

WINSLOW IN 1341: THE *NONARUM INQUISITIONES* AND THE RELIABILITY OF MEDIEVAL TAX SELF-ASSESSMENT

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The taxation survey of 1341 known as the Nonarum Inquisitiones reported dire economic conditions in Winslow, as in the rest of north Buckinghamshire: 400 acres of land out of production, shortage of sheep and lambs. Comparison with the manor court books of the same period suggests that things were not as bad as the inhabitants claimed, and brings into question the reliability of people explaining why they should pay less tax.

THE *NONARUM INQUISITIONES* AND THEIR BACKGROUND

On 29 March 1340, in order to support wars in France and Scotland, Parliament granted Edward III 'the Ninth Lamb, the Ninth Fleece, and the Ninth Sheaf, to be taken by Two Years then next to come'.¹ Assessors were appointed for each county by an order of 20 April 1340, but on 26 January 1341 they were instructed to use as the basis of their assessment the survey of ecclesiastical property known as the *Taxatio Ecclesiastica* of 1291–92. This had been drawn up on the orders of Pope Nicholas IV and provided an authoritative record of church income which was used for over two centuries. It includes for each parish a valuation of the tithes of lambs, wool and wheat (and sometimes of other produce too, e.g. hay; the total is not broken down). The 'ninth' due to Edward III was one-ninth of what was left after tithes had been paid to the church, and was therefore intended to produce exactly the same revenue as the tithes. Its basis was different from that of the lay subsidy known as the Fifteenth and Tenth which was levied frequently from 1332.² It was a period of oppressively heavy taxation.

The problem which the assessors faced was that the economic situation in 1341 was very different from what it had been in 1292. English rural society suffered a number of setbacks in the intervening period. The average size of holdings was already declining in the late thirteenth century due

to increased population.³ Bad weather, flooding and failed harvests caused the Great Famine of 1315–17 which is estimated to have killed at least ten per cent of the population.⁴ Sixty-two per cent of bovine animals were wiped out by the murrain of 1319–20, with drastic consequences for ploughing and manuring as well as human diet.⁵ More bad harvests caused by drought followed in the late 1320s and early 1330s.⁶ Studies of various manors show that the period 1337–41 was another one of crisis.⁷ There was growing polarisation within the peasantry between the wealthier ones and the large majority of smallholders and landless.⁸ Most people lived at subsistence level with few resources to fall back on, and if the Black Death had not arrived in 1348–49, famine might have had nearly as disastrous an effect on the population.⁹

The assessors were therefore directed to hold enquiries in each parish to ascertain whether the tax should be levied at the same rate as the tithes of 1292 or reduced. These are the records which survive, known as the *Nonarum Inquisitiones*. The inhabitants had to explain on oath why they should pay less than the 1292 assessment. There was evidently no standardisation in the procedure, leading to anomalies such as the recording of abandoned land in much of north Buckinghamshire and north Bedfordshire but not at all in Northamptonshire.¹⁰ Returns, usually containing a brief summary of the grounds alleged for a reduction even if the assessors did not accept them, survive for nearly all of Buckinghamshire, and they have

been used as an important primary source for the state of the English countryside shortly before the Black Death by historians who make the county an example of economic decline.¹¹ They present a bleak picture of an impoverished and diminished population lacking animals and seed, and unable to cultivate its land.¹² 101 out of 176 identified parishes record uncultivated land.¹³ At least 5,539 acres had gone out of production since 1292.¹⁴ However, one writer describes the *Nonarum Inquisitiones* as ‘a valuable yet treacherous source for historians of the early fourteenth century crisis’.¹⁵ People explaining why they should pay less tax than has been demanded are not necessarily at their most reliable. It is therefore useful to compare the *Nonarum Inquisitiones* with contemporary records at a very local level, and this can be done for Winslow, where manor court books survive for the same period.¹⁶ The manor of Winslow, including the hamlet of Shipton and the parishes of Little Horwood and Granborough, belonged to the abbot of St Albans.

THE ASSESSMENT OF WINSLOW

The total assessment for the church’s income from Winslow with the chapels of Little Horwood and Granborough in 1291–92 was £26 15s 4d.¹⁷ This included:

- £18 from the church and two chapels (i.e. the tithe income)
- 15s 4d paid direct to the chamberlain of St Albans and untitheable
- £8 from the three vicarages (i.e. the glebe lands)

The *Nonarum Inquisitiones* entries usually begin with the 1292 assessment, but in the case of Winslow they state that it is unknown, probably because the assessors did not know whether to include the chamberlain’s *pensio* and the glebe income. The latter was specifically excluded at Twyford and Hillesden: ‘no benefit to the ninth arys from it’.¹⁸ Policy on payments to other ecclesiastical institutions seems to have varied (see below), but the 15s 4d at Winslow was probably excluded from the assessment as it was from the tithes. In 1341 the jurors reported that the value of the ninth for Winslow ‘with members’ was £16.¹⁹ This shows how much greater the burden was than with the regular lay subsidy, in which Winslow

paid about £3.²⁰ They said ‘that 400 acres of land lie fallow and uncultivated (*frisce et inculte*), and that there are few sheep and lambs’. The reduction allowed on the 1292 assessment was about eleven per cent.

Winslow can be compared to the surrounding parishes, which gave similar reports. At Mursley, a carucate (about 120 acres) of land was uncultivated and there were few sheep and lambs, so the assessment was reduced from £13 to £10.²¹ At Addington there were two virgates uncultivated (a virgate was usually about thirty acres) and few sheep and lambs; the assessment was reduced from £5 to £4 6s 8d.²² At Adstock the peas and beans had failed because of drought, but the assessment went up from £6 13s 4d to £7 6s 8d.²³ At North Marston the assessment remained at £7 13s 4d despite ‘much land’ being uncultivated.²⁴ At East Claydon it remained at £7 3s 4d although there were few sheep and lambs.²⁵ Most parishes in north Buckinghamshire reported the same problems: uncultivated land, lack of sheep, failure of the pea and bean crop. Some added more detail. At Foscoate ‘the parishioners are so poor that they cannot cultivate their lands’.²⁶ At Maids Moreton thirty acres were uncultivated ‘because of the impotence of the parishioners who, they say, do not have the wherewithal to cultivate their lands’.²⁷ At Radclive ‘there was a great murrain of sheep this year’.²⁸

The six men who made the report on Winslow to the assessors in 1341 were William Broun, Robert atte Hull, John atte Nasshe, William Albyn, Thomas Broun and John Martyn. None of them served as a regular juror at the manor courts. It is not known how they were selected to give evidence to the assessors, but they were not the most obvious men to do so. One of them died soon afterwards, another moved away. Perhaps they were chosen to pass on information provided by the court jurors because they would not have any detailed knowledge if they were questioned closely. Three were from Winslow and three from Little Horwood, none from Granborough. This suggests that Granborough was not included in the survey, which was based on parishes rather than manors. It was a separate parish and in a different hundred (Ashendon rather than Mursley). Two of the men were probably elderly, two probably fairly young, and two had a limited stake in the community:

- William Broun held a messuage and a virgate of customary land²⁹ in Little Horwood, with another quarter-virgate of freehold, and some other smaller holdings. He had already in 1337 demised (i.e. sub-let) the virgate, and his death was reported in June 1342.³⁰
- Robert atte Hulle held a quarter-virgate of land in Little Horwood until its heir came of age,³¹ and had previously had some other temporary holdings. He is sometimes described as ‘of Wheathamstead’.
- John atte Nasshe was also from Little Horwood, where he held some land from the chamberlain of St Albans and three messuages and a half-virgate from the abbot, as reported when he died in 1351.³²
- William Albyn already held land in Winslow in 1332, and gradually added to his holding, which was still in his possession when the first series of court books ends in 1377.
- Thomas Broun gradually sold off his land in Winslow and Shipton in the 1340s. After the Black Death in 1349 he committed default at every court, so must have moved away. He was regarded as having abandoned his holding in 1359.³³
- John Martyn is first mentioned as holding land in 1330, and was evidently already in possession in 1327 when the records start. He was a juror at the manor court in 1340, but never again. He became probably the largest landholder in Winslow. At his most prosperous, he held nearly three virgates.

THE LAND MARKET IN WINSLOW

Several of these six men took advantage of an active land market to enlarge or dispose of their holdings, and the court books show many transfers of land. Most of these took the form of the tenant surrendering a piece of land, and the lord granting it to a new tenant on payment of a fine. In reality they were sales arranged between the parties, who technically could not buy or sell land as it belonged to the abbot not to them. There are also records of one tenant demising his or her land to another. The custom was that demising for more than two years had to go through the court, with payment of a fine. This meant that, because of the size of the fine payable, it was rarely thought worthwhile to demise land for a period of less than twelve years except

for substantial holdings. People were sometimes penalised for demising their land without the lord’s permission, suggesting that informal arrangements were made in order to avoid paying the fine.

A very active land market in the Middle Ages is usually linked with times of crisis, where people sell their land in order to buy food or pay debts.³⁴ It was a last resort when people found they had no other way of surviving a bad harvest.³⁵ At Hinderclay in Suffolk there were more sellers than buyers in crisis years of the 1290s, showing that some people were taking advantage of the situation to build up larger holdings.³⁶ The same thing happened in Worcestershire in 1316–17.³⁷ In Shropshire and Herefordshire, places reported in the *Nonarum Inquisitiones* to be in difficulties had a high number of land transactions in the famine period.³⁸ However, if wealthier peasants (usually virgate-holders) wanted to extend their holdings, why did they not take over abandoned land for which they might be able to negotiate more favourable terms, instead of buying existing holdings? It could be the case that the pool of abandoned land which was reported in 1341 did not yet exist in the 1310s, or not to such a great extent, or that the holdings which they were buying were in fact already abandoned. These possibilities can be tested for Winslow. Another possible reaction to famine, bringing more land into production (assarting),³⁹ was not available in Winslow, where all available land was already being used.

The court books of Winslow from 1327 to 1341 do not provide direct evidence for abandoned land or difficulty in finding tenants to take over the holdings of those who had died. In these respects they are very different from the entries after the Black Death struck, when there are many records of untenanted or abandoned land. For example, in 1349 William Horewod’s lands remained in the lord’s hands after his death ‘for lack of an heir’.⁴⁰ In 1351 a parcel of meadow worth 8d in rent had been standing uncultivated for two years.⁴¹ In 1352, John Irmonger surrendered a half-acre which remained in the lord’s hands without a tenant for several years.⁴² Entries like these should occur before 1341 if people were really leaving the land uncultivated. In fact there are no clear references at all to permanent abandonment. In 1332 Andrew and Rose Magge left their holdings without a tenant and were fugitives (i.e. they had gone away without permission), but their lands were restored

to them in 1334 at considerable expense.⁴³ When John Ponteyes went on pilgrimage, his son took over his holdings.⁴⁴

This is surprising if 400 acres were lying uncultivated, a very large figure compared to those for other parishes where there was some precision, e.g. thirty acres at Maids Moreton, two virgates at Addington. In 1813, post-Enclosure Winslow (including the old field systems of Winslow and Shipton) was recorded as having 719 acres of meadow, 1,459 of pasture and 300 of arable.⁴⁵ Assuming that the pasture was pre-Enclosure arable (as can still be seen from the surviving ridge-and-furrow landscape), this gives 1,759 acres of arable land. On the same principle Little Horwood had 700 acres of arable and Granborough 967. 400 acres would be twenty-three per cent of the available land in Winslow, sixteen per cent of Winslow and Little Horwood (the most likely combination) or twelve per cent of the three parishes.

Table 1 shows the number of transfers of land recorded by the court each year, with the number of individuals listed as sellers and buyers. It excludes as far as possible transfers for the benefit of a family member, e.g. making a wife joint tenant or passing on land to a child. It is likely that there were more of these than is apparent, since they can usually be detected only if the parties shared a surname or the record gives a family relationship.

The studies mentioned above found that the number of transfers rose at times of crisis, and that the number of sellers exceeded the number of buyers because people with large holdings were buying up the land of the smallholders. The table shows that this was not the case for Winslow. The number of transfers varied much more than the number of sellers because a few individuals accounted for a large number of transfers, and the number of buyers exceeded the number of sellers nearly every year.

SELLERS OF LAND

Desperation to raise money because of a crisis was not the only reason for disposing of one's land. The first recorded maintenance agreement, where someone handed over his land in return for being given an income or board and lodging, was between John le Clerk and his son in 1341.⁴⁶ Another possibility, probably only used by those without sons to

inherit, was to sell off the land gradually in order to provide an income in old age. The following three case studies concern people who seem to have chosen that strategy, and between them they account for about a third of the transfers listed in Table 1.

- John of Norton of Granborough, who held some land jointly with his wife or his daughter, sold off his own land every year. He originally seems to have held a virgate or the equivalent, and disposed of it in small parcels to a total of thirteen different buyers between 1333 and 1341, so that by the time he died in 1342 he held only a third of a house.⁴⁷ This was clearly a long-term policy and not a reaction to temporary circumstances, and it had the effect of extending rather than concentrating landholdings. Only one of the thirteen buyers, John Janekyns, was a virgate-holder. One other, Ralph Henry, was a regular juror, which suggests that he held a virgate or half-virgate, but his holding is not known. Walter le Taillour built up a holding of twenty acres through the land market. Two of the buyers, John atte Dene and Christina Henry, married each other and between them held fifteen acres. The other eight held only a few acres of land each. They were not wealthy peasants increasing their holdings, but people who only became landholders of any sort through the workings of the market.
- Geoffrey Scot of Shipton sold off at least a half-virgate in small parcels between 1328 and 1339. He is not mentioned after that, so may have given up his entire holding although he is not recorded as paying heriot as he should have done if he had ceased to be a tenant. He had twelve different purchasers. Two or perhaps three of them held a virgate and one held a half-virgate. At least two were younger sons of virgate-holders, and the others had small holdings acquired through the market. As with John of Norton, much of the land was transferred to people who would otherwise have held little or nothing.
- Henry Geffes of Little Horwood sold off at least a half-virgate in small parcels between 1328 and 1338 to eleven different purchasers. In 1336 he handed over a half-acre for two years as a pledge for a debt of 14s 6d (a very substantial sum; horses and oxen taken as heriots were normally valued at 10s at this time); this also involved

TABLE 1 Transfers of land recorded by Winslow manor court, 1327–42

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of transfers</i>	<i>Number of sellers</i>	<i>Number of buyers</i>
1327	5	4	5
1328	9	8	8
1329	18	10	15
1330	11	11	9
1331	15	9	15
1332	9	7	9
1333	9	8	7
1334	9	6	8
1335	21	11	17
1336	32	12	24
1337	21	10	13
1338	14	6	12
1339	20	12	18
1340	22	10	18
1341	28	13	20
1342	10	9	8

The number of transfers includes absolute transfers and demises for a term of years. Only transfers including farmland have been counted.

paying a fine of 1s.⁴⁸ In 1338 he disposed of his messuage and any remaining land.⁴⁹ Two of his purchasers held a virgate or half-virgate. Four others inherited a virgate or half-virgate later but held little land when they made their acquisitions from Henry. The other five had small holdings of which the largest was eight and a half acres and the others no more than three acres.

It is therefore clear that the people who sold off their land on a regular basis were not adding significantly to the holdings of those who already had plenty of land, but did much more to add to small holdings or provide the first holding for people who previously held nothing. In other words, despite the impression of the *Nonarum Inquisitiones*, it appears that there was a pool of wholly or nearly landless people who were taking an active part in the land market, presumably using money they had earned by paid labour or practising trades. This would surely not be the case if there was abandoned

land available to them. Enough people of this sort survived the Black Death to enable landlords to find tenants for many holdings which really were abandoned then.⁵⁰

Other people appear only as occasional sellers, presumably raising money to tide them over particularly difficult times. In 1340 there were five sales in this category

- Geoffrey and Amabilia Perles sold a quarter-acre in Winslow to Roger atte Welle. Roger was active in the land market in the 1330s, and became chief pledge of the New Town of Winslow after the Black Death. When he died in 1375 his holdings were described as 'land acquired from various tenants', so he does not appear to have been a virgate-holder.⁵¹ Geoffrey and Amabilia held twenty-four acres jointly when he died in 1346 and another three and a half acres in Amabilia's name.⁵²
- John Colyns sold an acre in Winslow to Roger and Alice Edward. Roger inherited eight and a

half acres from his mother in 1335. He acquired another acre from John Colyns in 1342 and made some other small purchases so that he held eleven and a half acres when he died in 1349.⁵³ John Colyns was a virgate-holder who served as a juror and became an increasingly frequent seller of half-acres.⁵⁴

- John the vicar of Little Horwood and Robert his brother sold an acre to Richard son of Robert Henry. Richard Henry was the son of a half-virgate holder who died in 1346, having already handed over some of his land; he appears to have shared it equally with his brother.⁵⁵ Robert, the vicar's brother, acquired another acre in his own right in 1337.⁵⁶ The two brothers are not mentioned as landholders otherwise but may be hidden in the records with a different surname.
- William Pygand sold a half-acre in Little Horwood to Walter Simond. Walter Simond, sometimes described as being of Mursley, held one and three quarter acres when he died in 1349 (he may have held more in Mursley).⁵⁷ William Pygand or Picond was a virgate-holder.⁵⁸
- John Janekynes demised two and a half acres in Granborough for forty years to Walter le Taillour. See above for both men. John was a virgate-holder and Walter was not.

Far from contributing to a concentration of holdings, at least three, and probably four, of these five sales involved a seller with more land than the purchaser. A tendency for this to happen when both buyers and sellers held little land has also been noted in some Suffolk manors in the 'famine' period,⁵⁹ and there was clearly much local variation. However, the four sellers listed above who held a virgate or nearly as much were precisely the sort of people who should have had the resources to withstand temporary difficulties without selling land.

RENTS, FINES AND HERIOTS

The fine payable to the lord for transferring a small amount of land was substantial. In 1327–29 it was nearly always 1s for selling a half-acre, about the value of a sheep. In 1340–41 a majority of the fines were higher, at a rate between 1s 3d and 2s for a half-acre. The rationale for the size of the fine is not known, but it must have been negotiable,⁶⁰ and there was evidently no question of making it lower

because people had to be encouraged to take on land; in 1350–51 when encouragement really was needed, it was usually 1s or less for a half-acre.

The private arrangements made between buyers and sellers were not usually the business of the court. In 1342, John le Spicer tried unsuccessfully to have a sale of a messuage and twelve acres to Richard of Cherdesle annulled on the grounds that he was not of sound mind when he made it. The sale took place in 1341 on condition that Richard paid John four silver marks (£2 13s 4d) the following Easter.⁶¹ In 1345, Walter le Taillour claimed that he had paid John le Longe 56 silver shillings (£2 16s) to buy one and a half acres of land, an agreement which the court had to enforce.⁶² These two sums are not consistent with each other: either the first was not the full purchase price or the second is a transcription error.

Another possible source of land for those who wanted it was the demesne, the land which was farmed directly for the lord using the labour services of the tenants. According to the Hundred Rolls of 1279 there were six virgates of demesne in Winslow, but the extent of it in Shipton, Little Horwood and Granborough is not known. A policy of taking the demesne out of direct management developed at Winslow in the 1340s, and was a widespread reaction by landlords to the economic changes.⁶³ Henry Boveton and John Horewode were each granted four acres of demesne in Cheynefurlong for three years in 1342.⁶⁴ In 1344, a total of twenty-nine acres of demesne in Granborough, mainly in two-acre blocks in different parts of the field system, was handed over to tenants at rents of 4d or 5d per acre.⁶⁵ In 1345, parts of the demesne in Shipton and Winslow totalling 119 acres of arable land and some pasture were handed over for twelve years in larger blocks and at higher rents (but without labour services) of 6d to 12d per acre.⁶⁶ More demesne totalling at least 207 acres in Winslow and seventy-three in Granborough (as well as pasture and meadow) was let out in 1347 at rents of up to 12d per acre.⁶⁷ These arrangements were cancelled after the Black Death.

The rent which was charged on parts of virgates and half-virgates seems to have been rather less. Disputes involving Richard of Cherdesle in 1342 and 1344 refer to rents of between 3½d and 6½d per acre payable to the lord.⁶⁸ The rents payable in 1556 are recorded, and in the case of customary land they may have been unchanged since the

fourteenth century. There are some examples of rent as low as 3d per acre, which is also cited as a typical rent elsewhere in the early fourteenth century.⁶⁹ It therefore seems that the abbot was able to charge higher rent for newly leased demesne land than for customary land in the 1340s. Even if this can be partly explained by rent in money replacing labour services, it does not seem consistent with other land having been abandoned.

A final possible source of information about the abandonment of land is the record of people amerced for default, *i.e.* non-attendance, at the manor court. The figure for defaults is not very reliable as they do not seem to have been recorded regularly; in some years there are records only for Winslow or Little Horwood, and the apparent peaks occur in the years where people were listed for all the parishes. After the Black Death many people were listed as absentees every year because they had gone away, but that is not the case in the period 1327–42. Table 2 shows the number of individuals who were amerced each year.

Only four individuals were recorded as

TABLE 2 Amercements for default

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of defaults</i>
1327	4
1328	0
1329	2
1330	4
1331	4
1332	3
1333	2
1334	4
1335	9
1336	6
1337	4
1338	7
1339	6
1340	4
1341	9
1342	2

defaulters five times or more. John Smyth cannot be identified further as there were several people with that name. Nicholas le Daye kept his holding in Winslow until his death in 1341 and was succeeded by his son.⁷⁰ James, vicar of Turville was clearly not a runaway, and kept his holding until he died in 1349.⁷¹ The only regular absentee who lost his holding was Robert Bisshop, who was deprived of it because he was deemed to have caused waste in 1337, but it passed to the reversionary heir, and Robert was a chaplain who had presumably left for ecclesiastical reasons.⁷² There is therefore no support at all in the record of defaults for the idea that people were abandoning their land.

On the alleged shortage of sheep and lambs, the only clue comes from the animals which were claimed by the lord as heriot. When tenants died, or gave up all their holdings for another reason, the lord was entitled to the most valuable possession, which was usually an ox, cow or horse for the more substantial tenants, or a sheep, pig, utensil (e.g. a brass pot) or item of clothing for others. Table 3 shows how often sheep were claimed as heriots, in comparison with other animals and possessions:

These figures can only give a very general indication, and may be affected by a slight rise in the total number of heriots in 1341 and 1342 which could have involved more people who owned no more than a sheep, but they do not suggest any particular shortage of sheep in 1341.

CONCLUSION

This analysis of the relationship between the taxation return of 1341 and the evidence of the manor court books does not inspire confidence in the *Nonarum Inquisitiones*. The court books do not support the claims that land had been abandoned or (as far as they go) that there was a shortage of sheep. That is not to say that the economic decline since 1292 was imaginary. 400 acres might really have been abandoned in the 1310s, but it is very likely that they were back in production by 1341. Another possibility is they were uncultivated in 1341 because they had been left fallow as part of the normal cropping plan for the land, so the evidence given was technically correct but deliberately misleading. In either case, Winslow was not in such a bleak position as its taxation self-assessment suggested, and historians should be cautious about accepting the *Nonarum Inquisitiones* evidence for north Buckinghamshire

TABLE 3 Items claimed by the lord as heriot

<i>Year</i>	<i>Bovine</i>	<i>Horse / beast</i>	<i>Sheep</i>	<i>Pig</i>	<i>Utensil / clothing / money</i>	<i>Waived</i>
1327	1	1			1	
1328	5				2	
1329	2	1				
1330	3	2		1	1	
1331	4			1	3	
1332	3	1				
1333	2					
1334	3	1	1			
1335	2	1	1			1
1336	4	2			1	
1337	1		1	1		
1338	3				2	1
1339	3				1	
1340	2		1		2	
1341	6	1	2	1		
1342	4	3	2	1	1	

at face value. The medieval assessors who allowed only modest reductions in assessments, or no reduction at all, already realised this.

NOTES

1. *Nonarum Inquisitiones in Curia Scaccarii temporibus regis Edwardi III* (printed by order of the House of Commons, 1807), v. I am very grateful to Lyn Robinson for introducing me to this text, and for stimulating discussion.
2. AC Chibnall, *Early Taxation Returns* (Bucks Record Society **14**, 1966).
3. Mark Bailey, 'Peasant welfare in England, 1290-1348', *Economic History Review* **51** (1998), 223-51, p. 227.
4. Bailey, 238.
5. Philip Slavin, 'The Great Bovine Pestilence and its economic and environmental consequences in England and Wales, 1318-50', *Economic History Review* **65** (2012), 1239-66, p. 1239. The murrain may have been rinderpest (p. 1240).
6. David Stone, 'The impact of drought in early fourteenth-century England', *Economic History Review* **67** (2014), 435-62, p. 436.
7. Chris Briggs, 'Manor court procedures, debt litigation levels, and rural credit provision in England, c.1290-c. 1380', *Law and History Review* **24** (2006), 519-58, p. 532.
8. Bailey, 'Peasant welfare', 237.
9. JCK Cornwall, 'Medieval peasant farmers', *Recs Bucks* **20** (1975), 57-75, p. 75.
10. Alan RH Baker, 'Evidence in the *Nonarum Inquisitiones* of contracting arable lands in England during the early fourteenth century', *Economic History Review* **19** (1966), 518-32, p. 521. Baker incorrectly gives the year of the survey as 1342, without explanation.
11. e.g. Cornwall, 75; Slavin, 1258; Christopher Dyer, *Making a Living in the Middle Ages* (London 2003), 237.
12. Baker, 530.
13. Baker, 528.
14. Baker, 529.
15. Chris Briggs, 'Taxation, warfare, and the early fourteenth century 'crisis' in the North:

- Cumberland Lay Subsidies, 1332-1348', *Economic History Review* 58 (2005), 639–72, p. 651
16. David Noy (ed.), *Winslow Manor Court Books, Part I 1327–1377* (Bucks Record Society 35, 2011), hereafter WMCB.
 17. *Taxatio* website <<http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/taxatio/benkey?benkey=LI.HU.AL.08>>, accessed 30 Dec 2014. The website gives the details extracted from the 1802 printed edition of the *Taxatio Ecclesiastica*. The original figures were usually given in marks (two-thirds of a pound) rather than pounds, shillings and pence.
 18. *Nonarum Inquisitiones*, 330–31.
 19. *Nonarum Inquisitiones*, 327.
 20. Chibnall, 103.
 21. *Nonarum Inquisitiones*, 326; *Taxatio* website <<http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/taxatio/benkey?benkey=LI.BU.MU.04>>; this includes £2 to the Prior of Nuneaton and £1 to the Prior of Luffield.
 22. *Nonarum Inquisitiones*, 330; *Taxatio* website <<http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/taxatio/benkey?benkey=LI.BU.BU.15>>; this excludes £2 payable to the Hospitallers of St John at Hogshaw.
 23. *Nonarum Inquisitiones*, 330.
 24. *Nonarum Inquisitiones*, 339; *Taxatio* website <<http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/taxatio/benkey?benkey=LI.BU.WA.07>>; this includes £1 payable to the Prior of Dunstable.
 25. *Nonarum Inquisitiones*, 339; *Taxatio* website <<http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/taxatio/benkey?benkey=LI.BU.WA.08>>; this includes 10s payable to the Prior of Wallingford.
 26. *Nonarum Inquisitiones*, 331.
 27. *Nonarum Inquisitiones*, 330.
 28. *Nonarum Inquisitiones*, 329.
 29. Customary land, or land held in villeinage or 'by rod' or 'by copy of court roll', was held by paying rent and performing labour services. It was nominally held 'at the lord's will' but in practice was inheritable.
 30. WMCB, 74, 124.
 31. WMCB, 37.
 32. WMCB, 265.
 33. WMCB, 332.
 34. Phillipp R. Schofield, 'Dearth, debt and the local land market in a late thirteenth-century village community', *Agricultural History Review* 45 (1997), 1–17; Mike Davies and Jonathan Kissock, 'The feet of fines, the land market and the English agricultural crisis of 1315 to 1322', *Journal of Historical Geography* 30 (2004), 215–30, pp. 216, 218; Bailey, 241.
 35. Schofield, 5.
 36. Schofield, 10.
 37. Davies and Kissock, 219.
 38. Davies and Kissock, 222–23.
 39. Dyer, 231.
 40. WMCB 245.
 41. WMCB 261.
 42. WMCB 271.
 43. WMCB 30, 43.
 44. WMCB 81.
 45. Rev. St John Priest, *A General View of Agriculture in Buckinghamshire* (London 1813), 372.
 46. WMCB 113. They may have been done informally before this.
 47. WMCB 134.
 48. WMCB 67.
 49. WMCB 88.
 50. MM Postan, *The Medieval Economy and Society* (Harmondsworth 1975), 158.
 51. WMCB 451.
 52. WMCB 176.
 53. WMCB 58, 123, 224.
 54. WMCB 225.
 55. WMCB 177.
 56. WMCB 78.
 57. WMCB 243.
 58. WMCB 225.
 59. Barbara F Harvey, 'Introduction: The 'crisis' of the early fourteenth century', in Bruce MS Campbell (ed.), *Before the Black Death: Studies in the 'crisis' of the early fourteenth century* (Manchester 1991), 1–24, p. 14.
 60. Dyer, 242.
 61. WMCB 121, 131, 135.
 62. WMCB 167–68.
 63. Dyer, 241.
 64. WMCB 131–32.
 65. WMCB 148–49, 154–55.
 66. WMCB 160–62.
 67. WMCB 195–205.
 68. WMCB 126, 152.
 69. David Noy, *Winslow in 1556: The Survey of the Manor* (Aylesbury 2013), 87, 88, 91; Dyer, 176.
 70. WMCB 116.
 71. WMCB 247.
 72. WMCB 79.