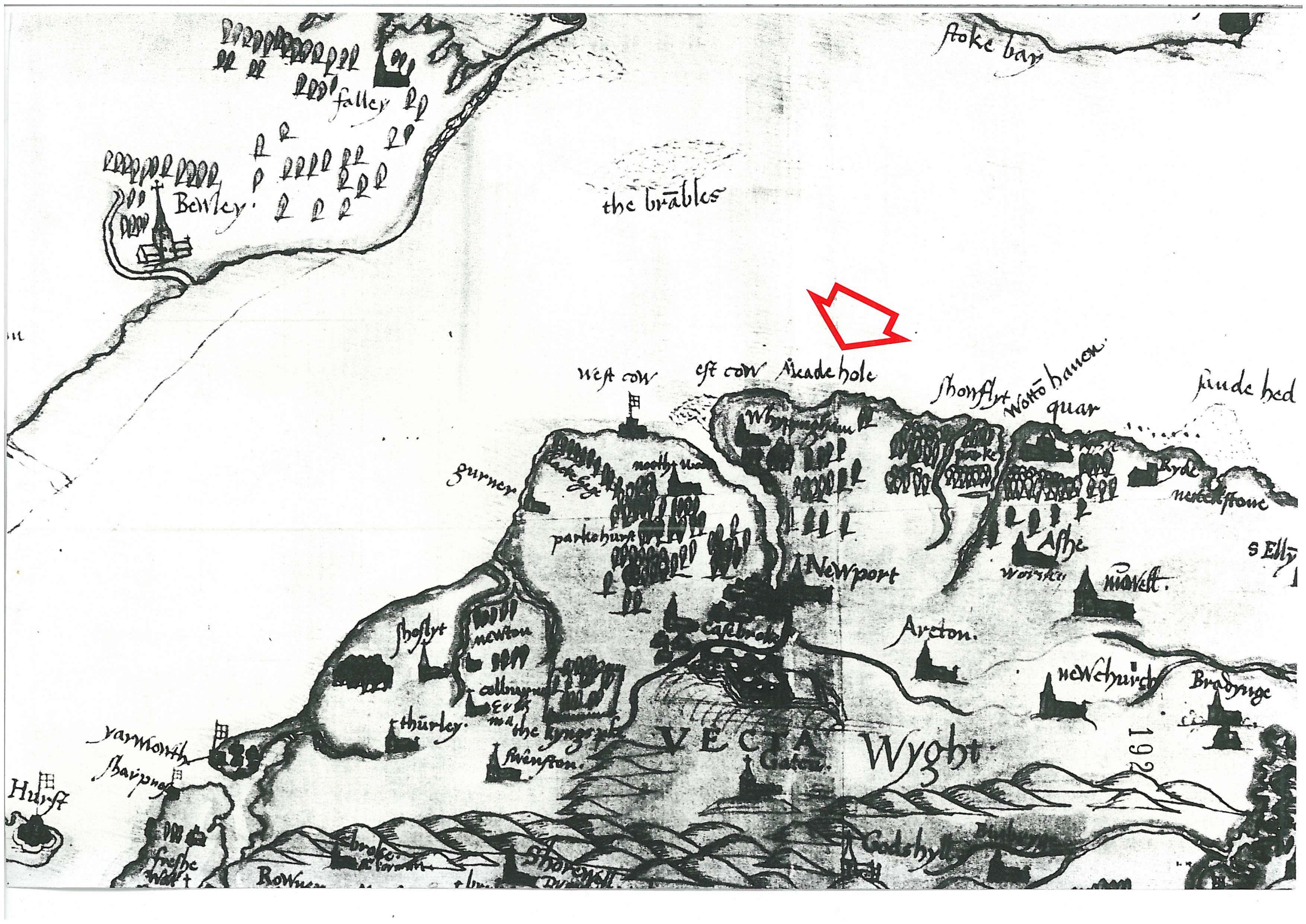
1 O.G.S.Crawford: 'Mead Hole and Shoesflete' in Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club... Vol.17, pt.2 (1951), pp.112-115

2 Dartmouth MSS., f.3[v]

3 Brit. Mus., Lansdowne MS.11, f.72

4 Studland Bay near Poole was a similar pirates' depot: see C.L'Estrange Ewen: 'Organized piracy round England in the sixteenth century' in Mariner's Mirror, Vol.35 (1949) pp.29-42

5 O.G.S.Crawford (1951), loc. cit.


falley
Bewley
the brables
stoke bay
west cow
est cow
Meadehole
Shonflyt
Wotto hauen
quar
Ryde
Asshe
Newport
Arcton.
Shoflyt
newton
thurley.
VECTA
Wyght
Hurst
Yarmouth
Shorwell
Godshyll
Bradynge
1626

place not accustomed for marchanntes to make salle of goodes and merchandizes in....but rather suche as mak salle theare are suspected to have come evill by the goodes they there sell"[1]. In 1570 the Spanish ambassador, having sent an agent to the Isle of Wight "to see what was going on there", passed on his report to Philip II: "In a town on the island called Medol there is a great fair of spices, wines, wool, saffron, oil, soap, woad, and a great number of other goods stolen from your Majesty's subjects and some from French and Portuguese"[2]. Another witness of one of these Island markets, in 1581, wrote: "Theyr weare above 30 bottes Abord the man of warre his pryes the pynes and the shipes so foull and soche a Thronge as if it had bene at a feare byinge and sellinge and barteringe. The Seayllores browght hoes Reddy mad doblyttes mantelles and gownes and towke lynen Clothe and wollen Clothe for the same in barter and some monny some wares. The golldsmythe with his wyselles in lyke maner So that he is no man in the shipe withowt he hathe a whisell and Acheyn Abowt his necke. The shewmaker with his shewes pompes and pantafelles. The brewer with his beere the backer with his bread and the boucher with his bifes Callefes and muttenes, and Eavery deayllor with his shares lyinge before him, on man bargeninge with this man one other with that mane and the bottes that gave attendance and browght men abord wolld not goe from on shipe unto Another, but he wolld have xij^{d}. So that me thawght when I was amongeste them That I had bene in a goodly Feare"[3].

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1 P.R.O., HCA.13/28, f.25

2 M.A.S.Hume (ed.): Calendar of Letters and State Papers relating to English affairs, preserved principally in the Archives of Simancas, Vol.2, Elizabeth 1568-1579 (1894), No.189, p.245, Guerau de Spes to the King, London 12 June 1570

3 Brit. Mus., Lansdowne MS.33, f.184^{v}

Foreign merchants must have felt a sense of despair at the apparent ease with which cargoes were plundered. In 1570 after the latest prize, a very rich cargo of wool, had been taken in to the Island, the Spanish ambassador lamented: "If ships continue to come freely in this way trade will simply be to enrich the heretics"[1]. At times the pirates seemed to have the Solent to themselves. "Je vous diray aussi", complained Henry of Navarre's ambassador M. de Segur writing from Southampton to Sir Francis Walsingham in 1584, "que l'embouchure de cette havre est si bien garde par les pirates, que hier un passagier de Jersey, se voulant mettre en mer, fut attaque et constraint de rentrer dans ceste riviere. Je ne pouvois prendre ung plus mauvais lieu pour m'embarquer que cestuicy, car la plus part des pirates de ce pays sont entre l'Isle de Wick et la Poole, ou il fault necessairement que je passe; et quelques navires de la Royne estants a Portsmouth deliveroyent toute cette coste de ces brigans, qui ne se contentent de voler ceulx qui sont en mer, mais d'avantage viennent dans les havres piller les marchands et mesmes jusques devant ceste ville qui est dix ou onze milles dans terre[2]".

He was not exaggerating. In 1581 a Spanish ship from Andalusia was taken by pirates from beneath the guns of Cowes Castle[3], causing

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1 M.A.S.Hume, op.cit. (1894), No.223, p.283; Guerau de Spes to the King, London, 15 October 1570

2 J.A.Froude, op.cit. (1901), Vol.xi, p.471

3 M.A.S.Hume (ed.), Cal. of Letters and Papers..in the Archives of Simancas, Vol.3, Elizabeth, 1580-1586 (1896) No.178, p.235, Bernardino de Mendoza to the King, 11 December 1581

the ambassador to complain forcefully to the Council. This ship was probably the Greyhound, about which there is a grudging Government minute that there appeared to be no alternative to making restitution[1]. The Isle of Wight however was territory in which the Government's fiat would not necessarily prevail. There was for instance the case of Nicholas Vincent, a French merchant whose ship was taken by pirates and brought to the Island. Vincent, who had been set adrift in the ship's boat, survived the ordeal and subsequently obtained an order from the Privy Council for restitution of the ship and cargo. Arriving hopefully at the Island with this document, he was forcibly carried aboard the pirate ship, had the Council's letter taken from him, and was thankful to escape with his life[2]. About the same time, on 5 April 1587, a Danish ship carrying wheat and bacon to Rouen was captured by another pirate near the French coast and brought in to the Isle of Wight. The owners in their complaint to the Admiralty Court did not conceal their view that the ultimate responsibility was with Sir George Carey the Island Captain[3]. The pirate, Thomas Evans, detained the Danish ship at the Island for five weeks, in the course of which the crew had their money and clothing stolen, as well as all the grain and a large part of the bacon. Finally, with the ship and the exiguous remains of the cargo, they were allowed to leave with Carey's permission. This voyage was not a long one: still within sight of the Island, they were captured and then taken into Falmouth by one of John Killegrew's ships "quae consulte, ut apparet, eos subsequebatur".

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1 Cal. S.P.Dom. Add. Elizabeth, 1580-1625 (? 1581) p. 48

2 Brit. Mus., Lansdowne MS. Ibid., 30/57 (? 1587)

3 Brit. Mus., Lansdowne MS. 162, f. 63: "ad portum Angliae & iland Wicht insolenter abducta, in praefectura Georgii Care Serenissimae Reginae gubernatoris eius loci...."

The inference of collusion on the part of Carey may in this case have been unjustified, but he and his predecessor were undoubtedly very involved with the flourishing piracy round the Island. The reason was basically an administrative one. The legal redress open to an aggrieved ship-owner was either an appeal to the Admiralty Court and thus down to the Vice-Admiral; or else to the Privy Council and thus down to the Lord Lieutenant or in this case the Captain of the Isle of Wight. Edward Horsey (Captain 1565-1583) and Sir George Carey (1583-1603) combined the two offices and were thus well placed to block or at least interminably delay any litigation that might be launched in their direction. The office of Captain and of Vice-Admiral did not automatically go together; but Knolles's survey in 1559, coming immediately after the death in 1558 of the previous Vice-Admiral, Richard Cooke of Sandown[1], recommended that the Island Captain should "be vyceadmirall as the Capteynes heretofore hath bene"[2]. This recommendation was not adopted in the case of Richard Worsley, immediately succeeding[3], but it was written into the appointments of Horsey[4] and Carey[5], and it so happened that both were resident mostly on the Island, and inclined to make use of the position. Repeatedly one finds that many of the lines of

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1 P.R.O., SP.11/13/65, Thomas Tresham to the Queen (6 September 1558)

2 Dartmouth MSS., f.13

3 Pat.2 Eliz., part xv (8 April 1560)

4 Pat.7 Eliz., part v (6 August 1565)

5 Pat.25 Eliz., part ix (6 July 1583)

inquiry into local piracy lead to the Captain's study at Carisbrooke Castle. Carey had the advantage of being a kinsman of the Queen and a business associate of the Lord Admiral[1], whereas his predecessor Horsey had to live more on his wits. Much of the piracy and privateering encouraged or condoned by the Captain was of course within the ambit of Government policy, but when particularly important interests were offended pressure was on the Privy Council and was duly passed on to Carisbrooke Castle. Early in 1580 parts of pirated cargoes from ships returning from the East found their way into the Island, and the Council ordered Horsey to set about finding who was buying this stolen property[2]. A cloud of suspicion was growing in London, and in June 1581 Walsingham passed on to Burghley a report just in from Julius Caesar "by the which yt appeareth that the Yle of Wyght is a great favorer of Pyrates which groweth pryncypally thorrowghe the corruption of Sir Ed. Horseys Lieutennante...Sir Edward him selve promisethe to use all care in fynding owt sooche as are any waye to be charged and to offere them up to iustice that they may receyve punishment according to ther demerytes"[3]. Burghley would already have been well informed however, for earlier that month he had received a report from an informant, John Johnson, who had spent a short time on the Island sampling various shipboard markets and apparently spying out for particular cargoes that had been lost. One night he had supper in Newport with several of Sir

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1 On Carey's manipulation of the Admiralty Court see K.R.Andrews: Elizabethan Privateering (1964) pp.96-97

2 APC ~~Eliz., Vol 4~~ (15 July 1580) xii (1580-81) p.100

3 P.R.O. SP.12/149/53, Walsingham to Burghley, 25 June 1581

Edward Horsey's men and with the local merchant Henry Jolliffe. The conversation got on to the subject of piracy, with Jolliffe speaking "crewell wordes agaynst pyrattes and them that had Anny maner of deayllinge with them...and Sir edward Horseyes men in lyke order beinge at Soper with me ussing the lyke spyches sayinge That they wolld not for xx£ anny of Sir Edwardes men showld be seene or known to goe Abord of A man of ware, neather showlld theyr any man of theylland goe A bord, if theyre lyfftenant showlld knowe of Any it wear bettor for them, what eaver they be, to goe a honderethe mylles"[1]. The next day Jonson, posing as a prospective buyer, went aboard a pirate prize. Among the crowd of people on the ship he was startled to recognize Henry Jolliffe, eight of Horsey's men, and several Island gentlemen. "They wear Abashed to see me", Jonson reported, "and I wear muche more Abashed to see them, to Remember theyr wordes the night befor". Jolliffe was seen to slip quickly down to the captain's cabin, and with equal speed Jonson climbed into one of the dinghies to be rowed ashore; but the boatman was recalled just as he was casting off. There followed a tense scene down in the captain's cabin, in which one of the pirate's chief advisers was Horsey's servant William Hopton, described by Jonson as "A great dealler with pyrattes"[2]. Finally, through Jonson's astuteness and through the intercession of another of Horsey's men, the prisoner was released under oath not to name names - though he seems to have done this with abandon in his letter to Burghley.

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1 Brit. Mus., Lansdowne MS. 33, f.184^{v}

2 Ibid., f.185. Hopton was not new to the trade, he being a former servant of George Fenner (SP. 12/123/12, I)

"The Captaynes and theyre Companies", he continued, "dowthe deally goe on shore at the Wyght, and if Any man come on shore neer whear they are they by and by have warninge[1]. If it pleayes Sir Edward Horsey, he may esely Cawse them to be stayed, for if the lifftenant at Any tym dowthe send for him Ashore he dowth come strayght or if Any of his men dowthe send for eather bord or preese or Any of theayr companie they straight come withowt Any feare and if Any stranger Come then have they word by and by, The comon Mareneres douthe Come dely on shore they are esely to be come by, but not The principalles"[2].

Another of Horsey's associates was "the pirate Vaughan"[3] of the Spanish diplomatic dispatches. Examined by the piracy commissioners in 1578, John Vaughan pleaded that he had sailed in the Castle of Comfort with the knowledge of Edward Horsey. He had also accompanied Horsey on his diplomatic mission to the Netherlands in 1577, and used this alibi to plead ignorance of the alleged delivery of a load of stolen salt at his house in the Isle of Wight[4]. Obviously Horsey was on personal terms with the local gentlemen promoters, and prudently dealt through his deputies with the more

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1 On the security of pirate anchorages see David Mathew: 'The Cornish and Welsh Pirates in the Reign of Elizabeth' in English Historical Review Vol.39 (1924), p.337

2 Brit. Mus., Lansdowne MS.33, f.186

3 Calendar of Spanish State Papers...at Simancas, Vol.3, No.139 (p.178), 1 October 1581

4 SP.12/123/12, I (24 March 1578)

ruffianly element at Mead Hole. This should not obscure the fact that he was reasonably diligent in his duties as Vice-Admiral. With a mixture of adroitness and guile he neatly took possession of a Spanish treasure ship in Southampton water during the general bullion seizures in December 1568[1]; he used patience and persistence with obdurate characters like Captain Sconwall, reluctant to surrender their prizes[2]; and in 1577 he achieved something of a coup with the arrest of John Callis and his crew[3]. Nevertheless he provided the necessary unhostile climate for the dubious commercial practices that flourished under his rule.

His successor Carey had, in addition to greater social status, the oriflamme of the privateering war to invest with a sense of patriotism activities that were also personally profitable. He too could and did ensure that some piratical practices in the Island were not open to the full blast of legal sanctions; but the general pattern changes from Channel ventures by small promoters, to give way to more heavily capitalized privateering ventures by Carey and his Island associates into the Caribbean. Only when it came to

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1 SP.12/48/62 (20 December 1568)

2 SP.12/85/24 (22 January 1572); APC ~~Eliz., Vol.2, p.91~~ viii (1571-75) p.65 (2 February 1572)

3 APC ~~Eliz., Vol.3, p.184~~ ix (1575-77) p.337 (7 May 1577) and p. ~~189~~ 357 (31 May 1577)

arguing over the spoils brought back to the Island did he prove as unreceptive as Horsey had been to the claims of aggrieved merchants. Damaskette and the merchants of St. Jean de Luz had a good legal case; but their captured ship, renamed Commander, remained in the Isle of Wight, flaunting Carey's colours and carrying one of the Newport town drums[1]. Like Horsey before him, Carey was familiar enough with pirates: the episode of Callis's cargo of French linen cloth in 1585 is evidence enough of this[2].

With the end of Elizabeth's reign the age of piracy had passed as far as the Island was concerned. Peace with Spain was enough of a damper, and with the death in 1603 of George Carey (then 2nd Lord Hunsdon) the privateering voyages from the Island[3] lost their main source of capital. The new Captain, the Earl of Southampton, after a brief experiment of residence at Carisbrooke Castle, soon lapsed into occasional visits to the Island. Piracy round the Island continued, of course. Occasional prize cargoes came in to Cowes, such as Captain Scras's load of sugar and tobacco in 1629[4]; and Sir John Oglander had a boat-load of butter and cheese taken by pirates in 1635[5]; but the elaborate shore-based organization had gone with the last of the buccaneering Governors, and there were also now more warships in home waters.

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/2, f.44^{v}

2 K.R.Andrews: Elizabethan Privateering, (1964) pp.96-97

3 Ibid., pp.250-251

4 SP.16/140/26 (7 April 1629)

5 SP.16/300/61 (30 October 1635)

Summary on piracy

Piracy as a major factor in the Island's society and economy was confined mostly to the Captaincies of Sir Edward Horsey (1565-1583) and Sir George Carey (1583-1603), each of whom in turn was a key factor in creating the necessary conditions. Both combined the office of Captain and of Vice-Admiral of Hampshire and were thus in a position to neutralize any Council or Admiralty action to control piracy; and both were suited by temperament (Horsey also by experience) for boisterous maritime ventures. The disturbed political conditions of the later 1500s provided the necessary flow of heavily-laden shipping in the Channel as a target for raiding with some colour of national policy to back it.

The promoters of piratical ventures came from various parts of Island society: sailors, with little capital or reserves, and living on their wits; ambitious town merchants; and the Captain of the Island himself.

Apart from being an interesting phenomenon in isolation, this spate of local piracy has two significant aspects. One is the infusion of wealth into the Island economy, reflected in the expansion of Newport and in a general growth of population. The other is in the fact that this was a demonstration of the effective concentration of power in the Captaincy or Governorship in the late 16th century. The modification of this in the later part of the period is discussed in another chapter.

CHAPTER 5

INDUSTRIES

The leather trades

The Isle of Wight was a natural area to support a flourishing leather industry, with all the materials ready to hand. The Newport meat market was a good source of cattle hides, and materials for the main tanning processes were abundant: chalk for the lime pits used in de-hairing the hides, and oak bark for the actual tanning.

In common with most Tudor industries the leather trade was closely controlled. At the time of Knolles's survey of the Island in 1559 the centoners of St. Helens urged the Government "to take order that hides may be solde in the market at resonabell prisis to the tanner, and that the tanner sell agayn resonabell prises to the shomaker, and that the shomaker serve the people agayn of (every ?) accordingli"[1]. Eventually however the main concern of the Knolles commission was to avoid pluralization of crafts; and it recommended "that no man kepinge a tanne hous shall kepe tillage of husbondry nether bake nor brewe to sell"[2]. Administratively there seem to have been two advantages in such a course: in such

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1 P.R.O. SP.12/7/60

2 Dartmouth MSS., f.13[v]
Richard Worsley: History ofthe Isle of Wight (1781) transcribing Richard Worsley's 1560 patent as Captain (appendix 39, p.cvii) misreads the clause as "toune house"

a heavily capitalized trade as tanning, part-time work must have been inefficient; and secondly, casual farmyard tanning was hard to control. There are nevertheless signs that tanners continued to dabble in husbandry[1].

Within the liberty of Newport the leather trade was controlled by two officials responsible to the bailiffs and burgesses: a searcher and sealer of leather, and a registrar. The searcher's duties were involved mainly with examination of the quality of the tanned hides. Tanning processes, especially with heavy shoe leather, could last up to twelve months[2] in the course of which the hides needed constant and skilful vigilance. With so much capital tied up in the hides, the tanner must occasionally have been tempted to curtail the process, or else to let through a hide that had suffered from a misjudgement on his part during the tanning. As a safeguard, he was not allowed to sell a finished hide until it had been inspected and approved by the searcher. This was not particular to the Isle of Wight, for it was merely a consequence of the Leather Act of 1563[3]. The point of interest here is that there is every sign of the control being very stringently applied in the Island. The Court Leet jury reported at Newport on 19 October 1564 that "decem pelles voc. hydes & unum pellis voc. a calveskynne" had been detected as not properly tanned

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1 For example on 7 March 1562 the Newport tanner John Westmill leased some farm land in Carisbrooke, Whitcombe, and Gatcombe (IWCRO, Car D/179)

2 L.A. Clarkson: The organization of the English leather industry in the late 16th and 17th centuries in Economic History Review (2nd series) Vol. 13, pp. 245-256 and especially p. 246. Henceforth abbreviated as Clarkson (1960)

3 5 Eliz. I, c. 8

according to the statute; and the same stricture was applied to a skin " voc. an oxehide quod Willelmus Talbotte nuper emebat apud Havaunt"[1]. The following year the searcher reported on the leather of John Mills and John Stower[2]. Two of three pieces of leather belonging to Mills were legally tanned; and of Stower's seven small pieces of leather examined "una non est legittima"[3].

In addition to the statutory aspect of municipal control, attention was also given to the mundane details of the industry, particularly in their effects on the community at large. One recurring problem was pollution of the river from the effluents of the lime and tan pits and vats of the leather workers - a very live issue to the oyster draggers, and to the brewers who took their water from the river. In 1574 James Bowler was permitted "to make his lymes at the west ende of the meadowe Joyninge to his house with the Commoditie of the Ryver so that he did not annoye no man"[4]. In 1579 the tanners, glovers, and collar makers were restricted to emptying their various liquid pollutants[5] into the streams only in the middle of the night, though it was illegal to allow lime to run into the rivers at any time[6]. This restricted access to streams was evidently abused, for on 26 April 1582 various dyers, tanners and glovers were fined "for empting their pittes at unlawfull tymes"[7]. At the View of Frank Pledge on 23

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/21, f.40. Talbot was a Newport shoemaker (see below)

2 Ibid., f.50. Stowers was a Brading tanner

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid., f.165

5 "Their water or other filthe"

6 Ibid., f.255

7 Ibid., f.285

October 1599 various glovers and tanners were presented because "theire pitts were not convenient on the South syde of the River running downe Somers bridg and soe to the Brewe howses and to the Key by reason of casting of their lymes and sale scourings into the River"[1]; and the by no means excessive fines of 2s 6d each suggest that the offences were regarded as venial, if not customary.

Marketing arrangements, from the raw hide to the finished leather, were also carefully set out to exclude any irregular trading. Butchers were repeatedly required[2] to bring the skins as well as the meat to market; and in 1582 a fine of a shilling was set for any glovers buying their fells elsewhere than in the market[3]. The town wished to see what trade was taking place.

How important in the economy of the Island was the leather industry and its ramifications? Most of the trade does seem to have been centred on Newport, but in any case one tends to be thrown on to this town trade for evidence, if only because the ample court records give detailed identification of trades and occupations, generally unavailable elsewhere. From these records it is clear that all the associated leather crafts, both heavy and light, were

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/22, f. 265v

2 For example, ibid. 45/21, f.165 (1573), f.240 (1578), f.264 (1580)

3 Ibid. f.259

represented in the town. The main clients of the tanneries were the shoemakers, with the cobblers taking a more modest share of the market for tanned leather. There is at least one reference, in an apprenticeship agreement[1], to a saddler; and the glovers have already been encountered in connection with pollution control. Newport seems to have had the whole spectrum of the leather crafts. Moreover within the restricted period - the reign of Elizabeth - in which the availabaility of fairly ample craft and occupation evidence coincides with lay subsidy rolls, the leather trade seems to have been quantitatively significant. Of the 36 subsidy payers of known occupation in Newport in 1563, 10 were concerned with the leather trade, that is 27.8%. This figure might be distorted by the fact that the leather industry is perhaps the best documented; but the proportion of leather workers to all subsidy payers in Newport - that is, 72 - comes out at the substantial figure of 13.9%, and this of course is an absolute minimum. Turning to the lay subsidy of 1568, we find the leather workers more numerous in absolute and relative terms: 12 out of a total of 65 subsidy payers, or 18.5%; and 32.4% of the 37 subsidy payers of known occupations[2].

It happens that there survives among the Newport town papers a complete record of the tanned hides and skins searched and sealed, and of all the actual sales by tanners to leather workers, within Newport from 20 December 1567 to 16 October 1568[3]. Giving as it does a minimum trade turnover for the leather workers, and coinciding with the lay subsidy payment of 1568[4] it provides an informative check on

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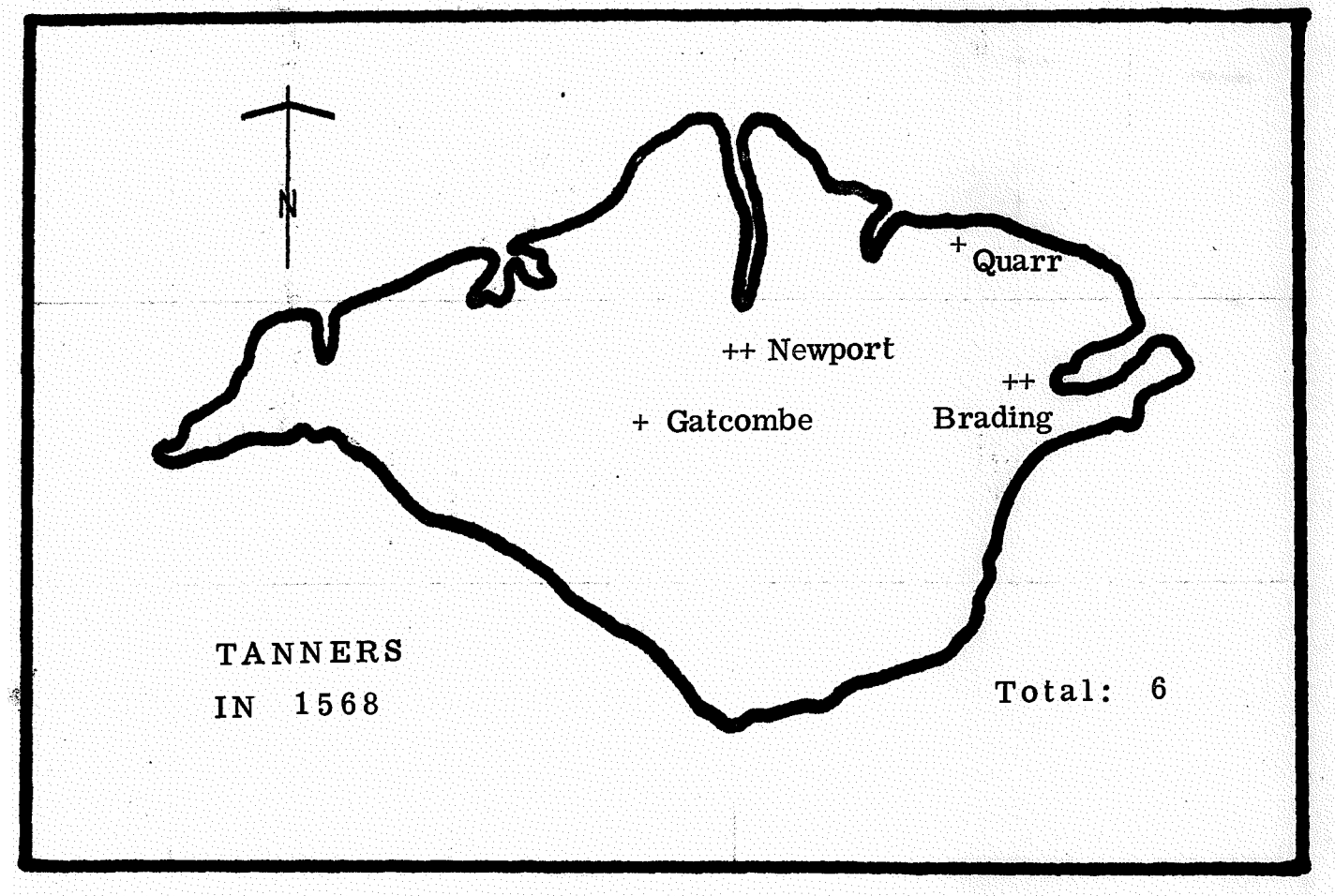
1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/21, f.259 (12 December 1579)

2 IWCRO, IW/27 (1563 list) and ibid., SW/1716 (1568 list)

3 Newport Borough MSS., 45/3

4 8 Eliz.I c.18

the validity of the tax assessment, as well as a study of leather manufacture and trading in the Island for nearly a complete year:



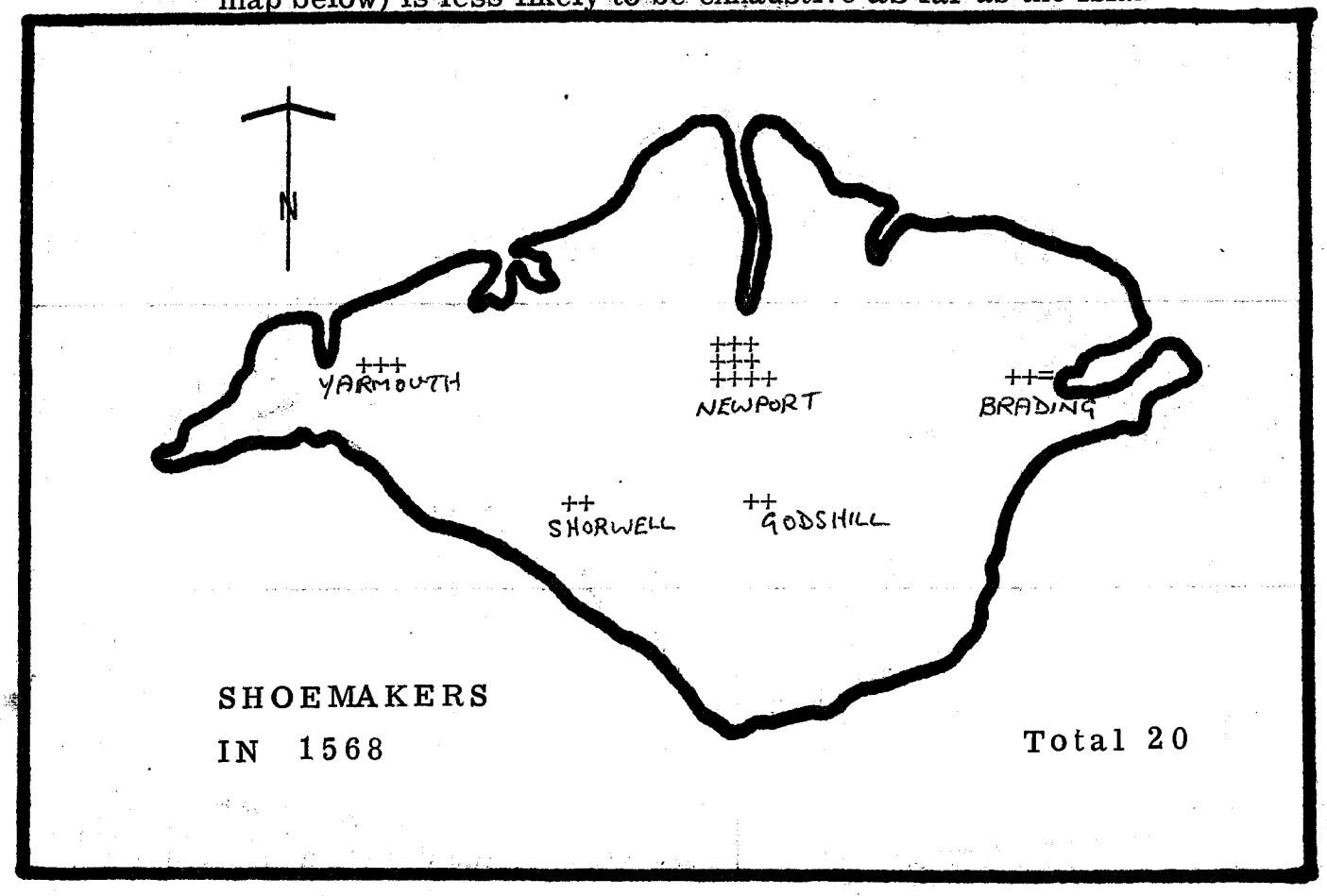
Six tanners are listed, and their trade is tabulated below

NAME	PLACE	HIDES SEALED	HIDES SOLD	SKINS SEALED	SKINS SOLD
Edmund BARNES*	Newport	176	145	225	115
John LENTON	Quarr	86	86	120	71
John PRISKOTE	Brading	10	50	57	24
John STOWERS	Brading	145	101	2	-
John WADE	Gatcombe	109	89	32	12
John WESTMILL	Newport	142	119	199	25
	Totals	668	590	635	247

* For the last two months of the period 20 Dec 1567 to 16 Oct 1568 Barnes's business was carried on by his widow

The average price paid to the tanner was 7s 6d for a hide and 1s 0d for a calfskin, so the latter are not so significant in terms of capital. Smaller scraps of leather have been excluded from the table.

The list of shoemakers provided by the same document (see map below) is less likely to be exhaustive as far as the Island



generally is concerned; but the tendency to urban concentration in Newport is at least compatible with national trends[1].

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1 L.A.Clarkson:'The leather crafts in Tudor and Stuart England', in Agricultural History Review (1966)pp.25-39 and especially p.26 (henceforth abbreviated Clarkson (1966)

One fact suggested by this leather register is that the Isle of Wight was a rather introverted area for leather trading. There are instances of trade with the mainland - enough to indicate that the register purports to be comprehensive - but such traffic is very slight. Island leather craftsmen occasionally made purchases at Havant, such as the hides bought there in 1564 by the Newport shoemaker William Talbot already mentioned; and the Newport searcher checked in 1568 some pieces bought by John Quyner "at havante fayer"[1]. In the other direction a Lymington shoemaker Richard Dialle bought a small amount of Island leather in 1568; and in 1579 the Gatcombe tanner John Wade shipped some leather in a Newtown boat across to Keyhaven in circumstances that suggest an evasion of duty[2]. Generally however the Island industry seems to have been in good balance between tanning and the leather crafts.

It follows from this that in view of the disparity in numbers between tanners and craftsmen, the former could be expected to be individually more wealthy; and this would be no more than compatible with the national picture of tanning and leather dressing as a high-capital occupation[3]. Thus one may look with interest at the total receipts from sales made by our six Island tanners within

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/3, f.14^{v}

2 Edwin Welch (ed.): The Admiralty Court Book of Southampton 1566-1585 (Southampton Records Series, Vol.13 (1968) p.80)

3 A.D.Dyer: 'The economy of Tudor Worcester' in University of Birmingham Historical Journal, Vol.10 (1965-6) pp.117-136. especially pp.130-1

the December 1567 to October 1568 period, in conjunction with their total assessment in goods under the Subsidy Act 8 Eliz.I, c.18, the second payment of which was made during 1568. The table below shows the real gross receipts of each tanner; his assessment in goods under the subsidy; and the assessment as a percentage of his gross income:

BARNES	£63.11.0d	£5	7.85%
LENTON	£38.18.8d	£3	7.7%
PRISKOTE	£17.7.0d	£3	17.3%
STOWERS	£39.1.11d	£15	38.4%
WADE	£41.18.0d	£10	23.8%
WESTMILL	£52.10.7d	£10	19.0%

Such figures have to be treated with caution, for the gross income receipts are minimum figures. It is likely that the Brading tanners Priskote and Stowers made sales that are not listed in the Newport register; but even between the two Newport tanners Barnes an d Westmill, whose trading figures should be more realistic, there is a wide disparity in tax assessment. Under the Subsidy Act in question the relevant clause 4 stipulates a comprehensive assessment of all trade and private goods, ready cash, and trading credit, with outstanding debts offset as an allowance. It is hard to accept these tanners' assessments as realistic in terms of the minimum earnings for which we have figures[1]; and there happens to be direct evidence of their artificiality.

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1 Compare the similar disharmony in the Leicester figures in W.G.Hoskins: 'An Elizabethan provincial town: Leicester' in J.H.Plumb (ed.): Studies in Social History: a tribute to G.M.Trevelyan (1955) at p.44

Edmund Barnes died at the beginning of August 1568 and the inventory of his goods, made during September, is with his will in the Hampshire Record Office[1]. His total estate came to £79.15.0d of which the craft goods comprised £62.12.0d[2]; and of these latter the hides and skins in various stages of completion were valued at £49.3.4d[3]. The ratio of fixed capital to working capital was indeed small. The stock of bark for example was valued at £6 but the "barking myll with the apurtenances" was only 13s 4d[4]. Tanners were clearly men of substance, and this is further suggested by the local custom for every tanner in Newport to supply each of the two bailiffs, for their dinner on All Souls' Day, Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide, with "one Quarte of the Best claret or whight wyne"[5].

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1 HRO, 1568 *B(series): Will of Edmund Barons (alias Barnes) of Newport (Consistory Court)

2 This proportion is not unusual: see the selection of tanners' inventories in Clarkson (1960) p.254, Table 1

3 He had 70 hides completed and 35 "in the lymes"; 108 calf skins completed and 48 "in the lymes"; and 23 hides of "Clowte lether"

4 Supporting L.A.Clarkson's comments, based on the two examples he had found, refuting the claim by Kerridge and by Nef that the bark mill was an expensive piece of equipment (Clarkson, op.cit.(1960) p.248, note 6)

5 Newport Borough MSS., 45/2, f.16v

The production of tanned hides was modest enough to be significantly affected by the landing and sale of prize cargoes from Mead Hole or elsewhere. One such, duly landed, sorted and dried at Thomas Becket's Cowes warehouse in September 1577, comprised 1,438 saleable hides, 72 damaged, and 32 rotten ones[1]. Even a part of this, sold locally, could have disturbed the equilibrium of the Island's leather market.

As for the other branches of the leather industry, the trading figures in tanned hides, given in the Newport leather register for 1567-8, show some disparity of commercial activity. This is not entirely correlated with the location of leather workers within the Island, for even among the Newport workers there is a noticeable range of leather purchases (see the table appended to this section). Taking these Newport tradesmen, and further eliminating those who were not assessed for lay subsidy payments in 1568, there is some indication that the tax assessment is an equal function of the total stock purchases for a year, in the case of the less ambitious tradesmen (Thomas Grose and Joan Badd). Where there seems to have been considerable commercial activity the tax assessment levels out and tends to conceal the greater turnover. The subsidy list would suggest an even spread of activity: the leather register indicates rather a section of leather workers at subsistence level and another group (Vawse, Hall, Cooke, and Valley) aiming to enlarge their business. A particularly interesting disparity is in the large turnover of Bartholomew Cooke, who if he had not been

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1 Salisbury MSS. (Hatfield House), 9/81: Jasper Swift to the Lord Admiral, 25 September 1577

an alien would not even have appeared in the subsidy assessment. His leather purchases during the period were generally small, in keeping with those of other cobblers, but were increasingly frequent and finally becoming commensurate with those of the shoemakers. They would suggest that he was embarking on shoemaking, though perhaps as an alien nominally confined to the cobbler's trade. Also surprising is the large leather trade of Robert Byrd, who is not in the subsidy assessment[1]. This could indicate that he became established in the Island after the assessment list was prepared in 1566.

Whatever the diversity of the leather trades, it certainly seems that the industry in the Isle of Wight had polarized into the skin processing trade as represented by the tanners, and the manufacturing trade of shoemakers, cobblers, saddlers and glovers. There seems to be little sign of a substantial body of curriers, the craftsmen who carried out the final dressing of leather. This suggests that such activity was mostly subsumed into the tanning trade. Such was probably the intention of the trade pressure groups who brought off the Leather Act of 1563[2], and the legislation was evidently effective in the Island.

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1 In 1576 he was making purchases of hides in partnership with Nicholas Vawse, another Newport shoemaker (Newport Borough MSS., 45/21, f.198^{v})

2 L.A.Clarkson: 'English economic policy in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: the case of the leather industry' in Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research, Vol.38 (November 1965)

It is possible that this widespread and flourishing leather industry may have been only a Tudor phenomenon, because the documentary sources are strangely silent about it in the 1600s. One hears of the occasional shoemaker[1] but there is apparently no trace of tanneries, and there is the suggestive export from Cowes in 1613 of 209 fresh cow hides "Rawe in the heare"[2]. The long-term tendency in provincial towns was for leather to occupy a diminishing sector of the local economy, though this is generally regarded as a feature of the later 17th century[3]. There may have been one special factor affecting local tanning: an increasingly acute shortage of timber and thus of the oak bark essential for the tanning process. Commenting ruefully in the 1630s on the timber famine, Oglander claimed that the rot had been started by Sir John Leigh, deputy lieutenant to Carey and to the Earl of Southampton, who was in charge of Parkhurst Forest , who was too obliging to refuse any request for wood, so that the Island at large[4] wore a path to his door and the Forest "wase the Common woodpile". Oglander also blamed the people of Newport for abusing their privilege of taking timber from the Forest, and this is confirmed by a town proclamation in August 1621 claiming that "there hath been great spoiles Committed in the Kings Majesties woods in the Forest of Parkhurst by the poore people of this Toune"[5]. There seems a fair chance, then, that the tanning industry went up in smoke.

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1 IWCRO, CarD/193, 25 December 1614

2 P.R.O. E.190/819/14, 10 February 1613

3 L.A.Clarkson, op.cit. (1966) p.39

4 Oglander gives a long catalogue including "the Inkepor wheare wee ordinaryed to make the Gentlemen a Fyor" (CCM.Og. 211b)

5 Newport Borough MSS., 45/2, ff.53^{v} & 54

Appendix: Trade turnover & tax assessments of IW leatherworkers, 1568:

NAME	TRADE	PLACE	1568 LEATHER PURCHASES	1568 TAX ASSESS.
BYRD, Robert	Shoemaker	Newport	£42.12.4d	- 217
VAWSE, Nicholas	Shoemaker	Newport	£25.5.0d	£10
HALL, John	Shoemaker	Newport	£24.19.8d	£8
COKE, Bartillmewe	Cobbler	Newport	£24.8.10d	£2 *
VALLEY, John	Shoemaker	Newport	£24.6.4d	£5
RIDGE, John	Shoemaker	Newport	£24.3.0d	-
HICKS, Myate	Shoemaker	Shorwell	£15.3.4d	-
ALEXANDER, James	Shoemaker	Newport	£14.17.0d	-
TALBOT, William	Shoemaker	Newport	£12.1.6d	-
BROWN, William	Shoemaker	Shorwell	£9.3.0d	£4
HOLAWAY, John	Shoemaker	Godshill	£6.17.0d	£5
BADD, Joan	Shoemaker	Newport	£6.3.4d	£6
BRIGHT, Robert	Shoemaker	Godshill	£4.18.2d	-
GROSE, Thomas	Shoemaker	Newport	£4.7.8d	£5
PEKALL, Thomas	Cobbler	Newport	£3.8.5d	-
WOODNET, Thomas	Shoemaker	Newport	£2.10.0d	-
BOCHER, William	Shoemaker	Brading	£2.8.0d	-
QUYNER, John	Cobbler	Newport	£2.1.2d	-
HATTON, Richard	Shoemaker	Brading	£2.0.0d	-
DROVER	Shoemaker	Yarmouth	15.0d	-
STEMP, James	Shoemaker	Yarmouth	13.4d	-
DIALLE, Richard	Shoemaker	Lymington	9.0d	-
GARLAND, John	Currier	Newport	6.0d	-
PLACE, Andrew	Smith	Carisbrooke	5.0d	£3
WOODNET, David	Shoemaker	Newport	3.8d	£4
HICHEN	Shoemaker	Yarmouth	3.6d	-

Source: Newport Borough MSS., 45/3

* the poll tax rate on aliens without enough land or goods to qualify for ordinary subsidy payments (8 Eliz.I, c.18, para.4)

Other industries

Manufacturing industries, apart from leather, do not seem to have evolved very much in the Island. One surprising feature perhaps is the absence of any substantial textiles industry. The medieval records indicate half a dozen fulling mills[1] but none is mentioned in the four surviving centon returns for the Island in 1559[2] and there must be a suspicion that the industry had not survived into the Elizabethan period. Some textile work was going on because one occasionally encounters a weaver and, rather more often, a dyer; but there are not the numbers to indicate any highly organized industry, and the size of the Island's raw wool exports even quite early in Elizabeth's reign suggests that little eventually got processed locally. In 1607 the collectors of subsidy reported to their commissioners that "the Comodities of this place are but corne and wooll"[3]

One industry that does appear towards the end of the period is shipbuilding, at Cowes. In 1634 a shipbuilder from the Isle of Rhe (himself formerly of Cowes) is reported to have recruited on the Island a shipwright called Newman. The yard in question at Cowes had a ship under construction,[4] but there is no information about its type or size. By 1698 incidentally there was a shipyard across the

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1 S.F.Hockey: Quarr Abbey and its lands 1132-1631 (Leicester 1970), p.53

2 P.R.O., SP.12/7/58, 59, 60 & 61

3 CCM Clarke MSS., No.6 (7 March 1606/7)

4 P.R.O., SP.16/262/52 (11 March 1634)

river at East Cowes, building warships[1].

Of the extractive industries we find a variety of quarrying, as might be expected with such diverse surface geology, though the prospecting seems often to have been more hopeful than the actual quarrying. The first Elizabethan prospector for alum reached the Island with a royal warrant dated 7 March 1561/2[2]. That survey by Bendall must have seemed promising because the next main alum exploring warrant, given in June 1565 to the London merchant Cornelis de Vos, authorized him "to digge open or woorke for all all manner of mynes for owres of Allume, coperas or the Lycours of them, and for all other metalls mineralls and Comodities in and upon the grounde... sett Lyeng and being within this her Highnes Realme of England and domynions of the same, and specally within the Isle of Wight"[3]. Cornelis certainly did carry out prospecting in the Island, but his patent generally was something of a financial failure[4].

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1 IWCRO, MS. sketch of the rise and beginning of the sea port town of Cowes, by Richard Thorold

2 Richard Worsley: History of the Isle of Wight (1781) appendix ii

3 P.R.O., SP.12/36/72

4 William Hyde Price: The English patents of monopoly, (1906), p.82

By the time of the construction of Charles I's fort in Sandown Bay there were Island brick kilns supplying the work: "Freeman Bonnds Brecke kell" at Ashey, and a kiln at Newport[1]. The brick industry was late in making its appearance in the Island, almost certainly because of the ready availability of building stone of various kinds, presumably at competitive cost. In the building of Carey's new hall at Carisbrooke Castle in the 1580s, brick is used only in the chimneys and fireplace surrounds, where its tolerance of heat was no doubt appreciated; the rest of the hall is built of Island limestone.

Of the stone supplies for the Sandown fort construction in 1632-6, the limestone came from Bembridge and St. Helens, and sandstone from Dunnose.[2] There were obviously clay pits working to supply the brick kilns, and there was too a working source of pipe-clay[3] because a London merchant was during the 1630s making regular visits "to the Isle of Wight, and other remote places, to buy clay at the lowest prices"[4].

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1 J.D.Jones: 'The building of a fort at Sandown, Isle of Wight 1632-1636' in Proceedings of the I.W. Natural History & Archaeological Society, Vol.6, part 3, p.177

2 Ibid., p.176

3 On the definition of pipe-clay see D.F.Lamb: The seaborne trade of Southampton in the first half of the seventeenth century (unpublished M.Phil. thesis, Southampton University 1972), p. 492

4 Calendar of State Papers, Domestic, Charles I, 1640-41, p.284, petition of William Pearne to the House of Commons, 1640 (?)November

Another small industry was candle-making. Newport had two in 1599[1] and they were obviously expected to supply the town rather than to venture into export markets. The control of their trade was strict, the most frequent complaint from the town being about candles with brown wicks,[2] presumably making more smoke than light.

Generally, then, the Island was a producer of raw materials rather than of manufactured goods. Wool and corn were a major export, with fish a close third. Herein perhaps lay the prosperity of Newport: as commodities went out of the Island, manufactured goods came in by way of trade, and the obvious entrepot, the only market centre serving the whole Island, was Newport.

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/22, ff.262^{v} et seqq. (VFP 23 Oct 1599)

2 Ibid., 45/21, ff.100^{v} et seqq. (VFP 25 Oct 1568); f.285 (VFP 26 April 1582); ff.354 et seqq. (VFP 2 May 1587)

CHAPTER 6

PURITANISM & RECUSANCY

Puritanism

In his study of Hampshire and Isle of Wight puritanism at this period[1] Dr. W.H. Mildon made the point that puritanism was not a quality associated with odd Presbyterians and extreme sectarians but rather one that permeated the Anglican church, certainly in the reign of Elizabeth. This is very apparent in the Island, and is personified in the two Captains whose period of office covered most of the reign: Horsey and Carey. 'Fautor evangelii delectus principe vixit' reads the contemporary inscription on Horsey's tomb in Newport parish church; and he had indeed had every opportunity to soak up Calvinism and a zeal for the vernacular Scriptures after his hasty departure abroad when the Dudley conspiracy came to light in Mary's reign. Sir George Carey was on the puritan wing of the church, supporting the weekly lecture in Newport; and he began his Captaincy in typical style with a set of orders "for the good goveremente of this Islande" which started:

> "In primis seeinge no governemente or direction devised by mans pollicie can carrie contynewance, unlease it stande founded uppon the feare, and service of almightie god, the gever, by his mercie, of all knowledge, strength and victorie; Firste I moste especiallie desire everie Centonier within the lymytes of their chardge, aswell by good and dailie example, as by exhortacon and comanndement, to cawse all their Centonne at tymes

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1 Rev. W.H. Mildon: Puritanism in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight from the reign of Elizabeth to the Restoration, unpublished London University Ph.D. thesis, (1934)

> appoincted, to frequente the Churche, both for the use of divine prayer, for receavinge the holie sacramente, and for hearinge the preachinge of gods worde, whereby they maie knowe their dewtie chiefelie to God, then to her Majestie, nexte to their neighbours"[1].

What kind of service would these people find when they went to church? There is no lack of evidence that the impact of the Reformation on liturgy, as well as faith, in the Island had been considerable. In Carisbrooke for example the inventory of church goods taken in 1552 , after considerable sales of plate earlier in the reign, still listed twenty items of plate and vestments including such pieces as "one hole sewte of whit Damaske borderid and crossede with Tawny vellot Imbroderid and spanglid with flowers of silke and golde with the albe and all thing to it"[2]; and, like many other Island churches, it had a Sanctus bell. For the year ending at Easter 1610 the plate and vestments comprised "a Comunion Cupp of Silver a diaper Clothe for the Comunion table, a Carpet of B(rayd)ed Silke for the same table, A new Surplus"[3]. There was every reason too for the surplice being new, for in 1607 John Baker the vicar of Carisbrooke was repeatedly summoned before the Winchester Consistory Court on a charge of not wearing one.[4] The diocesan government, anticipating Laud, was already reacting against the Elizabethan puritanism of

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1 Brit. Mus. , Lansdowne MSS., 40, No. 8

2 Exchequer Q.R. Isle of Wight 2/68, 6 Edward VI, printed as Appendix A in Percy G. Stone: Architectural Antiquities of the Isle of Wight (1891), Part 2, The West Medine

3 Churchwardens' account, among Carisbrooke church registers

4 A.J. Willis (ed.): Metropolitan visitation of the Archdeaconry of Winchester 1607-8 (1963), p. 11, 7 Oct 1607; and p. 24, 11 December 1607

Bishops Horne and Cooper. At Newport church too there had evidently been quite a searching purge of ornaments. In 1552 89 items had already been sold and 25 were still in the hands of the churchwardens[1]. By 1643, when the churchwardens received a Parliamentary order "for the demolishing of Monuments of superstition or Idolatry" they seem to have had to scrape the barrel for suitable targets. "By vertue therof there is taken away the resemblance of a dove on the font and another on the pulpitt and a Crosse on the outside of the church and every other thing of that nature that we can finde in and about the Church. And for our Communion table we have altered the standing there of and have newe sett yt east and west. And that for conveniency of the Church it is desired yt may stand where it nowe standeth, where it is conceived there will be noe superstitious use made of it, especially heere where wee have not any that we knowe are papistily inclined"[2].

At the beginning of our period many of the Island's churches were in a poor physical state[3]. Later their condition seems to have improved, though they had their vagaries of fortune. For example Carisbrooke lost its chancel some time during the later 1500s[4] and the churchwardens' account for 1610 includes a payment "to Hugh Priscott for setting up a shore on the north part of the church"[5] suggesting that the main structure may have been affected by the removal of the conventual buildings to the north[6]. On 4 May

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1 Percy G.Stone, op.cit. (1891) Part 2, appendix, pp.191-3

2 Newport Borough MSS., 45/16a, p.448

3 See Chapter 1, above, pp. 9-10

4 VCH Hants & IW, Vol.5, p.232, footnote 303

5 Carisbrooke parish registers

6 Carisbrooke Priory was suppressed by Henry V, it being an alien foundation

1638 the parishioners of Gatcombe complained that their church "is verie ruinous & in such decay as the Minister in stormy weather cannot read divine service in his seat"[1]. At Yarmouth the ruined church chancel that was the only remaining ecclesiastical building was "repaired and maintained for the exercise of divine service, and administration of the Sacraments"[2] by the townspeople, until a new church was built and consecrated on 11 March 1626[3].

In 1559 the Island had 25 parish churches of which 5 were unserved by priests[4], and in 1603 there was virtually no change: 23 parish churches were listed, of which 3 were unserved[5] but Yarmouth and St. Helens - counted as parish churches in the 1559 list, - are in 1603 listed as "chapelles of Ese" and are still, as in 1559, without clergy. Of six other chapels of ease in the 1603 list only one - Newport - had a minister. (See the table on next page).

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1 Carisbrooke Castle Museum, Clarke MSS., No.8: MS. petition of parishioners of Gatcombe to Privy Council

2 Proclamation of James I, 4 September 1611

3 CCM.Og., pp.94-96

4 Dartmouth MSS., f.1

5 Brit. Mus., Harleian MSS.,595, No.31

PARISH CLERGY IN THE ISLE OF WIGHT, 1559 AND 1603

Parish	1559	1603	
Yaverland	Yes	Yes	
Brading	No	Yes	
St. Helens	No	No	*
Newchurch	Yes	Yes	
Arreton	Yes	Yes	
Wootton	No	Yes	
Binstead	Yes	No	
Whippingham	Yes	No	
Godshill	Yes	Yes	
Niton	Yes	Yes	
Bonchurch	No	Yes	
St. Lawrence	Yes	Yes	
Freshwater	Yes	Yes	
Mottistone	Yes	Yes	
Shalfleet	Yes	Yes	
Yarmouth	No	No	*
Calbourne	Yes	Yes	
Brighstone	Yes	Yes	
Thorley	Yes	Yes	
Shorwell	Yes	Yes	
Chale	Yes	Yes	
Kingston	Yes	Yes	

(Continued on next sheet)

(Island clergy in parishes, 1559 and 1603, continued)

Parish	1559	1603	
Gatcombe	Yes	Yes	
Carisbrooke Castle	Yes	No	
Carisbrooke	Yes	Yes	
Newport	-	Yes	*
Northwood	-	No	*
Whitwell	-	No	*
Brook	-	No	*
Newtown	-	No	*
Chapel of the Holy Ghost	-	No	*

Sources:

1559: The generall Suvey of the state of T(hisle) of Wight.... among the MSS. of the Earl of Dartmouth at the William Salt Library, Stafford

1603: British Museum, Harleian MS. 595, No. 31 - A certyfycat answering tharticles specyfyed in the Quenes Majesties most honorable Counsellors letteres to the bysshop of Wynchester directed concernyng the state of his diocese

* listed as a chapel of ease in 1603

Among these clergy there is no trace of any Geneva exiles returned, and indeed the Island shows little evidence of the more extreme and radical puritanism[1]. A puritan ethos however permeated the whole community. Christopher Hill has described the prevalence of Sabbatarianism[2] and certainly the commerce and social life of the Isle of Wight felt the presence of the Sunday service and the week-day lecture. Newport innkeepers in 1574 were forbidden to "kepe anie victualinge or Drinkinge in their houses in the tyme of Common praier"[3] and on Sunday mornings they were allowed to open only after the church service was over[4]. Shops that dealt in perishable wares, such as meat, were allowed to open on Sunday morning but were required to close "after the seconde peale". Other shopkeepers such as drapers or artificers at this time observed a quaint ritual. They were required to have their doors closed and their window shutters up on Sunday, but could open to serve customers if any specially called, on condition that they closed up again after serving[5]. If any townspeople were "found Idle in the streates at the tyme of the devine service"[6] it would cost them a shilling. The same penalty applied to the master of any house where any "taylor, showe maker glovier or anie other Artifficer...is taken at worke on the Sondaie"[7].

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1 "Cartwright and Brown at Newport, Isle of Wight" were listed as "persons to be apprehended and committed" as being named in Undertree's letters in June 1574 (HMC, Cal. of MSS. of Marquess of Salisbury at Hatfield.... Part 2, p.200). See M.M.Knappen: Tudor Puritanism (Chicago 1939) p.245, note 95, for discussion of the suggestion that there was some substance in this plot

2 Society and Puritanism in Pre-Revolutionary England (Panther ed.1969), pp.141-211, especially p.152

3 Newport Borough MSS., 45/21, ff.172^{v} et.seqq.

(Footnotes continued on next page =)

(Footnotes continued from previous page =)

4 Newport Borough MSS., 45/21, ff.172[v] et.seqq. (VFP 5 October 1574)

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid., 45/21, ff.207 et seqq. (VFP 30 October 1576)

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After the end of evening prayer on Sunday Newport shopkeepers were allowed then to open their doors, but not their windows[1]. Carts were not allowed through the town streets "upon the Sondayes and holie dayes"[2], and by 1580 there was an embargo on carts moving anywhere to "carrie or Recarrie...nor millers to fetche anie gristes nor to grynde" during Sunday service[3]. By 1588 the town had turned its attention to the fruiterers, who were now prohibited from trading on the Sabbath[4]; and soon afterwards it was decreed "that none of the Inhabitaunts of this Towne shall play at any unlawfull games or tables cardes dice bowles or keeles[5] uppon the Sundayes"[6]. Aware perhaps of Exodus xx, 10, town

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/21, f.219[v] (VFP 8 Oct 1577)

2 Ibid., ff.232 et seqq. (VFP 8 April 1578)

3 Ibid., ff.263 et seqq. (VFP 19 April 1580)

4 Ibid., 45/22, ff.3 et seqq. (VFP 28 Oct 1588)

5 Kayles (ninepins or skittles)

6 Ibid., ff.64 et seqq. (VFP 19 Oct 1590)

merchants were forbidden "to send their servauntes into the country on the Sabath day"[1]. The Jacobean town government was equally strict. Various people were fined quite heavily in 1613 and 1614 for fishing on Sunday[2] and again in 1613 it was forbidden for idle persons or "boyes of the age of discretion" to play or loiter in the streets on Sunday.[3]

This was of course only a part of the story. There was the matter of the weekly lecture, which confronted the local tradesmen with the stark choice of deserting their weekly ration of Calvinism or else losing some commercial income. The town government tried to contrive as little choice as possible.

In 1580, observing some thin attendances of both masters and servants at the Wednesday morning lecture, it ordained that "no artifficer merchant or draper do suffer their folkes to woorke covertly in their houses in tyme of the sermon"[4]. In 1586 a different technique was used to fill the church: an order "that one of everie house within the toune shall every Wensdaye at the tyme of the sermon or lecture come to the churche to hire the same"[5]. By 1613 the lecture had moved to Saturday morning, the congregation being summoned by the town bell being rung for half an hour at 9 o'clock[6]. These weekly lectures, in various parts of the Island,

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/22, ff.64 et seqq. (VFP 19 October 1590)

2 Ibid., ff.319 et seqq. (VFP 19 Oct 1613); ff.332 et seqq. (26 April 1614)

3 Ibid., ff.319 et seqq. (VFP 19 Oct 1613)

4 Ibid., 45/21, ff.274 et seqq. (VFP 8 April 1580)

5 Ibid., ff.341 et seqq. (VFP 18 Oct 1586)

6 Ibid., 45/22, ff.319 et seqq. (VFP 19 Oct 1613)

drew support from all sections of the community. Their patrons included Sir George Carey and the Earl of Southampton[1], and in the 1620s Sir John Oglander's account books record payments to his own local Lecturer[2]. Oglander himself, though, quickly lost patience with eloquence divorced from scholarship, and he gives an unsympathetic picture of the stereotype puritan preacher: "If he weare prick eared, short hayred, cowld cast his eyes upp handsomly, and use no reverence when he came into the church, drawe his woord owt longe, and crie out, Awe Jesu, it mattered (not) wheather he had learninge, or Ordors, such weare accoumpted better then any Bischope"[3]. Could his nameless target perhaps have been William Harby the Newport minister? He was described by the Mayor and burgesses in 1641 as "an able and labowrious preacher and a man of honest conversation whoe for the time of his abode in Newport being about twelve yeares hath not omitted preaching there on any Saboth day unles by sicknes or other necessity he hath ben prevented"[4]. It was the same Harby who, accompanying the Newport town guard on their attempt to take Carisbrooke Castle in August 1642, exhorted them, in what Richard Worsley[5] calls "the canting phraseology of the times", to be valiant, as they were about to fight the battle of the Lord. The pulpit from which he operated survives today within the deceptive Victorian

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1 CCM. Og. 25b

2 Ibid., 24b, 58b, 252b

3 Ibid., 440b

4 Newport Borough MSS., 45/16a, p.406, 2 February 1641

5 History of the Isle of Wight (1781) p.116

exterior of Newport parish church, and its magnificence is an eloquent testimony to the place of preaching in the 17th-century service. Dating to about 1631 and carrying the crest of the donor Stephen March, it is of highly elaborate design, even without "the resemblance of a dove" which the reformers removed in 1643; and it carries in bold letters the text from Isaiah Iviii, 1: "Cry aloud and spare not: lift up thy voice like a trumpet". It is of the finest workmanship; but it may not have been quite what Laud had in mind in his own ecclesiology.

There is much evidence of Island puritanism, then, in the sense of having a simple liturgy and great emphasis on the preaching of God's word. Links with Geneva sometimes come to the surface, like the Island collection of £23.13.4d for Geneva in 1604.[1] There are signs too of puritanism in the sense of the popular stereotype: the steeple hat and the suspicion of enjoyment as a sinful indulgence. There was the town order that "noe minstrell nor musicion shall playe nether in the Streete nor in tiplinge houses within this Toune after nyne of the clock at night"[2], possibly only a reasonable noise-prevention measure for a compact community that got up at dawn. There can be little doubt however about the motivation for the cool reception given by the Mayor and corporation in 1624 to a company of travelling actors. "Considering the povertie of the towne and the inconvenience of suffering players to plaie too long in the

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1 Percy G.Stone, op.cit. (1891), Vol.2, p.21, quoting Carisbrooke parish registers

2 Newport Borough MSS., 45/22, f.5 [illegible]., (VFP 28 October 1588)

towne heertofore"[1] it was decided to limit the actor manager Gilbert Reason and his company to a show of only two nights, in the now rather derelict old town hall. "And the said Gilbert not being ther withall contented much urged to have longer time and would not depart being three or foure times so requiered, but at length saied he would stand on his auchtoritie and told Mr Maior that he would be questyoned for yt and that he should heare from my lord Chamberlaine"[2].

The very level of official repression however indicates the presence of something to repress, and the presence of a more roistering element in the community can legitimately be inferred. There was John Freborne, presented in 1614 for "card plaing in his howse beinge unlawfull games"[3]; John Frost, fined in 1576 for "bowlinge in his gardeyne"[4]; and Richard Stronge, presented in 1573 for "keping ill Rule at dice and cardes"[5]. The town courts of course had a succession of cases of drunkenness and of people drinking late into the night, along with the various affrays that

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/16a, p. 196 (16 April 1624)

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid., 45/22, f. 333[v] (VFP 26 April 1614)

4 Ibid., 45/21, ff. 207 et seqq. (VFP 30 Oct 1576)

5 Ibid., f. 155-155[v] (VFP 12 Oct 1573)

resulted. The local enactments in restraint of excessive drinking were reinforced when in 1613 the town court proclaimed that "the Kinges moste excellent Majestie hathe of late signified unto us his princelye care to suppresse the vice of drunckennes & Idlenes that doth soe abownde within this Bouroughe"[1]. Sir George Carey obviously knew the weaknesses of hismen, for in his instructions in 1583 to the corporals of the Island militia he advised that the corporal "must have a care to the good behaviour of his troop, not suffering them to use unlawfull gamynge, nor to give themselves to riot and drinking"[2].

Puritan or not, the Islanders enjoyeda celebration. At Sir George Carey's party in Parkhurst Forest in the 1590s there was "all kind of Musike and Dawncinge, and want of no provisions, in great aboundance wase all kinde of wyne and cakes", and the cannons fired a salvo at every health "of which ther weare not Fewe"[3]. At Sir John Leigh's funeral in Shorwell in 1630 there was also memorable hospitality. "I remember not", wrote Oglander, "that evor I wase at Greator entortaynement in the Island (espetiollie) it beinge in the Lent, it there wase of all sortes both of Fisch and Flesch in aboundance"[4]. Island puritanism is perhaps well summed up in the verse of Thomas Campion (d. circa 1620):

> "Britons frolic at your board,
> But first sing praises to the Lord
> In your congregations".

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/22, ff.319 et seqq. (19 Oct 1613)

2 Brit. Mus., Lansdowne MSS., 40, No.8

3 CCM.Og.326a

4 Ibid., 194a

Recusancy

"The inhabitants wittily boast their advantage over other people, as having never had either monks, lawyers, or foxes among them". Thus wrote Camden in 1586 about the Isle of Wight[1], and with tacit agreement Oglander gives a slightly varied version of the saying in 1627: "It is an honnor for Owr Island to have neythor foxe or Papest in it"[2]. It is Oglander also who relates an incident during a visit to the Island by Charles I, when he was still prince, in August 1618. "I wayghted upon him to Caresbrooke Castle, and Comminge throwgh the Castle holde, beinge passed by the Singe[3] of the lyon Clawinge the Fryor tourned about his horse to beholde it, and Demannded the meaninge thereof: Awnsor wase made that wee served all Papistes and Pristes in that mannor"[4]. This statement probably had its roots in the episode a generation earlier, when in February 1586 two seminary priests, William Marsden and Robert Anderton, coming in on a missionary voyage to England, were driven ashore by bad weather on the Isle of Wight, apprehended, and committed for trial at Winchester Assizes where they were condemned to death in April. The Privy Council decided "to have them executed there within that

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1 William Camden: Britannia, or a chorographical description of the flourishing kingdoms of England, Scotland and Ireland, (1586) 2nd edition, 1806, p.174

2 CCM. Og. 36b

3 Sic

4 CCM. Og. 292b

Isle where they were apprehended, either at the place of their landing or in some other fitte place or places within the said Isle"[1]. So, on 25 April, the priests were hanged, drawn, and quartered "on some high ground in sight of the sea"[2] and the Newport town accounts clinically record the payment of 15d "for a pole & speeke to sett up the traytors hedd"[3].

The Island was certainly not a friendly setting for recusancy. Was there any? At the end of our period, in 1643, the corporation of Newport felt able to claim "wee have not any that we knowe are papistily enclined"[4] but there was an element of reservation in the statement; and there are certainly traces of recusant opinion, as might be expected in an area bordering on Hampshire with its extensive network of recusant families[5]. On 3 September 1604, during a discussion at Edward Dennis's house in Shanklin, about the enactments of the Parliament earlier that year, a Captain Gosnoll made such critical comments about James I that Dennis considered Gosnoll "to be a counterfyte papyst & therfor yll affected to the Kynge"[6].

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1 Acts of the Privy Council, xiv 1586-7, p.58 [redacted]: letter from the Council to George Carey, 10 April 1586

2 E.H.Burton and J.H.Pollen: Lives of the English Martyrs Vol.1 (1914) pp.207-210

3 Newport Borough MSS., 45/2, f.41

4 Ibid., 45/16a, p.448 (29 May 1643)

5 J.E.Paul, unpublished Southampton University Ph.D. thesis (1958): The Hampshire Recusants in the reign of Elizabeth, passim.

6 Salisbury MSS. at Hatfield House, CP.107/45[v]

Perhaps the most consistent indicator of recusancy is the list of appearances of non-communicants before the Winchester Consistory Court: those who "of frowardnes or by seducement of the Popes confederates, Jesuites, and seminaries priestes professed enemies to our state and contrie, wilfully refraine resortinge to divine service"[1]. The Consistory Court records show a small but steady flow - some three or four a year on average - of people from the Island cited mainly for non-attendance at church or prolonged failure to receive communion. One of them, indeed, is Katherine Rich who was present at the alleged treasonable discussion in Shanklin in 1604, and who in 1593 was cited, with her servant, for "not resorting to their parish church where they dwell[2]; heretofore presented and no reformation"[3]. In 1581 a Newport woman, the wife of Giles Hackes, was presented "for harbouring of suspicious persons"; and an interesting sign of the old religion[4] was the dismissal of the Gatcombe churchwardens in 1572 for having "a bonfire on the feast of St. John the Baptist"[5].

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1 Brit. Mus., Lansdowne MSS., 40, No. 8, 'Instructions and ordinannces for the good governemente of this Islande..' (20 March 1583)

2 Brading

3 HRO, Liber Actorum Episcopi, passim. The writer is indebted, for this source, to the Reverend S.F.Hockey, O.S.B. of Quarr Abbey

4 In its turn a Christian adaptation of a pagan festival: see Keith Thomas: Religion and the decline of magic... (Penguin edition 1973), p. 54

5 Winchester Consistory Court of 22 November 1572

Unlike mainland Hampshire, the Island seems not to have numbered among its recusants any substantial gentry familes who could offer patronage and shelter for visiting priests. Richard Hobson of Ningwood was among some recusants committed to prison in the 1590s[1] and the Consistory Court appearances included "Mr. Lile, gentleman" of Gatcombe in 1587[2] and John Worsley, gent., of Newchurch in 1570[3]. Otherwise the known recusants seem to have been of modest means.

It seems, then, that the proverbial claim for the Island to be free of papists was an over-simplification; but that the recusancy problem in the Island was, in numerical terms at least, not large.

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1 HMC Calendar of the MSS. of the Marquess of Salisbury at Hatfield House.... Vol. 4, p. 271

2 HRO : Liber Actorum Episcopi

3 Ibid., Court of 4 October

CHAPTER 7

POLITICS & ADMINISTRATION

Politics and administration

"I knowe my Lord of Southampton would be dyspleased wyth me, & who can dwell in the Isle of Wyght wyth hys dyslyke"[1]. This remark by a local gentleman, Barnaby Rich, in 1604 sums up the power of the Island Captain. For most purposes his office was the Island administration, though it was up to the Captain individually to devolve such functions as he saw fit on to deputy lieutenants, of no prescribed number but usually two.

Above all, the function of the Captain was to organize the defence of the Island. He did this immediately through his deputy lieutenants and ultimately through the captains of the various centons or tithings, which vary over this period from eleven to twelve in number. Sir George Carey, later 2nd Lord Hunsdon, during his Captaincy 1583-1603 addressed himself with particular energy to reorganizing the Island militia, laying down a set of orders in minute detail for the training and drilling of this force[2]. When in July 1588 the Spanish Armada was seen off the Island, Carey was in the field in command of his force. The narrowness of the Island's escape on this occasion - and it was a narrow escape because Medina Sidonia had decided to fall back on his reserve instructions to seize the Isle of Wight but was balked by the close action of the English fleet, prompted by the same supposition - and the real continuance of the Spanish threat moved Carey to

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1 Salisbury MSS at Hatfield : CP 109/F 96 v

2 Brit. Mus. Lans. MS. 40, No. 8

goad the Islanders and the Queen into undertaking a major and expensive refortification of Carisbrooke Castle[1] by playing off one party against the other[2]. His successor the Earl of Southampton in his early years as Captain interested himself quite actively in the Island militia, and followed Carey's example in drafting a set of detailed instructions, after a not very impressive review taken in the summer of 1608[3].

Similarly it was the Captain who directed any Island-wide action to deal with emergencies such as the outbreak of plague in 1582-3, when Carey was in charge of the relief collections made throughout the Isle of Wight.

The Captain too was the fount of patronage: his wrath could mean a cutting off of the supply of favours. This is the truth behind Barnaby Rich's wry comment in 1604, at the beginning of this chapter. This was the reason for the diplomatic flow of gifts from the corporation of Newport to the Captain: spices for Carey

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1 P.R.O., AO.1/2515/563 and 564

2 The Islanders promised to raise £400 towards the cost if the Queen undertook the work. In August 1598 after spending nearly £4000 the Queen discovered to her mortification that the Island had not paid its share (Acts of the Privy Council, 2nd series, vol.29, 1598-9, p.80 of calendar: letter from the Council to the Island Justices, 23 August 1598)

3 C.Aspinall-Oglander: Nunwell Symphony (1945), p.41: letter from Henry Earl of Southampton to John Leigh, 14 July 1608

in 1584[1], more spices for him in 1588[2], sugar and other spices in 1594-6[3], a present to the value of £3.10.0d for the Earl of Southampton in 1621[4], a hogshead of sack to Lord Weston in 1631[5], and twelve sugar loaves to the Earl of Pembroke in 1644[6].

What did the Captain do in return? One notable gesture was Carey's coup in securing six M.P.s for the Island in the Parliament beginning 23 November 1585: two each from Yarmouth, Newtown, and Newport. The corporation of Newport gratefully recorded that this was "at the speciall instance and procurement of Sir George Carey"[7] and resolved that he should have the nomination of one of the two town members during the rest of his life. The same arrangement evidently applied in the other two towns, and Carey entered into this inheritance with enthusiasm and in complete assurance of the propriety of the arrangement. One of the two members returned by Newport in the first election was his brother Edmund Carey, and subsequent elections came under the scrutiny of the Captain. In the election for the Parliament beginning on 7 October 1601 he wrote to the burgesses of Newtown requesting

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/2, f.35[v]

2 Ibid., f.42[v]

3 Ibid., f.45 [illegible].

4 Ibid., 45/16a, p.157

5 CCM.Og. 235b

6 Newport Borough MSS., 45/16a, p.467

7 Ibid., 45/2, f.39

the usual submission to him of their blank writ in which he could insert the names of his nominees[1]. With the summoning of a crucial Parliament at the beginning of James I's reign he was especially assiduous, and wrote to the "Mayor & his brethren of Yarmouth":

> "The Kinges Majestie intending to Summon a Parliament presentlie after he shalbe Crowned, and the day of his Coronacon drawing on very fast: I have made Choise rather by a to-tymelie motion to prevent all Sutors in this kynde, then by differring it till th'appoynted tyme suffer my selfe to be prevented of my intended purpose. My earnest desire therefore is; that as usually heretofore yow have bynn Content to referr the nominacon of Burgesses for your Towne, to my free will and disposicon, and to that ende uppon receipt of your wryttes of Summons, have sent upp your blancke deputacons unto mee: Soe nowe I may finde the Continnewannce of your wonted love and favour, my occasions to use the helpe of my freindes being at this tyme more urgent and extraordinary then ever heretofore. And by how much I shall find your readynes to gratifie mee herein, by soe much shall yow finde my forewardenes to worck your desired succes in ought wherein yow shalbee occasioned to use mee, or my best meanes..."[2]

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1 W.H.Long (ed.): The Oglander Memoirs (Newport 1888), pp. xiii-xiv

2 CCM, Poole MSS., No.5 June 1603

Carey died three months later, but if the town of Yarmouth now considered itself a free agent it was soon disillusioned by the new Captain. The Earl of Southampton stepped in promptly with his own nominees, and the town pleaded that it had already selected its representatives. Southampton wrote to them on 19 February 1604:

> "It cannot but be strange unto me that by waie of prevention and cunning you have provided rather to make excuses than to yield satisfaction to my reasonable request. I should approve your reasonable aunswere concerning Mr Cheeke if first you had acquainted mee therewith. Your forehande promise made I shall fynde means to prevent, and shall have occasion to note your little love & respect to mee your Countryman and friend. In that I am not satisfied with your former annsweres I have sent my servant unto you desiring you that you give him hearing that by him you maie more plainlie understand my mynde, Soe expecting your kind usage I remaine, Your lovinge friend, Southampton"[1].

The Captain appears to have come to a working arrangement with his town, for by 1620 both of the Earl's nominees for Yarmouth - Arthur Broomfield and his own son Thomas Wriothesley - were

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1 CCM, Clarke MSS., No.1

returned[1]. This control though was a tenuous one and seems not to have survived the death of Southampton in 1624. His successor Lord Conway managed to have his son Edward returned for Yarmouth in 1626, but in the election of 1628 his four nominees were rebuffed by each of the three Island towns[2]. A sharper edge was given to the gesture in that Conway's two nominees for Yarmouth were displaced by his own two deputy lieutenants Sir John Oglander and Sir Edward Dennis, and that Newport chose Sir Christopher Yelverton in preference to Conway's son Edward. The revenge, in Oglander's view, was swift and terrible: the infamous billeting on the Island that summer of a murderous horde of Scottish soldiers involved in the Rochelle expedition[3]. Conway's own veiled threat at the time of his request had been the possibility of delay in the fortifications eagerly sought for by the anxious Islanders[4] and in fact it did prove necessary to wait for Conway's death before anything substantial was done. The important reality though was that a general gesture of defiance had been made, and this the more easily because the Captain was just a name in distant London. The Island towns had tasted independence, and this experience was pregnant with consequences in 1642.

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1 Sir Frederick Black: An outline sketch of the parliamentary history of the Isle of Wight (Newport 1929), p.33 and CCM, Clarke MSS., No.3

2 P.R.O., SP.16/92/4, 6, 15, 16, & 17; 93/60; & 94/9

3 CCM.Og., 274a. On the billeting see L.Boynton: 'Billeting, the example of the Isle of Wight' in English Historical Review, No.290 (January 1959), pp.23-40

4 P.R.O., SP.16/92/17, Conway to his deputy lieutenants, 2 February 1628

There were of course problems with some of the unmapped limits of the Captain's authority, and that of his deputies. In 1568 Edward Horsey's bailiff William Copping, armed with a county sheriff's warrant, made the mistake of arresting a Newport citizen William Jolliffe within the town jurisdiction, and he had to account for his fault at the town court[1]. When Newport had its Mayor charter of 1608[2] there were further grey areas of jurisdiction that had to be decided by case-law. In the summer of 1631 for example the town constable refused to serve a warrant on suspicion of felony at the request of Oglander as deputy lieutenant because he maintained that under the charter the town court had the right of dealing with felons. The case went on for hearing by Sir Thomas Richardson[3] who delivered judgement against the town. Although the record of the judgement is from the ex parte pen of Oglander, it does give an interesting contemporary view of the 1608 charter: "The Judge told the Towne Clerke and aldormen of Nuport that by theyre Chartor they weare to preserve the Peace within theare Towne, to take care of theyre poore Binde Owt theyre Aprentices and to take care of smale offences, Butt concerninge Fellonye or Suspition thereof they could not medle and this he woold make good furthor by waye of advise"[4]. His

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/21, f.99 (Curia Regis 9 Oct 1568)

2 Martin Weinbaum: British Borough Charters 1307-1660, (Cambridge 1943), p.46

3 He was made Chief Justice of the King's Bench on 24 October that year (DNB)

4 CCM.Og. 229b

doctrine about the charter was that it was "graunted owt of the favor of the Captayne"[1] and could not therefore lessen his own power or that of his deputies; and the judge hinted that any repetition of the town's rebuttal in such a case would mean that they would be hit with a Quo Warranto writ. The main hope for the town, in practice, was that the Captain himself tended more and more to be non-resident, and so some of his prerogative might go by default.

One aspect of the Captain's authority that did just manage to grow against the pretensions of Newport was the title of the office. Sir George Carey encouraged the use of the title 'Governor', and in his time and the Earl of Southampton's the lecturer would often pray in church for "Owre most woorthie Captayne and Governor", much to the annoyance of some of the local gentry[2]. "Butt that woord Governor wee have now cawsed to be cleane abolisched", Oglander wrote with satisfaction in 1626.

His satisfaction was premature. Patents of appointment were made out still in the style of Captain, but when in 1642 Philip Herbert, 4th Earl of Pembroke replaced the deposed Royalist Captain, Jerome, Earl of Portland, he had from Parliament a commission in the style of 'Captain and Governor'. So did his

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1 CCM. Og. 229b

2 Robert Dillington ended in the Fleet prison after challenging Carey's authority: see Richard Worsley, History of the Isle of Wight (1781), pp. 97-106

successors, Colonels Hammond, Sydenham and Fleetwood. At the Restoration however Portland was reinstated as Captain, and when he was succeeded in 1661 by Lord Culpeper the patent was still made out in the old form of 'Captain'.

The Islanders now prepared a draft petition complaining to Parliament "that the Captains of the said Isle have of late arrogated to themselves the additional title of Governor of the Isle of Wight (though no such style hath ever been given them in their patents from his Majesty"). The Crown righted this wrong by simply amending the title in the next appointment, in 1669, of Sir Robert Holmes[1], the first to hold a royal patent in the style of Governor. This was not acceptable to the Islanders, who produced another draft petition to Charles II: "That the chief commanders of the militia in the said Isle of Wight in the time of your Majesty's most royal progenitors had anciently no other title given them in their patents for the said office than Captains of the Isle...the title of Governor having been more lately inserted by way of addition in their said patents". Nevertheless the title remained unaltered, and continues today; and its genesis is to be found within the period 1558-1642.

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1 Pat. 20 Charles H, pt. vii, no. 9

CHAPTER 8

THE ISLAND DIVIDES FOR WAR

The Island divides for war

Recent discussions of the causes of the English Civil War[1] have served to underline the complexity of the issues involved. The battle lines were not neatly drawn, because the motives of the individuals concerned were tangled. The chemistry of this conflict is anything but simple.

The Isle of Wight matches well enough this complex pattern of economic, aesthetic, and religious interest and prejudice. The people involved are far from being stereotypes.

What kind of Cavalier is Sir John Oglander, for example? In church affairs he has no notable enthusiasm for the Laudian liturgy; he supports his weekly lecture; yet he feels revulsion against ranting preachers. He is a moderate.

Nor does he fit at all the model of the declining gentry. His account books show on the contrary that, in spite of his mock protestations of poverty, his real wealth is increasing and he is purposefully buying in farms and manors whenever they fall on the market - as indeed to a lesser extent his father and grandfather had done. He is a shrewd farmer and estate manager and has prospered in both the Stuart reigns.

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1 Lawrence Stone: The causes of the English Revolution 1529-1642 (1972)

Conrad Russell (ed.): The origins of the English Civil War (1973)

Temperamentally he does not well fit the Cavalier profile. "Of all vices hate drunkennes"[1]. He relates with some distaste the account of the bibulous visit to the Island by the Royalist Captain, Jerome, Earl of Portland and his merry party, which ended with a drunken exhibition in Newport with Colonel Goring making a solemn recantation speech, from the roof of the town cage, to the watching crowd of scandalized townspeople[2].

Politically even, he hardly fits: being a natural conservative, he was an ingrained constitutionalist and would reprobate extreme measures whether from King or Commons. So, when after the abortive attempt to arrest the five Members in January 1642, Parliament sent round a protestation for signature in their support, Oglander's name led the list[3]. The King must have found it hard to forgive Oglander for such a defection. This could well have been the reason for the royal snub delivered the following August when Colonel Brett at Carisbrooke Castle was appointed lieutenant governor and Oglander was not mentioned. "I wish", wrote Nicholas Weston to his son on 14 August, "Oglander had been Joyned with Brett for I see hee doth expect some such encouragement"[4].

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1 CCM. Og. 35b

2 Ibid., 289a

3 IWCRO, OG/19/91

4 Newport Borough MSS., 45/16a, pp. 428 et seqq.

The signatures on that Island protestation are indeed strange reading, for they are a cross-section of the local gentry, merchants and farmers. They range from the fiery Cavalier Barnaby Burley who was later to breathe defiance at Parliament from the walls of Yarmouth Castle, to the puritan Newport minister William Harby who about the same time was to urge on the Newport town guard to attack the Royalists at Carisbrooke Castle. The Island had not yet split.

On the Parliamentary side too there are strangely assorted characters: extreme radicals like Thomas Bowerman, and moderates like the young Sir Henry Worsley of Appuldercombe who was a member for Newport in the Long Parliament. He was not full of revolutionary fire, and in fact he was one of the victims of Pride's Purge in 1648. Why did he oppose the King? The reason here was mainly economic. The Crown had used the Court of Wards to extract excessive fines on the Appuldercombe estate. Worsley had an issue to settle with the feudal courts.

And why did people like Oglander declare for the King? This is less difficult. He was a conservative, and could not contemplate the upheaval of a steady drift towards a republic. At the same time, whether because of or in spite of Stuart policy, the Oglanders had so far prospered. Their times of trouble were still to come.

The start of the Civil War

The apparent ease with which the Isle of Wight passed into the control of Parliament in August 1642 is some index of the general anti-Royalist bias of the area and the extent to which it could put grit in the wheels of royal administration.

The two sides had their own geographical centres of polarity, in uncomfortable proximity: the Royalists at Carisbrooke Castle, and the Parliamentarians in the town of Newport. With Colonel Goring at Portsmouth, after a summer of vacillation, finally declaring for the King, the local issue was forced. Parliament's fleet closed in on the Solent, and for the Island Royalists the task was clear: to break the blockade.

If the task was clear, it was still not very practicable, and for the small knot of Royalists embattled at Carisbrooke the outlook was not cheerful. The Island Captain was not there. Jerome, 2nd Earl of Portland, was still in London having his problems with Parliament[1], and on 4 August he was put in the custody of the Sheriff of London "lest he should comply with Colonell Goring, and command the Isle of Wight against the Parliament"[2]. Two days later Philip, Earl of Pembroke was appointed by Parliament to replace him[3].

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1 An earlier attempt by the Commons to depose him as Island Captain had been blocked by the Lords

2 Brit. Mus., Burney 12a, Perfect Diurnall, No. 8, 1 - 7 August 1642, p. 6

3 Commons Journals, ii, p. 708

That same Saturday at York the King had just had news of Portland's arrest, and he at once took steps to plug the gap by giving Jerome Brett, Portland's deputy, full authority to act as "Lieutennant Governor of that our Isle"[1], correctly anticipating Parliament's next move of trying to install a nominee of their own in place of Portland.

The week that followed was one of growing tension. On Monday 8 August the blockading ships moved into position in the Solent, and on Tuesday the first manifesto of the Island campaign appeared. It was a Royalist document, albeit a discreetly worded one. Issued by "the deputy Lieutenannants and Justices the Knights and gentlemen of the Isle of Wight" ~~and~~ it declared:

> "1. That wee will with our lives and estates be assistant to each other in the defence of the true protestant Religeon established in the church of England against all papists or other ill affected persons whatsoever.
>
> 2. That wee will unanimously Joyne the uttermost of our endeavoures for the peace of this Island by protecting it by those forces already legally substituted amongest us and will admitt noe forraigne power or forces or newe government except his Majesty by advise of his Parliament uppon occasions that may arise shall thinke it necessary to alter it in any particuliers for the good and safety of the Kingdome"[2].

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/16a, pp. 429[v] et seq.

2 Ibid., p. 426. The signatures but not the declaration are printed by Richard Worsley: History of the Isle of Wight (1781) p. 115

It was signed by two dozen local gentlemen headed by Sir John Oglander and including all the fort commanders and three of the six Island M.P.s[1]. It was overtly unexceptionable, but a Parliamentarian news letter commented that it "might receive the construction of another sence"[2]. Moses Read the Mayor of Newport had no doubt about its meaning: he sent a copy up to the Commons along with an urgent request for twenty or thirty barrels of gunpowder"[3]. The Commons' reaction when they debated the declaration on 15 August was that the three offending M.P.s - John Meux, Nicholas Weston[4], and John Leigh - "be summoned forthwith to attend the Service of this House"[5] and that Sir Robert Dillington and Captain Humphrey Turney[6] be sent for as Delinquents[7].

The Mayor of Newport's anxiety about gunpowder was understandable because the Royalists were sitting on the entire Island stock[8]. Since

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1 The ambivalent wording of the document no doubt induced the signature of John Leigh, M.P. for Yarmouth, who was subsequently a Parliamentarian (see Douglas Brunton and D.H.Pennington: Members of the Long Parliament (1954) p.236

2 Brit.Mus., Burney 12a, Some Speciall and Considerable Passages from London ... No.1 (9 - 16 August 1642) p.8

3 Hist.MSS. Commission, 13th Report, appendix, part 1, p.49

4 Brother of the Earl of Portland, Captain of the Island

5 Commons Journals, ii, p.720

6 Captain of Cowes Castle

7 Dillington's petition was referred on 5 September to the Committee for Information (CJ, ii, p.752). Weston was dismissed as an M.P. on 16 August (CJ, ii, p.722)

8 Richard Worsley: History of the Isle of Wight (1781) p.111. The Tudor underground powder magazine can still be seen under the south garden of the castle at Carisbrooke

the 1540s most of the Island parishes kept their own bronze gun,[1] usually in a shed built for the purpose again the local church tower. These were of course useless without the gunpowder from the main magazine at Carisbrooke Castle, which was expensive and only sparingly issued for militia exercises in the 1600s. To make doubly sure, the local Royalists attempted sabotage. "The Touch hole of the feild peice of Brading neere Sandham Fort was soe artificially spiked upp with hardened steele that it is ympossible togett yt out againe and supposed more would have ben soe served had yt not ben soe timely discovered"[2]. Moreover Captain Turney at Cowes had managed to call some of the local militia weapons back into store. "He had inveagled the Countrey round about, and by faire glozing speeches had perswaded them to bring in their Arms into the said Castle, telling them that they would be there kept in safety from the Cavaliers"[3]. He had anticipated the August tension more acutely than the militia did. When the latter came in to ask for re-issue of the weapons, they found the Captain obdurate.

The Parliamentarians, then, may have had the overwhelming advantage of numbers, but they were lamentably under-provided with weapons. To make matters worse "rumors were spredd in the

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1 They were still in service at this time. The Island Captain wrote to the Council on 10 September 1640: "There are some parishes in the Isle of Wight which have their own brass field-pieces, but of so narrow bore they are not so useful as those his Majesty lately caused to be made" (CSPD Charles I, 1640-41, p.37). Two of these guns now survive: the Brading gun, a falconet, at Nunwell House; and the 'Carisbrooke Falcon' at Carisbrooke Castle. Both are inscribed as made by Robert and John Owen.

2 Newport Borough MSS., 45/16a, p.435

3 Brit. Mus., E.112(34), An Exact Relation of Fourteen dayes passages.....

Island that Collonel Brett had mounted and charged the ordinance of Carisbrooke Castle against Newport and had vaunted hee would beate downe the Towne and the Mayors house should be first. Which rumor did much terrify and affright the Inhabitants"[1]. This is confirmed by a news letter report on Monday 15 August that "there is in the Island much fear of the Captains of the Castles"[2].

On Friday 12 August the first shots were fired in anger. One of the Parliamentary blackading ships in the Solent, the Lion of Leith stationed off Cowes, hailed two boats bound for Portsmouth carrying a cargo of salt and a chest of money. As they ignored an order to heave to, Captain Ramsay the commander of the Lion fired a shot across their bows, and promptly came under fire himself from the guns at Cowes Castle.[3]

Meanwhile the Island Justices of the Peace were busy about their various partisan projects. Bulkley, a Parliamentarian, was going round showing a warrant from Parliament[4], while Sir John Oglander and Sir Robert Dillington were trying to neutralize the

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/16a, p.435

2 Brit. Mus., E.112(35), The Copy of a letter...concerning divers passages at Portsmouth...

3 Ibid., E.116(40), p.2. The firing was done by Captain Turney "in a furie, with his owne hand"

4 Forbidding the sending of supplies to Portsmouth (Nicholas Weston writing from Carisbrooke Castle to his son, 14 August 1642, in Newport Borough MSS., 45/16a, p.433). Copies of the warrant are in the Newport MSS. (ibid. p.427) and among the Oglander papers (IWCRO, Og/16/156

militia by persuading the companies to stand down from duty[1].

It was on Sunday 14 August that the royal courier got through to Carisbrooke Castle with the King's warrant appointing Brett as Lieutenant Governor. Brett needed this warrant to restore his morale because the royal courier had come hard on the heels of a messenger from Colonel Goring at Portsmouth appealing for men and supplies. In a revealing reply Brett wrote: "for the present I cannot answere your desire for men both by reason of the boatemans unwillingnesse to undertake the Carrying of any, alsoe being Sunday I could have noe oppertunyty. To morrowe I shall not fayle to Indeavor my uttermost"[2]. This and a batch of letters from others of the Carisbrooke garrison went off to Portsmouth that same Sunday afternoon, and Brett was left to plan his campaign for the next morning when he would present his warrant to the Mayor of Newport.

The visit to town was in fact a disaster. When Brett, accompanied by Captain Turney of Cowes, Captain Buck of Sandown Castle, Oglander, Dillington, and several other Royalists, reached town on the Monday morning he met his first setback. The Mayor was

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/16a, p.435

2 Ibid., p.434

not at home. Brett accordingly was left to stump the streets, jostling and being jostled by the sullen townspeople. "Papist", "traitors", and "villains" were among the insults alleged to have been hurled at the official party. One of the inhabitants, Welch, was so offensive that Brett threatened to have him whipped. The Royalists retired in frustration to an inn where, over refreshment, Brett tactlessly rehearsed some of his new powers. He would lay the town constable by the heels. He had power to hang men. The reaction was now so hostile that Brett's party withdrew before the people got quite out of control. "I shall hardly come thither againe", he wrote to the Mayor on returning to the castle, "untill you have put the Towne into a more civell posture. ... I cannot compare your towne to anything but to a large Bedlam"[1].

It was no accident that Brett should have found that the bird had flown. Moses Read was fully informed about recent developments because the outgoing couriers had failed to get through the Parliamentary ships the evening before. In spite of their stout denials their boat had been thoroughly searched and all their letters found.[2] The first public view of Brett's royal warrant was thus mere bathos. It was yesterday's news.

On Tuesday 16 August the Mayor and chief burgesses met to draft a reply to the rude letter that had now come from Brett. The town's reply was lengthy and equally forthright. To a request from

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/16a, p.428

2 Brit. Mus., Burney 12a, Speciall Passages, Numb.2, 16-23 Aug 1642, pp. 10-11

Brett for them to stand down the town militia[1] they replied: "As long as wee neither hurt nor disturbe any, give us leave within our selves to doe what wee list (soe lawfull) for our owne guarde and Securyty the times must needes be confeste on all hands to be dangerous and we think it ther fore a preposterous kinde of care to bidd us be negligent"[2]. The assembly then went on to pass a resolution to increase the town guard by sixteen men.

While this meeting was in progress, things were going badly for the Royalists at Cowes. Captain Louis Dick, one of the commanders of the blockading ships, had come ashore with a warrant for the arrest of Captain Turney[3] of Cowes Castle. When he arrived the first matter awaiting his attention was the disposal of two prisoners just taken by the watch at Gurnard: a Mr Southcot,[4] and another of the Weston family[5]. The obvious course was to lock them up, but Cowes Castle was still in Royalist hands, so they were taken to a "Mr. Monen's house"[6]. Dick after a brief interrogation left them there while he sent off messages to consult the captains of the other Parliamentarian ships. Southcot meanwhile was left with

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/16a, p.428

2 Ibid., p.429

3 The warrant was from Captain Swanley, commanding the Parliamentary blockade ships (Brit. Mus., E.116(40),p.2). It may be that the Commons summons of the previous day (CJ, ii, p.720) for Turney to be sent up as a delinquent, had made good speed

4 Brit. Mus., E.116(40), p.2; IWCRO, Og/16/157.

5 "Brother to my Lord of Portland" (E.116(40), p.2

6 IWCRO, OG/16/157

a problem. He was carrying letters to Island Royalists. So far these had evaded search, but they would certainly be found in time. The house where he had been left was near the sea. It was now late evening, and getting dark. Southcot asked to be allowed to go to the privy, and two musketeers accordingly escorted him downstairs to 'an house of office"[1]. Here was his opportunity. As he had suspected, there was a tidal outfall from the privy. Thankfully he threw his packet down it and watched the sea suck it away. His ingenuity deserved better success than it achieved. The tide washed the packet ashore again and it was found two days later "within the Sea marke"[2].

Captain Dick however caught a bigger fish than the couriers. Over at Cowes Castle, Humphrey Turney had news of their arrest, and at once went to the house where they were being kept, to demand their release. Dick in turn had news of this development. He put a cordon of musketeers round the house and went in himself to arrest Turney[3]. After a shouting match Turney succumbed to the inevitable. He and the two couriers were rowed out ina longboat and were made prisoner aboard various of the ships[4].

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1 Brit. Mus., E.116(40), p.3

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 E.114(6), The True Proceedings of the Severall Counties of Yorke....

If the Royalists were to make an effort in the Island this was the time to try, for the vice was tightening. Parliament had already on 13 August agreed to supply the gunpowder needed by the town of Newport[1]. On Monday 15 August it had been confronted with a further appeal for the Isle of Wight to be sent some cavalry and weapons[2], and troops had accordingly been ordered to the area. As yet Portsmouth was the main target, but forces on and near the Isle of Wight were also being increased. By 18 August there were seven warships off the Island, and plans had been completed to take over the coastal forts one by one.

Cowes was the first to go. After Turney's arrest only two gunners - William Stanfield and Joseph Galpin - were left there. On 17 August they sent an appeal to Sir John Oglander at Nunwell asking "what Course wee shall tak for the security of his maiestis Castell"[3]. The letter evidently got through, for it is among Sir John Oglander's papers; but it was too late. Cowes Castle surrendered that Wednesday[4] and a small Parliamentarian garrison was put in, with the master of Captain Swanley's ship in command.

Yarmouth was the next objective, and on Thursday morning Swanley sent Captain Wheeler to demand its surrender. Wheeler

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1 Commons Journals, ii, p.719

2 Brit.Mus., Burney 12a, Some Speciall and Considerable Passages from London etc. No.1 (9 - 16 August 1642) p.8

3 IWCRO, OG/16/157

4 Brit.Mus., Burney 12a, Speciall Passages... , p.11;
ibid., E.114(6);
Hist.MSS.Commission, 13th report, appendix, part 2, p.54

returned empty-handed. Barnaby Burley, commanding at Yarmouth, refused to hand over the castle without written authority from the King. Swanley, aboard Captain Jordan's ship the Caesar, now went to see for himself. Anchoring off Yarmouth Castle, he and Jordan rowed ashore and cautiously approached the moat "thinking to have had a fair parley with the said Burley, but being before the castle we saw him on the wall like a mad man, having a barrel of powder at each corner of the Castle with a linstock in his hands, saying that before he would lose his honour he would die a thousand deaths"[1]. Swanley waited a while for Burley to calm down and come out, on a safe-conduct, for a parley. Nothing was agreed, so Swanley left the castle surrounded by troops, and moved on.

The castle of Sandown was more easily taken. The captain there had a mutinous garrison who were effectively in control. When Swanley's ship appeared offshore the gunner and some of the soldiers went aboard and asked merely for a warrant to take the castle for Parliament[2]. So this new fort which had been completed by Charles I just six years before[3] passed peacefully across to his enemies without a shot fired. Meanwhile Captain Jordan, who had been sent to secure Hurst Castle, found the Royalist commander absent, and the garrison quite amenable to admitting a Parliamentary guard[4]. By the end of that Thursday, then, all the coastal forts except Yarmouth were secured; and Yarmouth in fact surrendered the following Monday, 22 August[5], the same day that the King set up his standard at Nottingham.

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1 Hist. MSS. Comm., 13th Report, appendix pt.2, p.55

2 Brit.Mus. E.116(40), p.3;HMC 13th Report, app. pt.2, p.55

3 J.D.Jones 'The building of a fort at Sandown, Isle of Wight, 1632-1636' in Proceedings of the Isle of Wight Natural History & Archaeological Society Vol.6, part 3 (1968), pp.166-188

4 HMC, 13th Report, appendix part 2, p.55

5 Brit. Mus. (Thomason Tracts) E.116(40), p.3

In terms of closing the net round Portsmouth all this was very satisfactory, for the inland garrison at Carisbrooke was now effectively bottled up. The mere existence of the Carisbrooke garrison however was a threat to the town of Newport, and consultations had been in progress to arrange a joint operation between the Newport militia and troops from the Parliamentary fleet in the Solent, to capture Carisbrooke. It is not easy to estimate with any accuracy the size of its garrison at this time, but in spite of current rumours in Newport that "Cavaleers resorted to Carisbrooke Castle in the night landed in by places of the Island"[1] there are signs that it was quite small[2]; and it is probable that it had not enough food supplies to enable it to withstand a long siege[3]. On the other hand Gianibelli's skill in the 1590s in designing the mile-long outer trace of artillery defences was such that this immense fortification could in theory be held by a moderately small garrison; and there was certainly no shortage of arms and ammunition, because this was the main arsenal for the Island and the magazine at this time contained 60 barrels of powder and enough weapons for 1500 men[4]. As early as 15 August

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1 Newport Borough MSS., 45/16a, p.435

2 The final terms of surrender (ibid., p.438) name fourteen Royalists "and all the servants belonging to any of them"; Richard Worsley (op.cit. 1781) p.115 reports that "Brett had not above 20 men"

3 Worsley (op.cit. 1781) p.116 says that "the Castle had not at that time 3 days' provisions for its slender garrison", and the reported attempt on the night of 23 August to run 25 sheep into the castle (Brit. Mus., E.116(40), p.4) suggests that food supplies were low.

4 Brit. Mus., E.116(40), p.5

the wife of one of the castle garrison approached one of the Parliamentary sailors at Cowes and claimed "that if speedy assistance could be provided, shee would shew a way to scure the said Castle"[1]. It was already clear to Captain Swanley, however, that only a show of force would achieve the desired result.

The operation began on Tuesday 23 August with the landing at Cowes of about 300 well-equipped musketeers and pikemen under the command of Swanley and five other naval captains[2].

While the force was being quartered in Newport that evening a delegation comprising Captain Jordan, Captain Martin, William Stephens (the Recorder of Newport[3]) and five trumpeters went on up to the castle to offer terms[4]. If Brett surrendered the castle, they said, he and the Cavaliers would be granted safe-conducts. Brett asked for time to consider this and was given until the next morning.

Brett had reasons for delaying: he was expecting more provisions, which might transform the situation; also he saw no impressive show of strength in the token force that had accompanied the heralds. He

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1 Brit. Mus., E.116 (40), p.2

2 Ibid., p.4. Richard Worsley (op. cit. (1781) p.115) gives the number of these naval auxiliaries as 400, as does Swanley himself (HMC, 13th Report, appendix part 2, p.55)

3 He later sat in the Long Parliament as one of the Newport Members, after the death of Lord Falkland in 1643

4 E.116 (40), p .4; HMC 13th Report, app. pt.2, p.55

prepared to guard the castle for his night vigil, and so did the thin cordon of pickets that Swanley now posted round the castle. As darkness fell Swanley's troops took their first prisoners of war: a flock of 25 sheep on their way in to augment the castle provisions[1].

It was a more imposing force that was seen from the castle the next morning, Wednesday 23 August. The full force of naval troops was now joined by the two town companies of Newport, bringing the Parliamentary force up to 600 men[2]. With dismay the watchers from the castle walls saw the moving forest of pikes as the enemy force took up its position on the neighbouring hill of Mount Joy overlooking the castle from the east. Richard Worsley[3] adds the picturesque and familiar detail of William Harby the Newport minister whipping up the enthusiasm of the town guard to put out the Countess of Portland and her five children (who were still living in the castle). Shewas a papist, he said; and the troops should be valiant, for they were about to fight the battle of the Lord.

Swanley and Jordan now approached the castle and offered to parley. Edward Worsley came out to them[4] and was told that the castle would be attacked if Brett did not accept the terms offered

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1 E.116 (40), p.4

2 Ibid.

3 Op. cit. (1781), p.116

4 Of Gatcombe, near Carisbrooke. He helped Charles I with his attempted escapes from Carisbrooke in 1648, and was knighted by Charles II at Carisbrooke Castle in 1665. His kinsman Sir Henry Worsley of Appuldercombe was on the Parliamentary side.

the previous evening. Worsley now invited the two Parliamentary officers into the castle to meet Brett[1], and for the next three hours in the Captain's quarters the detailed terms of surrender were worked out, while the defenders on the castle walls enjoyed the mortifying spectacle of their captured sheep roasting over the camp fires on Mount Joy[2].

At last the terms were agreed. The castle was to be handed over on condition that the Countess of Portland[3] was still allowed the use of her rooms there, at the discretion of Parliament, and that the principal Island Royalists were given safe-conducts to anywhere except Portsmouth[4]. Towards midday Swanley returned to his camp for a well-earned mutton dinner while Brett prepared to evacuate the castle. At last the signal came - a cannon fired from the castle - and the garrison marched out across the moat bridge.

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Vol. I.

1 HMC 13th Report, appendix part 2, p. 55

2 E.116 (40), p.5

3 Worsley (op. cit. (1781) p.116) records her defiant temper: "This Lady, with the magnanimity of a Roman matron, went to the platform with a match in her hand, vowing she would fire the first cannon herself, and defend the castle to the utmost extremity, unless honourable terms were granted". The Countess in fact left the castle within a month, to go to France (IWCRO, OG/16/144)

4 Newport Borough MSS., 45/16a, p.438;
Brit. Mus., E.115 (21), p.26

Now the Parliamentary troops moved in, in an order previously agreed. Just inside the inner gates, at the entrance to the castle courtyard, they found a brass cannon loaded with a deadly charge of 12 flint stones and over 100 pieces of musket shot, a sure sign that the storming of the castle would not have been a bloodless affair. While some of the incoming troops slewed the gun round and extracted the charge, others hastened to put a guard on the powder magazine and armoury. The castle was at last secured. It was left in the command of Captain Brown Bushell[1] with 50 men (40 from the ships and 10 from the Newport companies)[2]. The watchword at the gate that night was the Marigold, and at the powder magazine Dick[3].

The Island was now Parliamentary territory. On Monday 29 August Captain Dick left the Isle of Wight to report at Salisbury to the Earl of Pembroke, the new Captain and Governor[4], who finally arrived in the Island on 3 October[5] having been preceded during September by his deputy Colonel Carne[6]. The Countess of

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1 The hero of the recent exploit of cutting out Goring's only ship Henrietta Maria from under the walls of Portsmouth (G.N. Godwin: The Civil War in Hampshire 1642-5, (1904), p.15)

2 HMC 13th Report, appendix part 2, Vol. I, p.55

3 E.116 (40), p.5

4 Ibid., p.6

5 Richard Worsley, op.cit. (1781) p.116

6 IWCRO, OG/16/144

Portland meanwhile had made preparations to leave for Rouen with Sir William Hopkins in attendance[1]. The change of regime was complete, and the surrender of Portsmouth on 7 September[2] removed the last element of tension.

The revolution had been brought about in the Island with every sign of relative placidity from the population. Apart from Brett's turbulent and contentious visit to Newport on 15 August there is no sign of civil disturbance or of paying off old scores. The only case of looting was attributable to sixteen sailors from the Solent fleet, who apparently took advantage of the major operation against Carisbrooke Castle to plunder a house at St. Helens[3] belonging to Sir William Hopkins, a local Royalist who was in the Carisbrooke Castle garrison at the time[4]. The Hopkins family later took some lugubrious satisfaction from the fact that "their House was one of the first Plundered in England"[5]. Sir John Oglander (who was still at Nunwell) was quick to send a protest to Swanley[6] and the culprits

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1 IWCRO, OG/16/144

2 John Webb: The siege of Portsmouth and the Civil War (Portsmouth Papers, No.7, Portsmouth 1969), p.21

3 Cecil Aspinall-Oglander: Nunwell Symphony (1945) p.93

4 Newport Borough MSS., 45/16a, p.438
Charles I stayed at Hopkins's house in Newport during the Treaty there in 1648

5 Royal Library, Windsor Castle: Hopkins letters, 27 Aug 1642

6 C.Aspinall-Oglander: Nunwell Symphony (1945), p.93, letter from Oglander to Swanley, complaining of the sailors" threats "that they will serve most of the gentlemen's houses in the Island as they have done Sir William Hopkins"

were imprisoned in Cowes Castle[1], to the great consternation of the acting captain there, because the doors were without locks or bolts. Much of the plundered property was traced and returned. Certainly the Parliamentary officers were alive to the risk of pillaging resulting from failure to pay their sailors[2], but in this case the animus seems to have been of a political kind.

The epilogue may best be left to the King himself. Sir John Oglander was informed ("and I beleve from a good hand") that while in Oxford in March 1643 Charles I "often sayde, That he had most Confidence of the Isle of Wyght, that they woold have stoode for him, than of any other partes of his kyngdome but now by his experience he fownd fewe honest menn there"[3].

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1 E.116 (40), p.6

2 HMC 13th Report, appendix part 1, Vol. I, p. 61

3 CCM. Og. 425a

CHAPTER 9

SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS

Summary and conclusions

The period began with the Isle of Wight derelict and under-populated. It ends with every sign of growth and expansion. There are now six members of parliament. Newport and Yarmouth have both received a mayoral charter, and new buildings are appearing: in Yarmouth a new church, consecrated with great solemnity by the Bishop of Salisbury, and according to the royal proclamation the new fort, the increase of trade, and the new charter "hath induced many to resort unto, build, and dwell in the said Towne"[1]; in Newport there is a new town hall, a fine new school, and the harbour has been transformed out of recognition, while the population over the period has nearly trebled. A completely new town has appeared on the map, at Cowes: a threat perhaps to Newport's overseas commerce but not to its central position as an Island market. A large new coastal fort has been built in Sandown Bay, and Carisbrooke Castle has been brought up to date with a massive piece of renaissance artillery fortification. The local leather industry seems to have followed the medieval textile industry into oblivion, but at Cowes the first shipyards are beginning to develop, ready for the mercantile expansion still to come.

Island society too is becoming more fluid and adaptable. Under Elizabeth there was little major change in land tenure because there was a lot of Crown land on the Island and because the Queen as a

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1 Proclamation of James I, 4 September 1611, for subscriptions towards the building of a new church in Yarmouth

matter of military policy withheld its sale.[1] With the sale and mortgaging of Crown lands under the Stuarts, new owners and farmers have moved into the Island, some old families have sold up or cut down the size of their estates; but the effect of the incomers on the Island's posture in the Civil War was minimal. Apart from the fort commanders, most of the active people on both sides in the conflict were from existing Island families, settled for a century or more.

The motives governing the various Civil War loyalties in the Island were various: in some cases economic, in others political; but the single factor most responsible for the rapid crumbling of the Royalist cause in the Island was the existence of the expanding and cohesive town of Newport with a strong puritan tradition. This acted as a focus of support for Parliament, whereas Royalist support, apart from the nucleus at Carisbrooke, was dispersed and uncoordinated.

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1 R.B. Outhwaite: 'Who bought Crown lands?' in Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research, No. 44 (1971) p.31

THE ISLE OF WIGHT 1558-1642

SOURCES USED

A. Primary

1. Manuscript

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

There is of course a considerable amount of miscellaneous material relating to the Isle of Wight among the Domestic State Papers, from SP.12/4 (1559) to SP.12/275 (1600); SP.14/2 (1603) to SP.14/185 (1625); and SP.16/2 (1625) to SP.16/491 (1642).

In the Elizabethan and early Jacobean periods the dominant subject of official correspondence is usually defence and fortification, though by the reign of Charles I many of the papers relate to maritime affairs.

Work on fortifications is recorded in the Audit Office Declared Accounts, as follows:

AO.1/2515/562	Work at Carisbrooke, Yarmouth & Freshwater, 1584
/563	Work at Carisbrooke, Yarmouth & Freshwater, 1597-8
/564	Work at Carisbrooke, 1600-1601
/565	Work at Sandham (Sandown) & Yarmouth, 1609-10
/566	Work at Cowes Castle, 1616-7
/567	Building of Sandham Fort, 1632-6

Lay Subsidy assessments are mainly in the Exchequer papers:

SP.12/9, ff.108^{v}-109	1559	
E.179/174/388	1571	
D.MSS. No.114	1576	
E.179/174/414	1594	
/433	1598	
/441	1600	
/175/466	1606	
/ 174/369	1610	
/175/493	1621	
/507	1625	(part only)
/528	1629	(part only)
/537	1641	
/545	1642	

Isle of Wight coastal and foreign trade is entered for customs under the Southampton port books, of which the following books - at representative intervals during the period - were consulted:

E.190/814/1	May to September 1565
/2	October 1565 to April 1566
/3	Easter to Michaelmas 1566
/10	September 1575 to September 1576
/819/5	Christmas 1605 to Christmas 1606
/14 & 15	Calendar year 1613
/824/8 & 9	Christmas 1637 to Christmas 1638

Records of Island piracy among the Admiralty Court papers include:

HCA/13/23/	Gilbert Lea	1588	Thomas Becket	1588
/17	John Vaughan	1569		
/29	Henry Jolliffe	1590		

BRITISH LIBRARY

Lansdowne MS.11, f.72
'A note of the customes in the Isle of Wight for in chardgis', 1569.
A useful note on the Elizabethan trade of the Island

Lansdowne MS.33, ff.183-6
A report on Island piracy, from J.Jonson to Lord Burghley, 1581

Lansdowne MS.40
Various notes on the Isle of Wight, from the Burghley papers, including:
List of centons (f.10)
List of armed men (f.10^{v})
Havens and creeks (ff.11-11^{v})
Tithings and liberties (f.12)
Parish churches(f.12^{v})
Sir George Carey's orders for Island defence, 1583/4

Lansdowne MS.158, f.66
Letter from Sir George Carey about Fludd, a local pirate, 25 June 1585

Lansdowne MS.162, f.63
Complaint of Danish merchants about Island piracy, 1587

Lansdowne MS. 213, pp.42-3
Account of a visit to Gurnard, Newport, Cowes, and Carisbrooke in August 1635

Additional MS. 5669
Later copy, apparently late 18th century, of the town Court Book of Yarmouth, Isle of Wight, from 7 September 1600 to 18 October 1766, including:

ff.1-99^{v}	1600 to 1634
f.100	1647
ff.101 et seqq.	Index

This copy is particularly valuable because the original town papers for this period have not survived.

Additional MS. 5752, f.304
Instructions for defence of the Isle of Wight, 1 September 1586

Harleian MS. 1544
Heraldic Book of the families of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, 1634, incorporating material from visitations in 1530, 1575, and 1622

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Kk.5.5 Survey of royal manors and tenements in the Isle of Wight, 9 Oct 1583

ISLE OF WIGHT RECORD OFFICE, Newport

IW/22 Lay Subsidy assessment, 1563

SW/1716 Lay Subsidy assessment, 1568

SW/311 Court Book of the Borough of Newtown, 1636-56

Z.81 Bound volume containing the complete accounts for the building of the fort at Sandown, 1632-36. This in turn replaced an earlier fort of Henry VIII's time, which had been eroded by the sea.

OG/ series The IWRO has, on loan from the Oglander family, a large collection of the Oglander family papers. Their class numbers are not in chronological order, and documents relating to the period 1558-1642 are to be found among:

OG/1	21	60
4	23	71
6	26	72
11	27	73
13	29	76
14	31	77
15	33	78
16	39	79
17	44	80
18	49	81
19	51	86

Most of these concern the famous diarist Sir John Oglander (1585-1655) who was Deputy Governor of Portsmouth 1620-24 and Deputy Lieutenant of the Isle of Wight from 1624, as well as being High Sheriff of Hampshire 1637-9. Consequently, while many of these papers are deeds and leases relating to Oglander's large and growing estates in the Island, a significant number comprise official correspondence, throwing light on the defence and general administration of the Island. They should be read in conjunction with the Oglander notebooks at Nunwell House (q.v. below)

Of the Church Registers on deposit at the IWRO the following relate to this period:

Brading	Baptisms, marriages and burials for the whole period
Calbourne	Baptisms, marriages and burials from 1562
Carisbrooke	Baptisms, marriages and burials from 1572
Freshwater	Baptisms, marriages and burials from 1576
Gatcombe	Baptisms, marriages and burials from 1560
Northwood	Baptisms, marriages and burials for the whole period
Yaverland	Baptisms, marriages and burials from 1632

Church Registers of relevant date, still housed in the parishes, comprise:

Newport	Baptisms, marriages and burials for the whole period
Niton	Baptisms, marriages and burials from 1561
Thorley	Baptisms, marriages and burials from 1614
Yarmouth	Baptisms, marriages and burials from 1614

The registers of NEWPORT and CARISBROOKE were consulted in connexion with this thesis

HAMPSHIRE RECORD OFFICE, Winchester

The main source here is in the various series of wills, which are in three main groups according to the courts at which they were proved:

'A' series: Archdeacon's Court, covering all this period and including many Island wills

'B' series: Consistory Court, covering all this period and including many Island wills

'Pec' series: Peculiar Court, including 8 Brighstone wills between 1563 and 1642, and one Binstead will of 1612

Only sporadic use of wills was made in preparation of this thesis, because Isle of Wight wills have to be extracted from the general chronological sequence for the whole diocese of Winchester.

The Liber Actorum Episcopi or Register of the Bishops of Winchester, containing the transactions of the Consistory Court, has some material relating to recusancy, among other matters. The HRO class marks for the sections covering 1558-1642 are A.1/26 to A.1/31

NEWPORT BOROUGH MANUSCRIPTS

Newport has an excellent series of town books and papers, very informative for this period. They are housed in the office of the Chief Executive of Medina Borough Council at 17 Quay Street, Newport, IW, and include:

45/2	Town Ligger or Ledger Book containing various accounts and minutes of the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods
45/3	Register book of leather sealed and sealed in Newport, 1567
45/16a	Convocation Book 1609-59, minutes of the Corporation proceedings
45/20	Borough Court Book 10-37 Henry VIII
45/21	Borough Court Book 4-30 Elizabeth
45/22	Borough Court Book 30 Elizabeth - 15 James I
45/99	Terrier Book of Corporation estates, 1563
45/100	Terrier Book of Corporation estates, 1623
45/249	Charity account, 1582 (relief of poor during outbreak of plague)

BRADING TOWN PAPERS

Among the papers, property of Brading Town Trust, in the Town Hall at Brading the only source on this period is the Town Minute Book 6 December 1593 to 20 October 1622, being mainly records of the town courts. They are not very extensive and have the usual urban concerns of trade control, street cleaning, etc.

WILLIAM SALT LIBRARY, STAFFORD

Among the manuscripts of the Earl of Dartmouth in the William Salt Library is 'The generall Survey of the state of T(hisle) of Wight with all the Castelles and Fortresses wythin the same', being the report of Sir Francis Knolles, Sir Edward Warner, and John Goodwin who were commissioned on 20 November 1559 (Calendar of Patent Rolls...Elizabeth, vol.1, 1558-1560, p.443) to make a complete assessment of the state of the Island - number and condition of fortifications, number of parishes, condition of churches, population, industry, etc.

Although only 5 ff., this closely-written document is a major source on the condition of the Island at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign. It may be read in conjunction with the surviving four of the original eleven centon returns to the commission, in the Public Record Office:

SP.12/7/58	Arreton
SP.12/7/59	Mottistone
SP.12/7/60	St Helens
SP.12/7/61	Newport

which give even greater detail for their respective areas

OGLANDER NOTEBOOKS at Nunwell House, Brading

In addition to the Oglander papers in the IW Record Office, Sir John Oglander's notebooks are kept at Nunwell House. Basically account books - and the domestic, farm, and estate accounts are not the least interesting feature of these books - they also served as Sir John's commonplace books in which he jotted down scraps of poetry, philosophy, politics, observations on contemporary society, and gleanings of local history and archaeology. They cover the period 1625-1649.

Bound volumes of photocopies of these books are in the IW Record Office and in Carisbrooke Castle Museum, and the latter set (Museum accession number 11.1965) because it is paginated has been used as the standard reference, in preparation of this thesis.

EARL OF SALISBURY'S MANUSCRIPTS AT HATFIELD HOUSE, HERTFORDSHIRE

There are many scattered Isle of Wight references among the Salisbury papers, on various topics as in the Domestic State Papers, and these are well indexed in the excellent Calendar produced by the Historical MSS. Commission. It was necessary to consult the originals in the case of depositions relating to an alleged treasonable conversation in Shanklin in 1604: the relevant documents are CP.107/44-45^{v} and CP.109/96-97^{v}

2. Printed primary sources

Richard Worsley in his History of the Isle of Wight (1781) had access to original papers, many of which have not since been traced. He helpfully printed many of these as appendices, and those relating to this period are Nos. 2, 14, 15, 16, 18, 28, 39, 46, 49, and 85

B. Secondary sources

1. Typescript

Miss J.L.Wiggs: The seaborne trade of Southampton in the second half of the sixteenth century
(Southampton University MA thesis, 1955)
Gives the background of the Island's parent port of Southampton, with some identifiable IW material such as details of shipping

David F.Lamb: The seaborne trade of Southampton in the first half of the seventeenth century
(Southampton University M.Phil. thesis, 1972)
Again a small amount of material directly relating to the IW, mainly in analysis of sizes of ships

Rev. W.H.Mildon: Puritanism in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight from the reign of Elizabeth to the Restoration
(London University Ph.D. thesis, 1934)

K.R.Andrews: Economic aspects of Elizabethan privateering
(London University Ph.D. thesis, 1951)
Has some references to involvement of Islanders in various privateering ventures

2. Printed

(a) General

William Page (ed.): Victoria County History of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight
Vol.5 (1912) contains the parish histories for the Isle of Wight:
East Medine, pp.138-208, and West Medine, pp.209-292.
The manorial descents given here do show a gradual but not overwhelming trend for mainland people to buy an interest in Island manors and farms, particularly in the early 1600s

Richard Worsley: History of the Isle of Wight (1781) draws on many primary sources that have since ceased to be available. Still a standard work (and indeed given a reprint by EP Publishing in 1975, ed. by R.M.Robbins) the history gives a general description of the Island, an account of its military history, the lordship, the main towns, the religious houses, and the parish churches. Much of it relates to our period.

Percy G.Stone: Architectural Antiquities of the Isle of Wight from the 11th to the 17th centuries inclusive (1891) covers East Medine (forming Part 1) and West Medine (Part 2). Each part divides into two sections: ecclesiastical work, arranged alphabetically under parishes, and domestic work, alphabetically under names of houses and castles. It is not historically comprehensive, partly because Stone does not seem to have had access to all the manor houses, and partly because it is of course concerned with surviving buildings only; but the author's ability as both architect and historian is well applied to this work, which contains useful material on the period 1558-1642

(b) Special topics

Lindsay Boynton: 'Billeting: the example of the Isle of Wight' in English Historical Review Vol. LXXIV No.290 (January 1959) pp. 23-40 makes the point that much of the local resentment at the billeting of Scottish troops in the Isle of Wight in 1627 in connexion with the Rochelle expedition was attributable to maladroit handling of the business by the Government, and its reluctance to pay the due billeting money

O.G.S.Crawford: 'Mead Hole and Shoesflete' in Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society Vol. XVII Part 2 (1951) pp.112-115 gives a brief account of this infamous 16th-century pirate anchorage

A.Harbottle Estcourt: 'The ancient borough of Newtown alias Franchville, Isle of Wight' in Papers and Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club Vol. II (1890-93) Part 1, pp.89-109 gives a useful short history of this borough. Pages 91-92 and 96-97 relate to the period of this thesis

Rev. S.F.Hockey: Quarr Abbey and its lands 1132-1631 (Leicester 1970), a deeply-researched and definitive work, includes as Chapter 15 (pp.239-255) a study of the subsequent dispersal of the abbey estates after Quarr was closed by Henry VIII

Rev. S.F.Hockey: 'Terrier Book of Newport (I.W.) 1563' in Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society Vol. XIX Part 3 (1957) pp.227-239. The Newport Borough Manuscripts (q.v. supra) contain two later terriers within our period: 45/22, ff.120-123 (1592) and 45/100 (1623)

George Hiller: History of Newport (n.d., circa 1861) was one of the uncompleted fascicles (ending in mid-sentence at page 32) of a projected and uncompleted history of the Isle of Wight. Pages 11-32 cover the period 1558-1603 and include (pp.12-17) a transcript of the town's return to the Knolles inquiry in 1559 (original in PRO, SP.12/7/61).

J.D.Jones: 'The building of a fort at Sandown, Isle of Wight 1632-1636' in Proceedings of the Isle of Wight Natural History & Archaeological Society Vol. VI Part 3 (1968) pp.166-188

I.S.Leadam: 'The 1517 Inquisition on enclosures and evictions' in Transactions of the Royal Historical Society (N.S.) Vol. VII (1893) pp.277-292 argues that the trend towards enclosure in the Isle of Wight at this earlier period was not very pronounced

The Oglander papers have been partially published in various forms. The Oglander Memoirs: extracts from the MSS. of Sir John Oglander Kt., edited by W.H.Long (1888) was derived from an early 19th-century transcript then the property of Sir W.H.Cope of Bramshill and now in the Cope Collection at Southampton University Library. A Royalist's Notebook: the Commonplace Book of Sir John Oglander Kt., transcribed and edited by Francis Bamford (1936) again gives only partial and selected extracts. Nunwell Symphony by Cecil Aspinall-Oglander (1945) is an account of the house and family, illustrated with occasional extracts from the original papers. Pages 26-97 relate to the period of this thesis

PART OF HAMPSHIRE

Fareham
Porchester Castle
Eclarave
Cheshan
Wimerin
Farlington
Portsea bridge
Key
Elmsworth
Beydhampton
Tichfield Lake
Hellhead
Calshot Castle
Owrd
Mans Owrd
Leape
Bramble
Bewley
Halsey
Eaton Creek
Forton
Gomer pond
Gosport
Stoke
Gilkicker
Kingston
Kings Dock
Portsea
Botsland
Portsmouth
PORTSEA
ISLE
Milton
SouthSea Castle
Spitsand
Langston Haven
N Wood
HAL
Stike
INGI
Haling
South Wood
Thorney
Middle
Spit Head
Ryde midle
Horse
Dean
Limington
Salt Pitts
Hurst Castle
W Cows Castle
W Cows
Nort
Harto
E Cows
Whippingham
N Wood
Newton Haven
Kingshaven
Wolton Park
Fishouse
Quarr
Ryde
Nomans Land
Buoy
S Hellens Road
Bredleford
Elmsworth
Avinaton Forest
Cleybrook
Great Thoney
Fayrlee
Pan
Cross
Newport
Binsted
Thablefield
Newnham
Puckpool
Comley
Whitfield
Cares brook Castle
Newton
Arreton
Small brook
S Hellens
Merston
Knighton
Ashe
Nounwell
Brading
the Mixon
Hasley
Newchurch
Binbridge
Yaverland
Binbridge Pt
Redway
Hall
Sandham Ca
Culver Cliff
Swan Cliff
Pagam
Bathingbarn
Sandham Bay
Godshill
Langard
Bridg Court
Cliffe
Apse
Shanklin
Appledurcomb
Luckham
Stenbarro
Bonehurch
Week
Dunnose
Gotton
Ather field
S Katherine
Chale
Whitwel
Niton
Lawrent
Park
Chale Bay
Rocken-end
Shorwell
Wolverton
Kingston
Briaton
Motston
Brook
Compton
Fresh Water Bay
Hany Mouth
Jacmans Chine
Kingest Chine
Walks court
Kingest
Limerston
North court
West Court
Cheverton
Roughborrow
Saucome
Idlecombe
Calbourne
Gatcombe
Bawkham
North Park
Freshwater Cliff
Freshwater Isle
Aston
Wellow
Shawflet
Yarmouth
Thorley
Bulner
Kingswood
Worsleys Tower
The Farm
Stonnee Fort
The Needles
Shingles
A Scale of 10 Miles
5
10

THE SMALLER ISLANDS in the BRITISH OCEAN

By Robt Morden

Sold by Abel Swale
Awnsham and John Churchill.

ALDERNEY

Banes du Noord
Bunehou
le Cinq Corbet
Mid de Aigle
le Gray
Sogue
les Casquets
le Etats
la Ville
Houmet
Banrou
Le Porte
Roustel
le Brinchetais
R. Nere
Croquelihou
Bass-de Bony
3
6
A Scale of Miles

The Race of Alderney

Seneque damant
Cape d la Hague
Longuesque
H. de Goury
Anderuil
Pt Anderville
Bet Anse de
Estalgrain