THE MATERIAL CULTURE OF ENGLISH RURAL HOUSEHOLDS C.1250-1600

Ben Jervis, Chris Briggs, Alice Forward, Tomasz Gromelski and Matthew Tompkins

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'Living Standards' was an interdisciplinary project involving two archaeologists (Ben Jervis, Alice Forward), and three historians (Chris Briggs, Tomasz Gromelski, Matthew Tompkins). The project, and this book, are founded on three databases, introduced fully in Chapter 2, and now deposited with the Archaeology Data Service and freely accessible at https://doi.org/10.5284/1085022 (throughout the book, hyperlinks guide the reader to the online records). Alice Forward designed and populated the database of archeological small finds, while the databases of archival material were the work of Matthew Tompkins (medieval escheators' records) and Tomasz Gromelski (Tudor coroners' reports). Ben Jervis was the monograph's lead author, with Chris Briggs providing substantial input, but the resulting work would not have been possible without the collective research effort of the entire project team.

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A Note on Money and Measurements

The monetary system of the period under examination was based on the pound (£) which contained 20 shillings (s). The shilling contained 12 pence (d). The penny was in turn subdivided into 2 halfpennies (½d) and 4 farthings (¼d). The documents on which this book is based contain thousands of monetary valuations of goods and chattels; these are rendered in more than one way in the text, tables and figures. On the whole, sums of money are given in the text in the form that they appear in the original document. However, in some places, such as in tables, we have converted valuations into their pence equivalents in order to ease comparison.

The standard unit of area of the period, the acre, was equal to 0.4 hectares, and comprised 4 rods. One rod comprised 40 perches. Readers should be aware that the acres referred to in contemporary documents and in the text below are customary acres, which were not necessarily exactly equivalent to modern statute acres.

A sack of wool contained 364 lbs, or 26 stones of 14 lbs each; one clove of wool weighed 7 lbs, and a tod 28 lbs. Dry volume was measured using the quarter, equal to 2.8 hectolitres, which comprised 8 bushels. Units for the measurement of cloth were the ell (45 inches), and the yard (37 inches). For liquids, one gallon was equal to 4.5 litres.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction: Consumers, Commodities and Households in England, c.1300–1600

On 22 July 1418, at South Lynn in Norfolk, John Reynold (alias Backhous) committed homicide.[1] Following his subsequent indictment for this felony, Reynold's goods were listed and appraised on 8 September by an inquest of local men held before a royal official called the escheator, and subsequently seized and sold to two named individuals. The money generated went to the crown. John's goods consisted of six cushions (valued at 2s), three stools (7d), one ewer and basin (20d), six pewter dishes (8d), one candlestick (4d), two brass pots (3s 4d), one cauldron (2s), one iron plate (4s), 10 stones of wool (13s 4d), a mazer (a type of drinking vessel) (16s), 45s in cash, six silver spoons (6s), four cows (24s) and a silver adorned belt (6s 8d). Reynold is described in the record as a 'yeoman', which suggests he was a substantial farmer. Thus while he did not belong to society's poorest strata, neither can he be described as a member of the upper orders. This list of Reynold's possessions therefore raises intriguing questions and offers potential insights concerning consumption among non-elite households in later medieval England.

While we have a good understanding of the elaborate textiles, metalware and furniture found in great and noble households (Woolgar 1999), we know much less about the goods in the homes of those further down the social scale. New evidence presented in this book allows us to open up more fully a range of

[1] E484. Throughout this book, references to forfeitures in our databases of escheators' and coroners' records are provided in the footnotes using an ID number, prefixed by 'E' for 'escheators', or 'C' for 'coroners'. Each ID number corresponds to a record of forfeiture in one of the project databases. The databases are available at: Alice Forward, Ben Jervis, Chris Briggs, Mathew Tompkins, Tomasz Gromelski (2021) *Living Standards and Material Culture in English Rural Households 1300–1600: Digital Archive* [data-set]. York: Archaeology Data Service [distributor] https://doi.org/10.5284/1085022. Except where specified, these databases constitute the source for all Tables and Figures in the book. See also Briggs, Forward and Jervis 2021.

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questions about such people. Were the cushions and items of plate in Reynold's household exceptional? When we observe such items here and in similar lists, how should we interpret them: as evidence of increased spending power, of a 'consumer revolution', of the emulation of elites such as gentry or the merchants of the large towns, or as a sign of the emergence of a distinctive material culture which comes, by the seventeenth century, to be associated with the 'middling sort' (see Hamling and Richardson 2017)? Can we infer anything about the means by which such possessions were acquired? This book seeks to address these problems by examining the range of goods present in non-elite households, and by exploring changing relationships between those households and the market between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries.

The book's aim is to address two basic questions about consumption: what goods were consumed by non-elite rural and small-town households in late medieval and sixteenth-century England, and what factors influenced these consumption habits? We combine two main sources of evidence in undertaking this analysis: first, lists of the forfeited goods and chattels of felons (including suicide), fugitives and outlaws produced in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries by the royal escheator and in the sixteenth century by another royal official, the coroner; and second, objects found through the archaeological excavation of rural settlements. In Chapter 2, we introduce these sources of evidence more fully, along with the interdisciplinary approach taken in this study. In this first chapter, we set the scene, first by reviewing the debate on long-term changes in consumption, and then by providing overviews of the changing economies of later medieval and Tudor England, before introducing the household – our main unit of analysis – as a site of production and consumption.

Revolution or evolution? Medieval and modern consumption

As the above list of John Reynold's possessions illustrates, medieval people inhabited a vibrant material world, in which they acquired and used a range of material goods. It is now acknowledged that by the fourteenth century the economy was more commercialised than once thought, and that the production of goods for the market was highly developed (e.g. Britnell 1996; Dyer 2005; Kowaleski 1995). Yet, the relationship between medieval and modern consumption remains contested. Were medieval people primitive consumers? Or is medieval consumption a nascent form of modern mass consumption? Increasingly, archaeologists and historians of the medieval period are challenging the break between the medieval and modern introduced by a historiography framed by an early modern 'consumer revolution', in order to make the case for complex forms of consumption in the medieval period, which must be understood on their own terms (e.g. Heng 2014; Immonen 2012; Jervis 2017a).

The concept of an early modern consumer revolution was first proposed by Neil McKendrick (1982), who posited that in the eighteenth century more people were able to accumulate a wider range of goods, as greater aggregate wealth created new opportunities for social mobility. In simple terms, this consumer revolution is characterised by an acceleration in the range of goods consumed, the quantities in which they were consumed and the number of people consuming them. Research has focussed on Britain and North America, but similar trends in consumption practices have been identified across other areas of Europe (Ryckbosch 2015, 68). Of more pertinence here, however, is increasing debate over the date of this proposed revolution in consumption. The sixteenth and, especially, seventeenth centuries have been proposed as critical phases in a longer-term process, which in some accounts is seen more in terms of evolution than revolution (Agnew 1993, 20; Pennell 2012). The link between consumption and the early modern period is strengthened by the utilisation of the idea of the consumer revolution to help explain the preconditions for the industrial revolution of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and also by a desire to 'push back' the origins of modern consumption. Finally, critical to the picture is de Vries's (1993; 1994) theory of the 'industrious revolution' in which the structure of work changed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries through the commoditisation of labour (see also Whittle and Hailwood 2020). This created opportunities for the acquisition of wealth and its disposal driven by the realisation of a desire to consume.

At the same time, some have questioned the extent to which these features were unique to the early modern period. Without necessarily aiming to re-date the start of *the* consumer revolution, several authors have drawn attention to a much longer chronology of commercialisation, and to a significant growth in the importance of consumption in the later middle ages (Dyer 2005, 3, 126–8; Kowaleski 2006). While modern 'mass consumption' is unprecedented in its scale, to see the alienation of production and choice in consumption as modern traits is to deny the evidence for standardisation and an acceleration in the production of textiles, metalwork and other objects in the later middle ages (Heng 2014, 239). Such an approach fails to acknowledge the different ways that those things moved in and out of processes of commoditisation, became enrolled in processes of identity formation and were constitutive of a dynamic society in which consumption offered a means for rigid social and economic structures to be confronted and challenged, as can be seen through steps taken to regulate consumption activity through sumptuary regulation (Appadurai 1988; Jervis 2017a; Kopytoff 1988; Miller 1987; Shaw 2005; see Chapter 6). A further difficulty with the consumer revolution concept is that it implies the rise of an idea of consumerism, a conscious behaviour or means of engaging with the material world, which focusses on consumption as an intentional act with an intended outcome, a notion of consumption which is overly simplistic and shifts focus away from understanding the ways in which people become able to consume

and, more importantly, the intended and unintended consequences of that action (Campbell 1993, 41; Graeber 2011, 501).

Among many others, Christopher Dyer (2005) and Maryanne Kowaleski (2006) have examined in detail how medieval consumers encountered and acquired commodities, and made choices about how, when and why to acquire particular goods within the context of a proposed rise in in living standards after the Black Death, which served to stimulate consumption. James Davis (2012) shows that a moral economy emerged alongside this increasing engagement with the market, as both sellers and consumers developed expectations and practices which reveal shared values and anxieties about the desire and ability to consume. Matthew Johnson (1996) also focusses on the wider societal ethos of England between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries, arguing for an increasing concern with commodities as the more varied material world of the later middle ages offered opportunities to utilise objects to construct identities within the context of emerging capitalist relations. Johnson's work, along with that of Martha Howell (2010), stresses the importance of a nuanced understanding of the material dimension of consumption, suggesting that, although objects might enter (and even return to) the market as commodities, they become other things too, defined by the wider social relations in which they are immersed. While it is simplistic to see objects as simply displaying identity, except in specific cases, we can perceive of them being put to work, to secure allegiance through inheritance or to build communities through hospitality, for example.

As evidence for important shifts in later medieval consumption accumulates, a consensus is emerging that we should not seek to push the consumer revolution ever further back in time, but instead direct our efforts to understanding commerce in a given context on its own terms. Seeing medieval commerce and consumption as a 'way station' on the route to modern consumption implies a continuous, linear and largely economic narrative, which masks the complexity and social implications of interactions with material things (Howell 2010, 300–1). For Sear and Sneath (2020), a long-term evolution of English consumption patterns across the medieval and early modern centuries affecting different economic groups over time fits the evidence better than the notion of a single 'consumer revolution' at a specific date. Colin Campbell (1993, 43–7) stresses the need to work from behaviour, to understand what it meant to consume in the past and not to seek a form of consumption directly related to our own. Indeed, there is a need to develop approaches which not only acknowledge differences over time, but also *within* medieval society; to understand, for example, whether urban and rural life afforded the emergence of different sets of values, ideas and practices surrounding the acquisition and use of material goods (e.g. Goldberg 2008). We are increasingly aware that there are multiple forms of consumption, which disrupt a simple linear developmental trajectory (Ryckbosch 2015, 84). Frank Trentmann (2009, 292) sums up this trend well,

commenting that 'we should resist the temptation of claiming a revolution in a particular time and place'. He suggests that we should seek to understand and explain patterns of difference and similarity; there is not a single form of modern consumption, so we cannot seek a single root cause for it. Consumption can, perhaps, be reframed as a particular mode of interaction with the material world, in which meaning is not inscribed on or communicated through the things we acquire and use, but emerges from these interactions (Trentmann 2009, 307). Periodisation can be seen as creating false origins; seeking the 'first' and trying to seek linear origins masks the meandering ways in which societies develop and the variety of ways in which material goods are brought to bear on this development (see Shryock and Smail 2011), while also implying temporal homogeneity rather than permitting a focus on the dynamic changes within a period (Jervis 2017a, 1–2).

In the chapters that follow, a quantitative and qualitative analysis of late medieval and sixteenth-century material life is presented, focussing on the possessions of agriculturalists, artisans and others outside the elite who lived in the countryside and small towns. The documentary sources we use commence in 1370 and extend to 1600. Covering more than two centuries, our archival data thus offers a means of tracking systematically and quantitatively long-term changes in the number and value of household possessions.[2] However, this evidence also allows us to examine similarities and variabilities in consumption behaviour across space and between social groups. As such, our aim in this book is not to advocate for a consumer revolution, or to seek the origins of modern consumption somewhere between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries; nor is it an attempt to evaluate the effects of the Black Death of 1348–9 on material culture, since our written evidence does not cover the period prior to 1348. Instead, we wish to understand how particular forms of consumer behaviour emerged out of, and went on to shape, the socio-economic contexts which constituted later medieval and sixteenth-century England. The century and a half following 1349 differed significantly in its demographic and economic characteristics from the decades after 1500 that followed. Following a chronological approach advocated by others (e.g. Brown 2015) we have therefore chosen to examine evidence on household consumption and ownership of movables from across these two broad periods partly in an effort to generate useful comparisons across the traditional medieval–early modern divide. The dating of our archaeological evidence is inevitably much fuzzier than that of the written sources, and our database of small finds covers items which were almost certainly produced or deposited earlier than the documents' start date of 1370. Used carefully, the finds evidence can nonetheless contribute significantly to our understanding of changes and varying patterns across time and space.

[2] A separate quantitative study by the present authors, which focuses on change over time in living standards, is in preparation.

The economic contexts of rural and small-town consumption

1370–1500

In this section, and that which follows, we consider the economic environment in which the classes of people who are the main subject of this book made decisions around consumption. The aim is to sketch – in simplified strokes – the economic constraints and opportunities that affected such households, in order to provide an essential foundation for interpretation of the evidence on objects and possessions that we encounter in our sources. We must emphasize that the phrase 'objects and possessions' covers a very wide range: the items illustrated by our sources are not just household utensils and furnishings, but also many different possessions situated outside the dwelling such as crops, animals and a range of farming equipment. Moreover, many of the possessions we examine were not obviously an expression of consumption at all, in its *Oxford English Dictionary* sense of 'the purchase and use of goods, services, materials, or energy'.[3] Instead, many items we can observe were used in production, or represent its outcomes, or were items with multiple uses. In fact, it quickly becomes impossible to think about the source materials used in this book in terms of 'consumption' alone, especially if one is inclined to associate the latter term with the acquisition of non-essentials, or 'luxuries'. One prominent feature of this book is therefore its attempt to look at the full range of items in the possession of the household, and to interweave discussion of production and consumption.

In acquiring and managing all their material resources, however, households clearly responded to a diverse set of shifting economic influences. In this section, we look at the later fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, a period which, in terms of archival evidence, we approach via the records of the royal escheator. In the subsequent section, we focus on the sixteenth century, a period for which our archival evidence comes from coroners' reports. Our focus throughout both sections is naturally on the experiences of members of the groups that dominate our written records: the landholding peasants, including those more prosperous agriculturalists called yeomen and husbandmen in our sources, but also smallholders; the labourers who lived primarily by earning wages, but often held a small plot of land; and the artisans and tradesmen of lower and middling status who operated in villages and small towns, and who like the labourers also sometimes possessed some land and animals.

Of course, any list of the contents of a dwelling and its outbuildings of the kind analysed in this book is not solely a reflection of economic influences, such as the price level, or market access. Many other factors shaped a household's profile of possessions. One significant influence lies in the attempts by

[3] 'consumption, n.' *OED Online*. Oxford University Press, December 2022. Web. 13 January 2023.

the state and other authorities to control the behaviour of different groups, especially through sumptuary laws. The lists of forfeited possessions generated by the escheators offer potential for insight into the relationship between such measures and household consumption patterns, and indeed their relationship to the attitudes of those responsible for appraising forfeited goods. We must also acknowledge that the things we see in the lists also, in part, reflect preferences, and that expenditure decisions could be related to shifts in fashion, or to changing trends in religious expression. Where we see a list that appears to be composed entirely of mundane 'essentials', we must consider the possibility that this is indicative of a cultural tendency of the medieval peasantry to prefer investment in livestock and farm production over items of domestic comfort or display, rather than a lack of purchasing power on the part of the household concerned (Goldberg 2008). Furthermore, many of the items that we see in our lists of possessions were almost certainly not newly acquired by that household during its own lifetime, nor did they come from an external source. Many objects, including those in daily use, were clearly old, having been transmitted from one generation to the next via inheritance, no doubt being repaired or recycled along the way. Other possessions in the lists, most obviously crops and animals, were generated on the holding, being grown, bred or produced by the household itself. Finally, we must remember that our archival evidence captures a household at a particular point in its life-cycle. What is included and what is missing may be indicative of a particular stage in that household's longer-term growth and decline, rather than simply the outcome of a particular expenditure decision.

With these caveats in mind, we may now turn to the forces of demand and supply that had the potential to shape the patterns of ownership that we observe in the two main periods under consideration. As Chapter 2 explains more fully, the escheator's records, which form the first of the two main bodies of precisely datable written evidence used in this study, commence in earnest only in 1370. Moreover, that archive is no longer especially useful for the study of material culture after c.1480, and it is at its best before 1450. Meanwhile, our sixteenth-century written material, which comes from the archive of the Tudor coroner, is fairly sparse before the second quarter of that century. The result is that we have relatively little written data for the period 1480–1520. This is regrettable, since this is a poorly understood but potentially important period of change for which fresh evidence of patterns of consumption would be especially valuable (for existing views of this topic, see Dyer 2012b, 18–19, 196–8; Wrightson 2000, 44, 54). These 'missing decades' are situated between two distinctive economic phases, one characterized, crudely speaking, by stagnation and stasis, the other by growth. It is the former of these that we examine first.

The later fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in England are known, above all, for a low population following the Black Death of 1348–9, with any growth remaining muted largely as a consequence of recurrent outbreaks of epidemic disease. Although high prices in the immediate post-plague decades were a

sign of significant economic opportunities for some producers, especially in the urban economy, these conditions were on the wane by c.1370. The real GDP per capita data produced by Broadberry *et al*. (2015) shows a post-plague surge to 1392; however, the figure for that year was not surpassed again until late in the sixteenth century. GDP per capita, and therefore household incomes, seems on this evidence to have been essentially flat in the fifteenth century. Such a picture of modest or little growth in population and output are matched by the generally accepted view concerning of the level of urbanization, which sees this measure as largely unchanging in the period we are considering. The decades under review certainly cannot be considered as an undifferentiated whole, but the characteristics of perhaps the best known of the era's sub-periods – the so-called 'great slump' of the mid-fifteenth century – serve only to reinforce a generally pessimistic impression (Hatcher 1996). For many, a major factor in England's suppressed economic activity in the later fourteenth and fifteenth centuries was the general crisis in the money supply, and a shortage of small denomination silver coinage in particular. Perhaps the only major economic indicator that does not quite fit with the picture presented above is the evidence of wage rates, which on the face of it point to a fifteenth-century growth in wage-earners' real incomes to a level not attained again until the nineteenth century. As we shall see, however, there are good reasons to doubt the extent to which the well-known data on wage rates can be treated as straightforward evidence showing a boost to the living standards of most ordinary households, of a kind that might leave evidence of increased consumption.

What did these conditions mean for the households at the centre of this study, and what does the evidence reviewed suggest we should expect to find when we turn to our evidence of non-elite material life? There is a growing awareness that different social groups were affected in different ways by the broad changes just described. One obvious general benefit of a period of abundance of land relative to labour was that a greater proportion of households than previously had access to land. Many peasants began to accumulate larger holdings in this era, and some boosted their acreages yet further by taking on the leases of lordly demesnes (Dyer 2007). In a period of high labour costs and low prices, however, challenges faced anyone engaged in large-scale commercial farming, especially arable farming; another broadly recognized feature of the era is a shift towards less labour-intensive pastoral agriculture. For those living partly or wholly by wages, the opportunities were similarly circumscribed. While the records of the time provide ample evidence of impressive daily wage rates, it is less clear how far work was available at these rates for more than very short periods, leading to the claim that the real wage series which fail to take into account the number of days worked represent 'unreal wages'. There is therefore now serious debate as to whether the fifteenth century can continue to be viewed as a 'golden age of the labourer', in the sense of an era of annual earnings that were exceptionally high in historical terms. Such doubts are compounded by the mismatch between the GDP per capita series and the real wage series (Dyer 2015; Hatcher 2011).

One matter that is in little doubt, however, is that increased access to land meant it was much rarer for households to go hungry in normal years in this period than in the pre-plague era. The later fourteenth and fifteenth centuries are generally seen as a time of marked 'self-sufficiency', and of ample and diverse diets for many agrarian households. We might expect this relative abundance to be reflected in our evidence in various ways, most notably in evidence on cooking and dining utensils (Sear and Sneath 2020, 71, 74; Woolgar 2016, 39–41). Furthermore, although we have raised some doubts about the capacity of peasant and labouring households to generate significant disposable incomes given the sluggish economic conditions, the evidence nonetheless suggests that some increases in per capita consumption of marketed goods and services did take place in the era 1370–1480 of a kind that affected the ordinary rural population. One instance of this is the spate of construction of new dwellings, evidenced by dated surviving buildings, which took place in the middle and later decades of the fifteenth century (Dyer 1998, 302–3). Another important example is textiles. Although the late medieval development of the domestic textile industry is well known, Oldland's recent revised estimates on cloth output (and, by implication, consumption) represent a significant challenge to existing views, given his argument that 'textile production, rather than following the general reduction in demand for most of the fifteenth century, was in fact a stimulus to the economy until the mid-century depression and then a catalyst for economic recovery at the end of the century' (Oldland 2016, 251). He calculates production of pounds of cloth per capita at 1.33 pounds in 1311–15, 3.14 in 1391–5 and 4.64 in 1441–5, figures which show a striking increase across our period (Oldland 2014; 2019, 5).

Such evidence raises the possibility that non-elite households spent significantly on improved housing and on textiles (used largely but not solely for clothing) in this period. How far such developments can be traced in the evidence underpinning this book is an important question. Most commentators agree that any improvements in the material well-being of ordinary households in this period are likely to have affected diet, clothing and housing first of all. Another equally rational response to the conditions of this era is the preference for leisure once a certain level of income had been achieved (Hatcher 1998). Some of these responses are more visible in our evidence than others. A central question for this book is whether the economic conditions of the later fourteenth and fifteenth centuries also encouraged consumption of the manufactured household goods, including 'non-essentials', which our evidence is best suited to capturing: items like featherbeds, chests, basins and ewers, tables and chairs.

It is difficult to increase expenditure on manufactured goods such as these, as opposed to food, housing and clothing, if the range of such goods available to buy conveniently is limited, or their prices are prohibitively high. Supply was as important as demand, and for this reason, in this book we give close attention to the issue of access to goods, as an important variable affecting their prevalence and distribution. Some of the goods that late medieval households wished

to consume, such as certain types of chest, were not produced domestically but were imported, which may have limited their circulation (see Chapter 5). Data on the prices of manufactured articles is hard to come by, and indeed one of the purposes of the present study is to discuss some new information of this kind. Yet it is a reasonable starting assumption that the high labour costs involved in their production must have made the prices of manufactured goods prohibitively high for many consumers, especially relative to food (Hatcher 2011, 21).

Access to goods was shaped not just by their cost but also by their availability in the marketplace. We should not consider formal markets in town and countryside as the sole or even primary route through which movable possessions found their way into households. The importance of a range of channels, including second-hand sales, informal sales in locations such as inns, and regional fairs, has been stressed in a number of studies (e.g. Davis 2010; Dyer 1989; 1992; Hare 2013; Staples 2015). The dynamics of the marketing network certainly changed in this era. While London increasingly dominated the national economy, larger towns and cities played an important role as redistributive hubs. In some cases, such towns came to dominate the regional economy at the expense of the smaller markets that had proliferated in the commercial expansion of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, but fell out of use in significant numbers in the later fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (see Dyer 1991).

We might anticipate that these evolving marketing arrangements had implications for the range of goods that were available to non-elite households. Archaeology provides insights in this regard, particularly through analyses of pottery, a mundane and cheap commodity, that was produced locally, and, due to variations in geological composition, can be easily provenanced by archaeologists. While most pottery was acquired locally, the relative quantities of wares from different areas, as well as the range of regions represented, might usefully demonstrate the hierarchy and character of different markets and their consumers. Comparing three sites from southern England, for example, Duncan Brown (1997) shows how a wealthy Southampton mercantile household utilised a mix of locally produced and imported wares, while a burgess household from Winchester had more limited access to these imports but possessed pottery from a number of regional centres, as is to be expected in one of the principal cities of the region. In contrast, a smaller rural household possessed only pottery from the local market. Documentary evidence demonstrates how cartloads of pots were taken to fairs and markets, with smaller quantities of wares being hawked between villages (Moorhouse 1981, 108). In Kent, the limited reach of local market hinterlands is demonstrated by the presence of ceramic zones within the county (Streeten 1982). These reflect the character of the local geology, a pattern seen in many other counties, with waterways offering opportunities for the longer-distance transportation of wares which could not be economically transported long distances over land (Jervis 2011; Mellor 1994; Mepham 2018; Spoerry 2016; Vince 1977; also Chapter 9 below). Diverse assemblages of imported pottery attest to the wide trading contacts

of ports such as Hull (Evans 2019), London (Blackmore 1994), Bristol (Good 1987), Norwich (Jennings 1982) and Southampton (Brown 2002), but these wares rarely found their way to inland markets. These wares were, however, utilised by coastal communities, some of whom likely had direct contact with mariners or even foreign markets through fishing, raising the question of the extent to which the commercial relationships of these coastal communities were distinctive (Allan 1994; Jervis 2017b). The analysis of pottery from excavations also reveals how different members of urban populations engaged with the market, with the composition of assemblages from wealthier and poorer areas of towns varying in terms of function, decoration and point of origin (e.g. Allan 1984, 101–3; Brown 2002; Jervis 2009).

For a variety of reasons, explained in detail in Chapter 2, pottery does not form a part of the dataset discussed here. However, we highlight the potential of other goods, such as whetstones and quernstones, for informing our understanding of medieval exchange networks. With the exception of some textiles, the escheators' and coroners' records provide no detail on the source of goods; however, by considering the distribution of types of goods in relation to markets and communications networks, it is possible to consider the role of marketing networks in shaping patterns of consumption (see Chapters 9 and 10).

The sixteenth century

By 1600, the consumption decisions of labourers, artisans, husbandmen and yeomen took place in circumstances that were dramatically different from those that had prevailed over two centuries earlier, when the archival sources used in this study first become available. This is in part because entirely new forms or varieties of consumption goods, whether household articles or items of clothing, had now become available; some relatively common items in our sixteenth-century lists are absent or very rare in their pre-1480 equivalents, such as bedsteads, truckle beds and kettles. But the contrast was also a consequence of the altered economic forces shaping consumption that can be observed when comparing the later sixteenth century with the later fourteenth. These forces affected the various social and occupational groups under investigation very differently in the two periods.

The decades either side of 1500 represent an especially intriguing period, but as we have seen, for this era the documentary evidence used in this book is comparatively weak. The following brief discussion therefore focuses on the great changes that accelerated especially rapidly from the middle decades of the sixteenth century. In this era, the population recovery that had been so conspicuously absent from the long fifteenth century entered full swing. The total English population increased from an estimated 2.83 million in 1541 to 4.11 million in 1600 (Broadberry *et al.* 2015, 12). Prices of all kinds increased dramatically, with grain prices at the end of the sixteenth century lying at roughly

six times their level of one hundred years previously, while prices of industrial products grew rather less than two and a half times across the same period (Clay 1984a, 43–4). Although sixteenth-century GDP per capita was broadly 'resilient', there were a number of short-term downward movements in the latter half of the century (Broadberry *et al.* 2015, 210). The real wage series display a dramatic fall in the later sixteenth century as the cost of living rose rapidly and subsistence pressures mounted (Humphries and Weisdorf 2019, 2877). The tendency towards self-sufficiency that had marked the lot of many fifteenth-century households waned markedly, as dependence on the market for the supply of basic necessities became the norm for large swathes of the population.

In the face of such forces, rural and small-town society below the gentry was characterized by growing differentiation, or indeed polarization. Many yeomen and wealthier husbandmen expanded operations to meet growing demand for agricultural commodities, including that generated by a growing urban sector. This opened up new opportunities for consumption to these 'proto-capitalist' farmers, as is well attested in the literature, especially work based on probate inventories. These studies draw attention to the proliferation of goods owned by many yeomen and some husbandmen, and the evidence of comfortable and well-furnished domestic interiors in the later sixteenth century (Muldrew 1998; Shepard and Spicksley 2011). The material worlds of such later sixteenth-century rural elites have been contrasted with the experiences of their counterparts earlier in the century, many of whom, like the Leicestershire yeomen studied by Hoskins (1950), still lived in comparatively simple, bare homes (Clay 1984b, 5; Wrightson 2000, 44, 54, 139–41).

The situation was very different for those who lived largely or wholly by wages, as they struggled to cope with the rising cost of living. Among the key questions are how far sixteenth-century labourers' capacity for consumption extended once basic needs of food, clothing, housing and fuel had been met, and whether this capacity shifted across the century. This has proved hard to answer to date, since the probate inventories which are central to understanding consumption do not exist in any great quantity before 1550, and those labourers' inventories that are available are biased towards the wealthier members of the group. Indeed, partly for such evidential reasons, much of the literature on early modern consumption and living standards takes 1550 as its starting point. Muldrew (2011), however, assembled a sample of labourers' probate inventories which produced the surprising finding that the real value of household goods actually increased between 1550–99 and 1600–49. Whittle summarized Muldrew's findings (which also extended forward to the eighteenth century) as follows: 'it seems that labourers, like those of middling wealth, participated in the increased acquisition of new consumer goods for the home' (Whittle 2013a, 316). Others are less optimistic than Muldrew. Sear and Sneath (2020, 294, 305), for instance, argue that the trickle down of 'luxury' household goods (non-essentials) to labourers and poorer husbandmen only happened in the eighteenth century. Wrightson, meanwhile, tends to emphasize the growing poverty of wage-earners in the period c.1520–c.1580.

Consideration of the supply of commodities, as well as demand for them, is also important for understanding consumption and material life in the sixteenth century. Given the trends discussed above, the general importance of markets and marketplaces as sites of exchange most likely increased. Most commentators also point to a growth in industrial output in this period, which boosted the supply of manufactured goods. As noted above, the prices of industrial products grew more slowly than food prices. Broadberry et al. (2015, 195–6) comment on the rationality of switching spending from food to manufactured goods in periods when food became relatively dearer, such as c.1510–c.1630. The sixteenth century also saw the beginnings of the establishment of domestic industries that increased the supply of inexpensive commodities such as metalwares and stockings: 'by the end of the sixteenth century goods that had been deemed rich men's luxuries in 1540 were being made in so many different qualities and at such varied prices that they came within the reach of everyman' (Thirsk 1978, 179).

To summarize this discussion of broad economic context between 1370 and 1600, we note first that the literature does not lead us to expect support for a simple narrative of general 'rising consumption' to emerge from our sources. While many historians have seen the later fourteenth and fifteenth centuries as an important phase in the history of consumption, and have emphasized ways in which the material lives of non-elites improved in this period, others have pointed to countervailing forces created by the weaknesses of demand and the withdrawal of markets. Commentators on the sixteenth century have stressed the rising wealth of village elites in the period after 1550 in particular, but equally existing research leaves room for uncertainty concerning the consumption practices of poor husbandmen and labourers in an era of rising living costs. Our sources feature individuals and households from all these different social groups, and have the capacity to shed fresh light on their experiences. As Chapter 2 shows more fully, we have also selected evidence from a range of different localities from across the country in order to be able to explore the regional and urban-rural differences that undoubtedly existed in household economies and the world of goods.

Defining the medieval household

Before progressing to consider the evidence for non-elite consumption in the medieval household, it is necessary to reflect briefly on the term 'household'. This is important because the household forms the book's key unit of analysis. Throughout the middle ages, a variety of terms were used to define the household (e.g. *familia*, *hospitium*, familie, meine(e), hous(e)hold), each with their own particular connotations and meanings. However, from these terms, four key traits can be identified; co-residence, residential space, sociability and authority (Riddy *et al.* 2007, 117). The household is a term which relates to the organisation of living, is intimately related to the physical environment of

dwelling (the house) and is necessarily comprised of people dwelling and acting together. Yet the medieval household is not easily reducible to a common definition. The composition of the household varied across space, time and society. Sarah Rees Jones (2003, 12) usefully describes it as a liminal space between the individual and wider society. The household is, in some way, a component of society, being both constitutive of it, but also reflective of it (Hamling and Richardson 2017, 8). It is the site of socialisation (Riddy 2008); it is therefore a site in which social and cultural norms are both reproduced but also, potentially, adapted and altered, and might be understood as the 'foundational place of social, economic, religious and political life' and therefore essential to the maintenance of social order (Hamling and Richardson 2017, 7).

In order to define the household, it is necessary to overcome our modern associations between household and house, and household and family. While at the lower end of the social spectrum the household may have consisted solely of a nuclear family (Dyer 2005, 46), it was common for the household to include members of the extended family and also servants in both the medieval and early modern periods. Similarly, while we might see the house as the physical 'site' for the composition of the household, the people constituting the household might be dispersed, for example through moving away to a town, where they may live in shared accommodation but still contributing economically to their household, while simultaneously being a part of another (Grenville 2008). Home, as Goldberg and Kowaleski (2008, 1) remark, is more than a place, but an association with familiarity, friendship, nurturing and intimacy, as well as faith and micropolitics; the household might be seen as being performed across space, exceeding the bounds of the dwelling and the bonds of the family.

Linked to the household are changes to dwelling spaces and the emergence of concepts of domesticity, which Riddy (2008) links to the specific modes of living which characterised the burgess class of later medieval towns and cities. The earlier part of our period is characterised by houses with a simple plan, comprising a multifunction hall space, possibly with ancillary service rooms (Gardiner 2000; 2014a). Regional variation can be seen in the adoption of longhouses, with byres for the stabling of animals, in areas of western and northern England, while building technology also varied regionally, as can be seen in the varied distribution of cruck- and timber-framed houses (Alcock 2015; Gardiner 2014b). In both town and country, our period is characterised by a process of modification and rebuilding, with the insertion of upper storeys to houses and the creation of new types of enclosed space such as parlours and chambers, spatially separating activities (Alcock 2010; Johnson 1993; Martin and Martin 1999; Roberts 2003). While the chronology of these changes varied regionally, the occupation of multi-roomed dwellings created spaces through which behaviour and social relations could be ordered. Whether the adoption of similar spaces in the countryside from the fifteenth, and particularly through the sixteenth, century can be understood as the adoption of this burgess domesticity or something particular and unique to rural society (see for example Johnson

1997) is open to debate. In both cases though, we can see that the freedom to acquire capital and to dispose of it on architecture and moveable goods had the potential to alter modes of living and the ways in which households were constituted and operated. In the early modern period, as in the middle ages, the house was a site of work, both work which might be understood as 'economic' (e.g. production for the market or retailing) but also hidden, domestic labour, typically the role of female members of the household, in cooking, cleaning and childcare (Goldberg 2011; Hamling and Richardson 2017, 7–9; Whittle 2011). The division of space within the dwelling might be understood as ordering the separation of work and domesticity, but, as Jane Whittle (2011, 138) points out, what constitutes work 'in the house' is open to interpretation.

We can therefore see the fundamental element of the household being a relationship of co-reliance with a presumption of co-residence, which might not necessarily be constant. The changes to patterns of landholding and seigniorial obligations in the countryside potentially increased the importance of the household as a unit linked to a dwelling, undermining the communal relationships which had been fostered through service. While families were a component of the household, it was also composed of others, perhaps only for short periods of time, and it was in the performance of the household that distinctions and convergences between 'domestic' and 'economic' behaviour emerged. The medieval household is a slippery concept, difficult to define beyond the broadest of terms, a reflection of society as a whole but also a component of it and therefore potentially a driver of change and highly variable in its size, composition and character. But the household can also be understood in another sense, as referring to the goods brought together for the use of those people constituting the household, their furniture and utensils – in reflecting on the medieval household, it is necessary therefore to understand it not as a solely human composition, but as a set of relations between people, spaces and things.

Conclusion

In this book we do not undertake a fresh quest for the 'consumer revolution'. Instead, at one level our purpose is simply to present as fully as possible some important new evidence on the consumption behaviour of ordinary medieval and Tudor people. Despite some excellent and important work, this is a subject that has hitherto remained surprisingly mysterious, mainly because the evidence that has been used to date is fragmentary, or sheds light on only selected objects or kinds of households. We aim to show the great variety in the possessions of households of modest and middling wealth, and to try to understand the variations that we see by relating them to differences in chronology, geographical location and social status. Our evidence cannot answer all our questions fully, because, as we shall see, like wills, inventories and other sources, it too is incomplete and biased. Yet at the same time, our written evidence in

particular has some distinctive strengths. Most notably, we can be confident that we are often looking at relatively poor, low-status people – that is, at those who often escape the historical record – not least because many of our records concern those accused or convicted of crime, and therefore shed light on the desperate and marginal. Furthermore, although some of the lists of chattels are often 'incomplete', we can still use them effectively by treating them not as objective inventories of household contents, but partly as reflections of what those doing the appraising considered worthy of note and of value, in its various senses.

In what follows we first introduce the key sources of evidence used in the book, namely the lists of forfeited goods created by the escheator and coroner, and the database of objects from archaeological excavations (Chapter 2). We reflect on their strengths and weaknesses and on ways in which the two major source types can be most fruitfully combined. The central chapters of the book are built around the categorisation of the objects themselves, according to their functions and uses. Thus, we move through sections relating to food processing and cooking (Chapter 3), to food and drink consumption (Chapter 4), furniture (Chapter 5) and the person (Chapters 6 and 7). Chapter 8 considers the evidence for household craft production. In the subsequent two chapters, we consider patterns of consumption, firstly in relation to household economy, wealth and market access at the national scale (Chapter 9), and then through a regional case study focussed on Wiltshire (Chapter 10). Finally (Chapter 11), we resume the broader perspective of this introduction, and draw together evidence on the consumption habits of non-elite households and their implications.

CHAPTER 2

Exploring Consumption: Methods and Datasets

This study sets out to address two basic questions: what goods were consumed by non-elite rural and small-town households in late medieval and sixteenth-century England, and what factors influenced these consumption habits? In doing so, we draw together data derived from archival and archaeological research, in an attempt to develop a fuller understanding of household possessions than either source would permit in isolation. This chapter outlines the interdisciplinary approach which frames the study, and the datasets which underlie it.[4]

Interdisciplinary perspectives on consumption

Inspired by early modern probate inventories from the United States, the historical archaeologist James Deetz (1977) famously referred to archaeological objects as 'small things forgotten'. This phrase can be interpreted in two ways: first, it highlights the study of those objects which are missing from written inventories but are ubiquitous among assemblages of excavated objects; and secondly, it refers to the subtle patterns of variability apparent from the study of the objects themselves, but overlooked in written documentation. The integrated study of documentary and archaeological evidence in research on early

[4] The project's three databases, plus digital images of the all the archival documents, are freely accessible via the Archaeology Data Service, at https://doi.org/10.5284/1085022. A discussion of this resource and its research potential can be found in the accompanying Data Paper (Briggs *et al*. 2021). In compiling the text of this book we have returned frequently to the original archival documents, and some errors in the relevant deposited databases have been identified, but not corrected in the deposited versions. Briggs *et al*. 2019 is based on a preliminary version of the escheators' dataset which is smaller than that used here.

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modern (or post-medieval) consumption in the US and further afield is well established, and provides a model of how such interdisciplinary research methods might be applied to medieval material.

Comparative analyses of early modern probate inventories and archaeological objects have opened up a range of areas of enquiry which demonstrate the potential of interdisciplinary approaches to medieval consumption. Analysis of the terms used to describe objects, combined with details of their context of use, permit the development of approaches to the classification of archaeological objects in ways which are likely to have been meaningful to past communities (Beaudry 1988; Kent 2015). Comparative analyses of the occurrence of goods in archaeological contexts and in inventories highlights areas of overlap between these sources, and demonstrates both issues around the survival of archaeological objects (e.g. through recycling and the decay of organic materials) and the omission of common or low value objects from written inventories (Bedell 2000; Hodge 2012). Such studies may highlight the contextual character of systems of value, for example by illustrating the importance of cheap but fashionably decorated ceramics among wealthy early modern households compared to the significance of long-lasting and repairable metalware in lower status households (Smart Martin 1989). By comparing archaeological evidence and probate inventories from the estate of the Ximenez family, Portuguese immigrants in Flanders, Poulain *et al.* (2017) demonstrate how interdisciplinary analysis can help to reconstruct the context in which particular objects were used, suggesting that certain Portuguese ceramics were used in public performance whilst others were used in more intimate settings. From this perspective, it is important to be aware of the structures underlying inventorying practice; the purpose that inventories served has a direct impact on the items which were deemed worthy of listing and their relationship to the contexts in which the goods themselves were used.

In the case of medieval and early modern England studies of probate inventories, wills and references to objects in legal texts illustrate the range of influences which might impact the recording of particular types of goods or their qualities. For example, Richardson (2004a) highlights how the colour of gowns is recorded in court records only where they are in some way exceptional or pertinent to the case being discussed. Goods may be described in detail where they could be subject to dispute, for example where they were temporarily surrendered as security (Smail 2016) or where an item has been specifically bequeathed to an individual. For the medieval period, Wilson (2015) has highlighted the theatrical element of inventory production, as a communal process of valuation and judgement in which valuers, objects and the documents themselves all were actors. As Hamling and Richardson (2017, 16–17) illustrate, the patterns of variation between sources are as meaningful as the goods which they document, and only through contextualised and interdisciplinary analysis is it possible to piece together these systems of meaning and value and evaluate their significance.

Whilst interdisciplinary analysis of household possessions is commonplace for the early modern period, it is much less established for the medieval period. There are instances where the fortuitous survival of a will or inventory relating to an excavated settlement has been identified. At Foxcotte (Hampshire), several wills have been identified relating to the final stage of settlement prior to desertion in the sixteenth century (Russel 1985, 175–6). That of John Helliar, dating from 1587, includes a range of textiles, furniture, cooking equipment, animals and produce, similar to the types listed in the contemporary coroners' records examined here. The finds from contemporary dwellings are more limited, comprising ceramics, small metal items and structural fittings. Unusually, on the basis of the documentary evidence, it has been possible to propose that one of the excavated structures was Helliar's house, although few finds were associated with this structure. Similarly, Christopher Dyer (2012a) used the excavated evidence from Wharram Percy (Yorkshire) to create a material context for the inventory surviving for local man William Akclum. Increasingly archaeologists have sought to contextualise particular objects of study, for example through identifying analogies in contemporary depictions, while the growing interest in the material among historians has led some to relate those identified in documents to extant examples (e.g. Hamling and Richardson 2017; Standley 2013 on dress items; Willemsen 2012 on belt fittings). The present study is, however, the first systematic and large-scale interdisciplinary analysis of consumption among non-elite households in medieval England.

That such analysis has not been undertaken previously is due largely to the deficiencies of the source material. Probate inventories are the staple of early modern research, but they exist in small numbers only for the period before the 1530s. As the Foxcotte example demonstrates, wills are a valuable source where they survive. Yet although wills are available from the medieval period and sixteenth century in considerable numbers, they typically relate to wealthier rural households and particularly those living in towns. They often also omit reference to movable goods, or mention just one or two objects in their descriptions of bequests, which is a problem for any study (like the present one) which aspires to investigate the totality of a household's goods.

In spite of such source problems, with the emergence of the 'material turn' in historical study (e.g. Bennett and Joyce 2010; Hamling and Richardson 2017) there has, over the last decade or so, been a substantial increase in studies of the documentary evidence for medieval and early Tudor consumption (e.g. Burkholder 2005; Dyer 2013; French 2021; Gemmill 2020; Howell 2010; Kowaleski and Goldberg 2008; Wilson 2021). Such evidence as does exist tends to be better for towns; for the medieval countryside, documents which shed light on consumption among lower status households are rarer. Important exceptions are the lists of *principalia*, household equipment provided to tenants, for Worcestershire households examined by Field (1965) and the small yet intensively studied collection of early probate inventories from the diocese of York, dating from the later fifteenth century (Goldberg 2008; Dyer 2013). This

is not a situation unique to Britain. Increasing interest in the limited range of sources for medieval rural consumption can be demonstrated in other areas of Europe, including Scandinavia, where Poulsen (2004) has combined records relating to trade and legal practice with archaeological evidence to examine late medieval rural consumption; and Spain, where post-mortem inventories have been used to study household consumption in the Valencia region (Almenar Fernández 2017). The 'Living Standards and Material Culture' project set out to contribute to this growing body of scholarship through the collection of previously untapped sources of evidence which are subjected to an interdisciplinary analysis. The result is a study of objects from archaeological excavations and lists of the seized goods and chattels of felons (including suicides), fugitives and outlaws, which offer a particular window into the material setting of rural households in England between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries.

Seized goods as evidence for consumption

Throughout the medieval period and beyond, the crown exercised the right of felony forfeiture, which entitled its officials to seize the goods of felons, fugitives and outlaws. A felon was anyone who committed one of the large category of serious crimes classed as felonies, principally homicide and rape but also larceny, burglary, arson and suicide. Forfeiture was also applied in cases of treason; it was partly on these grounds that participants in the rebellions of 1381 and 1450–1 lost their goods to the crown. Fugitives were those who were suspected of felonies but fled before they could be brought to justice. Outlaws comprised criminals who had managed to evade trial and were stripped of legal rights *in absentia*; the same sanctions, at least in theory, were applied to defendants in civil lawsuits, often for debt, who had similarly failed to appear in court after repeated summonses. For reasons of brevity, throughout this book we use the term 'felons' as collective term for all those subject to forfeiture, making distinctions between e.g. outlaw and fugitives where necessary.

Given the deficiencies of the evidence provided by medieval probate inventories and wills, the lists of seized goods and chattels that were generated by the processes of felony forfeiture have an obvious value for understanding the everyday lives of lower status people in the middle ages. John Langdon (1986; 1995, 71–2) was perhaps the first to note the potential of materials preserved following crown seizure for understanding peasant agriculture. To date, however, they have not been exploited in a systematic manner for the study of consumption. The lists which form the basis of this study relate to goods seized for the crown by two officials: the escheator (for the later fourteenth and fifteenth centuries) and the coroner (for the sixteenth century). However, before introducing these records, it is necessary to comment further on the limitations on the crown's right to exercise felony forfeiture.

Current understanding of felony forfeiture rests largely on the work of Kesselring who has examined the broad development of the practice through the

medieval and early modern periods (Kesselring 2009; on the mechanics of suicide forfeiture see also Houston 2010a, 2010b). The default position identified by Kesselring is that a felon's goods would be forfeited to the crown, and his lands escheated to his lord after the king had taken their waste and profits for a year and a day. In practice, however, the situation was considerably more varied. Rights to forfeitures were also claimed by many lords (Gibbs 2018, 254–5). The question of rights to the forfeited goods of felons therefore often created disputes between landowners and the crown. Many major towns also exercised rights of felony forfeiture within their jurisdictions as part of their borough privileges. Altogether, this means that the coverage provided by the records of the royal officials who administered the process of seizure on behalf of the Crown is not complete; not all forfeitures appear there. There are also inevitably questions around whether in practice *all* of a felon's goods in fact were lost to the crown, which is a key issue for our interpretation of the lists. We return to this issue below, after describing in greater detail the process of forfeiture and the records it generated.

Records of seizure: the escheator and the coroner

A number of different officials played roles in the operation of felony forfeiture across the five or more centuries in which it was a royal prerogative. Although in the later fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the coroner and sheriff were involved to some extent in the process, the key figure at this time was the escheator. Hence it is the records of this official that we have used for this period. Although the main series of escheators' accounts starts in the 1340s, lists of felons' chattels only start to appear in these and related records from 1370. This explains the start date of the present study. Furthermore, in the latter half of the fifteenth century the involvement of the escheator in this area of royal administration waned, with the recording of lists of goods becoming patchier from c.1460, and ceasing altogether from 1480. The escheators' archive is therefore of relatively little use to historians of consumption and material culture after this date. In seeking sources for the succeeding period roughly equivalent to those of the later medieval escheator, we turned instead to the records of the coroner. The coroner's involvement in felony forfeiture grew in prominence across the Tudor period, and although material is comparatively scanty from the early sixteenth century, it grows quite rapidly from the 1540s in particular. The relevant archives of each official are discussed below.

Of course, for reasons of continuity and comparability the project would ideally have used forfeiture records produced by just one type of official for the entire study period. This proved impossible, however, owing to the aforementioned loss of relevant detail from the escheators' records in the later fifteenth century, and the relative paucity of such information in the coroners' records before c.1500. Two consequences flow from our reliance on distinct archives for the late medieval and Tudor evidence respectively: first, we must always

bear in mind that our evidence either side of 1500 was generated by two different officials (and their staffs) pursuing somewhat different processes; and second, that our data is thinnest on the ground for the period c.1480–c.1530. The well-known importance of those decades as an era of economic and social change makes this feature of our archival dataset especially unfortunate.

Escheators, coroners and felony forfeiture

The escheator was a royal official who performed a wide range of duties. In general, his role was to take responsibility for the collection of royal revenues, primarily the profits and incomes from 'escheats' – lands taken into the king's hands temporarily (Waugh 2015). Many of the escheator's duties, however, remain inadequately researched, despite their importance (Deller 2012, 208). One of these underexplored roles was the administration of felony forfeiture. An aim of the 'Living Standards' project has been to boost understanding of this aspect of the escheator's work.[5]

Each escheator administered an escheatry, comprising a county or a pair of contiguous counties. With their origins in the early thirteenth century, from the middle of the fourteenth century, the escheators began to take on a widening range of duties, including collecting, appraising and liquidating the goods and chattels of felons, fugitives and outlaws. This role entailed the documentation of seized goods and their value. Although there was a great deal of variability in how this was undertaken in practice, the standard process was for the escheator to hold an inquest for each felon, at which a jury of local men listed the possessions and documented their value. Such lists purport to itemise the possessions of the felon on the day of the inquest. The time period between the event which triggered the forfeiture (felony, flight or outlawry) and the inquest could vary from just a few days to many months.

The following is a typical example of a escheator's inquest into a felon's chattels:

> Inquest taken at Hooton Levitt in the county of York on 21 September in the fifth year of King Henry IV after the conquest [21 September 1404] before Nicholas Gower, escheator of the lord king in the same county, by virtue of his office, by the oath of Richard Cosyn [and 11 other named men] who say upon their oath that Henry Milner of the same vill who killed John Selby and afterwards fled had goods and chattels namely six quarters of wheat price 40d for each quarter, [total] 20s; eight quarters of barley, price 3s for each quarter, 24s; eight quarters of oats, price for each quarter 20d, 13s 4d; six quarters of peas, price for each quarter 2s, 12s; a parcel of hay in a stack, price 3s 4d, three horses price 8s each, 24s; six oxen price 9s each, 54s; one cow price 6s 8d; one heifer price 7s;

[5] A much fuller study of the escheator's work in felony forfeiture and its implications for use of the records is in preparation by the present authors.

> one bullock price 6s 8d; 18 ewes price 15d each, 22s 6d; eight hoggets price 12d each, 8s; four pigs price 2s each, 8s; a worn cart price 2s, and another cart bound with iron, price 13s 4d; item, household utensils price 6s 8d. In testimony of which they have attached their seals, dated the place and day as above. Sum: £11 11s 6d.[6]

Following the inquest, the escheator normally answered to the exchequer for the value of the goods, realised through their sale. In some cases, the escheator's records indicate who acquired the goods and where. For example, the goods of outlaw John Ferrour of Sevenhampton (Wiltshire) were sold to a John Walsyngham of Fisherton (Wiltshire) in 1415. The escheator accounted at the exchequer for the 42s 4d raised from the proceeds.[7] It is probable that the valuations listed in the escheators' lists relate to the sale price of the goods. The use of descriptive terms such as *debilis* (worn) and *veteris* (old), as well as references to the colour or specific type of textiles, suggests that there was a need to account for unusually high or low valuations for specific goods. It is also apparent that goods were not necessarily always sold as functional objects. The description of metal cooking vessels by weight in some instances suggests that these were sold on for their scrap, rather than functional, value. For example, in 1434 the five brass pots belonging to Richard Penyng of Great Cheverell (Wiltshire) were noted as weighing 80lb, and valued at 2d per pound.[8]

Analysis of the records generated by the escheator demonstrates clear variability in the practice of forfeiture in relation to a range of variables. The key question of whether or not the lists of goods represent all the felon's possessions, or just a selection, is considered more closely below. Another area of obvious concern is the question of regional variation in escheators' practices. Throughout the period covered by the escheators' lists, those relating to the escheatry of Kent and Middlesex appear most detailed. In contrast, the Yorkshire lists typically itemise only animals, metalware, agricultural produce and, in some cases, bedding, with other goods valued together as 'household utensils', as in the case of Henry Milner above (see Briggs *et al*. 2019). This latter category of miscellaneous goods, the 'small things forgotten', occurs across England, but appears to have been particularly favoured as a means of valuing a group of lower value goods in Yorkshire. The reasons underlying this regional variability are unclear, but have implications which may limit the scope for detailed regional analysis of the acquisition of particular goods.

Thus the escheator's records provide a valuable insight into the possessions of non-elite households across medieval England, but are not without their interpretive challenges. In assessing the goods present, it is necessary to understand where, when and why the goods were seized. Regional comparison of specific

[6] E37 (TNA, E 153/713 m. 2; this forfeiture also appears on E 357/15 rot. 14).
[7] E237 (TNA, E 357/24 rot. 36d, m. 1).
[8] E1538.

types of objects must also take into account variability in practices of appraisal and recording.

The medieval and early modern coroner has been more extensively studied than the escheator, with research on his duties has focussing on suicide, crime and accidental death (e.g. Gunn and Gromelski forthcoming; Hanawalt 1986; Kesselring 2019; Lockwood 2017; MacDonald and Murphy 1990; Sharpe and Dickinson 2016; Stevenson 1987a, 1987b).

The office of the coroner was created in 1194. His diverse duties included responsibility for the forfeited chattels of felons in cases of homicide. During the fourteenth century, elements of the coroner's role, including the administration of felony forfeiture, were transferred to the escheator, as noted above. In this period the escheator began to take responsibility for appraising and taking possession of deodands, the lands and goods of felons, outlaws and abjurors of the realm, and for holding inquisitions into treasure trove and shipwreck, duties formerly belonging exclusively to the coroner. The role of the coroner became limited to the holding of inquests relating to sudden and suspicious death. It is to this role that the lists of seized goods appearing in the coroners' records relate. It seems that ensuring that goods forfeited by felons in cases of homicide and suicide, and that the deodands resulting from fatal accidents were properly inventoried, appraised and handed over to authorised persons, remained key aspects of coroners' work (Butler 2015, 3; Hunnisett 1961, 22). Virtually all the coroners' lists of forfeited chattels analysed in this book arose from inquests into the goods of murderers (in cases of homicide), including those who had fled, and suicides. The coroners' inquests and reports do not cover outlaws, whether criminal or civil.

Clear differences emerge from the comparison of the goods listed in the escheators' and coroners' records. It is striking that items of clothing are considerably better represented in the coroners' than escheators' records (see Chapter 6), and in general the level of detail provided on objects is less variable and of higher quality. This is not to say, however, that these records should not be approached with caution. Hunnisett (1971), who pioneered systematic research into coroners' material, and Havard (1960) argued that the fallibility and corruptibility of the coroner, coupled with a lack of financial incentive and deficiencies of the late medieval and early modern judicial system as a whole, must have had a negative impact on the quality of the documents produced by the coroner, and those supervised by him. More recent scholarship also points to the instances and 'possibilities for corruption, influence, and error' inherent in the inquest procedure (Kesselring 2019, 51–60).

While it is sensible to assume that some coroners were less thorough than others and that there must have been attempts to influence the coroner and the text of the final report (for example the part listing assets to be confiscated), it should be also borne in mind that the process of holding inquests and drafting reports was regulated by a raft of legislation and closely supervised, that coroners, juries and witnesses could be prosecuted even for minor defects in their reports, and that there is no evidence of widespread corruption among

coroners and juries (see especially Lockwood 2017, 197–237). Contemporaries and certainly the authorities had much trust in coroners since their reports played a central role in criminal trials; at assizes, charges of unlawful killing were normally brought based on the written record of an inquest, rather than on a freshly drawn indictment (Cockburn 1985, 74, 91–2; Loar, 1998, 102–4; Sharpe and Dickinson, 2016, 310). Not only that, mid-sixteenth century legislation increased coroners' responsibilities in this area by charging them with the duty to record examinations and prepare evidence for trial and by empowering them to commit murder suspects to prison and to bind witnesses to appear in court.

Data collection and sampling: escheators' records

As already mentioned, where information on felony forfeiture is concerned, the records of the escheator are richest for the period c.1370–c.1480. In this project three connected categories of escheators' records were used: the files of inquests (The National Archives class E 153), the particulars of account (TNA class E 136) and the escheators' account rolls (E 357). Put simply and briefly, the files mostly collect together records of inquests held before the escheator, including inquests related to felony forfeiture, like that relating to Henry Milner, quoted above; the particulars of account record the revenues of individual escheators, usually for a single year; and the escheators' accounts bring together in large rolls the details of the revenues of every escheator over a period of several years. Digital images of the relevant forfeiture texts, drawn from all three document types, are available as part of the project's deposited datasets.

The escheators' files (E 153) typically contain collections of the original inquests submitted by the escheator each year. They contain collections of sealed indentures and informal memoranda recording the information gathered at the inquisitions presided over by him or his sub-escheators, along with the writs containing instructions from the central government which the escheator returned endorsed with a certificate of compliance. Many, frequently most, of the indentures, memoranda and writs which must have been produced are absent. Not all of the indentures and memoranda found in the files relate to felons' chattels, but those indentures that do appear sometimes contain extra details omitted from the E 136 particulars and E 357 accounts. Many were originally sewn to the particulars but they are now all bound into paperboard folders. The indentures vary in size, but are typically about eight inches by four or five inches. Being indentures, their upper edge is usually cut into a zigzag, and the lower edge sometimes retains the three or four thin strips cut from the base to which the jurors affixed their seals, but these have more often been cut off.

The particulars of account (E 136) contain the original accounts submitted by the escheators each year. These are written on one side of long, narrow parchment rolls comprising multiple membranes sewn head to foot. Generally about 10–12 inches wide, the longest – containing 100 or more membranes – can be 200, even 300 feet in length. As the felons' chattels always appear last in

every account, the entire roll must be unrolled in order to find them. The escheators' account rolls (E 357) are copies of the particulars of account. Each of these rolls contains all the accounts produced by all of the kingdom's 25–30 escheators during a period of two to ten years. They are large documents, generally comprising 50–170 rotulets sewn head to head, each rotulet consisting of two long, wide membranes sewn head to foot and covered on both sides in small, dense handwriting.

Every inquisition into the goods and chattels of a felon, fugitive or outlaw ought in theory to be recorded three times, once in each of the three record classes. This is perhaps true of about a quarter or third of the forfeitures examined, but inevitably each class has many gaps in the series. Inquisitions in the E 153 files tend to provide the fullest detail, but this series is also the least complete. The E 357 accounts have probably suffered the fewest losses, but being the result of two successive copying processes (from the original indentures and memoranda into the particulars, and thence into the accounts) are slightly more likely to contain summarised information, rather than the itemised lists and valuations of the goods and chattels that are of greatest evidential value.

For our purposes therefore, the escheators' accounts in E 357 were the most useful of the three classes, because they feature the fewest missing years and concentrate information in one document. We therefore proceeded by extracting from these accounts details of every forfeiture which generated a list of three or more items. We restricted our attention to the following nine escheatries, covering 15 counties altogether, and chosen to provide a balanced geographical coverage: Cumberland and Westmorland, Northumberland, Yorkshire, Worcestershire, Norfolk and Suffolk, Northamptonshire and Rutland, Kent and Middlesex, Hampshire and Wiltshire, and Devon and Cornwall. Because we were interested in rural and small-town households, we ignored forfeitures relating to persons who resided in the 50 largest towns as measured by the numbers of persons paying the 1377 poll tax (Palliser 2000, Appendix 5). Where we encountered gaps in the E 357 series, we searched all the surviving records from the relevant years in classes E 136 and E 153 to identify any previously undetected forfeitures, as above. The data collection process therefore made exhaustive use of the E 357 accounts, and for this project we did not look at every surviving document from E 136 and E 153, although a great many items in those classes were consulted. Often we have found information on a particular forfeiture in two of the three record series, and sometimes in all three. Where this is the case, the information is consolidated in an individual record in the database.

Three counties – Hampshire, Wiltshire and Worcestershire – were subjected to more intensive data collection. For these counties, in addition to collecting details of all lists of 3+ forfeited items used in this book, we also collected all forfeitures where just a total valuation for the forfeited goods is provided, rather than a breakdown of items. Such 'total valuations' are very common in the forfeiture records, and 344 of them were collected for these counties so

that they could be used in calculating long-term trends in the median value of forfeited possessions. Hampshire, Wiltshire and Worcestershire we also handled differently in that for these counties we also extracted information on all settlements regardless of size, with a view to facilitating urban-rural comparisons. We found, however, that evidence on forfeitures from the largest towns such as Southampton, Winchester, Salisbury and Worcester was rare, doubtless because (as suggested above) such privileged boroughs successfully asserted their claims to felony forfeiture, and excluded royal officials.

Both the escheators' and coroners' records provide varying levels of detail about the occupations of felons and suicides. The focus of this research was the possessions of non-elite members of communities. Therefore, where individuals were identified as 'knight', 'esquire' or 'gentleman', they were excluded from the sample, as were higher clergy, though parish clergy were included (individuals described as rector, vicar, chaplain or clerk). Again, Hampshire, Wiltshire and Worcestershire were the exceptions; here, the goods of all individuals, regardless of status, were recorded to facilitate comparative study of different social groups. In the event the data was of sufficient quality to permit such analysis for Wiltshire only (see Chapter 10).

In total, the resulting escheators' dataset used in this book comprises 997 lists of chattels for the period 1370–1479, detailing some 7,569 possessions or groups of possessions (Figure 2.1), most of which – though not all – are identifiable. Legible information on occupation is available for 326 of the 997 lists (32.7%).

Data collection and sampling: coroners' records

The vast majority of extant fifteenth-century and early modern coroners' reports are preserved among the records of the court of King's Bench, one of the two principal common law courts, in TNA classes KB 8 to KB 14 (Gibson and Rogers 2009). Statutes of 1487 and 1510 required coroners to investigate all sudden deaths and to produce all their records of inquests regularly at gaol deliveries, normally held twice yearly, under the penalty of £5. The gaol delivery justices, and later assize judges, would then forward them to the King's Bench, except those relating to homicide trials in progress. This practice continued until about 1752 when coroners' inquisitions began to be collected by clerks of the peace.

The longest and largest King's Bench record class containing coroners' material for the sixteenth century is KB 9 (described by the TNA catalogue as 'Court of King's Bench: Crown Side: Indictments Files, Oyer and Terminer Files and Informations Files'). A few inquests from our period were removed from KB 9 at various points and are now in KB 8.

Coroners' inquests or reports can be roughly divided into four major categories based on the verdict: homicide (includes most instances of one person

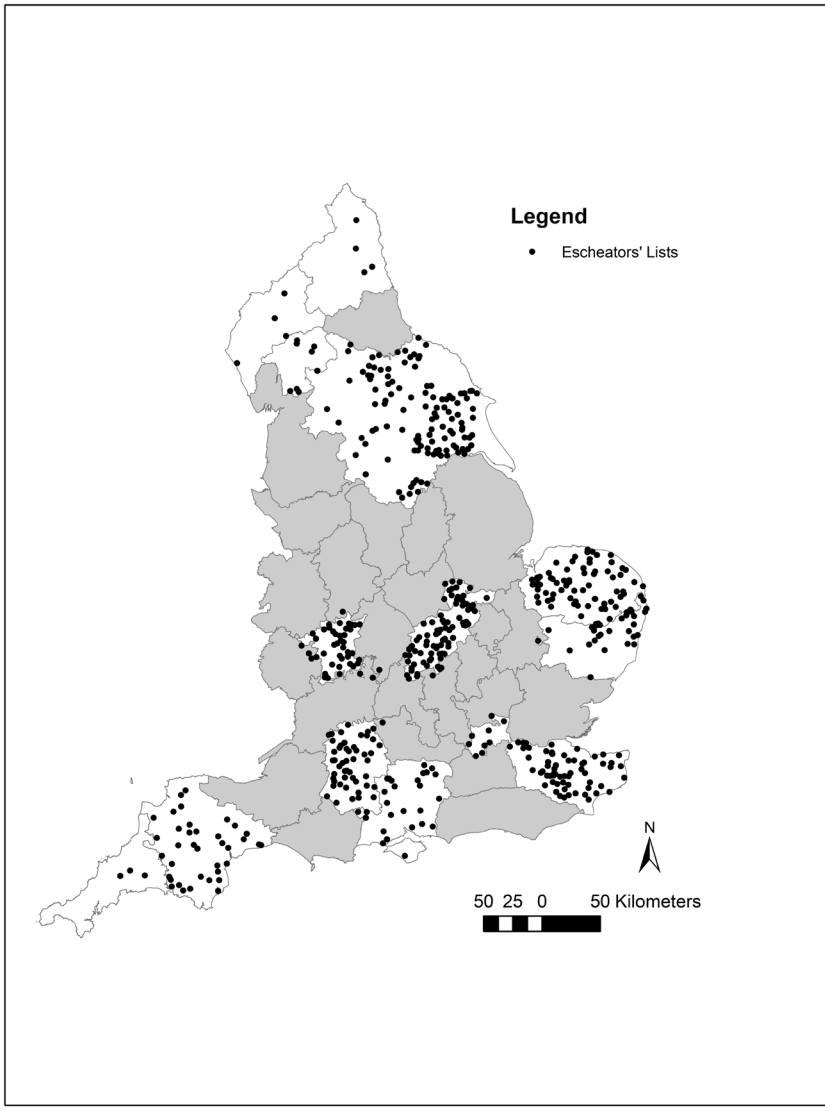

Figure 2.1: The distribution of escheators' lists in the project database. The map shows a single dot for each place from which lists with 3 or more objects occur.

killing another without differentiating between murder and manslaughter), suicide, accidental death and divine visitation (includes deaths from illnesses and diseases, exposure, natural death and deaths in gaol). Until the 1530s there is a preponderance of homicides over other deaths, particularly in the early years, but from that point an average yearly yield for KB 9 material is around 100 inquests from each category. In the case of murders and suicides, the felon's

goods would become forfeit to the crown, so the coroner's duty was to take an inventory and appraise them or to supervise this process and make sure that goods were taken possession of by those who had the right to do so. It is mostly murder and suicide inquisitions that were of primary interest to the project. The coroners' reports, written in Latin in cursive hand on rectangular strips of parchment or paper usually not larger than A4, vary in length and the amount of detail provided. Reports often include lists and/or valuation of goods and chattels of the deceased or felon, though in some cases inventories containing this information would be often drafted on a separate membrane annexed to the report.

In view of the vast quantity of material in the coroner's archive, the project focussed on inquests and reports among classes KB 8 and KB 9, supplemented by class ASSI 35, which contains some coroners' inquests with the verdict of homicide.[9] The data collection on the coroners' inquests focussed on the same counties as the work on the escheators' material. As in the case of the escheators, we gathered details of all lists of goods containing three or more items from all 15 counties. For the coroners' reports we focussed on six-year periods, one from each decade from the 1490s to 1590s, and extracted all surviving lists in reports from those periods, ignoring only those reports missing place of residence. We also collected all 'total valuations' (where the total value of the forfeited chattels is known, but no breakdown of items is given), in the following cases: (i) from Hampshire, Wiltshire and Worcestershire, irrespective of whether there is information on occupation/status and place of residence; (ii) all other counties, where the occupation/status and place of residence of the owner/handler of the goods is known. The purpose of collecting these 'total valuations' was, as with the escheators, to facilitate a separate investigation of temporal change in living standards. As in the work on the escheators, we included parish clergy throughout but ignored reports relating to persons of 'elite' status, and those from large towns, except in the case of Hampshire, Wiltshire and Worcestershire. Altogether this research on the coroners' reports generated a dataset of 170 chattels lists of the period 1490–1600, containing some 3,129 items or groups of items, plus 268 'total valuations' (Figure 2.2). Occupational information on the forfeiting individual is available for 108 of the chattels lists (63.5%).

Social status of those who forfeited

As noted above, given the project's primary interest in the lower-status residents of villages, hamlets and small towns, archival data collection concentrated on groups outside the lay and clerical elites and the residents of the 50 biggest towns. While the social pyramid represented by the resulting datasets

[9] These inquests were among those retained by Elizabethan and seventeenth-century assize judges to be used at trials and are still found among files of their respective assize courts.

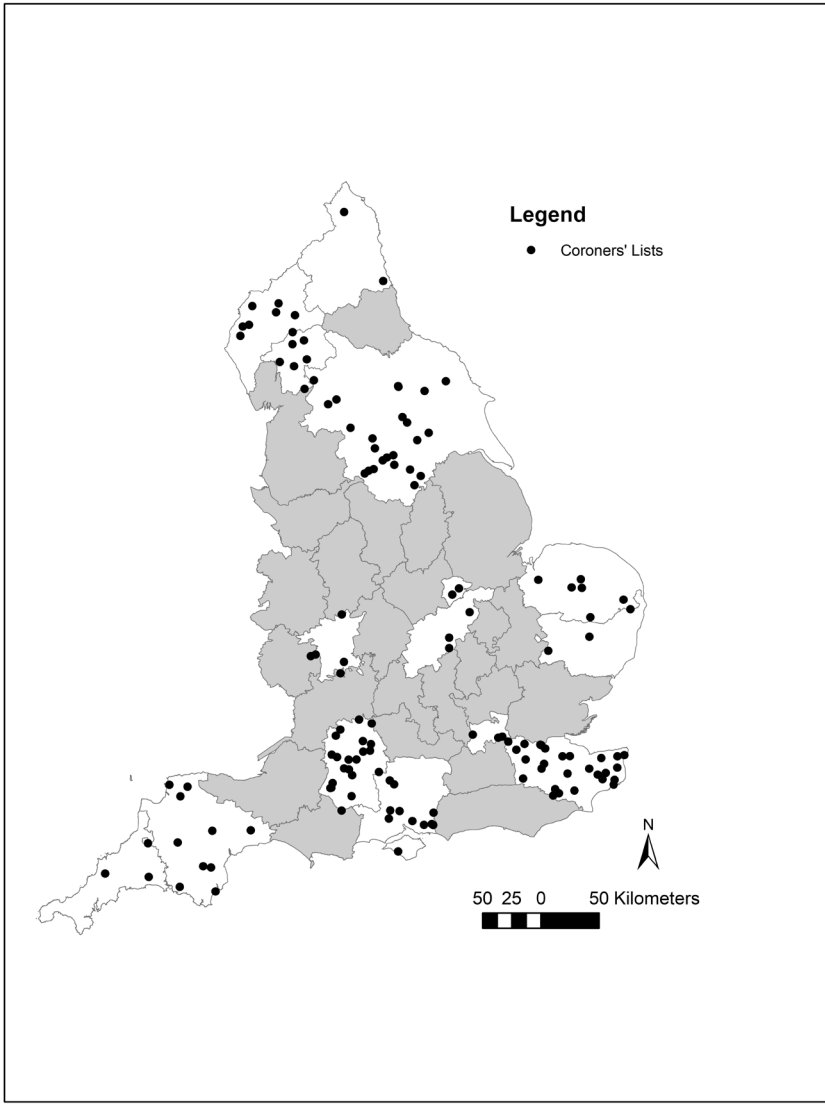

Figure 2.2: The distribution of coroners' lists in the project database. The map shows a single dot for each place from which lists with 3 or more objects occur.

is quite broad at the base, it is at the same time worth noting that our analysis covers people from a range of status levels. Precision is difficult owing to the exclusion of occupational descriptors in many cases. It is clear that at one end of the spectrum, the individuals and households captured by our record sources were often poor and apparently desperate people for whom it seems reasonable to assume that their involvement in crime, or their suicides, may have been

driven at least partly by their economic circumstances. Furthermore, taking the escheators' and coroners' databases together, a clear majority of those who forfeited their goods were labourers, artisans and peasants who belonged to the lower or middling portions of rural society. Such individuals can also be found among the participants in the revolts of 1381 and 1450–51 who feature quite prominently in the escheators' database. At the same time, felony forfeiture affected all ranks, and the criteria we have used in data collection has allowed for the inclusion of a number of individuals whose economic and social status was evidently rather higher than that of the typical forfeiting felon, even though they did not carry a descriptor such as 'gentleman'. Some of these people have relatively extensive or detailed lists, and therefore feature quite frequently in the chapters that follow, often as a point of comparison with other more modest lists. Two examples worth noting here are John Moigne, a traitor of Warmington (Northamptonshire), who forfeited goods worth £75 in 1405, and John James, a clergyman who hanged himself at West Dean (Wiltshire) in 1577, and whose extensive possessions were valued at over £300.[10] Elsewhere we included in our data a small number of other individuals, such as small-town merchants John Maister of Havant (Hampshire) and John Hawkyn of Barnstaple (Devon), who are clearly distinct from the peasants and artisans who make up the bulk of records in our databases, but meet the criteria of 'non-elite' as we have defined them.[11] Our archival datasets are in no sense entirely representative of late medieval and sixteenth-century society as a whole, but they do contain plenty of poorer people, while offering the advantage of allowing us to observe the material circumstances of a broad variety of households.

Forfeiture by men and by women

The vast majority of the felons who forfeited and left lists of chattels were male. This feature was especially marked in the case of the escheators' dataset, in which just 13 of the 997 lists (1.3%) relate to females. The proportion was higher for the coroners' dataset, where there are 26 lists for forfeiting females (15.3%). Overall, however, our evidence is dominated by men. The primary explanation for the small numbers of women appears to lie with the rules of coverture, which meant that on marriage all household goods became the possession of the husband. Since married women technically had no possessions of their own, they could not forfeit movables to the crown. This assumption is supported by the information on the marital status of those women who did forfeit. Among the 13 in the escheators' data, there is explicit indication of marital status for five women, of whom two were described as servants (presumably unmarried), and three as widows. Of the 26 women in the coroners' data, 20 are described as either widows or spinsters, while in six instances no information

[10] E45; C382.
[11] E122; E518.

on marital status is given. None of the 39 women are described as married. A further factor in the low numbers of females in the evidence on forfeiture is presumably the overwhelming predominance of men among those indicted for and convicted of felony, especially homicide (Brown 2022). Indeed, most of the women who do appear in our evidence forfeited due to suicide. Five of the 13 women in the escheators' dataset had committed suicide, while in the coroners' material 25 of the 26 women fell into that category, with one death being ascribed to misadventure.

This striking male bias raises important questions about our evidence. First, it forces us to question our access to direct written evidence on gender and consumption, a subject that French, for instance, is able to explore more fully using evidence from wills (French 2021). To be sure, we do have lists for women which, although typically quite short, are apparently complete and comparable in character in detail and content to similar lists relating to men. These can provide insights into material and familial circumstances when read alongside the contextual detail of the forfeiture. For example, in 1447 Agnes Wacy of Tilney All Saints (Norfolk) committed suicide. Her goods are listed as four brass pans (valued at 7s), two cows (12s), two coverlets (6s 8d), four sheets (60d), six pewter pieces (15d) and two candlesticks (6d).[12] This is fairly typical of a short list of the most common basic household goods. A similar example from the coroners' data is the list of the widow Jane Mortimer, who hanged herself in in her house in West Street, Gravesend (Kent) in 1598. She was described as 'very poor' and living with her six children on alms from the parish.[13] Her goods, worth 40s, are characterised rather vaguely, as a bedstead, featherbed and other furnishings and domestic utensils, but the description of her tragic circumstances would suggest that this was the extent of her goods. Other lists relating to female suicides provide useful, albeit relatively brief, information about clothing in particular, used in Chapter 6. Overall, however, the number of lists for women is sadly too small to permit a sustained analysis of gendered aspects of material culture.

Consideration of male and female forfeitures also draws attention to the issue of whether lists should be treated as describing the possessions of entire households, or just those of individuals. As we have seen, the vast majority of lists pertain to men, many of whom (though not all) were married household heads. Should we regard men's lists as representing the entirety of the goods of their households? Or, when a male household head was executed, fled or was outlawed, were some items excepted from those forfeited from the crown on the grounds that they belonged or pertained to the wife and family he left behind? Clearly, any formal exclusion of goods on these grounds is important to establish at the outset.

[12] E120.
[13] C456.

Kesselring investigated this general issue, and found that while some contemporaries thought the law surrounding forfeiture unduly harsh in its tendency to deprive a felons' innocent dependents of material possessions, especially where suicide was the reason for forfeiture, in principle it was indeed the case that a family could be stripped of most if not all of its movable goods as a result of the crown's exercise of its rights. No formal provision was made for the reservation of movable goods to the felon's family, and a widow of a forfeiting felon lost her normal rights of inheritance of such goods (Kesselring 2009, 2014). Similarly, the present study has found no explicit evidence that escheators or coroners formally excepted movable goods from consideration when ordering inquests and appraisals.

Whether a wife was actually deprived of all the household's goods in practice is another matter. Significant scope existed for the removal of goods from the attention of the escheator or the coroner so that they could remain in the household for the benefit of a departed felon's family, and there may have been strong social pressures inducing juries to disregard some items on these grounds. Concern for the material welfare of the families of suicides can certainly be documented from the coroners' records.[14] Although in principle the doctrine of coverture deprived a wife of property rights in all household movables, in practice the process of forfeiture may have recognized the wife's special interest in her own clothing, or even in a wider range of household utensils. These would represent items that in the rather different context of probate were known as the *paraphernalia* of a married woman (Beattie 2019). Some support for this idea is provided, for instance, by the fact that women's clothing is very rarely mentioned in lists concerning the forfeiture of males. The very detailed 1418 list of Worcestershire yeoman William Wodeward is unusual in including his wife's gown (*toga*).[15] In other cases, we may assume, the absence of references to clothing perhaps reflects recognition of a wife's informal property rights, and a similar tendency may lie behind the under-recording of other household possessions in ways that are not easily detectable. In both the escheators' and coroners' documents there are cases where specified forfeited goods are said to be in the possession of the wife of the felon, fugitive or outlaw, but the form of these entries probably reflects a refusal to render up the goods on the part of the wife, rather than an arrangement whereby she might continue to enjoy them against the letter of the rules of forfeiture.[16] A somewhat enigmatic entry containing the lengthy list of forfeited goods of attainted Barnstaple merchant John Hawkyn concludes by noting that the goods had been valued and sold to four men 'to the use of Matilda, formerly wife of the said John Hawkyn', but if these goods were returned into Matilda's possession, the mechanism through

[14] For examples, see a blog post by Tomasz Gromleski: https://medievalobjects.wordpress.com/2018/01/29/deducted-for-the-coroners-ffee-13s-4d-or-what-happened-to-forfeited-goods/.

[15] E348.

[16] e.g. E105, C9.

which they did so is unclear.[17] Overall, we may conclude that while on the face of it the chattels lists represent a household's goods rather than those of a (usually male) individual, some lists almost certainly silently omit items which were reserved to family members left behind, and we keep this possibility in mind in the analysis in later chapters.

How 'complete' are the escheators' and coroners' records of forfeiture?

Even if we accept that the chattels lists represent, in principle, all the household's movable possessions, rather than just those that belonged to the forfeiting individual, there remain other reasons to doubt the completeness of the lists. As we have seen, throughout the period studied the escheators and coroners were in principle permitted to seize all of a felon's movables for the crown, without exception (Kesselring 2009, 208). Little evidence has been found of exceptions to this. Indeed, it is striking how often the escheators' records in particular note explicitly that the forfeiting felon 'had no other goods' in the area under the jurisdiction of the escheator. Taken at face value, this suggests that even lists which appear implausibly short and comprise just a few goods should be treated at as representing 'everything' that a felon owned.

Of course, it would be naïve to do so. Informally there was huge scope for the omission, removal or overlooking of chattels. Unstated practices of omission could vary over time and space in ways that are hard to reconstruct.[18] Equally, it is dangerous to argue that just because an expected item does not appear in a chattels list, then this must be because it was deliberately excluded from the process of appraisal. Nonetheless, analysis of the content of lists does provide indication of omission on the basis of value or ubiquity. This is best evidenced by the near total absence of ceramic vessels, the most common object recovered from medieval archaeological sites, from the lists of goods seized by the escheator and coroner. One purpose of the interdisciplinary approach taken in this study is to allow a more complete understanding of possessions to emerge, as it enables us to begin to make judgements about the perceived value and importance of particular goods through the process of seizure.

It is possible that the propensity for a selective approach on the part of juries about which goods to identify for seizure could be related to the reason for forfeiture. As noted, goods could be seized in relation to a range of felonies or in association with a civil suit, typically pertaining to debt. One hypothesis is that the more serious the reason for forfeiture, the more exhaustive would be the process of appraisal. It is certainly possible to point to instances of the most heinous crimes, such as murder or treason, where lists are extremely detailed and would appear to represent, more or less, the seizure of all of the possessions

[17] E518.

[18] A fuller attempt to do so will be made in the study in n. 5 above.

of a household. In the case of civil outlawries, which appear to have been rather routine events by the fifteenth century, lists often appear less 'complete' and an obvious hierarchy of value can be discerned, with animals, crops and metal vessels (all of which could be easily liquidated) seemingly being seized preferentially, with items such as bedding seemingly less favoured. That said, there are always exceptions to this pattern, in the shape of several very full and detailed lists of civil outlaws. The statement that a forfeiting individual held no other goods in the county can be found in connection with civil outlaws as well as criminals, as is the case for the chaplain Simon Hull of Blatherwick (Northamptonshire) who was outlawed by civil suit in 1410.[19]

It is clear that the archival materials produced by felony forfeiture cannot be treated simplistically as complete and comprehensive listings. Nor can we always regard the contents of such lists straightforwardly as belonging to the household. For instance, some of the people who forfeited did so because they had stolen goods. Because the stolen items were also forfeit to the crown, we must take care to distinguish any stolen property for the felon's 'own' goods. Fortunately, the records themselves often make the distinction obvious, as in the 1433 list relating to Elena, servant of Nicholas Welsh, of Morpeth (Northumberland). This clearly differentiates Elena's own goods (a coverlet, two blankets and a worn hood, valued together at 26d) from those which she stole from her employer (three pairs of shoes, a worn dorser and banker).[20] We must also be on the lookout for lists which include an artisan's stock in trade among his own household items, and for occasional instances which seem to represent a felon apprehended in flight with a limited range of goods, rather than the more typical appraisal carried out at the felon's residence. These and other special circumstances inform the discussion of forfeiture evidence later in the book.

All told, the lists of forfeited chattels display huge variety. At one extreme lie short and stereotyped documents which it is entirely unrealistic to treat as complete or accurate listings. At the other extreme, we have detailed and apparently painstaking descriptions of goods which are striking in their verisimilitude. In the chapters that follow, we seek to read lists of both kinds as critically as we can, taking account wherever possible of the processes of appraisal and valuation, and the ways in which they may have shaped the evidence available to us.

Archaeological evidence for consumption

The objects recovered from archaeological excavations provide a valuable counterpoint to those documented in lists of forfeited goods. The potential of archaeological data has been greatly expanded by the explosion of archaeological excavations undertaken in advance of development since the introduction

[19] E299.

[20] E1526. Another good example of an attempt to distinguish the felon's own goods from the stolen goods is the case of Thomas Kyrkeby chaplain (E1349).

of Planning Policy Guidance 16 in England in 1990 and its subsequent development into requirements for archaeological work enshrined in later planning policies PPS5 and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). In interpreting archaeological evidence, it is necessary to understand some of the factors influencing recovery of archaeological objects, as these can account for apparent variability in artefact patterning.

The excavation of medieval rural settlements in England

Prior to the introduction of development-led archaeology in the 1990s, archaeological investigation of rural settlements was dominated by investigations of deserted medieval settlements. Typically, these set out to address questions relating to village formation and desertion, as well as the reconstruction of rural houses and settlement economy (see Beresford and Hurst 1971; Gardiner *et al.* 2012 for overviews). These excavations were often large in scale and are best exemplified by the groundbreaking research projects at settlements such as Wharram Percy (Wrathmell 2012) and West Whelpington (Northumberland; Evans and Jarrett 1987; Jarrett 1970). Projects such as those at West Whelpington and Raunds (Northamptonshire; Auduoy and Chapman 2010; Chapman 2010) had a strong research focus, but were also stimulated by development pressure, in both cases the expansion of quarrying. These early projects generated a vast quantity of data about rural life, used to develop regional chronological sequences for the development of vernacular architecture, settlement expansion and decline and artefact types. In many cases, excavation demonstrated clear evidence for continued occupation beyond historically attested abandonment around the time of the Black Death. Excavation in small towns prior to 1990 was extremely variable, often relying on the presence of a local archaeological trust or local authority archaeological unit. Dyer (2003) highlighted the underutilised potential of archaeological data from small towns for understanding the character of urban centres across medieval England.

Since 1990, the obligation to undertake archaeological assessment ahead of development has vastly expanded the quantity of archaeological work undertaken. Large databases of archaeological information, specifically information on known archaeological sites and associated interventions (e.g. excavation, survey) are held by unitary authorities and national parks. These Historic Environment Records (HERs) are maintained and added to when archaeological work is reported, with development-led work forming the bulk of these entries. The archaeological work is typically undertaken by commercial archaeological companies and the process is managed by local authority archaeologists. As determined by local and national planning policy, it is rare that development-led work results in total excavation, with projects typically adopting sampling approaches to examine areas deemed to be of highest archaeological potential, most at risk from development or in order to develop a general understanding

of a site. This has resulted in a large number of small-scale archaeological interventions, mostly recovering small quantities of archaeological material which are of most interpretive value when combined to create a large dataset such as that gathered for this project. A further benefit of development-led excavation for the study of medieval settlement has been the increased level of excavation within currently occupied rural settlements rather than deserted sites, furthering our understanding of places which persisted, albeit in some cases in a shrunken state. Thanks to development-led excavation, we now have a much larger excavated sample covering a large proportion of the country, although there is some bias with particular intensities of work in areas which have experienced the most concentrated archaeological excavation. Reviewing recent work on rural settlement, Rippon and Morton (2020) highlight key themes examined over the preceding decade including settlement growth and agriculture, settlement contraction, the evidence for vernacular architecture and designed landscapes.

Factors impacting archaeological recovery

Material recovered from archaeological excavations can be characterised as the residue of everyday life in the past, typically waste from domestic or industrial activity. Most material excavated from archaeological contexts has been subject to some form of transformation; it is exceptionally rare to recover 'primary' material; that is objects which were deposited in their area of use. Exceptions might be objects recovered from undisturbed housefire deposits, such as that recently excavated at Island Farm, Ottery St Mary (Devon; Mudd, Cobain and Haines 2018). Rather, archaeological deposits typically contain 'secondary' (that is material deliberately deposited into an archaeological feature such as a pit) or 'tertiary' (that is material re-deposited from its original place of deposition, for example through the spreading of midden waste as manure) material (see Schiffer 1987). Through processes of production, use and discard, objects undergo a variety of transformations: they may break or be worn down, elements may be recycled or salvaged and some materials may decay over time (LaMotta and Schiffer 2002; Needham and Spence 1997). For this reason, the archaeological record is always a partial representation of the materials produced or used at a given archaeological site.

In order to capitalise on the potential of archaeological evidence, it is essential to relate finds to the deposits from which they were excavated. Housefloor deposits are likely to incorporate 'primary' material, for example the small objects such as spindle whorls found on the floor of the excavated house at Upton (Worcestershire; Rahtz 1969), which we might imagine having been dropped and trodden into an earth floor. Also falling within this category might be the metal fittings from doors which were left in place when a building was abandoned, either to fall into decay or after a housefire, a good example being

those fittings from Foxcotte (Russel 1985). Waste could be deposited into convenient locations around settlements, for example abandoned quarry pits. For example at Parlington (Yorkshire; WYAS 2010) finds from an infilled quarry include a copper alloy stud and an iron buckle pin. Whilst these finds cannot be associated with a specific household, they can be related to the inhabitants of the settlement, as it is likely that convenient waste was used to infill these excavations. Tertiary waste, for example that spread across surrounding fields, is more difficult to interpret as it likely incorporates material from multiple households, potentially including the manorial household. At Parlington, finds from the plough soil include a range of domestic objects, including an ornamental binding, buckles, a strap end and bag hook, a file, awl and shears, iron vessel fragments, a padlock and three broken knives. A rake prong may be an accidental loss, perhaps a tool that broke in the fields.

The material signature of a medieval community is necessarily visible at varying scales of resolution depending upon whether finds are associated with a specific building or yard, or were recovered from communal areas of a settlement or from the surrounding landscape. The excavation of a farmstead at Capel St Mary (Suffolk; Tabor 2010) provided the opportunity to explore buildings within the context of their wider landscape, with the use of a metal detector assisting with the recovery of metal finds. Several finds were recovered from a Roman posthole situated within a Roman enclosure. These comprise a later medieval copper alloy buckle, two lead weights, copper alloy slag, lead sheet and a copper alloy escutcheon plate of probable fifteenth–sixteenth century date. The presence of this mixed range of finds, representing craft, personal adornment and furniture, likely relates to the dispersal of domestic waste across the surrounding fields. Finds from the occupation area are more limited. A book or casket mount was recovered from a ditch and another copper alloy book or furniture fitting from a hollow adjacent to the principal structure, a buckle plate and stud came from a pit. A dome-shaped furniture mount was recovered from the large ditch enclosing the farmstead. The only finds from the metalled surfaces of the yard area were a strap end and copper alloy split pin. Fragments of quern and whetstone were recovered from enclosure ditches and quarry pits. Like the small finds, the pottery was chiefly recovered from quarry pits, ditches and other pits, with only a small and fragmented assemblage coming from the metalled surfaces. Overall, houses and working areas appear to have been kept fairly clean, but by associating finds with their context of deposition we can reconstruct how communities disposed of their waste and utilise this material to better understand the possessions of a community or household.

In order to reconstruct these waste streams, it is also necessary to be aware of factors impacting materials after deposition and during the process of excavation. The survival of archaeological objects in the ground is determined in part by the underlying soil conditions. Organic materials such as wood and leather survive only in anaerobic conditions, typically waterlogged deposits, which are considerably more common in urban than rural settlements. Acidic

soils can accelerate the decay of materials such as bone and metal, meaning that underlying geology must be taken into account when considering the regional distribution of artefacts. Modern archaeological methods are also an important determinant of the composition of archaeological assemblages. Small scale excavations can be expected to produce lower volumes of material than larger excavations. Interpretation of these small samples can be further complicated by the relative lack of information on the specific archaeological deposits, which could not be fully excavated or recorded. This project draws on inventories of finds published in archaeological reports and this information is of varying quality. An important review by Cattermole (2017) highlighted substantial variability in the extent to which professional best practice standards are adhered to by archaeologists, meaning that the standard of reporting is inconsistent across the country.

The archaeological dataset

The archaeological dataset includes finds from 2,757 investigations from the case study counties (Figure 2.3).[21] In order to identify appropriate archaeological assemblages, searches of HERs within the case study counties were requested. Reports were returned containing details of all excavations from which evidence relating to the period c.1300–1600 was identified. These datasets were then sifted to identify sites for inclusion in the study. The project database contains a record of all sites meeting the criteria of a non-elite rural site regardless of whether finds were recovered, in order to map patterns of presence and absence. Key pieces of data were extracted from archaeological reports (including both published and unpublished 'grey literature' reports) in order to record the occurrence of artefacts in relation to specific dated medieval deposits. Recording at the level of the deposit, rather than the site, allows for understanding of the depositional processes: whether the material is likely to be an element of a primary, secondary or tertiary deposit. Key information about the object itself was also recorded including the object type (as it appears in the report and normalised to the Forum for Information Standards in Heritage (FISH) terminology to facilitate comparison), material, evidence for decoration, likely function, date range and quantity.

Establishing the chronology of sites is complex, and understanding the basic principles through which dates are derived for archaeological deposits is fundamental to the interpretation of the archaeological dataset. Archaeological dating works on the basis of stratigraphy, whereby deposits are excavated in reverse chronological order, giving a *relative* sequence for the dates at which those deposits form. Artefacts are a key element for providing a dating framework. Ceramics and small finds such as items of dress, which change style relatively frequently, provide measures against which the *absolute* date of a deposit

[21] This figure excludes excavations from within the cities of Salisbury and Worcester.

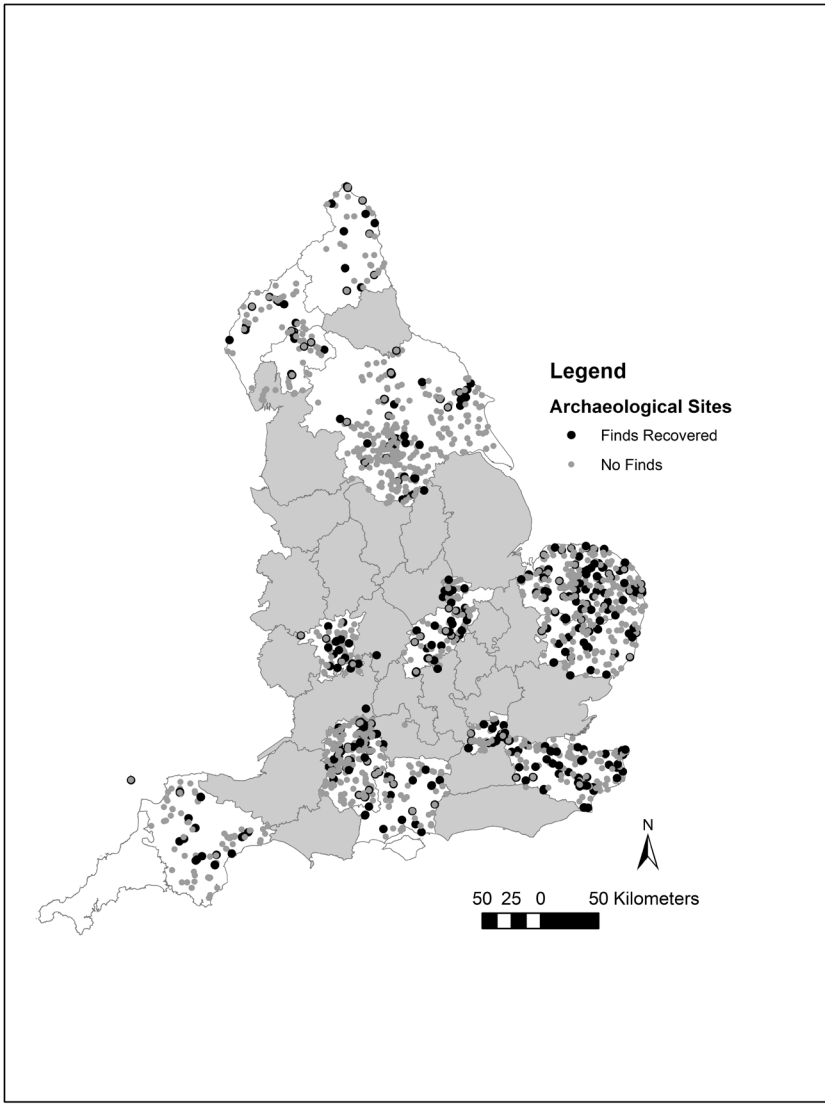

Figure 2.3: The distribution of archaeological sites in the project database.

can be assessed, they in turn being firmly dated by their association with objects such as coins or dates derived through scientific methods such as radiocarbon dating or dendrochronology (for the medieval period the London sequence, ascertained through the relationship between objects and surviving timber revetments associated with the building up of the Thames foreshore and dated by dendrochronology, is particularly important; Egan 2010; Vince 1985). Dates

for deposits can be ascertained by identifying the earliest and latest possible dates of deposition on the basis of the artefacts present and, where possible, considering that within the broader context of the stratigraphic sequence. Where excavations reveal long occupation sequences, it can be possible to identify chronological sequences which can be dated on the basis of artefacts associated with each phase of activity. In the majority of cases, however, dating is vague due to the lack of intercutting or well stratified deposits, or due to the absence of closely datable artefacts. Therefore, it is not possible to discuss the archaeological data with the same chronological precision as the lists of seized goods, although it is still possible to identify trends such as the introduction of new forms of dress fitting (see Chapter 6) on the basis of parallels with well dated sequences from urban excavations.

The majority of the material in the archaeological dataset comprises metal finds, mostly of iron and copper alloy. These items are typically elements of other objects. The most common are nails, which could have formed a part of house structures or items of furniture. Other common items are stone objects such as whetstones and querns. Items of wood, leather and textile occur in low quantities, due to issues of preservation. The project methodology excludes the most common type of artefact from rural excavations: pottery. Ceramics provide a wealth of information as they are closely datable due to styles changing relatively quickly, whilst they can act as proxies for trading networks where types can be associated with particular production centres and for domestic activities (see Brown 1988; Jervis 2014; McCarthy and Brooks 1988). However, for the purposes of this project a decision was taken to exclude ceramics from analysis. Several reasons underlie this. Firstly, although ceramics are ubiquitous, styles are extremely regional. Undertaking a national-scale analysis would require detailed consideration of this regional variability which falls outside of the scope of the project. Secondly, there is a lack of consistency in the extent to which ceramic vessel forms, which provide important information on household activities, are recorded and quantified, meaning that it is not possible to create a uniform dataset. Thirdly, there is a substantial existing literature on ceramics which can inform the analysis presented here. This includes their use in establishing site chronologies.

As with the escheators' and coroners' records, the archaeological dataset excludes excavations from within urban centres in the top 50 largest places in 1377 as defined above (with the exception of Worcester and Salisbury, the latter of which forms the basis of the regional case study in Chapter 10), elite sites such as castles and religious houses, and sites for which the dating evidence was unsubstantiated. There are a small number of sites within the sample which could be arguably considered high status. These include moated sites such as the rectory at Wimbotsham (Norfolk). However, it was considered that the inclusion of such sites was consistent with our decision to incorporate parish clergy such as rectors and clerks into the escheators' and coroners' sample.

The Portable Antiquities Scheme

The Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) was established in 1997 to record finds made by members of the public, typically metal detectorists. Its freely accessible online database is a valuable resource for artefact research and has underpinned numerous studies of particular medieval artefact types, as well as investigations of settlement and economy (e.g. Lewis 2016; Oksanen and Lewis 2020; Standley 2015). The use of the PAS dataset is, however, extremely problematic. A range of factors impact patterns of recovery, including land use, accessibility, legal restrictions on metal detecting and environmental factors (Robbins 2013). Furthermore, although the evidence exists within a landscape context, its specific archaeological context cannot be reconstructed without further detailed investigation. It is therefore impossible to determine whether material is waste from an elite or non-elite household, whether it is primary, secondary or tertiary in character, which settlement it may relate to or whether it is the result of an accidental loss. For this reason, PAS data does not form a central element of the research presented here. However, it does provide valuable information on the distribution of metal finds such as metal vessels and dress accessories, and therefore occasional reference is made to PAS data in order to further contextualise the objects listed in the escheators' and coroners' records or recovered from archaeological excavations.

Investigating medieval and sixteenth-century consumption: an interdisciplinary framework

The archival and archaeological datasets provide different, but complementary, evidence for consumption. Certain types of objects, such as metal cooking vessels, appear in both datasets. Others, such as chests, occur only in the archival dataset but can be inferred through the occurrence of elements such as hinges, locks and mounts in the archaeological dataset. Finally, certain objects, such as textiles, appear exclusively in the documents. Therefore, through the combination of the archival and archaeological data it is possible to build up a more complete understanding of the objects present in the home. By considering those objects which occur exclusively in the archaeological dataset, one may assess the ways in which ubiquitous or low-value items such as knives and belts were valued (or not) by medieval and Tudor communities, whilst the monetary valuations provided by the escheator and coroner provide a basis on which to assess the relative prestige of goods recovered archaeologically. Change over time can also be ascertained, both through the occurrence of archaeological objects in dated deposits and by tracking references in dated lists of seized goods. The distribution of elements such as furniture mounts can be used to supplement the archival sources to understand the distribution of certain types of object in our period.

In order to maximise the potential of this interdisciplinary approach, object function has been used as a means of linking these datasets. For this reason, this book is laid out firstly in relation to key areas of domestic life: cooking and food preparation, eating and drinking, furniture, dress and personal objects. The relationship between archaeological and archival data varies between these themes. In the discussion of food preparation, for example, archaeological and archival sources are drawn together to consider the distribution of quernstones associated with domestic milling. The discussion of furniture is heavily reliant on the archival sources, whilst changes in dress can be tracked in both the archival and archaeological datasets. The comparative absence of metal cooking vessels in the archaeological dataset and their ubiquity in the archival materials demonstrates how the value of items changed through their usable life, emphasising the importance of recycling as broken objects were melted down, rather than being dumped in archaeological deposits.

The datasets are also combined to consider the basis of the household economy and factors affecting the variability apparent in consumption practices between urban and rural households and households of differing levels of wealth. Whilst the archival sources provide quantitative data relating to household wealth, the archaeology provides valuable insights into household investment in architectural modifications. The ability to provenance some archaeological objects allows for the reconstruction of trading networks which can be further explored through the occurrence of objects in the escheators' and coroners' datasets. The approach taken here is therefore not to offer a straightforward comparison of the archival and archaeological data, but to explore the relative strengths of each dataset to develop a nuanced and integrated understanding of household production and consumption.

CHAPTER 3

The Processing and Consumption of Food and Drink

While the food habits of monastic and elite secular households are well illustrated by household accounts and other documentary sources (e.g. Woolgar 1992; 2016, 172–95), considerably less is known of non-elite diet. Our understanding of peasant diet is principally informed by records of grants of food made by landowners to their tenants, for example around harvest time. The extent to which these are representative of everyday diet is unclear (Birrell 2015; Dyer 1988; Woolgar 2016, 26–41). We can also infer diet through records of fines levied on food vendors and regulations relating to occupations such as butchers and bakers (Davis 2012, 231). Drawing on varied historical sources, Woolgar (2016, 41) summarises peasant cooking around 1200 as being dominated by boiling and stewing, with an increasing prevalence of roasting and frying by the fifteenth century. Archaeological evidence relates both to foodstuffs (in the form of animal bone and charred or waterlogged plant remains) and the material culture of cooking and dining. Archaeological science approaches, such as the analysis of organic residues extracted from ceramic cooking pots and the isotopic analysis of human remains (which demonstrate significant differences in the contribution of meat, marine fish and vegetables to diet) are increasingly addressing this issue (Charters *et al*. 1993, 220; Dunne *et al*. 2019; Evershed *et al*. 1991; Evershed 1993, 95; Evershed *et al*. 2002, 665; Mays 1997; Müldner and Richards 2005; Thomas 2007). Ceramics dominate the archaeological material culture of cooking and eating, with metal vessels surviving only in exceptional circumstances, such as the assemblage of objects lost in a housefire in 1507 at Pottergate in Norwich (Margeson 1993, 86). The presence of such vessels is more often only indicated by finds of vessel fragments or repair patches. The combined study of escheators' and coroners' lists and archaeological data provides a rare insight into the food practices of non-elite medieval

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households, in terms of food processing, storage, cooking, eating and drinking. In this section we briefly review the evidence for foodstuffs, before discussing in greater detail the various utensils and vessels associated with their storage, preparation and cooking.

The evidence for food

The study of medieval food is well established from both archaeological and historical perspectives (e.g. Hammond 2005; Henisch 2009; Moffett 2018; Müldner 2009; Sykes 2009; Wilmott 2018; Woolgar, Serjeantson and Waldron 2006; Woolgar 2016). Both demonstrate a strong relationship between diet and the socio-economic hierarchy of medieval society. As detailed in Chapter 2, archaeological data relating to faunal remains was not recorded for this project because there have already been a number of national and regional surveys (e.g. Albarella 1999; 2019; Holmes 2017; Sykes 2006; Thomas 2007) and due to methodological inconsistencies in the recording and presentation of animal bone data. References to foodstuffs in the lists of the escheator and the coroner were recorded and, in general terms, relate to preserved meat, including bacon, salt beef, mutton and pork, and salted fish. Foodstuffs occur in only 6% of the escheators' lists of chattels, being more prevalent in those associated with criminal (8%) than civil cases (3%).

Lists associated with criminal cases typically appear more complete than those resulting from civil suits. The occurrence of foodstuffs intersects with regional variability in inventorying practices (see Chapter 2). The Kent/Middlesex, Wiltshire and Northamptonshire/Rutland escheatries, in which inventorying practices appear particularly thorough, provide the best evidence for foodstuffs. In total, 72% of the references to foodstuffs in the escheators' lists are from Kent/Middlesex. Foodstuffs occur in only 17, typically particularly detailed coroners' lists. Only a very limited range of items are represented, principally bacon and dairy produce.

Food and drink were not routinely seized in forfeitures, presumably because they were perishable and had little resale value. Foodstuffs were normally only recorded where there were substantial quantities present. When John Meselyn's goods were appraised by the escheator of Kent and Middlesex following a civil suit in 1404, he had nine flitches (or sides) of bacon and a further five bacons, valued at a total of 11s 8d (the location of the goods is not stated but they were presumably at Meselyn's home).[22] The low quantities of foodstuffs present in the lists generated by the escheator and coroner are not sufficient to afford quantitative analysis, but do provide useful supplementary data for understanding the provisioning of non-elite households.

[22] E8.

Records of food liveries made to peasants at harvest time and as retirement allowances suggest a substantial increase in the provision of meat between the mid-thirteenth and mid-fifteenth centuries. Dyer (1983, 216) even goes as far as to suggest that the 'prevalent miseries of the period before 1350 gave way to a "dietary optimum" in the fifteenth century' (see also Woolgar 2006 for an overview of meat and dairy consumption). The available meat included beef, pork, mutton and poultry. The meat on offer became more varied over time and was increasingly fresh, rather than taking the form of preserved meat such as bacon (Dyer 1988, 30). The drivers for this change were a mixture of demographic pressures (a shortage of labour) and related changes, both in the organisation of landholding and of labour. For those able to afford it, the standard of food, both in terms of nutrition and flavour, increased substantially following the Black Death (Dyer 1988, 36). Whereas this historical evidence relates principally to the foodstuffs consumed, archaeological data primarily comprises waste material from the processing of carcasses or crops (Woolgar 2010, 3–4). The evidence from excavated animal bones shows clear distinctions in the relative proportions of pig and sheep from high status sites (such as castles) and rural and urban settlements (Thomas 2007). Pig often appears as a higher status foodstuff, particularly before the fifteenth century, while sheep remains are more prevalent in urban than rural contexts (Holmes 2017, 136–8; Thomas 2007, 136–8; Woolgar 2006, 90). Both Albarella (2006, 81), through archaeological evidence, and Woolgar (2006, 92), on the basis of documentary sources, note that higher status consumers often had a particular preference for younger animals, while bones from mature pigs are common finds in non-elite contexts, suggesting that age was a key determinant in status differentiation in relation to pork consumption (Albarella 2006, 80–1). Over time, pig declines in prevalence across the archaeological dataset in relation to sheep, due to a variety of factors including a reduction in woodlands (which offered pasture for pigs) and long-term fluctuations in wool and grain prices (Albarella 2006; Thomas 2007, 143–4). Animal bone data suggests that urban populations may have consumed more meat than rural populations, perhaps due to the focussing of wealth in towns or the presence of markets (Albarella 2005). Historical evidence, such as tax assessments from Colchester, remind us that urban communities were also engaged in the rearing of animals for sale or consumption and were not solely reliant on larger, rural, producers (Woolgar 2006, 89).

Bacon is the most common meat among the escheators' records, occurring in 24 lists with multiple pieces being present in all but three cases (Table 3.1).[23] This is presumably because it was both common and was preserved through smoking, meaning that it could be sold on. Usually, bacon is the only foodstuff present in the lists in which it occurs. It is the only meat to occur in the coroners' records, appearing in four lists (Table 3.2).[24] Beef and pork also occur

[23] E1279; E1335; E1584.

[24] C121; C382; C446, C472.

Table 3.1: The occurrence of foodstuffs in the escheators' records.

List No.	Name	Meat	Fish	Cheese	Flour & Oatmeal	Spices & Salt	Honey	Apple	Drink
8	John Meselyn	9 Flitches bacon(120d) & 5 Bacons (20d)							
9	John Child	2 Flitches (12d)							
12	William Burton	5 Flitches bacon (40d)							
13	John Philpot	4 Flitches bacon							
45	John Moigne	10 Bacons (120d) & 2 Qtr Beef (36d)							
157	John de Polton	6 Bacons & 3 Qtr Salt beef							
210	William Barett		Eel						
217	John Plumme								1 Pipe wine (1440d)
244	John Stevenson	1 Salt pork (160d)							
285	Thomas atte Rode							3 Qtr (24d)	
286	Stephen Donet	4 Flitches bacon (48d)							
289	Robert Cat	2 Flitches bacon (24d)							
304	John Coupere					0.5 Bushel salt			
310	John Forster	2 Qtr Salt mutton				Salt?			
341	William Bayly	3 Flitches (36d)							
417	John Eston	4 Flitches bacon (48d)							
479	John atte Wode	4 Bacons (48d)							

(*Continued*)

Table 3.1: Continued.

List No.	Name	Meat	Fish	Cheese	Flour & Oatmeal	Spices & Salt	Honey	Apple	Drink
505	Richard Bothe	2 Qtr Salt beef (30d)							
515	William Bouerset				3 Qtr Oatmeal (180d)				
518	John Hawkyn					1.5 lb Pepper (18d), 6lb Cumin (6d), 2lb Ginger (12d), 0.5lb Anise (1.5d), 1lb Grains of Paradise (16d), 0.8lb Crocus [saffron] (40d), 1lb mace (12d) & 4 Qtr Salt (180d)			
557	Nicholas Gulot	2 Sides bacon (36d)							
596	William at Mille								1 Pipe cider (40d)
664	John Spenser								0.125 Pipe wine (48d)
675	Robert Stonforde							2 Qtr (24d)	
677	Robert Senyng								
679	William Walton							1 Qtr (12d)	

(*Continued*)

Table 3.1: Continued.

List No.	Name	Meat	Fish	Cheese	Flour & Oatmeal	Spices & Salt	Honey	Apple	Drink
684	John Mounde							6 Qtr (48d)	3 Pipes cider (88d)
728	John Rennewey	4 Flitches bacon (48d)							
742	John Gunnyld	5 Bacons (120d)							
765	John Scot								1 Pipe cider (80d)
768	Thomas Isenden	2 Flitches bacon (24d)		5 Cheeses					
785	William de Brereton	4 Flitches bacon (40d), 1 Salt beef carcass (80d) & 2 Fresh pork carcasses (40d)							
786	John Fenton	2 Beef pieces & 1 Fresh pork piece							
910	John Horle				Pea? Flour				
948	John Paget								1 Pipe wine (720d)
953	Robert Neuton	6 Pork? (48d)							
1086	Humphrey Bocher			0.5 Wey Cheese		0.5 Oz Crocus	1 Gallon		
1099	John Burgh		400 Buckhorn & 1 Qtr Pike						
1102	Thomas Blofeld			1 Wey Cheese					

(*Continued*)

Table 3.1: Continued.

List No.	Name	Meat	Fish	Cheese	Flour & Oatmeal	Spices & Salt	Honey	Apple	Drink
1197	Richard Horeston				2 Bushels Oat flour (60d)				
1237	Baldwin of the Felde	2 Salt beef (30d) & 2 Salt pork							
1239	John Solterous	Beef & 1 Mutton carcass							
1241	Thomas Vyncent	3 Qtr Beef							
1279	John Hobelet	1 Flitch bacon (20d)							
1334	William Threle								
1335	Thomas Threle	1 Flitch bacon (6d)							
1336	Thomas Paccheherst	12 Flitches bacon (144d) & 3 Qtr Beef (42d)							
1337	Thomas Southlond	4 Flitches bacon (32d)							
1409	John Spykesworth	3 Flitches bacon (60d)							
1435	Philip Canaan			1 Cheese					
1466	John Cartere	2 Bacons (24d)							
1504	John Wynkelman								1 Pipe wine (480d)
1584	John Taillour	Half bacon (20d)							
1603	Simon Stumbil'	4 Flitches bacon (120d)							

Table 3.2: The occurrence of foodstuffs in the coroners' records.

List No.	Name	Bacon	Dairy	Treacle	Hops	Flour & Oatmeal	Salt	Fish	Apple	Verjuice
64	Henry Kistope			1 Barrel (3d)						
121	William Abbot	2 Flitch bacon (32d)								
194	Robert Crowne		Cheese			Oatmeal			4 Bushel (12d)	
215	John Jacson					3 Bushel Flour (60d)				
226	John Oke		Butter & Cheese							
230	John Wyvenden		6 Cheeses							
258	William Marten		4 Cheeses (12d)							
308	Edward Purkheme		40 Qtr Butter (3.25d)							
317	William Purches									6 Gallon & 2 Hog heads
382	John James	10 Bacon 'hog' (800d)			4.5 Qtr (160d)			5 Sculpin		
446	William Bacheler	2 Flitch bacon					2 Bushel			
447	Henry Cooper		89 Cheeses (976d)							
454	Edith Self		30 Cheeses (120d)							
458	John Feyrechilde		Butter & Cheese							
472	William Payne	4 Flitch bacon (120d)								

within the escheators' lists. In some cases the beef was salted; for example in 1419 the felon Richard Bothe of Bingley (Yorkshire) had salt beef to the value of 2s 6d.[25] Baldwin of the Felde of Worcestershire, whose goods were seized in 1397 after he murdered Simon Wheler at Kings Norton, had both salt beef and salt pork.[26] Pork occurs in two other lists, and in one case, that of William de Brereton of Tranby (Yorkshire), dated to 1383, is explicitly listed as being fresh and valued at 3s 4d (he also had salt beef valued at 6s 8d).[27] There are only two lists which include mutton. One relates to John Solterous of Long Stratton (Norfolk), whose goods, seized in 1397 after he was indicted for felonies, included a mutton carcass.[28] The other is that of John Forster, who had two quarters of salt mutton when he committed suicide in Thrapston (Northamptonshire) in 1419.[29] Salt occurs in a small number of lists. Salt was produced by evaporation in coastal areas as well as in the west midlands, with a high degree of variability in quality and value and much was imported (Bridbury 1955; Woolgar 2016, 71–2). William Bacheler of Mereworth (Kent) had two bushels of salt in 1541 and salt also occurs in the escheators' lists relating to the merchant John Hawykn (four quarters, valued at 15s), and John Coupere, probably a cooper, of Wellingborough (Northamptonshire) who was outlawed in 1416.[30] The occurrence of salt is low given the number of salt cellars which appear in escheators' and coroners' lists (see Chapter 4), suggesting that its presence was only recorded when occurred in significant quantities, perhaps associated with the preserving of meat.

The presence of pork (primarily in the form of bacon) as the principal meat in the escheators' lists is striking, given pork's high status associations. Pigs are relatively common, occurring in 183 escheators' and 45 coroners' lists. The key distinction in consumption is likely to be in terms of the consumption of fresh pork; indeed contemporary literary sources make a clear distinction between the consumption of salted, preserved meat by the peasantry and the consumption of fresh meat by the elite (Woolgar 2016, 28). In contrast, cows occur in 401 escheators' lists and 90 coroners' lists, yet beef occurs rarely. Archaeological evidence suggests cattle were more commonly consumed by urban than rural populations, suggesting that these animals were kept primarily for dairying or traction, often being driven to town for slaughter (Albarella 2005, 134). The consumption of bacon and pork by the peasantry in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries accords with Dyer's (1998) view that meat consumption increased in this period and provides further context to Thomas's (2007) observation that the elite turned to the consumption of wild birds as symbol of status and wealth as meat became increasingly available lower down the social order.

[25] E505.
[26] E1237.
[27] E785.
[28] E1239
[29] E310.
[30] C446; E518; E304.

The preserving of pork allowed for it to be consumed throughout the year, possibly in association with religious feasts or major events in the rural calendar.

More direct evidence of diet is provided through the biochemical analysis of human remains through stable isotope analysis, a technique which identifies the composition of an individual's diet though analysis of the relative proportions of carbon and nitrogen isotopes in bone collagen (see Müldner 2009 for an overview). There are few studies which have examined medieval individuals, the most comprehensive of which concern cemetery populations from Yorkshire. Mays' (1997) analysis of individuals from York and the village of Wharram Percy shows that fish formed a similar proportion of the diet of both populations. Further analysis of individuals from several sites in Yorkshire including Wharram (Müldner and Richards 2005) suggests that the consumption of freshwater fish was more common than understood from historical and archaeological sources, perhaps indicating the observance of the practice of eating fish on fast days.

Archaeological evidence suggests widespread fish consumption, particularly of herring (Serjeantson and Woolgar 2006, 116), but that larger marine fish were, perhaps, less frequently consumed in rural households (Serjeantson and Woolgar 2006, 128). In southern England, Holmes (2017, 92) identifies a link between eel and freshwater fish consumption and higher status sites, in part due to the possession of fishponds. Freshwater fish may be underrepresented in archaeological fish bone assemblages due to the difficulties in recovering their bones. The relationship between fish consumption and religious observance is difficult to establish, and although historical documents suggest a declining importance of fish to elite diet in the later middle ages, and particularly following the Reformation, this does not seem to be conclusively borne out in archaeological evidence (Serjeantson and Woolgar 2006, 128). Freshwater fish occur in three lists. In 1413 the parson William Barett of Wortham (Suffolk), who was outlawed for debt had an unstated quantity of eels.[31] John Burgh of Yealmpton (Devon) had 'one-quarter' of a pike, while the Wiltshire clergyman John James had five sculpin.[32] Archaeological evidence has greatly advanced our understanding of medieval stockfish through the application of isotopic analysis which demonstrates expansion of the North Sea, Baltic and Atlantic fisheries through the twelfth–fourteenth centuries (Barrett *et al.* 2011). Locker (2000, 107) concluded that demand for preserved fish fell from the fourteenth century, and this is perhaps borne out in the single reference to '400 buckhorn' (dried whiting) among the possessions of John Burgh. Whiting occurs commonly in archaeological contexts, although it is less well represented than herring, haddock and cod (Locker 2000, 137).

Fruits are mentioned only occasionally in the escheators' and coroners' lists, with vegetables being completely absent. Archaeological evidence makes it clear that these would have been a core component of the diet of rural households.

[31] E210.

[32] E1099; C382.

For example, at West Cotton (Northamptonshire) evidence of cabbage was present within the assemblage of charred plant remains (Campbell and Robinson 2010), and analysis of organic residues extracted from cooking vessels demonstrates the preparation of waxy brassica vegetables (most probably cabbage, although potentially young turnips) (Evershed, Heron and Goad 1991; Evershed 1993, 95; Dunne *et al.* 2019, 66–8).

Grain formed the bulk of the peasant diet. Documents such as retirement allowances and accounts of the provision of grain to harvest workers give some indication of its importance (Dyer 1988, 33). Grain would primarily have been consumed in three forms; as pottage, ale and bread, with pottage, which was the easiest to make within the home, being widespread among the lower echelons of medieval society (Stone 2006, 14). Archaeological evidence provides additional insights into the cultivation and consumption of plant-based foodstuffs. A detailed study of plant macrofossils from the midlands shows that free-threshing wheat dominates medieval assemblages in this region, with barley and oats also being commonly occurring components, mirroring the picture provided by historical documents (Carruthers and Hunter Dowse 2019, 124). Archaeobotanical evidence is most commonly recovered from urban contexts (see Van der Veen, Hill and Livarda 2013 for a detailed discussion of preservation conditions in relation to medieval archaeobotanical assemblages), where there is a higher incidence of waterlogged deposits, although the number of rural assemblages is steadily growing. At Raunds (Northamptonshire), free-threshing wheat was the most important crop, supplemented by rye and barley, and this picture is reflected in other assemblages from the region (Carruthers and Hunter Dowse 2019, 131–6). The escheators' and coroners' records detail the presence of grain in rural homes; however, it is not always clear whether this was grain for household consumption or cultivated for the market.

By far the most common foodstuffs in both sets of lists are grains. Where listed as in the field, barn, stack or 'in sheaf' it can be assumed that these were cultivated by the household. References to 'bushels' and 'quarters' imply the storage of grain, either for household consumption or resale (considered in further detail below). In these instances, this grain could be household produce, but also might have been acquired through the market. These different states likely relate to the time in the agricultural calendar that lists were produced, though the sample is insufficient to demonstrate this assumption quantitatively. Figure 3.1a demonstrates that within the escheators' lists, wheat and barley were the most common grains both among those references which appear to relate to crops which are growing and those relating to grains apparently stored in or around the home, while rye is the least common grain. Oatmeal and oat flour each occur in single escheators' lists and they also occur in single coroners' lists.[33] Wheat and barley are also the most common crops among the coroners' records (Figure 3.1b). Assessing the evidence for grain consumption,

[33] E515; E1197; C194; C215.

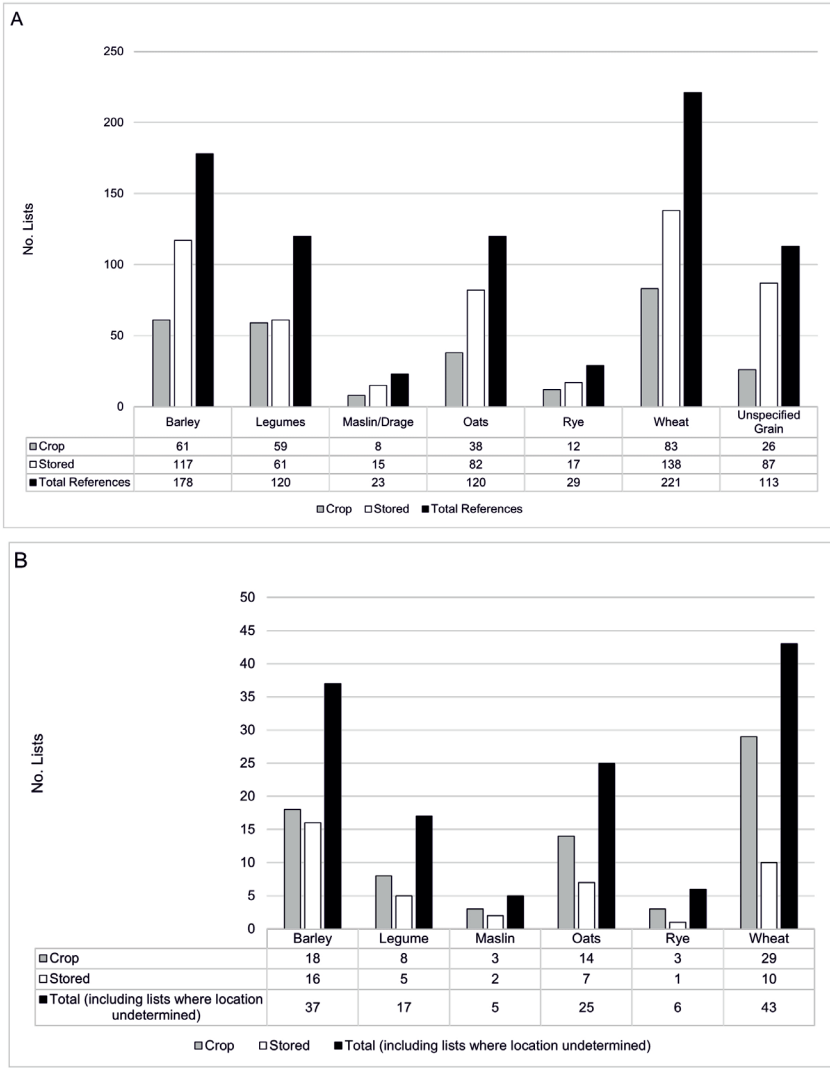

Figure 3.1: References to grains and legumes, showing the number of lists referring to crops (i.e. grains in the field) or stored (i.e. harvested) crops. A: Escheators' records. B: Coroners' records.

Stone (2006, 25–6) suggests that prior to the Black Death the consumption of wheaten bread and barley ale were limited to the upper echelons of society, but that form the later fourteenth century people had increased access to higher quality grains as pressure on land and resources reduced. Although limited, our evidence, dating to this period, corresponds with this suggestion of increased access to wheat and barley in the later fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

Dairy was a valuable source of protein in rural households, typically in the form of cheese, of which a number of varieties existed (see Woolgar 2016, 80–1). The evidence for dairy produce in the escheators' and coroners' lists is extremely sparse. Cheese occurs in four escheators' lists (Table 3.1) and eight coroners' lists (Table 3.2). Based on the quantities present, the coroners' lists appear to include evidence for households that produced cheese. Henry Cooper of Cowlinge (Suffolk) had 89 cheeses valued at £4 16d (an average of 11d per cheese), and the widow Edith Self of Melksham (Wiltshire) had 30 cheeses valued at 10s (average 4d each).[34] The valuation of cheeses found in lists varies considerably, presumably in relation to their type, size or quality. For example, the four cheeses in the list of William Marten of Hoe (Norfolk), who committed suicide in 1579, are valued at 12d (an average of just 3d each).[35]

A final form of foodstuff to discuss briefly are condiments. The best evidence comes in the list of John Hawykn, a merchant from Barnstaple (Devon), outlawed for treason in 1422. He had quantities of pepper, cumin, grains of paradise, mace, saffron, ginger and anise (Table 3.1). It is likely that these were merchandise rather than being for his own consumption and these were clearly valuable commodities.[36] A second list, that of Humphrey Bocher of Norfolk (outlawed in 1494), includes a small quantity of crocus (i.e. saffron) and some honey, neither of which are valued.[37] These spices are typical of the range occurring in the records of the London Grocers' company and in the accounts of elite households (Nightingale 1995, Woolgar 2016, 85). Imported condiments were valuable commodities and the general absence of these from the lists considered here is to be expected (Sear and Sneath 2020, 69; Woolgar 2016, 85–6). Archaeological evidence shows that across medieval northern Europe, summer savory and coriander were important flavouring agents, and new types such as black mustard, fennel, caraway and parsley became increasingly widespread (Livarda and Van der Veen 2008, 206–7). In non-elite rural settings, it is black mustard which dominates, and it seems that it was towns which were the main places in which new flavourings found their market (Livarda and Van der Veen 2008, 207). It was towns too which were the main places where exotics such as black pepper were consumed (Livarda 2011, 159). In contrast, finds of exotic plant species from the countryside are exceptionally rare (Livarda 2011, 160–1). Rural households would most likely have obtained flavourings locally, growing them in gardens or foraging them (Dyer 1994; 2006a; Woolgar 2016, 102–3). For example, at Raunds and West Cotton (both Northamptonshire), archaeological evidence demonstrates the use and cultivation of fennel and black mustard (Carruthers and Hunter Dowse 2019, 125, 134). A further unusual entry can be found in the coroners' list of Henry Kistope of Kirkby Kendal (Westmorland), who committed suicide in 1540 and who had a barrel of treacle (*Trekyll*) in his possession.[38]

[34] C447; C454.
[35] C258.
[36] E518.
[37] E1086.
[38] C64.

Drink occurs in just 10 escheators' lists (Table 3.1). The absence of ale, the most common medieval drink, is striking and likely due to its ubiquity and short shelf-life (Woolgar 2016, 46; see below for a discussion of the evidence for brewing). Five of the six lists featuring cider originate from Kent, a county particularly associated with apple growing and cider production (Mate 2006, 46–7; Woolgar 2016, 51). Apples occur in four lists, and there is a fifth that records apples and pears; all these lists are from Kent, and constitute the only reference to fruit within the escheators' lists.[39] Red wine occurs in four lists. There is a considerable difference in the value of these drinks; the average value of a pipe of cider is 32.9d and that for a pipe of wine is 827d. Wine was the most prestigious and expensive drink in medieval England, with strong associations with the elite table and the liturgy (Woolgar 2016, 53). These lists suggest that despite its value, it could be accessible to non-elite households in some instances. Even so, its general absence from the lists suggests that wine was either not being consumed by non-elite households, or that it was concealed through gifting or consumption before goods were appraised. The only drink listed in the coroners' records are the barrels of verjuice belonging to William Purches of Devizes (Wiltshire), who committed suicide in 1587.[40]

The escheators' and coroners' records provide tantalising glimpses into the diet and food habits of non-elite households. They generally accord with current understanding in terms of the consumption of salted meat and temporal variation in grain consumption but understate the importance of cheap and perishable foodstuffs such as fruit, vegetables and fresh fish, well attested in the archaeological record. The prevalence of Kentish lists among the sample which contain foods suggests that these low value and perishable items are particularly sensitive to regional, contextual and chronological variation in seizure and inventorying practices. We might also suggest that a further reason for not seizing food was to avoid depriving a household of foodstuffs and therefore making them reliant on the charity of the community. Even so, the occurrence of fresh meat and wine in a small number of lists provide some insight into the ability of non-elite households to access these more expensive and prestigious items.

Food storage and processing

The escheators' and coroners' records provide valuable information about how and where grain was stored. This is pertinent here because it provides some insight into the extent to which households were engaged in the market for grain. Barns offered suitable storage for grain in sheaf, but once threshed it took up considerably less space. Through an analysis of thirteenth- and fourteenth-century purveyance accounts, Claridge and Langdon (2011, 1246) identify that small quantities of threshed grain could be stored in a variety of

[39] E285; E675; E677; E679; E684.

[40] C317.

locations, including granaries, halls, inns and upper rooms. They found that small quantities of grain were most commonly stored in granaries followed by houses. A key finding is that grain storage was primarily a private concern and that the quantity of grain stored in each location decreased, on average, between the 1290s and 1340s, with flexibility being a key characteristic of food storage (Claridge and Langdon 2011, 1258). Their study contradicts earlier analyses, primarily that of McCloskey and Nash (1984), which focussed on storage through an economic lens, by emphasising that storage must enhance the value of crops in excess of interest rates to make investment in long-term storage viable. Therefore, whereas McCloskey and Nash argue that storage was prohibitively expensive in medieval England, Claridge and Langdon suggest that the adaptability of storage strategies means that they need to be understood within their specific socio-economic context, varying with a household's or community's situation within networks of production and marketing, and emphasising the need to consider storage strategies from an historical, as well as economic, perspective (see also Komlos and Landes 1991).

The location of grain is rarely indicated in the escheators' records (see Briggs *et al*. 2019 for the general lack of information on rooms and other spaces). The most commonly stated location is in the barn, and this might include grain in sheaf but also that which has been threshed, as in the case of Phillip ate Grove of Hagley (Worcestershire), outlawed in 1379.[41] There is one case of grain listed as being 'in the house of another'.[42] Some lists include both harvested crops and those still under cultivation; for example Richard Pykwell, a murderer from Horton (Northamptonshire), had three quarters of peas and an acre of wheat, although in the majority of cases the produce listed is either exclusively in the field, or harvested.[43] Archaeological evidence for grain storage outside of barns is extremely limited. Excavations of a house from the thirteenth or fourteenth century which burned down at Island Farm, Ottery St Mary (Devon) provides one example. Here, it is suggested that the western room of the building was used for crop storage, with archaeobotanical evidence for the presence of oats, wheat, rye, peas and beans being identified (Figure 3.2). The presence of charcoal in association with the legumes suggests that these may have been stored in wickerwork containers (Mudd, Cobain and Haines 2018). Details about the location of crops, while more prevalent than in those of the escheator, are similarly lacking in the coroners' records. Where given it is most typically in the field (either growing or in stacks) or barns, but alternative locations are listed. For example, in 1541 William Bacheler of Mereworth had a malt loft.[44] In other cases, grain was stored in the house. John James of West Dean (Wiltshire) had produce stored in a variety of locations, including in a granary over the kitchen, in the loft over the larder and in the chamber over the parlour, as well as in the

[41] E779.
[42] E1599.
[43] E174.
[44] C446.

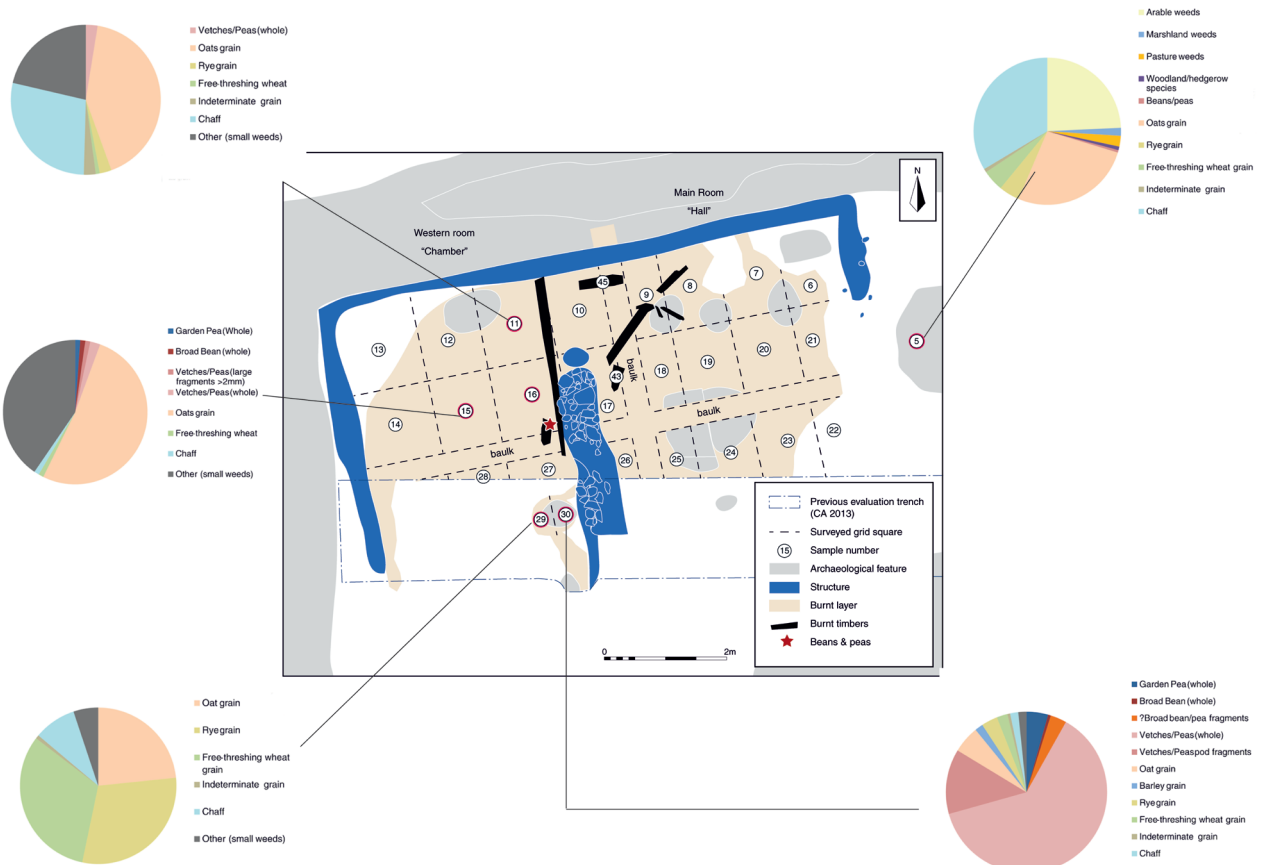

Figure 3.2: The distribution of archaeobotanical remains within the excavated house at Island Farm, Ottery St Mary, Devon. Image reproduced from Mudd, Cobain and Haines 2018 under CC by Attribution Licence.

kitchen and barn.[45] Within the coroners' lists the household storage of grain is suggested by the occurrence of hutches in three lists. In 1587 William Bridge of Stelling (Kent) had a bunting hutch as well as a kneading trough, and the yeoman William Payne of Chilham (Kent) had a bunting hutch within his bunting house in 1600.[46] John James had a bolting hutch in his larder in 1577.[47] These items were used for the storage of bread, or more likely grain, and are suggestive of baking, as is demonstrated by the occurrence of these items in specific spaces and in association with kneading troughs. These items demonstrate the difficulty of separating out items associated with storage and those associated with processing, as these two functions were intimately connected. Indeed, the lid of a hutch could often double as a kneading trough (see Hamling and Richardson 2017, 84–5).

Where the quantity of agricultural produce stored is stated in the escheators' records, the average is 4.9 quarters, although this is higher for barley (6.3 quarters) and legumes (5.1 quarters). Interpretation is complicated by the fact that lists were created at different times of year, and therefore may reflect variability in the cycle of cultivation and harvesting. Based on the date of seizure, it evident that lists were produced throughout the year and therefore average figures provide an approximate basis for comparison. This suggests that small quantities of grain were kept around the home, with storage targeted primarily at domestic consumption rather than resale, with surplus presumably being sold on to grain merchants relatively quickly. In the coroners' records, quantities are stated in only 26 lists and in most only four quarters or less of any given crop are listed, suggesting limited change in domestic storage habits into the sixteenth century. The exceptions are the clergyman John James who had over 70 quarters of barley and over 38 quarters of wheat; two yeomen, William Hyke (18 quarters of barley and six of wheat) and Robert Schiperd (16 quarters of barley and seven of wheat), both of Stonegrave (Yorkshire) and dating to 1495; and a tanner, Thomas Aston of Wadworth (Yorkshire, 1543; 16 quarters malt).[48]

The principal items associated with food storage found in the escheators' and coroners' records are multipurpose wooden vessels such as tubs and barrels. These occur in 68 escheators' lists, of which 31 are from Kent or Middlesex (where lists are typically more detailed than elsewhere) and 16 are from Northamptonshire. This suggests that these items, which we might expect to be ubiquitous, were not recorded in a uniform manner and their presence is due to local appraisal practices. The majority of the Kent lists relate to rebels whose goods were seized in the wake of the uprising of 1381, although they also include some whose goods were seized due to civil suits. In these 1380s Kentish lists, barrels (*cadus*) are typically valued along with another item (*dolium pandoxat'*), probably a brewer's cask. Barrels are absent archaeologically but are indicated by the presence of a spigot of sixteenth-century date from Newton Abbot (Devon;

[45] C382.
[46] C309; C472.
[47] C382.
[48] C9; C382; C556; C557.

Weddell 1985, 105). The value of these items is low. For example Thomas Deghere of Erith (Kent) had one *dolium* and two barrels, valued at a total of 8d.[49] Some individuals had particularly high numbers of barrels, for example Sampson Kyrseye of Bexley (Kent) had 10 barrels and casks altogether.[50]

Whereas in Kent the lists primarily contain barrels, in Northamptonshire a wider variety of items are listed. For example, William Cole of Edgecote (Northamptonshire) had two vats, one barrel, a *kemelyn* (a type of tub) and a tub seized for felony in 1390.[51] The tubs are likely to have been open vessels used in dairying or baking. Of the 16 Northamptonshire lists containing these items, only three relate to civil cases. In all cases the lists are either short, for example the list of Hugh Payne, outlawed by civil suit in 1383, only contains animals, cooking equipment, a ewer and basin, a tub and a vat to a total value of 43s 4d, or of low overall value, as in the case of Richard Dawe of Thrapston (outlawed by civil suit in 1379), whose list contains a wide range of objects but is only valued to a total of 30s.[52] This pattern is generally repeated elsewhere. For example John Stanke, a butcher of Andover (Hampshire), whose goods were seized in connection with a civil suit in 1404 had a vat and three tubs among goods worth only a total of just over 24s.[53] There are exceptions which suggest that these items were seized where they were present in significant quantities; William Leder of West Lavington (Wiltshire), whose goods were seized as result of civil suit in 1404, had six tubs (or *keveres*) worth 2s and four vats worth 3s.[54] These containers are rarely valued separately, but where they are the valuation is typically low. William Wodeward of Abbots Morton (Worcestershire), who fled after committing a felony in 1418, had two casks valued at 6d and two vats valued at 6d, for example.[55] It is clear that these presumably common items were not routinely seized, or at least routinely appraised, likely due to their ubiquity, low value and, perhaps, their bulk.

Despite their low value, the terminology used to describe these items demonstrates that a range of specialist barrels were produced. The most telling evidence is provided by the inventory of John Coupere of Wellingborough (Northamptonshire), whose occupation, judging by his surname and possessions, was almost certainly that of cooper.[56] He was outlawed for felony in 1416. His possessions (not individually valued) include barrels identified as being specifically for ale, herring and salt while specialist terms 'tankard' (a large open tub-like barrel for carrying water) and kinderkin (a half barrel, usually for fish) are also listed. The one-gallon *amphora* belonging to William Wodeward

[49] E651.
[50] E662.
[51] C257.
[52] E761; E748.
[53] E30.
[54] E28.
[55] E348.
[56] E304.

may also be this kind of barrel.[57] Other lists name verjuice barrels as a further specific type.[58]

A wider range of wooden vessels are listed in the coroners' lists, used for a variety of functions. Some would clearly have been used for storage. For example, in 1565, Thomas Chylrey of Marlborough (Wiltshire) had a tub in his kitchen and a further tub and verjuice barrel in his cellar.[59] In other cases, specific sizes of storage vessel are mentioned. Robert Crowne of North Elham (Kent) had three tubs and a firkin in 1567 and Henry Cooper of Cowlinge had three hogsheads in 1595.[60] These items were kept in a variety of locations, including multipurpose spaces such as halls and specialist rooms such as malt lofts, kitchens and milkhouses (Table 3.3). These items occur in 28 coroners' lists, primarily from Wiltshire and Kent. As in the escheators' records, their value appears low, for example in 1565 Robert Davys of Wroughton (Wiltshire)

Table 3.3: The location of objects associated with food storage in the coroners' records.

List No.	Name	Date of List	Place of Residence	Room	Vessels
171	Thomas Chylrey	1565	Marlborough (Wiltshire)	Kitchen	Tub
					Kiver
				Cellar	Tub
					Verjuice barrel
183	Edward Burges	1566	Laverstock (Wiltshire)	Chamber	Kiver
				Not stated	Pail or tub
208	Reynold Carter	1570	Chiddingstone (Kent)	Chamber over hall	Barrel
				Buttery	Barrel
					Tubs × 8
					Keeler
289	Anthony Curlynge	1585	St Lawrence (Kent)	Kitchen	Tub
317	William Purches	1587	Devizes (Wiltshire)	Hall	Barrels × 2
				Loft over hall	Bottle
				Mill house	Kiver
					Tubs × 2

(*Continued*)

[57] E348.
[58] E303; E620.
[59] C171.
[60] C194; C447.

Table 3.3: Continued.

List No.	Name	Date of List	Place of Residence	Room	Vessels
382	John James	1577	West Dean and Newton Tony (Wiltshire)	Yooting house	Vat
					Scalding kive
				Buttery	Beer barrel × 8
					Hogshead
					Water pot
					Oatmeal tub
					Leather bottle × 3
				Entrance	Provender tub
				Kitchen	Tubs × 5
					Firkins × 2
					Cowl
				Larder	Bolting hutch
				Parlour	Barrel
					Tubs × 2
					Half-firkin
					Salt barrel
				Hall (at Newton Tony)	Barrel
				Buttery (at Newton Tony)	Barrel
				Larder house (at Newton Tony)	Barrel
				Malting House (at Newton Tony)	Vat
428	Nicholas Cussyn	1597	Calcott (Kent)	Bedchamber	Keeler
					Aqua-vita bottle
				Hall	Hamper
					Firkins × 2
					Pail
					Tubs × 2
					Bottle
446	William Bacheler	1541	Mereworth (Kent)	Malt loft	Tub
472	William Payne	1600	Chilham (Kent)	Bunting house	Bunting hutch
				Milkhouse	Tub

had two tubs valued at 4d.[61] The value of items likely varied in accordance with their size, as is clear in the 1577 list of John James, whose two firkins are valued at 20d and his half-firkin at 6d.[62] As is the case in the escheators' lists, such vessels appear to have been recorded inconsistently and it is probable that they were grouped within general classes of goods and chattels or household utensils in other cases.

While barrels were primarily used for storage (although they had a role in ageing produce and in brewing), items such as tubs were multipurpose. While they could be used for storage, they also played a role in processing. Similarly, kivers and troughs were used for a variety of processes including salting, dairying and mixing dough. In the escheators' lists, tubs commonly occur along with relatively complex ranges of cooking equipment. For example, John Lebarde of Thrapston, outlawed for felony in 1415, had a tub and a *kymelyn*, multiple pots and pans, equipment for roasting and a lead for brewing.[63] Similarly, Walter Fox of Brigstock (Northamptonshire), outlawed in 1420, had six tubs, a brewing lead, wooden vessels 'for brewing' and equipment for roasting meat.[64] In both cases it is possible that the tubs were a part of the households' equipment for brewing. In other cases these items may be associated more clearly with baking. For example Thomas Paccheherst of Kent, outlawed as a member of a corrupt jury in 1407, had five kimelins, a kneading trough, an oven and a quern.[65] The goods of Adam Grym of Gillingham (Norfolk), who killed John Austyn in 1402, include a coul (a tub or large vessel for water), a stand (an open tub) and a flesh trough, suggestive of the salting of meat (Buxton 2015, 102).[66] Others may not have had any role in food processing, For example the tub belonging to the barker (tanner) John Mogerhangre, who committed murder in 1383, could have been used for his trade, although it occurs alongside other domestic items in his list.[67] In order to understand the significance of these items within the household, it is clearly necessary to examine them alongside the other objects present. A focus on the processing activities undertaken by the household can also provide insights into its role as a productive economic entity. Evidence of household specialisation might be understood as suggestive of households participating in market exchange. To explore this, we can focus on the evidence associated with the processing of grain, baking, brewing and dairying.

Grain processing and baking

Our period is characterised by the increasing use of wind- and watermills for the grinding of grain, and the commercialisation of grain processing

[61] C172.
[62] C382.
[63] E303.
[64] E311.
[65] E1336.
[66] E1419.
[67] E752.

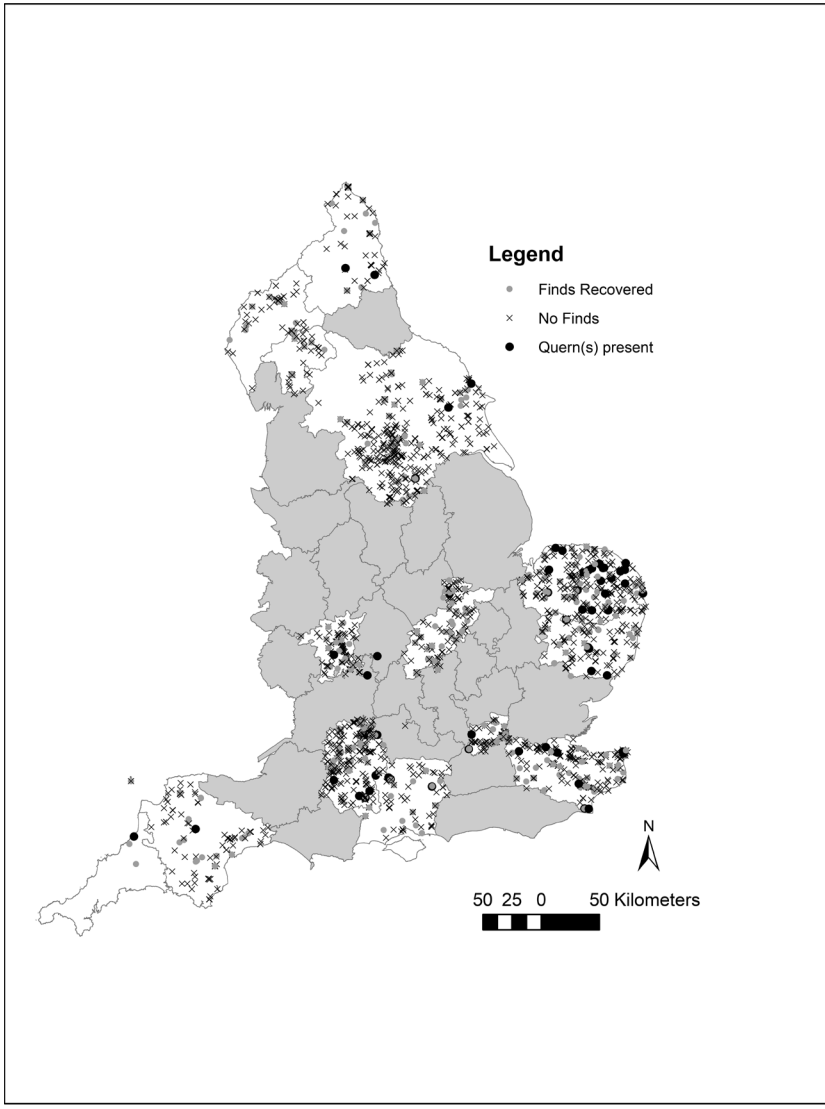

Figure 3.3: Distribution of quernstones in the archaeological dataset.

through the leasing out of demesne mills (see Langdon with Ambler 1994; Langdon 2004, 232). However, it is clear from the presence of handmills or quernstones in our evidence that domestic scale grain processing was still taking place in the fourteenth century. These are common archaeological finds, primarily occurring in eastern England, principally in Kent and East Anglia (Figure 3.3). That these stones, most of which occur in Millstone Grit or German 'lava', have a largely eastern distribution is unsurprising given their point of origin and their distribution throughout the North Sea zone

(Pohl 2011). In Kent, quernstones occur in a variety of archaeological contexts. At St Paul's Cray (Saunders 1997) they are found within the floor layers of a collapsed building of late twelfth or early thirteenth century date, and they are closely associated with house structures at Lydd Quarry on Romney Marsh (Barber and Priestly-Bell 2008, 206) and at Shorne near Gravesend (Gollop 2003), all of which appear to be 'peasant' farmsteads. These examples are highly suggestive of milling within the household even if, as is the case at Shorne, it is likely that households had access to a mechanised mill (see Jervis 2022a). Elsewhere, at Grange near Gillingham and at Margate, they are associated with larger complexes, perhaps implying their use within the context of a manorial household (Seddon 2007). Finally, on the Isle of Thanet, several finds are associated with bakehouse complexes, which went out of use at the very start of our period, and may have formed a part of the estate infrastructure of Canterbury Christ Church Priory, the major landholder in this area (Powell 2012). The archaeological evidence points to variability in the organisation of handmilling, with it being organised at the estate or manorial level, as well as within individual households (see Jervis 2022a for further discussion).

Where the escheators' lists are concerned, hand mills are almost exclusively associated with lists of individuals from Kent convicted of treason, and in many cases beheaded, following the Peasant's Revolt of 1381 (Table 3.4). It is tempting to link this association to the account of the seizure of handmills from the tenants of St Albans Abbey who had defied the authority of the abbey (Justice 1994, 136) and, indeed, the occurrence of quernstones on archaeological sites in northern England has been suggested to be an act of resistance by the peasantry (Smith 2009a, 409). Such associations do not, however, seem appropriate in Kent, where suit of mill did not apply due to the unusually free tenurial arrangements in the county (Lucas 2014, 283; see also Langdon 2004, 275–8 on the variable effect of suit of mill). Rather, their occurrence in these lists is likely to be due to three factors: the comparatively detailed process of appraisal which appears to characterise the escheators and their juries in Kent, the relatively early date of these lists, and the persistent use of handmills, as suggested by the archaeological evidence. Hand mills do not appear in comparable lists from Kent connected with Cade's rebellion and dating to the early 1450s. However, the dating of some archaeological deposits in which they occur does suggest the continued acquisition and use of lava querns into the fifteenth century (the best evidence coming from Lydd Quarry; Barber and Priestly Bell 2008, 206). The gradual phasing out of handmilling, and the regionality of this practice, is supported further by a general absence of querns from the coroners' records; they occur in six lists, of which five are from Kent. In two cases these appear linked to malting and brewing (see below).[68] In others they either occur without any associated objects,[69] or in association with baking equipment.[70] Both the

[68] C194; C446.
[69] C346.
[70] C428; C472.

Table 3.4: The occurrence of hand mills in the escheators' records.

List No.	County	Place	Name	Year of List	Item	Original Term	Value of Querns (d)	Total Value of List (d)	Brewing Equipment
517	Devon	Great Torrington	Richard Swalwa	1422	mill (×2)	paru' moler'	36	1105	
215	Kent	Woodchurch	Hugh Cetur	1414	malt quern	querns pro bras'	20	5702.5	
284		Cranbrook	Thomas Cretynden	1413	mill	mola' deb'l'm	12	1130	
644		Boxley	Joh Groue jun.	1382	handmill	mole manual	18	302	
647		Bapchild	John Louel	1382	handmill	mole manual'	12	68	
651		Erith	Thomas Deghere	1382	handmill	mole manual'	24	336	X
653		Plumstead	John Theccham	1382	handmill (×2)	molarum manual' debil'	44	216	X
654		Erith	John Sampson	1382	handmill	mole manual'	18	220	
657		Dartford	William Ponchon	1381	handmill	mole manual'	20	240	X
658		Dartford	William Forster	1381	handmill	mole manual'	18	344	
664		Larkfield	John Spenser	1381	handmill	mole manual'	18	342	
666		Snodland	John Baudry	1381	handmill	mole manual'	12	42	

(*Continued*)

Table 3.4: Continued.

List No.	County	Place	Name	Year of List	Item	Original Term	Value of Querns (d)	Total Value of List (d)	Brewing Equipment
669		Royton	John Chyddeston	1382	handmill	mole manual'	18	442	
674		Smarden	John Warner	1382	handmill	mole manual'	18	916	
677		Linton	Robert Senyng	1382	handmill	mole manual' debil'	12	1881	X
765		Unknown	John Scot	1385	iron handmill	molam manual et ferru'	60	554	
768		Sutton Valence	Thomas Isenden	1384	handmill	mola manual'	60	3200	X
612	Norfolk	Islington	Thomas Taliour	1423	quern	qwerne debil'	20	462	
1227	Suffolk	Mendlesham	Robert Prior	1396	mill (??)	malar'		3595	X
343	Worcs.	Kidderminster	Walter Pach'	1404	quern	querne	120	1020	
585	Yorkshire	Elvington	William Clerk	1417	quern	pari de quernes		5120	X
785		Tranby	William de Brereton	1383	quern	querens		4417	X

archaeological and historical evidence is therefore suggestive of household-scale milling in fourteenth-century Kent, particularly in the central belt of the county. This corresponds well with Langdon's (1994, 29–31) estimate that in the fourteenth century, around 20% of England's grain was milled at the domestic scale. Langdon (1994; 2004, 230–1) suggests that domestic-scale grinding was increasingly commercialised, with households offering this service for cash payments. If this was the case, we might imagine households to have specialised in grain processing and for this to be apparent in the range of items present in their lists. The detailed nature of Kentish lists permits such an analysis.

The list of John Spenser of Larkfield provides a good starting point.[71] Spenser was seemingly able to maintain a high standard of living: he had a basin and ewer and a chair, as well as a pipe of red wine, all relatively rare items in rural households. The only items associated with domestic scale food processing are handmills, valued at 18d. Although their homes were less endowed with luxury items, a similar picture is presented by the lists of others who possessed these items (Table 3.4).

There are, however, some exceptions, and in these cases it can be suggested that the handmills found a different use (Table 3.4). The most striking is the list of Robert Senyng of Linton. He clearly had a comfortable lifestyle: his list includes pewter plate and items of bedding, as well as a basin and ewer.[72] He had a 'worn' (*debilis*) handmill valued at 12d, but also had equipment for brewing and cider making. It is possible that the mill was used for grinding malt, but may also have been used for grain, as quantities of both occur in his list. Other lists in which handmills may have played a role in brewing are clustered in the north-west of the county, an area in which arable agriculture was less intensive (see Campbell 2015). They can be typified by the list of Thomas Deghere of Erith, whose handmill is listed with a brewing lead, suggesting perhaps that the quern was used for the processing of malt, rather than grain.[73] Interestingly, Deghere's handmill is valued more highly than others, at 2s.

Evidence for baking is limited. Baking was primarily a commercial activity, which was highly regulated (Davis 2004). Flatbreads could also be baked in the home, however, using objects such as the iron griddle excavated at Beere, North Tawton (Devon; Jope and Threlfall 1958, 115; Woolgar 2016, 62–5). Within the archaeological dataset there are a small number of sites with evidence for baking. Bakehouses have been excavated in small towns, for example at Church View, Fordingbridge (Hampshire), likely dating to the thirteenth–fourteenth centuries (Light 1978) and at 25 High Street, Pershore (Worcestershire), probably of fourteenth- or fifteenth-century date (Napthan, Hurst and Pearson 1994; Figure 3.4). Ovens are also present within farmsteads. At Foxcotte (Hampshire), a flint-built oven was associated with a fifteenth- or sixteenth-century building,

[71] E664.
[72] E677.
[73] E651.

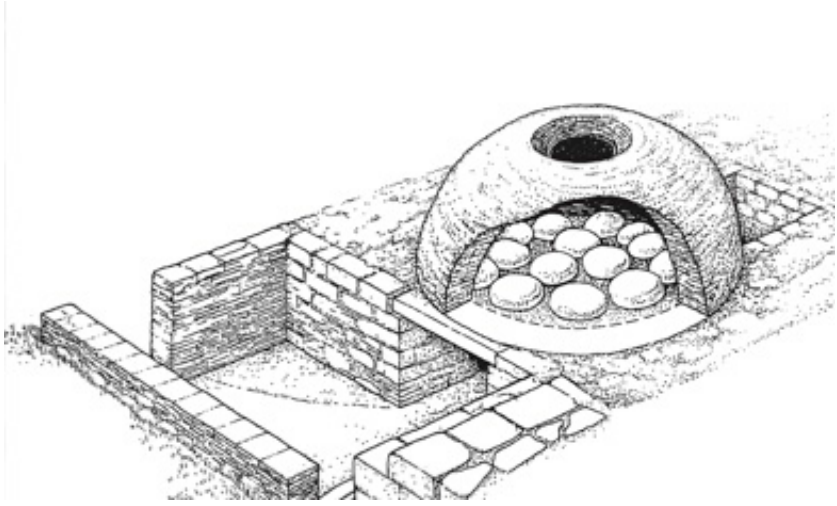

Figure 3.4: Reconstruction of the bread oven excavated at High Street, Pershore. Reproduced by kind permission of Worcestershire Archaeology.

and a tile built oven was associated with another contemporary structure (Russel 1985, 177; 182). An oven dating to the fourteenth century was also identified within an isolated farmstead at Latton (Wiltshire; Mudd *et al.* 1999). Elsewhere, evidence of ovens is more ambiguous, for example at Park Place, Knaresborough (North Yorkshire), evidence of burning is interpreted as a possible hearth or oven (Stirk 2007), and similarly burnt stones excavated at a farmstead at Askerton Park (Cumbria) may be the remains of an oven (Hodgson 1939, 68). Where identified, it is not always clear what function ovens served, especially where remains are ephemeral; whist they could be used in baking, they could also be used for drying agricultural produce – for example, a corn drying kiln was associated with the farmstead at Beere (Jope and Threlfall 1958; see also Rickett and McKerracher 2021) – or could have been used in brewing.

Baking objects recorded by the escheator and coroner are limited to those for preparing dough, being typical of the range of vessels found in documented bakehouses (Woolgar 2016, 64). While wooden tubs could have been used for the mixing of dough, they had a range of other purposes too. The strongest evidence comes from lists which contain specific items associated with baking. William Bryte, a husbandman from Erith (Kent), outlawed by civil suit in 1418, had at least one wooden kneading trough (the number present is unclear).[74] William Wodeward, the yeoman from Abbots Morton, also had a kneading trough, as well as a kiver (a shallow vessel) which may also have been used for baking.[75] Occasional references to 'trendles' might be interpreted as relating

[74] E288.
[75] E348.

to round vessels used in baking, an example being those of John James, which were located in his larder, kitchen and buttery.[76] We have already highlighted the items in the list of Thomas Paccheherst of Kent as suggestive of baking and, intriguingly, vessels associated with the preparation of dough also occur in two lists associated with the same incident.[77] Unfortunately, these lists do not specify the place of residence of the three forfeiting individuals, but it may conceivably have been Staplehurst, where the three were members of a corrupted jury. If this is the case, it would be suggestive of at least three households engaging in the preparation of dough within a single village, and suggests that this activity is substantially underrepresented in the escheators' lists.

There are several lists within the coroners' records which would appear to provide evidence of households engaged in baking. In 1597, Nicholas Cussyn of Calcott (Kent) had an iron peel (baker's shovel) in his hall, a quern in one of his chambers and a kneading trough in his bedchamber. The evidence for the productive activities of Cussyn's household are unusually wide: in addition to baking and dairying equipment, he had a spinning (wool) wheel, woodworking tools and a variety of animals. This would suggest a mixed household economy and it is unclear whether he would have been baking for the market or household consumption. The range of rooms in his house and the presence of plate and bedding suggest that Cussyn was a yeoman and therefore we are perhaps seeing a form of household organisation specific to the emerging 'middling sort'.[78] A kitchen block is noticeably absence from the rooms listed, with the house maintaining a multipurpose hall, implying, perhaps, that architectural modification had not kept pace with developments in domestic, and particularly food, practices. A contrast is provided by William Payne of Chilham.[79] On the basis of his possessions, Payne would appear to have been of similar status to Cussyn, though unlike Cussyn, Payne is explicitly described as a 'yeoman'. Payne's home, however, had a kitchen, milkhouse and a bunting house, which contained a bunting hutch, while he had a quern in the kitchen loft. As with Cussyn, we are seeing here a distinctive way of organising food processing emerging in this period. Rather than outsourcing processing to specialists within the community, the evidence points towards households investing in the infrastructure required for self-sufficiency (see also Buxton 2015, 100). Other baking equipment is less easily interpreted. John Cosen of Ashburton (Devon), who committed suicide in 1590, had peels ('a peare of Beales') but no other items associated with baking.[80] Several other Kent households had kneading troughs, one of whom (William Bridge) also had a bunting hutch and churn suggesting engagement in both baking and dairying.[81]

[76] C382; in other instances this term appears to refer to a spinning wheel (see Chapter 8).
[77] E1336; E1334; E1337.
[78] C428.
[79] C472.
[80] C357.
[81] C309.

By the end of the fourteenth century, evidence for the domestic processing of grain is extremely limited. It is possible in Kent to see variability in the provision of domestic-scale milling, and the evidence would suggest a degree of household specialisation in respect to this task. Archaeological evidence demonstrates that ovens could be incorporated into rural homes, but evidence for baking in domestic contexts is extremely limited across the dataset. Ovens, as elements of house structures or ancillary buildings, would not be listed by the escheator or coroner, whose records are limited to the movable tools of baking. Within the coroners' records, several lists can be associated with the emergence of a middling sort, who undertook a wider range of domestic food processing activities, and it is noteworthy that the ovens at Foxcotte date to the later part of our period and may be related to this trend.

Malting and brewing

Ale was the principal drink in medieval England and a great deal of work has been undertaken on the organisation of the brewing industry, particularly at the household level. Bennett's (1996) pioneering work shows how even in the early fourteenth century, commercialised brewing was an important element of the household economy. Analysis of presentments connected to the assize of ale shows how brewing was dominated by women, who were typically married. Often women brewed where their labour could not be usefully applied to the principal craft of the household (Bennett 1996, 30). The number of households engaged in brewing within a single settlement could be high: between 20 and 25 households at Lullington and Alfriston (East Sussex) in the early fifteenth century, for example. Some brewed regularly, but others may only have done so a few times a year (Mate 1998, 59). Given the widespread nature of domestic brewing, it is surprising that objects explicitly associated with brewing are rare in the escheators' records (Table 3.5), although it should be noted that ordinary kitchen vessels, specifically pans, could have been used in brewing (Woolgar 2016, 35).[82]

The infrequency of brewing episodes may, in part, account for this, meaning that it was only worth investing in specialist equipment where households brewed regularly. A further reason is likely to be the contraction of domestic brewing in the mid-fifteenth century, with our records dating principally to the period of decline identified by both Bennett (1996) and Mate (1998, 61). In Devon, Postles (1992) shows a clear regional variation in the organisation of brewing in the fifteenth century across the county. In the manor of Stoke Fleming in the South Hams region of southern Devon, brewing became increasingly focussed into the hands of a small number of individuals. In contrast,

[82] A similar under-representation of brewing equipment is noted by French (2021, 130) in her analysis of the goods of London households in this period.

Table 3.5: The occurrence of brewing and cider making equipment in the escheators' records. I = Number of items. V = value of items (d).

List No.	Name	Year	Occupation	Lead		Lead in Furnace/ Oven		Brewing or Tippling vessels		Mash Vat		Tools in Brewhouse		Malt Quern		Ale Barrel		Cider Press	
				I	V	I	V	I	V	I	V	I	V	I	V	I	V	I	V
1	William Moldessone	1372	–	1	40														
45	John Moigne	1405	–			1	240												
99	William Benet	1428	–	1	40														
119	John Larke	1447	–	1	48														
158	John Muleward le Fuattede (alias Rigewold)	1372	–	1															
185	John de Stonton Wyuill	1379	Parson					2	240										
186	William Quellewether	1379	–	1	24			2	160			Not stated							
215	Hugh Cetur	1414	Clerk											1	20				
278	William Weton	1418	–	1	12														
303	John Lebarde	1416	–			1	48												
304	John Coupere	1416	–			1	48									1			
310	John Forster	1419	–	2															
311	Walter Fox	1420	–	4	108														
314	? Bassyngham	1438	Husbandman	1	24														
317	Robert Sprakelyng	1403	Smith					2	160										

(*Continued*)

Table 3.5: Continued.

List No.	Name	Year	Occupation	Lead		Lead in Furnace/ Oven		Brewing or Tippling vessels		Mash Vat		Tools in Brewhouse		Malt Quern		Ale Barrel		Cider Press	
				I	V	I	V	I	V	I	V	I	V	I	V	I	V	I	V
564	Thomas Baxster	1422	–	1	18														
566	Thomas Scorburgh	1422	–	1	48														
567	John Barrys	1422	–	1	12														
585	William Clerk	1417	–	1															
586	John Rotherham	1417	–	1															
617	Philip Drapare	1422	–							1									
620	Thomas Frankeleyn	1422	–							1	6								
642	Richard Vttokestre	1382	Parson			1	48												
650	John Douere	1382	–			1	48												
651	Thomas Deghere	1392	–			1	24												
653	John Thecham	1392	–			1	40												
656	Geoffrey Potet	1392	–					2	8										
657	William Ponchon	1382	–			1	24												
663	Matthew de la Haye	1382	–			1	24												
677	Robert Senyng	1382	–			1	24											1	80
681	Thomas Giles	1382	–			1	36												
745	Thomas Bocher	1382	–	1	60			1	64										

(*Continued*)

Table 3.5: Continued.

List No.	Name	Year	Occupation	Lead		Lead in Furnace/ Oven		Brewing or Tippling vessels		Mash Vat		Tools in Brewhouse		Malt Quern		Ale Barrel		Cider Press	
				I	V	I	V	I	V	I	V	I	V	I	V	I	V	I	V
748	Richard Dawe	1383	–					2	72										
754	Richard Gryndell	1382	Milner			1	160												
768	Thomas Isenden	1384	–					1											
785	William de Brereton	1383	–			4													
786	John Fenton	1426	–	1	80														
788	John Robynson	1426	–	1	84														
789	George Braweby	1426	–	1	96														
800	Roger Gurley	1426	–			1	108												
892	Robert de Mersh	1392	–	1	36														
910	John Horle	1385	–			1													
953	Robert Neuton	1431	–	3	60	2	96												
1127	John Litster	1441	Litster	2	480														
1227	Robert Prior	1396	–	2															
1391	Thomas Boucher	1399	–	3															
1481	Thomas Howysshe?	1412	–	1	480														
1558	John Margretson	1445	–			1	240												
1594	John Beset	1404	–	1	160														

in more remote areas of western Devon, Postles identifies the persistence of smaller-scale domestic brewing into the fifteenth century. It is unfortunate that Postles' observations cannot be examined further here, as the lists from Devon lack any mention of brewing equipment. Coupled with the increasing professionalisation of brewing traced by Bennett, one cause of the decline of domestic brewing was the introduction of hopped beer through the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, initially as an import and through the work of immigrant brewers, which was more labour intensive to brew and was not well suited to domestic manufacture (see Pajic 2019). This is particularly apparent when one considers that the principal item associated with brewing is the lead, normally valued at between 2s and 4s. Among the coroners' records some vessels which might be found in the kitchen, particularly pans, are recorded as being situated in the brewhouse and were presumably used for brewing.

Within the escheators' records brewing equipment, like that associated with baking and grain processing, occurs primarily in lists generated by criminal cases, principally from Kent and Northamptonshire (Table 3.5). The most common item associated with brewing is the 'lead', sometimes referred to as a 'lead in furnace' (*plumbum in fornaci*), a large open vessel used for boiling larger quantities of liquid as part of the brewing process. Leads came in various sizes and those listed as 'in furnace' are likely to be fixed items, suggesting the presence of a specialised space (a brewhouse) and therefore perhaps a larger brewing concern (see Woolgar 2016, 35–6). Evidence of furnaces might be found archaeologically in the hearth bases interpreted as vat stands at Southwick (Northamptonshire; Johnston, Bellamy and Foster 2001; Figure 3.5) and, outside of our case study region, at Hangleton (East Sussex; Jervis 2022b). Other references in the escheators' lists are to 'brewing vessels', mash vats, whether for the storage or heating of the mash, and, in one case, wooden vessels for brewing.

The difficulty of isolating items associated with brewing is demonstrated by the list of William Moldessone of Lamport (Northamptonshire), outlawed in 1372.[83] He had a lead valued at 40d but his other items comprise two brass pans and wooden vessels, which may have been used for brewing, but could also have been standard household utensils. This ambiguity demonstrates how tightly bound up into domestic practice brewing was. In many cases equipment associated with the preparation of malt, such as malt querns, does not appear in lists. Malting requires the heating of grain and a large amount of space for drying. As the evidence from Kent suggests, the grinding of malt could take place in the homes where brewing was taking place. Indeed, one Kent list, that of the clerk Hugh Cetur, indicted for murder in 1414, features an object specifically described as a pair of malt querns, although, curiously, his list includes no brewing equipment.[84] Even so, this was not the case in all Kent households.

[83] E1.
[84] E215.

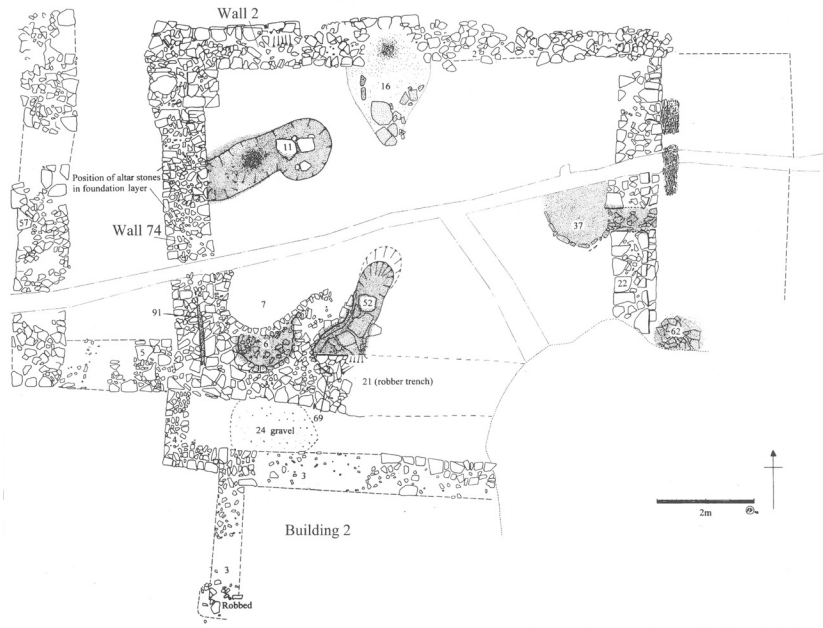

Figure 3.5: Plan of the excavated brewhouse at Southwick (Northamptonshire) showing the vat emplacements (labelled 6, 7, 37 and 52). Reproduced by kind permission of Gill Johnston and the Northamptonshire Archaeological Society.

For example, Matthew de la Haye of Frindsbury (Kent), beheaded in 1381, had a lead but no handmill, and it is unlikely that this would be included within the 'diverse utensils' valued at 20d, given that handmills are typically valued at around this figure.[85] A further example of malt processing within the home is provided by the list of William de Brereton of Tranby (Yorkshire). He had two fixed leads and querns valued together at 10s, as well as five quarters of malt oats. Intriguingly he had two further 'worn' (*debilis*) leads valued at 16d, perhaps suggesting he had kept some older equipment for its scrap value.[86] Similarly, Robert Prior of Mendlesham (Suffolk), outlawed in 1391, had two leads and a mill, valued together at 160d, as well as quantities of malt oats and barley and barrels of ale.[87] Within our case study counties, archaeological evidence of malting can be seen in the occurrence of malting kilns or ovens such as a sequence of such structures dating from the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries at Poplar High Street (Middlesex), situated in a village on the outskirts of the city of

[85] E663.
[86] E785.
[87] E1227; the meaning of the word '*malar*' is obscure, but is taken to refer to a mill.

London (Sygrave 2004) and a possible malting oven at Elephant Yard, Kendal (Cumbria; Hair 1998). Other examples come from a Redcastle Furze, Thetford (Norfolk; Andrews 1995), and from High Street, Doncaster (Yorkshire; Buckland, Magilton and Hayfield 1989). The proximity of these kilns to markets may highlight the importance of brewing to both small and large urban centres.

In addition to leads for heating the water required to make the mash, vats or tubs were required for cooling and barrels for storage. John Moigne of Warmington (Northamptonshire), tried as a traitor in 1405, had a lead and a number of tubs likely used for this purpose.[88] In other cases, as in that of William Benet of Raisthrope (Yorkshire), who fled for murder in 1428, the low value wooden items may perhaps have been incorporated into a generic category of household utensils, a practice which is particularly common in Yorkshire.[89] Occasionally, however, these items are specifically identified as being for brewing. Thomas Bocher of Brackley (Northamptonshire), outlawed in 1382, had a lead and wooden vessels for brewing.[90] There are occasional indications of specialist spaces for brewing. William Quellewether of Northamptonshire, outlawed by civil suit in 1379, had brass and wooden vessels and a range of tools specifically listed as located in the brewhouse (*brasina*).[91] He also had a lead, the location of which is not noted and a quantity of malt, presumably for use in brewing, in his barn. Similarly, John de Stonton Wyuill, a parson from Titchmarsh (Northamptonshire) outlawed for felony in 1379, had brass and wooden vessels for brewing, situated in his brewhouse and kitchen.[92] In some cases, there is clear evidence of brewing taking place as a supplementary activity to the main trade. The probable cooper John Coupere of Wellingborough had a 'small' lead 'in furnace'.[93] However, there is no clear evidence of households engaging in brewing alongside other specialised food processing activities.

The fifteenth century was a transitional period for brewing, as ale came to be replaced by hopped beer, and brewing moved increasingly into the hands of male specialist brewers (Bennett 1996, 78). Hops occur in one coroners' list, that of John James.[94] Among the coroners' records there is only one reference to a lead, situated in the brewhouse of Thomas Ramsden, a shoemaker of Oundle (Northamptonshire) who committed murder in 1545.[95] He also possessed a tub in this area of his property, the only brewhouse noted within the coroners' lists. He also had a strike (a measure) in the brewhouse, as well as a bucket and pitchfork, which, perhaps, were stored there rather than being used in brewing

[88] E45.
[89] E99.
[90] E745.
[91] E186.
[92] E185.
[93] E304.
[94] C382.
[95] C76.

specifically. Together the contents of his brewhouse were valued at 8s. It is difficult to assess the significance of this single mention, but we might propose that the general absence of brewing equipment from the coroners' records is indicative of the decline of domestic ale production.

There are only a small number of other coroners' lists which contain brewing equipment. Thomas Thomas of Longbridge Deverill (Wiltshire), who drowned himself in 1551, had two brewing vessels, and several barrels.[96] John Wyvenden, a labourer from Hawkhurst (Kent) who committed suicide in 1576, had a brewing tub, listed with some other barrels and measures.[97] He also had six milk bowls, suggestive of involvement in dairying. It is noticeable that he also had a small amount of plate and a silver ring suggesting a degree of affluence and perhaps the adoption of something approaching the household economy of the 'middling sort'. The most comprehensive range of brewing equipment is listed among the kitchen equipment of the prosperous Wiltshire clergyman John James.[98] It includes a mashing vat, malt quern and malt tub. The absence of leads may be due to the increasing occurrence of kettles in the coroners' lists, although kettles do not occur in any lists with other items of brewing equipment or within goods present in brewhouses.

Our records capture a transitional period in the history of brewing in English households, from the heavily domestic focus in the early fourteenth century to the professionalised enterprises of the end of our period. The general lack of specialist brewing equipment is, perhaps, reflective of the decline in domestic brewing, but also of the need for households to brew sufficiently regularly to warrant investment in expensive items such as leads. No forfeiting individual in the dataset carries the occupational descriptor 'brewer', which supports the idea that where brewing was occurring in the households studied, it was as a supplementary economic activity. As Postles (1992) demonstrates, there was a degree of local variation in the decline of household-scale brewing, and it is possible that the appearance of brewing equipment might highlight areas where it persisted into the later fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. However, the prevalence of Kent and Northamptonshire among these areas may also owe something to the detailed inventorying practices of the escheatries concerned. The records, as well as archaeological evidence, also remind us of the role of households in the processing of malt to produce beer, a task requiring considerable investment in ovens and fuel, and likely a specialised activity. The occurrence of malting ovens in small towns and on the periphery of urban centres stresses the importance of household enterprise in supplying both urban and rural brewers.

[96] C126.
[97] C230.
[98] C382.

Dairying

No items associated explicitly with dairying, such as churns, are present within the escheators' lists, although many households possessed one or two cows, presumably for the provision of milk rather than meat (see Chapter 9). It is possible that some of the shallow tubs discussed previously could have been used for dairying, and ceramic bowls were frequently used for this purpose (Brears 2015, 261–2; McCarthy and Brookes 1988, 109–10). Objects for dairying are also scarce within the coroners' records, occurring in only eight lists. This is despite dairy produce being an important source of protein, consumed primarily as cheese and butter (Woolgar 2016, 76). Dairying was particularly associated with the clergy (Woolgar 2016, 81), so it is noteworthy that the clergyman John James possessed a butter churn, two cheese vats, two milk pans, two milk tankards and a milk tub.[99] William Mursshall, a labourer from West Greenwich (Kent) who committed murder in 1535, possessed a butter churn, and three cheese moulds with two covers.[100] The most common items are milk bowls and pans, which in two cases occur as multiple items: Elisha Gregory, a husbandman from Brixton (Devon) who committed suicide in 1600, had seven, and John Wyvenden, of Hawkhurst, who also had some baking equipment, had six.[101] It is noticeable that there is evidence of labourers undertaking dairying as a household activity. These households just discussed all possessed at least one cow, so were likely processing their own milk.

The grinding of herbs and spices

Mortars were used in the preparing of herbs and spices and are present in both the escheators' records and the archaeological dataset, although they are absent from the coroners' lists, where the only item associated with grinding condiments is a mustard quern (*mola sinapia*) belonging to Henry Cooper of Cowlinge (1595).[102] Mortars could be of brass or stone; the material is not stated in the escheators' lists. Brass mortars were introduced to Europe from the Islamic world and it has been suggested that Hispano-Moresque examples influenced the design of some English stone examples. They do not appear to have been imported in any quantity, being exceptionally rare archaeologically and most likely being imported as gifts or souvenirs (see Lewis 1984). No brass examples feature in this dataset. Stone examples, of Purbeck, Quarr or Caen limestone, are known archaeologically, with examples from Kent, Norfolk, Yorkshire, Wiltshire and Hampshire within our dataset (Figures 3.6 and 3.7). Other examples are of local stone. A national survey of stone mortars shows a strong

[99] C382.
[100] C487.
[101] C467; C230.
[102] C447.

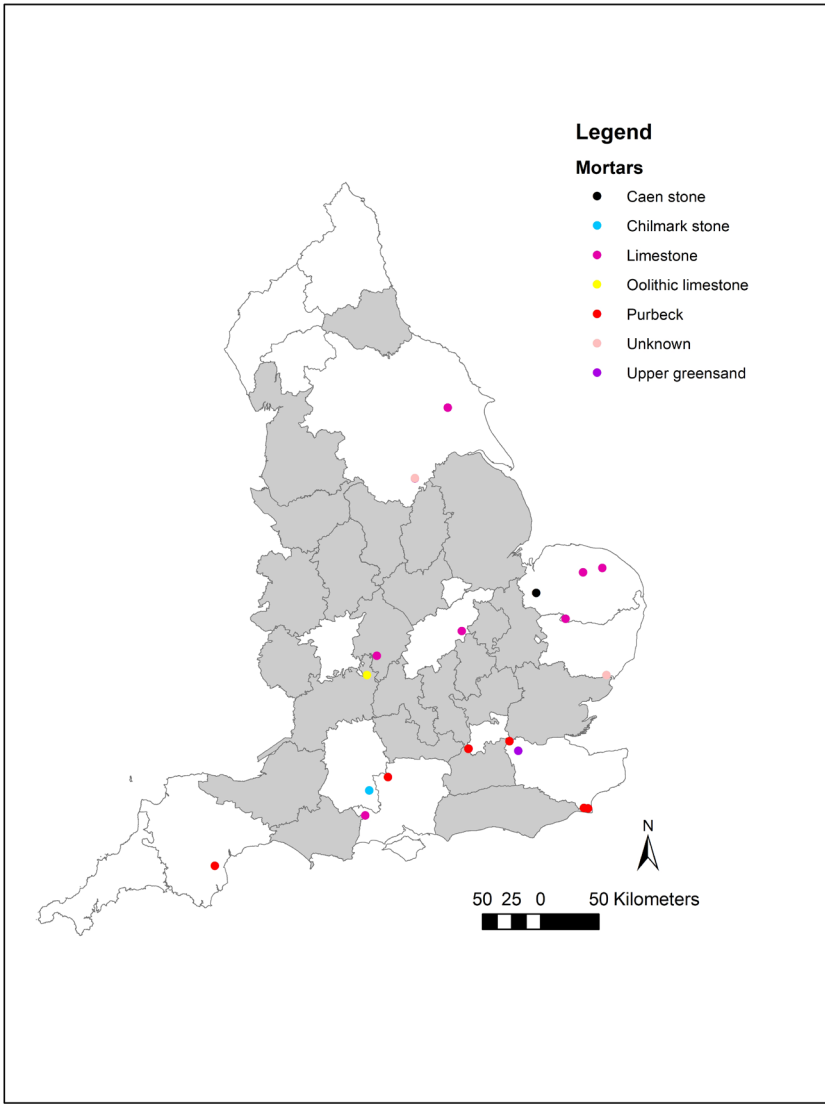

Figure 3.6: Distribution of stone mortars in the archaeological dataset.

association with higher status rural sites, religious houses and larger towns (Jervis 2022d; see also Dunning 1977). In southern and eastern England mortars of Purbeck marble or limestone are by far the most common type, and in this region they do occur in non-elite rural settings, often around the coast or in the hinterland of major towns (see further discussion in Chapter 9). Where present in non-elite households, such as at the fishermen's farmstead at Lydd (Kent), they may have been used for the processing of locally sourced herbs.

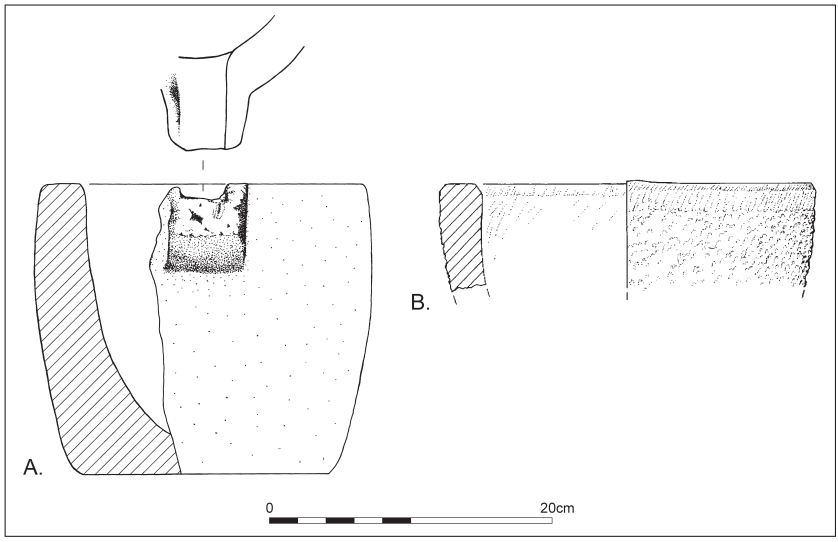

Figure 3.7: Examples of stone mortars from Doncaster (Yorkshire) and Fordingbridge (Hampshire). Redrawn from Chadwick (2008) and Harding and Light (2003) by Kirsty Harding.

While the distribution of imported mortars may relate to the point of importation of these items, it also mirrors the distribution of imported spices and condiments as identified through archaeological analysis, which shows that these occur most commonly in the major cities and ports of trade (Livarda 2011; see discussion above). Mortars occur in only two escheators' lists. Richard Vttokestre, the parson of Lyminge (Kent), outlawed by civil suit in 1381, had four mortars, as well as three spits, four pans, two pots, two skimmers (for skimming fat from a stew or broth), three forks and a frying pan, suggestive of a complex kitchen arrangement at the end of the fourteenth century.[103] The other individual to possess a mortar is Thomas Molundre, also a parson, from Great Brington (Northamptonshire), who was imprisoned for felony in 1380.[104]

Summary

In summary, the evidence for items associated with the processing of foodstuffs is, perhaps, surprisingly scarce. This may be for several reasons. The period saw an increase in the acquisition of prepared foodstuffs, meaning that items for certain tasks, such as baking, may not have been required in the home (Carlin 1998). We might also consider that some items may have been considered

[103] E642.
[104] E298.

fixtures of a property, and therefore not available for confiscation. However, Buxton (2015, 99) highlights that in the early modern period, food processing was not common to every household, occurring most frequently in the gentry and yeoman households of Thame, his case study. This, he proposes, may be due to the need both for specialised spaces for processing activities (such as dairies and bakehouses), and the ability to invest in specialised equipment. Our evidence suggests that households may have specialised in certain activities such as grain processing, brewing and, to a lesser extent, baking and dairying. The emergence of the 'middling sort' in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries led to a reorganisation of this labour, and it is perhaps this phenomenon which Buxton observes among Thame's yeomanry. While limited in quantity, the evidence for food processing shows how some households, particularly in Kent and Northamptonshire where the evidence base is strongest, appear to have produced food and drink for the market. Furthermore, the limited evidence for households engaging in multiple processing tasks in the latter part of our period is symptomatic of a broader withdrawal of the household from the community as suggested by Johnson (1997). While items associated with food processing are considerably underrepresented within our sample, the scarcity of the evidence suggests a general level of reliance on processing specialists due to the capital constraints highlighted by Buxton.

Cooking

Our study period straddles an important transition in domestic architecture, which sees increasing specialisation in domestic space, including the emergence of service rooms and kitchens. As noted, the escheators' records do not typically provide details of the rooms in which items were located, and this evidence is inconsistently provided in the coroners' records. We must therefore rely on some general conclusions drawn from studies of standing and excavated houses and other documentary sources. In the fourteenth century, at the start of our period, most cooking would have taken place over a central hearth situated in the open hall (Woolgar 2016, 29). However, references to kitchens in a small number of escheators' and coroners' records confirm the presence of these rooms by the sixteenth century.[105] The development of the kitchen can be understood in the context of the 'modification' of rural houses, a process which dendrochronological analysis now shows occurred at varying rates across the country (e.g. Alcock 2010; Dyer 2005, 151–5; 2006b; Gray 2002; Johnson 1993; 2010; Martin and Martin 1999; Roberts 2003). One factor which may have led to the emergence of separate kitchens is the increasing complexity of cooking practices, in part brought about by newly available foodstuffs, and their associated pieces of equipment in the later middle ages and early modern

[105] E185; E768; C171; C226; C289; C382; C446; C472.

period (Hamling and Richardson 2017, 77). In the south-east, kitchens were commonly detached buildings from the late fifteenth century, with kitchens integrated into the house increasingly common through the sixteenth century, but slower to develop in the midlands (Hamling and Richardson 2017, 71; Martin and Martin 1997; Pearson 2012, 36–8). In the coroners' lists occasional reference is made to goods being stored in the buttery, but the pantry is not mentioned. The buttery is typically associated with the making and storage of drink and the pantry with foodstuffs. These service rooms, which form part of the typical medieval 'tripartite' domestic plan, can be understood to have emerged in the twelfth century, trickling down into vernacular architecture from higher status residences (Gardiner 2008). The limited evidence for rooms within our dataset does not bear out this distinction in practice. Items stored in the buttery included cooking vessels, various items of tableware, processing utensils and other household objects including a spinning wheel.[106] It should also be noted that 'kitchen' need not always denote a room where food was cooked; this may still have happened over a central hearth, with the kitchen being used for the preparation of foodstuffs (Hamling and Richardson 2017, 72). A similar process of modernisation, with similar levels of variability in precisely how service rooms were structured in relation to existing structures, took place from the sixteenth century in the south-west (Alcock 2015, 20). We might therefore expect to see increasing complexity in the range of cooking wares represented in the escheators' and coroners' lists over time. We begin by summarising the evidence for cooking ware, starting with pots and pans and then examining other cooking vessels and equipment, before exploring these questions further.

The basics of cooking: pots and pans

At the turn of the fifteenth century, the Kent household of Thomas Paccheherst was well stocked with objects associated with cooking and food processing.[107] The list of Paccheherst's possessions, produced in 1407, includes two brass pots (valued at 6s 8d), five brass pans (5s), a spit (8d), three tripods (12d), two cauldrons (2s), a kneading trough (4d), a sieve (4d), five kimelins (10d) and three tuns (18d), as well as an oven (*furnays*) (5s) and quern (11d). This list, however, is exceptional. It is one of only four from our sample which includes basic pots and pans, as well as items for roasting and other kitchen equipment, along with items for the storage and processing of foods. Of the 463 escheators' lists which include items associated with cooking, the majority (326) include only pots and pans, and a further 31 include only pots, pans and items such as trivets and pot hooks, which allowed these vessels to be moved around the hearth, as the only items associated specifically with cooking (Table 3.6). The coroners'

[106] C171; C208; C382.
[107] E1336.

Table 3.6: The occurrence of combinations of cooking equipment in the escheators' and coroners' records. 'Pots and pans' relate to lists including only pots and/or pans. 'Other cooking equipment' includes utensils other than pots and pans, their associated pot hooks or trivets, or roasting equipment (spits and andirons).

Cooking Equipment Present	No. Escheators' Lists	%ge Total Escheators' Lists	No. Coroners' Lists	%ge Total Coroners' Lists
Pots & Pans	326	33.9%	26	14.8%
Pots & Pans with Associated Equipment (e.g. trivet, pot hook)	31	3.2%		
Other Cooking Equipment (vessels and utensils other than pots and pans)	17	1.8%	4	2.3%
Pots & Pans with Other Cooking Equipment	57	5.9%	16	9.1%
Pots & Pans with Roasting Equipment	8	0.8%	1	0.6%
Pots & Pans with Other Cooking Equipment and Roasting Equipment	20	2.1%	23	13.1%
Roasting and Other Cooking Equipment (no pots and pans)	1	0.1%	3	1.7%
Roasting Equipment	3	0.3%		
Total Lists	**463**	**48.1%**	**73**	**41.5%**

records present a different picture for the latter end of our period. Of the 73 lists containing these items, just 26 contain only pots and pans (two including additional items for storage or processing) and 47 include a range of cooking vessels and equipment including items for roasting, supporting the notion that cooking became increasingly complex over time, a phenomenon which will be explored more fully in the next section (Table 3.6).

Metal (typically copper alloy) pots and pans were ubiquitous in the medieval home across the social spectrum (see also Woolgar 2016, 30–35; French 2021, 134). However, the range of other items associated with cooking varied considerably. Analysis of appraisal and inventorying practices by the escheator, as well as differences between civil and criminal cases, shows that, other than animals, cooking equipment is least sensitive to regional and temporal variation.[108] This is presumably due to two factors: the ubiquity of these items, and

[108] A fuller study is in preparation; see Chapter 2.

their comparatively high value: on average pots are valued at 32d and pans at 19d within the escheators' records.

Given their ubiquity, it is surprising that metal vessels are comparatively rare in the excavated archaeological record. There are only 65 occurrences of metal cooking vessels, typically in copper alloy, but with a smaller quantity in iron and lead alloy, within our archaeological dataset. Five of these come from a bronze casting workshop at Caldewgate, Carlisle and may be production waste or material collected for recycling (Giecco and Dearham 2005). In some cases, this may be due to soil conditions. For example, the housefire deposit from Dinna Clerks (Devon) may well have included metal vessels, but the acidic nature of Dartmoor's soil will have caused these to decay (Beresford 1979). Evidence of the spread of these items across the country can be found in the records of the Portable Antiquities Scheme, which show that they occur across England (Figure 3.8). Most of these finds are categorised as 'vessel' or 'cooking vessel', but some are classified as pot, skillet or cauldron and the most commonly occurring components are vessel feet and rims, the most robust elements of copper alloy vessels. Finds of metal vessels are distributed fairly evenly across the country, varying in accordance with the general distribution of finds within the PAS database (see Chapter 2). The PAS data demonstrates clearly that the absence of these items from the archaeological record is not due to regionality in use or preservation. Rather, this is likely due to recycling; indeed, a record of 'five brass pots weighing 80lbs price 2d per pound', and another of 'three old pans weighing 8lbs Troy, price 1½d. per pound' may provide evidence of vessels being valued for their scrap, rather than functional, value.[109] The use of scrap by bronze founders in the period is well established (Butler and Green 2003, 21). Even so, these items do appear to have been valued by their users. In many cases the vessels are clearly old or well used, described as *debilis* (worn). Evidence of the regular repair of broken vessels is plentiful in the archaeological record, where common finds relating to vessels include patches. For example, at Island Farm, Ottery St Mary (Mudd, Cobain and Haines 2018) sheets and strips of copper alloy assumed to relate to vessel repair were found on the floor of a burnt house. In addition to the patching of vessels, cauldron rims and feet could be replaced on a regular basis (Butler and Green 2003, 29).

Three types of basic cooking vessel are present: pots, pans and the larger cauldrons. Among the escheator's records the specific form of vessels is not stated in 54 cases; instead a generic term such as *vasa* is used. Perhaps because of their ubiquity, the records tell us little more about the pots and pans. Where listed, the capacity of pots, globular cooking vessels, varies from one gallon to three gallons, while the presence of pairs or sets of vessels of varying capacities is implied by a reference to 'two brass pots, great and small' in the list of the goods of the butcher John Bekelswade of Rothwell (Northamptonshire), who

[109] E1538; E1601.

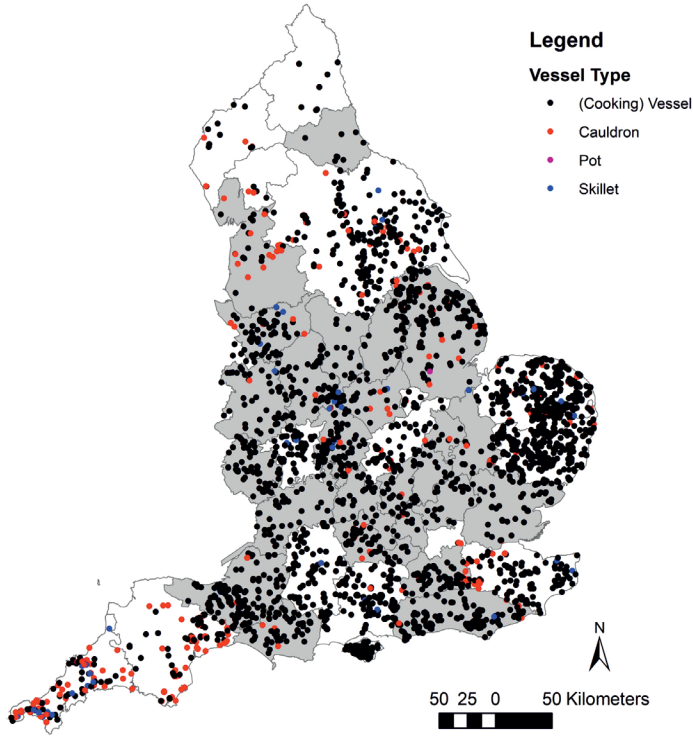

Figure 3.8: Distribution of metal vessel fragments in the PAS database and examples of PAS finds. From left to right: Cauldron from Llanengan, Gwynedd with evidence for repair (PAS Reference GAT-0FE28F); Cauldron from Skelton, Cumbria with handle replaced in antiquity (PAS Reference LVPL838); Rim and handle fragments found at Heslington, Cumbria (PAS Reference LVPL2388). Reproduced under CC-By Attribution Licence. Licence holders Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust and National Museum Liverpool.

was outlawed by civil suit in 1416.[110] The coroners' records are similarly vague, never listing capacity, although one pot is listed as 'small'.[111] Where the material is stated these are nearly always of 'brass' or 'copper', although there is a single example of a leather pot and four pewter pots, which may have had a role in the serving, rather than cooking, of food, or have had a decorative function. Pans, flatter, more open vessels, are similarly ubiquitous and like pots, also varied in size. Stated capacities range from one to nine gallons, with others listed as 'small'. Cauldrons were vessels with their own feet, sometimes used in brewing as well as cooking (Woolgar 2016, 37).

It was commonplace for households to possess multiple pots and pans, perhaps of different volumes, or used for the cooking of different foodstuffs (Table 3.7). At a conservative estimate (i.e. where it is clear that multiple vessels are listed, but the exact figure is unclear, leading to a minimum value of two being assigned), the households listed in the escheators' records that possessed pots and/or pans had on average 2.8 pots and pans (mean; mode=2); however, numbers vary from 1 to 14 vessels. Pots and pans occur together in 245 lists. Of these, 95 (39%) list a single pot and a single pan. In 28 cases (11%) pots outnumber pans, while in 89 cases (36%) pans outnumber pots. This variability suggests that these were multipurpose items which were adapted to the needs of individual households. The smaller sample of coroners' records shows a greater variability in the number of pots and pans, the average number of vessels per household being higher (3.4) and the mode being lower (1). Pots and pans co-occur in 20 of the 66 lists and cauldrons are proportionally more important (occurring in 26% of the lists with cooking vessels, compared with 10% of the escheators' lists with cooking vessels). One noticeable difference between the escheators' and coroners' lists is the vocabulary used for cooking vessels. In the coroners' records we see the introduction of the term 'crock', possibly a regional term as it occurs mostly in the western counties of Devon (8), Cornwall (1) and Wiltshire (4), with two examples from Kent.

Metalware was supplemented by ceramics in most, if not all, medieval households. Ceramics are the most common find on the majority of medieval archaeological sites and had a range of functions. In contrast, earthenware only appears in one escheators' list, and there are two examples of coroners' lists which include references to stoneware vessels, probably used for drinking.[112] Our period begins at a time when the range of ceramics present in the home was changing. The thirteenth and fourteenth centuries are characterised by the increasing prevalence of jugs, sometimes highly decorated, alongside plainer jars (occurring in a variety of shapes and sizes and used for storage and cooking) and open bowls and dishes. Ceramic drinking vessels are rare. Analysis of the occurrence of these principal forms at sites in Hampshire (Brown 1997;

[110] E300.
[111] C511.
[112] E11; C547; C382.

Table 3.7: The co-occurrence of pots and pans in the escheators' lists.

		Pots									
	No. items	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**13**	**No. Lists**	**%ge Total Lists**
Pans	**0**		46	16	5	2		1		**70**	**7.3%**
	1	60	95	16	2		1		1	**175**	**18.2%**
	2	17	40	26	2	1				**86**	**8.9%**
	3	6	6	20	5	1	1			**39**	**4.0%**
	4	6	8	6	3	1	1	1		**26**	**2.7%**
	5	1		1		1		1		**4**	**0.4%**
	6				1		1			**2**	**0.2%**
	7					1				**1**	**0.1%**
	8							1		**1**	**0.1%**
	9				1					**1**	**0.1%**
	No. Lists	**90**	**195**	**85**	**19**	**7**	**4**	**4**	**1**	**405**	**42.1%**
	%ge Total Lists	**9.3%**	**20.2%**	**8.8%**	**2.0%**	**0.7%**	**0.4%**	**0.4%**	**0.1%**	**42.1%**	

Jervis 2012) demonstrates that urban assemblages are more complex than those from smaller towns and rural sites, the latter being characterised by a higher prevalence of dishes, potentially used for processes such as dairying and as measures, in relation to jugs, which are more prevalent in urban settings. Analysis of vessel capacity, coupled with organic residue analysis, of pottery from West Cotton shows how vessels were produced for particular stages in the processing, cooking and consumption of foodstuffs, with vessels seeming to cluster around known medieval dry measures for grain and flour (Blinkhorn 1999; Dunne *et al.* 2020). Equivalent studies of sites in Humberside by Hayfield (1988) and Oxfordshire by Mellor (2005) have reached similar conclusions. The picture changes considerably from the later fourteenth century. Ceramics for cooking are typically much plainer in terms of decoration, and occur in an increasing range of forms, perhaps mirroring the increasing diversity seen in metalware (Gaimster and Nenk 1997, 175). In some areas tripod cooking pots, similar to those found in the Low Countries, develop. These might be seen as imitations of metal vessels, but it should be noted that these have distinctive material properties and might be better understood as complementing metal cooking vessels, rather than competing with them (Jervis 2014, 66–9). Other

forms which become increasingly prevalent in the later middle ages are large pans for dairying. Other distinctive ceramic forms include baking dishes and bunghole pitchers used for holding ale (Brears 2015). The changing suite of ceramic vessels therefore reflects the diversification of metalware forms across the course of our period.

Medieval cooking was based around the ubiquitous metal pot and pan, supplemented by a range of ceramic vessels as well as, perhaps, equally cheap and disposable items of wood and leather. Most households had at least a pot or pan and in many cases more, suggesting the ability to produce relatively complicated dishes using multiple utensils over a simple hearth. The ability to cook in this way was assisted by the presence of various pieces of equipment associated with cooking pots. The archaeological record gives a taste of such items: for example stone pot lids from Doncaster (McComish *et al*. 2010) and Ripon (Yorkshire; Finlayson 2001a) and a chain from West Cotton (Hylton 2010) would all have been used in cooking. However, the most common items occurring in the escheators' records are trivets and tripods for suspending a vessel over a fire. Within the sample there are 70 such items of ironwork from 57 households, so some households would have made do in other ways. Woolgar (2016, 37) provides the example of a coroners' report from Stone (Buckinghamshire) from 1363, where a brass pot was resting on a stone. Woolgar (2016, 39) notes an increase in references to items of equipment for supporting pots in the fifteenth-century wills of the middling echelons of society. Brandreths (iron frames to place over a fire, on which pots might be arranged) appear from the later fourteenth century in northern England, and there is a single example in the escheators' records, belonging to Robert Coke of Kettlesmoor (Yorkshire; 1410).[113] It is noticeable that hooks and hangers are more common in the coroners' records than in the escheators' records, although trivets remain the principal item associated with placing pots in and around the fire (20 from 16 lists incorporating items for this function). One reason for this may be the emergence of the fireplace. Items associated with tending fires occur only occasionally: an example is the list of John Oke of Britford (Wiltshire; 1576), which includes two iron dogs, tongs, a fire shovel and bellows suggesting the presence of a fireplace rather than an open hearth. He also had iron pot hooks as well as a trivet.[114] His cooking items are listed as being in the kitchen, while no location is given for the items associated with the fire, suggesting this may be one example of a house where the kitchen was used for the storage and preparation of the foodstuffs, but cooking took place in the main living area. In other cases, these hooks were used over an open fire using equipment such as andirons, as is the case in the list of Thomas Bullock of Hawkhurst, Kent, convicted of murder in 1577.[115] It is this latter arrangement which appears most frequently, indeed

[113] E1450.
[114] C226.
[115] C547.

Oke's list is exceptional for having items associated with tending a fireplace and pot hangers.

The diversification of cooking equipment

Discussing the emergence of the kitchen as a specialised space for cooking and food preparation, Hamling and Richardson (2017, 77) highlight the increasing complexity of utensils to be found in the early modern home. This proliferation of equipment developed from the mid-fourteenth century, as changes in the availability of foodstuffs created new opportunities for peasant cooking (see also French 2021, 137). Woolgar (2016, 41) highlights how meats and fats were more accessible to a wider cross-section of society, and following this, that the fifteenth century saw greater investment in culinary equipment. The escheators' records provide a challenge in understanding the extent to which this diversification spread across society. In the fifteenth century, the complexity of cooking wear assemblages appears to decrease, but this is also the period in which lists become less detailed. The coroners' records provide some further insight, as a wider range of cooking items are listed in these records.

Overall, a total of 85 escheators' chattels lists include items of kitchen equipment associated with cooking along with pots and pans, while a further 21 include these items without any pots and pans. The range of items includes vessels associated with specific functions as well as a variety of other utensils. Of these, the most common vessels are pitchers (*urcioli*) (Table 3.8). Several are stated as being of brass and are presumably a metal equivalent to the ceramic jug, a multipurpose vessel for the carrying and pouring of liquids. The value of these ranges from 6d to 40d. It is possible that lower value pitchers, such as a group of three valued together at 3d, and another at 4d, are ceramic; however, that valued at 4d is identified as *debilis* and this, rather than its material, is the probable explanation for its low value.[116] Other cooking vessels are posnets, frying pans and skillets. Posnets and skillets are small tripod cooking vessels and the form was also produced in ceramic (typically referred to by archaeologists as a tripod cooking pot or tripod pipkin). In contrast to pots, which were most likely suspended above the hearth or placed on a trivet, these vessels were specially designed to be placed over the embers (see Butler and Green 2003, 16–17). Skillets typically have quite thick walls, meaning that they heat their contents more slowly than a saucepan or pot (Eveleigh 1993, 10). Posnets gradually reduced in popularity, while skillets and saucepans became more common through the sixteenth century (Eveleigh 1993, 11; Green 2015, 311). This is reflected in the relative abundance of posnets in the escheators' records when compared to skillets, and their presence in equal numbers in the coroners' records. In the escheators' records stated values for posnets range

[116] E348 (it may be significant that the term here is *idreas* rather than the usual *urcioli*); E671.

Table 3.8: Summary of cooking equipment other than pots and pans in the escheators' and coroners' lists.

Object	Escheators'		Coroners'	
	No. Items	No. Lists	No. Items	No. Lists
Cooking Vessels				
Posnet	25	20	8	6
Skillet	3	3	8	7
Frying Pan	17	16	8	8
Kettle	2	2	37	24
Chafer	2	2	2	2
Saucepan			6	6
Utensils				
Spoon	12	1		
Wooden Spoon	9	1	6	1
Hook	7	3		
Fork	5	3		
Skimmer	2	1	5	5
Spatula			1	1
Taster			1	1
Measure			4	3
Colander			2	2
Ladle			2	2
Tongs	2	2	10	8
Sieve	18	7	7	5
Other Vessels				
Pitcher	36	23		
Wooden Vessels	27	18	2	1
Leather Pot	1	1		
Basin/Bowl			11	9

from 4d to 24d and skillets from 3d to 6d; their value was therefore less than pots and pans. In the coroners' records, posnets are valued between 6d and 16d and skillets at 3d to 8d. These vessels occur in a wide range of capacities (Brears 2015, 259; Green 2015, 309).

Figure 3.9: Example of a copper alloy skimmer (missing handle) from Dunton, Norfolk, reported to the PAS (PAS Reference NMS-633652). Reproduced under CC-Share Alike Licence from Norfolk County Council.

The frying pan is another distinctive vessel, often stated as being of iron rather than bronze and perhaps therefore distinct from the more common brass pan. A total of 17 occur in the escheators' lists (valued between 3d and 6d) and eight in the coroners' (valued between 2d and 10d). There are two entries among the escheators' records for kettles (one being made of lead), with a further 37 among the coroners' records, several of which were said to be made of brass, though none of lead. One 1545 list features two 'bayle kettells', presumably a reference to hoop-handles.[117] Edward Burges of Laverstock (Wiltshire) had 'two little brass kettles' when he committed suicide in 1566.[118] The sole lead kettle in the escheators' lists is valued at 24d, with valuations in the coroners' records being lower, ranging from 2d to 18d, perhaps suggesting lead examples were worth more than copper alloy vessels. The presence of these specialist items suggests a diversification of metalware and the ability to acquire metal objects for specific culinary functions which, in turn, implies an increasingly varied diet. There are two occurrences of 'chaffers' in the escheators' records, and these vessels (listed variously as chafers and chafing dishes) are more common in the coroners' records (Table 3.8). This is a term covering vessels fulfilling a range of uses, including holding food over the fire, heating water or keeping food warm at the table (Brears 2015, 258–9). A single brass chafer belonging to William Mandevile of Colnbrook (Middlesex) was valued at 20d in 1419, although no examples are individually valued within the coroners' records.[119]

An important utensil for cooking was the skimmer, for removing fat and scum from the top of a stew (Figure 3.9). Three examples, all in copper alloy, are present in the archaeological dataset, while there are two mentioned in the

[117] C76.
[118] C183.
[119] E712.

escheators' lists and five in the coroners' records. A range of other utensils are present in small quantities, including wooden spoons, ladles, sieves and, in the coroners' records, colanders. These were low value items: William Wodeward of Abbots Morton had nine wooden spoons valued at 1d in 1418 and Richard Vttokestre of Lyminge (Kent) had two skimmers worth 4d in 1382, for example.[120] Sieves are valued between 2d and 5d.

In the escheators' records, the majority of households possessed only one item in addition to pots and/or pans, most typically a posnet or frying pan, along, perhaps with a utensil. For example, in 1381 Thomas Beterford of Middlesex possessed a brass pot and a trivet, as well as a fork and a posnet.[121] In the coroners' records, kettles are the most common additional item, but still, in most cases only one or two additional items are present. We can draw two possible conclusions from this section. Firstly, it is possible that the complexity of cooking arrangements, while revealed in some lists, is masked in others, as smaller items, particularly utensils, might have been bundled into the category of 'other household objects'. The low value of items such as skillets, wooden spoons and skimmers would support this suggestion. Secondly, while a wider range of cooking equipment was available, households did not necessarily have the means to acquire these items, or the associated foodstuffs. Therefore, households may have been cautious in acquiring new items, limiting their occurrence and the number of items which could be found in a specific home. This issue is considered in further detail in Chapter 9, in the context of household consumption.

Cooking and household status: roasting

The increased availability of fresh meat in the fifteenth century is perhaps best illustrated by the occurrence of items associated with roasting over the hearth. Such items occur in 34 escheators' lists, with spits being the most common objects. These occasionally occur with cobbards (for supporting spits). Other items associated with roasting are brandirons and gridirons. A similar range of items, along with dripping pans for collecting fat, occur in the coroners' records, although with a wider range of terms (brandiron, broach, broil iron, cobiron, roasting iron and spit) being used to describe the principal items. A similar increase in the prevalence of roasting is seen in the London wills analysed by French (2021, 136).

Where roasting equipment is present, it typically occurs alongside a range of other kitchen items. For example, Robert Tyuerton, a 'leech' (or healer) of Woodnewton in Northamptonshire, possessed two iron spits, a chafing dish, a frying pan and a skillet, as well as six pots, a pan and a trivet when he was

[120] E348; E642.
[121] E689.

outlawed in a civil suit in 1419.[122] Roasting is commonly understood as being indicative of high status cookery, due to the fact that it is high in labour costs (the meat must be watched and constantly basted for a long period of time) and also because, when compared to stewing or pot boiling, it is relatively wasteful. There is some indication that those with roasting equipment were of somewhat elevated status: where occupation is listed in the escheators' records, individuals in this group include a leech, a clerk, a parson and a butcher (who we might expect to possess a range of equipment for cooking meat). This is not the case for the coroners' records where occupations of those with roasting equipment comprise a mariner, a shoemaker, a widow and two husbandmen. As well as roasting equipment, all possess a range of specialist cooking equipment; for example Thomas Ramsden, a shoemaker of Oundle, possessed three pans, three pots, two kettles, two posnets, a chafing dish and two spits in 1545.[123] This feature would appear primarily to relate to the time-consuming and labour-intensive process of roasting, the expense of meat and the need for multiple items.

Summary: complexity in cooking

It is useful to envisage three tiers of cooking related material culture. Most households belonged to the group which possessed only pots and pans. A smaller group possessed a small range of other culinary items and a minority possessed items associated with roasting. The small numbers of lists with more complex assemblages of goods mean that it is not possible to identify any temporal development in the use of cooking ware. This may speak to a range of factors influencing the acquisition of these wares: wealth, living arrangements, household organisation and the availability of foodstuffs. Among the escheators' lists, the households that possessed a more diverse and specialised range of metal objects might be understood as being of slightly higher status than those whose kitchenware was limited to pots and pans; they include artisans (two smiths, two tanners, a sawyer, a roper and a skinner), as well as a chaplain, a clerk, a parson, a husbandman and a yeoman. In general terms, those with the most complex cooking equipment would appear to represent the wealthiest households based on total valuations.[124] However, it is worth noting that, while those households with only pots and pans are primarily those with the least material wealth, the range of total valuations in this group is extremely wide. Investment in cooking equipment in relation to other goods is considered further in Chapter 9, both in relation to household wealth, and to the assessment of contrasts between town and country.

[122] E307.

[123] C76.

[124] Note this discussion only includes the lists of felons (i.e. criminal forfeiture) as these are generally more 'complete'; see Chapter 2.

Conclusion

Objects associated with food processing and cooking clearly demonstrate the benefit of an interdisciplinary approach which draws on both archaeological and historical evidence. Together they show that households in the later fourteenth and fifteenth centuries appear to have specialised in specific processing tasks. Broader trends, such as the decline of domestic milling and the professionalisation of brewing, can also be illustrated. Most of the households in our study had a modest range of cooking vessels, but we see that over time cooking techniques became more complex and that some households, particularly the wealthier, invested in items for the performing of a wider range of food processing activities. These observations can be fitted into wider trends in architecture (the emergence of specialised spaces for food processing) and land tenure (the production of larger surpluses for household processing by those leasing or acquiring land). A middling sort can be seen to emerge in relation to cooking practices, who had the space and resources to prepare more complex dishes. An investigation into objects associated with dining and drinking brings this group further into focus.

CHAPTER 4

Eating and Drinking

This chapter demonstrates that our period sees a considerable expansion in the range and quality of items associated with eating and drinking, a phenomenon which can also be observed in urban households (French 2021, 140). Dining was an important social activity within the medieval household. Hospitality provided a means to influence and display, or construct, social relationships and identities. The table was a stage for the negotiation of status relationships, between genders, age groups and members of the extended household (e.g. Green 2017; Hadley 2005; Willmott 2005; Woolgar 2016). We begin by considering the table itself, before discussing objects associated with eating, handwashing and drinking. This analysis draws primarily on the evidence of the escheators' and coroners' records. Objects of pewter and wood are rare archaeological survivals; however, archaeology does provide insights into the use of glass drinking vessels, largely absent from the historical datasets.

At the table: tables and tablecloths

It was only in the latter part of our period, with the creation of spaces such as parlours, that larger pieces of relatively fixed furniture, such as tables, began to appear (Hamling and Richardson 2017, 120–4). These may have been purchased, or formed a part of the 'standard', being the possession of lord or landlord (see Field 1965, 121). Within the escheators' lists there are 44 cases where the only objects associated with dining are tables. It is likely that these were multipurpose objects, potentially used for a range of household activities within a multifunctional hall. Tables are commonly listed with trestles (Table 4.1), suggesting that the table was a portable object which could be erected and taken down as required, highlighting the fluidity of medieval domestic space. This is a pattern which is reflected across medieval society

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Table 4.1: The occurrence of tables in the escheators' and coroners' records.

Object	Escheators'		Coroners'	
	No. items	No. Lists	No. Items	No. Lists
Tabula [table], with trestles	57	31	29	19
Tabula [table], with trestles	10	10	3	3
Mensal' [table]	21	19	5	4
Tabula mensal' [dining table]	8	6		
Mensal'/Tabula mensal', with trestles	29	19		
Board/Tableboard			36	10
Board/Tableboard with trestles			4	3
Board/Tableboard with frame			3	3
Plank table & frame			1	1
Plank			1	1
Folding table	1	1	1	1
Little table (with four feet, covered with green)			1	1
Tabula dormantz [fixed table]	2	1		
Trestles	9	5	8	2
Table frame			1	1

(Eames 1977, 217). It is unclear where an item is listed simply as 'table' whether this relates to a solid piece of furniture, a table-top or a set of table and trestles. Buxton (2015, 148) comes across similar ambiguity in early modern probate inventories and proposes, in that context, that the term 'table' is distinct from a table-top and trestles. Such a distinction cannot be securely proposed here given the prevalence of trestle tables within the escheators' records. One exception is the two *tabule dormantz* belonging to John Moigne of Warmington, Northamptonshire, in 1405 and valued at 8d, which were clearly fixed tables (see Eames 1977, 223).[125] There are also references to a *tabula mensalis*, which can be variously interpreted as a dining table or a trestle table, with values ranging from 4 to 16d. A few are valued at around 20d, suggesting more solid pieces of furniture. More typical are the two *tabule mensal'* belonging to William Leder, a franklin (elite freeholder) of West Lavington (Wiltshire) in 1404, valued at 2s.[126]

[125] E45; these tables are further described as 'old and rotten'.
[126] E28.

The coroners' lists also include several entries for 'table' with no mention of trestles, but generally exhibit a greater level of distinction between table and table boards than the escheators' lists. The values ascribed to tables within the coroners' records are varied. This is nicely illustrated in the list of Thomas Bullock, a tailor of Hawkhurst (Kent), who committed murder in 1577. He had two tables (2s), a long table (12d) and a square table (4d).[127] Other examples are George Bowre of Kingthorpe (Yorkshire) who had a square table valued at 3s 4d in 1588, while Reynold Carter, a chandler of Chiddingstone (Kent), had in 1570 an old table valued at 2d, plus a 'plancke table'.[128] The size of a table and its condition thus appear to have played a role in the determination of value. Within the escheators' records, John Coupere of Wellingborough (Northamptonshire) and Sibyl Thedeware of Rockland St Mary (Norfolk) each had a small table (*parua tabula*), valued at 5d and 2d respectively.[129] In many cases tables were valued along with benches or stools, for example John Wyvenden of Hawkhurst (Kent), had a 'plain table and trestle set in the ground', with a form (bench), cupboard and two old chairs, valued together at 2s in 1576, suggesting these items were of low value individually.[130] An increasing diversity in the types of tables used in the home can also be traced through wills and probate records (Sear and Sneath 2020, 137–8).

Some households had multiple tables. William Burton, of an unidentified location in Kent or Middlesex, who was outlawed by civil suit in 1404, seems to have had at least two. The term *tabul'* (whether singular or plural is unclear) crops up twice in his list. In both cases, the term appears within a collection of objects listed together and valued as a group.[131] A similar case is that of Richard Vttokestre, parson of Lyminge (Kent), outlawed by civil suit in 1382. He had four trestle tables (valued together at 13s 4d) and a further two tables (valued with four benches at 3s 6d), possibly suggesting a distinction between portable trestle tables and fixed tables.[132] Henry Pruet of Hampshire, outlawed in 1404, is listed as having three tables (three tables and three pairs of trestles).[133] These are valued with three benches at 4s 4d. Similarly, Richard Clifford of Chiswick (Middlesex), outlawed by civil suit in 1422, had three trestles and three tables, plus forms (benches).[134] That these items are often grouped with benches for the purpose of valuation suggests that they were primarily understood as associated with dining, rather than having a principal role as workbenches, although they could have also fulfilled this function. There is nothing within the escheators' records to suggest a link between trestles and lower status households;

[127] C547.
[128] C346; C208.
[129] E304; E627.
[130] C230.
[131] E12.
[132] E642.
[133] E36; the document is partly illegible, but 'trestles' presumably follows 'pairs'.
[134] E608.

trestles are listed among the belongings of clergy, a merchant, and a goldsmith. Occupations are listed too rarely within the coroners' records to analyse this relationship, however.

Whereas the table likely had a range of functions, tablecloths are clearly associated with dining. The importance of tablecloths in elite dining can be traced back to the early medieval period (Jervis, Whelan and Livada 2017, 256), and Woolgar (2016, 192) highlights how in many cases the importance of napery surpassed that of the furniture underneath. Indeed, the custumals studied by Birrell (2015, 17) enshrine the rights of tenants to eat in a 'dignified' fashion, implying a concern not only with being provided with food, but also with the opportunity to consume appropriately including, perhaps, the use of a tablecloth. While we must bear in mind the caveat that tableware may have been included within the catch-all category of 'household utensils', the acquisition of a tablecloth without pewter ware or specialist consumption vessels may be indicative of aspirational behaviour among those at the lower end of society. Generally, these were valuable items. In 1404 William Leder, the Wiltshire franklin, had two tablecloths, valued at 4s (more than his two trestles and tables valued at 2s 8d altogether), and in 1435 William Chitynden, a labourer of Cranbrook (Kent) had two, valued at 20d, showing how these objects were used by households at each end of village society.[135] Within the escheators' lists, values assigned to cloths range from 4d to 10s, and therefore they must have varied considerably in material, size and condition. The same is true of those in the coroners' records. For example, in 1551 Thomas Thomas, possibly a tanner, of Longbridge Deverill (Wiltshire) had three linen tablecloths valued at 4s, but William Sparke, a yeoman of Loddon (Norfolk) had two (material unspecified) valued at only 8d in 1519.[136] The list of the Wiltshire clergyman John James provides some further insights into these variations. He had a diaper (probably patterned silk) tablecloth valued at 10s, a Holland (a fine linen made in the Netherlands) tablecloth valued at 3s 4d and another tablecloth worth 16d.[137] The material of these cloths was clearly an important factor in determining their value. The escheators' records provide 20 cases where a tablecloth, but no table, is listed as the only object associated with dining. It may be the case that tables were excluded from the list for some reason, perhaps being considered an immovable item associated with a property. It was, however, common for napery to be passed on through wills, particularly down the female line, and this may account for the occurrence of cloths with no associated furniture (Hamling and Richardson 2017, 135).

Of particular interest are instances where households possessed multiple tablecloths. For example, as noted William Leder possessed two tablecloths, as well as two tables and two trestles.[138] Another case is John Meselyn, of an

[135] E28; E918.
[136] C126; C133.
[137] C382.
[138] E28.

unidentified Kent or Middlesex location, outlawed by civil suit in 1404. Meselyn possessed a table, two tablecloths and 'other *naperie*', perhaps napkins or further tablecloths.[139] The table is valued with other items, but the cloths and napery are valued together at 12d. In one case, that of Nicholas Shawe of Mere (Wiltshire), who broke out of prison in 1401, the list includes two tablecloths (one valued at 12d and the other at 6d), as well as two napkins (valued at 10d).[140] In around half of cases (34/56) where households possessed a tablecloth, at least one napkin or towel was also present. However, there are two cases, William Mauldeson of Wintringham (Yorkshire; outlawed in 1422) and Robert Smyth of Sutton, Wiltshire (outlawed by civil suit in 1408) where the only objects associated with dining are napkins (in both cases their other possessions include animals, agricultural produce, tools and other furnishings as well as basic kitchen equipment; Smyth's napkin is valued at 6d).[141] Overall, the evidence for tables and cloths shows variability in the arrangements of particular households and in the value and character of these objects, with cloths seemingly being particularly popular objects within non-elite households.

Eating utensils and pewter ware

The most basic eating utensils, trenchers of stale bread, would not have been worth recording. Trenchers, probably of wood, occur in six coroners' lists; the six belonging to the Wiltshire clergyman John James in 1577 are noted as being 'fine' and stored in a box.[142] Wooden vessels recovered from our sample of archaeological contexts (which survive only where the wood is mineralised or deposits are waterlogged) are exclusively turned bowls. An example from Wakefield (Yorkshire; Birmingham Archaeology 2009) carries decorative incisions. A vessel from Abbeytown (Cumbria; Grampus Heritage 2012) was cut in half and may be a mazer which was cut to remove its silver or gilt band. Bowls vary in size. Two examples from 75–87 Main Street Cockermouth (Cumbria; Leech and Gregory 2012) have a diameter of approximately 180mm, but a larger example from Carlisle had a diameter of 560mm (Newman 2011), suggesting that it was not used for individual food or drink consumption. Other examples, from Exmouth (Devon; Weddell 1980), Dinna Clerks (Devon; Beresford 1979), Ripon (Yorkshire; Finlayson 2001b) and Berwick-upon-Tweed (Northumberland; Lancaster University Archaeology Unit 2000) appear undecorated.

Most of the eating utensils listed in both the escheators' and coroners' records are pewter ware. Most scholarship on medieval and early modern pewter has focused on questions of manufacture (see Homer 1991 for an overview). London was the centre of the pewter industry, but in the fifteenth century pewterers are

[139] E8.
[140] E1437.
[141] E563; E1281.
[142] C45; C146; C158; C382; C472; C547.

recorded in several large towns, including Canterbury, Northampton, Southampton and Ipswich (Homer 1991, 68). The most comprehensive study of the archaeology of medieval pewter is that of Weinstein (2011), who presents an overview of both manufacture and use, including scientific analysis of materials and a survey of forms from archaeological contexts. Prior to our period, pewter was mostly used in the church, but by the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries its consumption in domestic (particularly high status and urban) contexts was rising (Hatcher and Barker 1974, 43; Weinstein 2011, 216). Hatcher and Barker (1974, 46) associate this increase with a rise in living standards after the Black Death and perceive it as a part of a wider increase in the quality and use of items of furniture (discussed in Chapter 5). The sixteenth century saw a substantial growth in the pewter industry, and pewter ware became increasingly prevalent in the homes of rural households (Weinstein 2011, 55–6). Pewter was widely available at markets and fairs in the late medieval and early modern period (Hatcher and Barker 1974, 253). It is likely that this mechanism, rather than purchasing direct from pewterers, was the principal means through which rural households acquired pewter. This may, in part, account for the odd quantities of items present in some lists, as markets and fairs may have facilitated the acquisition of single objects rather than complete sets, in accordance with the purchaser's means. Pewter is distinct from copper alloy and iron in that it is not well suited to the manufacture of cooking vessels. Therefore, its introduction marks a fundamental change both in the perception and value of dining vessels and of dining itself in the later middle ages, perhaps inspired by larger communal gatherings in higher status contexts experienced, for example, around the harvest. The escheators' and coroners' datasets offer a unique opportunity to track the introduction of pewter vessels in non-elite households. It is unfortunate that the composition of pewter means that it does not often survive in the ground, with none present within the archaeological sample analysed here.

The most numerous tableware vessels are those associated with the serving and eating of foodstuffs (Table 4.2). Among the escheators' records the most abundant items are dishes (typically listed as being of pewter or tin; there are only five lists which contain wooden dishes). Most commonly these occur in sets of six or, occasionally, 12 as is typical for plate in general (Woolgar 2016, 178; Weinstein 2011, 75) (Figure 4.1). The next most common are platters, typically of pewter or tin, but with occasional wooden examples. These also seem to commonly occur in multiples of three, particularly in lists with larger quantities of these vessels. These items are suggestive of the display of foodstuffs in the centre of the table, perhaps indicative of the consumption of sliced meats (see Weinstein 2011, 72). The presence of 35 saucers, across 11 escheators' lists (typically occurring in multiples of three), is particularly noteworthy as this implies the preparation of flavoured sauces to be served at the table (see Woolgar 2016, 84–92). Where the material is stated, these are of pewter (Figure 4.1).

In the majority of cases, the only pewter items listed are dishes, typically in groups of three to six (Table 4.3). There are, however, instances where households had more. Edward Knyght of Seend (Wiltshire) had 8 pewter dishes

Table 4.2: The occurrence of eating vessels in the escheators' and coroners' records.

Object	Escheators'		Coroners'	
	No. items	No. Lists	No. Items	No. Lists
Vessels (specific type not stated)	190	23	27	11
Dish	229	41	220	37
Charger	11	5		
Platter	55	16	119	30
Saucer	34	11	80	22
Salt cellar	22	12	22	14
Pewter Pot	2	1	6	5
Bowl	2	2	33	10
Pottinger	5	1	24	10
Chafing dish			17	15
Custard dish			5	1
Egg dish			1	1
Porringer			3	3
Pottinger & Platter			12	1
Trencher			46	6

(valued at 16d) and John Treby, a clerk from Devon, had 12 tin dishes.[143] The list of Thomas Molundre, parson of Great Brington (Northamptonshire), is distinctive in having four chargers and three platters as the only tableware (no valuations are given), which is surprising given his diverse range of kitchen equipment, including tools for roasting and a mortar.[144] Perhaps here we are seeing the larger vessels that were used to serve the potentially elaborate dishes prepared by this household, while the smaller eating vessels, perhaps wooden trenchers, are omitted from the list. Other lists have a more varied range of tableware. The most diverse is that of Richard Swalwa, a goldsmith of Great Torrington (Devon), who possessed six dishes, five pottingers, three saucers, one pot and a pewter salt cellar (valued together at 2s 4d) along with a quite complex range of kitchen equipment.[145] Similarly, Robert Tyuerton, a 'leech' of Woodnewton (Northamptonshire) possessed two platters, four dishes, four

[143] E14; E55.
[144] E298.
[145] E517.

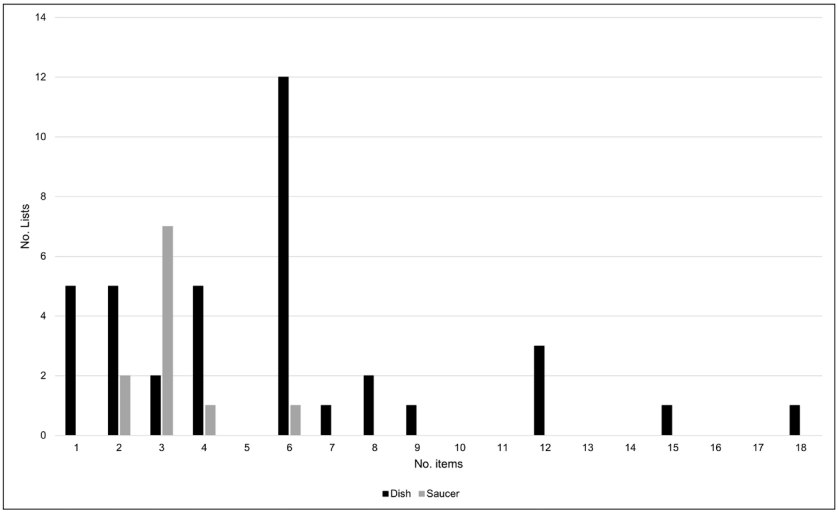


Figure 4.1: Occurrence of dishes and saucers in the escheators' lists. The bars indicate the number of lists which contain the stated number of dishes and saucers.

saucers and a pewter salt cellar as well as a table cloth.[146] These examples demonstrate that reasonably well-off households, with a wide variety of goods, might only have a limited range of pewter tableware.

Salt cellars occur in multiple escheators' lists. These were often the centrepiece of the table (Woolgar 2016, 186), so the occurrence of these items in pewter, and in one case silver, is significant for understanding how middling households (including two clerics, a leech and a yeoman) may have sought to emulate the practices of the elite table, where it was increasingly being used as a flavouring as well as a preservative. The price of salt dropped steadily across the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries, but remained a moderately expensive commodity, restricting its accessibility to households (Bridbury 1955, 152; Sear and Sneath 2020, 70–1).

The symbolism of the salt cellar is demonstrated through the later medieval and early modern practice of placing it in front of the diner of the highest social status, resulting in the expression that someone is 'above' or 'below' the salt (Buxton 2015, 164). This symbolism likely relates to the metaphorical status of salt as a holy and purifying substance (Yeoman 2018, 182). Yeoman (2018, 191) suggests that the act of filling the salt cellar, placing it on the table and then removing it for storage in the buttery or pantry can be likened to the performance of eucharistic rituals, in which objects are processed in and out of the church. Medieval eucharistic thought framed domestic practice, from the saying of prayers in the bed chamber to the serving of food (French

[146] E307.

Table 4.3: Combinations of pewter vessels occurring in the escheators' records.

Dish	Platter	Charger	Saucer	Salt Cellar	Pot	Bowl	Pottinger	Misc. Vessels	No. Lists
X									22
X	X								5
				X				X	2
X	X	X	X	X					1
X			X	X					1
X	X	X	X						1
X			X						1
X	X		X	X					1
X	X			X		X			1
X			X	X			X		1
X				X					1
X	X		X						1
X						X			1
X								X	1
X		X							1
X	X	X		X					1
	X		X	X					1
	X								1
	X	X							1
	X		X						1
	X			X					1
				X					1
					X				1
			X						1
								X	20

2014, 46). For example, Gardiner (2008) highlights parallels between liturgical and domestic behaviour around dining, and it is perhaps fruitful to consider these in the context of an increasing presence of religious items in the home after the Black Death (French 2021, 191–5; Kolpacoff Deane 2013). Following the Reformation, the melting down of church plate and its refashioning into

domestic objects may also have afforded this material a religious significance. As Walsham (2017) argues, the transformation of liturgical objects into commodities stripped them of their potency, yet consumers may have been aware of the potential or actual liturgical origins of their tableware. These liturgical connections can be situated within a broader suite of tableware in other materials which provided a means to subtly display religious devotion or provide material experiences, once provided by the church, in the home (Hutton 1995; Walsham 2008; 2017).

The full set of pewter tableware was referred to as 'the garnish' and comprised 12 platters, 12 dishes and 12 saucers (Weinstein 2011, 75). This full complement of wares is not present in our lists. Rather than acquiring 'sets', households acquired what they could afford and adapted their use into existing and emerging dining practices (see also French 2021, 143). Indeed, as French (2014, 53) highlights, we might expect households to change their eating habits gradually, as they adopted not only new tableware but developed tastes for different types of foods, cooked in different ways. Additionally, small households did not require the large sets needed for formal dining, meaning they had different requirements to the metropolitan merchants and companies who were the earliest adopters of pewter in large quantities. Division of sets could also occur, as pewterware was split between heirs (French 2014, 50). The proportion of escheators' lists within an individual decade that include at least one item of pewter never rises above 11% (Figure 4.2). The value of these items is difficult to ascertain, as many are valued within groups of other items. Pewter dishes appear relatively cheap, however. John Stanke, a butcher of Andover (Hampshire), had three valued at 12d in 1404, for example.[147] Even salt cellars were not prohibitively expensive. John Moigne's two pewter salt cellars were valued at 12d in 1405, although the silver examples owned by the cleric Richard Fysshere of Attleborough (Norfolk) in 1448 were considerably more valuable (two 'worn' items valued at 20s).[148] Individual items of pewter appear to have been within reach of those of modest means. However, these households found the cost of obtaining a suite of complementary vessels prohibitive, placing acquisition of a full set, or more specialist items, out of the reach of some households.

A rise in pewter use can be charted through the later fourteenth century, peaking in the second quarter of the fifteenth century, after which point lists become less detailed (Figure 4.2). The later fourteenth century sees an increase in the average number of pewter items in lists, with this dropping and remaining fairly stable thought the first half of the fifteenth century. This, coupled with the increasing occurrence of at least one pewter item in lists, is suggestive of a rising number of households acquiring pewter, but in low quantities. Few occupations are listed before the 1410s; however, in this decade individuals listed with pewter ware include two yeomen, a husbandman and a clerk. Clearly at

[147] E30.
[148] E45; E126.

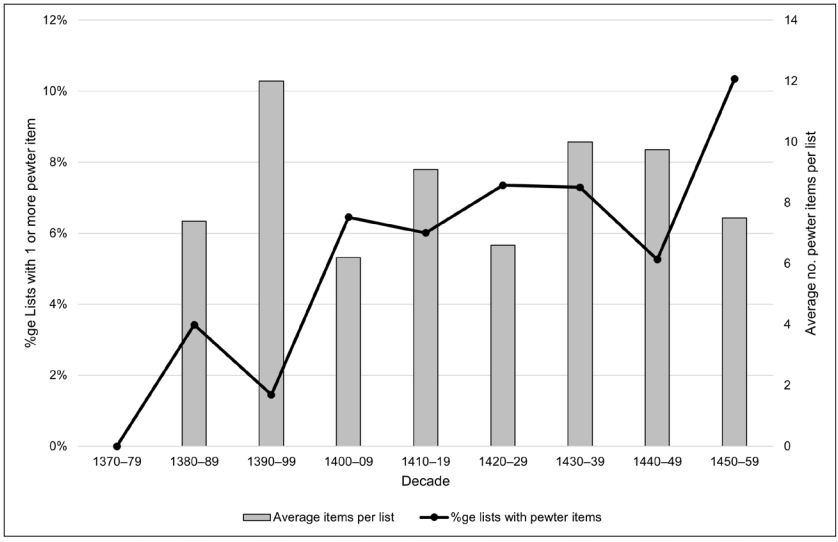


Figure 4.2: Proportion of escheators' lists containing pewter items (line chart), and the mean quantity of pewter items (bar chart), by decade.

this early stage, a century or so earlier than studies such as Weinstein's suggest, pewter was starting to find its way into rural homes.

Evidence of the use of other metals to make serving vessels is provided by archaeological evidence of copper alloy platters from Dartford (Kent; TVAS 2014) and Wharram Percy (Yorkshire; Harding, Marlow-Mann and Wrathmell 2010) and a possible iron plate from the manor house at Aston (Yorkshire; Wiles 2011). There are three similar copper alloy dishes on the database of the Portable Antiquities Scheme; however, these items are very rare when compared to copper alloy cooking vessels (Figure 4.3).[149] Despite their scarcity, these vessels perhaps indicate the use of cheaper metals to adopt new habits of serving and eating in some households. While pewter, with its liturgical associations, was perhaps a particularly meaningful material, wooden vessels could also carry meaning through decoration, as Yeoman (2017) shows in her analysis of elaborately decorated early modern trenchers (perhaps the 'fine' examples belonging to John James carried such decoration). The evidence is suggesting two things: firstly, that households needed to acquire a broader range of vessels, including items suitable for serving solid foods, such as platters or chargers; and secondly, that pewter was increasingly the preferred material for these vessels. It is probably simplistic to see this as material substitution in pursuit of the emulation of high-status dining practices. Instead, it represents a process of adaptation to the availability of new materials, foodstuffs and experiences. These included

[149] NMS-073775; WAW-F6F236; LON-691E76.

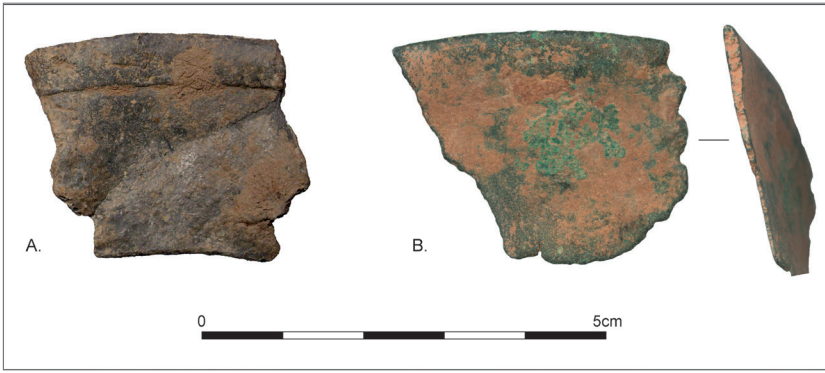


Figure 4.3: Examples of lead alloy and copper alloy dishes reported to the PAS. A: Fragment of a 14th–15th century tin alloy/pewter dish, probably a shallow plate-type vessel from Tanworth-in-Arden, Warwickshire PAS Reference WAW-F5CC16); B: Fragment from a 15th–17th century copper alloy dish-like vessel from Aston Canlow, Warwickshire (WAW-F6F236). Reproduced under CC-Share Alike Licence. Images: Birmingham Museums Trust.

sensations of taste and texture, but also opportunities for the display and performance of piety and identity.

A similar range of items are present in the coroners' lists, although there are some changes in the relative importance of certain objects (Table 4.2). Dishes remained the most common vessel. Platters were the second most important items and salt cellars remained relatively common. The vessels listed are more diverse, including pottingers, porringers and specialised items such as the egg dish and custard dishes belonging to John James.[150] A major difference is the relative importance of bowls and also the presence of latten chafing dishes, interpreted as items to keep food warm at the table. This diversification is suggestive of a sixteenth-century maturation of the new dining practices hinted at in the escheators' lists.

Silver and pewter spoons

Sets of silver spoons are often thought to have been acquired as a means of storing wealth. However, they may also have had a role in the more ritualistic elements of dining, perhaps used on special occasions such as weddings, and they may be understood as having liturgical associations (Goldberg 2008, 134). Goldberg (2008,134–5) argues that silver spoons were symbolic possessions, signifying good manners and good breeding, but could easily be converted into cash if needed. He contrasts the acquisition of silver spoons by urban 'bourgeois' households with the holding of wealth in livestock and land

[150] C382.

by rural households (discussed further in Chapter 9). The evidence from the escheators' and coroners' records supports this to some degree. On the whole, where occupation is listed, spoons can be clearly related to the 'middling sort' of late medieval and Tudor society: merchants, administrators, yeomen and the clergy. A link with towns is harder to sustain; where settlement is stated, 48% of the escheators' lists including silver (or probably silver) spoons are related to places with either borough charters or identified as a market town in 1600, but the remainder are from categorically rural contexts, while the majority of occurrences in the coroners' records are also from rural households.

There are nine escheators' lists where silver spoons are the only objects associated with dining other than tables and table linens. Typically, there are multiple spoons listed, usually 6 or 12. Of particular interest are the possessions of husbandman John Ferrour of Sevenhampton (Wiltshire), whose goods were confiscated in 1415. He possessed two 'broken' silver spoons valued at 4s, alongside two tablecloths (but no table) and five napkins.[151] Another individual from an unambiguously rural settlement is Geoffrey Geney, a franklin of Sutton (Suffolk), outlawed by civil suit in 1433, who had a dozen silver spoons.[152] These, as well as a small number of other examples within the dataset, demonstrate that substantial rural tenants clearly aspired to, and were able to, acquire silver spoons, but that these were particularly valuable possessions.[153] Others in this group include administrative officials and clergy: William Stokker, a clerk of Forncett St Mary or St Peter (Norfolk), and Thomas Crishale, vicar of Barton Bendish (Norfolk, but outlawed in Middlesex), both possessed six spoons valued at 10s.[154] Others potentially fall within the class of small-town residents who invested in items of silver in the manner suggested by Goldberg. These include John Maister, a merchant of Havant (Hampshire), who had six spoons valued at 10s as well as three napkins and three tablecloths, and Geoffrey Potet of Dartford (Kent), who in 1381 had six spoons valued at 6s, a tablecloth and napkin, a table and two trestles.[155] Among the coroners' lists only one inventory lists spoons as the only object associated with dining; Jane Batty, a spinster of Warrington (Yorkshire), had two silver spoons valued at 3s in 1543.[156] In all, silver spoons occur in four lists, with latten or pewter spoons in a further two.

In considering the motivations behind the acquisition of these objects, we can turn to archaeological evidence to examine the form, appearance and meaning of spoons. Silver and pewter spoons are rare in the archaeological dataset. A silver spoon bowl was recovered at Wharram Percy (Harding, Marlow-Mann and Wrathmell 2010) and a pewter slip-top spoon was recovered from a sixteenth-century context at Wye (Kent; Griffin 2013), which related

[151] E237.
[152] E1522.
[153] E.g. E788 John Robynson of Girlington in Craven, Yorkshire (1417).
[154] E1285; E1534.
[155] E122; E656.
[156] C43.

historical research suggests was probably associated with a yeoman household. A pewter apostle head spoon was excavated at Inner Ashley Wood (Wiltshire; Stallybrass 1906) and fragments of pewter or copper alloy spoons were excavated from a further eight sites. At the time of writing (June 2019) there are 41 silver or silver gilt spoons in the Portable Antiquities Scheme database (Figure 4.4). These are remarkably uniform in style: where the handle survives the majority are decorated with an acorn knop, with a smaller number having a diamond point terminal, features which typically date from the fourteenth to fifteenth centuries (Egan 2010, 246). In his study of medieval dress accessories, Cassels (2013, 175–80) draws on various references to acorns in medieval literary and visual culture to argue that they can be regarded as 'implicit symbols of patience, modesty and chasteness'. As with pewter ware, and within the context of increasing domestic devotion in the later fifteenth century, such spoons can be considered among a suite of objects with religious significance which entered the home (French 2021, 144). After the Reformation, they perhaps acquired further significance, allowing for the persistence of tactile and embodied engagement with spiritually loaded objects, substituting the experiences which would previously have been central to church worship (see Walker Bynum 2012, 270; Walsham 2017). Such an interpretation can be advanced through the consideration of a further significant group: spoons in silver, pewter and copper alloy with anthropomorphic 'maidenhead' knops. These are likely to be fifteenth- or sixteenth-century apostle spoons which could be given as christening gifts. Other spoons also carry religious iconography. Pewter examples from Yorkshire, Suffolk and Norfolk have crosses etched into the bowl and a spoon from Shropshire is incised MATER.DEI.MEMENTO.MEI (Mother of God, Remember Me) and carries a crude engraving of the Virgin and child. This inscription is also carried on a copper alloy example from Somerset, and a pewter spoon from the Isle of Wight. In probate inventories there is a strong association between silver spoons and chambers, which were places of reflection and prayer (Hamling and Richardson 2017, 41–2). Similar associations between spoons and personal devotion have been advanced in studies of these objects from continental Europe (e.g. Poulsen 2004, 60; Sundmark 2017; Ardavičiūtė-Ramanauskienė 2018).

Another feature of the PAS sample is the presence of copper alloy spoons decorated with silvering or tinning, and often in similar forms to silver spoons, presumably intended to imitate silver or pewter examples. These include three which carry anthropomorphic decoration and may be apostle spoons. This iconography supports Goldberg's link between spoons and liturgical practice. The PAS data, as well as the occasional occurrence of these items in the households of rural husbandmen, demonstrate the possession of spoons by rural, as well as urban households. While offering stores of wealth, the occurrence of spoons in pewter and copper alloy, as well as silver, suggests a desire to acquire objects for other reasons: perhaps representing an investment in piety, not simply to represent this quality, but to enable the performance and experience of devotion within domestic contexts.

Figure 4.4: Examples of silver and pewter spoons reported to the PAS. A: 14th–15th century silver spoon with acorn knop from Newington, Oxfordshire (PAS Reference BERK-203428); B: Silver spoon dating to c. 1375 with pointed knop from East Knoyle, Wiltshire. Features leopard head and wheatsheaf marks (DOR-235972); C: Anthropomorphic knop from a copper alloy maidenhead or apostle spoon dated c.1400–1600 from Bishops Waltham, Hampshire (HAMP-71D2020); D: Silver-gilt knop depicting a Wildman motif from Rendlesham, Suffolk (SF-0B2F53); E: Silver gilt spoon handle with acorn knop from Enmore, Somerset. Reproduced under CC Share Alike Licence (A) and CC By Attribution Licence (B; C; D; E). Images: Oxfordshire County Council; Hampshire Cultural Trust; Suffolk County Council; Somerset County Council.

Handwashing

Other vessels, namely ewers and basins (sometimes referred to as lavers), are specifically associated with the ritual of handwashing before a meal. Water would be poured over the hands from the ewer over the basin, finding a parallel in the way that priests washed their hands while preparing to perform the eucharist. Whereas silver spoons and plate have liturgical associations through their material, these items can be understood as having a more direct liturgical significance, introducing to mealtimes an act associated with the mass (Redknap 2010, 155). In particular, the occurrence of examples with acorn grips on the handles situates these objects within the same aesthetic realm as silver spoons and dress accessories. These items are considerably more abundant in the escheators' records (occurring in 85 lists) than the coroners', suggesting that this ritualised dining practice had declined in importance by the sixteenth century, although it certainly persisted, and pewter ewers continued to be manufactured (Weinstein 2011, 90). The material is rarely noted, but examples of brass, lead and pewter ewers can be found in the escheators' records.[157]

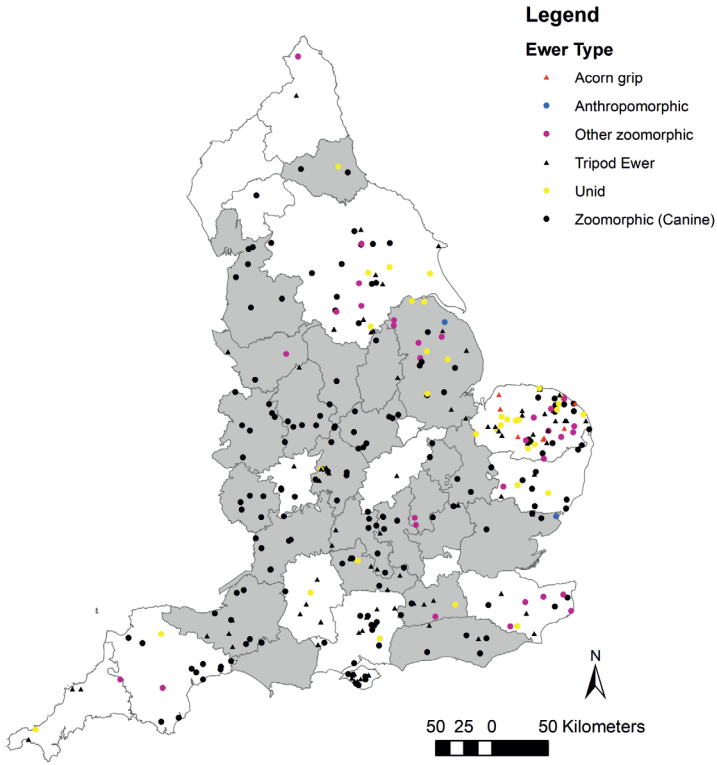
There is a single ewer fragment within the archaeological dataset. This is a copper alloy spout moulded into the shape of a dog's head from the rectory at Wimbotsham (Norfolk; Shelley 2003). These are the most frequently occurring type of ewer recorded in the PAS database (Figure 4.5; see also Lewis 1987; Redknap 2010 for other examples). The distribution of these is spread across England but appears concentrated on a band running approximately from Somerset to Norfolk (Figure 4.6). Compared to metal cooking vessels, they are noticeably absent from the south-west, Sussex and Essex (although they are reasonably abundant in Kent), as well as from Yorkshire and the west midlands. This is reflected, to a degree, in the escheators' and coroners' dataset, with ewers being particularly prevalent in Kent, Wiltshire, Northamptonshire and Norfolk and occurring rarely in lists from Worcestershire, Yorkshire, Devon and Cornwall (Figure 4.6). Both datasets therefore suggest a degree of regionality in the regular acquisition of specialist handwashing vessels.

Verhaege (1991) has noted the increasing prevalence of vessels in both ceramic and metalware for handwashing from the thirteenth century. He suggests that as this element of dining became popularised, specialist items started to be produced in cheaper materials. He highlights a distinction between the ewer (typically a jug-like vessel, sometimes with feet) and the aquamanile, typically an anthropomorphic or zoomorphic vessel, often depicting horses, other animals, mythical creatures or, occasionally, knights on horseback. Aquamaniles were also made in ceramic and the distribution of the production centres making these items is noticeably similar to that of ewers recorded in the PAS database. For example, they were produced at Brill Boarstall (Buckinghamshire) (Mellor 1994) and at Lyvedon (Northamptonshire). These ceramic examples

[157] Additionally, silver ewers appear in the list of William Wawe (E86) but these are probably stolen property.

Figure 4.5: Examples of ewer types in the PAS dataset. Top: Dogs head ewer spout from Broughton Gifford, Wiltshire (PAS Reference NMGW-0508C5). CC By Attribution Licence: Portable Antiquities Scheme. Bottom: Foot from tripod ewer from Calbourne, Isle of Wight. CC Share Alike Licence: Frank Basford.

were a relatively short-lived phenomenon, primarily dating to the thirteenth and early fourteenth century, making them a fairly minor component of the suite of specialist handwashing material culture. The presence of ewers in non-elite households shows a concern with handwashing and, as Verhaege suggests, the manufacture of vessels in pottery and cheaper metals is suggestive of the popularisation of this practice. It is likely that other vessels such as ceramic jugs



Dog's head spout	175
Tripod ewer leg	99
Zoomorphic	23
Acorn grip	8
Lion head spout	6
Horse leg	3
Bird/eagle spout	2
Camel spout	2
Anthropomorphic	2

Figure 4.6: The distribution of ewer fragments by type reported to the PAS (June 2019).

were also used for handwashing, but cannot be identified as such due to their multipurpose character.

Within the escheators' sample, some of the ewers and basins were clearly quite old, being described as worn or old in three instances. Lists usually include both an ewer and a basin (or in a small number of cases, multiples of each), but seven basins appear without a ewer and 14 ewers appear without a basin. Peter Mapelton of Hampshire (outlawed in 1417) had three ewers and three basins, while John Moigne of Warmington (1405, ewers and basins valued at 10s), Thomas Paccheherst of Kent (1407, ewers and basins valued at 3s 4d) and Robert Erhethe of Erith (Kent) (1407, ewers and basins valued at 4s) all had two pairs, the latter also possessing a range of drinking vessels.[158] Why these households may have required more than one set of basins and ewers is unclear, but may be indicative of the display as well as practical use of these vessels, or the inheritance of items after a household had been established. The occurrence of either a basin or a ewer in isolation may suggest that some of these objects had an alternative function, or were used alongside vessels of other materials; for example, basins may have been paired with ceramic aquamaniles or jugs. Ewers and basins are typically valued together, most commonly at around 20d.

In contrast to the escheators' records, ewers or lavers occur in only four coroners' lists, and in all but one case these occur with a basin. Analysis of the occurrence of handwashing equipment in escheators' lists shows a relatively sudden decline in its occurrence from the 1420s (Figure 4.7). Buxton's (2015, 155) analysis of probate records from Thame shows that ewers and basins

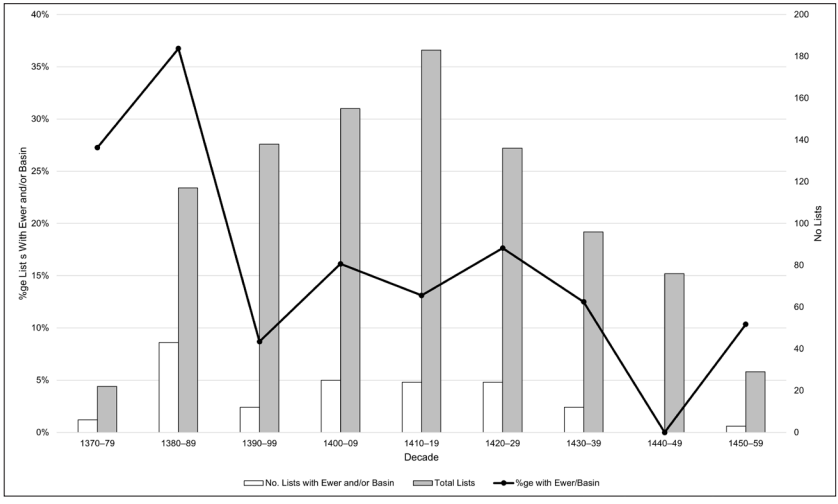


Figure 4.7: The occurrence of handwashing equipment in the escheators' records by decade.

[158] E510; E1339; E45; E1336.

were still in use in the early seventeenth century, typically among yeomen and artisans, but he argues that their low incidence suggests a fading of their use, a phenomenon which our data suggests occurs over a longer period. This corresponds with archaeological evidence which suggests the peak period of popularity for these vessels was the mid-to-late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries (Redknap 2010, 158).

Drinking vessels

Drinking vessels appear very rarely in the escheators' and coroners' chattels lists. In part, this is likely to be due to the increasing use of ceramic drinking vessels in the later fifteenth and sixteenth centuries (Gaimster and Nenk 1997), but also the cost of pewter items (Weinstein 2011, 90; note there are no individually valued pewter drinking vessels within our sample to test this assertion) and the widespread use of drinking vessels in leather and wood (Wood 2005). Six types of drinking vessels occur in the escheators' records, the most common being cups and mazers. There are 14 craters (bowls for the serving of drink), with occasional drinking horns, two chalices and a tankard (which may be a barrel). Several lists include multiple items associated with drinking (Table 4.4).

Drinking vessels are particularly difficult to interpret, as they often appear where the context or content of a list suggests that the goods were stolen. A good example is the case of Alice, servant of the deceased parson of Islip, whose possessions comprised six silver spoons, a mazer, a chest and silver pieces. Given that her goods were seized for felony, it is reasonable to assume that these goods were stolen, although it is also possible that the late parson had bequeathed them to her. There is no definitive evidence either way; the document does describe the items as Alice's goods, but one may not wish to take this too literally.[159] Another example is the case of William Wawe, a yeoman from Northcott (Middlesex) who had five silver craters, a gold crater and four silver gilt craters.[160] Wawe was hanged for his crimes, which likely included the theft of these vessels. The list of the goods of Thomas Fuller, yeoman of Lymington (Hampshire), is also unusual and suggestive of theft, his goods including a variety of elaborate drinking vessels alongside cash and a breviary.[161] A final illustrative example is Alexander Johnson who fled for felony in 1424, and whose goods were in the hands of the parson of Bradfield Combust (Suffolk).[162] These goods include a chalice, a silver adorned belt and two religious books, suggesting that these were stolen church contents. This example leads us to other ambiguous cases, where drinking vessels were the possessions of clergy.

[159] E822 (*bonorum et catallorum..que fuerunt Alicie seruient'…*).
[160] E86.
[161] E1120.
[162] E629.

Table 4.4: Summary of drinking vessels occurring in the escheators' records.

List No.	Name	Year	Occupation	Item	Quantity	Value (d)	Value per item (d)
107	William Spenser	1428	_	Mazer (murra)	2	320	160
200	Thomas Idery	1415	_	Mazer (murra)	1		
215	Hugh Cetur	1414	Clerk	Gilt mazer (maser deaurat')	1	60	60
249	William Cook	1390	_	Mazer (maser)	1		
282	Stephen Tannere	1413	_	Tankard (tankerd)	1	4	4
339	Patrick Goldsmyth	1418	_	Silver adorned mazer (mazorium debile cum ligamine argent')	1	16	16
				Silver band for cup (ligamen argent' pro cipho) and silver boss for cup (prentys argent' pro ciphis)	2	24	12
348	William Wodeward	1418	Yeoman	Ash-wood cup (ciphos fraxin')	3	2	0.7
407	John Northern	1437	_	Mazer (murra)	1	160	160
484	John Reynold	1418	Yeoman	Mazer (maser)	1	192	192
519	Thomas Serle	1422	_	Silver cup (ciphos argent')	2	160	80
				Small horn (parv' cornu)	1		
577	Richard Buryman	1422	_	Silver cup (tacea argent')	1	96	96
585	William Clerk	1417	_	Silver adorned horn (cornu argent' harneis')	1		
610	John Knot	1422	_	Horn (cornu)	1	66	66
738	William Thome	1381	_	Silver and gold bound cup (ciphas ligatas cim argento et auro)	>1		

(*Continued*)

Table 4.4: Continued.

List No.	Name	Year	Occupation	Item	Quantity	Value (d)	Value per item (d)
768	Thomas Isenden	1384	_	Worn silver-bound cup (ciphos ligat' cum argento debil')	2	40	20
789	George Braweby	1426	_	Silver adorned mazer (murra hernes' cum argento)	1	240	240
869	Thomas Totyng	1392	_	Silver-adorned mazer (murra arraiat' cum argento)	1	240	240
1182	Margaret Burdon	1444	Widow	Silver mazer (murra de argento)	1	160	160
1339	Robert de Erhethe	1407	_	Silver cup (ciphus argentis)	1	40	40
				Mazer (ciphus de murro)	2	24	12
1394	Thomas Megson	1399	Vintner	Mazer (murrum)	1		
1504	John Wynkelman	1430	_	Silver cups (ciphos argent')	3	960	320
1514	Thomas Aykebergh'	1430	Yeoman	Horn fitted with silver (cornu cum argento harnesiat')	1	480	480
1523	John Spurnell	1433	Labourer	Silver crater (cratere de argento)	1	120	120
Probable Stolen Goods							
86	William Wawe	1428	Yeoman	Silver crater (crater' argent')	5	3600	720
				Gold crater (magn' crater' stant de auro cum rubeis et alijs lapid')	1	9600	9600
				Silver-gilt crater (crater' argent' et deaurat')	4	6400	1600
629	Alexander Johnson	1424	_	Chalice (calicis)	1	800	800
822	Alice ?	1392	Servant	Mazer (murre)	1		

(*Continued*)

Table 4.4: Continued.

List No.	Name	Year	Occupation	Item	Quantity	Value (d)	Value per item (d)
Probable Stolen Goods							
1120	Thomas Fuller	1458	Yeoman	Mazer (ciphi vocat' a Nutte)	1	240	240
				Silver and gilt bound mazer (murr' circumligat' cum argent' deauarat')	3	720	240
				Horn cup silver gilt-bound with silver gilt feet (ciph' voc' a horne ligat' cum argent' deaurat' cum pedibus de argento deaurat')	1	160	160
				Silver crater (crater' argent')	1	120	120
1177	William Monk	1444	–	Crater (crater')	1	120	120
				Mazer (murr')	1	40	40
Possible Liturgical Vessels							
516	John Lideford	1422	Clerk	Silver cup (ciphos argent')	3	480	160
525	Adam Malet	1419	Rector	Adorned mazer (cipho de masere harnis')	1	120	120
587	John Ely	1417	Chaplain	Silver cup (ciphos argent')	3		
				Mazer (masers)	2		
1193	Henry Hole	1439	Vicar	Crater (crater')	1		
1299	John Wyn	1411	Clerk	Mazer (masers)	2		
1349	Thomas Kyrkeby	1407	Chaplain	Chalice (calix)	1		
1503	John Waryn	1430	Clerk	Silver cups (ciphos argent')	4	2400	600

These could have been personal possessions, but may also have been liturgical vessels. This is almost certainly the case for the chalice belonging to the chaplain Thomas Kyrkeby, and could also be the case in other instances, such as the mazer belonging to the rector Adam Malet and the silver cups and mazers belonging to the chaplain John Ely.[163] Finally, it is possible that the silver band for a cup and silver mazer belonging to Patrick Goldsmyth were stock, rather than his own goods.[164]

With these caveats in mind, it becomes apparent that drinking vessels were not common possessions of non-elite households, and where they do occur, they were typically mazers or cups. A distinction between mazers and cups is difficult to make. Mazers are typically of maple, with metal adornment, although there is considerable variability in their value, from 40d to 240d/£1. In the majority of cases their material is not listed, but one is identified as 'silver' and another as 'gilt', while two are listed as 'silver adorned', one as 'silver bound' and another as 'silver-gilt bound'. The cups are also listed as 'silver' (eight), while one is listed as ash and one entry is the 'silver boss for a cup', presumably of wood. Mazers and cups were valuable items, finding parallels in the particularly extravagant items found in both elite secular and ecclesiastical households (Woolgar 2016, 56–7). The two mazers belonging to William Spenser of Methwold (Norfolk; 1428) are valued at 26s 8d and the one belonging to John Northern of Glandford (Norfolk; 1435), at 13s 4d.[165] In both cases it is unclear whether these were stolen goods or the felon's own possessions. Another, adorned with silver and belonging to George Braweby of Old Malton (Yorkshire), was valued at 20s.[166] He committed theft in 1426, and this may be a stolen item, although the item is listed in the middle of an array of other more typical domestic items.[167] There are silver craters, one belonging to John Spurnell, a labourer who committed suicide in 1433, and the other to the above Thomas Fuller, both valued at 10s.[168] Given the value of these items, it is perhaps likely they were recovered, stolen objects.

There are only a few cases where drinking vessels can confidently be identified as the possessions of the felon. Where the occupation is stated, these include three yeomen, William Wodeward, John Reynold and Thomas Aykebergh'.[169] Others appear to be relatively wealthy agriculturalists, for example William Cook of Yarm (Yorkshire) had a mazer as well as six silver spoons, several animals and 40 sown acres.[170] In other cases, such as that of the clerk Hugh Cetur, mazers occur in fairly comprehensive lists of the possessions of clergy, suggesting that they were domestic possessions rather than liturgical

[163] E525; E587.
[164] E339.
[165] E107; E407.
[166] E789.
[167] E1120.
[168] E1523.
[169] E348; E484; E514.
[170] E249.

apparatus.[171] Similarly, Thomas Serle of Liskeard (Cornwall) had goods suggesting that he had a comfortable lifestyle.[172] In other cases, lists containing drinking vessels are seemingly incomplete, making the wider context of their consumption difficult to determine.

Woolgar (2016, 55–60) discusses the importance of communal drinking to medieval society, emphasising the role of shared cups in building various types of communal bonds, the crater sitting in the centre of the table to replenish the drinking vessels. Both Woolgar (2016) and French (2021, 59) highlight the value of mazers as mnemonic objects, particularly through their bequest to religious houses where the ritual use of these objects would preserve the memory of the benefactor or as heirlooms. Donation to religious houses would have taken them out of circulation and may therefore depress the number of these items appearing in the escheators' records. Finally, the shared cup carried further symbolism through its association with the eucharist, as can be seen through its role as a literary device in medieval writing (Bellis 2011). The range of people owning drinking vessels in the escheators' lists is instructive. It consists of a vintner, yeomen, clergy, with a single labourer and a widow, the majority of whom would have been able to maximise the symbolic capital of engaging in shared drinking and who, importantly, were in a position to afford both these expensive vessels and the wine to drink from them (Table 4.4).

The coroners' records show a marked contrast to the escheators' in the range of drinking vessels present and, because of the circumstances of seizure, are less likely to be stolen items. Cups occur in five lists, in two cases being identified as being made of pewter. It is noticeable that the range of people owning these cups is typically of lower status than those listed in the escheators' lists, consisting of two widows, a shepherd and a labourer. Pewter goblets occur in two lists, one relating to the Wiltshire clergyman John James.[173] Other notable contrasts with the escheators' records are the pots and pitchers associated with ale consumption belonging to Henry Cooper, the stoneware ceramic drinking vessels belonging to George Bowre and John James, and the drinking glasses belonging to John James.[174] Bottles occur in the lists of William Purches, John James, Edward Purkheme and Nicholas Cussyn (the latter's is specifically described as an aqua-vitae bottle).[175]

Stoneware mugs or jugs imported from the Rhineland are the most common drinking vessel occurring in the archaeological record (see Gaimster and Nenk 1997). The occurrence of glass in the archaeological dataset is noteworthy, given its general absence from the escheators' and coroners' records. Previous analyses have demonstrated that the use of glass was not widespread in medieval England. Tyson (2000) concludes that glass use was limited to the

[171] E215.
[172] E519.
[173] C382.
[174] C346; C382; C447.
[175] C308; C317; C382; C428.

wealthier, higher status members of society, including ecclesiastical figures, the urban elite and aristocracy, with it being rarely used in rural contexts (indeed she notes only one occurrence of imported glass at a village site, at Seacourt, Berkshire). Tyson also notes a temporal shift in glass use, with the thirteenth to fourteenth centuries being characterised by the occurrence of imported tablewares, and the fourteenth to fifteenth centuries by domestic utilitarian vessels (such as those used for distilling), with occasional finds of imported Venetian glass. For the sixteenth century, Willmott (2002) notes the continuing association of glass with elite and urban sites.

Within the archaeological dataset gathered here, several sites fit with the categories identified by Tyson and Willmott. The evidence principally comes from the hinterlands of major ports. From the area around London, drinking vessel glass has been recovered from Camden (AOC Archaeology 2001) and Islington (MOLAS 1998b; 2001; AOC Archaeology 2001) on the edge of the city of London and Creedy's Yard, Greenwich (Cooke and Philpotts 2002), the latter probably being associated with a high-status waterfront residence. Fragments of bottle glass and a possible Venetian drinking vessel come from Spital Street, Dartford, interpreted on the basis of faunal and ceramic remains as an affluent small-town household which had access to Mediterranean ceramics (TVAS 2014). Glass also comes from ports themselves: a flask from Barnstaple (Devon) is possibly of Spanish origin (Markuson 1980) and glass fragments also come from Berwick-upon-Tweed (Northumberland; Hunter and Moorhouse 1982; Mabbitt, Frain and Hodgson 2010). Within the hinterland of Hull, vessel glass comes from Low Fishergate, Doncaster (Yorkshire; McComish *et al.* 2010) and from the manorial site at Aston Hall, Sheffield (Yorkshire; Wiles 2011). Two shards from Lydd (Kent) may be intrusive later material, but perhaps demonstrate how rural households at the coast had access to a wider range of imported commodities than comparable inland households, as demonstrated by the variety of imported pottery from the site (Barber and Priestly-Bell 2008). There are, however, a small number of other site types represented in the sample. Small towns are represented by fragments of three glasses of sixteenth/seventeenth-century date from the Greyhound Hotel site, Fordingbridge (Hampshire; Harding and Light 2003) and fragments of vessel glass came from medieval contexts at Ripon (Yorkshire; Finlayson 2001a), Bishop's Waltham (Hampshire; possibly associated with an episcopal building; Lewis 1985), Corbridge (Northumberland; from a ditch, associated with fourteenth- and fifteenth-century pottery; Jones 2004) and Swindon a phial fragment, perhaps associated with an industrial process; Foundations Archaeology 2004). Fragments from a distillation vessel were also recovered from Laughton-en-le-Morthen (Yorkshire; Roberts and Rowe 2007). Most unusual, however, are fragments from four rural sites: a kicked (flared) base from a fourteenth- or fifteenth-century context at Wye (Kent; a probable yeoman house; Griffin 2013), the base of a forest glass drinking vessel (fourteenth–seventeenth century) from a ditch at Woodrow, Melksham (Wiltshire; Cotswold Archaeology

2016) and a fragment (sixteenth–seventeenth century) from a robber trench at Snodland (Kent; Dawkes 2010). While low in quantity, this evidence, largely from recent development-led excavations, shows that glass was perhaps more accessible than previous evidence has suggested, at least by the end of our period.

Tableware assemblages

Complex assemblages of tableware including vessels for a range of functions, as well as tables and napery, are rare in both the coroners' and escheators' lists. There is only one escheators' chattels list featuring a full range of tableware incorporating all of the functions discussed in this chapter. Thomas Isenden, probably a cloth dealer (see Chapter 8), of Sutton Valence (Kent), had a table (16d), two tablecloths and napkins, as well as a ewer and basin, four silver spoons (4s), two silver bound cups (3s 4d) and six pewter pieces (12d) when he was outlawed in 1383.[176] A further particularly complex collections was that of Hugh Cetur, a clerk from Woodchurch (Kent), who committed murder in 1414. He possessed a table and trestle (8d), two platters and two pewter saucers (8d), a salter or salt cellar (2d), a ewer and basin (2s), a gilt mazer and seven silver spoons (7s).[177] Finally, William Wodeward, a Worcestershire yeoman (whose goods are not individually valued) possessed a tablecloth and two napkins, six pewter dishes, a pewter platter, a charger, 12 wooden dishes and a salt cellar, as well as a ewer and basin and three ash wood cups in 1418.[178] We can see in all of these cases households of what might be termed a 'middling sort', that invested in elaborate dining. Even so, the valuations of these objects suggest that individual vessels of pewter were affordable. It was the acquisition of sets, as well the acquisition of silverware, which was prohibitively expensive. That such dining arrangements were aspirational might be demonstrated through the investment in tablewares by those slightly further down the social scale, for example [?] Bassyngham (forename unknown), a husbandman of Faxton (Northamptonshire) had at least two tables (valued with other furniture at 3s 4d), three 'old' saucers and seven pewter platters (valued together at 20d) and two 'old' basins and ewers (20d) in 1438.[179]

Similarly, particularly complex groupings of tableware are rare in the coroners' records, with a range of items representing each element of tableware (drinking, eating, handwashing, spoons and napery) occurring in only two remarkably different lists. In 1535, William Mursshall, a labourer of West Greenwich (Kent), had a folding table plus a pair of trestles and a table, a linen tablecloth, two latten basins, two wooden platters, a latten spoon and two pewter cups

[176] E768.
[177] E215.
[178] E348.
[179] E314.

(these items are not individually valued).[180] In contrast, John James, a wealthy Wiltshire clergyman, had a wide range of items including specialised serving vessels, glassware and ceramics.[181]

It is more common for a smaller range of items to occur together. For example, where handwashing equipment occurs alongside food serving vessels in the escheators' lists, typically we see a diverse range of objects represented: in 23 cases, handwashing equipment occurs alongside a range of eating items, which typically include dishes. For example, Robert Senyng of Linton (Kent), accused of treason following the Peasants' Revolt in 1381, had six pewter platters, six pewter dishes and three pewter saucers (valued together at 18d), and a ewer and a basin (18d), as well as a tablecloth and a napkin (18d), while John Wryde, of Ospringe (Kent), possessed three chargers, 15 pewter dishes and four old pewter salt cellars (valued together at 30d), an 'old and worn out (*perusitat*')' basin and ewer (24d), and two tablecloths and two napkins of worn canvas (12d).[182] The variability in the range of vessels present reveals that households took a variety of approaches to developing dining culture, implying a process of adaptation rather than emulation, presumably informed by a range of contextual factors, including market access, personal experience and concerns with personal piety. These findings mirror those of French's (2021) analysis of the acquisition of tableware by London households, in which she identifies religious references as a key component of dining experiences and the emergence of new ways of using tablewares as they became accessible to a wider variety of households.

In the escheators' records (once those items which are probably stolen are excluded), drinking vessels often occur with spoons or among the most diverse assemblages of tableware. The acquisition of drinking vessels may be understood as an investment in the adoption of aspirational lifestyles, as well as a demonstration of the ability to afford these expensive items (Table 4.4). It is reasonable to assume that other goods associated with dining were present in these households but were subsumed into the category of miscellaneous 'household utensils'.

In a small number of escheators' lists, a single type of dining object occurs alongside silver spoons. For example, in 1422 Thomas Knyth, a tanner of Great Torrington (Devon), possessed six spoons (6s) and a ewer and basin (2s).[183] In three other cases, spoons occur with ewers.[184] There are seven examples where the only tableware items are those for drinking and silver spoons, an example being the list of William Spenser of Methwold (Norfolk), dating to 1428, who had two mazers (valued at 26s 8d) and 12 spoons (valued at 20s).[185]

[180] C487.
[181] C382.
[182] E677; E901.
[183] E736.
[184] E773; E775; E1584.
[185] E107.

Other cases where spoons occur with a limited range of tableware are the lists of Robert Neuton of Oakham (Rutland; five spoons (6s) with pewter (3s) and wooden vessels), dating to 1431, Richard Fysshere, *magister* or *custos cantarie* of the church of Attleborough (Norfolk), who possessed six spoons (6s 8d) and two silver salt cellars (20s) in 1448, and John Stille of Hampshire or Wiltshire (precise location unknown) who had two dishes (4d) and three spoons (2s) in 1404.[186] While we must be open to the possibility that only certain items were seized, the occurrence of salt cellars, understood as a particularly prestigious item of tableware, and silver spoons in these lists is interesting, and possibly suggestive of choices being taken in the acquisition of a limited range of items of pewter ware which could fulfil a display, rather than functional, purpose, while holding their value.

To better understand the acquisition and use of these objects, it is productive to think about the performance of dining itself. Willmott (2005) has devised a means of classifying objects as 'mobile' or 'static', and as being for 'individual' or 'communal' use. Mobile items are those which might be passed around a table while static items are those which stay associated with a particular place. A total of 723 items within the escheators' lists can be classified through this scheme, of which 398 might be considered as 'communal' items (e.g. tablecloths, platters, ewers and basins, mazers) and 323 might be considered 'individual' items (e.g. napkins, dishes). The majority of items are 'static' (n=455), and as might be expected, there is a stronger correlation between mobility and communal objects. We might expect the use of communal, static items to relate to the sharing and display of foodstuffs (e.g. the communal salt cellar, salt itself moving on a spoon or in the hand) while mobile, communal items can be understood in the context of sharing and community building (e.g. handwashing and drinking). Within the elite context we might expect an emphasis on mobile items, brought to the table by servants, whereas in the rural household we might imagine the 'theatre' of dining being performed differently, with items being placed on the table before the meal. Eating together was an important symbol of the solidity of a marriage (French 2014, 47) and while women would have likely performed the role of server at mealtimes where servants were not present, they were also participants in what were smaller and more intimate meals than those in high status households.

Over time, some changes in the performance of dining can be seen (Figure 4.8). Most clear is the declining importance of 'mobile, communal' items as a proportion of tableware from the mid-fifteenth century, primarily due to the declining importance of communal handwashing. In the 1380s and 1390s, most lists include only 'communal mobile' items, primarily in the form of a basin and ewer. At the end of the fourteenth century, investment in the table appears to have primarily been through the acquisition of communal items associated with the display of foodstuffs and communal rituals. In

[186] E953; E126; E1575.

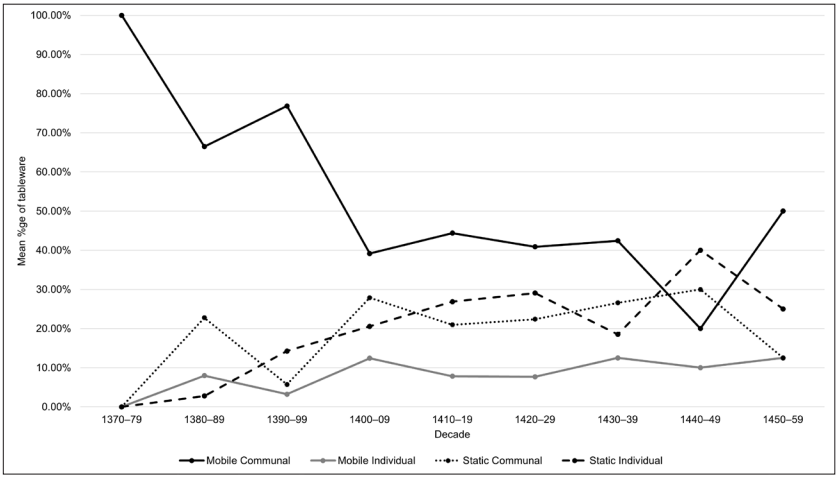


Figure 4.8: Composition of tableware assemblages in the escheators' records by decade. The graph shows the average proportion of tableware in each category among the lists from each decade.

contrast, the occurrence of 'static communal' items increased over time, reflecting the appearance of vessels such as salt cellars or platters used for displaying food on the table. By the mid-fifteenth century, while 'mobile communal' items are still present, we see the occurrence of lists which only include 'static individual' items and generally lists are more mixed in their composition. Static individual items remain a fairly stable occurrence in lists over time, reflecting the need for an individual dish or bowl. Although mobile individual items (principally napkins) only account for a small proportion of tableware across our period, the rise in the quantity of static individual items likely reflects the increasing complexity of meals. The introduction of vessels such as saucers alongside dishes or trenchers is a result of this phenomenon. This corresponds with a general trend towards greater investment in individual items over time, which continues with the high number of dishes in the coroners' lists. The acquisition of sets of dishes for personal consumption is perhaps indicative of a move towards more solid foodstuffs characteristic of the later medieval 'dietary optimum' suggested by Dyer (1983). A shift away from items associated with performative rituals might be associated with the retreat of dining to more intimate and personal spaces such as the parlour or chamber (see Hamling and Richardson 2017, 132).

Conclusion

A significant subset of the households investigated made some investment in tableware, commonly acquiring items for handwashing and items of plate including salt cellars and silver spoons. Increasing complexity in the meals

consumed by households is visible in relation both to serving and cooking vessels. As might be expected, the majority of households with only pots and pans have no tableware or only a single category of objects. Similarly, those households with the most complex kitchen equipment have the most diverse tableware in both datasets, suggesting a general pattern whereby complexity in cooking and dining went together. The longer-term trends in the character of tableware assemblages echo those observed by previous research using other sources (e.g. Weinstein 2011; Wilmott 2005; Woolgar 2016), but the escheators' records do suggest pewterware may have been more common in rural households than is usually thought. Dishes were rather practical items, and it is telling that these occur more commonly in isolation than other items of tableware, emphasising the importance of practicalities. These items, in contrast to silverware, were fairly cheap, often being valued at only a few pence, meaning that individual vessels (although not necessarily larger sets) were within the means of many rural households. In contrast, drinking vessels are rare, although the escheators' and coroners' records appear to show some shift in attitudes to drinking or to its social significance, with the items such as mazers, associated with communal drinking, occurring in the escheators' records but not the coroners'. A further development is the decline in ewers and basins for handwashing and items for communal drinking. This change is mirrored in the increasing importance of items for individual consumption, which may relate to the movement of dining towards parlours and chambers, where display was less important and a greater emphasis could be placed on personal consumption.

CHAPTER 5

A Hint of Luxury? Furnishings, Comfort and Display

Following the consideration of tables and napery in Chapter 4, three main categories of furniture remain to be discussed. These are bedding, items for storage, and seating. Bedding is the most significant of the three. The medieval and early modern bed has recently become a focus for scholarship, drawing particularly on literary and historical sources (e.g. Flather 2011; French 2021; Gowing 2014; Handley 2016; Morgan 2017). Hamling and Richardson's (2017, 29–30) work highlights a proliferation of beds in the early modern period. They place this into the context of increasingly specialised subdivisions of domestic space. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and later in some areas, both excavated and standing houses show that most domestic activities took place within a single space (Gardiner 2014a), meaning that flexibility was required in furnishings (see Dyer 2013). In both the escheators' and coroners' lists, it is most common for bedding to be the only item of furniture listed (Table 5.1). However, the coroners' records feature more instances of lists with a wider range of furniture.

Archaeologically, the evidence for furniture is limited and difficult to interpret. For example, items of metalwork may be structural or a part of an item of furniture. There are 3,333 nails in the archaeological assemblage. In nearly all cases, these are of iron and due to corrosion or resource limitations are rarely identified by researchers to type. Goodall (2011, 163–4) highlights the various forms of medieval nail known from excavations, and Salzman (1967, 317) has summarised the various types of nail recorded in medieval documents. There is clearly value in further analysis of iron nails from archaeological sites for understanding both building construction and their use in furniture manufacture, which falls outside of the scope of the current survey. Most of the items which can be identified as being from furniture are mounts and strapping from chests, as well as locks and keys. These would have been for doors and windows as well as for securing chests and caskets.

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Table 5.1: Occurrence of combinations of furniture in the escheators' and coroners' records.

Bedding (inc. beds)	Storage	Seating	Table	Hanging or Curtain	No. Escheators' Lists	%ge Total Escheators' Lists	No. Coroners' Lists	%ge Total Coroners' Lists
X	X	X	X	X	5	0.5%	10	5.7%
X	X	X	X		10	1.0%	20	11.4%
X	X	X		X	4	0.4%	1	0.6%
X	X	X			6	0.6%	2	1.1%
X	X		X	X	5	0.5%	0	
X	X		X		15	1.6%	0	
X	X			X	4	0.4%	1	0.6%
X	X				37	3.8%	15	8.5%
X		X	X	X	1	0.1%	0	
X		X	X		7	0.7%	2	1.1%
X		X			2	0.2%	0	
X			X		16	1.7%	0	
X				X	6	0.6%	0	

(*Continued*)

Table 5.1: Continued.

Bedding (inc. beds)	Storage	Seating	Table	Hanging or Curtain	No. Escheators' Lists	%ge Total Escheators' Lists	No. Coroners' Lists	%ge Total Coroners' Lists
X					170	17.7%	23	13.1%
X		X		X	3	0.3%	0	
	X	X	X		7	0.7%	0	
	X	X			1	0.1%	0	
	X		X		2	0.2%	0	
	X				57	5.9%	14	8.0%
	X			X	0		1	0.6%
	X	X		X	1	0.1%	0	
		X	X		4	0.4%	0	
		X		X	1	0.1%	0	
		X			1	0.1%	0	
				X	1	0.1%	1	0.6%
			X		2	0.2%	0	

Furniture circulated in a range of ways, which provides a challenge to interpretation. We know for instance that in some contexts, particular kinds of objects were appurtenant to the house or tenement, rather than the personal possessions of its inhabitants. For example, the lists of the *principalia* ('principal goods') of fifteenth-century Worcestershire manorial tenants comprise objects of this kind (Field 1965). These lists often include tables, seating and chests, which were recorded as items of furniture expected to pass with the holding from one tenant to the next. As Chapter 2 noted, the records of forfeiture produced by the escheator and coroner provide no positive evidence that items were exempted from forfeiture to the crown because they belonged not to the felon personally, but to the house or holding. However, the possibility that some such officials might have observed this practice should be kept in mind. This consideration particularly affects beds and bedding; where no bed appears in a list of forfeited goods, one cannot entirely rule out the possibility that a bed was excluded because it was viewed not as a personal possession, but as an appurtenance of the house. It should be noted, however, that in his analysis of the Worcestershire manorial *principalia* lists, Field (1965) found very few references to beds; only a small number of lists mention a *tignum*, probably a form of basic wooden pallet bed. He concluded that tenants were expected to provide their own beds, which suggests that in this context at least, beds were regarded as personal possessions (and therefore liable to forfeiture) rather than as inalienable household furnishings.

The interpretation of the information on beds and bedding in the escheators' and coroners' chattels lists is also potentially affected by the issue of women's property rights. Morgan (2017, 176–80) highlights how women understood the bed as belonging to them and suggests that, in London at least, beds and bedding formed a part of the 'paraphernalia' which were passed to a wife on her husband's passing (Morgan 2017, 183). Bedding could be passed on through women in wills; for example, in 1548 Margaret Argram of Louth (Lincolnshire) bequeathed her featherbed and best bolster to her son. Prior to the Reformation, women often passed linens to the church as a pious bequest which could be converted into liturgical materials (Wilson 2019, 182, 185). The passing of personal items on through wills, as well as the acquisition of second-hand goods, is perhaps demonstrated through the number of 'old' or 'worn' items of furniture listed in the escheators' and coroners' records (Jervis 2022c).

An association of beds with female ownership may have had an impact on practices of forfeiture and confiscation. For example, when the possessions of John Browne were seized in 1549 by the bishop of Peterborough, his wife Alice complained of the loss of her best down bed, despite the return of a third of her husband's goods (Kesselring 2014). Our records provide no clear details of disputes over items of bedding specifically. Nonetheless, the sense of loss associated with their forfeiture must have been profound, given the associations between the bed, marriage, personal memory and devotion (see Morgan 2017). Some lists appear comprehensive in respect to household goods, except for bedding. This perhaps suggests that bedding remained in the hands of a wife or

daughter, whereas other household goods were confiscated. One such example is the list of the yeoman John Reynold of South Lynn (Norfolk). His list, dating to 1418, includes a wide range of household goods, including plate, six silver spoons, a mazer and furniture. It is reasonable to assume that a household such as this would have had a range of bedding; however (except for six cushions), this is absent.[187] In this case the bedding appears to have been deliberately omitted from the list. While this cannot be proven, nor a definitive reason for its omission be provided, one possibility is that it remained with the women of his household.

In discussing furniture, we begin with bedding, before proceeding to assess the occurrence of items associated with storage, seating and the fashioning of domestic spaces.

Beds and bedding

Bedding (including beds, mattresses and various soft furnishings) are the most common category of furnishings in both the escheators' and coroners' lists. The most frequently occurring objects are coverlets, sheets and blankets (Tables 5.2 and 5.3). Other possessions associated with further adornment of the bed,

Table 5.2: Occurrence of bedding in the escheators' records.

Object	No. Items	No. Lists	%ge Total Lists
Bed	78	61	6.3%
Bed with furnishings	14	10	1.0%
Canvas	16	14	1.5%
Mattress	48	36	3.7%
Sheets	477	177	18.4%
Blanket	179	77	8.0%
Coverlet	347	174	18.1%
Quilt	10	9	0.9%
Bolster	13	5	0.5%
Banker	20	15	1.6%
Cushion	103	22	2.3%
Pillow	41	13	1.3%
Canopy	6	6	0.6%
Curtain	6	2	0.2%
Tester	23	15	1.6%
Mixed (e.g. 'bedding')	15	11	1.1%

[187] E484.

Table 5.3: Occurrence of bedding in the coroners' records.

Object	Type	No. Items	No. Lists	%ge Total Lists
Bed	Bed	12	7	
	Bed with a frame	1	1	
	Bedstead	79	37	
	Bedstock	1	1	
	Corded truckle bed	1	1	
	Frame	1	1	
	Posted bedstead	3	1	
	Standing bedstead	4	2	
	Truckle bed	4	2	
	Truckle bedstead	4	3	
	Total	**110**	**44**	**25.0%**
Mattress	Canvas bed	1	1	
	Canvas bed tick	1	1	
	Canvas chaff-bed	1	1	
	Chaff bed	2	1	
	Donge [viz. A mattress]	1	1	
	Dust bed	4	2	
	Featherbed	33	17	
	Flock bed	20	14	
	Hay' [in chamber]	1	1	
	Linen mattress	1	1	
	Mattress	23	12	
	Mattress [or featherbed]	1	1	
	Woollen mattress	3	1	
	Total	**92**	**39**	**22.2%**
Misc. Bedding		22	16	
Blanket	Blanket	51	23	
	Cloth for blankets	1	1	
	Linen blanket	7	2	
	Linen blanket or sheet	2	1	
	Woollen blanket	9	5	
	Total	**70**	**28**	**15.9%**

(*Continued*)

Table 5.3: Continued.

Object	Type	No. Items	No. Lists	%ge Total Lists
Coverlet	Bed cloth	1	1	
	Bed cover	1	1	
	Canvas-lined coverlet	1	1	
	Coverlet	76	35	
	Diaper coverlet	1	1	
	Tapestry coverlet	2	1	
	Woollen coverlet	3	2	
	Total	**86**	**39**	**22.2%**
Sheet	Canvas sheet	21	7	
	Flaxen sheet	4	2	
	Harden sheet	6	2	
	Head sheet	1	1	
	Hempen sheet	6	3	
	Linen sheet	37	13	
	Linsey-woolsey sheet	1	1	
	Lockram sheet	4	1	
	Noggen sheet	3	1	
	Painted linen sheet	2	2	
	Painted sheet	2	1	
	Sheet	80	23	
	Undercloth	2	2	
	Total	**169**	**44**	**25.0%**
Pillow	Feather pillow	3	1	
	Leather pillow	1	1	
	Pillow	31	19	
	Total	**35**	**21**	**11.9%**
Pillow case		27	4	
Quilt		1	1	
Tester	Canvas tester	1	1	
	Silk tester	1	1	
	Stained tester	1	1	
	Tester	12	9	
	Total	**16**	**9**	**5.1%**

(*Continued*)

Table 5.3: Continued.

Object	Type	No. Items	No. Lists	%ge Total Lists
Celure or Ceiling	Bed celure	1	1	
	Celure	1	1	
	Cloth bed celler	1	1	
	Ceiling	1	1	
	Painted ceiling	2	1	
	Total	**6**	**4**	**<1%**
Bedstead with painted ceiling		**2**	**1**	
Furnished bed with bed clothes		**1**	**1**	

in the form of cushions, pillows, bolsters and bankers, or those associated with the 'ceiling' (testers, curtains, canopy) are considerably rarer. The quantities of bedding-related items in the escheators' lists vary considerably, from single items up to 18 items within a list.

Most of what we know of medieval bedding relates to the furnishings of the elite or wealthy urban households, with literary sources and rare surviving examples providing some basis for reconstructing the ideal sleeping arrangements. These beds most typically take the form of a 'hanging' bed, with a canopy and tester covering the bedstead and mattress (Figure 5.1). Such an arrangement was a necessary part of the seigniorial home by the start of our period (Eames 1977, 74). The bed would be made up of several layers (Figure 5.2). A 'litter' of straw would be placed over the wooden bedstead and possibly covered with a canvas. The mattress would typically be the next layer, although this term does not have a consistent meaning in the period; increasingly it seems to have meant a stuffed base for lying on but could also be used to mean a bed covering. A featherbed was seemingly a separate piece which was paired with the mattress. This would then be covered with sheets, blankets and coverlets, with further bolsters and pillows (Morgan 2017, 20–39).

The escheators' records, which deal on the whole with less exalted households, provide something of a problem in understanding the bed. This is due to the common use of the term 'bed' (*lectum/-us*) in isolation. In 46 cases, beds are the only item associated with bedding. This could be taken to mean the wooden bedstead (an element that is explicitly mentioned in many coroners' records) but may refer to the soft furnishings, or the entire 'bed set' (Morgan 2017, 20–21). In some cases, the term 'bed' may mean just that, a bed (perhaps a wooden frame or mattress) with no associated bedding. In others, it could be a shorthand for a 'bed and its furnishings', the latter being a form that appears in 10 escheators' lists. Alternatively, 'bed' could mean the combination of mattress and bedding. This ambiguity is further demonstrated by the values

Figure 5.1: Reconstruction of a hanging bed with a truckle bed beneath at the Weald and Downland Museum. Image: Ben Jervis.

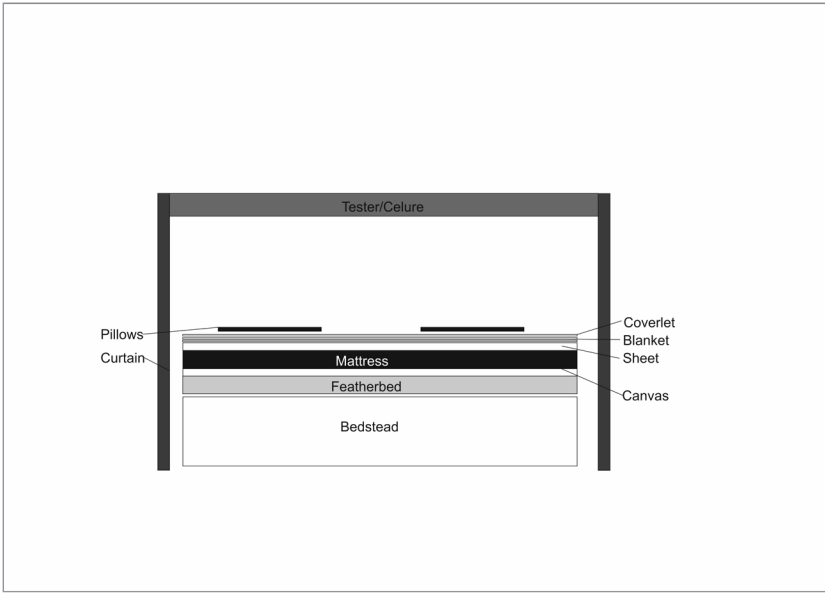

Figure 5.2: The 'stratigraphy' of the medieval bed. Redrawn from Morgan 2017 by Ben Jervis.

assigned to 'beds', which range from 6d to 60d. Beds 'with their furnishings' were appraised at considerably higher values, from 160d to 720d. Bedding was valued highly, and therefore the low valuation of 'beds' would suggest that these typically relate either to wooden bed frames or forms of stuffed mattress.

Dyer's (2013, 22) analysis of Yorkshire probate inventories shows that in the fifteenth century, furniture and objects associated with sleeping were most commonly found in the hall. These frequently included bedding, but not bed frames. In these instances, a fixed wooden bed would have been impractical. Evidence of wooden beds is very rare within the escheators' records; wording suggestive of a wooden bed frame is found in just two lists.[188] Thus although the term 'bed' is certainly ambiguous, it appears to be the case that in ordinary fourteenth- and fifteenth-century households, 'beds' in the sense of static wooden structures were not normally present. While bedding occurs commonly in wills (as discussed above), wooden beds are often omitted (Morgan 2017 36–7). This could be due to their low value, but may also be further evidence of their absence, with people sleeping on portable mattresses, featherbeds or more rudimentary surfaces such as bags stuffed with straw. The idea that the 'bed' was actually something that would be rolled up and put away after use is supported by one reference to a 'chest with a bed and other necessaries in it', valued at 6s 8d in 1402.[189]

[188] E304 (*bordebedde*); E642 (*ii lectorum lingnorum*).
[189] E1423.

With such an arrangement, it is worth reflecting that the non-elite experience of sleep would have differed considerably from that of wealthier households. In a wealthy urban household, the bed might be prepared by a servant, who would assist the master and his family in getting ready for bed and prayers would be said. Prior to this, the house would be secured and the fire extinguished. The chamber offered a distinctive space for sleeping, associated particularly with personal devotion and contemplation as well as intimacy, both in terms of sex and in conversation (Ekrich 2001; Hamling and Richardson 2017, 220–31; Handley 2016, 109; Morgan 2017). Rather, in the peasant household, we might imagine space being cleared in which a bed could be assembled, perhaps with trestles being dismantled and benches pushed to the side, as part of a daily rhythm of transforming domestic space.

The number of beds present may not relate to the number of people living under a roof. It was common throughout the middle ages and early modern period for people to share beds. Servants, visitors and children might share their bed with the man and woman of the house (Gowing 2014), and this might especially be the case within poorer households. Indeed, within medieval society the bed 'became inseparably associated with prestige, honour, power, wealth and privilege' (Eames 1977, 86). It was also the place in which the intimate relations between husband and wife played out, where married couples could speak equally and intimately as well as engage in sex, becoming a symbol for the very sanctity of marriage (Gowing 2014, 278; Morgan 2017, 146–56). Even within higher status households, there was a disjuncture between the idealised image of the bed and chamber and the reality of life, and this ideal, one might imagine, was increasingly removed from reality further down the socio-economic scale. The acquisition of bedding was a necessity, but we can question the extent to which its meaning was universally understood.

Figure 5.3 demonstrates that within the escheators' lists, only one item of bedding is listed in 28% of those lists which contain bedding, in contrast to the coroners' records where this is the case in only 8% of lists. Larger quantities of bedding occur more commonly in the coroners' lists. In the escheators' lists the single item is most commonly a coverlet (13 lists) or a sheet (five lists). The most commonly co-occurring items of bedding are sheets and coverlets, sometimes supplemented by blankets and mattresses. It was common for these to be possessed as pairs (Morgan 2017, 28–31) and for them to be passed on through inheritance. It is telling that in those lists that contain larger combinations and quantities of bedding, it is these same items – coverlets, blankets, sheets and mattresses – which form the majority of the bedding. An exception was Richard Fissher, a clerk from Attleborough (Norfolk), whose list dates to 1448.[190] This list includes none of these items, but it does include a canopy (a *seler*, or celure), three curtains and a tester, valued together at 13s 4d, which represent

[190] E409.

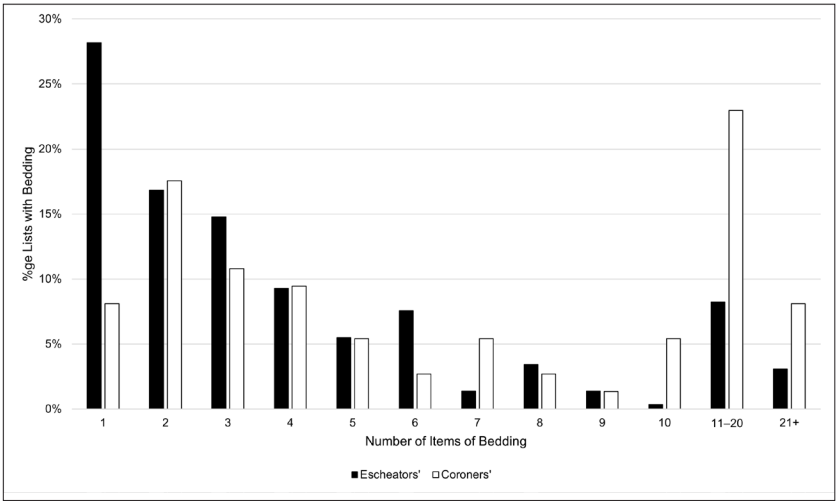

Figure 5.3: Numbers of items of bedding occurring in the escheators' and coroners' lists (as percentage of lists containing bedding).

the fittings of a hanging bed. The bed itself, along with any bedclothes, is oddly absent (the only other items listed are animals).

Overall, the evidence from the escheators' records suggests that most people slept on sheets covered by a coverlet and, perhaps, a blanket. Sometimes they had a mattress or featherbed, but in others may have simply laid on straw or stuffed bags, which were not seized. Sear and Sneath (2020, 133) suggest that featherbeds were not purchased as whole items, but that the various components were acquired separately and assembled in the home. Importantly, these items of bedding were quite valuable. Valuations for individual sheets and coverlets typically range from approximately 12d to 30d, and it was common for households to have multiple sets. This high value is one reason why bedding was curated and passed on through wills. The values of mattresses and featherbeds vary considerably (possibly due to them being valued by weight although this is not explicitly stated in the escheators' and coroner's records; Sear and Sneath 2020, 133), but one reason for their absence from the home may be that these were considered unessential items, which were outside of the means of many households. While no information on the composition of mattresses is provided, a range of materials could be used for stuffing them in the early modern period, and we might expect this to also be the case in earlier centuries. Plaited mattresses, such as the surviving example from Titchfield, Hampshire, could be used to protect the bedstead and mattress, for example in childbirth. Chaff, feathers, leaves, hair and straw could all be used to stuff mattresses, and could be easily replaced when the mattress was cleaned (Handley 2016, 58–9).

The combinations of bedding occurring in the coroners' records are less consistent than in those of the escheators. Lists typically include at least one sheet,

blanket and coverlet, with items such as testers and celures being exceptional. As in the escheators' lists, the majority have a fairly simple range of bedding. A typical example might be Robert Crowne of North Elham (Kent), who in 1567 had three coverlets, three blankets, five sheets, two bedsteads, a bolster and a pillow.[191] One explanation for having more bedding than beds could be the acquisition of heavier and lighter bedding which could be used at different times of year (French 2021, 67). All except the sheets and bedsteads (valued with clothing and table linen) were valued together at 8s. Items such as testers are rare in the coroners' records, but there are clear examples of households with 'hanging beds'. For example, in 1519 William Sparke, a yeoman of Loddon (Norfolk) had five featherbeds with bolsters (20s), three pairs of blankets (3s), six pairs of linen sheets (5s) and a celure and tester 'with the hanging for a chamber', valued at 6s 8d.[192] The evidence is suggestive of a single hanging bed in the principal bed chamber, perhaps with additional beds in other rooms.

Goldberg (2008) suggests that, along with silver spoons, cushions (including bankers and bolsters) were an item indicative of urban 'bourgeois' consumption. In addition to providing comfort and colour, these also 'encompass intimacy and the holy' (Goldberg 2008, 133). As such, like the investment in plate (Chapter 4), investment in soft furnishings was an investment in fashioning the home as a site of piety and devotion. This was of particular pertinence in the context of the chamber where prayers were said and sleep, a time in which people were both vulnerable and closer to God, took place (see discussions in Handley 2016; Morgan 2017). Investment in bedding is considered in greater detail in Chapter 9, but here we provide some illustrative examples of individuals with elaborately adorned chambers to highlight the variability in bedding which could be found in both urban and rural homes.

In 1417 John Mone from the town of Rochester (Kent) had a 'pallet' (perhaps a layer to go between the bed, which is not listed, and the featherbed with which it is valued at 20d), three worn sheets and a coverlet (valued together at 5s). Additional items consist of four cushions and a banker (valued together at 12d).[193] Featherbeds are rare in the escheators' records, occurring in only 12 lists. They are marginally more prevalent in the coroners' records, occurring in 17 lists, with some households having multiple examples, suggesting an increased prevalence of this type of bedding.

In 1431 Robert Neuton of Oakham (Rutland), another small town, had two mattresses, valued with six pairs of sheets and six blankets at 26s 8d; plus a dosser (possibly a hanging) (3s 4d), three bankers (3s 4d) and six cushions (3s 4d). He also had 20 coverlets 'of diverse colours, for lying on a bed', valued at 40s, at least some of which are likely to have been merchandise.[194] A further example is that of John Wryde of Ospringe (Kent) who committed suicide in

[191] C194.
[192] C133.
[193] E489.
[194] E953.

1393.[195] He had a mattress, two blankets, four cushions and two feather pillows. Although his mattress was 'old and worn', it was nonetheless valued, together with the blankets and pillows, at 6s 8d.

Where the occupation of those with these elaborate assemblages of bedding is stated, the range is limited and the overall status comparatively elevated. The individuals concerned include a merchant, several clergy and clerks, and a goldsmith, but also the yeomen William Wodeward and John Reynold,[196] the franklin William Leder and the husbandman John Ferrour.[197] Testers appear particularly common in Norfolk, occurring in four of the six lists from the county which contain bedding, generally without any cushions. The escheators' records provide useful insights into the nature and character of the items of bedding found in rural homes. The bedding belonging to William Mandevile of Colnbrook (Middlesex) (coverlets, mattresses, blankets and sheets) as well as the testers and sheets belonging to John Ferrour of Sevenhampton (Wiltshire), are listed as 'worn' (*debilis*), suggesting perhaps that these were inherited or second-hand items (see Jervis 2022c).[198]

The coroners' records provide further examples, a particularly interesting case being that of John Oke, a carpenter of Britford (Wiltshire).[199] He had elaborate bedding, possibly including hanging beds, as he had testers along with a single ceiling. He also had a range of other bedding including pillows and bolsters. His list includes a further bed listed separately, probably an item that he was making or repairing. When we look at the occupations of those who possessed items of bedding such as bolsters, cushions, pillows, testers and celures, there is a striking difference between the coroners' and escheators' records. Whereas in the escheators' lists it was largely yeomen and clergy who possessed these items, the coroners' lists include five husbandmen and five labourers who had at least one of these items, most typically a bolster. In the latter records the most diverse ranges of bedding can be found in the possession of those of 'middling' households, like that of craftsmen such as John Oke, as well as those of yeomen and clergy.

Those more elaborate assemblages, however, are very much the exception, and typical bedding as it appears in the escheators' records may be exemplified by a list such as that of John Vynche, a labourer from Yalding (Kent). He had a coverlet, two sheets and two worn blankets, valued together at 20d in 1428.[200] Lists with varying combinations are the most common among the escheators' lists containing bedding, suggesting an emphasis on warmth over comfort, with the bed itself most probably being improvised. In lists where coverlets, blankets and sheets are the only items of bedding, there are an average of 1.8

[195] E901.
[196] E348; E484.
[197] E28; E237.
[198] E712.
[199] C226.
[200] E101.

blankets, 1.6 coverlets and 2.4 sheets. If we assume that all bedding was seized, this means that most households possessed only one or two of each of these items, implying sufficient bedding for one or two beds. This emphasises that beds were likely to be shared and that in many households, there may have been scarcely enough bedding to keep everybody warm.

In contrast, lists including other items, particularly those associated with further comfort (such as pillows) or privacy (such as testers and curtains) are particularly rare. An interesting example, dated 1433, concerns the civil outlaw Thomas Payn, formerly vicar of Shillingstone (Dorset) and apparently deceased at this point, but with goods at Headcorn.[201] His possessions included a bed with three curtains (6s), a quilt (18d) and two pairs of sheets (5s), as well as two blankets (2s). Similarly, in 1419, Robert Tyuerton, a 'leech' (or healer) of Woodnewton (Northamptonshire) possessed multiple coverlets and sheets, a mattress (valued with old blankets and a canvas at 2s) and curtains, some of which are noted as being old and torn and are valued with two coverlets at 40d.[202]

Bedding appears to have been the first area of furnishings in which people invested, the minimum being a sheet and coverlet, sometimes supplemented by blankets and more rarely quilts and pillows. It is notable that where only a small number of items are listed, as in John Vynche's list, beds or mattresses are not documented, suggesting very simple sleeping arrangements or the presence of a bed which was not the possession of the individual concerned.

As noted above, the escheators' records include only two clear references to wooden beds. Within the coroners' records, more varied terminology is used to describe the beds themselves (Table 5.3). While 'bed' is a widely used term, 'bedstead' is more common, making for a clear distinction between the structure of the bed and the mattress. Assessing the worth of these bedsteads is difficult as they are typically valued with other items. One bedstead belonging to the Wiltshire clergyman John James was valued at 12d, while another, a 'plain bedstead with a tester and a bolster', was valued at 2s 6d.[203] Another new feature in the coroner's records is the truckle bed, that is, a bed that can be wheeled under another bed or piece of furniture (see Figure 5.1). These demonstrate a demand, in some cases, for some flexibility in sleeping arrangements. Truckle beds may have been used for servants or children and are suggestive of cohabitation of sleeping spaces. These emphasise how the bed chamber could become an arena in which the social life of the household played out, for example through the emphasising of power relations (Flather 2011, 180; Gowing 2014; Handley 2016). Again, the value of these is difficult to ascertain, but the one example belonging to John James that is valued on its own is appraised at 3s.[204] As in the escheators' lists, coverlets, sheets and blankets are the most common items of bedding,

[201] E1531.
[202] E307.
[203] E382.
[204] E382.

while testers, celures and curtains are rare. Bolsters do appear more frequently than in the escheators' lists. Cushions clearly associated with bedding (i.e. found in a room containing a bed) are rarer, occurring in just two lists, the majority in the coroners' lists being associated with chairs. The material of soft furnishings is occasionally mentioned (Table 5.3); however, such references are too sparse for meaningful analysis.

While we might expect beds to be located in the chamber, they also occur in other spaces, such as the parlour. In such instances they were as much display pieces as functional objects for sleeping, providing an opportunity to display wealth and the virtues associated with the bed, for example through decorative bedding (Gowing 2014, 279). In 1545 Thomas Ramsden had two bedsteads, with two mattresses, a featherbed, two pillows and various sheets in his parlour at Oundle (Northamptonshire).[205] The yeoman, William Payne of Chilham (Kent), had a bed in his parlour, with a featherbed in his chamber.[206]

In several cases multiple beds were made up, and the ordering of items within lists, perhaps associated with specific rooms, allows us to gain some insight into a households' sleeping arrangements. A particularly interesting example is William Bridge, a husbandman of Stelling (Kent), who committed suicide in 1586.[207] One bedstead is listed with a pair of canvas sheets, a chaff bed (a type of mattress), a coverlet, blanket and bolster. A more elaborate range of bedding is to be found 'in the widow's bedchamber', comprising a bedstead, chaff bed, bolster, blanket, pair of sheets and, importantly, an 'old' tester, suggestive of a hanging bed. Given the links between bedding and femininity (see Flather 2011), and particularly the way in which widows were potentially able to claim bedding as 'paraphernalia' on the death of their husbands, this list provides an interesting insight into the gendered role of bedding. It perhaps illustrates how ideas of ownership surrounding bedding played out, in that here the widow had, perhaps, been able to take ownership of bedding, only to have it seized by the coroner.

Another example, from an urban setting, demonstrates the complex sleeping arrangements to be found in the early modern home. In 1565 Thomas Chylrey of Marlborough (Wiltshire) had bedding in two rooms.[208] In the chamber he had a standing bedstead and a truckle bed, perhaps for a servant. The chamber also housed a featherbed and two flock beds, as well as three coverlets, a bolster and two pillows. A bedstead and flock bed were also to be found in 'another chamber'. In 1570, Reynold Carter of Chiddingstone (Kent) seemingly had a master bedchamber 'over the south end of the house'.[209] In here were a single bedstead with a featherbed, bolster, blankets and a woollen coverlet. The varied contents of a 'chamber over the hall' included a cradle, suggesting that Carter's

[205] C76.
[206] C472.
[207] C309.
[208] C171.
[209] C208.

child may have slept in this chamber. A third chamber contained a bedstead, an 'old bed of canvas', blankets and a bolster. This distinction between spaces can also be seen in a labourer's home. In 1585, Anthony Curlynge had a bed and a truckle bed, as well as six pairs of 'very coarse' sheets and 'bed furniture' in his bed chamber, and two further beds with their furniture in another chamber.[210] These examples illustrate how beds could come to be used as a means of social differentiation within the household, with, perhaps, a single hanging bed for the householders, with more simple or inferior beds, or even low truckle beds, for servants and children.

Writing in 1577, William Harrison in a famous passage in his *Description of Britain* commented on the 'great amendment of lodging', noting how contemporary sleeping arrangements surpassed those of his predecessors:

'…our fathers, yea and we ourselves also, have lain full oft upon straw pallets, on rough mats covered only with a sheet, under coverlets made of dagswain or hopharlots (I use their own terms), and a good round log under their heads instead of a bolster or pillow. If it were so that our fathers or the goodman of the house had within seven years after his marriage purchased a mattress or flock-bed, and thereto a stack of chaff to rest his head upon, he thought himself to be as well lodged as the lord of the town, that peradventure lay seldom in a bed of down or whole feathers, so well were they contented and with such base kind of furniture, which also is not very much amended as yet in some parts of Bedfordshire and elsewhere further off from our southern parts. Pillows (said they) were thought meet only for women in childbed. As for servants, if they had any sheet above them, it was well, for seldom had they any under their bodies to keep them from the pricking straws that ran oft through the canvas of the pallet and rased their hardened hides' (Harrison 1577, 119).

Overall, this is a picture borne out in the escheators' and coroners' records. These demonstrate that an increasing quantity of bedding was to be found in homes over the course of our period (Figure 5.4), provide some insight into the wide variety of sleeping arrangements and suggest an increasing investment in a diversity of bedding. Even so, in most cases sleeping arrangements in rural households appear to have been fairly simple throughout the study period. The investment by Tudor husbandmen and labourers in bedding is, perhaps, indicative of the increasing prevalence of waged labour, changes in relative prices of food and manufactured goods, and an enhanced ability to invest in the fashioning of interiors, with bedding seeming to be the preferred target of such investment.

Storage

Chests are among the most common items of furniture both in our datasets and also in later medieval inventories and wills (e.g. Hinds 2022; Wilson 2021).

[210] C289.

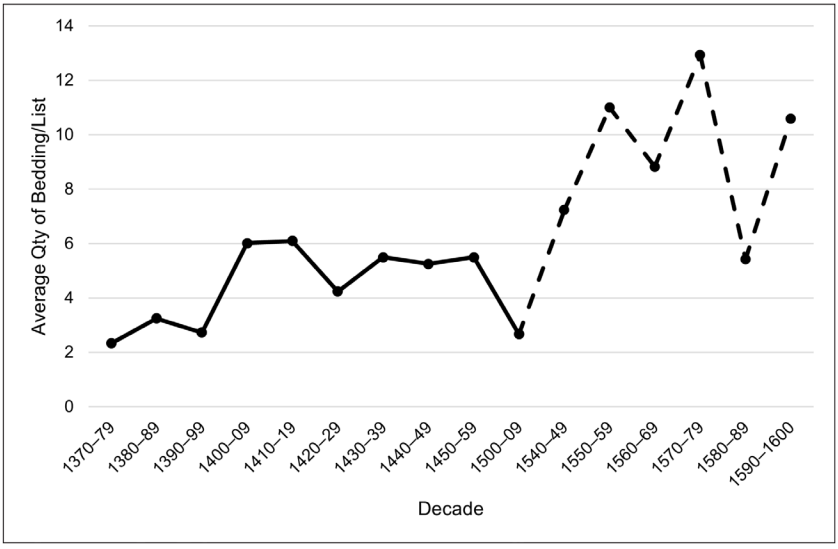

Figure 5.4: Mean number of items of bedding per list by decade. The solid line relates to escheators' records and dashed line to coroners' records.

Items associated with storage are generally portable pieces of furniture, most typically chests (Table 5.4). Chests are wooden items, whereas caskets are generally smaller objects made of leather (Brennan 2010, 65). Chests were probably the most widely used item of furnishing in the middle ages (Eames 1977, 108). These are inherently mobile items, which might be associated not only with storage but with the movement of people between households, for example through marriage or service. As such, they provide a physical container for the goods of an individual, particularly where spaces were shared (French 2021, 111–12; Hinds 2022).

Considering the occurrence of chests in illuminated manuscripts, Sarah Hinds (2018) has proposed a change in the perception and use of chests around the fifteenth century. Prior to this period, they were typically depicted as open and were associated with storage, hoarding and commerce. From the fifteenth century they were more commonly depicted as closed items, which Hinds suggests is symbolic of the anxieties around the distribution of wealth and the moral implications of commercialisation. In this regard it is interesting to note that in some cases, the sixteenth-century coroners' records make specific references to locks. In 1528 the widow Jane Vause of Beccles (Suffolk) had a coffer with a lock (12d), as did John Knolles of North Stoneham (Hampshire) in 1578 (valued with a little kettle at 12d).[211] In 1576 John May of North Luffenham (Rutland) had a chest with lock and key (8d), as did Mary Wyn of Armthorpe

[211] C146; C256.

Table 5.4: Occurrence of furniture associated with storage in the escheators' and coroners' records.

Object	Escheators'		Coroners'	
	No. Items	No. Lists	No. Items	No. Lists
Chest	165	101	62	33
Chest (old)	7	3	7	2
Chest (worn)	34	21	0	0
Chest (old and worn)	2	1	0	0
Chest (with lock and key)	0	0	1	1
Chest (little with lock and key)	0	0	1	1
Chest (old, bad)	0	0	1	1
Great chest	0	0	1	1
Little chest (old)	0	0	3	1
Ship chest (old)	0	0	1	1
Joined chest	0	0	1	1
Coffer	4	3	37	21
Coffer (old)	1	1	2	2
Coffer (with lock)	0	0	2	2
Coffer (with 2 locks)	0	0	1	1
Ark	3	2	1	1
Ironbound chest	1	1	0	0
Flanders chest	1	1	0	0
Forcer (worn)	1	1	0	0
Whitch (wooden)	0	0	3	2
Forcet	0	0	2	2
Hutch	0	0	1	1
Repository	0	0	1	1
Casket	5	5	0	0
Total Chests	**224**	**130**	**128**	**58**
Aumbry	7	6	3	3
Cupboard	2	2	35	29
Cupboard (old)	0	0	5	5
Shelf board	0	0	16	2
Sideboard	0	0	3	1
Basket	7	5	1	1

(Yorkshire) in 1590 (a little chest worth 8d).[212] Finally, in 1577 the Wiltshire clergyman John James had a coffer with two locks, worth 5s.[213] A similar link between chests, morality and commercialisation is proposed by Katherine Wilson (2021), who highlights the role of chests as secure containers for cash, but also as items of trade, which become more varied in relation to the increasing commercialisation of the economy. The examples of chests discussed by both scholars are predominantly urban, and relate specifically to the merchant or burgess class, or are associated with elite contexts such as the royal court. From a different perspective, French (2021, 113) argues that the increasing prevalence of chests can be associated with the growing number of household possessions which needed to be sorted and stored, making them fundamental to the negotiation of the tensions brought about between rhythms of domestic life and the growing range of goods available to households. The data presented here offer an opportunity to address three questions in relation to this recent scholarship. Firstly, how widespread was the ownership of chests? Secondly, did chests become more common over time? Finally, can we see evidence for the diversification of chests in association with the increasing circulation of commodities which comes with commercialisation?

Archaeological evidence for chests takes the form of metal fittings, best represented by the metal fragments excavated at Chapel Meadow, Membury (Wiltshire; Figure 5.5). These comprise two lock plates, a strap hinge and several iron fittings, all of which are evocative of a typical medieval chest; and a locked box, strengthened (or apparently strengthened) by iron strips (Figure 5.6). Other archaeological items potentially associated with chests are keys and padlocks, although these could have had other uses too, for example securing doors. Chests, referred to in various ways, are common in both the escheators' and the coroners' datasets.

The best archaeological evidence for chests within our sample comes from sites of somewhat elevated status or from excavations in towns (Table 5.5). The site at Chapel Meadow, Membury is probably a manorial complex, and a similar interpretation can be advanced for the site at Huish (Wiltshire), from which iron fittings from at least one box and one casket were recovered (Thompson 1972). Excavations at Grange Farm, Gillingham (Kent; probably a manorial grange) and Wimbotsham (Norfolk; the site of a rectory) recovered items associated with caskets: a small copper key from Grange Farm, Gillingham and two copper alloy strips and a handle from Wimbotsham (Seddon 2007; Shelley 2003). Urban examples include two possible hinge straps from Ripon (Yorkshire; Finlayson 1999), a box corner and decorative ironwork from Bawtry (Yorkshire; Cumberpatch and Dunkley 1996), a locking mechanism from Creedy's Yard, Greenwich (Kent; Laidlaw and Mepham 2002), a lock plate from Staines (Middlesex; Jones 2010), and iron strips or decorative copper

[212] C228; C353.
[213] C382.

Table 5.5: Occurrence of box or chest fittings in the archaeological dataset.

County	Site Name	Handle	Hasp	Hinge	Lock	Mount	Rivet/ Stud	Strapping	Structural
Cumbria	Land at Shaw's Wiend, Appleby-in-Westmorland							X	
	Low Road, Keswick					X			
Devon	London Hotel, Chapel Street, Exmouth							X	
	Island Farm, Ottery St Mary							X	
Hampshire	Popham					X			
Kent	Land at Friars School, Great Chart, Ashford							X	
	Star Lane, Westwood, Thanet							X	
	Manston Road, Ramsgate								X
	Queen's Farm, Shorne							X	
	28 Spital Street, Dartford	X			X			X	
	Borthwick Street, Deptford						X		
	Eastney Street (Creedy's Yard) Greenwich				X		X		
Middlesex	High Street, Uxbridge					X		X	
	County Sports, Staines				X				

(*Continued*)

Table 5.5: Continued.

County	Site Name	Handle	Hasp	Hinge	Lock	Mount	Rivet/ Stud	Strapping	Structural
Norfolk	Site of Capel Hall, Barton Bendish	X							
	Multi-period finds and features on Bacton to King's Lynn Transco Pipeline					X			
	West Street, Gargrave					X	X		
	Thuxton	X				X			
	Priory Grove, Great Cressingham							X	
	Park Farm, Mileham			X					
	Abbey Road, Old Buckenham			X					
	Land near Church Close, Shipdham					X			
	Grange Farm, Snetterton					X			
	Wymer's Lane, Pilson Green, South Walsham	X							
	Wimbotsham	X						X	
	Redcastle Furze, Thetford					X			
Northamptonshire	Wythemail						X		
	West Cotton			X	X			X	
	Deene End, Weldon			X					

(*Continued*)

Table 5.5: Continued.

County	Site Name	Handle	Hasp	Hinge	Lock	Mount	Rivet/ Stud	Strapping	Structural
Northumberland	Main Street, Cornhill-on-Tweed				X				
	West Whelpington				X		X	X	
	Shotton						X		
	Berwick-upon-Tweed	X				X			
	4–8 Woolmarket, Berwick-upon-Tweed						X		
Suffolk	Land to the north of The Street, Erwarton							X	
	Late medieval to early post medieval dyeing workshop at The Swan Hotel, Lavenham	X				X		X	
	Land East of Days Road, Capel St.Mary				X	X	X		
	Church Lane, Hepworth					X			
	Cedars Park, Stowmarket			X				X	
Wiltshire	Huish			X		X		X	
	Gomeldon	X			X			X	
	Chapel Meadow, Membury			X	X				X
	Pennings Road and St. Andrews Road, Tidworth					X			
	Dukes Brake to Cricklade Gas Pipeline							X	

(*Continued*)

Table 5.5: Continued.

County	Site Name	Handle	Hasp	Hinge	Lock	Mount	Rivet/ Stud	Strapping	Structural
	The Old Joinery, Vale's Lane, Devizes							X	
	Mannington, North-east of Toothill Farm							X	
	The Paddock, Swindon				X	X		X	
Worcestershire	Excavations on the Transco Honeybourne to Newbold Pacey Gas Pipeline, Goldicote					X	X	X	
	Upton, Blockley	X	X		X	X			
Yorkshire	Barnburgh Hall, Barnburgh					X			
	Rectory Farm, Laughton-en-le Morthen					X	X		
	Hillam Burchard, Parlington				X			X	
	Sherburn					X			
	Land to Rear of Town Hall, High Street, Skipton							X	
	Wharram Percy	X		X			X	X	
	16–20 Church Street, Bawtry				X		X	X	X
	Church Walk (a.k.a. Askews Print Shop), Doncaster					X			
	Low Fisher Gate, Doncaster		X			X		X	
	8–9 Market Place, 'The Arcade', Ripon			X					

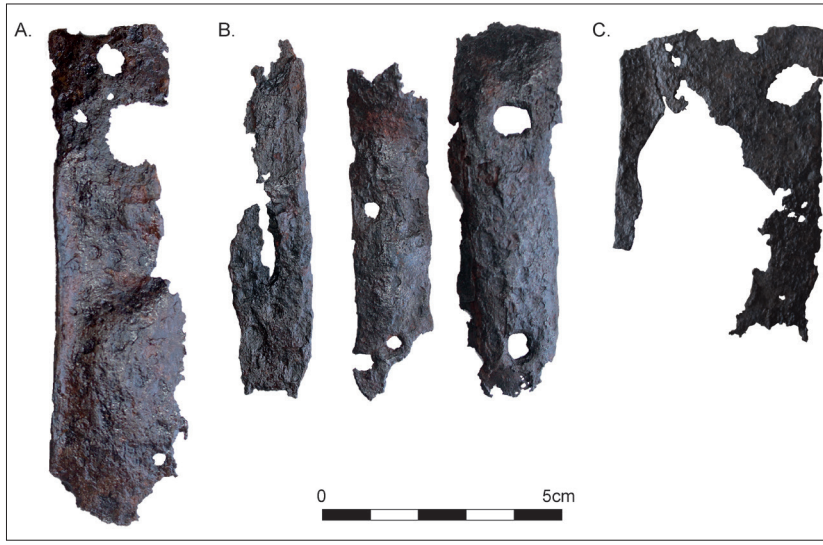

Figure 5.5: Examples of box fittings from excavations at Chapel Farm, Membury, Wiltshire (Image: Alice Forward and Kirsty Harding).

alloy mounts from towns including Dartford (Kent), Doncaster (Yorkshire) and Berwick-upon-Tweed (Northumberland).

However, all three datasets provide clear evidence of the consumption of chests in non-elite rural households. Among the escheators' records, of the 130 lists which include chests, 69 relate to rural households and 32 to urban (small-town) households (in the remaining cases no place is associated with the record). Rural households with at least one chest include craftsmen such as the fuller Clement Vynche of Yalding (Kent; one chest worth 6d), the barker John Mogerhangre of Little Stratford (Northamptonshire; one coffer and one forcer, a type of chest), as well as the husbandmen [?] Bassyngham (forename unknown) of Faxton (Northamptonshire; 'chests' valued with other items), William atte Well of Byfield (Northamptonshire; one chest, 12d) and John Spark of Martin (Wiltshire; two chests, 12d). These husbandmen all invested in a range of other domestic goods including unusually elaborate bedding or tableware. Others are of more elevated status, including five clergymen and a yeoman. Similarly, of the 60 coroners' chattels lists including at least one chest or similar, 45 are from rural households. These include four labourers; Thomas Johnson of Kirkby Kendal (Westmorland; one chest), David Poynter of Uffcott (Wiltshire; one chest; 8d), John Wyvenden of Hawkhurst (Kent; four chests) and Anthony Curlynge of St Lawrence (Kent; six chests).[214] It is notable that both Wyvenden and Curlynge possessed chests described as old or 'bad', suggesting that they may have been inherited or acquired second-hand.

[214] C11; C219; C230; C289.

Figure 5.6: Late fifteenth-century woodcut of *Der Rych Man* by Hans Holbein the Younger, showing three types of chest in the foreground. Image: National Gallery of Art Washington DC (Accession Number 1948.11.128; Image in public domain).

The husbandmen Elisha Gregory of Brixton (Devon; two chests) and Walter Barnard of Erlestoke (Wiltshire; three chests) also possessed multiple chests.[215]

[215] C467; C173.

Table 5.6: The number of chests possessed by households in the escheators' and coroners' records.

No. Chests	No. Escheators' Lists	No. Coroners' Lists
1	68	24
2	41	18
3	14	6
4	3	7
5	3	0
6	1	3
Total Lists	**130**	**58**

Others whose professions are listed are primarily craftsmen, but also include a clergyman, a yeoman and a spinster. This occupational diversity can also be traced in the urban sample. The escheators' lists include an urban clergyman and husbandman, and the coroners' records note labourers, craftsmen, a mariner and a spinster as chest owners. Chests could clearly be found in both rural and small-town homes across the social spectrum.

As will be clear from Tables 5.4 and 5.6, it is quite common for multiple chests – typically two or three – to occur within a single escheators' or coroners' list. Although this is rare, the coroners' records do sometimes provide indication of where these items might have been housed. Typically, chests could be found in the parlour or chamber, and these rooms could house multiple chests. For example, Thomas Chylrey had three coffers in his chamber and another ('old') in a second chamber, while the six chests of labourer Anthony Curlynge were located in his chambers (two each in two of his three chambers), and in the hall (two).[216] The records rarely provide any indication of what was stored in these chests, though one unusual reference from the escheators' lists to a bed stored in a chest has been noted. Also unusual is one of the chests of John Wyvenden of Hawkhurst in 1576, which is said to have contained 'six cheeses'.[217]

Tracing bequests of chests in London wills, French (2021, 117–19) shows a general increase in their prevalence through the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. To assess whether a similar trend can be traced for rural households, we can consider both the proportion of lists per decade containing chests, and the mean number of chests per list in each decade. Figure 5.7 demonstrates that throughout the later fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries (represented by the escheators' records), a fairly low proportion of lists contain chests. Although the dip towards the latter end of the period covered by the escheators' dataset is likely due to recording practices, it is clear that there is no evidence of a sustained increase in the acquisition and use of chests through this period. The coroners' records present a different picture, with a marked

[216] C171; C289.
[217] C230.

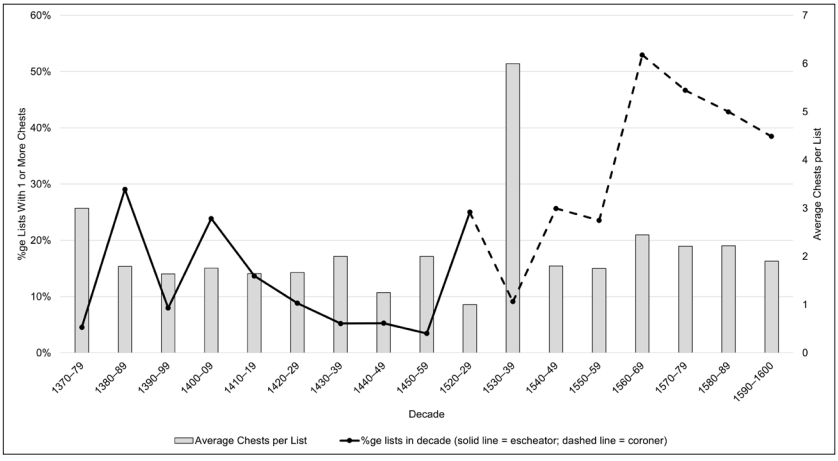

Figure 5.7: Occurrence of chests in the escheators' and coroners' records by decade. The line graph represents the proportion of the total lists from each decade containing at least one chest. The bar chart represents the average number of chests per list. The solid line relates to the escheators' records and the dashed line to the coroners' records.

increase in the middle third of the sixteenth century, with over half of the lists from the 1560s including at least one chest. In contrast, the average number of chests per list is fairly stable across the whole period, generally ranging from 1 to 2.4 (the figure of six for the 1530s relates to a single list). Although variations are slight, the average number of chests per list does fluctuate approximately in line with the proportion of lists with chests – with households, on average, having the highest average number of chests in the mid-sixteenth century, also the time at which the proportion of households possessing these items was at its highest.

Finally, we can consider the diversity of these items. The archaeological dataset is particularly valuable here as it demonstrates the possible acquisition of decorative chests by non-elite rural households. Surviving examples of medieval chests, as well as contemporary illustrations (Figure 5.6), show that chests and caskets could be elaborately decorated with studs and metal strips, but equally could be of plainer form with the lock plate being the only metal element. While examples from archaeological excavations cannot be conclusively identified as relating to chests, it is likely that many of these metal objects were chest furniture. The most common items are fragments of iron strapping. These could be from a range of different objects including doors or other iron-bound wooden objects such as buckets. They are common finds from urban and rural excavations. Perhaps of more significance are the copper alloy strips which may have been from smaller boxes or caskets. Like the iron strips, these are typically perforated but do not have any further decoration. If these are from

caskets, they show that these smaller boxes, used typically for storing valuable items, were used in a range of settings, not just higher status residences such as those at Grange Farm, Gillingham and Wimbotsham. Examples come from West Whelpington (Northumberland; Evans and Jarrett 1987), from Westwood (Kent; Powell 2012) and from a building at Goldicotte (Worcestershire; Palmer 2010). Items which can be more certainly associated with boxes or chests are the corner brackets, such as a copper alloy example from 16–20 Church Street, Bawtry (Cumberpatch and Dunkley 1996) and an iron example from Manston Road, Ramsgate (Kent; Archaeology South East 2009), and hinges. There are 10 hinges in the archaeological dataset, all made of iron. These come from a range of sites including the rural settlement at Cedars Park (Suffolk; Woolhouse 2016). Rivets and studs had many uses in carpentry and furniture making but could be used to secure strapping or mounts to chests. Both copper alloy and iron examples occur in the archaeological dataset, typically with a domed head. Further variability in the appearance of chests, caskets and boxes is provided by the evidence of furniture mounts. An oval piece from Huish (Thompson 1972) is of iron, but the remainder are made of copper alloy. These generally take the form of cut copper alloy sheet, but examples from Thuxton (Norfolk; Butler and Wade-Martins 1989), Upton (Worcestershire; Rahtz 1969) and Hepworth (Suffolk; Muldowney 2009) are incised, and a possible mount from Popham (Hampshire) is gold plated (Fasham 1987).

Handles are rarer finds and are typically of iron. Their distribution reflects that of other components of chests or boxes, being found at rural sites at Upton (Rahtz 1969), Gomeldon (Wiltshire; Musty and Algar 1986) and Thuxton (Butler and Wade-Martins 1989) (all iron, although one example from Upton may have been plated with a non-ferrous metal), with copper alloy examples from South Walsham (Norfolk; Brennand 1999) and Wharram Percy (Yorkshire; Harding *et al*. 2010). Iron hasps come from Upton (Rahtz 1969) and Low Fisher Gate, Doncaster (McComish *et al*. 2010). The final items associated with chests and boxes are elements of the locks and locking mechanisms. Parts of locking mechanisms have been recovered at Bawtry (Cumberpatch and Dunkley 1996) (iron with copper plating), Creedy's Yard, Greenwich (Laidlaw and Mepham 2002) (iron and copper alloy), West Whelpington (Evans and Jarrett 1987) (iron) and West Cotton (Northamptonshire; Hylton 2010) (an iron tumbler). In relation to the appearance of these objects, finds of lock or bash plates are perhaps more instructive. These include copper alloy examples from Staines (Jones 2010), Dartford (TVAS 2014) and Capel-St-Mary (Suffolk; Tabor 2010) and decorated copper alloy examples from Upton (Rahtz 1969) (incised and possibly gilded) and Parlington (Yorkshire; WYAS 2010) (incised). Iron keyhole surrounds also come from Gomeldon (Musty and Algar 1986) and Swindon (Wiltshire). Together, these archaeological examples demonstrate two things. Firstly, we can identify a high degree of variability in the appearance of chests and caskets. Iron and copper alloy were used in a variety of ways both in the construction and decoration of these items, and they might be embellished

through plating or further decoration. Secondly, boxes and chests were used in a wide range of households, corresponding with the evidence offered by the escheators' and coroners' records.

Further evidence of variation in the form and appearance of chests is provided by the descriptive language used in the escheators' and coroners' records. Across the escheators' dataset, a range of terms are used to describe chests. While the majority are referred to simply as chest (*cista*), more specific types include iron-bound chests and Flemish chests, while others are described as 'old' or 'worn'. As such, they may not represent investment by a household, but rather the curation of an heirloom. These old or worn examples range in value from 3d to 18d. The mean value of chests in the escheators' records is 17d, but values range from 2d to 480d/£2, with a modal value of 12d, and the majority being valued at less than 20d. The importation of chests, both as containers and as objects for sale (*cista vacua*) is well attested in the London customs accounts (e.g. Jenks 2019; see also Hinds 2022). Scientific analysis is adding to this picture. Research into a particular form of iron-bound domed chest (Pickvance 2012) suggests, on the basis of dendro-provenancing of wood and stylistic elements of the ironwork, that these items were imported into England (primarily eastern England). Eames (1977) suggests a Flemish connection and it is possible that the term 'Flemish chests' relates specifically to objects imported from Flanders.

A wider range of terms are used to describe these items in the coroners' records, perhaps pointing to an increasing level of diversity in form. Terms such as ark, coffer and whitch appear. These may be regional variations in some cases, but in others may indicate a greater degree of specificity in describing containers. We can also see variability in size, with chests referred to as 'little' or 'great' in some cases. Old chests also occur, a particularly interesting example being the 'old ship chest' belonging to William Bridge of Stelling (Kent) in 1586.[218] The increasing prevalence of chests in rural households suggested by their occurrence in the coroners' records could be due to changes in their production. Dendro-provenancing shows that through the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, surviving chests were often made of wood imported from the Baltic, but in the sixteenth century there is a shift to British sources (Bridge and Miles 2011). This shift may relate to a number of factors, including the regeneration of English woodland and changes in international patterns of trade reducing access to high quality imported wood. A rise in domestic production may have made more chests available on the market in response to an increasing demand for these objects, perhaps particularly from rural households which had not used them as heavily as their urban counterparts in previous decades.

In order to explore the supply of chests further, we can consider the spatial distribution of these objects and associated archaeological finds. A study of finds of furniture mounts and locks and keys reported to the Portable

[218] C309.

Antiquities Scheme by Lewis (2016) shows them to have a largely easterly distribution. This is particularly the case for the copper alloy padlocks most commonly associated with chests and caskets, and most likely to be identified by metal detectorists. Our archaeological data for items associated with chests shows a similarly focussed distribution, although with further findspots in (particularly northern) Wiltshire (Figure 5.8). These items appear most common in northern Kent, East Anglia and eastern Northamptonshire. The majority of padlocks in our archaeological sample are iron, although two examples from West Cotton are plated with copper alloy. These padlocks had a range of functions, but some may be related to the securing of chests, and in 14 out of 24 cases padlocks or padlock keys (a type of annular key, which could have been used in the locking mechanism of a chest itself; Egan 2010, 88–90) were recovered from sites which also had items which were potentially the metal elements of a chest or box. A similar pattern can be seen in the escheators' records, with chests being most prevalent among lists from Kent, Northamptonshire and, to a lesser extent, East Anglia, north Wiltshire and south Yorkshire. It is noticeable that the earliest lists with chests are largely to be found in eastern England, with examples from Wiltshire, Worcestershire and Devon principally being later in date (Figure 5.9). This may support the idea that earlier chests were imported, or made of imported wood, whereas by the fifteenth century chests made from English wood were more prevalent. The earliest examples come primarily from Norfolk, Kent and eastern Yorkshire, all of which were tied into North Sea trading networks. This is also reflected in the coroners' records, in which chests primarily appear in lists from Kent and Wiltshire, but also appear more prevalent in Devon and southern Wiltshire than in the escheators' dataset.

The coroners' records suggest an increase in the number of items of furniture associated with display or open storage in the sixteenth century, especially in the form of cupboards, shelves and sideboards (Table 5.4). Such items could be fixed or moveable (Eames 1977, 2). Their presence in coroners' lists is perhaps suggestive of an increasing adoption of the moveable type. A further addition is the wainscot press, occurring in the list of John James (valued at 26s 8d).[219] The value of these items of furniture is difficult to determine as they are typically appraised with other objects.[220] However, sixteenth-century cupboards are valued individually at sums ranging from 2s to 10s, suggesting that at the higher end at least, to obtain such an item would have represented a significant investment. The coroners' records also provide some information regarding the location of these items in the home. Most typically they are to be found in the hall or chamber, with occasional occurrences in the parlour or kitchen. Fixed items of furniture, in the form of cupboards or aumbries, are considerably rarer in both the coroners' and escheators' records. An example is John Rotherham of Elvington (Yorkshire), who committed murder in 1417 and possessed two chests

[219] C382.
[220] C11.

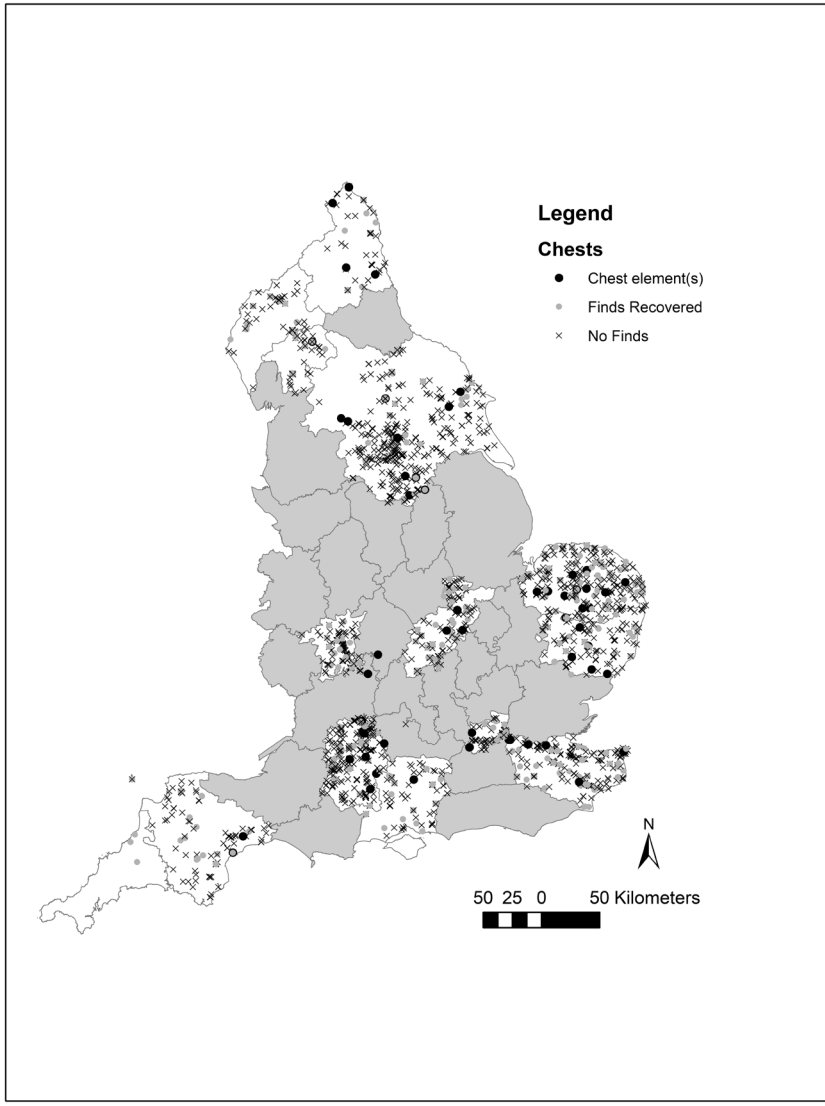

Figure 5.8: Distribution of objects associated with chests in the archaeological dataset

and an aumbry, although apparently no books or items of value to store in the latter.[221] The chests may have been used to store some of his soft furnishings, as he possessed 14 sets of bedding consisting of sheets, blankets and coverlets.

Overall, our data supports the notion of an increasing prevalence of chests as households engaged more intensively in commercial activity in the fifteenth

[221] E586.

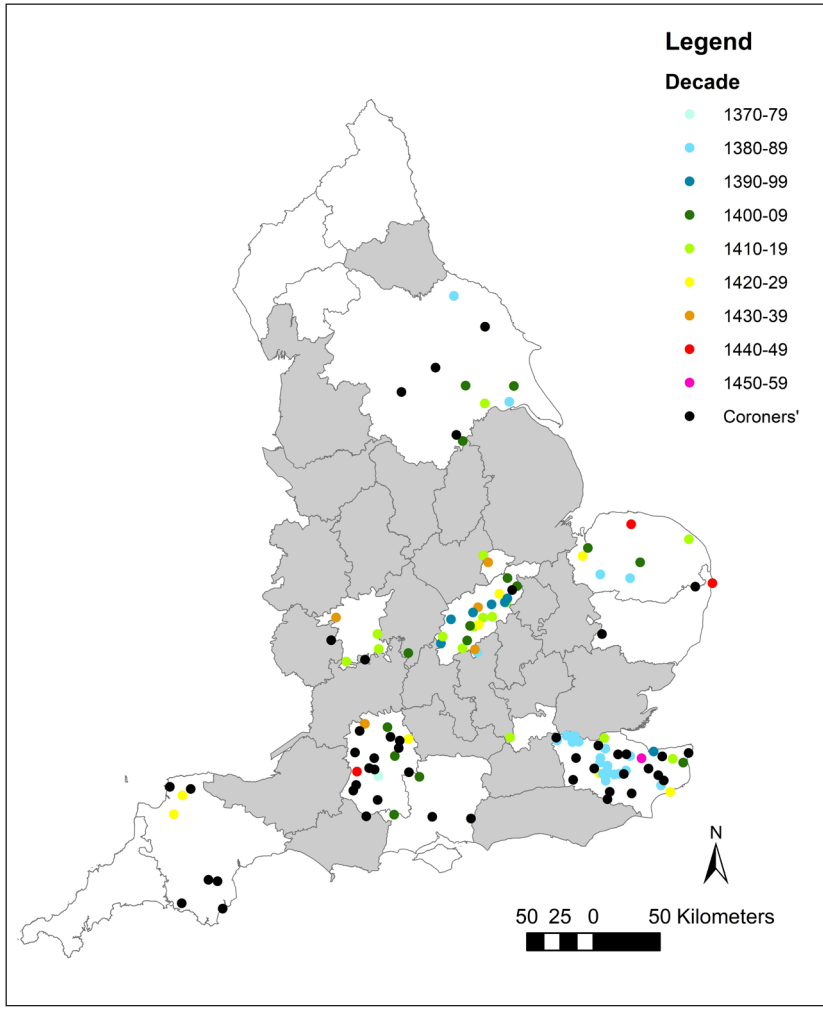

Figure 5.9: Distribution of chests in the escheators' and coroners' records by date.

and sixteenth centuries. Even so, chests were used in non-elite rural households in the later fourteenth century. We can infer an increasing diversity in the character of these items from the language used to describe them, supported by the range of embellishments attested to by archaeological finds. They occur in an increasing proportion of lists over time, and the areas in which they are found and the average number of chests per list also grew. The archaeological and historical datasets point strongly to an eastern bias in the use of chests in the fourteenth century, expanding westwards through the fifteenth century. This may be related to a change in the source of the wood, and perhaps

therefore the chests, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries as suggested by dendro-provenancing, and by changes in the perception of chests at the same time, as revealed in manuscript illuminations. As chests became more prevalent in lower status homes, so they increasingly came to stand for social ambiguity as they might conceal, or create an illusion, of wealth in a social order that was being renegotiated through the long-term changes to the labour and property markets following the Black Death.

Seating

The final major category of furniture comprises items associated with seating: chairs, stools and benches (Table 5.7). In the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, cushions were typically associated with the bed, so where the escheators' records are concerned have been discussed as bedding (see above). In contrast, within the coroners' records a small number of cushions, typically found in the hall, are clearly associated with chairs or benches, rather than beds. Whereas items associated with storage and bedding are exceptionally common, seating occurs as the only category of furniture in just two escheators' lists (one of which also includes tables). In all, seating items occur in 44 lists. In two cases only a single type of item is present. In 1422 Nicholas Webster of Howden (Yorkshire) possessed a chair (valued at 8d) and table, and in 1420 John Hullediewe, a husbandman of Highway (Wiltshire) had a stool (valued at 1d) and two tables; it is notable that these appear in the midst of a list of farming equipment.[222]

Benches are the most common items occurring in the escheators' lists, followed by chairs and stools (Table 5.7). It is noticeable that multiple stools occur in a small number of lists, while typically households with chairs only had one or two. As Table 5.8 illustrates, in most cases the households with seating listed in the escheators' records had a bench, in a small number of cases with a chair, or chair and stools. These different types of seating fulfilled different practical and social functions. The chair was a symbol of authority, linked with the head of the household and, potentially, having some symbolic power in relation to the status or aspirations of a household (Buxton 2015, 139; Eames 1977, 181; Sear and Sneath 2020, 139). Chairs were typically valued at 4d or 6d. Benches, like tables, were typically moveable to allow for flexibility in the use of space (Eames 1977, 203). Where listed, benches quite often occur in multiples of three, and these groups are given values from 4d to 36d, suggesting some variety in material, size or condition. As in the elite household, seating on benches might reflect the social order, based on distance from the head of the household (Flather 2011, 178).

The coroners' lists suggest an increase in the quantity of seating, particularly in the number of chairs and stools in relation to the quantity of benches. This

[222] E565; E558.

Table 5.7: Occurrence of seating in the escheators' and coroners' records.

Object	Escheators'		Coroners'	
	No. Items	No. Lists	No. items	No. Lists
Chair	26	19	27	16
Chair (joined)			1	1
Chair (board)			1	1
Chair (worn/old)	2	2	6	3
Bench/form	52	24	41	24
Bench/form (old)			1	1
Stool	20	7	28	13
Three-legged stool			3	1
Stool (plain and old)			1	1
Seat/bench			4	1
Cushions	103	22	42	6

gives support to the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century evidence presented by Sear and Sneath (2020, 140), and by Buxton (2015) who highlights a distinction between the use of chairs in wealthier households and a preponderance of shared seating in lower status homes in the town of Thame. Chairs are typically valued with other items of furniture, so it is impossible to determine how they were appraised. We can also identify soft furnishings in the form of cushions in six lists (note that one list, that of an innkeeper, includes 24 cushions, in part accounting for the high number of cushions per list)[223] which are unambiguously associated with seating rather than bedding. Cushions were valued modestly, for example in 1588 George Bowre of Kingthorpe (Yorkshire), had five valued at 12d.[224] Consideration of the co-occurrence of these items of seating also suggests that in the sixteenth century it was more common for households to possess a chair or stool as well as a bench than in the preceding centuries, with benches occurring as the only item of seating in only four lists (Table 5.8).

Other furnishings: heating, lighting and hangings

Objects for lighting and heating occur in a small number of escheators' and coroners' lists (Table 5.9). These include andirons and occasional scuttles and pokers for tending the fire. References to bellows occur in five coroners'

[223] C548.
[224] C346.

Table 5.8: Combinations of seating occurring in the escheators' and coroners' records (excluding lists with soft furnishings but no furniture associated with seating).

Bench	Chair/ Seat	Stool	Seat	Banker	Bolster	Cushion	No. Escheators' Lists	No. Coroners' Lists
X	X						2	7
X							16	4
X	X	X					3	4
X				X		X	3	0
X						X	1	1
	X			X	X	X	1	0
	X			X		X	4	0
	X					X	3	0
	X					X	2	0
	X						8	3
		X					3	1
		X				X	1	1
X	X					X	0	1
	X	X					0	2
X		X					0	4
X	X	X				X	0	3

lists, typically in association with other equipment for tending the fire. These references are suggestive of the presence of fireplaces rather than open hearths. For example, Jane Vause of Beccles (Suffolk) had a pair of bellows and a fire-pan in 1528, and Thomas Chylrey of Marlborough had a pair of bellows in his chamber.[225] In 1576 John Oke of Britford had a pair of iron fire dogs, tongs and a fire shovel as well as a pair of bellows.[226] Bellows also occur in the escheators' records, but only example – that of William Mandevile of Colnbrook (Middlesex), whose list dates to 1419 – relates clearly to a domestic context, as opposed to smithing.[227] Such items must have been more widespread than is apparent from these lists.

[225] C146; C171.
[226] C226.
[227] E667.

Table 5.9: Occurrence of objects associated with lighting in the escheators' and coroners' records.

Object	Escheators'		Coroners'	
	No. Items	No. Lists	No. Items	No. Lists
Latten candlestick	14	7	19	7
Candlestick	29	14	62	28
Brass candlestick	0	0	8	4
Wooden (?) candlestick	0	0	8	2
'White' candlestick	0	0	2	1
Iron candlestick	0	0	1	1
Lantern	1	1	2	2
Tin candlestick	2	1	0	0
Candle	55	2	66	2
Candlewick	0	0	4	1

Like items of plate and bedding, candlesticks had a value beyond the utilitarian. In forthcoming work, Louisa Foroughi notes how candles, in addition to providing light, offered a further link to ecclesiastical practice. This imbued metal candlesticks, which feature regularly in wills, with a significance beyond the economic. As inherited items they developed a mnemonic capacity, which in turn might be considered as statements of piety. Latten (a copper and zinc alloy) candlesticks are not common in the escheators' records, but typically occur in multiples (Table 5.9). John Poughole, a hosteller of Basingstoke (Hampshire) had three (2s), as did John Moigne of Warmington (Northamptonshire) (12d) and John Peke of Hampton (Middlesex) three (9d), for example.[228] They may also have been available in cheaper materials, John Crane's two 'tin' candlesticks were worth only 2d.[229] Archaeological examples are primarily of iron, for example those from Wimbotsham (Shelley 2003), Whittington (Worcestershire; Hurst 1998) and West Whelpington (Evans and Jarrett 1987). The widespread use of candles from around 1300 is also reflected in the presence of other types of candleholder. Prickets such as those from Wimbotsham (Shelley 2003), Popham (Fasham 1987), West Whelpington (Evans and Jarrett 1987), Doncaster (McComish *et al.* 2010) and Lydd (Kent; Barber and Priestly-Bell 2008) are all made from iron. Lewis (2016) shows that candleholders had a wide distribution across England. Numbers are low, however, and Egan (2005, 203) suggests that this could be due to the use of rush lights rather than candles

[228] E20; E45; E403.
[229] E614.

in rural homes. The PAS evidence in particular shows a great deal of variation in the form and decoration of candleholders and candlesticks, and it might be the case that it was those more elaborate examples, and particularly those of pewter or other valuable metals, which caught the appraisers' eye (Figure 5.10).

The coroners' lists provide further information. They show that items for lighting were most commonly in the hall, chamber and parlour, but may also have been kept in butteries. These are nearly all candlesticks, typically described as latten, with eight in brass, and a single iron example (Table 5.9). An unusual find is a wooden lantern from Exmouth (Devon; Allan 1999). A copper alloy strip from Staines has also been interpreted as part of a lantern (Jones 2010). This may be paralleled in the lantern worth 1d belonging to the sawyer John Haselwode of Boughton in 1438 (Kent) and those belonging to the labourer William Mursshall of Greenwich (Kent) and Edward Purkheme of Denbury (Devon).[230]

Hangings and coverings, including window curtains, are rare in the escheators' lists, occurring most commonly in lists with a wide range of other furnishings. It was common practice for fabrics to be hung in medieval houses to cover wooden furniture and to add colour and warmth to the interior. While is highly likely that items associated with heating and lighting are under-represented in the lists, the extent of this is unclear. Taken at face value, however, it appears that only the wealthiest of households were able to invest in such items. Like other textiles, these were relatively valuable. In 1382 Richard Bocher of Rochester had two old hangings (*tapete*) valued at 2s.[231] Another example is the striped hanging belonging to Simon Deryng of Whinburgh (Norfolk) in 1406, valued at 12d.[232] It is probable that some items termed as testers, costers or dossers were in fact wall hangings. Further detail on these items is provided in the coroners' lists. For example, in 1586 Edward Purkheme of Denbury possessed a 'shred halling', or a tapestry made up of shreds of fabric.[233] A curtain was to be found in the chamber of Thomas Chylrey of Marlborough in 1565 and also in the parlour of Thomas Ramsden, the Oundle shoemaker, in 1545.[234] Hints at the use of hangings are also provided by the archaeological dataset in the form of rings such as the copper alloy examples from Wharram Percy (Harding, Marlow-Mann and Wrathmell 2010), West Whelpington (Evans and Jarrett 1987), Popham (Fasham 1987) and Dartford (TVAS 2014) and an iron example from excavations on the Bacton to King's Lynn pipeline (Norfolk; Wilson *et al*. 2012), although these items could have had a variety of functions and need not have been used for hanging decorative textiles.

[230] E293; C308; C487.
[231] E667.
[232] E1309.
[233] C308.
[234] C171; C76.

Figure 5.10: Examples of candlesticks and holders from the Portable Antiquities Scheme database. A: 15th–16th century copper alloy socketed candlestick from Long Sutton, Lincolnshire (PAS Reference NMS-8ED0A7); B: 15th–17th century cast copper alloy candlestick found at Ogwell, Devon (DEV-002F46) C: Socket from cast copper alloy candlestick found at Stone, Kent; D: Copper alloy tripod candle holder from Repps, Norfolk (NMS-6FEA68); E: Copper alloy candle holder from Wakefield, West Yorkshire; F: Zoomorphic animal holder in the shape of a cockerel, dating from the 12th–14th centuries from Barston, Solihull. CC By Attribution Licence. Images: Norfolk County Council (A; D) Portable Antiquities Scheme (B; C); West Yorkshire Archaeology Advisory Service (E); Birmingham Museums Trust (F).

Conclusion: furnishing the home

Some interiors were clearly well furnished. In 1419, William Mandevile of Colnbrook had a wider range of bedding than is typical: three coverlets (4s 4d) and five blankets (20d); a further coverlet, two blankets, mattress and a pair of sheets (valued together at 5s 4d); four cushions (18d) and three pillows (4s); and an additional coverlet, blanket and sheet (valued at 20d with one stone of wool) (see discussion in Jervis 2022c). A final two coverlets, blanket, mattress, quilt and two curtains were valued at 2s 4d. Although many of these items are described as 'worn', here we can see investment in a degree of comfort, and the occurrence of multiple groups of bedding in his list are suggestive of Mandevile's home having a chamber or chambers. He also had bellows, suggesting a fireplace. However, as Table 5.1 illustrates, such a wide range of furnishings was not typical for the households within our sample. It is apparent that investment in bedding took priority when furnishing the home, with storage items perhaps being new acquisitions but also likely, in some cases at least, to have been passed down familial lines. Bedding represented a substantial investment; along with metal cooking ware, it was generally the most valuable set of items within the home. Objects associated with seating in comfort do not seem to have been the foremost concern of medieval households. It is instructive to summarise the furnishings of some of those households that had more complex assemblages of furniture.

It is in those households that had furniture for sleeping, seating and storage that we find the strongest evidence for investment in objects associated with privacy and comfort. For example, in 1384 Thomas Isenden of Sutton Valence (Kent) possessed two bankers with accompanying cushions (12d), one chest valued at 3s 4d plus 'two other worn chests' valued at 20d, two coverlets, a tester, a hanging and two bolsters (valued altogether at 13s 4d), and two pairs of sheets (6s) (all these appear in the section of his list that concerns domestic items, as opposed to his goods 'in the shop').[235] We can also, in some cases, see investment perhaps in a 'master' bed chamber. In 1405 John Moigne, an exceptionally wealthy individual within the sample, had six pairs of sheets (14s 3d), three pillows (12d) and a bed 'of white wool' (5s), plus a further 'worsted' bed with canopy and three curtains (20s), two coverlets with worn *tapete* (that word here probably meaning a bed covering, rather than a wall hanging, 10s), and four sheets (3s 4d). This entry is suggestive of the presence of at least one hanging bed, and implies a chamber.[236] In addition, he had a white and red coster and six old 'tapestry' cushions (*vi quisshon' de Tapicer veter'*, 5s), and curtains (*i wyndocloth*', valued at 12d). He also possessed five chests, three tables and three benches (notably, his coster and cushions are clearly listed with the

[235] E768; the more valuable chest is described using an illegible adjective, possibly meaning 'Flemish'.

[236] E45.

benches rather than the bedding). Similarly, Simon Deryng, a parker of Whinburgh (Norfolk) convicted of treason in 1406, had a canopy, curtain and tester (3s 4d); here the 'bed' is only implied, not specifically mentioned. He also possessed one coverlet with three *shalons* (blankets or coverlets), two blankets, one mattress and one canvas (6s); five sheets (3s); a dosser with two costers (16d); and a striped hanging (12d).[237] While we might expect furniture to be acquired by wealthier households due to their higher levels of disposable income, lists such as those of Moigne and Isenden also show that it was households such as these, with their more complex domestic arrangements, which in turn afforded the use of fixed or specialised forms of furniture, as the function of particular rooms became more defined.

We might expect increasing complexity in domestic arrangements over time, both in terms of the spaces themselves and the range of goods which filled them. Drawing on the evidence of wills, Salter (2006, 67) highlights how, in wills, terms such as 'chamber' refer not to the room but to the furniture and objects within them, suggesting that it was the practices which these things afforded, rather than the spaces in which they were placed, which was of key concern. Our dataset is too small to assess whether the increasing range of furniture was driven by architectural modification, or was a response to it. However, we can infer that changing domestic practice and values relates to these changes. For example, an increasing need for privacy and comfort might be understood as driving the emergence of the parlour and chambers. We might question whether it was the presence of these spaces which created an opportunity for the acquisition of wooden bedsteads, seating and soft furnishings, or whether desire for such goods necessitated modification. Whichever, if either, change came first, we suggest that architectural modification and a diversifying world of goods worked in tandem to create new forms of domestic space and experience. The presence of goods such as cushions in the escheators' and coroners' lists does suggest more complex architectural arrangements, as their occurrence implies the presence of permanent beds or seating, as they would otherwise be cumbersome to store. These items need not be associated with the wealthy only because they were 'luxury' goods, but also because particular architectural organisation was required for them to become usable possessions.

Similarly, in the coroners' records complex sets of furniture are rare. It is the list of John James which provides the most vivid and complex picture of such an interior.[238] James had carpets in his parlour, bed chamber and study, and also had several hangings and canvas curtains in his bed chamber. He had a bedstead, featherbed, coverlets and blanket 'in the mayden's chamber'; a truckle bed and standing bedstead plus extensive bedding in the bedchamber; a further bedstead and bedding 'in the bushoppes (bishop's) chamber'; a bedstead and a truckle bed plus bedding in the inner chamber; and a bedstead 'in

[237] E1309.
[238] C382.

the chamber over the halle entry'. He had additional beds in a second property at Newton Tony.

It is striking that furniture is absent from the majority of escheators' and coroners' records. While some lists show investment in elaborate bedding and larger items of furniture, in most cases the evidence suggests sparsely furnished homes. These spaces could be easily transformed over the course of the day through the use of objects such as mattresses, benches and trestle tables. As might be expected, the most common types of household with more elaborate furnishings are those of the highest socio-economic status within our dataset: the clergy and yeomen. It is apparent, however, that husbandmen and, particularly, labourers developed some capacity and desire to invest in furnishings, particularly by the end of our period. Regional differences in bedding and seating are difficult to assess due to the low quantities present, but there does seem to be a focus in the use of chests in the eastern counties, perhaps revealing the impact of Hanseatic trading networks on everyday life in this part of England.

Overall, we can see an increasing level of comfort in late medieval and Tudor homes by the end of our period, and a proliferation of furniture. This is most apparent in the changes to bedding, but also in the increasing quantity and diversity of chests and seating. In furniture we can, perhaps, see the intersection between function, architectural developments and commercialisation; as a wider range of goods became available, space became increasingly specialised, and levels of disposable income rose for many groups. This created a shift in both the use and perception of furniture within the home between c.1370 and c.1600.

CHAPTER 6

Dressing the Part: Evidence for Clothing

Clothing and personal adornment are among the most well-studied elements of medieval consumption, from both archaeological and historical perspectives. Within medieval and early modern society, clothing was perhaps the most obvious signifier of social status, so that dress could be used by medieval writers as a metaphor to convey information about characters (Jaster 2006, 91; Hodges 2005; Robertson 2008). Items of dress and personal adornment had symbolic meaning as well as practical importance for the peasants and artisans who are the primary subjects of this book, just as they did for the lay and clerical elites. At every social level, the expectations and intentions of the wearer worked in combination with the responses of others to produce meanings around dress choices that varied with context (Jervis 2017a; Shaw 2005; Smith 2009b). Furthermore, scholars have frequently pointed to evidence of widespread changes and improvements in dress in the later fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, which suggest, for instance, that many lower status households were able to purchase cloth of increasing quality and in greater quantities (Dyer 2005, 149–50; Kowaleski 2006, 249–51; Sear and Sneath 2020, 106–8). The argument for such changes gains support from well-known contemporary comment which, like the preambles to the sumptuary petitions and related statutes of 1363, 1463 and 1532–3, expresses anxiety about the growing difficulty of distinguishing different status groups through their dress and personal adornment (Ormrod 2005; Record Commission 1816, 399; 1817, 430). Such commentary has also encouraged the view that non-elite groups enjoying greater disposable income not only replaced their clothing more frequently and with garments and textiles of higher quality, but that they also participated in wider changes in the style of dress, or indeed in fashion, for which the period under consideration in this book is well known (Dyer 1998, 175–7; 2005, 135).

Substantiating such arguments with direct evidence of the clothing and accessories of peasants, labourers and artisans is not straightforward. Each of

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the main documentary sources for understanding clothing – wills, inventories and manuscript illuminations – provides different kinds of information, but are all problematic for understanding non-elite dress (see Piponnier and Mane 2000, 3–13). Inventory evidence relates primarily to a small number of better off households, at least prior to the sixteenth century. Wills provide useful information on clothing and, more tellingly, on attitudes to clothing. Bequeathing clothing was a means through which the identity and memory of the deceased could be formed and curated, for example through showing charity, exploiting awareness of clothing's symbolic role, and by creating obligations through gifting (see Burkholder 2005; Crawford 2004; Jaster 2006; Sweetinburgh 2004; Salter 2004). Manuscript illuminations typically illustrate elite dress or portray the peasantry in an idealised form for an elite audience, meaning that while they may provide information on general trends, such images are a problematic source for understanding specifics (Blanc 2002, 160; Scott 2007; Smith 2009b). Prescriptive sources exist in the shape of sumptuary measures through which the crown aimed to lay down rules on the value of textiles and forms of dress permissible to different social groups. Yet we must remember that not all parliamentary petitions on the matter became statutes, that the evidence for enforcement of those statues is virtually non-existent and that in any case, all the late medieval and Tudor petitions and statutes were as concerned with the behaviour of elites as they were with the lower orders (Phillips 2007). Thus while such petitions and statutes provide an invaluable insight into contemporary thinking about rank and display, they pose problems as a guide to practice. Given all this, analysis of our escheators', coroners' and archaeological datasets offers an opportunity to add to our understanding of non-elite dress, and to attempt to trace some of the changes highlighted above.

Our evidence on dress is perhaps less abundant and harder to interpret than it is for many other aspects of household consumption considered in this book. As the next section shows, on the archival side we have surprisingly few chattels lists that say much about clothing. The archaeological data is characterized by its capacity to illuminate specific well-preserved items such as buckles, but is less helpful on other topics, although there are rare survivals of textiles and leather, which survive only in anaerobic conditions. However, although our material is patchy overall, enough exists to allow this chapter to add to the currently available picture of the clothing, footwear and jewellery of both the non-elite laity and parish clergy. The chapter's broader objective is to assess claims about the adoption of more elaborate and costlier clothing as well as new fashions among the ordinary residents of small-town and rural England.

Clothing in the escheators' and coroners' records

Clothing, footwear and other items of personal adornment such as jewellery are relatively rare in the felony forfeiture records of the escheator and coroner,

though somewhat less so in the latter than the former. There are many lists of chattels that do not feature such items at all.

To some extent this characteristic must reflect the practices of felony forfeiture. Although direct and explicit evidence is lacking, it seems that it was only in rare circumstances that a living felon's own clothing was taken from him as part of the process of forfeiture. Those living felons who had fled, or were otherwise absent from the scene of the escheator's or coroner's inquest, would naturally be wearing at least some of their clothes, rendering them unavailable for seizure. There is a small group of lists among the escheators' records which are relatively short, consisting of just a handful of items, and are also unusual in mentioning clothing. In these cases, one might suspect that what we are seeing is not the typical escheator's inquest into movables carried out at the residence of the forfeiting felon, but the capture of an individual in flight, with the forfeiture affecting only those items he had on or about his person. A good example is that of Hugh Heche of Rollesby in eastern Norfolk, who fled for numerous felonies, and had 'after his flight' just three items: a blue gown (5s), a dagger (12d) and a shirt (8d). These goods are said to be in the hands of Thomas Greystok at Horning, several miles to the west of Rollesby, which suggests that Hugh may have been apprehended in flight towards Norwich.[239] It is possible that in this forfeiture Hugh was stripped of the clothes he stood up in, but there is nothing explicit to prove this either in the details of this forfeiture or in others featuring fleeing felons who left similar short lists dominated by clothing.

When it came to deceased felons – those who had been executed, or committed suicide – one might anticipate that the escheator or coroner had greater scope for seizing clothing. In these cases the clothing worn at the point of death may have been open to seizure. This likelihood appears to have been greatest for suicides, and the fact that clothing – including women's clothing – is more frequently mentioned in the coroners' inquests is almost certainly connected to the fact that suicide is a more common reason for forfeiture in those records than in the escheators'. However, for those forfeiting felons known to have been executed by hanging, the reference to clothing in chattels lists is again largely sporadic. Presumably one important reason for this is that the execution took place in a different location to the inquest into chattels, again rendering the felon's personal clothing unavailable for appraisal.

The above does not exhaust the list of possible reasons for the exclusion of clothing from the appraisal of forfeited chattels. For instance, clothing could be received as payment, perhaps in the form of livery (Crawford 2004). In such cases, it is possible that clothing might have been understood as remaining the possession of the employer or lord, meaning that it was not eligible for confiscation (Crawford 2004). Furthermore, women's clothing may be particularly

[239] E411; the particulars of account entry specifically states that these three items were withheld by Thomas, leaving open the possibility that other goods were appraised and sold in the original inquest but not mentioned in this account.

lacking from the lists of male felons because it was considered inalienable paraphernalia and therefore exempt from confiscation (Beattie 2019, 32; see also Chapter 2).

The above considerations show that the chattels lists, and especially those in the escheators' records, understate the presence of clothing in households. Many of the items of dress that they do record are likely to have been spare or second examples. In the escheators' dataset everyday items such as tunics and tabards (*tunica, colobium*) are included in only two lists each (Table 6.1). This is probably because most tunics were being worn by the felon concerned and were therefore not available to the escheator for appraisal. The escheators also seem to have been particularly interested in items of dress that were unusual or especially valuable. The items of clothing most commonly listed by the escheator are outer garments such as gowns, and belts, hence our focus on these below. It is very rare for multiple items of clothing to be listed. The list with the most items of clothing (10), that of Robert Tyuerton, leech of Woodnewton (Northamptonshire, date 1419), is thus very unusual. It contains four gowns, two sleeves and four kirtles, the latter of which, interestingly, were garments typically associated with female dress. One of the gowns is valued individually at 5s, while two of the remaining three are valued together with the sleeves and kirtles at 5s; the valuation of the final gown is illegible.[240] In 1418 Patrick Goldsmyth of Evesham (Worcestershire) possessed a leather belt with silver adornment, valued with the dagger and sheath at 13s 4d; an old hood (2d); a second leather belt, valued with a forcer or casket (*forcet*) at 4d; a worn 'striped garment' (*indumentum strangulat'*, 6d) and eight buttons (10d).[241] These lists are unusual in mentioning more than just one or two items of clothing.

As noted, the coroners' records differ markedly from the escheators', with a higher quantity and wider range of clothing represented (Table 6.1). Changes in fashion can be identified: hoods are replaced by hats, and a trend towards tighter clothing can be seen in references to bodices (Figure 6.1). The presence of such clothing is suggestive of changes in its acquisition, with the increasing use of tailors to produce 'made to measure' clothing (see Piponnier and Mane 2000, 28–32). Undergarments (typically petticoats) and footwear also appear in the lists. In some lists, especially those of suicides, we can see something which may amount to the full range of clothing belonging to an individual. For example in 1541, the suicide Peter Lambe of Woodchurch (Kent), probably a carpenter, had two tunics, two doublets, a jerkin and hose, all valued at 13s 4d.[242] The list relating to Thomas Hippkyns, a shoemaker of Havant (Hampshire), dating to 1551, would seem to consist mainly of the outfit in which he committed suicide; his listed chattels comprise two coats (4s), a doublet (16d), hose (12d), a jerkin, a cap, and a pair of shoes (all valued together at 12d) and two

[240] E307.
[241] E339.
[242] C14.

Table 6.1: Occurrence of clothing in the escheators' and coroners' records.

Object	Escheators'		Coroners'	
	No. items	No. Lists	No. Items	No. Lists
Apron	1	1	24	8
Belt	74	41	4	4
Brooch	7	1		
Cloak	11	11	25	17
Coat (coot)			22	13
Equestrian equipment (spur)	1	1	1	1
Fastening	152	2	1	1
Footwear			97	12
Frock			2	1
Glove			1	1
Gown or robe (toga), Kirtle or Gaberdine	79	49	20	9
Hand ruff			1	2
Head covering (see table 6.5)	32	23	68	29
Jacket			9	6
Jerkin			15	12
Leg covering (e.g. hose, breeches)	46	6	50	27
Misc. Clothing	2	2	45	35
Nightcap			2	2
Purse	8	3		
Ring	14	10	4	2
Ruff			2	1
Safeguard			2	1
Shirt or Doublet	8	7	91	41
Tabard	2	2	1	1
Tunic	2	2	22	16
Underwear (e.g. petticoat, bodice, partlet)			64	17
Vestment or Cassock	1	1	4	4
Waistcoat			5	3

Figure 6.1: Two depictions of peasant dress. A: Illustration of a Kentish peasant dating to c.1390. He is wearing a loose-fitting tunic and a belt adorned with round studs, to which is attached a dagger and purse. From the register of Archbishop William Courtenay, fo. 337v. Reproduced by permission Lambeth Palace Library. B: 16th-century German illustration of peasants brawling from 'The Peasants' Feast' by Sebald Beham. Note the wearing of hats, coats and more tightly fitted clothing. Image: Metropolitan Museum of Art (in public domain) Accession number 62.662.4.

shirts (12d).[243] The coroners' lists provide some insights into female attire and the care taken over appearance. For example, in 1590, Mary Wyn of Armthorpe (Yorkshire) committed suicide. She had a hat (12d), three rails (i.e. cloaks or shawls), a kerchief, two pairs of sleeves, three cross cloths (a form of headwear), two ruffs, and undergarments in the form of a petticoat, six partlets and a smock.[244] She also possessed two safeguards (outer garments for protecting clothing), four aprons, old hose and a pair of shoes. All of this clothing was valued together at 3s 4d. Wyn's list therefore sheds light on the changing fashions of the period. She possesses the layered items which characterise Tudor female dress (smock, petticoat and partlets), plus ruffs and headwear.

Overall therefore, for a number of reasons the escheators' records definitely understate the presence of clothing, the most important being that the felon was commonly absent and wearing his clothing when the inquest into chattels was taken. Equally, the general dearth of references to articles of dress casts doubt on the idea that it was typical for late medieval non-elite individuals to possess multiple garments. The processes underlying the coroners' records were such that they perhaps give us a fuller picture of clothing than the pre-1500

[243] C116.
[244] C353.

materials. At the same time, our archival evidence from the Tudor period suggests significant changes in styles and fashions, and in the propensity to own multiple items of clothing, which are likely to represent more than simply a change in recording practices.

The consumption of cloth

Before examining each type of clothing in turn, we look first at the presence of 'cloth' (*pannus*), which appears somewhat more commonly than specific items of clothing in the lists of forfeited chattels. In many cases this must represent material destined to be made up into garments, either by tailors or in the domestic setting. In this section we focus our attention on all references to 'cloth', naturally excluding from consideration any textiles in the form of items such as tablecloths or dossers. Of course, the cloth recorded as present in households was not all destined for clothing and some will have been used for furnishings and bedding. Yet it is useful to look at this category because it can provide some clues to trends in domestic cloth consumption in the period 1370–1460. The investigation is limited to the escheators' records since, somewhat surprisingly, references to 'cloth' not in the form of garments or furnishings are rare in the coroners' material.

Of course, the presence of cloth in a list of forfeited chattels may be viewed in different ways depending on context. The forfeiting household could be regarded as the producer, seller or consumer of the cloth, and it is often difficult to be certain which is the correct interpretation. In this chapter an effort is made to isolate those lists where the cloth appears to be an article of consumption. In Chapter 8, by contrast (Table 8.6), we focus on cases where the forfeiting household appears to have been the producer or, more commonly, the seller of the cloth. These distinctions are drawn mainly on the basis of occupational designation, and on the evidence of other objects mentioned in the list, as well as the context of the forfeiture. The quantity of cloth mentioned also plays a role, but here one must be careful not to adopt circular reasoning and assume that the presence of relatively large amounts must indicate involvement in the marketing of cloth.

There are 102 escheators' lists which feature 'cloth' which may plausibly be treated as an article of consumption. Many of these lists – some 85 – are not especially helpful, because they simply offer rather stereotyped reference to 'linen and woollen cloths' (*panni linei et lani*), a form that is especially prevalent in the records concerning Norfolk and Suffolk, and Yorkshire. It is not possible to determine what kinds of objects lay behind this phrase. Some of the *panni linei et lani* are given an overall value, but it is not possible to do much with this given that the quantity of each type is unknown.

More helpful are the remaining lists which provide a little more detail concerning the type, quantity and value of the forfeited cloth. Oldland (2014, 39–41) has posited an increase in cloth consumption per capita across the

Table 6.2: Values of cloth identified as a consumption item in the escheators' records. Assumes 1 ell is equal to 45 inches and 1 yard to 37 inches (after Manchester University Lexis of Cloth and Clothing).

List No.	Date	Name	Occupation	Type	Ells	Yards	Pence / yard
226	1413	John Neet	Butcher	Russet		4	6
556	1420	John Spark	Husbandman	Russet strait		4	3
596	1462	William Atte Mille	Labourer	Russet		1.5	10.6
656	1382	Geoffrey Potet	–	Sack-cloth	8		3.3
				New red medley	4		19.8
1582	1404	John Lynch	–	Russet		5	5.6
1594	1404	John Beset	–	Linen	24		5.5

period covered by our evidence, but it is difficult to evaluate change over time with the information at our disposal. We can, however, bring together some evidence concerning the quantity and quality of cloth in the possession of forfeiting households. Table 6.2 provides summary details of those lists containing cloth for consumption described in ells or yards, allowing a price per yard to be calculated. Dyer (1998, 176) suggested that 'peasant clothes were not made from the cheapest materials available', and put the cost of textiles used for tunics at 8d to 1s 3d per yard. Table 6.2 shows that in most of the escheators' examples the cloth was valued at 3d–6d per yard, with a further cloth valued at 10.6d per yard, and a piece of clearly superior 'new red medley cloth' appraised at nearly 20d (1s 8d). Those values are in general quite modest, though we must remember that, with the partial exception of the medley, which had perhaps been only recently purchased, these forfeited cloths were by definition not new. Quantities are again relatively few and difficult to interpret, but in the main these too do not seem large (a few lists which mention 'pieces' of cloth of unspecified lengths, or simply 'cloths', must be excluded, which perhaps distorts the picture somewhat). It has been suggested that 2.25 to 2.5 yards of cloth were required for a tunic, and three for a coat (Oldland 2014, 39). Thus three of the households represented in Table 6.2 possessed enough to make one full garment only, while John Lynch and Geoffrey Potet perhaps had enough for two tunics each of russet and medley, respectively.[245] Geoffrey Potet and John Beset also possessed more extensive quantities of cheaper sack cloth and linen, as opposed to woollen cloths.

[245] E1582.

Among the lists which feature 'cloth' as an apparent consumption item, Geoffrey Potet's 'new red medley' is unusual in noting the type and colour of the cloth concerned. Two further lists mention 'white' (undyed) cloth. One concerns John Tydder, a chaplain of Wolverley (Worcestershire) who had two yards (value not given), while the other is the striking case of Thomas Pipe of Broadway (Worcestershire), a labourer hanged for killing his wife, who in 1451 possessed two white woollen cloths, valued at the impressive sum of £6, amongst goods worth £14 6s 8d in total.[246] Thomas seems to be an undisputable example of a mid-fifteenth-century labourer living in remarkable domestic comfort. Yet he stands out as unusual. It is useful to compare him to the hellier or tiler John Bethebrok, from an unspecified Hampshire or Wiltshire location, who in 1404 is recorded as owning 'one gown and two yards of blue cloth' valued quite modestly at 20d.[247] Finally we have four lists which note russet cloth (Table 6.2). While 'russet' cloth was undoubtedly drab in colour, the use of the word points as much to the type of coarse cloth (Sauer 2020, 94–5). The general lack of colour among the forfeited textiles speaks against a notion of vibrant display in non-elite clothing, and is in fact rather surprising given the evidence for coloured outer garments presented in the next section.

Outerwear: gowns, cloaks and jackets

Gowns (*toge* and *goune*) are the most numerous items in the escheators' lists, appearing in nearly 50 lists, with multiple examples occurring in 15 of these (Table 6.3), with a smaller quantity in the coroners' lists (Table 6.4).[248] The 'coat' of the coroners' lists may be treated as a broadly similar article. The lists do not of course, tell us in general terms what a gown (or coat) looked like – we must assume that it denoted a form of long outer garment – but they do often include a useful degree of detail, describing the colour, material or type. This is in marked contrast to other objects recorded by the escheator and coroner. Assessing a similar phenomenon among inventories of seized goods from medieval Italy, Smail (2016, 224–9) suggests this descriptive detail provided a means of keeping track of particular garments, as well as being indicative of the attention paid to the social meaning of clothing. Both of these explanations provide a useful framework for examining the clothing occurring in the escheators' and coroners' lists.

The gown was widely worn, primarily as male attire, but was ridiculed by some commentators as a feminising item (Horrox 1994, 131–2; Denny-Brown 2004, 236). The relative prominence of these items in lists is significant for two reasons; firstly, they may have had a novelty value as a fashionable item and

[246] E1124; E381.
[247] E1595.
[248] It is possible that some of the buckles in the archaeological dataset are from such items, but these are discussed along with the evidence for belts below.

Table 6.3: Summary of gowns and other outer garments in the escheators' records.

List No.	Date	Name	Occupation	Objects	Original Text	Total Value (d)	No. Items	Value / item (d)
8	1404	John Meselyn	–	Gowns	tog'	120	4	30
11	1404	Peter Pesemerssh	–	Gowns	tog'	48	4	12
121	1447	John Smyth	–	Gown	togam	40	1	40
127	1448	Robert Larke	–	Gowns	togarum		2	
241	1416	Nicholas Wastell	Yeoman	Gown	toge	40	1	40
348	1418	William Wodeward	Yeoman	Man's gowns	toge dicti Willelmi	144	2	72
348	1418	William Wodeward	Yeoman	Woman's gowns	toge uxoris sue	160	2	80
407	1437	John Northern	–	Gown	toge	96	1	96
500	1418	Thomas late servant of Thomas Stodeley	Servant	Gown	toga roseta	20	1	20
627	1424	Sibyl Thedeware	–	Gown	togam	9	1	9
639	1420	Thomas Cartere	–	Gown	togam	12	1	12
723	1421	Thomas Richard	Husbandman	Gown	toge rub'	40	1	40
818	1426	Agnes Boy	–	Gown	toge	20	1	20
851	1422	William Hornby	–	Gowns	togas		2	
951	1431	John Harward	–	Gown	toge	96	1	96
986	1432	Phillip Capellanus	Irishman	Gown (and hood)	togam et capucin'		1	
1129	1441	John Ham	Parson	Gowns	togarum	80	2	40
1130	1441	John Alman'	Shipman	Gown	toga	80	1	80

(*Continued*)

Table 6.3: Continued.

List No.	Date	Name	Occupation	Objects	Original Text	Total Value (d)	No. Items	Value / item (d)
1339	1407	Robert de Erhethe alias Kelme	–	Gowns	al' togis	60	2	30
1531	1433	Thomas Payn	Former vicar	Gown	toge	32	1	32
1534	1433	Thomas Crishale	Vicar	Gowns	togarum	48	2	24
1583	1404	Peter Atte Halle	–	Gown	toge	16	1	16
1595	1404	John Bethebrok	Tiler	Gown (and two yards of blue cloth)	tog' & ii virg' pann' blod' pr' xxd		1	
1596	1404	John Taunton	–	Gown (with hood)	tog' cum capit'		1	
1600	1403	John Flemyng	–	Gown	toge	16	1	16
Mean Value Gowns								**40**
216	1414	Thomas Litleton	Parchmentmaker	Russet gown	tog' de russete		2	
307	1419	Robert Tyuerton	Leech	Russet gown	tog' de rosset		1	
723	1421	Thomas Richard	Husbandman	Russet gown	toge de russet	28	1	28
1601	1403	John Aleyn	–	Russet gown	toge de russet	12	1	12
Mean Value Russet Gowns								**20**
109	1428	Richard Iresshe	Chaplain	Green gown	toga verid' coloris		1	
307	1419	Robert Tyuerton	Leech	Green gown	tog' de vered'		1	
1210	1440	Thomas Partrik	Carpenter	Green gown	toga virid' coloris	48	1	48
240	1416	Nicholas Cole als Peautener	Millward	Blue gown	toga de blodio colore	36	1	36
406	1437	John Bourne	Husbandman	Blue gown	toge blod'	24	1	24

(*Continued*)

Table 6.3: Continued.

List No.	Date	Name	Occupation	Objects	Original Text	Total Value (d)	No. Items	Value / item (d)
411	1448	Hugh Heche	–	Blue gown	toga coloris blody	60	1	60
1143	1442	John Burgeys	–	Blue gown	toga blod'	8	1	8
Mean Value Blue Gowns								**32**
119	1447	John Larke	–	Blue (Blewmedly) gown with fox fur lining	toge Blewmedly penulat' cum penula vulpiu'	60	1	60
1122	1458	Thomas Taylour	Yeoman	Blue gown, furred with grey	toge blodij coloris pennulat' cum grey	240	1	240
1504	1430	John Wynkelman	–	Blue gown, furred with grey	unius toge blod' furryd cum Grey	120	1	120
Mean Value Blue Lined Gowns								**140**
820	1426	Thomas Tylthe	–	Gown of black-a-lyre, fur-lined	toga de nigro de lyre furrat cum mart'		1	
307	1419	Robert Tyuerton	Leech	Old, red, fur-lined gown	tog' vet' coloris sangweyn furrat' cum cuniculis	60	1	60
307	1419	Robert Tyuerton	Leech	Old, red, womans gown	tog' veterem pro muliere eisdem coloris	40	1	40
1086	1494	Humphrey Bocher	–	Old, russet gown	veteris toge de russet		1	0
1374	1399	John Horseley	–	Old/worn gown	toga debil'	4	1	4
1503	1430	John Waryn	Clerk	Scarlet gown furred with grey	toge de Scralter furryd cum Grey	1680	1	1680

(*Continued*)

Table 6.3: Continued.

List No.	Date	Name	Occupation	Objects	Original Text	Total Value (d)	No. Items	Value / item (d)
Mean Value Blue Lined Gowns								
1508	1430	Philip Bent	–	Red gown	unius toge rubii coloris	140	1	140
1508	1430	Philip Bent	–	Sanguine [red] gown	unius alterius toge de Sangewayn'	100	1	100
11	1404	Peter Pesemerssh	–	Fur lining (surgown)	furrur'		1	
650	1382	John Douere	–	Lamb-skin lined gown	togule \viz goune/ pellit' cum pell' agnorum	40	1	40
1339	1404	Robert de Erhethe alias Kelme	–	Furred gown	toga furr'	36	1	36
104	1428	William White	Chaplain	Multi-coloured gown (motley)	togas de motle	80	2	40
1309	1406	Simon Deryng	Parker	Old gowns of diverse colours	togis veteribus diuers coloris	200	5	40
688	1382	John Stakepoll	–	Red gown	goune rub'	42	1	42
688	1392	John Stakepoll	–	Gown covered in red and green cloth	goune paliate de rub' pannis et viridi	96	1	96
907	1393	William Harptre	–	Gown	goune		1	0
215	1414	Hugh Cetur	Clerk	Frieze cloak	mantel' de frese	40	1	40
307	1419	Robert Tyuerton	Leech	Kirtles, old	curtelis veteres		4	
1086	1494	Humphrey Bocher	–	Old, camlet jacket	veteris jaket de chamlet		1	

Table 6.4: Summary of coats, gowns and other outer garments in the coroners' records.

List No.	Year	Name	Occupation	Object	Original Text	No. Items	Value of Items (d)
4	1544	Jane Skynner	Spinster	Red kirtle	vnam tunicam voc' a kertill coloris rubij	1	24
29	1541	Constance Paramore	Spinster	Gown	Toga	1	160
				Kirtle	Interior' vest' vocat' a kyrtell	1	136
43	1543	Jane Batty	Spinster/ Widow	Gowns	duas togas	2	
				Kirtles	duas tunicas vocat kirtill'	2	
46	1543	Roger Warde	Clerk	Violet tailored gown	vnam Togam talarem coloris violeti	1	
				Tawny gown, short	Togam Curtam coloris dirk Tawny	1	
				Sleeveless jacket	[illegible] voc' sleveles Jackettz	2	
54	1545	Isabel Slader	Spinster	Gown	vna' toga' & alia ornamenta	1	
62	1540	Helen Robynson	–	Gold redcoat	a gold redcoott	1	12
				White coat	a whyett coott	1	4
73	1544	John Hays	Husbandman	Sleeveless jacket	truncatam tunicam manic' voc' a sleveles Jackett	1	
116	1551	Thomas Hippkyns	Shoemaker	Coat	ij cots	2	48 (ave 24d)
117	1551	Henry Ansley	–	Old russet coat	an ollde russett cote	1	48
126	1551	Thomas Thomas	Tanner	Jackets	ij tunice voc' jacketts	2	
135	1520	Thomas Yong	Labourer	Garberdine	vnam togam virilem vocat' a gaberdayn	1	
146	1528	Jane Vause/Vanse	Widow	Dudd coat	dudde cote	1	

(*Continued*)

Table 6.4: Continued.

List No.	Year	Name	Occupation	Object	Original Text	No. Items	Value of Items (d)
208	1570	Reynold Carter	Chandler	Old frieze coats, black	old black ffryst Cotes	1	
256	1578	John Knolles	–	Gowns	ij Gownes	2	160 (ave 80d)
				Coats	iij coatt'	3	
				Black jacket	a black jackett	1	12
				Furred gown	a furred gowne	1	
267	179	Anne Turbutt	Spinster	Gowns	towe gownes	2	
270	1579	Agnes Paradyce	Spinster	Old coats	thre olde cotes	3	36 (ave 12d)
279	1584	Margaret Bayly	–	Waistcoat	vnu' manullare voc' a wastcott	1	6
380	1574	Robert Wodwarde alias Smyth	–	Waistcoat	one Wastcote	1	20
				Russet coat	one Russet Cotte	1	48
445	1598	Thomas Parker	–	Coat	one Coate	1	
382	1577	John James	Clergyman	Worsted gowns with fur trimmings	ij gownes of worsteed faced w'h foynes	2	912 (ave 456d)
				Cotton-lined gown	one gowne lined w'h whit cotton	1	60
				Puke gown	a powke gowne faced with [obscured]	1	240
446	1541	William Bacheler	–	Black coat	a blacke cote	1	
			–	Russet coat (man's)	A man's cote colored russet	1	48
487	1535	William Mursshall alias Marsshall	Labourer	Woollen sleeveless jacket	vnam nigram tunicam laneam voc' a slefeles Jakett	1	
510	1539	William Skot	Husbandman	Blue sleeveless coat	a blewe Sleveles Cott	1	
559	1504	Robert Tonge	Yeoman	Tawny coat	vnam Togam coloris Tawny	1	

secondly, we might consider that the appraisers were passing moral judgements on the individuals, perhaps perceiving these items as extravagant, although the low number of gowns overall suggests that such judgements were highly contextual.

The colour of gowns is noted in the escheators' records, albeit inconsistently. We can suggest several hypotheses for why it was sometimes included. Practical reasons were undoubtedly significant. It was particularly important to note colour in instances where multiple items of the same type were present, so as to ensure that each item was properly accounted for, a phenomenon also identified in the description of items in wills (Burkholder 2005, 141; see also Smail 2016, 224). Similarly, such detail might also be considered 'supporting evidence' to underpin a valuation. Yet the symbolic implications of recording the colour of seized gowns should not be dismissed either. Contemporary satire emphasised the difference between dyed and undyed cloth, and the 'good' peasant might be exemplified as someone wearing russet or dull, natural colours and the 'bad' peasant as wearing bright colours that might be perceived as seeking to upset the social order through emulating the fashions of the elite (Sweetinburgh 2004). Colour was appropriate for particular occasions: blue (particularly dark or dull blue) could be worn on holy days, for example (Sweetinburgh 2004, 118). Colour was not always a prominent concern among those who expressed anxiety about the attire of the lower orders; it played a surprisingly muted role in sumptuary petitions and legislation, where the focus was much more on the value and quantity of cloth used in garments. However, it is altogether plausible that reference to colour was in part used by the appraisers as a tool to pass moral judgement on the forfeiting individual.

The inclusion of colour in descriptions of gowns in the chattels lists probably does not have a single explanation. The significance of colour may have varied with the circumstances of seizure, but also in accordance with the character of the seized goods. Discussing the ways in which clothing was described in court testimony, Richardson (2004a, 214) highlights that russet coats were unremarkable items, which appear in testimony only when they add detail to a specific event. We might assume that most of the gowns listed without any colour were russet or similarly plain. In some instances, russet seems to have been used to differentiate between multiple garments. For example, as we have seen above, in 1419 Robert Tyuerton of Woodnewton is described as possessing four gowns (*toge*). These were distinguished by value, but also by colour and other characteristics: there was one old gown of sanguine with fur, a second old gown 'for a woman' of the same colour, a russet gown and a green gown.[249] This list demonstrates clearly how colour and material were important factors in appraising value. Here there seems to be a clear intention to differentiate items which would otherwise appear as similar in a list. Similarly, in 1494 Humphrey Bocher had an old russet gown and an old jacket of camlet (a silken material),

[249] E307.

though no value is provided.[250] In three other cases single gowns are listed as being of russet. In these instances, appraisers may simply have been particularly diligent. In two cases these are valued with other items and in the other no value is given. This is also the case in two coroners' chattels lists. In 1566, Edward Burges of Laverstock (Wiltshire) had a russet cloak worth 2s.[251] Other plain coats are represented by the 'dudd' (coarse cloth) coat belonging to Jane Vause, a widow of Beccles (Suffolk), valued with an old cloak at 3s in 1528, and the frieze (coarse woollen cloth) coat possessed by Reynold Carter, a chandler of Chiddingstone (Kent), appraised with his other clothing at 6s in 1570.[252]

The escheators' lists include seven blue gowns. There is a single sleeveless blue coat within the coroners' sample, belonging to the husbandman William Skot of Hougham (Kent) in 1539.[253] Where occupation or status is listed, the blue garments in the escheators' lists belonged to a yeoman, a husbandman and a mulleward (millward). Following Sweetinburgh (2004), we might understand these as being 'holiday wear' or 'Sunday best'. Three of these gowns, those of John Larke (valued at 5s in 1447), Thomas Taylour, a yeoman, (valued at 20s in 1458) and John Wynkelman (valued at 10s in 1430), were lined with 'grey'.[254] It is notable that the mean value of blue, fur-lined gowns (140d) is considerably higher than that assigned to the plainer russet equivalents (20d) (Table 6.3).

The other coloured gowns are bright, either being multicoloured (medley) or red, and these have interesting stories behind them. Two multicoloured gowns belong to chaplains. In 1428 one of these, the well-known Norfolk lollard William White had two medley gowns valued at 6s 8d.[255] Another clergyman, Richard Iresshe, who abjured the realm for felony in 1428, had a green gown and two silvered belts, valued together at six marks.[256] John Stakepoll, beheaded for treason in 1381, had a red gown valued at 3s 6d and a gown covered in red and green cloth valued at 8s.[257] Philip Bent, outlawed for treason, had a red gown valued at 11s 8d and another gown of sanguine valued at 8s 4d.[258] This evidence reveals a strong correlation between the presence of brightly coloured gowns and forfeitures connected with the crimes of treason and heresy. A case can be made here that the appraisers were deliberately emphasising the poor character of the felons, associating them with vices of extravagance, vanity and pride. However, the appraisals of these items also emphasise the simple fact that these were items of substantial value, especially when compared to plainer russet gowns. A further case from the coroners' records is more difficult to interpret. Helen Robynson of Raughton Head (Cumberland), who committed suicide in

[250] E1086.
[251] C183.
[252] C146; C208.
[253] C510.
[254] E119; E1122; E1504.
[255] E104.
[256] E109.
[257] E688.
[258] E1508.

1540, had a 'gold redcoot' (12d) and a 'whyett coot' (4d).[259] These items sound extravagant, but were of low value. We know nothing of her status, her other goods comprising a cow, a stirk, some fowl and a brass pot.

Further colourful coats belonged to clerks. In 1419 John Waryn, likely the rector of Cardinham (Cornwall), was possibly a quite wealthy man, judging by his ownership of a scarlet gown lined with 'grey' appraised at £7 in 1430.[260] The coroners' records reveal the case of Roger Warde, a clerk of Mattishall Burgh (Norfolk), who had a violet gown and a tawny gown, to which no value is assigned.[261] Another clergyman, John James of West Dean (Wiltshire), also possessed two velvet cloaks (£4), a gown of puke (a kind of woollen cloth, typically bluish black or dark brown in colour) (20s), a cotton-lined gown (5s) and two worsted gowns 'faced with foynes' (i.e. with fur trimmings) (56s 8d).[262] These items, along with his cassock (13s 4d), were situated in his bed chamber, probably hanging in his wainscot press.

A further element of the descriptions of outer garments is the occasional inclusion of the adjective 'old'. This may imply these items were well worn, but it could also suggest they were second-hand, perhaps passed down from family members or acquired via purchase. There was a thriving second-hand market in clothing (Davis 2010; Staples 2015). The trade would have been less organised in rural areas and small provincial towns, however, with goods perhaps being bought and sold by itinerant sellers such as hucksters (Staples 2015, 301). Both studies demonstrate, though, that second-hand clothing was a critical part of the medieval material world. As Smail (2016 209–30) demonstrates, legal seizure was a further way in which second-hand clothing might circulate; the items of clothing listed in the escheators' and coroners' records were likely destined for this market. Far from being a case of making-do, this market offered opportunities to acquire unusual types of clothing or fabrics, which would not have been accessible to these consumers if acquired new (Staples 2015, 297). Examples may be the man's and woman's gowns belonging to Robert Tyuerton and the gowns belonging to Phillip Bent and Humphrey Bocher (all discussed above).[263] The coroners' records also yield several references to old coats. Due to the small size of the dataset, however, it is not possible to examine in detail any implications that age or condition may have had for the value of items.

Rarer items of outerwear are cloaks (Latin *cloga*, *mantellum*, *armilausa*). The Tudor dataset also features rails, which were apparently a type of cloak. When Catherine Goodale of Ludgershall (Wiltshire), committed suicide in 1569 she had three 'rails' identified as being of a woman's type, worth 12d.[264] The records

[259] C62.

[260] E1103; E1503. Note the list of John Waryn is unusual in having a substantial period of time between the committing of the felony (1419) and appraisal (1430).

[261] C46.

[262] C382.

[263] E307; E1086; E1508.

[264] C207.

also tell us about the material of some of these garments. Such references are rare in the escheators' lists, though in 1414 Hugh Cetur had a frieze (coarse wool) cloak (3s 4d).[265] In the coroners' lists there are three mentions of waistcoats (one in fustian), and William Skot, a husbandman of Hougham (Kent), had a 'blewe sleevles cott' in 1539, valued with a fustian doublet at 12d.[266] There are three references to kirtles (a type of gown associated with female dress), all belonging to women (one of whom, Jane Batty of Wakefield (Yorkshire), had two).[267] The kirtle belonging to Jane Skynner of Brightstone (Isle of Wight) in 1544 was red and valued at 12d.[268] Additionally, jackets occur as a specific type of garment. Roger Warde, a clergyman of Burgh Mattishall (Norfolk) and John Hays, a husbandman of Wilby (Northamptonshire), both had sleeveless jackets.[269] John Knolles of North Stoneham (Hampshire) had a black jacket worth 12d in 1578.[270]

Coloured and fur-lined coats and gowns were seemingly exceptional in non-elite households. The descriptions of these items suggest that they were especially likely to noted because they were often valuable. The records vividly demonstrate the contrasting valuations of plain russet coats and those of brighter colours, or with linings. It is noteworthy that great care was taken in describing these superior coloured or lined garments, in a way that emphasised their value, rarity and symbolic potential.

Hats, hoods and head coverings

Hair is a particularly visible and malleable part of the body which, in the medieval period, provided a means for the communication of a range of social meanings associated with gender, age and morality (Bartlett 1994). Standley's (2013, 51–7) analysis of hair ornaments, specifically elements of wire hair nets and hooked accessories, from medieval and early modern sites only identified these objects at urban sites and high status residences. Rural examples are known from the PAS, although it is not possible to understand the status of their owners. Standley suggests that it was through elite networks that fashions related to hair and head coverings were transmitted, with simpler techniques being used in the countryside. No piece of wire in the archaeological dataset could be confirmed conclusively as relating to head coverings. Pieces of twisted copper alloy wire from excavations at Wharram Percy (Yorkshire; Harding, Marlow-Mann and Wrathmell 2010) and twisted iron wire from Bishopstone (Wiltshire; King and Bethell 2013) could potentially relate to hair ornaments.

[265] E215.
[266] C510.
[267] C43.
[268] C4.
[269] C46; C73.
[270] C256.

Table 6.5: Occurrence of head coverings in the escheators' and coroners' records.

Object	Escheators'			Coroners'		
	Quantity	No. Lists	Mean Value (d)	Quantity	No. Lists	Mean Value (d)
Kerchief	1	1	12	22	10	6
Kerchief, linen				1	1	12
Kerchief, cotton	1	1	–			
Cross/head cloth				5	2	–
Hood	18	12	8	1	1	–
Hood, green	1	1	12			
Hood, worn/old	3	3	4			
Hood, red	2	2	100			
Cowl	2	1	6			
Veil	4	1	20			
Cap				3	3	8
Cap, woolen				1	1	–
Cap, woman's				2	1	–
Hat				16	15	6
Felt hat				3	3	16
Fillet (head band)				1	1	1

Hoods are the most numerous head coverings listed in the escheators' lists, occurring in 18 lists (Table 6.5). Interestingly Elena (no surname given), a servant from Morpeth (Northumberland), possessed a 'worn' hood, perhaps implying that it was old and potentially inherited from the household in which she served.[271] Another hood is described as green, and valued at 12d.[272] Red hoods appear more valuable; Thomas Tylthe of Cranbrook (Kent) had a scarlet hood worth 13s 4d.[273] There are two examples of kerchiefs, one said to be made of cotton but not individually valued, the other valued at 12d.[274] Pins are ubiquitous in the archaeological dataset and although they are rarely firmly identified as hairpins, some would have been used to hold headwear in place. Two iron examples from Spital Street, Dartford (Kent) have been identified specifically as hat pins (TVAS 2014, 51) and other smaller pins could have been used to hold veils and hoods in place. The practice of women binding their

[271] E1526. Elena's own goods are carefully distinguished in the record from other items, which she stole from her master.
[272] E1458.
[273] E820.
[274] E11; E518.

hair to symbolise their married status (loose hair being symbolic of maidenhood) was reputedly widespread (Bartlett 1994, 54). However, beyond finds of possible hairpins, our dataset does not provide any indication of the extent to which these practices were common among the non-elite, in part because the majority of lists relate to men.

Whereas in the escheators' records it is hoods which dominate the headwear category, in the coroners' records it is hats and caps (Table 6.5). In 1520, in addition to a hood Thomas Yong had a felt hat (*feltrum*), as did Reynold Carter in 1520 (neither are appraised individually).[275] Others, such as William Mursshall of West Greenwich (Kent) had a woollen cap.[276] Interestingly, William also had two woman's caps. These appear relatively cheap items, being of equivalent value to kerchiefs (Table 6.5). Other head coverings, in the form of kerchiefs, head cloths and cross-cloths occur exclusively in lists detailing the possessions of women.

Belts

Buckles are one of the most numerous find types in the archaeological sample. They occur principally in copper alloy (200 examples excluding shoe buckles), with smaller quantities in iron (89) and lead alloy (3). Buckles are one of the most diverse types of dress accessory, but two main types can be identified: those with a frame and a pin, and those with a plate (Egan and Pritchard 2002, 50; Figure 6.2). Those with a plate were from belts, while those with a frame could have been a part of garments such as coats or gowns, as well as belts. Smaller examples may relate to other items of clothing such as shoes or doublets, while buckles can also be found on bags and other leather straps, for example those used for equestrian purposes. The dating of these objects is typically based on the large collection from London (Egan and Pritchard 2002), which is referred to throughout this section.

The greatest variety of buckles are those in copper alloy (Table 6.6). The simplest are round or annular buckles, none of which are decorated. Where these occur in dated contexts, they generally appear to be of fourteenth- or fifteenth-century date, and this corresponds well with their occurrence in deposits in London and elsewhere (Egan and Pritchard 2002, 57; Hinton 1990a). Of comparable, or perhaps earlier, date are oval frames which, where datable, are found in fourteenth-century contexts. Few examples are decorated: two from Upton (Worcestershire; Rahtz 1969) appear to have been gilded as does an example from Yarm (Yorkshire; Evans and Heslop 1985). In London, similar examples to that from Thetford (Norfolk HER ENF13082), an oval-framed buckle with ornate outside edges, are dated to c.1200–1350 (Egan and Pritchard 2002,

[275] C135; C208.
[276] C487.

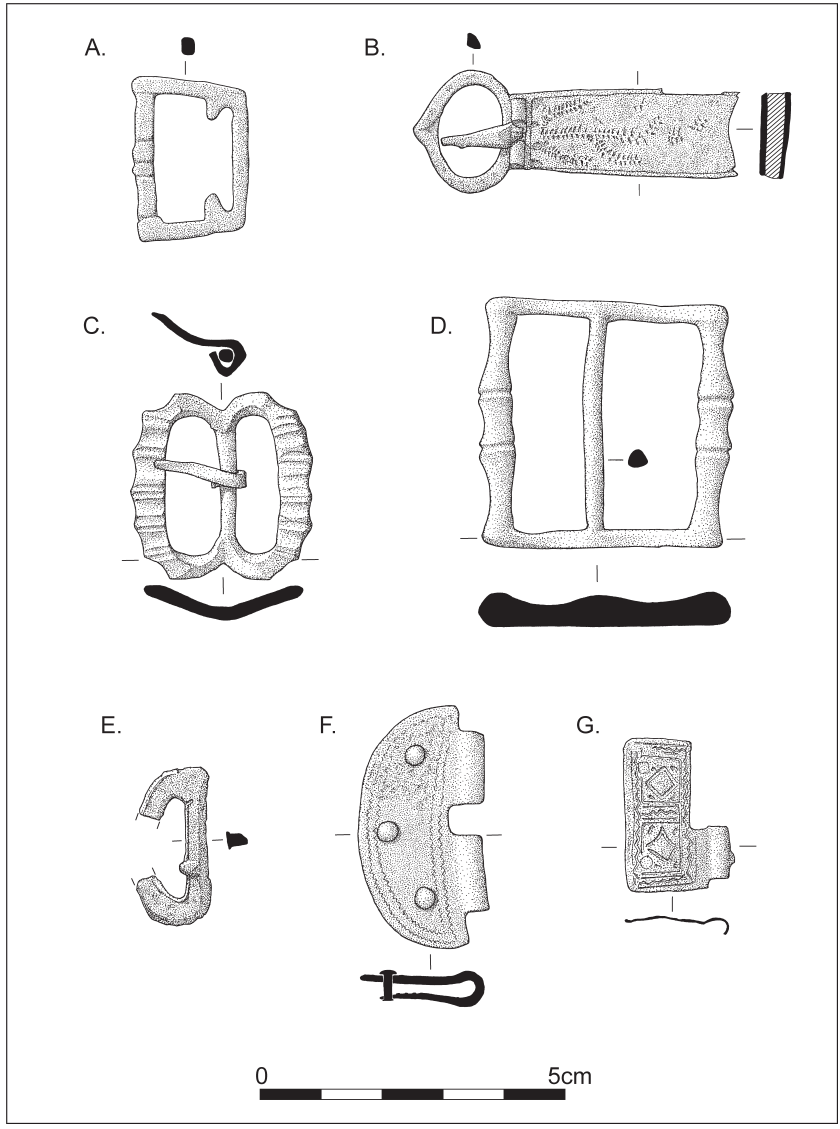

Figure 6.2: Examples of buckles and buckle plates. A: Trapezoidal buckle from Cedars Park (Suffolk). B: Incised buckle plate with annular buckle from Cedars Park (Suffolk). C: Double-looped buckle with traces of tinning from Capel Hall, Barton Bendish (Norfolk). D: Double framed buckle with baluster mouldings (probably 16th century) from Barton Bendish (Norfolk). E: D-shaped buckle from Popham (Hampshire). F: Riveted buckle plate from West Cotton (Northamptonshire); G: Incised buckle plate from West Cotton (Northamptonshire). Redrawn by Laura Hogg from Woolhouse (2016); Rogerson *et al.* (1997); Chapman (2010) and Fasham (1987).

Table 6.6: Summary of belt buckles in the archaeological dataset.

Type	Decoration	Total
Double frame	Baluster moulding	1
	Gilding	1
	Lacquered	1
	Rope pattern	1
	Silvered	1
	Tinned	1
	Zoomorphic	1
	None	28
Double frame Total		**35**
Oval frame	Gilding	2
	Gilt	1
	Ornate moulding	1
	None	17
Oval frame Total		**21**
D-shaped frame	Moulded and incised	1
	Punched scrolled	1
	Tinned	1
	None	17
D-shaped frame Total		**20**
Rectangular frame	Moulded	1
	None	9
Rectangular frame Total		**10**
Oval frame with buckle plate	Enamel inlay	1
	Incised – Geometric	1
	None	3
Oval frame with buckle plate Total		**5**
Trapezoidal frame	Gilded	1
	Moulded knops	1
	Tinned	1
	None	1
Trapezoidal frame Total		**4**
Openwork	Gilded	1
	Openwork	1
Openwork Total		**2**

(*Continued*)

Table 6.6: Continued.

Type	Decoration	Total
Shield-shaped	File-cut	1
	None	1
Shield-shaped Total		2
Spacer	Zigzag	1
	None	2
Spacer Total		**3**
Tongue	Zoomorphic?	1
	None	1
Tongue Total		**2**
Buckle plate	Gilded	1
	Gilded and cast geometric	1
	Gilding; Incised fleur de lys	2
	Incised	2
	Incised – Geometric	1
	Repousse	1
	Stamped – floral	1
	Zigzag	2
	None	29
Buckle plate Total		**40**
Annular	None	17
Square frame	None	2
Asymmetrical	None	1
Rose buckle	None	1
Pin	None	3
Unidentifiable	Decorated	2
	None	18
	Unknown	12
Unidentifiable Total		**32**
Grand Total		**200**

72–4). Five examples are attached to a buckle plate. An example from Darsham (Suffolk; Green 2016) is undecorated and paralleled by an early fourteenth-century example from London (Egan and Pritchard 2002, cat 317), while that from Cedars Park, Stowmarket (Suffolk; Woolhouse 2016) is later, dating

to the fourteenth–fifteenth centuries, and is decorated with a zigzag motif around the frame (Figure 6.2B). A particularly elaborate example is that from Staines (Middlesex; Jones 2010, 333), which is decorated with a cream enamel inlay depicting a horse or dog.

Within our sample, there are 20 examples of D-shaped frames (Figure 6.2C; D). One, from Itteringham (Norfolk; Hickling 2010) has punched, scrolled decoration, and another, from Carbrooke (Norfolk; Hutcheson and Noble 2006) carries moulded and incised decoration. A further example from Foxcotte (Hampshire) is tinned (Russel 1985). For comparison, dated examples from London appear slightly later than the oval forms, generally occurring in contexts of later fourteenth- or early fifteenth-century date (Egan and Pritchard 2002, 90), and this is reflected within our dataset. Rectangular frames are rarer (10 examples) and in all but one case (a moulded example from Blagdon Hall (Northumberland; Jenkins 2008) are undecorated. In London these date to the later fourteenth–fifteenth centuries, but within the sample presented here occur in contexts of fourteenth- to sixteenth-century date, meaning that they appear to be in use throughout the study period (although some may be residual in later deposits). A more unusual form are trapezoidal buckles (Figure 6.2A). There are only four in the sample, two of which are from Itteringham (Hickling 2010), and one of these is gilded. These fall at the later end of the London sequence, although appear in contexts of probable thirteenth- to fourteenth-century date within our dataset. More unusual types are a fifteenth- or sixteenth-century 'Rose buckle' decorated with black lacquer from Wath-upon-Dearne (Yorkshire; Lee and Signorelli 2006); an asymmetrical buckle, possibly used to hold a scabbard from Thetford (Archaeoserv 2014); and shield-shaped buckles from Oyster Street, Portsmouth (Hampshire; Fox and Barton 1986, 239) and Cowlam (Yorkshire; Brewster and Hayfield 1988, 48). There are a further two buckles of undescribed form carrying open work decoration, one of which, from Redcastle Furze, Thetford (Norfolk), is gilded (Andrews 1995).

Double-framed buckles (Figures 6.2C; 6.2D) are the most common in the sample. London evidence suggests that these become common in the fourteenth century and continue in use into at least the fifteenth century (Egan and Pritchard 2002, 53), and similarly late introduction has been observed in Winchester (Hinton 1990a, 508) and Norwich (Margeson 1993, 28). There are 35 in our sample and, where these can be dated, they typically occur in contexts of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century date. These are among the most elaborate buckles in our dataset. An example from Lydd Quarry (Kent; Barber and Priestly-Bell 2008, 180–2) is silver plated and one from Capel Hall, Barton Bendish, (Norfolk; Rogerson *et al.* 1997) is tinned (Figure 6.2C). Two examples, one from Dereham (Norfolk; NAU 2004b) and another from Upton (Northamptonshire; Foard-Colby and Walker 2007), are decorated with black lacquer. The general forms of belt buckles thus follow those in use in the major towns and cities; however, the range of buckles present are less diverse and rarely carry decoration.

Within the archaeological dataset a fairly limited range of buckle types are represented, and parallels can commonly be drawn with examples from urban sites. This supports the suggestion made by Egan (2007) that there was a common range of buckle types in use across England in the later middle ages. Analysis of buckles reported to the PAS by Burnett and Webley (unpub) suggests greater complexity. Their analysis found significant regional variability within the bounds of this national signature, as Cassels (2013, 147–8) also demonstrated for urban assemblages. However, in contrast to Cassels (2013, 6), who argued that the types found in the larger towns were representative of buckles used across England, Burnett and Webley (unpub) found some unusual types were mainly rural and were rarely or never represented in urban assemblages. They also demonstrated that there is not a strong correlation between the types of buckles used in larger towns and in their hinterlands. This suggests different influences on urban and rural consumers and the exploitation of multiple markets, or perhaps fairs, by rural households.

Buckle plates (Figures 6B, 6F and 6G) occur throughout the study period and are more commonly decorated than the buckle frames. For example, a buckle plate found on the Bacton-King's Lynn Pipeline (Norfolk; Wilson *et al*. 2012) was stamped with a floral motif. More typically, buckle plates carry simple geometric motifs, often based around zigzag lines. Other elements of buckles, such as tongues, pins and spacers, have been found in small numbers.

Buckles also occur in other metals. The 16 rectangular iron frames are most typically associated with horse equipment (Egan and Pritchard 2002, 53). Two D-shaped buckles from Upton (Worcestershire) have non-ferrous plating and may have been dress accessories (Rahtz 1969). An example from Lydd Quarry also seems to be gilded (Barber and Priestly-Bell 2008, 180). The iron buckles in the archaeological sample (Table 6.7) match the national picture illustrated by Goodall (2011), who demonstrates that D-shaped buckles far outnumber other types. In general, iron buckles occur in similar forms to the copper alloy examples. The two lead alloy examples are both from Norfolk, one from Carbrooke (annular) and the other from Thetford (double frame) (Hutcheson and Noble 2006; Andrews 1995). Neither exhibit decoration.

As the archaeological evidence demonstrates, belts were common items, and we can expect that most people, if not everyone, would have owned one. In forthcoming work, Woolgar demonstrates that belts occur commonly in the wills of Southampton burgesses.[277] These belts were often of silk, rather than leather, and were typically adorned with 'silver' fittings. Within the escheators' record, there are just two belts explicitly listed as 'of silk'. One belonged to the suicide Dericus Frise, 'Fleming' (value 6s 8d), and the other to Thomas Serle of Liskeard, Cornwall.[278] The latter is valued with a 'small horn' (20d) and

[277] Discussed in a paper at the conference 'Objects and possessions: material goods in a changing world 1200–1800', University of Southampton, 2–6 April 2017.

[278] E963; E519.

Table 6.7: Iron buckles in the archaeological dataset.

Type	No. Objects
D-shaped frame	24
Rectangular frame	16
Double frame	6
Oval frame	4
Trapezoidal frame	3
Annular	2
Square frame	2
Oval frame with buckle plate	1
Spur buckle	1
Pin	3
Form not stated	24
Total	**86**

is followed in the list by Serle's two daggers. This list perhaps, therefore, provides evidence for the suspension of multiple items from a silk belt. In several cases the escheator listed belts with baselards (i.e. daggers), highlighting how items could be hung from the belt, also attested to by archaeological examples of suspension loops.[279] For example, in the list of Patrick Goldsmyth of Evesham the baselard, sheath and silver-adorned belt are valued together at 13s 4d, suggesting they were associated with each other.[280] This is also the case in the list of Warin Pengeley of Cullompton (Devon), whose belt and baselard are valued at 10s.[281] The list of William Fale of Hunworth (Norfolk) is even more strongly suggestive of the physical connection between belt and dagger, as it details 'belts arrayed with silver harness, with baselard and dagger', the whole valued together at an impressive 100s.[282] Association can also be suggested by the ordering of goods. In the list of the parson Richard Talmage of Occold (Suffolk) the belt and baselard are valued separately, but appear in succession as the first two items in the list.[283]

The archaeological evidence suggests that belts were probably much more ubiquitous than our archival datasets indicate. Within the escheators' records, there are 74 belts listed, although these include the 20 'small belts for boys

[279] E1308.
[280] E339.
[281] E1230.
[282] E1308.
[283] E492.

adorned with copper and tin', the fittings presumably being similar in style to those in the archaeological dataset, held as stock by the merchant John Hawkyn.[284] The 20 belts are valued at 18d, an average of less than 1d each. Of the remainder, 31 belts are described in various ways as being adorned or decorated with silver. A further six examples are described as having silver gilt adornment. The value of the silver adorned belts varies from 24d to 360d/30s, with a mean of 134d, showing these were valuable items worth considerably more than John Hawkyn's copper- and tin-adorned examples. The silver gilt examples have an average value of 207d. That these were expensive items is reflected in the stated occupation of those possessing these belts, which is limited to members of the clergy, yeomen and a vestment maker. In contrast, only eight belts and girdles are listed in the coroners' records, which could perhaps be explained by changes in fashion with buckles being incorporated into tighter fitted clothing. No detail of their adornment or value is provided, although we might assume that they are less elaborate as even when valued with other items the highest assigned value is 5s for the purse, girdle and clothing of the labourer Anthony Curlynge of St Lawrence (Kent) in 1585.[285] The general absence of belts can likely be explained by their low value as well, or due to the fact that they were on the person of those who fled. Whether of fabric or leather, the escheators' evidence suggests that it was the material of any fittings which was important and the ubiquity of tin or copper alloy fittings in the archaeological dataset suggests that the majority wore belts adorned with these low value fittings.

In a European context, Willemsen (2012) calls attention to how, as with fabrics, the wearing of excessively adorned leatherwork might lead to the moral character of the wearer being questioned. This relates both to their elaboration and how they were worn. Willemsen's (2012, 187) analysis of iconography shows how during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, belts were worn low on the hips, while from the fifteenth to sixteenth centuries women wore shorter, broader belts above the waist. As well as being used to secure clothing, belts had a role in shaping the body and drawing attention to particular features. Elaborate mounts played a role in this latter function. Mounts could perform a number of functions. Most prosaically, they could be used to repair belts or to strengthen them (Willemsen 2012, 177), as is perhaps the case for the basic stud mounts which are the most common finds in the archaeological assemblage. It should be noted that this function relates only to leather belts. The fourteenth and fifteenth centuries saw a change in the fashion for belts, with them becoming more elaborate items both for display and shaping the body. These items were clearly acquired as items of display to fashion 'the self', although quite what this form of selfhood was, is unclear. The adoption of heraldic imagery could be seen as a means of aping elite fashion, or representing the emergence

[284] E518. Robert Neuton of Oakham (Rutland) also possessed belts among his 'small merchandise' in 1431; E953.

[285] C289.

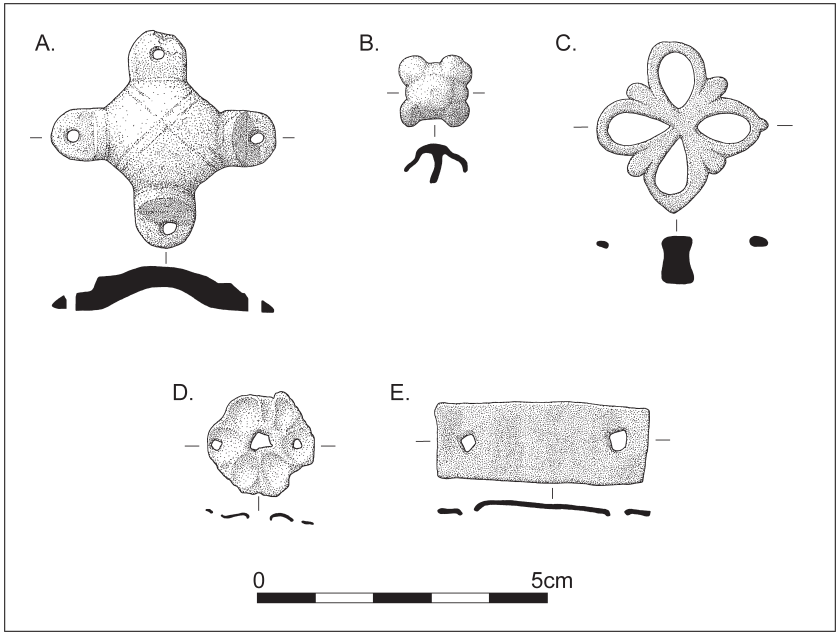

Figure 6.3: Examples of belt fittings from archaeological contexts. Popham, Hampshire (A), Thuxton, Norfolk (B) and West Cotton, Northamptonshire (C-E). Redrawn by Laura Hogg from Fasham (1987), Butler and Wade-Martins (1989) and Chapman (2010).

of a vernacular fashion, in which symbols and items of dress found new meaning (Willemsen 2012, 199–200). As Smith (2009b) proposes, the adoption of cheap but shiny belt ornaments and items of jewellery could be understood as a means of resisting the image of austerity projected onto the peasantry by elite culture, or an attempt to harness the disruptive potential of new commercial networks through freedom to acquire wealth.

The practice of adorning belts can be clearly seen in a leather girdle of fifteenth-century date from Carlisle, which has a number of piercings along its length into which mounts or studs could have been inserted (Newman 2011). There is some difficulty in differentiating studs and mounts for decorating furniture from those associated with decorating leatherwork, but generally size is a useful means of differentiation. Ninety mounts have been identified as possible belt decoration in the archaeological sample (Figure 6.3). These are mostly of copper alloy, with occasional lead alloy examples, and two silver alloy mounts: one from Saxon Place, Thetford (Norfolk HER ENF13082), which is of fleur-de-lys design, and another from Thuxton (Norfolk), of a simple circular form (Butler and Wade-Martins 1989). The mounts are typically in the form of simple domed studs, occasionally gilded or silvered, but some more elaborate examples are present. A stud from Snodland (Kent) is silvered and features

an incised Maltese cross (Dawkes 2010). Plain bar mounts are the next most common, followed by rectangular mounts which feature a range of styles of punched or incised decoration and are sometimes gilded or silvered. There are a small number of more elaborate mounts. An example from Bawtry (Yorkshire; Cumberpatch and Dunkley 1996) takes the form of a letter 'S'. Mounts taking the form of letters could have performed a variety of functions, such as spelling out religious phrases or initials, or performing a function as livery, for example (Willemsen 2012, 195–7). Others take the form of flowers or rosettes and there are examples of sexfoil and octagonal forms. An example, from Grange Farm, Gillingham (Kent), takes the form of a scallop shell and could, perhaps, be a pilgrimage souvenir from Santiago de Compostela (Seddon 2007).

The final common items of belt adornment are strap ends. Again, nearly all of the 72 examples in the dataset are of copper alloy, although there are two lead alloy examples. In London, lead alloy examples occur from the later fourteenth century and, indeed, strap ends become increasingly significant around this time (Egan and Pritchard 2002, 124–6). They are generally undecorated, but might be gilded or have embellished terminals, for example in the form of an acorn knop, a fleur-de-lys (an example from Thuxton; Butler and Wade-Martins 1989) or an animal head (as in an example from Goldicotte (Worcestershire; Palmer 2010). Others feature incised or punched motifs, with there being single gilded and silvered examples in the dataset.

Egan and Forsyth (1997, 219–20) suggest that the use of mounts declined through the fifteenth century and had effectively ceased by the sixteenth century. This is supported by the absence of adorned belts explicitly referenced in the coroners' records and also by the archaeological evidence, where the majority of examples from dated contexts come from those dated to the fourteenth century. Most examples from later contexts come from a single site (Low Fisher Gate, Doncaster (Yorkshire); McComish *et al*. 2010) while examples from Carbrooke (Hutcheson and Noble 2006), Market Quay, Fareham (Hampshire; Gifford and Partners 2003) and Bawtry (Cumberpatch and Dunkley 1996) are paralleled in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century examples from London and are likely to be residual in these deposits.

The three datasets here combine to demonstrate clearly a decline in elaborately adorned belts in the sixteenth century, a trend likely to be related to the increasing elaboration in clothing evidenced in the coroners' records, which created new opportunities for self-expression through dress. The escheators' and coroners' lists typically only illustrate those belts adorned with silver, which generally belonged to clergy or particularly wealthy individuals. In contrast, the archaeological evidence for cheaper fittings (of the type only visible in the historical sources through the itemisation of John Hawkyn's stock) demonstrates how belts were a malleable item of vernacular fashion. The general trends in buckle form show that patterns of rural and urban dress appear to have moved broadly in step with each other. The embellishment of belts through mounts, and through the acquisition of gilded or silvered buckles, served to make these objects uniquely personal expressions, standing in stark

contrast to the plain cloth used for the manufacture of tunics or the majority of gowns. The PAS data examined by Burnett and Webley (unpub) suggests further regional variability in this element of dress which remains hard to detect among the excavated sample.

Other items of clothing

That our period saw changes in fashion, particularly the emergence of tighter fitting clothing for both men and women, is well established (see Standley 2013, 46–51 for an overview). The emergence of such shaped clothing in the mid-fourteenth century was the subject of contemporary moral commentary (Horrox 1994, 131–4; Newton 1980, 8–9). In 1365, for instance, the chronicler John of Reading wrote of 'the empty headedness of the English, who remained wedded to a crazy range of outlandish clothing without realising the evil which would come of it. They began to wear useless little hoods, laced and buttoned so tightly at the throat that they only covered the shoulders, and which had tippets like cords. In addition they wore *paltoks*, extremely short garments, some of wool and others quilted, which failed to conceal their arses or their private parts'. These 'misshapen and tight clothes', John went on, 'did not allow them to kneel to God or the saints, to their lords or each other, to serve or do reverence without great discomfort, and were also highly dangerous in battle' (Horrox 1994, 133–4). This clothing was also distinctive from that which came before in that it was fitted to the individual, limiting the potential for items to circulate as they had in previous centuries (Denny-Brown 2004, 224).

Of course, the wider developments in fashion highlighted and condemned by John of Reading and others should not necessarily be taken literally as guide to contemporary clothing culture in the English villages and small towns that are the focus of this study. Nonetheless, the trend towards shorter, tighter clothing can be traced, albeit over a longer timescale than suggested by the chroniclers, when we contrast the evidence for shirts and doublets in the escheators' and coroners' records. Shirts and doublets (usually *dobelet*, or similar) are exceptional in the escheators' records, and there are no references in our sample to the short garments called *paltoks* mentioned by John of Reading and other later fourteenth-century commentators. Where shirts and doublets do occur in the escheators' lists, it is generally among those of fifteenth-century date.[286] In contrast, shirts and doublets are much more common items in the coroners' lists. Where stated, the shirts listed by the coroner are of linen or canvas. There are also a small number of lists which include mentions of other plain items of dress, notably tunics and tabards. Where the material is stated, these are mostly of wool and almost exclusively occur in lists of goods belonging to those lower down the social order; labourers, a shepherd and a carpenter for example. Surviving fragments of textile are rare from archaeological contexts

[286] E12 (1404); E104 (1428); E127 (1448); E411 (1448); E1437 (1401); E1508 (1430).

but do provide some further insights into the materials used for clothing. Excavations at 50 Finsbury Square, Islington (Middlesex) recovered fragments of textile in tabby weave (MOLAS 1999), which was increasingly popular from the later fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and was the quickest and easiest weave to produce (Crowfoot, Pritchard and Staniland 1992, 43–4), although the specific context from this site cannot be closely dated. Similar woollen cloth was recovered at Micklegate, Selby (Yorkshire; Walton Rogers 1999). Woven flax from Redcastle Furze, Thetford (Crowfoot 1995) is interpreted as a shirt, probably reused as stuffing material due to the presence of accretions on the fabric. A further interesting piece is a leather pocket lining from 27–30 Finsbury Square, Islington (MOLAS 2000b). Although limited, both the historical and archaeological evidence demonstrate the importance of woollen cloth and linen in shirt manufacture, industries discussed in Chapter 8.

Doublets are listed in several materials: leather, canvas and fustian (a coarse cloth) (Figure 6.4). Doublets were clearly worn by a cross-section of society from yeomen such as Thomas Browne of Latton (Wiltshire), who had one in sack cloth valued at 4s in 1569,[287] to labourers such as Thomas Yong of Minster-in-Thanet (Kent), who had one, appraised with his other possessions at 4s in 1520,[288] and servants like Gilbert Cader of Wick (Worcestershire), who possessed an example valued at 20d in 1517.[289] Unfortunately material is not listed frequently enough to ascertain a link between material and social status, but we might infer from the variation in value that these were produced to varying levels of quality or in different materials. These fashions are also represented by the appearance of jerkins among the possessions of men such as Robert Duke, a labourer of Wilsford (Wiltshire), who in 1549 had a leather jerkin as well as a fustian doublet, and David Poynter, a labourer of Uffcott (Wiltshire), who had a russet jerkin valued at 2s in 1575.[290] In 1576 John May of North Luffenham (Rutland) had several jerkins: two of russet (one valued at 16d and one at 20d) and one of kersey (8d). John Frelande of Upper Clatford (Hampshire) had two jerkins, one in russet (11d) and one of leather (20d). These examples clearly demonstrate how the material was a key factor in appraising the value of clothing.[291] While fitted clothing might be linked to martial culture (Blanc 2002), by the sixteenth century it had clearly permeated vernacular dress.

Archaeologically, the shift to fitted clothing is commonly argued to be seen in the proliferation of lace ends, typically of copper alloy (Egan and Forsyth 1997, 224–6) (Table 6.8; Figure 6.5). In Winchester and London, they occur from the end of the fourteenth century (Hinton and Biddle 1990, 583; Egan and Pritchard 2002, 281) and in Norwich from at least the fifteenth century (Margeson 1993, 22). These items are referred to specifically in the list of the goods of the merchant John Hawkyn of Barnstaple (Devon), dating to 1422, who had a

[287] C206.
[288] C135.
[289] C532.
[290] C99; C219.
[291] C228; C281.

Figure 6.4: Leather doublet of 16th-century date. The doublet features slashing, which was fashionable at the time. Image: Metropolitan Museum of Art (in public domain). Accession number 29.158.481a, b.

'gross of points' valued at 6d.[292] The term 'points' can relate to coloured leather lace ends, but may also refer to metal examples (Egan and Pritchard 2002, 285). Individual items could have up to 12 pairs of lace ends and therefore it is unsurprising that they are found in large quantities (Margeson 1993, 22). Lace ends (or chapes) typically take the form of copper alloy cylinders and this is the case for the majority of those in the sample, an exception being a silver example from

[292] E518.

Table 6.8: Summary of lace ends in the archaeological dataset.

County	Site	Context Date	No. Objects
Cumbria	Elephant Yard, Kendal	–	3
	Yard 110, Stricklandgate, Kendal	–	1
Hampshire	Foxcotte	13th–14th century	1
	Hospital of St John and St Nicholas, Portsmouth	–	2
	Market Quay, Fareham	–	1
	Site of former Greyhound Hotel, Fordingbridge	1200–1400	1
		1500–1800	7
	The Priory, Wherwell	–	3
Kent	28 Spital Street, Dartford	1450–1500	2
		1450–1550	5
		1500–1600	1
	Ospringe	–	2
	Water Lane, Thurnham	–	1
	Eastney Street (Creedy's Yard), Greenwich	1550–1675	3
Middlesex	27–30 Finsbury square, Islington	1480–1550	1
	High Street, Uxbridge	–	2
	Prudential, Staines	–	1
Norfolk	Creake Road, Burnham Market	–	1
	Church Close, Shipdham	–	1
	Blakeney Freshes, Blakeney	–	1
Northamptonshire	Grafham Resilience Flow works (Irchester)	–	1
Northumberland	Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed	1300–1600	1
	West Whelpington	–	1
Suffolk	The Street, Erwarton	–	3
	Late medieval to early post medieval dyeing workshop at The Swan Hotel, Lavenham	16th century	1
	81 Bury Street, Stowmarket	16th century	2

(*Continued*)

Table 6.8: Continued.

County	Site	Context Date	No. Objects
Wiltshire	Orchard, Glebe Place, Highworth	–	1
	Broad Blunsdon	1300–1400	1
Worcestershire	Cotswold House, High Street, Evesham	–	1
	Upton, Blockley	–	1
	Land at Corner of Avon/Brick Kiln Street, Evesham	–	1
Yorkshire	8–9 Market Place, 'The Arcade', Ripon	1375–1425	1
	16–20 Church Street, Bawtry	–	2
	Church Walk (a.k.a. Askews Print Shop), Doncaster	1100–1299	1
	Sherburn	1200–1300	1
	Wharram Percy	–	7
		1250–1450	1
		1400–1500	1

West Whelpington (Northumberland; Evans and Jarrett 1987; MF M1/F1). A particularly interesting example is from 27–30 Finsbury Square, Islington, from a context dating to 1480–1550 where a lace with the chapes intact was excavated (MOLAS 2002). Where items could be dated, examples are typically from contexts of fifteenth- to sixteenth-century date, although examples occur in potential earlier contexts. At Church Walk, Doncaster, a lace tag is dated to the thirteenth century on stratigraphic grounds; it was recovered from a tanning pit and its presence here could potentially relate to the production of leather laces. It is unusual in that it features ribbing, rather than being made of plain sheet (Cool 2008, 138). At Sherburn (Yorkshire) a plainer copper alloy chape was recovered from a thirteenth-century yard surface deposit within a moated site (Brewster and Hayfield 1994), perhaps suggesting that the early date relates to the elevated socio-economic status of this household. Chapes occur in both urban and rural contexts, although it is noticeable that they are most prevalent in towns with rural sites clustering around London (in Kent and Middlesex), with additional instances in Norfolk and Yorkshire (home to the major towns of Norwich and York), perhaps suggesting that these styles were more prevalent in towns, being adopted more slowly in the countryside.

Pins were an important element of dress for holding fabrics in place. A range of pins are present in the archaeological sample, principally of copper alloy, but with some iron and bone examples. The majority of copper alloy pins

Figure 6.5: Examples of a lace end from Reepham, Norfolk (PAS Reference NMS-20D868). CC Share Alike Licence. Image: Norfolk County Council.

from medieval archaeological contexts are wound wire head pins, introduced from the fourteenth century and used throughout the middle ages (Caple 1991; Biddle and Barclay 1990; Margeson 1993; Egan and Pritchard 2002, 297–342). Pins were produced in large quantities (see Chapter 8) and occur across our period; however, large quantities of cheap pins were imported from the continent, particularly from the Netherlands and through the hands of Venetian merchants in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, despite the introduction of protectionist legislation (Caple 1991; Egan and Forsyth 1997, 222). Caple (1991) observes a decline in the length of pins between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries, possibly due to changes in the fineness of cloth and styles of clothing. In London, it is argued that there was a marked increase in the use of pins across the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and at this time they became plainer and generally smaller, primarily being used to secure garments such as veils rather than cloaks or gowns (Egan and Pritchard 2002, 297). There are some more elaborate examples. Two pins from Market Street, Alton (Hampshire; Millet 1983) have a blue glass head (probably of sixteenth-century date on contextual grounds, although parallels are considerably earlier; Egan and Pritchard 2002, 299; Biddle and Barclay 1990), and an iron pin from Bawtry may have had a non-ferrous plating (Cumberpatch and Dunkley 1996).

A variety of other fastenings are also present in the archaeological sample (Table 6.9). Copper alloy hooks could be quite elaborate, for example a hooked tag (which would have been used to fasten straps or ribbons; see Hinton 1990b, 548–9) from Itteringham (Hickling 2010) was decorated with a ring-dot motif. A hooked tag from a sixteenth-century context at Aylsham, Norfolk (NAU 2004a) is decorated with openwork, as was an example from Bawtry (Cumberpatch and Dunkley 1996). A final example worth noting is a silver clothing hook from Saxon Place, Thetford (Norfolk HER ENF13082). The purpose of such hooks is unclear, but they were likely used to hold up a train or skirt, often of lighter fabrics. As such, they can be understood as items associated with

Table 6.9: Summary of dress fastenings in the archaeological dataset.

Object	Material	No. Objects	No. Sites
Button	Bone	1	1
	Copper alloy	17	6
	Glass	1	1
	Silver alloy	2	1
Button Total		**21**	**9**
Clasp	Copper alloy	3	3
Dress fastener/hook	Antler	1	1
	Copper alloy	8	8
	Iron	1	1
	Silver alloy	1	1
Dress fastener/hook Total		**11**	**11**
Hooked tag	Copper alloy	8	8
Tag	Copper alloy	1	1
Toggle	Bone	1	1

affluence and fashionable dress (see Gaimster *et al*. 2002). We can see therefore that embellished fittings were also an arena for displaying taste and identity, alongside the exercise of choice in the colour and type of textiles used for clothing (Margeson 1993, 4). Other fastenings include buttons and toggles, buttons having replaced brooches as the preferred means of fastening clothing by the fifteenth century (Egan and Forsyth 1997, 220–2). Three copper alloy buttons were recovered at Old Buckenham (Norfolk; NPS Archaeology 2015) and other groups, also of copper alloy, come from Wharram Percy (Harding, Marlow-Mann and Wrathmell 2010) and Brandon Lane, Weeting with Broomhill (Norfolk; NAU 2002a). Two silver alloy buttons were excavated at Thuxton (Butler and Wade-Martins 1989, 36). Bone could also be used for buttons, as demonstrated by a single example from Castle Street, Kendal (Cumbria; Elsworth, Whitehead and Dawson 2011) and production waste from Alton (Hampshire; Millet 1978). A final unusual example is a glass button, paralleled from a fifteenth-century context in Winchester, from High Street Skipton (Yorkshire). Bone toggles were also recovered, from Berwick-upon-Tweed (Northumberland; Hunter and Moorhouse 1982) and Cedars Park, Stowmarket (Woolhouse 2016), and a jet or shale example comes from Carlisle (Newman 2011). Buttons seem to appear in the thirteenth century and are depicted in iconography of the time (Biddle and Cook 1990, 572). Their occurrence, like that of the lace

ends discussed above, might be associated with the increasing taste for tighter and fitted clothing in the later middle ages (Biddle and Cook 1990, 572).[293]

As we have seen, chroniclers were also exercised by the ways in which contemporary trends in clothing drew attention to the lower portion of the male body, as well as its upper parts. Information about coverings for the legs is sparser in our evidence than that relating to the upper body. Breeches only occur in one escheator's list, but six contain hose, typically multiple pairs (although the 20 belonging to Robert Neuton of Oakham, Rutland, are explicitly grouped with other items as 'small merchandise').[294] Similar legwear features in the coroners' lists, with hose being the most frequently occurring item. Little additional detail is provided for these items, though in 1577 John James, the clergyman of West Dean in Wiltshire had a pair of 'puke hose' worth 16d, puke being a superior kind of woollen cloth.[295] John Greene, a labourer of East Overton, also in Wiltshire, had a more extensive if somewhat shabby set of garments: 'old torn knit hose', 'old russet drawers' and a 'pair of old breeches', valued with 'two old torn shirts of canvas' at 16d in 1576.[296] David Poynter of Uffcott, also a labourer, had a pair of over-breeches (12d) and a pair of knit hose (6d).[297]

The coroners' records also document the introduction of further types of clothing, including underwear. These items include petticoats, generally, but not exclusively, listed among the possessions of women. In 1585 Mary Carter of Hullavington (Wiltshire), had two bodices, one of linen (6d) and one of camlet (2d), a linen partlet (12d), a linen kercher (12d), a petticoat (5s), a linen apron (8d) and, curiously, a frieze cassock (6s).[298]

Taken together, the archaeological and historical data supports the notion that the changes in costume which are widely recognized to have taken place in the later middle ages occurred nationally and across the social spectrum. The contrast between the escheators' and coroners' datasets are especially striking where clothing is concerned, suggesting that at the social level under consideration here, the changes in fashion were a relatively drawn-out process. Importantly, the artefactual evidence shows how the design of fastenings, as well as the textiles used, could become a medium for display and the expression of style. This transition appears as a clear material horizon in the archaeological record, characterised by the demise of brooches and the increasing prevalence of lace ends, hooks and pins.

[293] The interpretation of bone items as toggles is disputed (Brown and Lawson 1990, 589), with a possible alternative interpretation being that these were 'buzz bones', a form of musical instrument formed by suspending the bone and spinning it quickly to produce a buzzing sound.

[294] E953.

[295] C382.

[296] C224.

[297] C219.

[298] C278.

Footwear

No footwear is listed in the escheators' records and those examples occurring in the coroners' records include no information other than that items were made of leather. Archaeological evidence provides further insight into the acquisition and use of shoes; however, leather only survives in anaerobic conditions and therefore the sample of excavated shoes is not large. Our understanding of the development of medieval footwear is dominated by the large collection of leather shoes from deposits along the London waterfront (Grew and de Neergaard 1988). The general development of shoes seen in London is mirrored in other large towns such as York (Mould, Carlisle and Cameron 2003, 3313), Exeter (Friendship-Taylor 1984), Gloucester (Pritchard 2020) and Norwich (Friendship-Taylor 1993) where shoes have been excavated.

The archaeological evidence presented here offers an opportunity to consider whether these urban fashions, best exemplified by the London evidence, were similarly adopted in smaller towns in England. Leather footwear has been recorded at only one rural site in our sample, Lydd Quarry (Barber and Priestly-Bell 2008, 198), with the remainder being from waterlogged deposits in smaller towns, principally in Yorkshire. A particularly good sequence comes from Micklegate, Selby (Table 6.10; Clarke 1999). Here the earliest type of shoe identified is an ankle boot fastened by a draw string, dated by associated ceramics to the thirteenth–fourteenth centuries. In London, similar shoes are in use during this period, and it is boots or ankle shoes which dominate the assemblage (Figure 6.6; Grew and de Neergaard 1988, 15–16).

Five examples of boots with toggle fastenings from Selby are unique within our sample. The Selby examples are difficult to date as the associated

Table 6.10: Occurrence of shoe types in the assemblage from Selby. Shading denotes date range of these types in London.

Shoe type	13th Century	14th Century	15th Century	16th Century
Ankle boot, fastening at front with divided lace and small metal buckle			2	4
Boot with pointed toe			1	1
Drawstring fastening ankle boot	1			
Front lacing boot	1	1	2	
Low-cut latchet fastening shoe	2		2	1
Side lacing boot		1	1	2
Toggle-fastening shoe/boot				1

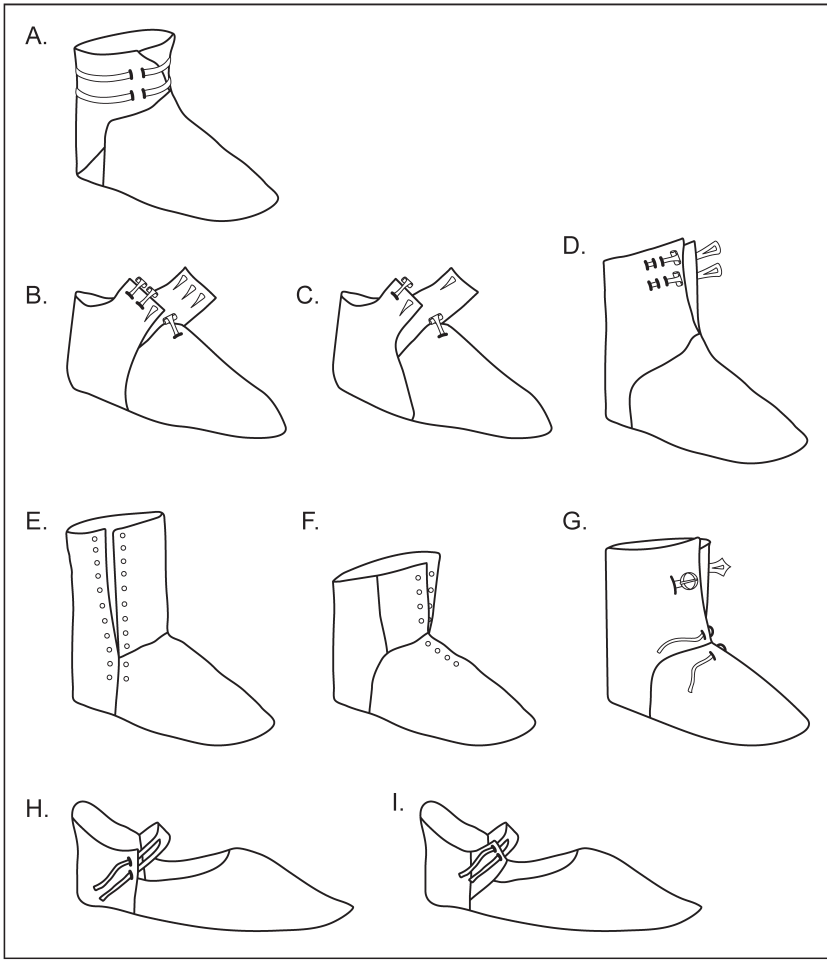

Figure 6.6: Examples of medieval shoe types. A: Ankle boot with drawstring fastening. B and C: Shoes with toggle fastening D: Ankle boot with toggle fastening. E: Boot with side lacing. F: Boot with front lacing. G: Ankle boot with front lacing and buckle fastening. H and I: Low cut shoes with latchet fastening. Redrawn by Kirsty Harding from Clarke 1999.

ceramics are of mixed date. Two examples occur in contexts with pottery of fourteenth-century or earlier date, whereas others are associated with post-medieval deposits. In London, toggles were in use on boots and ankle-shoes in the earlier thirteenth century, but become particularly popular at the turn of the fourteenth century (Grew and de Neergaard 1988, 23). It is, therefore, conceivable that the adoption of toggled boots in Selby broadly corresponds with their adoption in the larger towns.

The fourteenth century sees low shoes become more prevalent. Shoes cut below the ankle dominate the London assemblage in the later fourteenth century. Earlier examples typically have rounded toes and examples are present in the assemblage from Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed in contexts of thirteenth- to fourteenth-century date (Heawood and Howard-Davis 2004). By the later fourteenth century in London, shoes are often noticeably, sometimes excessively, pointed in form and were typically fastened with buckles or a latchet, although shoes were commonly laced (Grew and de Neergaard 1988, 28–31). Examples of similar, although less excessively pointed, examples come from Gloucester (Pritchard 2020, 150) and Exeter (Friendship-Taylor 1984, 329). There are a small number of lower shoes in the Selby assemblage. One, with a pointed toe, is dated on ceramic grounds to the fifteenth century, perhaps corresponding with the latter end of this style's currency in London. A further pointed shoe comes from a fourteenth- to fifteenth-century deposit at Portholme Road, Selby (Pre-Construct Archaeology 2007). Other low-cut shoes, three of which feature asymmetrical cutting, come from contexts of thirteenth- to sixteenth-century date, corresponding in general terms with the peak of this type's use in London. Similar pointed shoes have been recovered from a number of other sites within our sample. At Oakham (Rutland), three fragments of pointed shoes were recovered from the castle moat, one associated with pottery of fourteenth-century date (Gathercole 1958). One of the shoes features buckle holes. A further boot fragment features punched decoration of a type which was popular in London in the fourteenth century (Grew and de Neergaard 1988, 83). The Oakham evidence therefore points to the adoption of similar styles of footwear to those seen in London, although the dating of the context from which these shoes was recovered is imprecise. A pointed shoe from Forster Square, Bradford (Yorkshire; WYAS 2006) was recovered from a context dated to 1575–1625 and is perhaps residual, while two examples of turnshoes (a shoe that was made inside out and then 'turned' so that the seams are on the inside) with pointed soles have been recovered from probable fourteenth- to fifteenth-century contexts at Bawtry (Cumberpatch and Dunkley 1996). A further example of a pointed shoe with a buckle comes from a fifteenth- to sixteenth-century context at Wakefield (Birmingham Archaeology 2009), while a latchet was recovered from a context identified only as later medieval at Eastern Lane, Berwick-upon-Tweed (The Archaeological Practice 1998).

Small buckles which likely functioned as shoe buckles provide further evidence of the adoption of new styles in the countryside. The examples cannot be closely dated but comprise small iron annular buckles from Huish (Wiltshire; Thompson 1972), Martins Hill (Wiltshire), Foxcotte (Russel 1985) and Uxbridge (Middlesex; MOLAS 2000a). There is a copper alloy example from Weeting (Norfolk; NAU 2002a) and a lead alloy example from Ashford (Kent; Boyer and Payne 2011).

Boots continued to be worn and also developed stylistically. At Selby, two boots with pointed toes are dated to the fifteenth–sixteenth century based on associated ceramics, and boots with side lacing appear in contexts dated on ceramic grounds to the fifteenth–seventeenth centuries. Such boots occur in larger towns such as Exeter, London and Gloucester in the later fourteenth to fifteenth centuries, and the evidence from Selby might point to a slightly later adoption of the type here. Front-lacing boots occur in contexts of similar date. These peak in London in the fourteenth century, and here the evidence may point to the longevity of this type away from larger urban centres. Ankle boots with a fastening at the front, with a lace and buckle fastening, occur in contexts dated on ceramic grounds to the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries, again perhaps lagging slightly behind the introduction of the type in London.

The fifteenth century saw technological developments in shoe manufacture with the introduction of welted soles (Grew and de Neergaard 1988, 43). Examples of such soles come from a context dated 1575–1625 at Forster Square, Bradford and fifteenth- to sixteenth-century deposits at Low Fisher Gate, Doncaster (McComish *et al.* 2010). Fifteenth-century examples from Lydd Quarry are interesting as they are turnshoes, rather than welted shoes (Barber and Priestly Bell 2007). These shoes exhibit evidence of repair and perhaps point to a greater longevity of this type in rural areas. The latest group of shoes in the dataset are from High Street, Barnstaple, dating to the sixteenth century and paralleled in Exeter (Lovatt 1990). Unsurprisingly, later fifteenth- to sixteenth-century examples from Finsbury Square, Islington (MOLAS 1999; MOLAS 2000b) and Creedy's Yard, Greenwich (Cooke and Philpotts 2002), correspond with examples from London, having rounded toes and welted soles. A sole from Creedy's Yard is welted.

Further evidence of footwear comes in the form of pattens, or overshoes. There are only two examples in our dataset. These consist of a wooden heel from Carlisle (Newman 2011) and an iron patten from Kingsborough Manor (Kent; Brady 2003). A further heel iron (a strip of iron attached to a shoe to protect the heel) was recovered from the excavations at West Whelpington (Jarrett and Stevens 1962, 221). These items were necessary as shoes otherwise only had thin leather soles and would have been uncomfortable and easily worn.

Shoes were clearly valued items. In addition to the repaired examples from Lydd, evidence of repair can also be seen on several other examples, such as those from Forster Square, Bradford (WYAS 2006). The evidence suggests that similar styles to those popular in London and other large urban centres found their way to small towns, although these cannot be tightly dated.

Jewellery

Archaeological excavations have recovered a range of jewellery items, typically of copper alloy and therefore likely to have been fairly cheap (Table 6.11). Of these, brooches are the most common item (31 examples). There is a single lead

Table 6.11: Summary of jewellery in the archaeological dataset.

Object	Material	No. Objects
Brooch	Copper alloy	26
	Lead alloy	1
	Silver alloy	4
Brooch Total		**31**
Ring	Copper alloy	9
	Lead alloy	1
	Silver alloy	1
Ring Total		**11**
Pendant	Copper alloy	2
	Silver alloy	1
	Shell	1
Pendant Total		**4**
Bracelet	Copper alloy	3
Chain	Copper alloy	3
Dress jewellery (?)	Copper alloy	1
Earring	Copper alloy	2

alloy example from Redcastle Furze, Thetford (Andrews 1995) and silver examples from Old Buckenham (NPS Archaeology 2015), Shipdham (Norfolk (2); NAU 2008) and Clare (Suffolk; Brooks 2014b). This contrasts with the picture in London, where the majority of brooches, and particularly those dating to the period after 1400, are of lead alloy (Egan and Pritchard 2002, 269), although many of these are likely to be religious trinkets or 'badges'. These brooches typically have simple decoration. Brooches were worn to fasten clothing but could also be 'badges', for example worn as livery (Egan and Pritchard 2002, 247). For example, a brooch from Parsonage Farm, Westwell (Kent), from a context dated c.1250–1350, carries a zoomorphic motif (MOLA 2009). Others, such as a copper alloy brooch dated c.1200–1400 from Lydd Quarry carries an incised geometric motif (Barber and Priestly Bell 2008). Typically, brooches were cast and have moulded decoration, such as the brooch from Throckmorton Airfield (Worcestershire) which features cast roundels (Griffin, Griffin and Jackson 2005). This brooch features white enamelled decoration and is interpreted as an imitation of more expensive gold gem-set brooches. Another brooch which may be illustrative of this phenomenon is a gilded brooch from Snetterton (Norfolk; NAU 2002b), which may have been set with glass pellets. Such

imitation was common and, while this may be understood as a form of 'fake', glass-set brooches may also have been understood as having similar apotropaic qualities to those items decorated with gems (Standley 2013, Chapter 6).

The silver example from Shipdham carries the letters 'MVR' and features a cross, suggesting a possible religious motif. The number of brooches present in the archaeological sample is low, however, and each item appears unique, although it is likely that cast brooches were replicated. Only one escheators' list includes brooches: Thomas Howet of Rothbury (Northumberland) had seven (valued with 'diverse silver rings' at 2s 6d), and, like John Hawkyn's belts, it is presumably the quantity that led to them being noted.[299] However, there is nothing in his list to suggest these were held as stock. The coincidence of the brooches and rings, and the fact that Howet was hanged for felonies at Newcastle, suggests that these items may have been stolen. The low number of brooches in the data may be due to the fashion for annular brooches to secure clothing declining in the fifteenth century (Egan and Forsyth 1997, 220); indeed, fifteenth-century brooches are exceptionally rare in Winchester (Biddle and Hinton 1990, 640), and the majority of brooches published from Norwich also pre-date 1450 (Margeson 1993, 15–16). An example from Staines is paralleled by a fifteenth-century example from Winchester, and may be among the latest in the sample (Jones 2010). Few of the brooches in the sample are from securely dated contexts, but in all but one case those which are pre-date 1400 (the exception is an example from Lydd Quarry which comes from a context dated 1400–1600, but likely dates 1350–1450 on the basis of parallels from London; Barber and Priestly Bell 2008, 182). The low number of brooches present therefore appears to reveal a decline in brooch use from the fifteenth century as fashions changed, with new fastenings being introduced and the increasing use of laces to tighten clothing. Combined with the evidence for lace ends and fastenings, as well as references to clothing in the escheators' and coroners' records, this data suggests that the movement towards tighter clothing occurred across the social spectrum, in both town and country.

Jewellery is exceptionally rare in the escheators' lists. Other than the objects in the list of Thomas Howet, only silver and gold rings are listed. In 1447 John Maister a merchant of Havant (Hampshire) had a gold signet ring valued at 12s, presumably a tool of his trade.[300] The same interpretation might be advanced for the gold ring decorated with a diamond valued at 10 marks, which belonged to Richard Horeston, a rector of Northfield (Worcestershire).[301] Thomas Taylour, a yeoman of Chippenham (Wiltshire), also had a gold ring appraised at 10s.[302] Where material is listed, the other rings are of silver, one belonging to Margaret Burdon, a widow of Semley (Wiltshire; valued at 20d in 1444) and

[299] E212.
[300] E122.
[301] E1197.
[302] E1122.

another to Dericus Frise, a Fleming, valued at 4d in 1432.[303] There are 11 rings in the archaeological sample, all but two of copper alloy (the exceptions being one of lead alloy from Cricklade (Wiltshire; Brett 2003) and of silver from Skipton (Greenlane Archaeology nd)) rather than precious metal. Rings were common items given as marriage tokens, although a range of other items could be given as gifts in this context (Rushton 1986, 26–7; McSheffrey 2006, 62–3; Standley 2013, 32–3). Rings could be gifted to the male partner in courtship, but it may also have been difficult to prove that rings were the possession of a woman, in both cases leading to their confiscation as the possession of the male felon. It is likely that those rings belonging to women are wedding rings, but rings could also fulfil other functions, including as protective or apotropaic items (Cherry 2001). In this regard the cross motif on the silver example from Skipton may be pertinent.

Other items of jewellery are rare occurrences in the archaeological dataset. There are two copper alloy bracelets. One, from Barbury Castle Farm, Chiseldon (Wiltshire; Pattison 1983) is made of twisted copper alloy wire and a second, from Spital Street, Dartford (TVAS 2014) takes the form of a chain. There are two further copper alloy chains, one from Melksham (Wiltshire; Davenport and Schuster 2012) and another from Carbrooke (Hutcheson and Noble 2006), which may be items of neckwear. In London, chains appear to be introduced from the later fourteenth–fifteenth centuries, and may be a part of a general trend towards elaborate neckwear; the dating of the Carbrooke example to 1400–1550 would correspond with this observation (Egan and Pritchard 2002, 318). Other items of jewellery include five pendants and two earrings. The pendants take various forms. A copper alloy openwork example from Great Cressingham (Norfolk) comes from a context dating to 1500–1700. Another copper alloy pendant comes from the excavations of the deserted medieval village at Shotton (Northumberland; Muncaster and McKelvey 2013). The other three examples are more unusual. From Old Buckenham comes a silver alloy pendant with white glass settings, incised with a cross on the rear (NPS Archaeology 2015). A copper alloy disc from Barbury Castle Farm, Chiseldon may be a reused Roman coin (Pattison 1983). Finally, a pierced oyster shell from Cley-Next-the-Sea (Norfolk; Birks 2003) has been interpreted as a pendant, perhaps intended to imitate the scallop shell pilgrimage souvenirs from Santiago de Compostella (see Hall 2011, 91). As with the chains, these are likely to come from the latter part of our period as artwork supports an increased concern with neck jewellery in the fifteenth century (Egan and Pritchard 2002, 321; Egan and Forsyth 1997, 230). However, the Shotton example is likely to be earlier, coming from a context dated 1150–1350. Other jewellery includes two earrings, one from West Cotton (Northamptonshire; Hylton 2010), from a fourteenth-century context, and another from Wharram Percy, from a context dated 1250–1450. A final intriguing piece is a copper alloy piece of dress

[303] E1182; E963.

jewellery in the shape of a snake from Throckmorton Airfield in Worcestershire (Griffin, Griffin and Jackson 2005).

The low quantity of jewellery across all three datasets means it is not possible to draw conclusions about chronological change, regionality or the ability of rural households to acquire jewellery, beyond the clear decline in the use of brooches. The data does, however, provide some insights into the range of jewellery which could be acquired by rural households which were generally of lower value materials. It is this low value and, therefore the likelihood that jewellery was overlooked by the escheator and coroner, which may account for its general absence from these records.

Conclusion

Our material does not permit a comprehensive overview of clothing and personal adornment in non-elite rural communities, but it is still a rich resource for interdisciplinary analysis of these possessions, and allows us to draw several conclusions. Firstly, the evidence we do have does not easily support the notion of a step-change in the clothing of non-elites across the later fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Contrasts between the late medieval period and the sixteenth century are if anything more noticeable. Most escheators' lists do not feature clothing, and while there are several factors contributing to this, it supports the idea that in the later middle ages most lower status people did not own many clothes, and that those they did have were of low value. Cloth which may have been for garments was present in a more significant number of lists, but the quantities were generally quite small, the range of colours restricted and the values low. At the same time, we should not overlook the fact that a few people who fit our criteria of 'non-elite' did own elaborate or more expensive items, such as lined garments. Also, the diversity apparent in belt fittings and jewellery demonstrates a capacity to portray a sense of personal style or identity through the acquisition and display of apparently cheap and widely accessible objects.

Secondly, the noting of detail such as the colour of clothing provides an insight into systems of value, both allowing us to understand the comparative monetary worth of items, but also to draw inferences about attitudes to clothing. In the context of the escheators' records, the relationship between detailed descriptions of coloured gowns and serious crime possibly provides evidence of seizure as a process of moral judgement as well as legal practice. Thirdly, both the archaeological and historical datasets provide clear evidence for the adoption of new styles of clothing, most obvious in the evidence for fitted garments which is common in the coroners' records, but also in the archaeological evidence of chapes or lace ends, as well as in the changes observed in relation to headwear. Finally, in relation to belt buckles and shoes, we can see evidence for a general level of similarity between urban and rural fashions, although certain fashions may have been adopted more slowly away from the larger towns.

The evidence of jewellery, belt fittings and coloured garments shows that clothing was an important means of fashioning identity in the medieval countryside, just as it was in the larger towns. Although dress was fairly standardised at the general level, the variety of cheap metal fittings recovered from archaeological contexts shows how clothing could be an outlet for creativity and the expression of individuality within general bounds. Clothing then was an important outlet of consumption, closely associated with the performance of the self, shaped by legal, moral and commercial contexts, but personal in its expressive capacity.

CHAPTER 7

Personal Objects

This chapter examines the evidence for a diverse range of objects which might be broadly considered as personal items. These include knives, items associated with religious devotion, arms and armour and smaller personal items such as purses and toilet sets.

The bare necessities: the ubiquity of knives

Iron knives are exceptionally common archaeological finds. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries at least they would likely have been a multipurpose personal possession. Specialist table knives, with broader blades, became increasingly common over the study period. Their introduction coincides with the introduction of rivetted scale tang knives from the early fifteenth century, which gradually become more common than whittle tang knives (Cowgill, de Neergaard and Griffiths 1987, 51; Goodall 2011, 109). Goodall (2011) divides knives into these two main types, each with its own typological subdivisions (Figure 7.1). Here, due to the sample size and inconsistency in reporting, it is only possible to talk about knife types in broad terms. A further introduction, in the sixteenth century, was the bolster, an expansion between the blade and tang, of which there is a single example in our sample (Goodall 2011, 109). Of the 297 knife blades in the sample, 153 cannot be assigned to a particular type due to corrosion or the loss of the tang. Overall, there are around three times as many whittle tang knives as scale tang knives (Table 7.1). Of the scale tang knives, only nine come from contexts which can be closely dated: seven come from sixteenth-century contexts and two from probable fifteenth-century contexts, supporting the general chronological development suggested by the London evidence (Cowgill, de Neergaard and Griffiths 1987). In contrast, the whittle tang knives are largely from deposits of fourteenth- to fifteenth-century date. The scale tang knives include a small example interpreted as a table knife

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Table 7.1: Knife types occurring in the archaeological dataset.

Knife type	No. Objects
Blade	153
Whittle tang	103
Scale tang	38
Bolster	1
Draw knife	1
Unknown	1

from City Road, Islington (Middlesex; MOLAS 1998a) and an example from Mileham (Norfolk), which is decorated with a chevron motif (Cope-Faulkener 2004). Of particular note are a group of sixteenth-century knives from Foxcotte (Hampshire) which include a possible table knife and butcher's knife (Russel 1985). The introduction of specialist knives is visible in the coroners' records, which feature only six lists that mention knives. These are described with terms suggestive of specific functions: four are termed 'cutting' or 'chopping' knives and appear to specifically be kitchen knives rather than personal multi-purpose tools.

In a small number of cases, knife handles survive. These are typically of bone (12 examples) and some, such as those from Cowlam (Yorkshire; Brewster and Hayfield 1988) and The Spinney, Sherburn-in-Elmet (Yorkshire; Antoni 2004) have incised decoration. An example of probable sixteenth-century date from Wharram Percy (Yorkshire) is decorated to have the appearance of an owl (Harding *et al*. 2010). A handle from Sherburn (Yorkshire) appears to have been polished and stained black to imitate jet (Brewster and Hayfield 1994). Examples from Wolborough Street, Newton Abbot (Devon; Weddell 1985), Yarm (Yorkshire; Evans and Heslop 1985) and Wymondham (Norfolk; Crawley 2012), have wooden handles. This contrasts the evidence from London, where wooden handles are by far the most common type (Cowgill, de Neergaard and Griffiths 1987, 24–5), and it is unclear whether their comparative absence from the sample is due to preservation conditions (meaning that wood is underrepresented outside of London) or a genuine and meaningful difference.

In contrast to the archaeological sample, knives feature exceptionally rarely in the escheators' and coroners' records. There are 12 knives in the escheators' lists, as well as two sheaths. Two knives, both of which belong to chaplains, were adorned with silver.[304] Curiously, neither is appraised individually. A further knife is described using the abbreviation *arn*' (i.e. *arnesiat*', literally 'harnessed', or decorated), and is valued at 12d.[305] The monetary worth of ordinary knives is

[304] E1468; E1349.
[305] E1575.

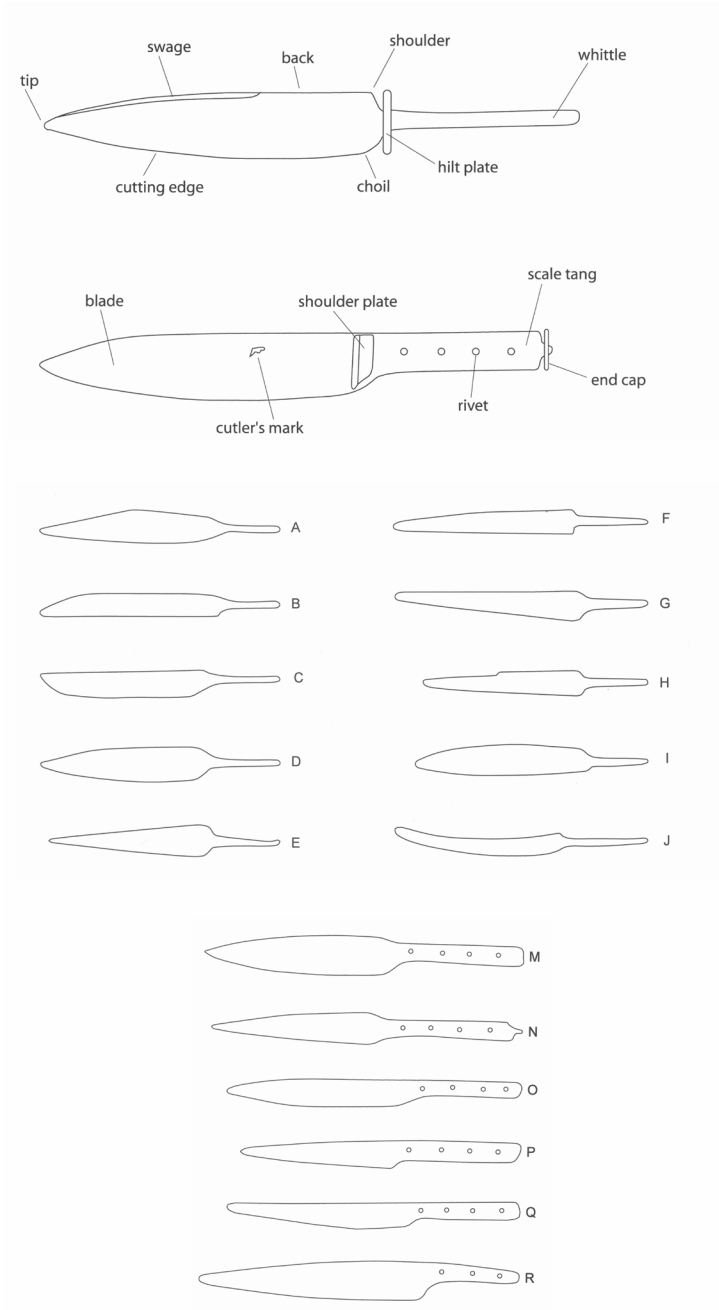

Figure 7.1: Examples of medieval knife types. A–J: Whittle tang type. M-R: Scale tang type (Goodall 2011, figures 8.1, 8.2 & 8.3. © Society for Medieval Archaeology and Ian H. Goodall, Reproduced by Permission Society for Medieval Archaeology).

perhaps revealed in the record for 20 'small knives of Axstedware' which appear in the list of the Devon merchant John Hawkyn, valued together at 20d.[306] These were probably knives produced at Thaxted (Essex) which had 79 cutlers in its 1381 poll tax return, and where an excavated workshop provides evidence of the manufacture of bone handles (Andrews 1989). Valuable detail is provided by the escheators' records in relation to sheaths, or scabbards. These provided a further means for visible display through dress, as they were worn on the belt. One of these items belonged in 1415 to John Ferrour, a husbandman of Sevenhampton (Wiltshire), and is described as a 'silver chape to put a dagger in'. While 'chape' can mean either a mount on the sheath or the sheath itself, this formulation probably indicates a sheath with a silver mount. The chape is listed together with two broken silver spoons valued at 4s, but is not itself valued.[307] The other sheath occurs in the list of Patrick Goldsmyth of Evesham (Worcestershire, 1418). It is simply listed as a 'shethe', and is listed along with a baselard, or dagger (rather than a knife), in association with a silver adorned belt, appraised together at 13s 4d.[308] It is unclear if these are his possessions, or objects that he was working on given his likely profession as a goldsmith.

Scabbard chapes also occur in the archaeological dataset. One, from Wharram Percy, is decorated with an openwork design. Additionally, there are 10 leather sheaths or scabbards in the archaeological sample, eight of which are from Carlisle (Cumbria) and decorated with simple tooling. The remaining two are both elaborately decorated. An example from City Road, Islington is stamped and features engraved foliate decoration. It is probably of fourteenth-century date. The other, again likely fourteenth-century, is from Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed (Northumberland), and is made of a piece of folded leather, stitched down one side and stamped with lozenges, a fleur-de-lys motif and stitched running foliage (Heawood and Howard-Davis 2004).

A final important item associated with knives are honestones, or whetstones, used to sharpen blades. There are 138 whetstones in the archaeological sample (Table 7.2). The majority are in sandstone (usually of local origin) or mica schist, typically Norwegian Ragstone, although mica schist whetstones from Bunnings' Park (Cornwall) may have been locally sourced (Austin *et al.* 1989). Analysis of the distribution of these whetstones shows that imported schist whetstones are most common in the eastern half of England, while locally sourced stones are more common in the west (Figure 7.2; a pattern considered in further detail in Chapter 9). At some sites, most notably Lydd Quarry (Kent; Barber and Priestly-Bell 2008), a range of whetstones were recovered. Here imported and locally sourced sandstone whetstones, presumably acquired through local markets, were used alongside beach pebbles. Given that here suitable stone was clearly available both locally and freely, we can see a clear choice

[306] E218.
[307] E237.
[308] E339.

Table 7.2: Whetstones occurring in the archaeological dataset.

Material	No. Objects
Dolerite	1
Jet	1
Limestone	4
Metamorphic, non local	1
Phylite	1
Phyllite	1
Quartzite	1
Sandstone	35
Schist	46
Slate	2
Unknown	45

on the part of a household at Lydd to acquire a commoditised imported stone, perhaps due to its superior material properties or even as an item of display, as these stones often have suspension loops allowing them to be worn on the person. This is, perhaps, quite a different act of consumption to an urban household acquiring the same object without such ready access to stones which could be foraged from the surrounding landscape.

Knives, like belt buckles, were ubiquitous items which would have been found in most, if not all medieval homes. A central theme throughout this study is that sometimes it is the ubiquity of items, particularly those of low monetary value such as knives, which has led to their exclusion from the escheators' and coroners' records. Here archaeology provides a unique insight into these items and their associated objects, and the ways in which changing manufacturing and use practices led to the development of the knife from a simple multipurpose object to having more specialised functions in the early modern period. Furthermore, evidence of the use of imported whetstones provides some insight into the consumer mentality of medieval households, as they were able to access, and possibly deliberately sought out, particular objects, even when alternatives were locally, and freely, available.

Protecting the home: religion and ritual

Buried within an occupation layer of a thirteenth/fourteenth-century longhouse at Island Farm, Ottery St Mary (Devon) was a Bronze Age palstave (Mudd, Cobain and Haines 2018). It might be coincidence that this prehistoric

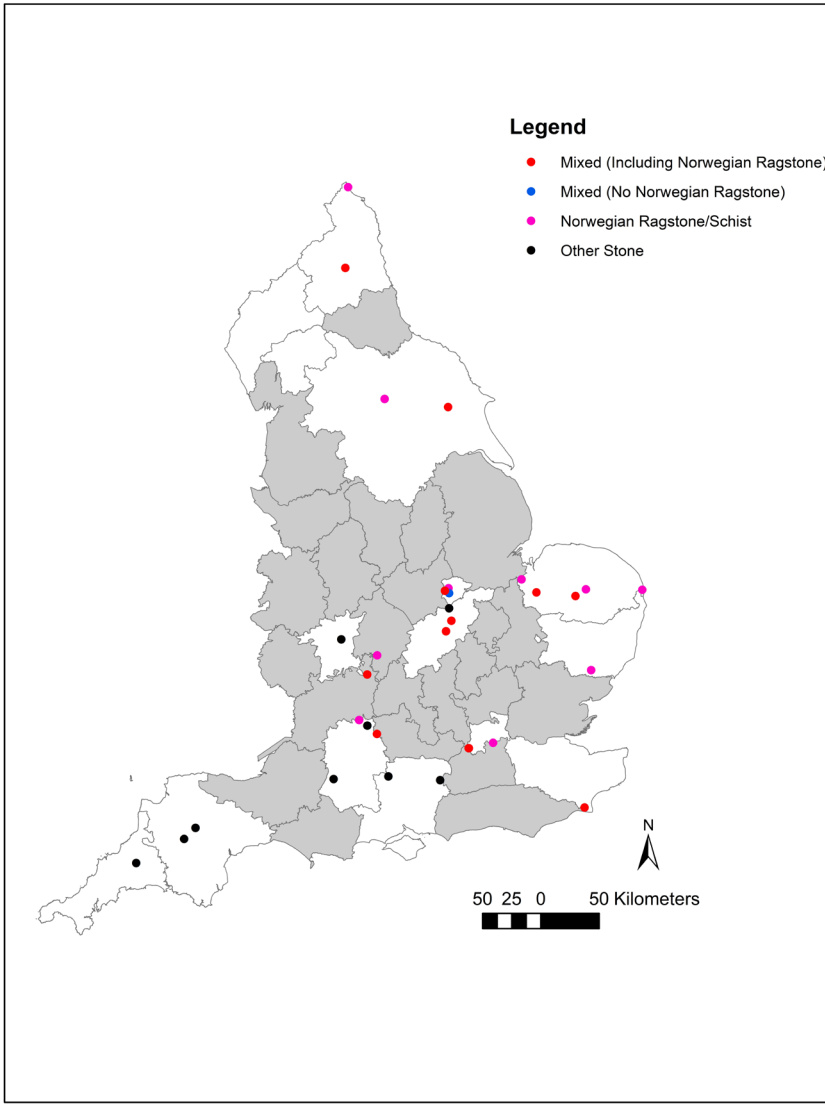

Figure 7.2: Distribution of whetstones from archaeological contexts.

weapon was buried within the floor, but it is also possible that it was a placed deposit, perhaps intended to protect the house or its occupants. Also from Devon, at Hutholes on Dartmoor, a buried shard of Roman glass, deposited in an internal doorway, might be afforded the same explanation (Beresford 1979, 150). The burial of artefacts for protection has been long recognised in prehistoric contexts and both Hall (2011) and Gilchrist (2012, 232–33) discuss

how this act might be understood both as a magical practice and a practical one; these deposits had a specific function in blessing or protecting the home. A further example from our dataset is the plough coulter deposited within a drain at Almansheles, Northumberland. Standley (2020) situates this act of deposition within a broader context to argue that it represents a communal emotional investment related to anxiety over the continued fertility of the land. Such items are hidden and, inevitably therefore, would not have been identified or noted by the appraisers producing the coroners' and escheators' records. In her analysis of London households, French (2021, 191–5) observes a marked increase in the acquisition of objects explicitly associated with domestic devotion after the Black Death. This is not particularly visible in the escheators', coroners' or archaeological records, but explicitly religious items do occur in small quantities. However, these objects need to be considered within the wider context of those items of dress and tableware with religious or liturgical associations discussed in previous chapters, as well, perhaps, as the presence of textiles carrying religious iconography.

Prayer beads (*precamen, precarius, bedes*) occur in five escheators' lists, one of which contains multiple sets (Table 7.3). These beads occur in jet and amber.[309] The list containing multiple sets is that of the merchant John Hawkyn, dating to 1422, which contains a mix of personal possessions and stock, and this is also likely the case for Patrick Goldsmyth.[310] Two pairs (likely a set) of jet beads are valued together at 2d, another pair of jet beads at 6d and three pairs of amber beads at 6d. Prayer beads belonging to John Northern of Glandford (Norfolk) in 1435 are appraised with a silver chain, presumably along which the beads were strung, to a total value of 13s 4d.[311] In addition to his beads, Thomas Cranforth had rings and a silver crucifix, all valued together at 26s 8d in 1448. Religious reform may account for the absence of prayer beads from the coroners' records. One reason for the general rarity of prayer beads in the escheators' material could be that they were considered inalienable possessions, exempt from seizure. A parallel for this can be found in rosaries being considered inalienable paraphernalia in the context of testamentary practice (Beattie 2019, 47). Sear and Sneath (2020, 187) and French (2021, 200) highlight the increasing popularity of rosary beads in the mid-fifteenth century, the period in which escheators' records become less detailed. Beads in glass, shale and amber from archaeological contexts may have been rosaries (summarised in Table 7.3). Gilchrist (2012, 157) highlights how the use of these beads was a tactile engagement with specific materials, which may have been understood as having apotropaic qualities through repeated handling in private prayer, which formed a part of daily household rituals. It is in relation to such

[309] Among the higher status lists collected, but excluded from the study, there are also examples in coral and one instance of beads with a silver Agnus Dei.

[310] E518.

[311] E407; E339.

Table 7.3: Occurrence of beads in the escheators' and archaeological datasets

Escheators'						
List No.	**Year**	**Name**	**Location**	**Object**	**Quantity**	**Value (d)**
149	1448	Thomas Cranforth	Tickhill, Yorkshire	Prayer beads	1 pair	–
339	1418	Patrick Goldsmyth	Evesham, Worcestershire	Jet prayer bead	1 pair	6
407	1437	John Northern	Glandford, Norfolk	Prayer beads	1 pair	–
518	1422	John Hawkyn	Barnstaple, Devon	Amber beads	3 pairs	6
				Jet beads	2 pairs	2
715	1421	Thomas Hert	Folkestone, Kent	Jet prayer bead	1 pair	3
Archaeological Evidence						
Site		**Material**	**Description**		**Quantity**	**Reference**
Maulds Meaburn, Cumbria		Amber	Irregular, slightly angular, amber bead		1	Gerry Martin Associates 2014
Churchgate Way, Terrington St Clement, Norfolk		Stone			1	NAU 2008
Heydon, Nofolk		Glass	White		1	Hickling 2010
Ludgershall High Sreet, Wiltshire		Glass	Perforated blue glass, 14mm diameter		1	Wessex Archaeology 2002
Otterpool Campsite, Lympne, Kent		Glass			1	Canterbury Archaeological Trust 2012
Denge West, Kent		Shale			1	Barber and Priestly Bell 2008
Cutty Sark Station, Greenwich, Kent		Glass	Blue		1	Pre-Construct Archaeology 2001

tactile, material engagement that other objects, such as the silver spoons and items of plate discussed earlier, might be understood in the context of personal devotion and belief.

Pilgrimage souvenirs are rare in the archaeological sample, when one considers the significant quantities of these recovered from urban contexts in places such as London and Salisbury (Spencer 1990; 2010). The 400-plus pilgrim badges recorded by the PAS show widespread deposition in rural areas,

with a largely easterly distribution, a pattern also seen in the distribution of ampullae (Anderson 2010). However, around a quarter of these badges have been recovered in the London area, primarily from metal detecting on the Thames foreshore. These are commonly interpreted as having been deposited into the river as a final ritual act on return to the city, yet this perspective is contested, with an alternative explanation being that these were cheap and disposable objects, meaningful within the context of pilgrimage but losing their significance thereafter, becoming incorporated into dumps of domestic rubbish (see Garcia 2003; Lee 2014). Anderson (2010) proposes that in rural contexts the deposition of ampullae on fields, perhaps still containing holy water, can be seen as an act of 'blessing the fields' to secure a good harvest. Such an interpretation might be advanced for the ampulla recovered at Throckmorton Airfield (Worcestershire) from an area of ridge and furrow (Griffin, Griffin and Jackson 2005), and perhaps also for a pilgrim badge recovered from a furrow at Benefield (Northamptonshire; Walker 2011). The final pilgrim badge in the sample, probably of fifteenth-century date and from the shrine of Thomas Becket, was residual in a later context at Spital Street, Dartford, Kent, a town situated on the pilgrimage route between London and Canterbury (TVAS 2014). Following Anderson, the limited evidence from excavations suggests perhaps that these souvenirs developed a variety of meanings, with deposition in fields being an act which would be more significant to rural, than urban, communities for example.

There are two occurrences of crucifixes in the escheators' records. Thomas Cranforth, a vestment maker of Tickhill (Yorkshire) had a silver crucifix, valued with his prayer beads at 26s 8d in 1448, and William Hornby of Droitwich, Worcestershire, had a silver gilt cross worth 4s in 1422.[312] It is possible that Cranforth's goods are stock-in-trade. A single cross also occurs in the coroners' records, a gilded silver example belonging to the yeoman Leonard Mallhome of St Giles in the Field (Middlesex,) valued at 4s in 1541.[313] An archaeological parallel, in lead alloy, comes from Grange Farm, Gillingham (Kent; Seddon 2007).

Finally, religious books occur in 21 escheators' lists (some of which contain multiple books), of which 15 relate to clergy (chaplain, parson, rector, vicar), and four relate to 'clerks' (Table 7.4). This follows the general trend in book ownership identified by Lane Ford (1999) and Sear and Sneath (2020, 151) who demonstrate that books were principally owned by the clergy and university-educated professionals such as doctors and lawyers. Although ownership of religious books increased among London households through the fifteenth century, they still only occur in a small proportion of the wills analysed by French (2021, 201). Therefore, their rarity in non-metropolitan households is to be expected. By the early fifteenth century, there was a common fraternity of those engaged in the manufacture and sale of books in London, and by 1500 there were over 250 Londoners making their living from the book

[312] E149; E851.
[313] C30.

Table 7.4: Occurrence of books in the escheator's records. *Indicates goods that are likely to have been stolen.

List No.	Year	Name	Location	Occupation	Object	Original Text	Value (d)	No. Objects
84	1428	Hugh Pye	Bradenham, Norfolk	Chaplain	Portable breviary	portiforium portat'	120	1
					Book of sermons	liber de sermonibus	20	1
104	1428	William White	Norfolk	Chaplain	Old/worn book called 'the Bible'	liber debil' vocat' le Bibill	240	1
112	1428	Reginald Lange	Pillaton, Devon	Clerk	Book called 'portos' [portable breviary]	liber vocat' portos	240	1
215	1419	Hugh Cetur	Woodchurch, Kent	Clerk	Portable breviaries	portos	880	2
					Portable breviaries	portos	160	–
					Psalter	sauter	120	1
					Missal	missale	1600	1
255	1390	Giles atte Welle	Donwnham Market, Norfolk	Chaplain	Missal	missalis	1200	1
					Portable breviary	portiferium	240	1
299	1413	Simon Hull	Blatherwick, Northamptonshire	Chaplain	Portable breviary	portoferium	160	1
587	1417	John Ely	Ripon, Yorkshire	Chaplain	Portable breviary	portos		1
					Missal	missalis		1
629	1424	Alexander Johnson*	Bradfield Combust, Suffolk	–	Missal	missale	320	1
					Antiphoner	antiphoner	800	1
725	1413	Henry Blak	Suffolk	Chaplain	Portable breviary	portiforium portat'	240	1
1120	1458	Thomas Fuller*	Lymington, Hampshire	Yeoman	Portable breviary	portiferium	480	1

(*Continued*)

Table 7.4: Continued.

List No.	Year	Name	Location	Occupation	Object	Original Text	Value (d)	No. Objects
1129	1441	John Ham	Antingham, Norfolk	Parson	Portable breviary	porteforium	240	1
1193	1439	Henry Hole	Old Newton, Suffolk	Vicar	Portable breviary	portiferium	320	1
					Missal	missal'		1
1197	1439	Richard Horeston	Northfield, Worcestershire	Rector of the church of Northfield	Book called 'Portoos' [portable breviary]	liber voc' portoos	1200	1
1349	1407	Thomas Kyrkeby	Norfolk/Suffolk	Chaplain	Book	liber		1
1358	1407	William Dalton	Fyfield?, Hampshire/ Wiltshire	Parson	Portable breviary	porteforeum	360	1
1435	1402	Phillip Canaan	Brook, Kent	Rector	Diverse books	divers' libri	1200	
					Books	iiii. libri	160	4
1468	1410	Roger Bettys	Dunwich, Suffolk	Chaplain	Portable breviary and other books	portiforium portat' & al' libri	480	
1503	1430	John Waryn	Cardinham, Cornwall	Clerk	Missal	liber vocat' myssal'	1200	1
					Book called a 'Grandvolom'	liber vocat' Grandvolom	1200	1
					Psalter	psalterium	480	1
1534	1433	Thomas Crishale	Middlesex	Vicar	Book called 'portos' [portable breviary]	liber vocat' portos	120	1
1548	1445	Isaak Grene	Great Walsingham, Norfolk	Clerk	Prayer, or prayer book	orison'	20	1
1578	1404	John Capell'	Corhampton, Hampshire	Chaplain?	Matins books, pair	par matutinarum	12	1

industry (Christianson 1999, 129). Even so, books remained expensive, despite the advent of printing from c.1475 (Christianson 1999, 133). This made books more widely available to the gentry and urban merchant class, but ownership remained limited. Patronage and social networks likely played an important role in the provisioning of the lesser clergy, such as those book owners within the escheators' and coroners' lists, with religious texts (Lane Ford 1999, 212). While the need for books among the clergy and professionals is fairly obvious, the motivations for those with non-clerical occupations in acquiring books is unclear. There are just two apparently non-clerical lists featuring books among the escheators' records. The first relates to the yeoman Thomas Fuller of Lymington (Hampshire), who has an unusual list containing elaborate drinking vessels, his breviary and cash, but no domestic goods.[314] The other is that of Alexander Johnson, who had a missal and an antiphoner, plus a couple of other valuable items recorded as coming into the possession of Thomas Leche, parson of Bradfield Combust, following Jonson's flight for felony.[315] The circumstantial details and the character of the items in these lists raises the suspicion that these were stolen, and while there is no explicit evidence to indicate this, such a conclusion would support the idea that in the rural and small-town social milieu studied here, books were valuable items almost exclusively associated with the clergy.

Details are not given for all the books listed among the escheators' records, but those which are given a description are all religious in character. They comprise breviaries (at least 17), missals (six), an 'orison' (perhaps a small prayer book, to judge by its value), a book of sermons, a Bible, two psalters, an antiphoner and a pair of matins books (with nets for storage). This religious focus corresponds with the evidence of book ownership from London wills (French 2021, 201). These were valuable items. The missals belonging to Hugh Cetur and Giles atte Welle were valued at 10 marks and 100s. respectively, for example.[316] Two of the priestly book owners – William White and Hugh Pye – forfeited for heresy. Given the well-known association of these two with lollardy (Aston 1984, 71–100) it is interesting that White is the only man in Table 7.4 said to have forfeited a Bible, while Pye's is the only book of sermons. Lane Ford (1999, 212) draws attention to the fact that the clergy's books represented significant investment, proposing that in many cases they are likely to have been gifts of patronage. Several other books are listed without detail, but all belong to clergy so are likely to be religious in nature. The absence of explicitly religious books from the coroners' records is presumably due to the lower proportion of lists relating to clergy, although John James had books of various type and his profession as a clergyman suggests that these are likely to have been religious in character.[317]

[314] E1120.
[315] E629. Part of Jonson's list is illegible and it is possible it features an additional book.
[316] E215, E255.
[317] C382.

Archaeological evidence for book ownership consists of fastenings and furnishings from books. Small quantities of such objects come from excavations in the larger towns, but are most common from religious houses where books were used and repaired, and manuscripts produced (Howsam 2016). There are 13 examples of book fittings in the archaeological dataset. These come from a limited range of sites, being associated with the vicarage at Wharram Percy (a further two were found in the church; Harding, Marlow-Mann and Wrathmell 2010), a moated site at Sherburn (Brewster and Hayfield 1994) and an apparently wealthy farmstead at Capel-St-Mary (Suffolk; Tabor 2010). Other examples, for example from Cockermouth (Cumbria; Leech and Gregory 2012) and Crowle (Worcestershire; Reynish 2013), are more ambiguous in regard to date or site type. Overall, this data supports the interpretation that book ownership was limited to the clergy and gentry in our period, with no clear archaeological evidence of book ownership among non-elite rural households. Tantalising glimpses of rural book ownership are provided by PAS finds of book fittings, which are similar in character to excavated examples, but difficult to interpret due to a lack of direct association with a household (Howsam 2016, 19). The most compelling interpretation of these is that they are related to the destruction of books following the dissolution, rather than providing evidence of rural book ownership (Howsam 2016, 404–5). Overall, the evidence presented here accords with the established view that book ownership was limited to the clergy, university-educated professionals and the gentry and urban merchants who fall outside of our datasets.

Religion was a core element of medieval life; it infiltrated the domestic sphere in a variety of ways. Yet our archaeological and historical records are both surprisingly silent on this subject. Archaeological evidence, however, allows us to consider some of the ways in which people interacted with religious objects such as pilgrimage souvenirs and engaged in ritual acts such as the concealment of objects within the home. It is, perhaps, in recognising the potency of materials intertwined in personal, domestic acts of devotion that archaeological analysis is most powerful, creating a framework through which it is possible to see devotional practices elsewhere in the home, for example at the table as discussed in Chapter 4. It was perhaps the ubiquity of religious items, as well as their inalienable qualities, which meant that only in exceptional circumstances were they seized and noted by the escheator or coroner.

Arms and armour

Arms and armour are a small but important part of the dataset. The beginning of our period marks the start of the transition from chain-mail armour to plate (see Richardson 2011), and the end sees the increasing adoption of firearms. The Assize of Arms was issued by Henry II in 1181 and this, as well as Edward I's Statute of Winchester (1285) imposed an obligation on the population to

retain and be prepared to use arms. As warfare with Scotland and France intensified during the fourteenth century, provision was made to array armed men and maintain coastal defences via commissions that invoked the Statute of Winchester and other traditional arrangements (Hewitt 1966, 1–27). An ordinance of 1363 was the first of several requiring men to practise archery (Gunn 2010). Men were recruited for military campaigns at musters, with communities expected to meet the costs of equipping men or paying a fee to exempt the community from its obligation. While households may have acquired arms to meet these obligations, others may have been engaged in aristocratic retinues, potentially being provisioned with arms or cash with which to acquire them (Prestwich 2006, 77–9).

Arms were not only acquired to fulfil legal obligations. They could be obtained as items of display; Leech (2000, 7–8) and French (2021, 83) discuss the importance of armour as an item of display in later medieval and early modern urban halls in relation to the role of citizens in the militia and as symbols of masculinity and citizenship. In London, French (2021, 83) demonstrates that the display of weapons and armour became less common by the sixteenth century, with households instead stowing these items in out-of-the-way places. Weapons could also be the equipment of professional soldiers. From the reign of Edward I, feudal military obligation was increasingly abandoned in favour of paid troops (Prestwich 2006, 78), meaning that it was possible for men effectively to become, either permanently or temporarily, professional soldiers. Changes in weaponry required new legislation to limit its use. By the end of our period, legislation was passed to restrict access to arms: in 1541 an act was passed to limit ownership of pistols and crossbows, and in 1548 gun owners were required to register with their local justice (Schwoerer 2000, 34–5).

One reason for the fairly modest quantities of arms and armour occurring in the escheators' and coroners' records may be that the seizure of these items would inhibit the felon or members of their household from performing military service. Indeed, from the fourteenth century felons were often recruited into military service (Prestwich 2006, 79). Therefore, before considering the specific items of arms and armour occurring in these records, it is necessary to better understand the circumstances of seizure. It is noteworthy that a particularly high proportion (around a third) of those escheators' lists containing weapons relate to crimes which carried capital punishments; nine such lists relate to murderers, nine to those convicted of treachery or treason, one to a convicted lollard and five to individuals who were hanged for other or unspecified felonies, in addition to a single suicide. In such cases, the individual concerned would clearly have had no need for weapons and, indeed, they may have been used in committing the crime. Overall it is highly likely that arms and armour are underrepresented within the dataset.

A valuable insight into the kinds of armour that might have been available through the market can be gained from an escheators' list which falls outside of the main sample analysed here, as it relates to a resident of a large town. In

1403 Richard Fourbour, a furbisher (or armourer) of Winchester (Hampshire), was arrested and his stock seized.[318] This included three hauberks (long coats of mail), five basinets (small headpieces) with ventails (neck armour), a further 15 ventails, four pairs of paunces (plates to protect the abdomen), two pairs of braces of mail, two pairs of leg harness, a breast plate, seven pallets (skull-caps, usually of leather), two pairs of vambraces (to protect the arms), two pairs of rerebraces (to protect the upper arm), 13 pairs of plate gloves, 41 swords, five baselards (daggers), 12 baselard blades and three lance heads. A further unusual case (not in the analysed sample due to its 'elite' status) is the list of the armiger (esquire) John Walydve of Swindon (Wiltshire). He had an iron or mail helmet ('hatte de wyre'), three poleaxes, a crossbow with fittings and a baselard, all presumably for his own military use.[319] These lists are exceptional; in the analysed sample, armour occurs in only 12 escheators' lists (Table 7.5), with multiple items of armour occurring in three of these. In 1417 the murderer William Bouerset of Ormside (Westmorland), had a hauberk (appraised at 13s 4d), a sallet (a headpiece), a gardbrace and a pair of vambraces (both to protect the arms) (appraised together at 12s 4d), representing a suit of armour to protect the upper body.[320] In 1381 the traitor John Steuenache of Mersham (Kent) had a more limited set of items: a hauberk with a (probable) helmet (valued together at 10s), and plate gloves (16d).[321] The final list is that of Thomas Tylthe of Cranbrook (Kent), dating to 1426, who had a breastplate (20s), a hauberk (15s) and pairs of vambraces (6s 8d), rerebraces (6s 8d) and plate gloves (5s).[322] Where single items occur it is hauberks which are most common (four), followed by costlets (body armour, two), with single examples of breastplates, a brigandine (body armour) and neck guards, all suggesting that, in the first instance, the priority was to acquire items for protecting the upper body. The expense of these items perhaps explains why most individuals who possessed armour only had one or two pieces. These items may have been used in combat, but also have functioned as display pieces. Discussing probate inventory evidence from Yorkshire, Dyer (2013, 22, 26) highlights the occurrence of weaponry within the hall, which was likely hung on the wall. He suggests that this is a visual indication of a peasant's ability to defend themselves and serve the state, rather than relating to an explicit military role. Armour is very rare in the coroners' records, occurring in only four lists (Table 7.5). In 1545 Robert Foster of Winskill (Yorkshire), had a 'tunic of defence, called a jack' worth 5s.[323] A more extensive inventory of armour was held by William Sparke, a yeoman of Loddon (Norfolk), who had a corslet, splints, a sallet and gauntlets, appraised

[318] E1442. Perhaps surprisingly, Fourbour's merchandise is said to be at Penton Mewsey, which is also where he was arrested on suspicion of theft.
[319] E1551.
[320] E515.
[321] E672.
[322] E820.
[323] C56.

Table 7.5: Combinations of arms and armour occurring in the escheators' and coroners' records.

	Armour	Arrows	Bow	Dagger	Shield	Spear	Sword	Bill	Gun	Misc. Weapons	No. Escheators' Lists	No. Coroners' Lists
	X	X	X								1	
	X			X							1	
	X										8	4
	X		X								1	
	X	X	X		X		X				1	
		X	X	X	X		X				1	
		X	X								7	2
			X	X							1	
		X					X				1	
		X	X	X							3	
		X	X				X				4	1
		X									2	2
		X			X						1	
		X	X	X			X					2
			X								5	2
			X	X							1	
				X			X				1	1

(*Continued*)

Table 7.5: Continued.

	Armour	Arrows	Bow	Dagger	Shield	Spear	Sword	Bill	Gun	Misc. Weapons	No. Escheators' Lists	No. Coroners' Lists
				X							15	2
					X	X					1	
					X		X				6	1
						X					1	
							X				13	2
			X				X	X				1
			X					X				2
										X	1	
								X				3
									X			1
				X			X		X			2
Escheators'												
Total Items	**26**	**194**	**44**	**29**	**10**	**2**	**28**	**0**	**0**	**1**		
Total Lists	**12**	**21**	**24**	**23**	**10**	**2**	**27**	**0**	**0**	**1**		
Coroners'												
Total Items	**6**	**23**	**52**	**7**	**1**	**0**	**10**	**5**	**3**	**0**		
Total Lists	**4**	**7**	**10**	**8**	**1**	**0**	**10**	**5**	**3**	**0**		

together at 6s 8d in 1519.[324] Finally, Thomas Chylrey of Marlborough (Wiltshire), had 'a pair of almain rivets', a type of flexible plate armour worth 16d, which was kept, presumably on display, in his hall.[325] Archaeological examples of armour are equally rare, being limited to pieces of chain mail recovered at 11–23 City Road, Islington (MOLAS 1998a) and 50 Finsbury Square, Islington (MOLAS 1999).

Weaponry is more common than armour in the escheators' records (Table 7.5). The most common weapons are bows and arrows, although it must be noted that in some cases these may have been used for hunting rather than combat. Through our period archers increasingly dominated England's military, with them often being drawn from the middling ranks of society (Bell *et al*. 2013, 143–7). Bows occur in 24 escheators' lists, in the majority of cases with arrows, making these the most common types of weapons. Although they are often valued with other items, some indication of their value can be ascertained. Thomas Pulton of Titchfield (Hampshire), had two bows and 24 arrows in 1404, valued at 3s 4d.[326] Hugh Cetur had two bows and 11 arrows worth 20d in 1414.[327] A final example is the list of John Henefeld of Black Notley (Essex), who had a bow and a sheaf of arrows worth 4s.[328] These differences in value perhaps indicate that it was arrows, rather than bows, which were the more expensive items. This is supported by the list of John Flemyng of Kent or Middlesex, dating to 1403, which unusually, values these items separately: a bow at 8d and a sheaf of arrows at 18d.[329] Where occupation is stated, a variety of people possessed these items, including servants, clerks and a smith. Where occupation is not listed but there are sufficient items present to suggest a relatively complete list, bows and arrows are most typically associated with those whose possessions suggest a degree of affluence. Examples are John Meselyn of Kent or Middlesex, who had various soft furnishings, John de Polton of Tilshead (Wiltshire), who had substantial agricultural holdings, and William Mandevile of Colnbrook (Middlesex), who possessed a range of agricultural tools, furnishings and tableware.[330] While there is nothing to suggest that these individuals performed military service, they fit the profile of military archers who were often rural freemen or yeomen (Bell *et al*. 2013, 145).

Archery was a common pastime in medieval society, and although developing skill in archery was encouraged in the context of defence, it was also a form of sport among rural communities (Bradbury 1985, 160). However, although archery was encouraged, the events of the Peasants' Revolt and stories of outlaw

[324] C133.
[325] C171.
[326] E25.
[327] E215.
[328] E287.
[329] E1600.
[330] E8; E157; E712.

bands, best exemplified by the legend of Robin Hood, provide ample evidence of the risks associated with encouraging the development of the skill (Bradbury 1985, 170–1). In spite of these risks, Gunn (2010) presents evidence for the continuation of archery practice through the sixteenth century in the form of the maintenance of communal archery butts and coroners' inquests relating to accidental deaths associated with archery, although, as indicated by contemporary observers, the number of people engaged in archery probably gradually declined for a variety of reasons, including longer working hours and the rise of the handgun. Even so, under Henry VII and Henry VIII, householders were obliged to maintain bows for themselves as well as any children and servants (Gunn 2010, 53). The prevalence of archery throughout our period and the requirements for ubiquitous proficiency and bow ownership explains why arrowheads are the most common type of weaponry recovered archaeologically. These occur in a variety of forms, some with specific functions (Figure 7.3). Of the 28 identifiable arrowheads in the archaeological sample 16 are of broadhead form (Figure 7.3A), that is, with a barb and best suited for hunting. These were principally recovered from rural settlements, the exception being an urban example from Redcastle Furze, Thetford (Norfolk; Andrews 1995). It is possible that these arrowheads were used in poaching or legitimate hunting. The remaining arrowheads are of spearpoint (Figure 7.3B) or bullet head form (Figure 7.3C). Spearpoint arrowheads were common, multipurpose arrowheads, while bullet heads were intended to pierce armour (Borg 1991). Only two of the arrowheads are certainly of bullet head type, one from The Forty, Cricklade (Wiltshire; Wessex Archaeology 2007) and one from Mannington, Wiltshire. Arrowheads from Upton (Worcestershire; Rahtz 1969) and Foxcotte (Russel 1985) are certainly of spearpoint form. While there are examples from Cricklade (Wessex Archaeology 2007), Thetford (Andrews 1995) and Doncaster (Yorkshire; McComish *et al.* 2010), the remainder are from rural sites and presumably represent weaponry or arrows used for sport; the lack of clearly bullet head arrowheads may suggest that these were reserved specifically for military activity. An additional common arrowhead form – the forked arrowhead, used for hunting wildfowl – is absent from the archaeological sample (Figure 7.3D). A further find from an urban context is a yew long bow from Main Street, Cockermouth (Leech and Gregory 2012). The occurrence of these finds at a range of sites supports the impression from the escheators' and coroners' records and other historical research of the widespread use and ownership of archery equipment. While the escheators' records reveal ownership of bows and arrows, the archaeological evidence allows us to understand better why these were obtained. It suggests that sport, rather than defence, was the primary motivation, or that hunting arrowheads were more widely available than those for battle.

The second most common weapon type in the archival evidence is the dagger, 13 of which in the escheators' records are termed baselards and valued

Figure 7.3: Examples of medieval arrowhead forms. A: Broadhead form. B: Spearhead form. C: Bullet head form. D: Forked head. CC Share Alike licence: Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society (WILT-732305); Birmingham Museums Trust (WMID-164B47); Hampshire Cultural Trust (HAMP-39EFDA); Bristol City Council (GLOS-3515D4).

between 12d and 10s. Four of these baselards were adorned with silver, two belonging to Richard Horeston, rector of Northfield (Worcestershire) in 1439, the others dating to the first decade of the fifteenth century.[331] Of the 23 lists including daggers, five relate to murders and four relate to individuals accused

[331] E1197; E1308; E1309.

of treason or treachery, implying that these weapons may have played a role in the indictment of the individual concerned. Swords occur in 27 lists and are valued modestly, between 12d and 10s, with the majority below 40d. There are very few lists where more than one weapon occurs. In one list, that of Thomas Pulton of Titchfield (Hampshire), a sword and shield (appraised together at around 3s) and two bows are present.[332] Weapons are only present in one of the lists containing multiple pieces of armour, that of Thomas Tylthe, who had a bow.[333] Hand weapons are rare in the archaeological sample. Examples include a copper alloy pommel from Spital Street, Dartford (TVAS 2014), an iron pyramidal-shaped pommel from Weaverthorpe (Yorkshire; Finney and Hunter 2006) and a cast iron dagger hilt from Old Buckenham (Norfolk; NPS Archaeology 2015). Iron spikes or spears may have been a part of weapons, with examples coming from Wharram Percy (Harding, Marlow-Mann and Wrathmell 2010), Huish (Wiltshire; Thompson 1972), Staines (Middlesex; Jones 2010) and Wimbotsham (Norfolk; Shelley 2003).

Weaponry occurs in 28 coroners' lists. As with the escheators' lists, bows and arrows, daggers and swords are the most common types, with a small number of guns also being present (Table 7.5). Statutes of the first half of the sixteenth century restricted gun ownership to those with an income of over £100 as a measure to prevent their use for poaching and to quell potential rebellion (Gunn 2010, 78), so those owned by the servant William Taylor, the fuller Laurence Tichen and the yeoman Simon Grynden are likely to have been owned illegally.[334] In most cases, single items of weaponry are present. Interestingly, the four lists containing armour do not include weapons.

There is no consistent pattern among the lists containing a single item of weaponry. Where profession is listed, those with single weapons include yeomen, a mariner and a fuller, and others with weapons include a chandler (who had a sheath of arrows),[335] a labourer who had an iron bill and another who had a dagger,[336] a servant who had a gun and clergyman who had a stone-bow (a kind of crossbow used for shooting stones; worth 10s, considerably more than a long bow).[337] Where rooms are given, weapons were to be found in the hall, parlour, a loft and a chamber.

The evidence for arms and armour is problematic to interpret. It does not appear to have been routinely seized and, with the exception of arrowheads, is not regularly recovered archaeologically as items are likely to have been curated or recycled. However, the partial evidence does reveal that weapons were owned across society and highlights the importance of archery across our period. Some items of weaponry and armour represent a substantial investment, and

[332] E25; valuation of sword and shield partly illegible.
[333] E820.
[334] C299; C318; C335.
[335] C208.
[336] C230; C537.
[337] C382.

likely had a function in display as well as being used offensively. The adorning of items in silver perhaps demonstrates the importance of weapons such as daggers as fashionable items of dress, allied to the other martial influences on dress discussed in Chapter 6.

Other personal objects

A final group of objects comprises other small items including those associated with personal grooming, and purses. Of these, purses are the most common items. Purses occur in five escheators' lists, in two cases recorded alongside cash. These include the clerk, Hugh Cetur of Woodchurch (Kent), whose remarkably detailed list includes a purse containing 18½d, and the vicar Thomas Crishale of Barton Bendish (Norfolk; but relating to goods and chattels in Middlesex), who had 'money in his purse, 2s 2d', though the purse itself is not separately listed or valued.[338] The ownership status of other purses is more dubious. The six purses belonging to the merchant John Hawkyn who had six, were presumably stock, while that belonging to the hanged arsonist Richard Buryman, whose goods are limited to a silver cup, and a purse containing cash, might reasonably assumed to be stolen.[339] The goods belonging to John Hornebrok of Plympton (Devon) are limited to a brass pot, money in a purse and the adorned belt, to which it was presumably attached.[340] Purses are also the most common personal item in the coroners' records (11 lists), and they belonged to men and women of various professions and typically contained cash. The records give some information about how purses were worn and what they contained. In 1567 Robert Crowne of North Elmham (Kent) had 'his purse and girdle and money in it, 3s'.[341] Similarly, the purse belonging to the labourer Anthony Curlynge of St Lawrence (Kent) is also listed with his girdle and 'wearing apparel'.[342] The purse belonging to the labourer John Wyvenden of Hawkhurst (Kent) in 1576 contained his money (7s 4d) and a silver ring.[343] As with the escheators' records, the true ownership of some purses might be doubted. In 1516 when the labourer John Henne of Milton-next-Gravesend (Kent) murdered Robert Makerell, he had a leather purse, cash and a dagger which could, conceivably, have been stolen from his victim.[344]

More details on purses are provided by the archaeological evidence, which takes the form of leather fragments and metal purse frames (Figure 7.4). The simplest purses are two drawstring examples from Carlisle, one made from calfskin and the other from sheepskin (Newman 2011). From the same site

[338] E215; E1534.
[339] E518; E577.
[340] E1175.
[341] C194.
[342] C389.
[343] C230.
[344] C537.

Figure 7.4: Purse frame from Duke Street, Haughley, Suffolk. Image: Cotswold Archaeology.

are decorative leather purse panels: one is of lobed form and made of sheepskin, and the other leather panel is decorated with a scalloped motif. These would have formed a part of composite purses with a metal frame. Copper alloy and iron purse bars and frames are present within the dataset. An example from Haughley (Suffolk; Figure 7.4), probably of early sixteenth-century date, is made of two copper alloy rods, flattened and perforated, with another perforated rod allowing for the attachment of a suspension loop (Goffin 2009). A copper alloy purse bar from Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed is corroded (Suddaby 2007), but a final example of a copper alloy purse frame from Lydd Quarry (Kent) is decorated with niello lines and incised zigzag patterning (Barber and Priestly-Bell 2008). There are also three iron examples: a large swivel bar from High Street, Uxbridge (Middlesex; MOLAS 2000a) and a circular suspension loop from West Cotton (Northamptonshire; Hylton 2010) as well as a fifteenth-century purse frame from Southwick (Northamptonshire; Johnston,

Bellamy and Foster 2001). An iron pin from Thuxton (Norfolk), is probably also from a purse frame (Goodall 2011, 360).

Purses would have been worn on the person, typically suspended from the belt, and could be made of elaborately decorated leather or bright fabrics, which, along with decorated frames such as that from Lydd Quarry, created a further vehicle for personal display (Egan and Pritchard 2002, 342). Occasional survivals of textile elements, as well as metal badges depicting purse frames and artistic depictions attest to the display potential of these items when worn from the belt (Willemsen 2022). This is nicely illustrated in the archiepiscopal register of the Archbishop of Canterbury dating to 1390, where a Kentish peasant is depicted wearing a frame purse suspended from a belt adorned with circular mounts. The drawing clearly carries a strong element of implied criticism of such ostentatious display on behalf of the lower orders (Figure 6.1A; Du Boulay 1966, 189). A copper alloy purse mount of fifteenth–sixteenth century date from Oyster Street, Portsmouth (Hampshire) is adorned with punched decoration (Fox and Barton 1986, 61). Purse frames, like other objects of dress, could carry religious inscriptions, imbuing them with a further personal and spiritual significance, which might also be made evident in the embellishment of leather or textile coverings (Standley 2015, 63–4). Indeed, purses commonly feature in depictions of religious scenes in European art as a symbol of charity (Willemsen 2022, 117). Purse frames are generally rare finds from excavations, even within large urban settings; only two are reported on from Winchester (Hinton 1990c) and one from the London waterfront (Egan and Pritchard 2002, 356), for example. Iron purse frames are known from King's Lynn and London. However, artistic depictions show that purses were a feature of rural dress (Standley 2015, 18), and over 2,000 purse fragments have been reported to the PAS. Of these, 605 are adorned with niello in a similar manner to the excavated example from Lydd Quarry and 118 carry inscriptions, most commonly variations on Ave Maria. Smaller quantities exhibit evidence of gilding (26) or silvering/tinning (43 examples). Although purses are generally of fairly plain materials, they might be considered an important component of the performance of the social self as discussed in Chapter 6 in relation to dress. They allowed for the cultivation of an impression of modesty and honour through appearing to avoid excess (Davis 2012, 45), but also, like other areas of dress, became a potential means of displaying wealth, piety or individuality. Purses emerged as a response to the increasing circulation and use of coinage, not just as a receptacle but as a means of embodying it without frivolously converting it into jewellery or clothing, or risking the judgement brought about by subverting sumptuary legislation. In this regard they can, perhaps, be considered alongside chests as objects associated in the fifteenth century with the increasing ambiguity around one's place in the social order brought about by commercial growth.

Personal toilet items include combs, small implements and glass urinals. Wooden and bone or antler combs for grooming were excavated at City Road, Islington (MOLAS 1998a), Exmouth (Devon; Weddell 1980), Thetford

(Andrews 1995), West Cotton (Hylton 2010) and Wharram Percy (Harding, Marlow-Mann and Wrathmell 2010). These artefacts are likely to be considerably underrepresented archaeologically, particularly due to the decay of wooden objects. Other objects include an unidentified cosmetic item from Spital Street, Dartford (TVAS 2014), copper alloy ear scoops from Faversham (Kent; Reid 2009) and Cley-Next-the-Sea (Norfolk; Birks 2003) and tweezers from Shipdham (Norfolk; NAU 2008) and West Cotton (Hylton 2010). There is a single copper alloy mirror case in the group, from Throckmorton Airfield (Griffin, Griffin and Jackson 2005). Mirrors are typically understood as female accessories, and were often given as courtship gifts (Standley 2008; 2013, 36–38) but also had a role as devotional items associated with pilgrimage, whereby 'mirror magic' could be used to capture the reflection of a relic (Hall 2011, 92). The final items are glass urinals (medical items used for assessing the colour of urine), both from sites on the edge of London (Cooke and Philpotts 2002; MOLAS 1997). These items barely appear in the written lists. There are two razors among the escheators' records, and John James had two pewter chamber pots worth 16d.[345]

Other personal items listed in the escheators' lists mostly consist of undefined 'valuables' of silver or gold. However, there is a single instance of a musical instrument, a gittern, a strung instrument, belonging to John Stakepoll of Middlesex, valued with a cither, also a stringed instrument, at 16d.[346] Elements of musical instruments have also been identified in the archaeological data, consisting of bone flutes or pipes from Cedars Park, Stowmarket (Suffolk; Woolhouse 2016), West Cotton (Northamptonshire), and Redcastle Furze, Thetford, (Andrews 1995). Other examples are a Jew's harp from Bishopstone (Wiltshire; King and Bethell 2013) and a tuning peg from Staines (Jones 2010). A further unusual musical item from the coroners' records is a blowing horn, belonging to Leonard Mallhome, valued at 3s 4d in 1541.[347] This item could potentially be a pilgrimage souvenir, as such items were used in pilgrimage processions (Hall 2011, 92). Other items associated with leisure consist of die from Greenwich (Cooke and Philpotts 2002) and Carbrooke (Norfolk; Hutcheson and Noble 2006), gaming boards and pieces from West Cotton (Hylton 2010) and probable nine men's morris boards from West Whelpington (Northumberland; Evans and Jarrett 1987, M1/F4) and Treworld (Cornwall; Dudley and Minter 1966). Gaming pieces have also been recovered from Rowhope Burn (Northumberland) (soapstone) and Fordingbridge (Hampshire) (bone) (Dixon 2014; Harding and Light 2003).

Finally, among the coroners' records there are five items associated with storage. Henry Cooper had a knapsack or bag (*mantica*), as did William Bacheler,

[345] C382.
[346] E688.
[347] C30.

but neither are assigned an individual value.[348] There are also three examples of trusses (wrapped packages of goods).

Many such small items associated with personal grooming and leisure may have been considered too small or mundane to be valued by the escheator or coroner. Gaming pieces and boards, as well as bone flutes, might, in some cases, be considered improvised artefacts with no specific monetary worth. They are important, however, for reminding us that there was space and time for leisure, and that even the poorest home could be filled with music or the loud conversation accompanying a game.

Conclusion

This chapter has summarised the evidence for a variety of different types of objects, each of which provide different insights into the value systems, consumption habits and pastimes of rural medieval households. Knives are ubiquitous archaeologically but largely absent from both the escheators' and coroners' records, but the list of John Hawkyn hints at the low monetary worth of these items. The development of more specialist knives at the end of our period is evident both archaeologically and in the coroners' records, while the evidence for the use of imported whetstones provides evidence of consumer choice and the links between rural households and international trade networks which are rarely visible through other materials. Devotional items are, perhaps, surprisingly rare in both the escheators' and coroners' records, given the centrality of devotion to medieval life. Items such as prayer beads must have been more common than they appear, and it is possible that these were considered inalienable possessions. The archaeological evidence of placed deposits hints at the ways in which devotional practice could incorporate objects which would not be immediately obvious or were not suited to seizure, such as fragments of Roman glass, and the evidence for tableware and bedding provides a further means for thinking about how devotional activity saturated domestic life. Weaponry and armour were expensive items, but were owned across the social spectrum. It is notable that few individuals in the sample possessed anything approaching a full suit of armour, suggesting the piecemeal acquisition of these expensive items. Analysis of the circumstances of seizure points to a tension between punitive seizure and the necessity of households meeting their obligations for military readiness, and it is clear from all three datasets that archery was an activity widely undertake across the social spectrum. Smaller objects point to care taken in fashioning and cultivating an image through the use of purses and grooming, while also illuminating the leisure activities of rural households.

[348] C447; C446.

CHAPTER 8

Making a Living: Evidence for the Production of Consumer Goods

Discussions of the medieval rural economy have typically focussed on the organisation of agricultural production. The work of Carus-Wilson (1959) and Thirsk (1961), in particular, provides a context for examining the relationship between agricultural and industrial production. Key themes to have emerged are the extent to which craft specialists were reliant on agricultural activities, and variability in the levels of wealth and living standards of those engaging in 'industrial' activities (e.g. Birrell 1969; Blanchard 1972; Frost 1981; Penn and Dyer 1990; Zell 1994). These contributions are exceptional though, as the bulk of literature on the organisation of craft production is focussed on larger urban centres, particularly those with active craft guilds (e.g. Rosser 1997; Swanson 1988). Archaeological analyses have examined the evidence for industry in towns, but also for rural industry such as pottery production, particularly in the upland and forest areas which specialised in industrial activities (see Mellor 2018 for an overview). The gendered division of labour has been a key area of enquiry in medieval studies. Judith Bennett (1996; 1997) presents a picture of the marginalisation of female labour. It is clear that women were involved in agricultural production and that while work was gendered, there was a great deal of fluidity in roles, rather than clearly defined spatial or economic gendered spheres (Goldberg 2011; Phillips 2013; Whittle 2013b). Recent work by Whittle and Hailwood (2020) on the gendered division of labour at the end of our period in south-west England has once again drawn the economy of rural households into the spotlight. Their work provides a clear, quantitative demonstration of the importance of the household as an economic unit and the varied character of household economies also indicated by studies of the medieval economy.

While studies such as that by Whittle and Hailwood (2020) have focussed particularly on how work varied along gendered lines, with men being more

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prevalent in certain areas of production (stone, metal and wood working and milling) and women in others, particularly the 'service economy' (e.g. cleaning, laundering, childcare), our data is better suited to the analysis of household economy. Firstly, our unit of analysis is the household, and therefore we must talk in terms of household economy, rather than the activities of individual household members, other than where this is explicitly stated. Secondly, we can assess the extent to which 'household' organisation entailed the use of domestic spaces for manufacturing processes, particularly through the archaeological evidence. Finally, we can assess the extent to which households might have specialised in particular crafts or engaged in them as one component of a mixed domestic economy. This is particularly pertinent as the records often state the occupation of the felon, fugitive or outlaw, but their possessions suggest engagement in a different or multiple economic activities, reinforcing the concept of occupational diversity and flexibility proposed by Penn and Dyer (1990, 361–2). The aim of this chapter is to consider the role of rural and small-town households in the production of goods and, in turn, their contribution to driving changing patterns of consumption through our period. The escheators' and coroners' records provide an opportunity to consider not only the economic basis of medieval households, but also the capital investment associated with craft production, while archaeological evidence can provide valuable insights into the organisation of production and its relationship to agricultural activities. To achieve this, we focus on three industries – textiles, leather and metal – which provide the fullest evidence for an interdisciplinary contribution to these debates.

The production, marketing and working of textiles

The period covered by the escheators' records relates to well-established shifts in the textile industry, as cloth production came to dominate England's economy. Oldland (2016, 233) argues that the demand for cloth, and therefore the scale of rural production, has been underestimated. He proposes that in the 1540s, around 15% of the adult workforce would have been engaged in cloth manufacture (Oldland 2016, 235). Although cloth production was the most important industry in terms of national income, in reality intensive cloth production was focussed in specific areas of the country: particularly Wiltshire, Somerset and Gloucestershire, the Stour valley in Suffolk and northern Essex and, to a lesser extent the Weald of Kent, west Yorkshire, the Thames Valley, Devon, Worcestershire and the north-west (see Lee 2018, 120–43; Oldland 2019, 290 and regional studies by Amor 2004; 2016; Britnell 2003; Hare 1999; Jackson 2008; Perry 1945; Swain 1997; Zell 1994). Within these regions, production activities became focussed in specific locales. In the 1460s in Suffolk, most cloth came from 15 parishes in the south-western corner of the county (Amor 2004, 418; Britnell 2003, 90), although both spinsters and weavers were

present in smaller numbers across the county (Amor 2016, 126, 135). A similar focus on a few parishes can be seen in Kent (Zell 1994, 155), western Wiltshire (Gaisford 2016, 210; Hare 1999) and parts of Gloucestershire (Perry 1945, 87). This regionality is one reason why cloth production is, perhaps surprisingly, underrepresented within both the escheators' and coroners' datasets. Objects associated with textile production (as opposed to references to textiles themselves) occur in less than 10% of the total lists examined. The coroners' records, while relating to a period of rural dominance in cloth production, suffer from similar effects of regionality. Where records relate to areas of cloth manufacture, we have clear evidence of engagement in cloth production. For example, at Cranbrook (Kent), the centre of the Wealden industry, Thomas Lupton possessed a trendle (a word which can refer to a vessel, but often relates to a spinning wheel in sixteenth-century probate inventories from the Kentish Weald; Zell 1994, 168), a pair of 'small cards', and a pair of stock-cards, suggesting engagement in the processing and spinning of wool. More explicit is the case of William Dune of Malmesbury (Wiltshire), identified as a 'clothier' in 1597.[349]

There are further reasons for the apparent absence of evidence for cloth production. While cloth production became increasingly rural in the fifteenth century, during the period to which the majority of the escheators' records relate (1380s–1420s) it was still primarily an urban enterprise (Britnell 2003, 87; Hare 1999, 5; Lee 2018, 11). Furthermore, the first two decades of the fifteenth century saw a period of suppressed cloth exports, meaning that production was both less profitable and less intensive (Hare 1999, 10; Oldland 2014, 30), although there was still extensive production for a growing domestic market (Oldland 2019, 205).

The study of English cloth production has been dominated by debates around the extent to which the industry can be characterised as proto-industrialist or capitalist, with the large clothiers such as the Springs of Lavenham (Suffolk) and William Stumpe of Malmesbury (Wiltshire) dominating the narrative (see Lee 2018, Chapter 6). A dichotomy has been drawn between mercantile capitalists, who acquired resources and utilised the putting out system to organise manufacture, and industrial capitalists, who sought directly to control elements of production (Jackson 2008, 146; Oldland 2018, 3). Regional studies demonstrate this dichotomy to be false. In Suffolk, while a small number of wealthy clothiers dominated production in financial terms, there were numerous smaller clothiers, who also worked in other parts of the cloth-making process, and sealed cloths, mixing direct control of weaving or dyeing with the putting out of activities such as spinning (Amor 2004, 417; 2016, 191–6), although the larger clothiers became increasingly important over time (Britnell 2003, 91–3). In some areas of the country, fulling mills were under the direct ownership and control of clothiers, while in others these functioned as independent enterprises (Lee 2018, 53–9; Amor 2016, 151–7). The industrial model can

[349] C229; C433.

only be applied in the area around Newbury (Berkshire), where cloth making remained a distinctively urban industry (Jackson 2008; Yates 2007, 81–98). In other areas, production was undertaken at a much smaller scale. In Lancashire and Yorkshire, for example, fifteenth-century production was not controlled by clothiers, but households acquired resources themselves, undertaking various stages of the production process using pre-prepared materials, usually as a supplement to agricultural production (Swain 1997). Although evidence for textile production is limited in all three of our datasets, they do provide insights into engagement in the textile industry at the household scale, particularly away from the main cores of production. These principally relate to three areas: the relationship between wool and flax production and spinning; the development of infrastructure for the processing of cloth and linen; and the marketing of textiles.

The production of wool

Although a detailed analysis of agricultural production falls outside the scope of this volume, it is necessary briefly to contextualise cloth production in relation to sheep husbandry. Campbell (2000, 151–65) highlights that sheep are likely to be under-recorded for the demesne sector, but nonetheless is able to demonstrate both regional and temporal variability in sheep husbandry regimes. In the period 1350–1449 it is on the chalklands of southern England – Salisbury Plain and the north and south Downs and the Cotswolds – that we see the most specialisation in sheep husbandry, with sheep accounting for around 90% of non-working demesne animals (Campbell pastoral type 4). The demesne sector in East Anglia and the east midlands was characterised by a more mixed pastoral regime with varying mixes of cattle and sheep (Campbell pastoral types 1 and 3), though the 1341 national wool tax suggests extensive sheep husbandry in the peasant sector in these regions (Campbell 2000, 163). In Norfolk, Campbell (2000, 160) detects a shift towards dominant large-scale flockmasters during the fifteenth century. The demesne sector in the north of England saw a decline in sheep husbandry due to a mix of environmental and economic factors. Sheep husbandry regimes relate to agrarian husbandry (e.g. the use of sheep for manuring) and terrain, resulting in regional variability in the types of sheep kept and therefore in the quality and weights of the wool yield (Campbell 2000, 164). The best wools came from the marcher counties and the Cotswolds, with those from the south-west and East Anglia generally being coarser and of lower value (Campbell 2000, 161; Munro 1978; Stephenson 1988).

The escheators' records have potential for detailed analysis of sheep husbandry regimes and values, but in the context of this volume we briefly present some general points. There is considerable variation in flock size. The mean sheep per list for those lists containing sheep is 42, but both the median (18) and mode (20) are considerably lower. The higher mean is due to a small

number of extremely large flocks in the dataset. The largest is that of Richard Gegge of Saham Toney, Norfolk who in 1457 had 670 sheep worth 6d each, and 130 ewes worth 4½d each.[350] Large flocks of over 100 sheep are rare, with one or two occurring in most escheatries, with the exceptions of Devon/Cornwall, Northumberland and Kent/Middlesex. Across the escheators' records, 19% of lists include sheep. The counties with the highest proportions of lists featuring sheep are Rutland (40%), Suffolk (29%), Devon (26%) and Wiltshire (22%). In contrast, low proportions of lists from Worcestershire (10%), Hampshire (11%), Kent (16%) and Norfolk (17%) contain sheep. This data suggests contrasts between the peasant and demesne sectors in some areas. In Devon, for example, sheep husbandry appears more important to the peasant than the demesne sector, while in Hampshire and Kent the demesne sector appears dominant. Caution must be taken in interpreting these data, however. In Hampshire and Wiltshire, for example, many lists are from areas outside of the chalk downlands of the Winchester estate, while in East Anglia demesne sheep husbandry varied considerably in relation to the local environment. The escheators' lists do, however, show that across England there was considerable peasant interest in wool production at a range of scales. The coroners' records present a general picture of continuity in the regions associated with sheep husbandry. Writing from the perspective of clothiers, Lee (2018, 41) proposes a clear distinction between wool production and processing– while a few clothiers had large flocks, the majority sourced raw wool for spinning from farmers or middlemen. For example, the Gloucestershire merchant John Heritage bought up wool from local suppliers of varying scale, many of whom were demesne farmers and much of which was destined for the London market (Dyer 2012b; 100–03). However, the division of labour between farming households and spinning households is not as stark as this might suggest. Writing in 1533, describing the general duties of the wife, John Fitzherbert wrote in his *Book of Husbandry* that 'if she have not wool of her own, she may take wool to spin of cloth makers…', clearly suggesting that wool producing households might engage in the spinning of wool from their own flocks (Skeat 1881, 97). The association between sheep husbandry and wool working is one area where the escheators' and coroners' records can prove informative.

Both the escheators' and coroners' records provide suggestions of wool-producing households processing at least some of their wool into yarn. Many households that owned sheep possessed quantities of wool and, in some cases, yarn, some of which was perhaps processed by the household (Tables 8.1 and 8.2), although lists may also capture the possession of raw wool which was yet to be sold. The earlier stages of wool preparation – picking, sorting, cleaning and carding – leave little material trace in either the archaeological record or the escheators' and coroners' lists, yet were time-consuming processes: over half of the total time taken to make a cloth is taken up by the conversion of wool to yarn (Oldland 2018, 7). Carding was a particularly important process as it

[350] E297.

Table 8.1: Summary of households possessing wool in the escheators' records.

List No.	Year	Name	Occupation	Place	Object	Value (d)	No. Sheep	Equipment
210	1413	William Barett	Parson	Wortham, Suffolk	wool		0	
248	1389	Simon Marys	Parson	Glendon, Northamptonshire	wool (33 fleeces)		8	
256	1390	John Croos	–	Overstone, Northamptonshire	wool (3 stone)	96	40	
284	1413	Thomas Cretynden	–	Cranbrook, Kent	wool (14lb)	40	0	Trendle
297	1457	Richard Gegge	–	Saham Toney, Norfolk	wool (100 stone)	1100	800	
310	1419	John Forster	–	Thrapston, Northamptonshire	wool (3 stone)	120	34	
312	1450	Edward Clayton	Clerk	Northamptonshire	wool (6 stone)	216	20	
315	1403	John Soutere	–	Imber, Wiltshire	wool (18lb)	45	33	
355	1418	John Sta	–	Mitton, Worcestershire	wool (2 stone)	80	3	
365	1420	Stephen Werkeman	–	Castlemorton, Worcestershire	wool (6 stone)	15	0	
484	1418	John Reynold	Yeoman	South Lynn, Norfolk	wool (10 stone)	160	0	
552	1420	John Cope	Husbandman	Urchfont, Wiltshire	wool	96	0	
547	1420	Robert Camell	Parson	Tidpit, Wiltshire	wool (20 stone)		15	
555	1420	Richard Godynche	Husbandman	Liddington, Wiltshire	wool (20lb)	48	20	

(*Continued*)

Table 8.1: Continued.

List No.	Year	Name	Occupation	Place	Object	Value (d)	No. Sheep	Equipment
562	1422	Thomas Dale	Vicar	Westow, Yorkshire	wool (11 stone)	272	0	
632	1420	Thomas Chipet	–	Hampshire or Wiltshire	wool (3lb)	216	0	
636	1420	John Helyot	–	Wiltshire	woollen thread (11 skeins)	4	0	
					wool (6 lb)	6		
642	1382	Richard Vttokestre	Parson	Lyminge, Kent	wool (in a chest)		0	
657	1382	William Ponchon	–	Dartford, Kent	wool (white) (2lb, in a chest)		0	
677	1382	Robert Senyng	–	Linton, Kent	wool (2 quarter)	12	12	
712	1419	William Mavndevile	–	Colnbrook, Middlesex	wool (1 stone)		30	
747	1382	William Neweton	–	Oakham, Rutland	woollen thread (10lb)	24	0	Spinning wheel
768	1384	Thomas Isenden	–	Sutton Valence, Kent	wool (1/2 sack)	360	0	
1099	1456	John Burgh	–	Yealmpton, Devon	wool (1 quarter)		0	
1142	1442	Walter Fitz Rery	–	Nettlecombe?, Hampshire	wool (1 sack)	1120	0	
1146	1442	John Wyndesore	Clerk	Welford, Northamptonshire	wool (10lb)	20	0	
1227	1396	Robert Prior	–	Mendlesham, Suffolk	wool	48	9	

(*Continued*)

Table 8.1: Continued.

List No.	Year	Name	Occupation	Place	Object	Value (d)	No. Sheep	Equipment
1270	1409	John Gore	–	Hampshire or Wiltshire	wool (8lb)	28	7	
1373	1399	Richard Godestre	–	Middlesex	woollen yarn	36	0	
1386	1399	John Cook	–	Flixton, Yorkshire	wool		0	
1431	1401	William Earde	–	Kent	wool and woollen yarn (20 quarters)	160	100	
1490	1430	Roge Cokeman	Weaver	Warminster, Wiltshire	wool, blue (1 tod)	120	0	Loom
					wool, white (20 lbs)	80		
					woollen thread (8 lbs)	40		
1525	1433	William Uynton	Husbandman	Welford, Northamptonshire	wool (20 stone)	880	200	
1539	1434	Richard Shirburn	Parson	Northfield, Worcestershire	tithe wool		0	
1573	1404	John Brode	–	Hampshire or Wiltshire	coarse wool (6 lbs)	18	14	
1577	1404	Walter Donne	–	Hampshire or Wiltshire	wool (20 lbs)	80	0	Loom
1582	1404	John Lynch	–	Hampshire or Wiltshire	sheepskins (with wool)	6	3	
1590	1404	John Clerk	–	Hampshire	coarse wool (3 cloves)	30	40	
1609	1425	Richard Walsh	–	Frankley, Worcestershire	wool, a 'toll?'	80	0	

Table 8.2: Summary of households possessing wool in the coroners' records.

List No.	Date	Name	Occupation	Place	Item	Value (d)	No. Sheep
191	1567	John Julyan	Miller	Empingham, Rutland	wool	20	15
269	1579	Thomas Trotter	Labourer	Dent, Yorkshire	wool (3 stone)	240	35
357	1590	John Cosen	–	Ashburton, Devon	37 fleeces	504	57
382	1577	John James	Clergyman	West Dean/Newton Tony, Wiltshire	wool (quantity unclear)	6552	223
					2 baskets of wool [locks]	160	
428	1597	Nicholas Cussyn	–	Calcott, Kent	wool (1lb)	6	6
433	1597	William Dune	Clothier	Malmesbury, Wiltshire	wool (3 tods and 20 lbs)	840	0
447	1595	Henry Cooper	–	Cowlinge, Suffolk	wool (12 lb)		0
458	1598	John Feyrechilde	–	Loxgore, Devon	120 fleeces	1440	171
467	1600	Elisha Gregory	Husbandman	Brixton, Devon	wool (6 lbs)	80	15

allowed the combining of wools, but was a process typically undertaken within the household setting (Lee 2018, 46), often for piece rates and in many cases by women and children (Muldrew 2012, 502; Whittle and Hailwood 2020). The only evidence for carding wool in the escheators' dataset appears in the list of William Cole of Edgecote (Northamptonshire), who in 1390 had 40 sheep as well as a spinning wheel and a pair of cards. These suggest his household was engaged in spinning, although flax yarn was also present so the household may have spun both wool and flax yarn from the produce of its farm.[351] A similar example from the coroners' record is that of John Cosen of Ashburton (Devon). In 1590 his household had 57 sheep (£7 8s), as well as 37 fleeces (42s), a spinning wheel ('turn') and pair of cards (valued together at 13d).[352] Others, such as John Gunnyld of Tixover (Rutland) possessed 60 sheep (worth 12d each) and a spinning wheel (12d) in 1382, but his list does not provide any evidence of the processing of wool prior to spinning.[353] A final example is William Earde of Kent, who possessed 20 quarters of wool and woollen yarn (13s 4d), as well as 100 sheep (116s 8d) in 1401, implying that the yarn was spun from his wool.[354] These households all lived in areas away from the major centres of cloth production, but provide evidence, or a suggestion, of participation in spinning, rather than exclusively providing raw wool to the market. One exception might be the shepherd Richard Webbe of West Lavington (Wiltshire), at the fringe of the west Wiltshire area of production. In 1565 he possessed nine sheep (18s) and also had a spinning wheel ('turn', valued with a cask at 8d). He also had a 'little trendle' (4d), which may be a vessel or a spinning wheel. These objects suggest that his household was processing either the wool of his own flock or that of his employer, or was providing labour to Wiltshire clothiers.[355] At an altogether different scale, the wealthy clergyman John James of West Dean, Wiltshire, had a large flock of over 200 sheep, wool, a woolhouse and shears, suggesting a large-scale wool processing operation.[356] These examples, typically from areas associated with sheep husbandry and wool, but not cloth production, suggest that sheep farming households of all scales processed at least some of their wool into yarn.

The processing of hemp and flax

The escheators' and coroners' lists provide tantalising evidence for the cultivation and processing of hemp and flax fibres, for the production of linen, hessian and rope. Archaeological evidence for the retting of hemp and flax has also

[351] E257.
[352] C357.
[353] E742.
[354] E1431.
[355] C158.
[356] E382.

been identified at sites within our dataset. The most compelling evidence is the list of William Bacheler of Mereworth (Kent).[357] At the time of his suicide in 1541 he had a little bag of yarn, a pair of stock cards, a hemp break (for separating hemp stalks) and a linen wheel to produce yarn. Other cases, also from the Kent coroners' records, are Robert Crowne of North Elmham (Kent), who had linen yarn (3s 4d) and two trendles, and Reynold Carter, a chandler of Chiddingstone (Kent), who had hemp, linen yarn (20d) and two spinning wheels.[358] Within the escheators' records [?] Bassyngham (forename unknown) and Robert Haynes both possessed quantities of linen yarn; Bassyngham appears to have held eight 'bolls' which would translate to quite a substantial quantity.[359] Other households appear to have processed both wool and flax. In addition to the items mentioned previously, William Cole of Edgecote had flax yarn which may have been produced by his household.[360] Others were clearly cultivating these crops. Anthony Wright of West Winch (Norfolk), had a field of hemp and Thomas Stondy, a chaplain of Worcestershire, had six yards of hemp.[361] It is in the coroners' records where we see the strongest evidence. In 1544 Thomas Hylles of Shoreham (Kent), had 3lb of tow yarn (flax), Thomas Ramsden, a shoemaker of Oundle, Northamptonshire, had three stones of hemp (8s) in 1545, and Anne Turbutt, a spinster of Kinsham (Worcestershire), had 0.5lb of flax when she committed suicide in 1578.[362] In the escheators' records, John Child of Kent or Middlesex had a chest of hemp (valued with two tubs at 12d in 1404), John Moigne of Warmington (Northamptonshire) also held four sacks of hemp (4s), and the list of John [?]ham (surname partly illegible) of Kildale (Yorkshire) includes a reference to harvested flax.[363]

Campbell (2000, 213) argues that flax and hemp were largely peasant crops, as they do not form a substantial part of the output of demesne farms, although they were cultivated on monastic estates in the fourteenth century (Thirsk 1998, 6). Flax and hemp (along with apples) are the most commonly mentioned garden crops in tithe records due to their value (Dyer 1994, 119). In East Anglia the crops were typically grown in small enclosures of an acre or less, often by households engaged in dairying (Evans 1985, 16–19). As such, we know comparatively little about the cultivation of these crops in medieval England, as the majority of records relate to the seigniorial sector. The escheators' and coroners' records therefore provide a unique insight into the cultivation of these crops. Hemp is often written off as a weed and a crop associated with marginal agricultural areas; however, to thrive and produce high quality

[357] C446.
[358] C194; C208.
[359] Assuming a 'boll' of six bushels. E314; E908.
[360] E257.
[361] C15 (1540); E1365 (1399; the term is '*virg*', which could mean 'virgates', though this seems less likely).
[362] C45; C76; C267.
[363] E9; E45; E887.

fibres, prime, well-irrigated land is required (Clarke 2010a, 121). Furthermore, hemp is resource intensive, draining land of nutrients, although the process of field retting (leaving harvested crops to break down on the ground) can return some of this to the land (Clarke 2010a, 121). It is noticeable that the cultivation of hemp and flax is more apparent in the coroners' than escheators' records, perhaps corresponding with a decree of 1533 by Henry VIII, and further mandated by Elizabeth I, to increase hemp by setting a quota of ¼ acre of hemp per 60 acres of arable land production to supply the navy with sails and ropes (Gibson 2006, 59–60), as well as clothing and nets. Pollen evidence provides particularly strong evidence for the increasing cultivation of hemp through our period, as well as for its processing, particularly in East Anglia (Bradshaw *et al.* 1981; Peglar *et al.* 1989; Peglar 1993; Cheng *et al.* 2007). This is located particularly around the Waveney valley and the fenlands, both areas associated with hemp cultivation and processing (Thirsk 1965, 48). Further pollen evidence shows the increasing cultivation and processing of hemp from the eleventh century in Yorkshire in both urban and rural contexts (Gearey *et al.* 2005, 318). Additional evidence for urban flax and hemp cultivation comes from ditches at Moorfields, London, where hemp and flax seeds likely represent cultivation at the edge of the city (Cubitt *et al.* 2019, 257). In Kent, pollen evidence for hemp retting has been recovered near Dungeness on Denge Marsh, to the south of the settlement at Lydd, and is assumed to have been related to the production of sails and ropes (Schofield and Waller 2005). Additional evidence is provided by toponymic evidence. In Cumbria and Lancashire, a number of field names from the sixteenth century, such as Hemskin Howe, Hempgarth Plantation and Lyndelands point to the cultivation of hemp or the processing of flax in linen production. Elsewhere in the north-west, flax pools are preserved as earthworks at Grindleton (Lancashire) on the River Ribble, and at Newton-in-Bowland (Lancashire), the latter taking the form of a complex network of ditches (Cox *et al.* 2000, 147; Higham 1989). Documentary evidence as well as the presence of pollen in local pollen cores has been used to interpret ponds at Little Langdale (Cumbria) as retting ponds (Evans 2017), while at Rathmell (Yorkshire), documentary, earthwork and toponymic data comes together to demonstrate the exploitation of water meadows on land belonging to the abbey of St Mary in Craven (Higham 1989, 49–50).

These different strands of evidence demonstrate how natural or artificial bodies of water could be utilised for water retting, and that in the case of artificial retting ponds, substantial investment could be made in the erection and maintenance of this infrastructure. The absence of such infrastructure need not, however, indicate a lack of hemp or flax cultivation and processing. Field or dew retting, where stalks are left on the surface of fields to decompose, would leave no archaeological trace, and was traditionally used across England in more recent periods (Clarke 2010a, 132). Smaller-scale retting has been identified through archaeological excavation. At The Spinney, Sherburn-in-Elmet

(Yorkshire) a large pit, probably dating to the fourteenth century, contained de-seeded flax stems (Antoni 2004). Elsewhere in Yorkshire, at Bridge Lane House, Bawtry, a series of ponds were excavated. These were established prior to our study period but were re-cut in the fourteenth–sixteenth centuries, and small numbers of hemp seeds were recovered, leading to the interpretation of these features as retting ponds (Tuck 2018). A complex of intercutting, waterlogged pits to the south of Corpusty (Norfolk) close to the River Bure are interpreted as possible retting or tanning pits (although there is no archaeobotanical evidence for retting taking place) (Bates 2004). Elsewhere in Norfolk, similar waterlogged pits were excavated on the line of the Bacton-Yarmouth pipeline at Bastwich and these may relate to retting or the preparation of bark for dyeing (Bates 2004, 266). Finally, at South Wootton a stone-lined pit may have been for retting or tanning (Norfolk HER 19758).

Other stages of flax and hemp processing leave no archaeological trace. The drying of stems could be undertaken around domestic hearths or make use of ovens or grain driers, when the climate was not suitable for leaving stalks to dry in the fields (Clarke 2010a, 128). There is limited archaeological evidence for scutching and heckling, the process of extracting and separating the fibres. Within our sample, heckling comb fragments come from Wharram Percy (Yorkshire), Berwick-upon-Tweed (Northumberland), Aylsham (Norfolk) and Cricklade (Wiltshire).

This brief survey demonstrates the importance of an interdisciplinary approach to understanding the cultivation of processing of hemp and flax. While there are clear concentrations of evidence for retting in East Anglia, Yorkshire and the north-west, there is slight evidence for these processes in Kent, Wiltshire, Northumberland, Worcestershire and Northamptonshire within our datasets. The south-west was not excluded, with Bridport (Dorset) being a major centre of rope production from the middle ages (Gibson 2006, 58–9; Williams 2006). Within the escheators' sample there are two ropers. Both clearly practised agriculture alongside their craft. John Roper of Evenley (Northamptonshire) had five bullocks (26s), four cows (24s) and two calves (16d), in addition to 'instruments of his art of ropery': a bolt, three iron hooks, and '11 hoops for sieves'. James Bouelond of Hope (Kent), described as a roper, had two cows (13s 4d), three mares (15s), 13 foals (40s), 40 sheep (40s) and sown crops of wheat, beans and peas (20s).[364] No craft equipment appears in Bouelond's list, and neither list gives a full overview of the household's domestic goods. As with the production of woollen cloth, we can suggest that while there were concentrations of linen and hemp production, the cultivation and processing of these crops was widespread in our period, and probably increased through it, being practised by households alongside other activities.

[364] E616; E722.

Spinning

Spinning must have been undertaken at a massive scale in our period. It has been estimated that in the sixteenth century, around eight spinners and carders were required to produce wool for every weaver (Muldrew 2016, 80), a figure which does not take into account the spinning of other fibres. Zell (1994, 166) estimated that it would have taken 3,000 full-time spinners, working 300 days a year, to produce the yarn required for Kent's cloth output in the 1560s. It is commonly understood that spinning was organised at the domestic scale, largely by women, to generate supplementary household income. Quantitative support for the association between women and spinning at the end of our period is provided by Whittle and Hailwood's (2020) analysis of court records, where 95% of references to spinning relate to women. Eleanor Standley's (2015) analysis of medieval spinning synthesises pictorial and literary evidence associating women and this task. Further evidence for the association between women and spinning is provided by the evocation of the Marian cult, in the form of Ave Maria inscriptions, on some lead spindle-whorls (Standley 2015, 283). Together this evidence suggests that although not an exclusively female activity, spinning had close associations with elements of female identity including sociality and devotion.

The link between women and spinning is often used to substantiate the idea that female labour was supplementary to the main economic activities of the household (e.g. Bennett 1997; Standley 2015). However, a close association of women and spinning must inevitably force us to consider the importance of women to the productive economy of medieval England, given the importance of cloth to England's fortunes. Indeed, Oldland (2016, 249) stresses the need to think about the textile industry as a household industry, in which men, women and children participated for wages. While the association between women and spinning would suggest that spinning and carding took place at the domestic level, to write this off as mere 'by-work' is to undermine the importance of this labour to commercial development (see Jervis 2022a). The capital investment for engaging in spinning was slight, but the 'value added' by spinning might be quite low. The list of the Wiltshire weaver Roger Cokeman, dated 1430, is instructive in this regard.[365] He had 20lbs of white wool valued at 6s 8d (4d per lb) and 8lbs of woollen thread valued at 3s 4d (5d per lb). He also had a tod (28lb) of blue (dyed) wool valued at 10s (4.3d per lb). Similarly, in 1420 John Helyot of Wiltshire had 11 skeins (probably equal to 7oz) of woollen thread valued at 4d (1.2d per lb) and 6lb of wool valued at 6d (1d per lb).[366] Both examples show that for the labour expended in spinning the return was low, and it is perhaps this which ultimately is the reason for the marginal nature of spinning in medieval society. This is supported by the piecework rates paid

[365] E1490.
[366] E636.

for spinning, which Oldland (2016, 243) estimates at 2d per day in the 1540s. Even so, Muldrew (2012, 504–11; 2016, 87) highlights the substantial earnings that households could make from engaging in spinning as piecework, and the resulting contribution that these labouring households might have made to economic development.

The quantities of wool listed in the escheators' and coroners' records allow us to differentiate between those who were probably dealing in wool and those who had smaller quantities and were perhaps engaging in spinning (Tables 8.1 and 8.2). Those with larger quantities of wool typically had flocks of sheep. John Croos of Overstone (Northamptonshire), for example, had three stone of wool, worth 96d, and a flock of 40 sheep and Richard Gegge of Soham Toney had 100 stones of wool and a flock of 800 sheep, the largest in the escheators' sample.[367] Examples of those who perhaps bought up stocks of wool might be the Norfolk yeoman John Reynold, who had 10 stones of wool, but no sheep; Thomas Isenden of Sutton Valence (Kent), who possessed a range of finished textiles (see below), plus half a sack of wool worth 30s; and Walter Fitz Rery of Nettlecombe (Isle of Wight), who had a sack of wool as well as four dozen medley cloths and four pieces of kersey, suggesting that he was dealing in textiles.[368] Some lists are more ambiguous. In 1420 Stephen Werkeman of Castlemorton (Worcestershire) had 6 stones of wool, but otherwise his possessions were limited to a brass pot, hay and bedding.[369] Putting out was rare in Worcestershire (Lee 2018, 143) and this more substantial quantity of wool may have been acquired through the market for processing into yarn by Werkeman and his household. A similar case, also from Worcestershire, may be the husbandman Richard Walsh of Frankley.[370] In contrast, the 11 skeins of woollen thread (4d) and 6lb (6d) of wool belonging to John Helyot in 1420 suggest that his household was engaged in spinning.[371]

Given the scale of cloth production, the evidence within our dataset is scarce. Judging by the valued examples in our datasets, spinning wheels, which became more widely used with the shift from worsted to woollen cloth in the fifteenth century (Oldland 2016, 231), were relatively cheap and affordable pieces of household equipment (Table 8.3). This could account for their general absence from the escheators' and coroners' lists; if they were cheap and commonplace, they are less likely to have been individually appraised. The valuations given in the lists are corroborated by references to spinning wheels in late medieval wills, for example stated values in fifteenth-century Nottingham wills vary from 2d to 12d (including a pair of cards) (Stevenson 1882, 23). In 1382 William Neweton of Oakham (Rutland) had a spinning wheel (12d) and 10lb of

[367] E256; E297.
[368] E484; E768; E1142.
[369] E365.
[370] E1609.
[371] E636.

Table 8.3: Occurrence of spinning wheels in the escheators' and coroners' records. 'Trendles' are included where it is possible that they refer to spinning wheels.

Escheators'					
List No.	**Year**	**Name**	**Place**	**Object**	**Value (d)**
257	1390	William Cole	Edgecote, Northamptonshire	Spinning wheel	
284	1413	Thomas Cretynden	Cranbrook, Kent	Trendle (possibly a vessel)	6
585	1417	William Clerk	Elvington, Yorkshire	Spinning(?) wheel (rota)	
742	1382	John Gunnlyd	Tixover, Rutland	Spinning wheel	12
747	1382	William Neweton	Oakham, Rutland	Spinning wheel	12
1432	1401	John Nichol	Malmesbury, Wiltshire	Spinning wheels (2)	6
Coroners'					
158	1565	Richard Webbe	West Lavingston, Wiltshire	Turn Trendle (possibly a vessel)	4
194	1567	Robert Crowne	North Elham, Kent	Trendle (2; possibly vessels)	
208	1570	Reynold Carter	Chiddingstone, Kent	Spinning wheels (2)	
229	1577	Thomas Lupton	Cranbrook, Kent	Trendle (probably a spinning wheel)	
274	1580	William Harvye	Hartlip, Kent	Spinning wheel	
428	1597	Nicholas Cussyn	Calcott, Kent	'Woollen wheel'	12
446	1541	William Bachelor	Mereworth, Kent	Linen wheel	

woollen thread (2s), presumably spun on it.[372] The suggestion that spinning was by-work for these households is supported by the other items listed; for example William Clerk of Elvington (Yorkshire) was a fairly wealthy arable agriculturalist who also possessed a spinning wheel.[373] In 1413 Thomas Cretynden of Cranbrook (Kent) had a trendle (16d) and two cloves (14lb) of wool.[374] Given that this list relates to a household in the Kent Weald, it is conceivable that this refers to a spinning wheel; however, the possibility must remain that this is a vessel. Muldrew (2012, 505) suggests that a spinner could have carded and spun this amount in a week if working full time. However, Cretynden was a small-scale agriculturalist whose household also undertook spinning most likely on a part-time basis, a mode of employment which would become common in the Kent Weald in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries (Zell 1994, 174). The majority of lists which suggest engagement in spinning are situated away from major cloth producing centres; an exception is John Nichol of Malmesbury (Wiltshire), who possessed two spinning wheels (6d) and was presumably undertaking spinning in support of the emerging industry – the absence of wool from this list perhaps implying that materials were 'put out', any wool and yarn being the possession of the commissioning clothier, but the spinning wheels being Nichol's own.[375] Other households that possessed spinning wheels, such as those of Robert Crowne of North Elham (Kent) and Reynold Carter of Chiddingstone were likely spinning flax rather than wool.[376]

Evidence for spinning is also provided archaeologically in the form of spindle-whorls used in drop spinning. Spindle-whorls are surprisingly scarce within our archaeological dataset. Most examples are from Northumberland; 12 from West Whelpington (11 stone and one lead example), two lead examples from Lucker Hall and one in stone from Rowhope Burn. As demonstrated in Table 8.4, the majority are from sites in Yorkshire, with examples also coming from Suffolk, Worcestershire and Devon. In most cases the spindle-whorls have been recovered from deposits within houses, suggesting that they were lost and trodden into the floor, or were discarded when the building was abandoned. A large number of lead alloy spindle-whorls have been recovered by metal detectorists and reported to the Portable Antiquities Scheme. These whorls have been examined in relation to their gendered and religious symbolism by Eleanor Standley (2015); however, their potential for understanding the organisation of spinning has not been explored. The distribution of these whorls mirrors that of those within our excavated sample, with the distribution being biased towards the north-east, particularly north Lincolnshire and eastern Yorkshire (Figure 8.1). It is particularly striking that numbers are scarce in the major cloth-producing areas in south-west and south-east England, although there

[372] E747.
[373] E585.
[374] E284.
[375] E1432.
[376] C194; C208.

Table 8.4: Occurrence of spindle-whorls in the archaeological dataset.

County	Site	Ceramic	Lead alloy	Chalk	Dolerite	Limestone	Mudstone	Sandstone	Unid. Stone	Not Stated
Devon	Beere, North Tawton								1	
	Pigs Paradise, Lundy	2								
Kent	Stubb's Cross, Ashford		1							
Northumberland	Rowhope Burn								1	
	Lucker Hall		2							
	West Whelpington		1		4	1	3	2	1	
Suffolk	Castle Street, Eye									1
	Cedars Park, Stowmarket		1			2				
Yorkshire	Low Fisher Gate, Doncaster	2	1							
	Old London Road, Towton								1	
	Wharram Percy			3						
Worcestershire	Upton, Blockley					3		1	1	
Total		**4**	**6**	**3**	**4**	**6**	**3**	**3**	**5**	**1**

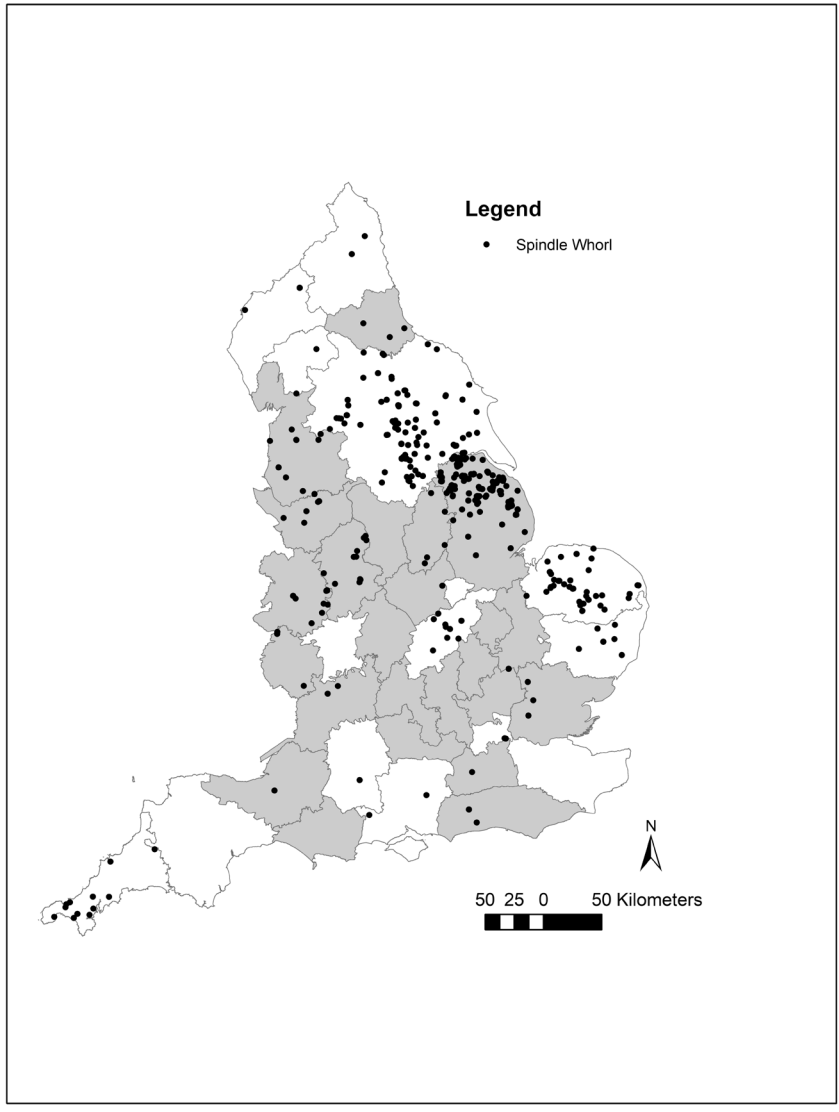

Figure 8.1: Distribution of spindle-whorls in the PAS dataset.

are a number from East Anglia, where they could conceivably be related to linen production, given the use of drop spinning in the linen industry (Clarke 2010b, 233; Evans 1985).

It is noticeable that the spindle-whorls in the PAS dataset cluster in areas such as Yorkshire and Lancashire, where cloth production was generally a small-scale enterprise. Lee (2018, 132) argues that 'the typical figure in the West Riding industry … was the small independent clothier', and that households

typically practised a mixed household economy of farming and cloth production. Similarly, in Lancashire producers were generally poor, and the industry was characterised by small-scale spinners and weavers (Swain 1997; Lee 2018, 138–40). We can contrast this with production in areas such as the Stour Valley, the West Country and Kent, where production was more intensive and organised more strongly around dominant clothiers who exercised control over the various parts of the production process. An anomaly in this regard might be Norfolk where even into the early modern period, the yarns for the finest worsteds had to be hand-spun (Muldrew 2012, 504).

We suggest therefore that the distribution of spindle-whorls relates both to the organisation of spinning in different areas of the country and, potentially, the types of wool and cloth produced in these areas. In areas of intensive production, where putting out was the dominant means of organisation, spinning wheels would appear to have dominated, allowing the rapid production of large quantities of yarn. It is in these areas (Kent, Wiltshire) that we have references in the escheators' and coroners' records to spinning wheels, although it should be noted that lists in these areas are typically more detailed than in other counties. In areas where cloth production was less intensive, and where households engaged in small-scale production, hand spinning appears to have persisted for longer, presumably alongside the use of the wheel and perhaps indicating more solidly that spinning was considered a part-time and supplementary contribution to household economy. Furthermore, drop spinning seemingly persisted in areas where households were engaged most intensively in sheep husbandry and were converting some or all of their wool stock into yarn, and in those areas where flax and hemp were most important to the regional economy. We would therefore argue that the model of spinning being a supplementary form of income holds only for certain areas of the country, and is likely to be untenable for areas of intensive cloth production, where it was to the benefit of households to maximise income through the rapid and efficient production of yarn.

Investing in textile production: dyeing and weaving

Archaeological evidence provides clear insights into household investment in textile production. This is best demonstrated at The Swan Hotel, Lavenham, where the rear range of High Street plots were modified in the fifteenth century in association with the development of 10 dyeing furnaces over at least two phases of industrial activity (Brooks 2014a; Figure 8.2). A common theme in productive processes, be it dyeing, tanning or retting, is the need to give over large spaces to the activity concerned. Therefore, this evidence represents investment in urban property development. The dating of the earliest furnaces is unclear, and they could potentially be as early as the fourteenth century, predating Lavenham's boom period and perhaps representing speculative investment in cloth manufacture. Similar evidence for dyeing, associated with a building interpreted as a wealthy burgess household, was found at Callow Lane,

Figure 8.2: Dyeing furnaces at The Swan Hotel, Lavenham, Suffolk. Image reproduced by kind permission of Cotswold Archaeology.

Kidderminster (Worcestershire; Hemingway 1990). At Drury Lane, Wakefield (Yorkshire) barrel lined pits are interpreted as evidence of dyeing or, perhaps fulling (Krawiek and Edgeworth 2006). More tentative evidence is provided by seeds of dyer's rocket, used to produce yellow dye, from a gulley at Castle Street, Evesham (Worcestershire), interpreted as a part of an industrial complex (Whitworth, Jones and Pearson 2001). The archaeological evidence therefore provides clear indications of the investment in infrastructure for dyeing and, perhaps, fulling within small towns, either by clothiers or independent dyers, with this infrastructure showing similarities with the larger dyehouses excavated in major towns such as Norwich and Beverley (Atkin and Evans 2002, 119–21; Evans 2006).

Evidence from the escheators' lists provides one example of the probable establishment of a cloth working workshop by an independent household in the early fifteenth century. Dating to 1430, the list of Roger Cokeman of Warminster (Wiltshire), described as a weaver, is suggestive of a household involved in all stages of the cloth making process.[377] As noted already, he possessed wool and woollen thread valued at 20s, suggesting the processing of wool. A quarter of a pipe of oil, worth the significant sum of 20s, may also have been associated with wool processing. His tod of blue wool, as well as a bale of woad, a woad-vat, and 20lb of alum (used in the fixing of dyes), indicate that the dyeing of unprocessed wool was taking place. This method was employed by clothiers in the Weald of Kent, who dyed wool prior to spinning, and this may be one possible interpretation for the organisation of Cokeman's workshop. This

[377] E1490.

shows considerable investment: the woad was valued at 13s 4d, the woad-vat at 6s 8d, and the alum at 20d. He also had a loom (10s). If this was a wide loom, we might assume that he employed a servant or apprentice to assist him given the need for two people to work such a loom (Lee 2018, 50). Cokeman's list demonstrates the substantial investment which had to be made in materials and tools to set up as an independent cloth producer. It is probable that spinning was put out, meaning that further investment had to be made in piece rates. Even so, Cokeman appears to have been comparatively wealthy: he had six silver spoons, six pewter plates, and a valuable (5s) basin and ewer, and seems to have operated full time as a textile producer, his only other economic goods being three piglets.

Looms are not frequent occurrences among the goods seized by the escheator and coroner, perhaps because weavers either rented looms or practised their trade in the workshop of a clothier (Lee 2018, 52). Indeed, the fifteenth century saw the decline of independent weavers as they increasingly became linked to clothiers (Oldland 2018, 9). Like the evidence for spinning, occasional references remind us that textile production was widespread and took place outside of the core zones of cloth production. In 1451 William Horne, identified as a weaver of Faversham (Kent; where 24 cloths were sealed in 1476–77; Lee 2018, 286), had two pairs of looms, valued at 20s.[378] If these looms were wide looms and in operation at the same time, this would suggest the engagement of eight people in weaving. The list of William Ponchon of Dartford (Kent), dated to 1382 and relating to his involvement in the 1381 Rising, contains two tuns of bark for dyeing (36d) and 2lb of white wool, as well as 'shearman's shears' (*forpicula pro scherman*).[379] These items are suggestive of involvement in dyeing and shearing, although there is no evidence to suggest engagement in weaving or other elements of the textile manufacturing process. Cloth had been produced in Dartford since at least the 1220s, and 17 cloths were sealed there in 1476–7, with a fulling mill being established in the late fifteenth century (Lee 2018, 286). This evidence demonstrates how although major cloth producing regions dominated the market, lower intensity cloth production took place in other centres, and was the subject of sometimes substantial investment by households. A final weaver within the escheators' sample is outlaw Walter Donne, of an unidentified Hampshire or Wiltshire location, whose possessions are limited to a loom (40d) and 20lbs of wool (6s 8d).[380] The coroners' records include an individual identified as a clothier, William Dune of Malmesbury; however, the only listed possessions relating to his occupation are three tods and 20 lbs of wool (104 lbs altogether).[381]

[378] E483.
[379] E657.
[380] E1577.
[381] C433.

Other stages of the finishing process are not well represented in either dataset. Fulling mills were typically in the hands of landowners (Lee 2018, 53–61) or capitalist clothiers who were able to exploit the commercial benefits of controlling the finishing of cloth (Gaisford 2016, 203). While some wooden vats may have been used in various stages of the processing of cloth, none are stated as having been for this specific purpose. The 1382 list of John Tonkyn of Kent mentions '10 staves of fuller's teasels' (*x baculi teseles pro fullatore*), valued at 5s.[382] This entry likely relates to the teasel *Dipsacis Sacitus*, used for raising the nap of the cloth. The high value of Tonkyn's teasels suggests a crop; in the early modern period teasels were cultivated in Essex and the west country, often in rotation with medicinal herbs (Ryder 1969, 118). Teasels were grown at Spitalfields on the periphery of the city of London in the sixteenth century, and these have been recovered from ditches at nearby Moorfields, an area within the city limits associated with cloth processing (Cubitt *et al*. 2019, 257).

Taken together, the evidence from archaeological excavation and the escheators' and coroners' records provides a balance to studies of cloth production which are focussed on large-scale producers, who are best served by wills and probate inventories. As Amor (2004; 2016) demonstrates for Suffolk, although these producers dominated in financial terms, small quantities of cloth could be sealed by a wide range of producers, and it is these smaller operators who are potentially brought into focus by these records.

Textile finishing and working, and the sale of cloth

Archaeological evidence provides an insight into an activity entirely missing from the escheators' and coroners' records, sewing (Table 8.5). Pins and needles, typically of copper alloy, are common archaeological finds, with a total of 774 being recovered from 43 sites. Although it can be difficult to differentiate between pins used for sewing and those used as clothing fasteners (see Chapter 6), large collections, seemingly not associated with pin manufacture, may provide evidence of tailoring. The best evidence for cloth working comes from the excavations Market Street, Alton (Hampshire). Here a collection of 138 pins was recovered from the features associated with 50–2 High Street. This site was adjacent to a plot which a rental of 1398 suggests was a drapers' shop, the plot itself being a mercers' shop in the sixteenth century (Millet 1983, 82). Here both the archaeological and historical evidence attests to a strong association with the marketing of cloth at what was a centrally located tenement within the town. A possible parallel can be found in the archaeological finds from excavations at Spital Street, Dartford (Kent). Here the metalwork assemblage includes an unusually high number of items associated with dress; 13 pins, eight lace tags and an eyelet of possible sixteenth-century date (TVAS

[382] E683.

Table 8.5: Summary of evidence for textile working in the archaeological dataset.

Site	Bone			Copper alloy			Iron		Stone	Textile
	Bobbin	Bodkin	Needle	Bodkin	Needle	Thimble	Needle	Scissors	Linen Smoother	Linen within thimble
Pilton, Devon									1	
10 Market Street, Alton, Hampshire						2				
Site 5, Bishops Waltham, Hampshire	1									
Greyhound Hotel, Fordingbridge, Hampshire						1				
Oyster Street, Portsmouth, Hampshire						1	1			
Wherwell Priory, Hampshire					1					
Creedy's Yard, Greenwich, Kent					1					
51–53 City Road, Islington, Middlesex						1				
50 Finsbury Square, Islington, Middlesex						1				
County Sports, Staines, Middlesex					1					

(*Continued*)

Table 8.5: Continued.

Site	Bone			Copper alloy			Iron		Stone	Textile
	Bobbin	Bodkin	Needle	Bodkin	Needle	Thimble	Needle	Scissors	Linen Smoother	Linen within thimble
St Michael's Hospital, Aylsham, Norfolk						2				
Blakeney Freshes, Blakeney, Norfolk					1					
Dereham, Norfolk						1				2
High Street, Dereham, Norfolk						1				
Church Close, Shipdam, Norfolk						2				
White Hart Street, Thetford, Norfolk			1							
Tweedale Press, Walkergate, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Northumberland			1		1					
Berwick-upon-Tweed, Northumberland					1					
West Whelpington, Northumberland						1				

(*Continued*)

Table 8.5: Continued.

Site	Bone			Copper alloy			Iron		Stone	Textile
	Bobbin	Bodkin	Needle	Bodkin	Needle	Thimble	Needle	Scissors	Linen Smoother	Linen within thimble
Lydiard Park, Swindon, Wiltshire								1		
Goldicote, Worcestershire				1						
Upton, Worcestershire							1			
Askews Printshop, Church Walk, Doncaster, Yorkshire						1				
Low Fisher Gate, Doncaster, Yorkshire							1			
East Road, Northallerton, Yorkshire					1					
Sherburn, Yorkshire					1					
Wharram Percy, Yorkshire					1	2	1			
Yarm School, Yarm, Yorkshire					1					
Total	**1**	**1**	**3**	**1**	**10**	**16**	**4**	**1**	**1**	**2**

2014). The zooarchaeological evidence from the site provides evidence of the processing of feathers due to the unusual quantity of butchered corvid remains, probably for decorative purposes (Holmes 2014). Many of these items occur in later contexts and are interpreted as residual but provide an unusual concentration of items which may indicate the manufacture of clothing on site. Evidence of domestic needlework can be found in an assemblage from the former Greyhound Hotel, Fordingbridge (Hampshire). A group of objects from a burnt layer is interpreted as a sewing kit: it included 60 pins, a thimble, several (probably four) sewing rings as well as some possible points (Harding and Light 2003, 166). Similar domestic sewing kits have been recovered from excavations in Norwich and Colchester (Crummy 1988; Margeson 1993).

The archaeological evidence also provides some hints at sewing within rural households. At Wharram Percy, a large collection of pins was excavated from a sixteenth-century demolition layer (Harding, Marlow-Mann and Wrathmell 2010). A similar group was recovered from Denge West Quarry, Lydd (Kent). This comprised 48 pins of various sizes, eight lace ends and three clothes fastenings from a sixteenth-century deposit which is probably associated with a building, possibly suggestive of domestic tailoring at this rural site (see Barber and Priestly-Bell 2008, 189); this is certainly an unusual concentration of such objects from a rural farmstead. Needles are scarcer finds than pins. They are present in a range of materials: copper alloy, iron and bone. Other items associated with sewing are thimbles, recovered from Wharram Percy, as well as from West Whelpington and several sites in Norfolk (Table 8.5). A stone linen smoother from Pilton (Devon; Miles and Miles 1975), can also be taken as evidence for the working of cloth in a rural home. Among the coroners' records, evidence for working with wool is represented by the knitting needle belonging to the Suffolk widow Jane Vause, perhaps indicative of the increasing association between women and knitting in the sixteenth century (Whittle and Hailwood 2020, 19).[383]

Shears were used for cutting cloth. A total of 15 sets of shears appear in the archaeological dataset but interpreting these as cloth shears is difficult. Cloth shears are typically large; modern examples may be up to 1m in length. They typically have broad, flattened blades (Goodall 2011, 61). Goodall (2011,111–12) suggests that excavated shears for cutting cloth are likely to be larger bladed examples. The complete examples within the archaeological dataset are typically 100–200mm in length, and therefore unlikely to have functioned as cloth shears. The escheators' records list two pairs of shears. One of these, described as a 'great pair of shears for a shearman', belonged to Thomas Isenden of Sutton Valence (Kent). These were presumably used for cutting up the cloth Thomas had for sale, discussed further below.[384]

[383] C146.
[384] E768.

Turning now to the sale of cloth, we revisit the attempt made in Chapter 6 to distinguish between cloth for consumption, cloth resulting from production and cloth for sale. Table 8.6 displays information on cloth in escheators' lists which can be categorized as material for sale, or arising from the household's own production (and itself presumably also awaiting sale). In fact, all except one of the lists in Table 8.6 are treated here as containing cloth for sale. The only exception is John Sta, an agriculturalist whose list includes sheep and wool, but also cloths which may have been produced in his household.[385] As noted in Chapter 6, categorising the different occurrences of cloth is not always straightforward. In compiling Table 8.6, we have again focussed mainly on stated occupation, and on other indicators such as details concerning civil outlawry, where that was the grounds for forfeiture. Sometimes the fact that we are looking at stock is made explicit in the relevant document. For instance, cloth 'for sale' belonging to Robert Assheford, who drowned himself in the River Tamar, is clearly distinguished from textiles associated with his household.[386]

What many of the lists summarized in Table 8.6 reveal is a world of comparatively small-scale cloth merchants, many of them situated in the lesser towns of the case-study counties. As noted in Chapter 2, some of these men lay at very upper end of the 'non-elite' social group as defined in this study. The individuals provide some indication of the likely sources of supply of cloth for many rural and small-town households.

Two unusually detailed lists, those of Thomas Isenden and John Hawkyn, provide a special insight into the textiles sold by such merchants. These lists include reference to a range of specific types of cloth. The recording of the quantity of cloth in ells and yards allows some consideration of the relative value of different types (Table 8.7). In Isenden's case, references to colour of his cloth are quite prominent. Isenden stocked in his shop cloth in red (20d per *ell*), russet (16d per *ell*), green (21d per *ell*), and multicoloured cloths of 'bluemedley' (19d per *ell*), and cloth 'de ray' (16d per *ell*). Other specific types of cloth in his list but not in the table, because not valued by the yard or ell, are plunket (blue), and cloth referred to as 'Candlewick Street', associated with production in the Cannon Street area of London (not valued individually). It is possible that these cloths came from a variety of different centres: Salisbury specialised in the production of rays, and red cloths were a specialty of the area around Stroud, Gloucestershire (Lee 2018, 11). Overall, a comparison of the prices of Isenden's stock with those of the cloths for consumption discussed in Chapter 6 (Table 6.2) suggests that Isenden was generally dealing in coloured cloths of relatively good quality, perhaps aimed at the more well-to-do customer. As Chapter 6 showed, although not unknown, coloured cloths worth 1s per yard were relatively rare in peasant and artisan households captured in our data.

[385] E355.
[386] E1229.

Table 8.6: Lists containing cloth identified as arising from domestic production or for sale in the escheators' records.

List No.	Year	Name	Residence	Occupation	Cloth 1	Cloth 2
56	1427	Nicholas Harry	Topsham, Devon	Mariner	1 dozen white strait cloths	
58	1427	William Smyth	Dartmouth, Devon	Draper	12 yards of cloth	
122	1446	John Maister	Havant, Hampshire	Merchant	40 ells of good cloth, 6d per ell	
308	1418	John Chapman	Coton (Hardingstone pa.), Northamptonshire	Chapman, 'who was a clerk'	140 linen [cloths], 5s	4 yards of motley, 6s
355	1418	John Sta	Mitton, Worcestershire	–	1 dozen white woollen cloths, 13s 4d	
518	1422	John Hawkyn	Barnstaple, Devon	Merchant	see Table 8.7	
768	1384	Thomas Isenden	Sutton Valence, Kent	–	see Table 8.7	
820	1426	Thomas Tylthe	Cranbrook, Kent	–	10 twills, 2s each	
944	1436	William atte Hill	Carleton Rode, Norfolk	–	20 yards woollen cloth, 10s	
1142	1442	Walter Fitz Reri	Combe, Isle of Wight, Hampshire	–	4 dozen medley cloths, 40s per dozen	4 pieces kersey, 13s 4d each
1204	1440	John Grey	Evesham, Worcestershire	Mercer	99 ells 16 crests of linen cloth at various prices, £2 14s 5 3/4d	42 ells 5 crests woollen cloth at various prices, £1 10s 1d
1229	1397	Robert Assheford	Tavistock, Devon	–	grey and white cloth for sale (panno venali), £8	

Whereas the cloth in Isenden's list is principally defined by its colour, that in the list of John Hawkyn is mostly differentiated by type.[387] Hawkyn held a wide variety of textiles in small quantities, many of them cheaper varieties than those in Isenden's list (only those of Hawkyn's textiles recorded in yards appear in Table 8.7). His stock included twill, two pieces of worsted (a light cloth with a glossy finish, typically associated with Norfolk) valued at 18s; fustian (a cloth of flax and wool) (4d per yard); two 'remnants' of buckram (a fine cotton cloth) worth 7d; cotton (not valued individually); carde (linen used for curtains and linings, 2d per yard); 'Norfolk' cloth (8½d per 'foleton'); oil cloth (3d per yard); and a small quantity of broad cloth (4d per yard), as well as white cloth, and russet.

Table 8.7: Price in pence (d) per yard of cloth by type in the lists of Thomas Isenden (E768) and John Hawkyn (E518). Assumes 1 ell is equal to 45 inches and 1 yard to 37 inches (after Manchester University Lexis of Cloth and Clothing).

	Ell	Yards	Value (d)	d per yard
Thomas Isenden (1384)				
Red	3.5	4.3	70	16
Blanket	5	6.0	51	9
Russet	10	12.2	160	13
Bluemedley	5.5	6.7	106	16
De' ray	10	12.2	160	13
Green	6.5	7.9	136	17
Red	14	17.0	240	14
John Hawkyn (1422)				
Cloth, type illegible		3	48	16
Bunting		10	20	2
Fustian		2	8	4
Spynal		2	6	3
Carde		4	8	2
Broad Alexander		0.5	2	4
Oilcloth		3	9	3
Canvas		125	60	1

[387] E518.

The coroners' records are comparatively silent on the finishing, working and sale of cloth. Shears occur in four lists, including that of William Purches who in 1587 had a pressing iron in his hall in Devizes (Wiltshire), presumably for pressing cloth.[388] Purches also possessed a quantity of tewke, a kind of canvas. The only individual listed as a tailor and holding cloth is John Combe of Acton Beauchamp, Worcestershire.[389]

Cloth seals, attached to cloth on the payment of aulnage, offer a further insight into the domestic marketing of cloth. All four examples within the archaeological dataset come from sites in Norfolk, the two examples from Carbrooke being from Yorkshire and Essex (Hutcheson and Noble 2006).

Overall, the archaeological evidence supports a picture of the domestic working of textile items, although cloth could also be passed to a tailor to manufacture garments. Documentary evidence for the finishing and working of cloth is limited, but the escheators' records provide a glimpse into the range of cloths traded by lesser merchants and others involved in sale, and their relative values. The evidence provides hints, at best, about the kinds of cloth which found their way into non-elite domestic contexts, either as clothing or items of soft furnishing. While specific references to cloth by type or colour are primarily associated with those involved in the textile trade, the evidence in Chapter 6 showed that small quantities of cloth were possessed by a range of households, presumably for the manufacture of clothing, napery or other household textiles either domestically or by a professional.

Textile manufacture: summary

Our evidence demonstrates that households were involved in textile production in various ways. Analysis of the occurrence of wool in the escheators' list suggests different scales of processing, with some households controlling stocks and others working only small quantities. Away from areas of intensive cloth production, spinning formed a part of the economy of many households, and at least some of the wool from a household's sheep was likely to be converted into yarn. The higher levels of capital investment required to set up workshops for weaving and dyeing meant that these were more likely to be full-time occupations. Finds of spindle-whorls, and the presence of trendles and spinning wheels within lists of household goods, suggest that spinning typically took place within the home, while the evidence from Lavenham and other small towns demonstrates how other activities required specialised spaces, requiring investment. The most striking conclusion from the evidence presented here is the way that the cloth and, to a lesser extent, the linen industry permeated the economy of rural households across England, with the evidence pointing

[388] C317.
[389] C41.

to clear regional variability which relates to a complex range of factors including sheep husbandry and arable regimes, patterns of landholding and regional economic specialisation. The evidence for the movement of cloths also shows the dynamism of the market. Although the export trade is rightly often cited as a major driver of industrial change, our evidence also shows that domestic consumers clearly had the opportunity to acquire a range of different cloths from other parts of England. This is an element of the cloth market often implied by surveys of the trade but difficult to trace in sources which principally inform on the export market (see Lee 2018, 78–98). In summary, despite the limited presence of relevant objects, our data is perhaps most instructive in relation to spinning and the processing of wool into yarn, demonstrating possible regional differences, highlighting the low investment required to gain a foothold in this craft but also the low returns which arose from it, which presumably contribute to the perception of this task as marginal 'by-work'. Even so, this analysis suggests that spinning, an area of medieval life which is commonly generalised, was a sophisticated process, in which tools varied in accordance with the materials being worked and the mode of production.

The leather industry

The production of leather goods, arguably the second most important industry in later medieval England after cloth production, is comparatively underresearched. Our understanding of leather production is biased towards larger towns, for which we have good historical evidence for the presence of tanners and excavated archaeological evidence for tanning. This takes the form of tanning pits and waste products from the processing of hides, typically horn cores (the bone element of horn) and hoof bones. Recent reviews of zooarchaeological evidence from the midlands (Albarella 2019) and southern England (Holmes 2017) have documented the presence of hide processing in Northampton, Leicester, Norwich, Colchester, Hereford, Buckingham, Winchester, Oxford and Kingston-upon-Thames. It is noticeable that in most cases it is sheep/goat hides which appear to have been worked, rather than those of cattle. Clarkson (1960, 245) identified areas of the midlands, the Weald and the Forest of Dean as key areas of leather production, although London dominated the market.

Although urban centres dominate our understanding, Clarkson (1960; 1966) demonstrated that, particularly in areas of the west midlands and East Anglia, tanning could be a rural industry undertaken by households engaged in pastoral agriculture. In her analysis of rural tanners at Wrotham (Kent), Semple (2006) has identified several families of tanners operating across rural parts of the manor, mostly supplying goods to the local market and taking advantage of the local supply of cattle hides and bark. Like those discussed by Clarkson, these tanners were also agriculturalists, with holdings ranging from 5 to 47 acres, many being of what Semple identifies as 'yeoman' status; these artisans

were able to accumulate wealth and invest this in land and domestic buildings. Analysis of the Wakefield (Yorkshire) court rolls by Lewis (2020) shows that while the industry was focussed on Wakefield itself, it also took place in surrounding rural communities, with the number of rural tanners increasing through the sixteenth century. Regional specialisation in tanning can be associated with access to the key raw materials required: the hides themselves, bark for soaking the hides, and lime, used in the removal of hair. Lewis's analysis suggests that tanners could purchase bark collectively from distances of up to 30km away, showing how tanning was closely integrated with other areas of the rural economy, including woodland management and the burning of fuel for ironworking. As early as 1938, Sargent argued that it was access to these key resources which led to the focussing of the leather industries around Northampton and Leicester, but also highlighted that areas such as Middlesex, which had such resources, do not seem to have developed substantial tanning industries due to other variables.

Cattle hides and those of sheep and goat were processed. The west midlands, in particular, were strongly associated with the processing of the hides of sheep and goat, producing light leather for use in clothing such as gloves and footwear, and becoming increasingly important as the fashion for more tightly fitted clothing developed in our period (Clarkson 1966, 28). The Leather Act of 1563 prohibited the practising of light and heavy leather working by the same craftsmen, implying that these two industries were practised together in some instances; indeed, excavations at The Green, Northampton have provided evidence for the processing of both cattle and sheep hides in the same or adjacent workshops (Shaw 2011, 121).

It is the heavy leather industry which is most strongly associated with larger urban centres. This is for several reasons. Firstly, there was a ready supply of hides from the butchers supplying the urban food market. Secondly, tanning hides is a time-consuming process (see Thomson 1981; Mould 2011 for detailed descriptions of the process). Hides must first be trimmed and washed before being soaked in a solution of lime or urine to loosen the hair which was then scraped away. Hides were then often re-soaked and scraped again to remove any remaining fat and hair roots (this process was outlawed in 1563). Hides were then soaked in an acid (typically bark or old tanning liquor) or alkaline (typically dung) overnight before again being washed or scraped, ready for tanning. Hides were soaked in the tanning solution of bark and water for a period of anything from six months to two years, before being removed and dried. Because of the time that the tanning process took there was a clear advantage to being able to process large numbers of hides, and to have hides at different stages of processing.

Tanning sites are characterised by the presence of clusters, typically alignments, of lined pits. Within our sample the most comprehensive evidence for a tannery comes from the Church Walk, Doncaster (Yorkshire; Chadwick 2008). Here, a total of 27 excavated pits relate to tanning. They are principally aligned

in two rows and the fills are stained from the urine, lime and bark which was used in the tanning process. Several of the pits appear to have been lined with stone, clay or wood. Tanning was established on the site at some time in the twelfth or thirteenth century, with some pits dating as late as the sixteenth century. The absence of large quantities of horn cores from the site suggests that hides may have been provided with the horns and hooves removed. By the sixteenth century, large quantities of hides were imported into Yorkshire from London through Hull and down river to Bawtry to the south of the town (Clarkson 1966, 32). This may be one explanation for the absence of evidence for the initial preparation of hides at Church Walk, Doncaster. However, hides were also obtained and processed locally. At Tickhill to the south of Doncaster, the faunal assemblage from a site associated with tanning is dominated by horn cores (Burgess and Andrews 2017). Here there is evidence for the initial processing of hides in the form of a lime kiln associated with an alignment of seven tanning pits which were probably lined with wood and in use during the fourteenth–fifteenth centuries. The site at Tickhill is important because it provides evidence of heavy leather processing outside of a large urban centre.

Elsewhere the evidence for tanning within the archaeological dataset is more limited. At Castle Street (Whitworth, Jones and Pearson 2001) and Cowl Street, Evesham (Vaughan 2007) (Worcestershire) faunal remains are suggestive of tanning. Post-medieval tanneries are known from excavated sites at High Street, Pershore (Worcestershire; Hughes and Pontin 1993) and the former Greyhound Hotel, Fordingbridge (Harding and Light 2003). At the latter site, barrel-lined pits with tanning waste in the form of lime and faunal remains are dated to the seventeenth century, but a rental suggests that tanners were present there from at least the later sixteenth century, while at Pershore the date of excavated pits probably relating to tanning is unclear and may pre-date the documented tannery on the site. Finally, possible evidence for tanning is provided by a wood-lined pit containing a large quantity of horn cores from Wolborough Street, Newton Abbot (Devon), where a rental shows a nearby tenement was occupied by a tanner in the last decade of the sixteenth century (Hughes 2015).

The archaeological evidence for heavy leather production is overwhelmingly urban. The remains identified at Doncaster, Fordingbridge, Thetford (NAU 1997), Evesham and Pershore are fairly limited in scale when compared to the large tannery complexes excavated in places such as Northampton (Shaw 2011) and Birmingham (Ratkai 2011). Evidence from the escheators' and coroners' records for this industry is slight (Table 8.8). In 1413 the currier Henry Coriour of Evesham had two cow hides worth 6s, his other goods being a horse (10s) and 'small chattels' (4s).[390] As he was a currier, engaged in the finishing of leather, these may already have been tanned and this evidence sits well with the archaeological evidence for tanning in the town. Other tanners seem to have

[390] E490.

Table 8.8: Occurrence of goods associated with tanning in the escheators' and coroners' records.

List No.	Year	Name	Place	Occupation	Object	Value (d)	Quantity
Escheators'							
249	1390	William Cook	Yarm, Yorkshire	–	Bark	480	60 qtrs
490	1413	Henry Coriour	Evesham, Worcestershire	Currier	Cow hide	72	2
560	1422	Stephen Fleschewer	Welton, Yorkshire	–	Cow hide	24	2
648	1381	John Prentys	Newenden, Kent	–	Lamb skin	16	30
686	1381	Thoas Wynchendenn	Marden, Kent	–	Cobbler's knife	12	3
736	1422	Thomas Knyth	Great Torrington, Devon	Tanner	Skins (goat, bullock, cow, calf)	2880	33 keeves (vats)
744	1382	Thomas Yol	Clipston, Northamptonshire	–	Sheepskin	60	30
752	1383	John Mogerhangre	Little Stratford, Northamptonshire	Barker	Bark	60	portion
1239	1397	John Solterous (?)	Long Stratton, Norfolk	–	Sheepskin		14
1384	1399	William Brynnand	Sherrif Hutton,Yorkshire	–	Leather		
1455	1410	John Atkynson	Wakefield, Yorkshire	–	Leather from oxen and cows		
Coroners'							
9	1543	Thomas Aston	Wadsworth, Yorkshire,	Barker	Hide	720	4 bags
76	1545	Thomas Ramsden	Oundle, Northamptonshire	Shoemaker	Hide (of leather)	108	12

(*Continued*)

Table 8.8: Continued.

List No.	Year	Name	Place	Occupation	Object	Value (d)	Quantity
126	1551	Thomas Thomas	Longbridge Deverill, Wiltshire	Tanner?	Cow and bullock hide	2160	45
					Calf hide	240	90
					Calf hide	48	30
					Cow and bullock skin	960	28
					Horse skin	24	1
					Sheepskin	24	31
					Sheepskin	6	6
					Fleshing knife		3
					Paring knife		4
212	1574	John Sharpe	Wing, Rutland	–	Sheepskin	16	4
214	1575	Simon Winter	Kings Meaburn, Westmoreland	Labourer	Yearling (sheep) skin	6	2
308	1586	Edward Purkheme	Denbury, Devon	–	Leather		1 piece
317	1587	William Purches	Devizes, Wiltshire	–	Shoeing horn		1
421	1597	Thomas Throwarde	Shorne, Kent	Tanner	calfskin	192	25
					Tan (bark)	312	1.5 cartloads

undertaken both heavy and light leather working. Thomas Knyth of Great Torrington (Devon) had skins of goat, bullock, cow and calf in keeves (vats) 'to be tannyd', valued at £12.[391] Other craftsmen living in small towns also had goods associated with tanning. In 1390 William Cook of Yarm (Yorkshire) possessed 60 quarters of bark worth 8d per quarter, which may have been intended for use in the tanning process. In contrast, the coroner's records provide clearer evidence for rural tanning, apparently on a large scale. As well as possessing a total of 229 hides of cow, bullock, calf, sheep and horse worth over £14, Thomas Thomas of Longbridge Deverell (Wiltshire) also possessed eight tan vats (valued with two 'great' wooden troughs at 10s), and seven knives (valued together at 5s).[392] In 1597 Thomas Throwarde, a tanner from Shorne (Kent) had a bucking tub (valued with his bedstead at 12d) as well as 25 calf skins worth 16s 8d and 1.5 cartloads of tan (i.e. bark) worth 26s.[393]

These lists all demonstrate quite clearly that rural and small-town tanners such as Thomas Thomas and Thomas Knyth undertook both heavy and light leather working. Others evidently engaged in light leather processing include John Prentys of Newenden (Kent), who had 30 lamb skins worth 16d in 1382.[394] Rural tanners had a mixed household economy. Thomas Knyth had three acres of wheat, William Cook had 40 acres of grain and Thomas Thomas appears to have cultivated wheat, barley, maslin and vetch. It is perhaps surprising that these tanners had such extensive arable holdings, as Clarkson (1966) links tanning specifically with pastoral areas, with animal husbandry creating greater capacity for the development of a trade. It is likely the mixed household economy, as well as the smaller markets served by these craftsmen, that led to the dual specialisation in heavy and light leather working. While heavy leather working was typically undertaken to supply a local market with leather or leather goods, light leather production was more typically undertaken to supply wider markets. This was a simpler process, requiring hides to be smoked, oiled, dried and reheated with salt, flour and egg yolks (Clarkson 1960, 247). It is light leather working which appears more prevalent in rural areas, both from archaeological and historical evidence. At Bardwell (Suffolk), two large pits are interpreted as relating to an industrial process, but the complex does not appear extensive enough to support economical heavy leather production (Muldowney 2012). Light leather production is suggested by the faunal remains from the site, which contain sheep horn cores. Further evidence for leather working at this site is provided by the presence of a slicker blade, used in the finishing of leather. Excavations at 59–61 High Street, Havant (Hampshire) have also revealed evidence for light leather working in the form of sheep horn cores and foot bones from pits of Tudor date (Shaffrey 2015, 6).

Although limited in quantity, the evidence for leather working points to differences in production between larger towns, smaller towns and the countryside.

[391] E736. Legibility of the key document (TNA, E 153/659, m.2) is poor.
[392] C126.
[393] C421.
[394] E648.

Evidence from larger towns provides clearer evidence of specialisation in heavy leather or light leather production (Clarkson 1960; 1966), while in smaller towns, such as Great Torrington, our evidence suggests a more mixed economy, with lighter leather production being better suited to rural households. Even so, by the sixteenth century, the case of Thomas Thomas demonstrates that fairly large-scale tanning enterprises could develop in the countryside; notably in this case in a region more associated with the production of cloth than leather.

Following tanning, a hide went to a currier for finishing, although in the case of small-scale producers the tanner may have performed this role. Henry Coriour is the only currier described as such in the escheators' and coroners' records, yet paring knives possessed by Thomas Thomas may suggest he was finishing, as well as tanning, hides. Archaeologically it is possible to distinguish between the evidence of leather finishing (typically characterised by thin scrapings from the flesh side of the leather) and offcuts in the form of trimmings from the production of pattern pieces or the repair of leather goods (Mould 2011, 33). Archaeologically, leather survives in waterlogged conditions, meaning that it is found inconsistently; the majority of finds are from urban sites, where such conditions are most prevalent. Therefore, the extent to which the finishing of leather and the production of leather goods was a largely urban process is unclear. Evidence for the trimming of hides is fairly limited within the archaeological sample. At Selby (Yorkshire), evidence of both primary trimming (hide edges, belly skin and udders), secondary trimming and currying were recovered, providing evidence for currying, shoemaking and cobbling (Clarke 1999). At Forster Square, Bradford (Yorkshire), leather waste was associated with tanning pits and this would suggest that here the hides were trimmed by the tanners (WYAS 2006). In contrast, at 27–30 Finsbury Square, Islington (Middlesex), excavations recovered two pieces of primary leather working waste including an offcut of cow udder, mixed with offcuts from the production of leather objects (MOLAS 2000b, 73). This area at the periphery of the city of London is known to have been associated with tanning and leather working, with excavations at Moorfields recovering tools, offcuts, faunal evidence of the processing of cattle, sheep/goat, fallow deer, horse and cat skins and an abundance of *Trox scaber* hide beetles, an indicator of hide processing (Cubitt *et al.* 2019, 254–5).

A similar mix of primary and secondary waste was recovered at High Street, Barnstaple (Devon), where two of the 49 offcuts were primary waste, with the majority being offcuts from shoe production (Lovatt 1990). A large collection of leather offcuts from Highweek Street, Newton Abbot (may be an indication of primary hide trimming (Markuson and Thomas 1980), the site being some distance from the possible tanning site identified at Wolborough Street. Finds from the castle ditch at Oakham (Rutland) include a currier's knife as well as scraps seemingly associated with shoe making, perhaps implying that the finishing of leather and the production of leather products took place on the same premises, or in close proximity. Currying also took place at Low Fisher Gate,

Doncaster, where a currier's knife was recovered from a fourteenth-century deposit (McComish *et al*. 2010). The three honestones associated with this building could relate, in part, to the sharpening of tools for this craft. In the fifteenth–sixteenth centuries, the site was occupied by leatherworkers who, to judge by the evidence of over 800 pieces of leather waste, specialised in the production and repair of shoes, working with both heavy and light leather. The waste suggests that in the sixteenth century at least, the main activity undertaken was the repair of shoes, rather than manufacturing (McComish *et al*. 2010, 84–5). Similar evidence for the production or repair of shoes comes from Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed (Heawood and Howard-Davis 2004), Cockermouth (Cumbria; Leech and Gregory 2004) and Prescot Street, Tower Hamlets (Middlesex; Pre-Construct Archaeology 1999). At Carlisle (Cumbria), a deposit of leather including a scabbard stripped of its metal fittings has been interpreted as a workshop specialising in the repair of leather products (Newman 2011). Mould (2011) notes that it is generally assumed that trimming was undertaken by tanners, however it was to their advantage to sell untrimmed hides if they sold their leather by weight, while curriers may have preferred to trim hides themselves to be sure of the quality of the leather. Our evidence provides clear, if limited, evidence of this practice from several sites and would suggest it was common for the finishing of hides to be undertaken away from the tannery itself.

Taken together, our evidence suggests that the heavy leather industries were primarily urban, being a component of the economies of small, as well as larger, towns. Light leather production might more commonly take place in the countryside, being better suited than tanning to being undertaken as a part of a mixed household economy. Both rural and small-town tanners undertook the craft around other economic activities, including arable as well as pastoral agriculture, meaning that tanning was one contributor to a mixed household economy, typically undertaken away from domestic spaces. We can also see that households specialised in different parts of the process, with the trimming and finishing of hides typically taking place away from the tannery. As such, leather working provides a valuable insight into the divergences between the household economies of urban and rural households, and the differences in the organisation of hide processing and leather production between the smaller towns captured in our dataset, where there is evidence of households engaging in both light and heavy leather manufacture, and larger towns, which form the basis of much of our knowledge, and where there is greater evidence for specialisation.

Metalworking

Metalworking is the industry best represented in the archaeological dataset and the goods of several smiths appear within the escheators' and coroners'

materials. The discussion below forms two parts. The first concerns the abundant evidence for ferrous metalworking within our dataset, both for the primary production of iron through smelting, and for secondary smithing to produce iron objects. Secondly, there is more limited evidence for the working of non-ferrous metals including copper, lead and gold.

Ferrous metalworking

The evidence for ferrous metalworking is derived from both the historical and archaeological datasets; however, the archaeological evidence is much stronger (Tables 8.9 and 8.10), and the escheators' and coroners' records do not provide any information on the initial stages of iron smelting.

Iron smelting

Up until the sixteenth century, England was highly reliant on imported iron, particularly from Spain, with the quantity imported trebling in the late fifteenth century, pointing to rising demand for high quality iron (Childs 1981, 30–33). Domestic production must have been many times larger; however; the transitory and ephemeral nature of bloomeries in England means that domestic output is impossible to judge. Records from north-east England suggest output rose as the cost of imported iron increased, incentivising investment in domestic production (Blanchard 1973, 78–9; Childs 1981, 46). The smelting of iron is a resource intensive process, requiring large quantities of charcoal (approximately 12lb for every 1lb of iron produced), which could account for up to half the cost of production; for example, at Tudeley, Kent, it accounted for 40% of the expenditure associated with ironworks in 1329–34 and 1350–4 (Hodgkinson and Whittick 1998, 14; Sapoznik 2016). It is logical therefore that evidence for smelting is commonly identified in areas with outcrops of iron ore and dense woodland.

Sapoznik (2016; see also Crossley 1981, 29) highlights the increasing demand for iron through the middle ages and also relates the growth of the iron industry to the expansion of settlement to agriculturally marginal, but resource-rich, areas. In Northamptonshire, for example, iron production sites in Rockingham Forest were situated close to woodlands and outcrops of ore, typically in the fields around woodland villages (Foard 2001), with a similar relationship between iron production sites and woodland identified in Yorkshire (Waites 1964). Iron is found across England, but the highest quality ores come from the Weald of Kent and Sussex, the Forest of Dean and along the Jurassic Ridge, with lower quality bog iron coming from the northern moorlands. The mining and processing of iron ore is a task well suited to a mixed household economy, involving engagement in agriculture (particularly pastoral) alongside iron production.

Table 8.9: Summary of evidence for ferrous metalworking in the archaeological dataset.

County	Site	Roasting	Smelting	Smithing	Casting	Unspecified
Cornwall	Tresmorn			X		
Cumbria	Shaw's Wiend, Appleby-in-Westmorland			X		X
	Shaw's Wiend and Boroughgate, Appleby-in-Westmorland			X		
	Buckbottom Farm Field System, Burgh-by-Sands					X
	Caldewgate, Carlisle					X
	Carlisle City Wall, NE Side			X		
	Castle Street, Carlisle			X		
	104–112 Stricklandgate, Kendal			X		
	130–136 Stricklandgate, Kendal			X		
	Elephant Yard, Kendal			X		X
	Land at Hackthorpe, Lowther			X		
Devon	Land at James House, Chudleigh		X			
	Field Drainage, Land at Hayne Lane, Gittisham		X			
	South of Wolborough Street, Newton Abbot					X
	North of Wolborough Street, Newton Abbot			X		
	Ditches off Back Lane, North Molton		X			
	Pit at Lower Poole Barns, North Molton		X	X		
	Beere, North Tawton		X	X		
	Dinna Clerks					X
	West of Barton Close, Winkleigh					X

(*Continued*)

Table 8.9: Continued.

County	Site	Roasting	Smelting	Smithing	Casting	Unspecified
Hampshire	18 to 20 High Steet, Alton					X
	Mill Lane, Brockenhurst			X		
	Manor Farm House, Kings Somborne			X		
	14–16 Milkingpen Lane, Old Basing					X
Kent	The Millworks, Brastead					X
	Bromley Hospital					X
	Highstead Farm Quarry, Chislet					X
	Betteshanger S.W.S, Deal					X
	7–9 High St, Eastry			X		
	Land to the north of the Presbytery Catholic Church of St Lawrence, High Street, Edenbridge			X		
	Edenbridge Western Relief Road			X		
	Friars School, Great Chart			X		
	A21 Lamberhurst by-pass		?			
	A21 Lamberhurst bypass at Spray Hill	X	X	X		
	East Lenham Farm, Lenham		X			
	Lydd Quarry			X		
	Lawn Cottage, East Northdown Farm, Margate					X
	The Rectory, Penshurst			?		
	182 High Street, Tonbridge			X		

(*Continued*)

Table 8.9: Continued.

County	Site	Roasting	Smelting	Smithing	Casting	Unspecified
	Lyons, East Street, Tonbridge				X	X
	Tonbridge Stock and Cattle Market, Bank Street, Tonbridge		X	X		X
	Whitfield Churchyard, Whitfield					X
	Taylor's Garage, Bridge Street, Wye					X
Rutland	The Old Hall, Belton	X				
	3 to 8 Main Street, Great Casterton					X
	Gunthorpe Hall			X		
	Limes Farm, Lyndon Road, Hambleton					X
	Martinsthorpe	X				
Middlesex	High Road (Nos 1263–75), Whetstone					X
	High Street, Harmondsworth					X
	7–9 Islington Green			X		
	County Sports, Staines			X		
	MacKay Securities, Staines			X		
	8–12 Red Lion Street, Aylsham		X			X
	Creake Road, Burnham Market					X
	St Peter and St Paul VC Primary School, Carbooke			X		X
	Land to the Rear of the Ostrich Inn, Castle Acre					X

(*Continued*)

Table 8.9: Continued.

County	Site	Roasting	Smelting	Smithing	Casting	Unspecified
Norfolk	Red Lion public house, Caston		X			
	Fairswell Manor, Funcham			X		
	United Reformed Church, Garnham Road, Gorleston			X		
	Beechwood House, The Street, Halvergate					X
	Mere Farm, Itteringham		X			
	Bacton to King's Lynn Transco pipeline, Lexham			X		
	1 High Street, Loddon					X
	Heydon, part of the Sheringham Shoal Offshore windfarm project		X			
	Pound Green Lane, Shipdham			X		
	Grange Farm, Snetterton					X
	Wymer's Lane, Pilson Green, South Walsham					X
	Nursery Lane, South Wootton					X
	St Nicholas St and Minstergate, Thetford					X
	Queensway Middle School, Queensway, Thetford					X
	Walpole Electricity Substation					X
	Wimbotsham			X		
Northamptonshire	Land adjacent to Blueberry Close and west of A508, Maidwell			X		
	Southwick		X			

(*Continued*)

Table 8.9: Continued.

County	Site	Roasting	Smelting	Smithing	Casting	Unspecified
Northumberland	104–106 Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed					X
	26–30 Tweed Street, Berwick-upon-Tweed					X
	77 Marygate, Berwick-upon-Tweed					X
	Castle Terrace, Berwick-upon-Tweed		?			X
	Former Tweeddale Press, Walkergate, Berwick-upon-Tweed			X		
	4–8 Woolmarket, Berwick-upon-Tweed					X
	Main Street, Cornhill-on-Tweed					X
	West Whelpington					X
	Shotton			X		
Suffolk	Cedars Park, Stowmarket			X		
	Mill Bank, Hinton Parva					X
	The Grange, Blunsdon St Andrew			X		
	Church Field, St James Church, Bratton		X			
	Brockenborough					X
	Land at the Rear of Church Street, Calne			X		X
	Wood Lane, Chippenham					X
	Barbury Castle Farm, Chiseldon					X

(*Continued*)

Table 8.9: Continued.

County	Site	Roasting	Smelting	Smithing	Casting	Unspecified
Wiltshire	Huish			X		
	Bowden Park Farm, Lacock		X			
	Bewley Court, Lacock		X			
	Cricklade to Broad Blunsdon Gas Pipeline, Latton			X		
	18–26 High Street, Ludgershall					X
	Clackers Brook, Snarlton Lane, Melksham		X	X		X
	Woodrow Road, Melksham		X			
	Former Pewsey Motors Site, Pewsey					X
	Chapel Meadow, Membury					X
	Southwick					X
	Land Opposite Manor Farm, West Ashton			X		
	35 West Street, Wilton			X		
	8 –16 Worcester Road, Bromsgrove		X			
	The Saltway, Droitwich		X	X		
	45 to 47 Swan Lane, Evesham		X			
	Church Lane, Hallow					X
	Medieval Site on M5 Widening, Whittington			X		
	Barnburgh Hall			X		

(*Continued*)

Table 8.9: Continued.

County	Site	Roasting	Smelting	Smithing	Casting	Unspecified
Worcestershire	Bridge Lane House, Bawtry			X		X
	The Crown Hotel, Boroughbridge			X		
	Low Fisher Gate, Doncaster			X		
	Bay Hall, Huddersfield					X
	Land off Venn Street, Kirkgate, Huddersfield		X	X		
	Rectory Farm, Laughton-en-le-Morthen			X		
	45 High Street and Land to the Rear on Quaker Lane, Northallerton					X
	Wakeman's House, High Skellgate, Ripon			X		
	Land to west of Market Place, Ripon			X		
	The Spinney, Low Street, Sherburn-in-Elmet					X
	Swillington Brick Works			X		
	The Bungalow, Old London Road, Towton		X			
	101 High Street, Yarm		X	X		X
	4 Westgate, Yarm			X		
	Land adjacent to 2 Mill Wynd, Yarm					X

Table 8.10: Summary of evidence for metalworking in the escheators' dataset.

List No.	Year	Name	Occupation	Location	Metal Working Items	Agriculturalist?	Other Crafts?
Iron Smiths							
131	1448	William Smyth	Smith (felony counterfeiting)	Bromsgrove, Worcestershire	Clamp Files Vice	No	No (tools could have been used for carpentry?)
317	1403	Robert Sprakelyng	Smith	Codford, Wiltshire	Iron anvil (240d) Iron hammers Iron tongs Smith's tools	Yes	Brewing
687	1381	Richard de Stazendenn	–	Marden, Kent	Smiths bellows(?) Slipstone	Yes	No
765	1385	John Scot	Smith	Kent	Slipstone	Yes	No
913	1395	John Eurdon	Smith	Welton, Northamptonshire	Anvil Pair bellows Fore-hammers Pincers Broken iron Smythecoles' (charcoal?) Tongs	Yes	Wooden vessels may suggest food procesing

(*Continued*)

Table 8.10: Continued.

List No.	Year	Name	Occupation	Location	Metal Working Items	Agriculturalist?	Other Crafts?
Iron Smiths							
1281	1408	Robert Smyth	–	Sutton, Wiltshire	Anvil with other 'necessaries' in forge (160d)	Yes	No
1294	1411	Thomas Smyth	–	Chippenham, Wiltshire	Anvil (320d)	No	No
					Pincers		
					Bellows		
1326	1407	Robert Carre	Smith	Rotherham, Yorkshire	Anvil	Yes	No
					Hammers		
1548	1445	Isaak Greene	Clerk	Great Walsingham, Norfolk	5 small hammers (5d)	No	Clerk
					Small iron anvil (4d)		
Goldsmiths							
339	1418	Patrik Goldsmyth	–	Evesham, Worcestershire	Silver band and boss for cup/mazer	No	No
					Goldsmith's anvil (4d)		
					Tools of goldsmithery (18d)		
517	1422	Richard Swalwa	Goldsmith	Great Torrington, Devon	Goldsmithing tools (40d)	Yes	

Iron extraction could be organised at a variety of scales. In northern England in particular, monastic estates controlled woodland and iron resources, with institutions such as Rievaulx Abbey and Durham Cathedral Priory being a major presence (Threlfall-Holmes 1999; Waites 1964). At Tudeley near Tonbridge (Kent), iron works on the lands of Elizabeth de Burgh, the granddaughter of Edward I, were leased out in the fourteenth century (Hodgkinson and Whittick 1998, 12). Not only were such landlords able to source iron for the maintenance of their buildings and estate, but they were also able to market this commodity. The industry was scattered however, and lay landowners of varying levels of wealth were also able to engage in iron production, although the water-powered bloomery mills, like those used for fulling, were likely to be in the hands of major landowners (Foard 2001, 80). Like textile production, iron production was dominated by a small number of areas producing high volumes of iron but supplemented by a background spread of lower-level production.

The production of iron is a multistage process (see Crossley 1981 for a summary). Firstly, the ironstone is mined, typically from large pits. While much ore was processed locally, there is evidence for trade in ore to be smelted elsewhere, particularly around the Severn estuary, where this may relate to the production of iron on monastic estates (Allen 1996). Unprocessed ore could provide ballast, while in managed woodlands the lower cost of fuel could offset the additional costs of acquiring finished iron. Iron could then be roasted and sorted to remove impurities before smelting. Until the introduction of the blast furnace in the sixteenth century, the bloomery method was used for smelting. Furnaces, typically of clay, were used to reduce the ore to the iron bloom, producing slag as a waste product. Following this process, the bloom was smithed to remove further impurities and to shape iron bars for transportation. Slag could be allowed to pool in the base of the furnace to form a 'slag cake' or be tapped out. From the thirteenth century, waterpower was used. Documentary references to 'mills' are common, although the blast furnace, where waterpower was used to drive bellows and hammers, did not come to England until the end of the fifteenth century, so the uses that waterpower was put to prior to this remain unclear.

The purpose of this analysis is not to reflect in detail on technology, but to understand the organisation of the industry, particularly in relation to household economies. We have limited evidence for the roasting of ore, but this could seemingly take place within settlements. At Martinsthorpe (Rutland), a pit had remains of a hearth at its base and contained partially smelted iron ore (petrologically sourced to the Northamptonshire sandstones), suggesting that smelting was taking place in the vicinity (Wacher 1960). Small quantities of slag provide only indirect evidence of smelting, with the material providing a useful source of hardcore for building up yard or floor surfaces. An example is 8–12 Red Lion Street, Aylsham, where a small quantity of smithing slag (as well as fragments of a crucible relating to non-ferrous metalworking) were recovered from a sequence of occupation deposits including make-up layers on a

tenement close to the marketplace (Bates and Shelley 2004). A striking feature of the archaeological dataset is the evidence for smelting in small towns. The clearest comes from Yarm (Yorkshire), where excavations at 101 High Street recovered a quantity of smelting slag as well as the remains of a furnace and tapping trench (for the removal of slag) (Evans and Heslop 1985). The site also had evidence for smithing in the form of a possible smithing hearth base and hammerscale, providing evidence of a metalworking workshop in the core of this small town, the site being situated between the widening in the High Street which would have been occupied by the market, and the riverfront wharves. The furnace is situated in the backland to the rear of a High Street frontage, likely therefore to be associated with a residential property, the area previously having been gardens; however, the only other finds from the excavation were a buckle and weight. The largest quantity of smelting evidence comes from excavations in Tonbridge (Kent). A site on Bank Street, close to the castle and therefore within the core of the medieval town, provided extensive evidence of smelting and smithing. The assemblage from the site is dominated by tap slag, from a variety of deposits, but remains of six smithing hearths and small quantities of hammerscale were also recovered (Keys 2005). While the tap slag is redeposited, the quantity is highly suggestive of smelting in the immediate vicinity. Further evidence of smelting comes from East Street, also within the core of the town, where slag has been tentatively interpreted as smelting waste (Keys 2002, 51). As with the excavations at Yarm, these remains were recovered from the rear of tenements and no further evidence relating to the status or economy of the households was obtained. Redeposited tap slag from a fifteenth/sixteenth-century dump deposit at 8–16 Worcester Road, Bromsgrove (Worcestershire) may provide similar, if less concrete, evidence of smelting in the backlands of urban tenements (Rudge 2002). Similar redeposited slag was recovered from a more peripheral location in Droitwich (Worcestershire), within an area associated with a variety of industrial activities (Williams *et al.* 2002). A final example from Worcestershire is the small amount of tap slag from an excavation at Swan Lane, Evesham, dating to the later fourteenth century, a period when this part of the town was in decay and Swan Lane ceased to be a routeway, perhaps opening up land for industrial activities (Martin 2003).

Evidence of iron working at the periphery of a small-town comes from the borough of North Molton (Devon). Ironworkers are listed within the manor at Domesday and iron was mined in the seventeenth century. At Back Lane, a pit containing tap slag may be the remains of a furnace or tapping trench with further tap slag, as well as a smithing hearth base, coming from excavations at Lower Poole Barns (Webb and Morris 2015; 2016). A small quantity of tap slag comes from the similarly peripheral location of the small borough of Chudleigh (Devon; Caine and Passmore 2015). At Melksham (Wiltshire), an iron smelting site has been identified in an area of forest around the town. The site is remarkable because, unlike other rural smelting sites in our dataset, it appears associated with domestic activity; postholes are interpreted as a small

two-cell building associated with a concentration of pottery and food remains. The site lacks clear evidence of a furnace, but pits are likely to have been dug for the extraction of clay and the slag is largely concentrated in an area to the east of the possible dwelling. The evidence suggests that this site comprises an isolated homestead occupied between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries, where smelting was taking place, perhaps alongside agricultural production (as suggested by traces of ridge and furrow around the site) or other crafts; a bone object may be associated with weaving (Hardy and Dungworth 2014). These instances would appear to follow the more usual rural model whereby smelting took place in fields around the settlement. The largest groups of smelting slag from rural locations come from Kent and Norfolk. Excavations at Lamberhurst in the Kent Weald provided evidence of the entire iron production process of roasting, smelting and smithing, associated with a demarcated plot, but no evidence of a dwelling was recovered (Turner 2004). Other than the metallurgical waste, the only finds from the site comprise pottery and a whetstone. It is unclear therefore whether this relates to an isolated site within an agricultural landscape, or a smelting and smithing site associated with a rural tenement. The site was abandoned around 1350. At Heydon Park and Mere Farm (both Norfolk), redeposited smelting evidence was recovered from features which appear to be at the periphery of rural settlement abandoned in the fourteenth century (Hickling 2010). At Southwick (Northamptonshire) dense concentrations of bloomery slag, dating from the early medieval period to at least the fourteenth century, have been identified around the village, including within a field named 'Bloom Furlong Field' on a seventeenth-century estate map, further demonstrating the undertaking of smelting around the periphery of settlements (Johnston, Bellamy and Foster 2001, 132–3).

Assessing the relationship between smelting and household economy is difficult for two related reasons. Firstly, smelting, particularly in the countryside, appears to have taken place away from the core of settlements. Secondly, where smelting waste is recovered there is typically little accompanying material culture. We can, however, make some general comments. Firstly, in the countryside, the evidence suggests a degree of integration between industrial and agricultural economies. At Heydon Park, Mere Farm and Lamberhurst, remains were recovered from features which appear to be agricultural boundaries. The urban evidence suggests smelting could be organised in a variety of ways. In some places, as at Melksham, North Molton and Chudleigh, the evidence mirrors that of the rural sites and demonstrates how even within putatively urban settlements, agricultural and industrial economies were interwoven. It is noticeable that smithing as well as smelting waste was identified in some of these peripheral locations, suggesting either the primary working of the bloom close to the smelting site, or the presence of ephemeral smithies. Other tasks could be more closely linked to settlement spaces, such as the slight evidence for roasting ore at Martinsthorpe. The most surprising feature of the data is the quantity of evidence for smelting within the cores of small towns such as Yarm,

Aylesford, Tonbridge and Bromsgrove. The mixture of smelting and smithing waste at Tonbridge and Yarm, as well as at peripheral sites at North Molton and Melksham, perhaps suggests that urban smiths were engaged in the production as well as the working of iron, in common with the evidence for hide and textile working whereby small-town producers appear less specialised in their economic activities than those in larger towns, perhaps due to the smaller market and therefore lower economies of scale.

Iron smithing

Discussions of the mixed rural economy in our period highlight the fact that metalsmiths, like those engaged in iron production, commonly pursued both agriculture and craft production (Birrell 1969; Frost 1981; Thirsk 1961; Zell 1994). Typically, this was pastoral agriculture; in Staffordshire for example, Frost (1981) demonstrates a link between metalsmiths and the ownership of cattle. Smiths, like tanners, operated in a variety of different ways. Some were specialist producers such as cutlers and scythesmiths, while blacksmiths focussed on the repair of metal goods. There is a high degree of regional variability: in the Weald, smiths largely focussed on the production of agricultural tools, whereas nailers were more common in Staffordshire, for example (Zell 1994, 133). Usually, the specialist smiths were wealthier than the ubiquitous blacksmith, having the capital to invest in quantities of iron for the production of goods, rather than specialising in repair. Britnell (2015) demonstrates the importance of smiths to the agrarian economy, using manorial records to show how smiths operated commercially to produce and repair agricultural tools. Of particular significance to understanding the organisation of rural smithing is the evidence he presents for the recycling and repurposing of ironwork in the assembly or repair of items such as ploughs or carts.

The appearance of smiths in the escheators' records provides the opportunity for some further exploration of their role in the rural economy.[395] Eleven individuals in the escheators' dataset have been identified as smiths on the basis of stated occupation, surname or possessions (or a combination), with smithing equipment also appearing in a small number of other lists. These lists overwhelmingly demonstrate how smiths participated in a mixed rural economy; however, contrary to the situation described by Frost in Staffordshire and Zell in the Weald, this includes a mix of pastoral and arable husbandry (Table 8.10). For example, in 1403 Robert Sprakelyng of Codford (Wiltshire) had over 400 sheep, as well as cattle and arable crops (see Chapter 9 for further discussion), while in addition to his smithing equipment (an iron anvil worth 20s and four iron hammers, four iron tongs and smith's tools worth 13s 4d), he had brewing

[395] There are six smiths within the coroners' records collected for the project, but their lists comprise total valuations only.

vessels.[396] The list of John Euerdon of Welton (Northamptonshire), dating to 1395, is particularly informative, as it refers to 12 quarters of charcoal (16s), an anvil, a pair of bellows, two hammers, one pair of pincers, and broken iron (9s), all described as located in the forge. He had some tongs as well which, although grouped with agricultural items, are also specifically described as 'in the forge'. Euerdon also had a mix of arable produce worth over 10s, a cow and calf, and eight sheep.[397] Robert Smyth of Sutton (Wiltshire) had an anvil with other 'necessaries' in the forge (13s 4d), but was clearly engaged in arable cultivation, possessing a heap (*cumulus*) of malt (6s), as well as wheat (2s), two harrows (20d) and an acre of oats (8d) among other produce, his only animals being two horses (valued with a cart at 8s) and a sow (3s 4d).[398] Two small-town examples are Thomas Smyth of Chippenham (Wiltshire), who possessed vats and barrels, possibly suggesting engagement in an activity such as brewing; and William Smyth of Bromsgrove (Worcestershire), neither of whom appears to have engaged in arable or pastoral husbandry.[399]

The escheators' evidence demonstrates that smithing was undertaken as one component of a mixed rural household economy, and even those who identified as smiths could have extensive agricultural holdings which would have required considerable stock or land management. It is noticeable that there is little investment in non-utilitarian goods within the smiths' lists. Archaeological evidence has the potential to provide further insights into the organisation of domestic smithing. The principal evidence is the remains of smithing hearth bases or hammerscale, the waste products from the heating and hammering of iron. Dense concentrations might indicate the location of a smithy, while smaller quantities are indicative of smithing taking place close by, with waste materials being removed and dumped elsewhere. Archaeological evidence for smithing is much more common than that for smelting (see Tylecote 1981 for a summary). There are a small number of sites (Yarm, Lamberhurst, Melksham and Tonbridge, discussed above) where evidence for smithing and smelting co-occur, and some of this evidence may be representative of primary smithing of the bloom; however, in most cases the evidence appears related to secondary iron working. It is clear that smithing took place at urban and rural sites, providing understanding of the role of iron working within household economies.

Reviewing the known evidence for smithies, Goodall (2011, 2) concluded that most excavated examples are from monastic, manorial or village sites. From an urban perspective, it is clear from the evidence of smelting and smithing that some small towns were particularly associated with iron production and working. As well the evidence of both processes from High Street, Yarm, there is further evidence of smithing in the form of hammerscale from a site

[396] E317.

[397] E913. The broken iron was associated with another, unidentified object, possibly related to smithing.

[398] E1281.

[399] E1294; E131; note William Smyth did possess a horse (3s 4d).

at 4 Westgate (Jenkins 2001). This evidence was not related to any artefactual or stratigraphic evidence of domestic activity, and may represent redeposited material. Similarly, a small quantity of smithing slag from 182 High Street, Tonbridge is redeposited and, although associated with medieval pottery, could be from a nearby post-medieval blacksmith's shop (Collings 2010). Clearer evidence for smithing workshops comes from excavations in Staines (Middlesex) and Doncaster. At Low Fisher Gate, Doncaster, hearths associated with a possible forge are probably of thirteenth-century date, with a large quantity of smithing slag being recovered from a later fourteenth-century pit (McComish *et al*. 2010). It seems that the tenement was subdivided in the early fourteenth century, and it is unclear whether smithing persisted here. There is additional evidence of grain processing (a corn drying oven), but charcoal remains in the same area may be suggestive of the persistence of industrial activities. The associated finds are largely utilitarian: cooking vessels and tools such as whetstones, knives and quern fragments. The evidence points to an urban household or households with a mixed economy, engaging in industry and the processing of foodstuffs, but with no clear evidence of consumption beyond the requirements of everyday food preparation and basic clothing.

A possible smithy has also been identified through the presence of slag, hearth base fragments and a tile hearth at the County Sports site, Staines (Jones 2010, 229). The evidence suggests that both iron and copper were worked here between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries in the backlands of a plot fronting onto to a major intersection at the heart of the town. A further hearth base at the nearby MacKay Securities site may relate to a further workshop (Jones 2010, 318). Finds from County Sports perhaps provide hints at a higher standard of living here: a mortar is suggestive of the processing of condiments, while a tuning peg and stylus are unusual finds from the site, suggestive of literacy and the pursuit of leisure activities. Querns from McKay Securities, as well as a pin from this site and a needle from County Sports, also provide hints of the mixed household economy, where domestic and economic activities blurred into one another. A final, but less conclusive, example is the evidence from Stricklandgate, Kendal (Cumbria), where deposits of fifteenth- to seventeenth-century date provided evidence for smithing in the form of hearth base fragments, as well as the working of lead, the processing of crops and the production of leather and textiles (Whitehead, Williams and Mace 2013). Environmental evidence indicates that this area was colonised by wild plants, suggesting that the area to the rear of the tenement plots was given over to industrial activities and the range of activities represented may suggest that this land was used by several households (it is noteworthy that further smithing slag was recovered from a cess pit at 104–112 Stricklandgate, as well as from Elephant Yard at the opposite end of the street (Bagwell 2004; Hair 1998)). This perhaps demonstrates how industrial waste might have been redeposited, or how this area of the town was engaged in industrial production across several households, creating a distinction between economic and domestic activities.

This can be seen in other towns where urban decay in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries created opportunities for such spatial separation (Jervis 2016a, 22). Here though, it is suggested that spaces behind plots were left clear of development, creating a space which could be colonised by a range of industrial activities (Cumbria County Council 2002, 18). Elsewhere, small quantities of slag are redeposited and indicate nothing more than the undertaking of smithing within the wider vicinity.

This urban evidence can be contrasted with that from rural sites. Goodall (2011) cites examples of smithies from within our study period at Waltham Abbey (Essex; on the home farm of an Augustinian abbey) and within manorial complexes at Goltho (Lincolnshire) and Alstead (Surrey). These are all specialised buildings, with features including hearths, lined pits used as water boshes (troughs for cooling ironworking tools) and clear concentrations of hammerscale. Within our dataset, comparable or less conclusive evidence comes from a moated rectory at Wimbotsham (Norfolk; Shelley 2003). Here though, it is unlikely that this small quantity of material relates to a permanent smithy, but rather temporary smithing to service the household of higher than average status. This evidence shows how smithies formed a part of the infrastructure of a manorial household. The smith may have been a waged employee, kept on retainer or provided service through the employment of their skills. Increasingly through the fourteenth century, this relationship was commercialised (Britnell 2015). More conclusive is the evidence from Huish (Wiltshire), where a building with two hearths and numerous metal objects and ash is interpreted as a farrier's workshop or smithy (Thompson 1972; Goodall 2011, 2). This was situated close to a barn and the church, probably within a manorial complex; the finds from the site including a Venetian soldino. At Tresmorn (Cornwall), a smith's forge has been excavated adjacent to a longhouse with a byre, within a croft at the centre of a small settlement (Beresford 1971). This would appear to provide direct evidence of a household with a mixed economy, combining pastoral agriculture with smithing, presumably to serve the needs of the settlement.

In contrast, other archaeological evidence points to smithing being undertaken at the periphery of settlements, often in association with other agricultural or industrial activity. At Shotton (Northumberland), smithing debris including slag and smithing hearth bottoms were recovered from an industrial zone which also housed a pottery kiln at the south-eastern limit of the village (Muncaster and McKelvey 2013). In contrast to other sites, the industrial infrastructure, which dates to the earliest part of our period, was associated with a building; however, this is interpreted as a workshop or drying shed, rather than a house (Muncaster and McKelvey 2013, 146). Similarly, at Edenbridge (Kent) smithing evidence, but no other material culture or structural evidence, was recovered from two sites at the periphery of the settlement and it is unclear if this was redeposited (Jeffery 2012; Oxford Archaeology 2005); however, further

evidence came from a ditch to the rear of tenement plot within the core of the settlement (Thorne 2005). Also in Kent, at Great Chart, a small quantity of (probably redeposited) smithing waste was recovered from an area which had previously been wooded, again possibly suggesting the location of a forge at the periphery of settlement (Holden 2009), while at Lamberhurst the excavated enclosure discussed previously appears to have been used for smithing as well as smelting (Turner 2004). Potentially similar evidence comes from Lexham (Norfolk) where hammerscale and hearth bottom fragments were recovered from an enclosure which also had evidence of a kiln or dryer, perhaps used for drying crops (Wilson *et al*. 2012). Elsewhere, smithing debris was redeposited, perhaps being incorporated with domestic waste removed from settlements and spread on fields. Such evidence comes from a number of rural excavations including those at Lydd Quarry (Barber and Priestly-Bell 2008) and Beere (Devon; Jope and Threlfall 1958).

Where buildings identified as smithies have been excavated, it seems that they often formed a part of the infrastructure of manorial sites (Goodall 2011, 2). This suggests that it is not necessarily the case that a smith owned their forge or the equipment within it. It is therefore noteworthy that several of the smiths referred to in the escheators' records do own tools and, in some cases, seem to have had possession of the forge as well. The majority of the archaeological evidence for rural smithing identified here comes from the periphery of settlements. This does not preclude these putative smithies being a part of manorial infrastructure, but the association of these smithies with agricultural enclosures, other industrial infrastructure (as at Shotton) or agricultural infrastructure (as at Lexham) may be suggestive of smithing being one component of mixed domestic economies, or the co-operation between households in the use of land held around settlements. In towns such as Yarm, Tonbridge, Doncaster and Staines, there is strong evidence for households specialising in smithing, although not necessarily exclusively. The evidence for the status of these households is limited, but the evidence from County Sports, Staines is perhaps suggestive that smithing households could maintain a comparatively high standard of living, an observation further corroborated by the wealth of possessions in the lists of smiths such as Robert Sprakelyng. Elsewhere though, for example in Kendal or at the peripheral sites around North Molton, where smithing and smelting were taking place, it seems that smithing could have been combined with agricultural activities or other crafts, perhaps by the same household, or through multiple households using decayed or peripheral locations within and around the town. When we talk of medieval industry being undertaken at the 'household' level, we think of houses as multipurpose spaces, but the evidence presented here for metalworking suggests that there may have been an increasingly clear distinction between domestic and industrial spaces, even as industry became an increasingly important element of household economies.

Non-ferrous metalworking

There is little evidence of bronze production in medieval England, with copper alloys largely being imported from continental Europe (Goodall 1981; although see Blair, Blair and Brownsword 1986 for evidence of bronze production in Oxford). Bronzesmiths would commonly have utilised scrap metal, and this may be one reason for the valuation of some cooking pots within the escheators' records by weight (see Chapter 3). Copper alloy scraps and sheet are difficult to interpret, as these could be a resource for metalworking, but could equally be remnants of household objects. Perhaps most compelling is an assemblage of 203 fragments of scrap metal from a house at Island Farm, Ottery St Mary (Devon), which are interpreted as being associated with the repair of copper alloy vessels (Mudd *et al*. 2018). Other scraps cannot be clearly interpreted as evidence of copper alloy working unless associated with other associated finds such as crucibles, moulds or copper slag. Five sites provide such evidence, all of them urban (Table 8.11).

The best evidence comes from Caldewgate, Carlisle, an area where goldmsiths are also known to have operated in the medieval period (Jones 1980). A sequence of three workshops was excavated on the street frontage, associated with hearths and furnaces (Giecco and Dearham 2005). A large quantity of metallurgical waste was recovered, including moulds for the casting of cauldrons and skillets, as well as scraps of broken vessels which were due to be melted down. This workshop appears entirely separate from any residential premises, with the finds from the workshop phase being entirely industrial in nature. A building interpreted as a metalworking workshop has also been excavated at 8 Westgate, Ripon (Yorkshire; Stirk 2003). Here, mould fragments, probably associated with the production of metal vessels, were recovered from the remains of a building within an urban tenement. The presence of further fired clay within another building may be suggestive of an additional structure associated with this industry. Quarry pits on the site probably relate to the extraction of clay for the moulds, the clay used geologically matching that underlying the site. Dating to the fourteenth–fifteenth centuries, on the basis of ceramic evidence, the evidence for metalworking appears to extend beyond a thirteenth-century property boundary. This is similar to the evidence from Kendal, discussed above, where industrial activity in the backlands of urban properties appears to extend beyond property boundaries, perhaps taking advantage of decayed plots (Whitehead, Williams and Mace 2013). As with other industrial sites, little domestic waste was recovered from the site. At 50 Finsbury Square, Islington, mould fragments associated with copper alloy working, probably the production of bells and vessels, were recovered from several quarry pits and a ditch (MOLAS 1999). Scrap metal from this site may also have been pieces salvaged for recycling, and a small quantity of copper alloy waste was recovered from the site. Although not associated directly with a workshop, this waste comes from an area of varied industrial production; in the

Table 8.11: Summary of evidence for non-ferrous metalworking in the archaeological dataset.

County	Site	Copper alloy				Lead		
		Mould	Waste	Pin Making	Hearth/Furnace remains	Mould	Waste	Hearth/Furnace remains
Copper Alloy Working Sites								
Cumbria	John Street Bronze Working Site, Caldewgate, Carlisle	X	X		X			
Kent	Creedy's Yard, Greenwich			X				
Middlesex	50 Finsbury Square, Islington	X	X					
Wiltshire	35 West Street, Wilton		X		X			
Yorkshire	Rear of 8 Westgate, Ripon	X						
Copper Alloy Waste								
Devon	3–5 Lower Fore Street, Exmouth		X					
Middlesex	County Sports, Staines		X					
Norfolk	Red Lion Public House, Caston		X					
Suffolk	Cedars Park, Stowmarket		X					
Wiltshire	New Flats, St John's Hospital, Wilton		X					
Yorkshire	Greyfriars Road, Doncaster		X					

(*Continued*)

Table 8.11: Continued.

County	Site	Copper alloy				Lead		
		Mould	Waste	Pin Making	Hearth/Furnace remains	Mould	Waste	Hearth/Furnace remains
Copper Alloy and Lead Working Waste								
Kent	Grange Farm, Gillingham		X				X	
Norfolk	Land off Church Lane, Barton Bendish		X				X	
Suffolk	Land East of Days Road, Capel St Mary		X				X	
Yorkshire	Wharram Percy		X				X	
Lead Working Waste								
Cumbria	Shaw's Wiend, Appleby-in-Westmorland						X	
Devon	Pig's Paradise, Lundy						X	
Hampshire	Market Quay, Fareham						X	
Kent	Lydd Quarry						X	
Middlesex	11–23 City Road , Islington						X	
	43–61 Prescot Street, Tower Hamlets						X	

(*Continued*)

Table 8.11: Continued.

County	Site	Copper alloy				Lead		
		Mould	Waste	Pin Making	Hearth/Furnace remains	Mould	Waste	Hearth/Furnace remains
Lead Working Waste								
Norfolk	Itteringham (Bacton to King's Lynn Transco Pipeline)						X	
	Walpole Electricity Substation						X	
	Brandon Lane, Weeting						X	
Northamptonshire	Southwick					X	X	X
Northumberland	Rowhope Burn						X	
	West Whelpington						X	
Wiltshire	Pennings Road and St. Andrews Road, Tidworth						X	
Yorkshire	Low Fisher Gate, Doncaster						X	
	45 High Street and Land to the rear of Quaker Lane, Northallerton						X	
	Ailcy Hill Playing Fields, Priest Lane/Residence Lane, Ripon						X	

fifteenth century, the area of marsh was drained and utilised for clay extraction (including, perhaps, for mould production) and leather working, as well as the production of metal objects. A final site which provides less concrete evidence of a workshop is 35 West Street, Wilton (Wiltshire), where fragments of crucible, furnace lining and copper alloy slag were recovered, but with no other finds (Wessex Archaeology 2006). This evidence suggests that bronze casting was a primarily urban industry, undertaken in specialist premises rather than being closely integrated with domestic structures.

Evidence for a more specialist form of copper alloy working, pinning, comes from remains at Creedy's Yard, Greenwich (Kent; Cooke and Philpotts 2002). Here, two pinners' bones and a large quantity of pins suggest pinning during the sixteenth century. This evidence is concentrated on an area referred to as Bear Yard, to the rear of high status townhouses fronting onto the river and smaller tenements along East Street. Caple's (1991) analysis of documentary references to pinning suggest this to have been a primarily urban industry, although the site is unusual in dating to the sixteenth century, a period when English pinners faced competition from large quantities of imported products, although this evidence for pin manufacture corresponds with Caple's analysis of pins themselves, which suggests slow change in material and style, contradicting the historical evidence for turbulence in the industry.

In contrast to copper alloy working, the evidence for lead working is largely from rural contexts. Lead was mined from several locations across England, however the majority of these – the Mendips, the Peak District and County Durham – fall outside of the project study area, and no archaeological evidence of lead extraction and working has been identified from the sites examined (see Blanchard 1981). There is a small amount of evidence for the secondary working of lead. This typically takes the form of a small number of lead fragments or fragments of lead slag, suggestive of small-scale working for repair rather than large-scale working. Pewterers were typically based in larger towns, so we would not expect to find waste from the large-scale production of lead alloy vessels (Hatcher and Barker 1974, 40–1). An exceptional site is that at Southwick, where the ground floor of a thirteenth-century stone hall was reused for lead casting in the later fourteenth–fifteenth centuries (Johnston, Bellamy and Foster 2001). The archaeological evidence includes a series of small hearths, a casting pit and 73 mould fragments from the production of skillets or cauldrons. This was a short-lived phase of activity, the building being repurposed as a kitchen and brewhouse in the fifteenth century (see Figure 3.6). It is possible that the upper floor of the house remained habitable during this phase, but it is likely that the building was in decay, perhaps leased to a metalsmith, before being redeveloped as a service block for a new vicarage in the fifteenth century. This site provides exceptional evidence for a rural workshop producing latten or pewter vessels. In contrast, the largest group of lead working waste comes from Walpole (Norfolk; Clarke 2009). This was recovered from a saltern and is likely associated with the repair of vessels used for salt extraction. Similar

evidence comes from Seasalter (Kent; Thompson 1956). At Lydd, offcuts of lead sheet are likely associated with the production of fishing weights (Barber and Priestly-Bell 2008, 186–7). With the exception of the workshop from Southwick, the picture offered by the archaeological evidence is therefore not of large scale lead working, but rather small-scale working by those repairing or producing items to undertake their primary economic activity.

Evidence from Cornwall provides some insight into the organisation of the extraction of another non-ferrous metal – tin – and its relationship to the household. A stone mould from the settlement at Treworld, dating to the earlier part of our period, may be suggestive of a household engaged in tin working, but other finds from the site include a loomweight and whetstones, suggesting a mixed household economy (including pastoral husbandry, demonstrated by the presence of a byre) (Dudley and Minter 1966). Excavation and landscape research at St Neot suggests that households engaged in tin production in the fifteenth century were not self-sufficient, the area specialising in pastoralism (Austin, Gerrard and Greaves 1989). Hatcher (1969; 1974) argues that although mining households engaged in agriculture, this does not mean that they were self-sufficient, but rather were undertaking a mix of specialised agricultural and industrial activities, with demand for food and land rising in periods of intensive tin output. Tin mines and mills operated at a range of scales, being owned by landlords, wealthy merchants or households. The evidence from the excavated tin mill at West Colliford is ambiguous: phases of rebuilding could represent periodic large-scale modification and capital investment, or ongoing, lower level maintenance (Austin, Gerrard and Greaves 1989, 20–1). For example, at Retallack the mills formed a part of the lease-hold lands of the manor of Merthen in 1506, with a descendant of the lessee purchasing nearby woodland, seemingly to provide fuel for the mill in 1545 (Gerrard 1985, 175). Tinners often collaborated to invest in tinworks, with shares being held both by local householders and merchants from surrounding towns (Gerrard 2000, 38–9). The excavated evidence from West Colliford Mill includes ironwork and preserved wood associated with the carpentry of the mill, as well as fragments of the mortar stones used to crush the ore, reminding us of the interdependencies between trades. In addition to a small quantity of pottery, the only 'domestic' find is a copper alloy spoon from the mill and a small quantity of pottery, largely associated with preserved foodstuffs and the transportation of liquids, rather than the cooking wares recovered from an associated farmstead at Bunnings' Park (Austin, Gerrard and Greaves 1989). Other finds from the farmstead include an iron sickle and whetstones, perhaps for the sharpening of agricultural tools. These, as well as the occurrence of a longhouse with a byre, point to the mixed economy of this agro-industrial landscape, and a general spatial separation of domestic and industrial activities.

To move to the working of precious metals, it is necessary to turn to the records of the escheator and coroner (Table 8.10). In relation to the tools of their crafts, the records provide little detail: in 1418 Patrick Goldsmyth, a

goldsmith of Evesham (Worcestershire) simply had 'tools of goldsmithery' (valued at 18d), although an anvil 'for the art of goldsmithery' worth 4d is listed separately.[400] Other goods in his list are difficult to interpret. Silver bands for cups (2s) and a silver banded mazer (16d) may be stock, and his other goods are unremarkable, comprising simple bedding and cooking wares. He did have a dagger, sheath and silver adorned belt, however, valued at 13s 4d and perhaps personal possessions, although whether the belt points to a high standard of living or access to silver is unclear. A second goldsmith is Richard Swalwa of Great Torrington (Devon). In 1422 he had goldsmithing tools worth 40d, but his list is more instructive for highlighting the mixed economy of his household. He was an agriculturalist with two cows and a calf. A note at the end of list states that several parts of a horse-mill belonging to Swalwa, value unknown, had been withheld by a local gentleman. The presence of a 'small mill' in the list is suggestive of the processing of cereals, and he had elaborate cooking equipment, including a spit, andiron, griddle and brandiron, and tableware including a pewter salt cellar, a lead ewer, three saucers and five pottingers. He also had two hangings, four cushions and a banker, two tablecloths and two napkins. All this points to investment in non-essential interior goods of comfort and display, and are suggestive of a home with specialised spaces for cooking, dining and sleeping. Here we have a small-town household with a high standard of living, specialising in the craft of goldsmithing.

Our evidence therefore provides a variety of insights into the role of households in different stages of the processing and working of non-ferrous metals. Copper alloy and precious metals seem to have been worked primarily in towns. While is difficult to draw inferences on the living standards of bronzesmiths, the evidence of goldsmiths suggests that they were able to maintain a high standard of living, although as the goods of Robert Sprakelyng demonstrate, high living standards could also be obtained by ironsmiths. The evidence relating to lead shows how metalworking could be subsidiary to other industries, while the evidence from Cornwall provides important insights into the balance between industrial and agricultural income to household incomes.

Metalworking households: summary

The evidence of the role of the metal industries in household economies is highly variable. Even within urban settlements, most sites associated with iron working are representative of a mixed household economy, in which iron working is associated with other crafts or agricultural production. It is noticeable that in many cases, the evidence for smithing is situated away from domestic occupation, either in backlands as at Kendal, within a distinct plot as at Carlisle, or perhaps extending into decayed plots as might be suggested for Ripon. It can be

[400] E339.

suggested that urban and rural smiths could maintain a high standard of living. The archaeological evidence from Cornwall in particular shows a clear linkage between households engaged in metallurgy and agriculture, and the escheators' records also point to the extensive agricultural activities of some smiths. In the countryside, as in towns, the organisation of metalworking is variable. In some cases, as at Huish, Tresmorn and Southwick, it took place within settlements, although not necessarily within the croft inhabited by the smith, whereas in other places ironworking and other industrial activities were undertaken at the periphery of settlements, as at Shotton and Edenbridge, or in more isolated locations, as seen, for example, at Lamberhurst. This variability is likely due to a variety of factors: the scale of production, patterns of land ownership and the agricultural regime. For smiths largely engaged in the repair of objects or activities such as farriering, a workshop within a settlement would be desirable. For those undertaking primary smithing, a more peripheral location, close to the smelting furnaces and fuel sources, might be more appropriate, while the production of objects could also take place away from settlements, closer to the sources of fuel, reducing transport and labour costs. It is this complex interplay of land and woodland management, labour, technology and access to resources which means that a single model for rural metalworking cannot be advanced, with the organisation and its contribution to household economy varying in accordance with a range of contextual variables.

Conclusion: production and household economies

In this chapter we set out to address three questions. Firstly, how did households obtain their income? The evidence presented here demonstrates clearly that by-employment and mixed economies were typical of households engaged in craft production. Even in urban contexts or those areas particularly associated with industry such as the Weald of Kent, it was usual for households to combine the processing of raw materials or the production of objects with some form of agricultural production. The evidence for textile production demonstrates that households that were primarily agricultural in character, engaged in the processing of at least some of the wool and other fibres that they produced, while the archaeological evidence for retting, tanning and metalworking all show spatial relationships between agricultural and industrial activities in the countryside and around small towns. In the context of debates around gendered work (e.g. Bennett 1996; 1997; Phillips 2013; Whittle 2013; Whittle and Hailwood 2020), we might consider that this mixed household economy provides further evidence for understanding the household, rather than the individual, as a productive economic unit, but one in which labour was differentiated between different household members. We might think primarily of women and children processing the wool from a household's sheep flock or undertaking tasks such as brewing to supplement household income. The

labour-intensive nature of tasks such as tanning likely meant that the division of labour was more fluid, with household members being drawn into a variety of activities at particular stages of production or times of year (see Whittle and Hailwood 2020, 17). We can also begin to think about the relationship of agricultural and industrial activities through the year, with tasks such as smelting or smithing likely being undertaken at quieter points in the agricultural calendar. One feature of the organisation of production which is clear from our evidence is that while the house was one place of work, it was not the only place in which work was undertaken by households. The marked differentiation between spaces of production and living spaces within the archaeological dataset is striking. This corresponds with Whittle's (2011, 138) definition of 'home' as expanding beyond the house (see also Goldberg 2011) and the findings of an analysis of the ordering of goods in the escheators' lists which suggests associations of goods with particular spaces (Briggs *et al*. 2019).

This brings us to the second question of how rural households contributed to the production of goods for the market. The most compelling evidence relates to the processing of raw materials, the spinning of wool and other fibres into yarn, and the smelting and primary smithing of iron. However, we can also demonstrate that industries typically associated with larger urban centres also took place in the countryside. Perhaps most striking in this case is the evidence of lead alloy working at Southwick, but we can also demonstrate engagement of rural households in tanning, sometimes at quite high intensity. The evidence for tanning is particularly interesting as it demonstrates the different ways in which urban and rural households needed to organise production, rural households engaging most commonly in the less labour-intensive light tanning, with heavy leather production being more limited to larger towns due to the capital required to undertake this industry at scale. While the contribution of rural producers to the textile industry is well understood, the limited evidence presented here suggests that we have perhaps underestimated the role of rural producers in other, less well studied, industries. Although production was presumably at a lower scale than that in larger towns where artisans could specialise in intensive production, the scale of the production of goods in the countryside was still significant.

Finally, some rural producers were wealthy and could maintain a high standard of living. In some cases this may have been through investment in livestock and land, as shown, for example, by the smith Robert Sprakelyng, while there are hints that other smiths such as that operating at the County Sports site in Staines were able to invest in luxury foodstuffs or objects. However, we are also able to begin to see that both rural and small-town producers invested heavily in capital: stocks of skins for tanning or the infrastructure required for tanning or dyeing as seen, for example, at Lavenham and Doncaster. It is this relationship between investment in 'consumer' and capital goods which we consider further in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 9

Understanding Variability in Consumption

In considering how consumption habits vary across medieval society, Jeremy Goldberg's (2008) stimulating comparison of later medieval urban and rural inventories provides a useful starting point. His argument, that through consumption patterns we can see the emergence of distinctive urban identities and taste, is based on the following contentions:

- High proportions of the wealth of rural households were invested in livestock and farming equipment (what Goldberg terms 'outside' goods);
- Rural peasant households invested preferentially in 'essential' household goods, such as cooking equipment, rather than luxury goods;
- Luxury goods, specifically in Goldberg's study cushions and silver spoons, are predominantly features of urban households.

Goldberg (2008) identifies three broad modes of consumption, which he equates to a contrast between urban and rural systems of value. The 'peasant' value system privileges the acquisition of animals and goods associated with production, with a minority of wealth invested in luxury domestic items. The majority of household goods are what Goldberg terms 'essentials' related to cooking and sleeping, although no precise distinction is made between what might be considered a luxury or essential good, a distinction which is surely highly contextual. The second is an urban 'bourgeois' system of value, in which domestic goods, including luxuries, account for the majority of household possessions by value and quantity. The third is a 'mercantile' value system, related to the 'bourgeois' system, but with elevated investment in economic goods associated with production or trade.

This model appears to indicate a clear and marked distinction between urban and rural patterns of consumption. However, there are ambiguities within

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Goldberg's sample, which are of particular relevance to the current study. The majority of Goldberg's urban inventories are from larger towns, principally King's Lynn, York and London. However, the sample from York includes an individual identified as a husbandman and also incorporates a number of examples from the small-town of Northallerton. The goods of these households equate more closely to the rural signature (Goldberg 2008, 128). This demonstrates that the 'urban' mode of consumption may be more complex than this tripartite system of value suggests. Goldberg's rural sample is based on a small group of rural, non-elite inventories, principally the collection of Yorkshire probate inventories mentioned in Chapter 2, and a group of sixteenth-century inventories from Nottinghamshire. The analysis presented here provides an opportunity, firstly, to assess the wider applicability of Goldberg's rural signature across a larger and more diverse sample of rural households, and secondly to explore in greater detail the extent to which 'rural' systems of value characterise the consumption of small-town households.

Small towns are a problematic category of place. Some small boroughs may be indistinguishable from a contemporary rural settlement in terms of economy, while others were larger settlements or had particularly specialised economies (see Dyer 2002; 2003). It is this ambiguity, and the fact that many small-town dwellers were closely engaged in agriculture, with small towns being a distinctive component of the manorial economy (Dimmock 2001; Goddard 2011; Jervis 2016b) which has led to the 'urbanity' of these places being contested. The data presented here offers an opportunity to compare small-town evidence against that from larger towns presented by Goldberg, and that from categorically rural settlements. This will result in a clearer understanding of whether the consumption patterns evident in larger towns resonate in these places of more ambiguous urban status, and if they contrast in any way with those of their rural counterparts. A characteristic of models such as Goldberg's is that they are necessarily generalising, and therefore a key aim of our analysis is to understand the extent to which we can see variability in the consumption habits of households both between town and country, but also in relation to wealth and social status. A further consideration arising from Goldberg's model concerns the classification of goods as 'inside' or 'outside', which suggests a clear spatial division between 'domestic' and 'productive' activities, a distinction which is not tenable when one considers both the archaeological and historical evidence for the multifunctional character of medieval houses and the areas around them (Briggs *et al.* 2019; Dyer 2013).

Hamling and Richardson (2017), discussing the later part of our period, suggest that the material trappings of domestic life were one way in which the 'middling sort' emerged as a cohesive social group, with its members sharing an understanding of material meaning and the entangling of objects within relationships of obligation and community building. Yet, as in Goldberg's analysis, their source material is primarily urban in character and is not well suited to considering the rural and lower status households which characterise the

datasets under consideration here. We must take care in considering consumption to avoid privileging the urban and middling experience; it need not be the case that non-elite households were seeking to emulate those of higher social standing, nor that they were left behind, but rather that they constructed specific material worlds which generated distinctive ways of life. The aim of this chapter is to contextualise consumption, to understand how and why it varied across the spectrum of medieval society.

In testing and expanding upon Goldberg's thesis, it is necessary to refine the dataset. For both the escheators' and coroners' datasets, lists have been selected for analysis for which we have a degree of confidence that they are representative of the range of goods present in a household, defined as having items for cooking and sleeping, or one of these functions plus a general category of household utensils (*utensilia domus*), with a minimum of three of thirteen functional categories of goods being represented.[401] These functional categories are further divided into:

'Economic' objects:

- Animals
- Farming equipment
- Craft materials and equipment
- Grain and fodder
- Textiles
- Fuel

and 'Domestic' goods:

- Tableware
- Cooking and food preparation
- Furniture
- Soft furnishings
- Personal items
- Arms and armour
- Clothing and personal adornment

It is also necessary to exclude any lists for which goods are not valued in such a way as to facilitate analysis based on function (for example where lists have total valuations, or group large numbers of items). This leaves a sample of 169 escheators' lists and 60 coroners' lists. Households have been identified as rural or living in small towns, the latter comprising places with a borough charter (as indicated by Letters 2006), or identified by Everitt (1967) as a market town in 1600. We are dealing with small towns, as larger towns were in most

[401] These functional categories are a refinement of those used in Briggs *et al*. 2019, which is based on a smaller dataset analysed at a preliminary phase of the project.

cases excluded from our survey and are in any case poorly served by our documentary sources (see Chapter 2). While imperfect, as places with borough status did not always develop into towns, and some non-boroughs had urban characteristics but may have declined by 1600, this approach offers the most straightforward and meaningful way of distinguishing between small-town and rural households in the context of this dataset. Archaeological evidence lends itself less well to the quantitative approach undertaken here, but provides valuable additional insights into household expenditure, particularly in relation to investment in houses themselves and as an indicator of small-scale market interactions.

A challenge in undertaking this analysis lies in defining a 'household', and in assessing the completeness of the lists as representations of the possessions of a household. Our analysis demonstrates that there are clear differences in the practices of felony forfeiture across England (see Chapter 2). Some lists of chattels clearly represent the items that a person had with them when they were apprehended, but other lists are more ambiguous and may point to instances of extended households. The claims of dependents in relation to forfeited property and the extent of crown rights are unclear. Understanding this in terms of the escheators' and coroners' records has implications for how we consider household consumption. We assume each record relates to the goods of a household; the seized goods of the named male head, being those in his name which, by extension, were those of his household. However, there may be instances of forfeiting male individuals within a household (e.g. servants, sons, apprentices), who only had a small number of items to their name. In such instances, we might expect their lists to include items such as bedding, clothing, animals and craft resources but, perhaps, not kitchen goods or other items which might have been the legal possessions of the household head.

Of interest in this regard are the possessions of John Vynche and Clement Vynche of Yalding (Kent).[402] Both had their goods seized in 1428 as outlaws in civil litigation. John, a labourer, had two piglets, a worn brass pot and pan, and a coverlet, two sheets and two blankets. Clement, a fuller, had a table and worn chair, a brass pot, two worn pans, a chest, a coverlet, a worn blanket, one sheet and two tin plates. This was, however, the second time that Clement's goods had been seized following outlawry. In 1422, he had three piglets, two bullocks, a brass pot, and 'a bed, namely coverlet, blankets, sheets, mattress and canvas'. Such lists are difficult to interpret. Are these two households? Or were these seemingly related individuals living under the same roof? As a labourer, John potentially had a precarious existence relying on wages. In 1428 at least Clement Vynche had furniture, while both had metalware and bedding. We can also draw on other lists which were deemed to be 'incomplete' for the purposes of this analysis. While many of the apparent omissions clearly relate to regional inventorying practices or the apprehension of a felon in flight, others

[402] E101; E102; E622.

could relate to household organisation. There are numerous lists which include bedding but no cooking ware, or metal vessels with no bedding, while others include only animals or agricultural produce. Without supporting information about the organisation of these households, the data we present here must therefore be considered minimal and perhaps represent the goods of the male head of a household, his wife and children, but not necessarily the goods of everybody within a household unit. Even where the forfeiting individual is the household head, the list may not include the goods of everybody in the household. The analysis here must therefore be predicated on some assumptions: that the goods listed are those of nuclear family units, which may form one component of an extended household, and that the lists identified here as being the most comprehensive through the application of the criteria described above are close to full representations of the possessions of these units. A number of interpretations can be put forward for those lists which are excluded: that they are partial lists; that they are the goods of households with meagre possessions; that they are lists of persons other than the household head, such as servants or sons; or that goods were removed prior to seizure.

We begin the chapter by focussing on Goldberg's contention that higher proportions of the wealth of rural households took the form of animals, grain and agricultural equipment, and by considering the ownership of animals. We then go on to examine the ways in which households invested in comfort and display, as well as houses themselves, before discussing the ways in which urban and rural households might be considered distinctive from each other.

Investment in economic goods by rural and small-town households

Central to Goldberg's argument is a distinction between two types of goods: 'household' goods such as furniture, tableware and cooking equipment; and 'outside' goods including animals and agricultural equipment. Rural households are characterised by a higher proportion of wealth being held as 'outside' goods, while urban 'bourgeois' households show the opposite pattern. The urban 'mercantile' signature sits somewhere between these extremes, but is characterised by the acquisition of a more diverse range of domestic goods, a phenomenon considered later in this chapter. As we have suggested elsewhere (Briggs *et al*. 2019), such a dichotomy is problematic, because it fails to appreciate the fluid and highly variable spatial arrangements of the medieval home. Here we adopt a similar distinction between items associated with economic production (e.g. animals, grain, tools) and those associated with domesticity (e.g. cooking equipment, tableware and furniture). While we acknowledge there may be an overlap between these categories, such an approach allows us to assess our data in relation to Goldberg's arguments. If Goldberg's bourgeois and mercantile consumption patterns are common to both larger and smaller

Table 9.1: Summary of minimum, mean and maximum proportion of inventoried wealth represented by domestic and economic goods by households in the escheators' and coroners' records.

		Domestic			Economic			No. Lists
		Min.	Max.	Mean	Min.	Max.	Mean	
Escheators'	Rural	1.5%	100.0%	47.7%	0.0%	98.6%	52.3%	125
	Small-Town	9.8%	100.0%	63.8%	0.0%	90.2%	36.2%	44
Coroners'	Rural	2.3%	100.0%	33.5%	0.0%	97.6%	64.1%	47
	Small-Town	3.3%	100.0%	60.8%	0.0%	67.6%	32.9%	13

towns, we would anticipate that higher proportions of the inventoried wealth of small-town households would be held as domestic goods, particularly items associated with comfort and display, than is the case for rural households. However, such a dichotomous approach runs the risk of homogenizing households within the two categories, small-town and rural; we might anticipate that a range of other variables, including occupation, wealth and household structure might all contribute to variability in consumption habits, as is suggested both by Goldberg's distinction between bourgeois and mercantile consumption, and his observations regarding the 'rural' signature of certain town dwellers.

Across the escheators' records, there are 125 lists relating to rural households and 44 relating to small-town households which meet our criteria. The figures for the coroners' records are lower: 47 relating to rural settlements and 13 relating to small-town dwellers. At a general level, both the escheators' and coroners' records bear out the contention that small-town households invested higher proportions of wealth in domestic goods and rural households invested higher proportions of wealth in economic goods (Table 9.1). For example, in the escheators' records, on average 64% of a small-town households' inventoried wealth (i.e. the total value of their goods) was held as domestic goods, while the figure is 48% for rural households. This broadly conforms to the contrast between urban and rural households observed by Goldberg. Among rural households, the mean level of inventoried wealth held as economic goods is higher than that held as domestic goods in both datasets, while the inverse is true for small-town households. The coroners' data suggests a more marked distinction between small-town and rural consumption than the escheators' data, perhaps implying greater deviation between small-town and rural lifestyles in the sixteenth century. However, these average figures conceal a wide degree of variation. In 1420 the husbandman Nicholas Gulot from the village of Bramley (Hampshire) held all of his inventoried wealth as domestic goods, including cooking vessels, bedding and tableware, while at the other extreme in 1381 Matthew de la Haye of Frindsbury (Kent) held 83% of his

inventoried wealth as economic goods including brewing equipment, four piglets and various arable produce.[403] This variation is also evident among small-town households; in 1386 John Sele of Thirsk (Yorkshire) held all of his inventoried wealth in domestic goods including bedding, furniture and cooking equipment, in contrast to the yeoman Thomas Gribell of Tenterden (Kent) who held a range of animals and agricultural equipment, accounting for 89.5% of his inventoried wealth in 1451.[404]

To understand this variability better, we can divide households along two lines; firstly, by the principal source of household income as suggested by their possessions, and secondly by the total value of a households' goods, which provides a rough proxy for wealth. Within the escheators' and coroners' records, most households were agriculturalists or had some form of agricultural element to their household economy. For the purposes of this analysis, they can be divided based on the profile of their possessions into households with small numbers of animals (typically five or fewer),[405] pastoral agriculturalists (who possessed a larger number of animals), arable agriculturalists (who possessed quantities of grain listed as in a field, sheaf or barn, and/or ploughing equipment) and mixed agriculturalists (who possessed animals along with items suggesting engagement in arable husbandry). Those with small quantities of animals or engaged in pastoral husbandry could also possess small quantities of grain within their homes (e.g. as bushels or sacks). Finally, a small group of households possessed no objects which provide evidence of occupation, while others clearly relate to artisans, some of whom had some form of agricultural interest.

The escheators' data shows that the distinction between small-town and rural households is less marked when households are divided by household economy in this way (Table 9.2). For example, the average proportion of inventoried wealth held as economic objects in households undertaking pastoral agriculture is 63.1% for rural households and 67.5% for small-town households. Although the sample size is small, it appears to be the economic activities of the household, rather than whether they were resident in town or country, which determined the proportion of inventoried wealth held as economic objects. The only deviation from this pattern is artisans, for whom the proportion of inventoried wealth held as economic objects is considerably higher in town (51.1%) than country (18.8%). Here though the sample size is small. A third of the value of the goods of the weaver William Horne relates to his two pairs of looms, his only economic objects.[406] In contrast, the wooden hoops, barrels and brewing equipment belonging to the cooper John Coupere account for 66% of his goods

[403] E557; E663.
[404] E891; E477.
[405] Exceptions are instances where households had a small quantity of fowl, five or fewer meat-bearing animals, and one or two horses, or only possessed horses in quantities which do not suggest horse breeding.
[406] E483.

Table 9.2: Average proportion of inventoried wealth held as economic (Eco.) and domestic (Dom.) goods in the escheators' and coroners' records in relation to household economy.

	Escheators'						Coroners'					
	Rural			Small-Town			Rural			Small-Town		
	No. Lists	Mean Eco.	Mean Dom.	No. Lists	Mean Eco.	Mean Dom.	No. Lists	Mean Eco.	Mean Dom.	No. Lists	Mean Eco.	Mean Dom.
Few animals	21	44.9%	55.1%	6	30.4%	69.6%	9	59.2%	39.9%	2	43.4%	54.0%
Few animals (with grain)	10	59.2%	40.8%	2	56.8%	43.2%	1	51.7%	48.3%	0	–	–
Pastoral	13	63.1%	36.9%	5	67.5%	32.5%	4	64.5%	35.2%	2	52.5%	46.0%
Pastoral (with grain)	10	70.9%	29.1%	1	84.9%	15.1%	1	83.4%	16.6%	0	–	–
Arable	7	64.3%	35.7%	1	34.1%	65.9%	1	76.8%	22.7%	1	44.6%	53.7%
Mixed	31	78.5%	21.5%	2	88.0%	12.0%	22	47.8%	47.8%	2	50.0%	25.2%
Grain	6	29.8%	70.2%	4	26.5%	73.5%	1	46.1%	53.9%	0	–	–
Artisan	6	18.8%	81.2%	7	51.1%	48.9%	0	–	–	2	23.1%	65.7%
Artisan with agricultural interest	2	64.7%	35.3%	3	59.2%	40.8%	2	50.7%	49.3%	1	39.7%	59.9%
No evidence of occupation	19	8.9%	91.1%	13	9.1%	90.9%	6	14.8%	83.8%	3	1.7%	98.2%
Total	**125**			**44**			**47**			**13**		

by value.[407] These examples demonstrate the need to be cautious in extrapolating generalising conclusions from a small number of lists.

The coroners' dataset is much smaller, but across all categories of household there appears to be a stronger polarisation in the relative proportion of inventoried wealth held as economic goods between town and country. This is most noticeable among those households with few animals, for whom in the countryside economic goods account for an average of 59.2% of inventoried wealth, whereas the figure is only 43.4% for urban households. This data therefore supports the interpretation of an increasing polarisation between urban and rural in the sixteenth century.

A particular feature of the data when broken down by total inventoried wealth (Table 9.3) is that in both the escheators' and the coroners' datasets, for both rural and small-town households, the households with the highest proportion of inventoried wealth held as domestic goods are those who appear poorest (Figure 9.1a and b). It is also noticeable that there is greater divergence in the proportion of inventoried wealth held as domestic goods among poorer than wealthier households in town and country, with this being more marked in the coroners' dataset (Figure 9.1b) Within the escheators' records among those of middling wealth, there is an approximately equal proportion of inventoried wealth held as economic and domestic objects, though with a slight emphasis on economic objects in rural households and domestic ones within small-town households. Among the small-town and rural datasets, the proportion of wealth held as economic goods appears to increase with wealth at a similar rate (Figure 9.2), with the goods acquired by rural households being skewed slightly towards the economic. This correlation between wealth and investment in economic goods is also reflected in the coroners' records; however, there is substantially higher investment in economic goods by rural than urban households within this dataset (Figure 9.2b).

This analysis demonstrates that consumption patterns are more complex than indicating a straightforward dichotomy between small-town and rural households in terms of the relationship between 'economic' and 'domestic' goods. While the small-town datasets are skewed towards domestic goods and the rural datasets towards economic goods, this distinction is less marked in the escheators' data than in the coroners' data. There are also clear variations along lines of economic activity, with agricultural specialists existing within small towns, who held significant proportions of their wealth as economic goods, roughly in accordance with levels of wealth; specifically, the poorest households invested the highest proportions of wealth in domestic goods, perhaps because they could either not afford or were unable to keep livestock. The remainder of this section explores the economic goods present in these households in greater depth. We then move to consider investment in household

[407] E304.

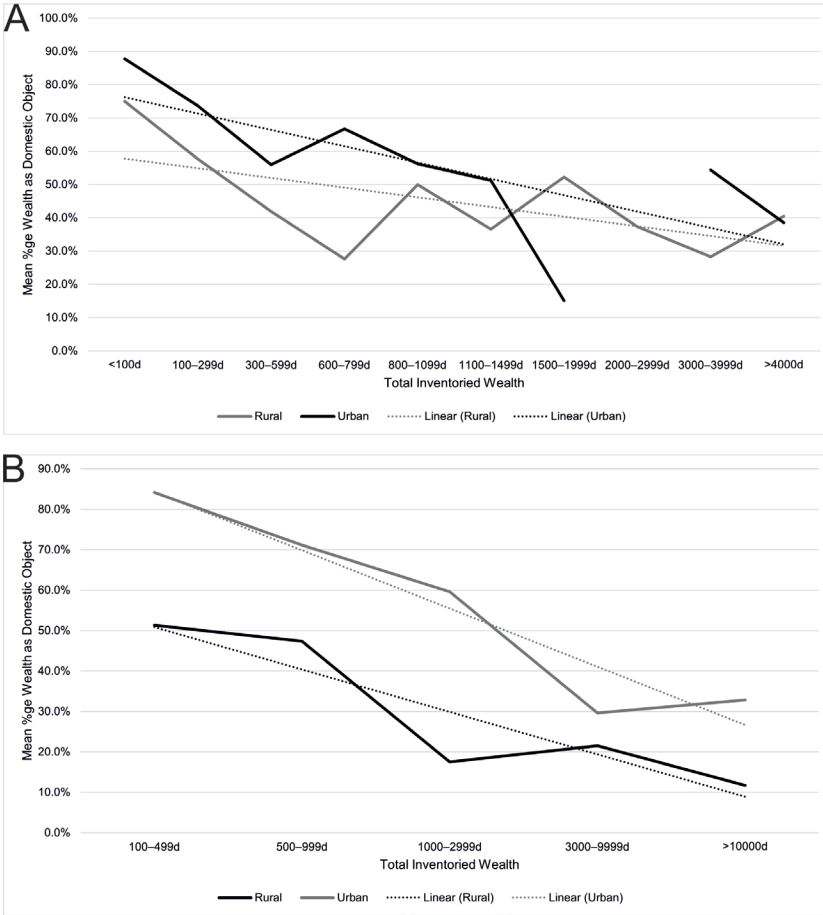

Figure 9.1: Average proportion of inventoried wealth held as domestic possessions. A: Escheators' records. B: Coroners' records.

fabric and the acquisition of 'domestic' goods, including those identified by Goldberg as markers of an urban value system.

Rural agriculturalists

Agriculturalist households of various forms comprise the vast majority of the escheators' lists. This section discusses the possession of animals and, to a lesser degree, the arable activities of these households. In considering the relationship between animal ownership and wealth, it is important to take into account not only the costs of the animals, but also of the feed and infrastructure required to keep them. While archaeological evidence cannot directly inform us about

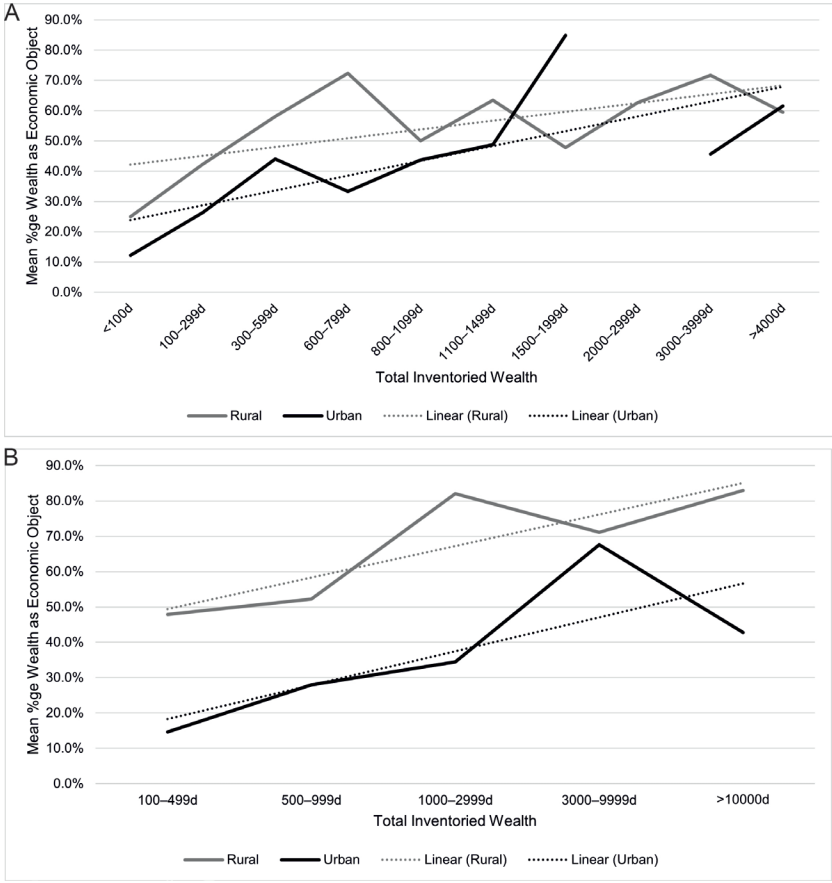

Figure 9.2: Average proportion of inventoried wealth held as economic goods. A: Escheators' records. B: Coroners' records.

the animals kept by particular households, the remains of the associated infrastructure can reveal information about the relationship between agriculture and domestic space. Dyer (2019a, 37) notes that peasant holdings could include a range of structures for housing animals, but that documentary evidence suggests that their livestock was 'not as comprehensively sheltered as those on the demesne'. As he observes, archaeological evidence provides some context for small-scale husbandry, with house compounds often incorporating shelters for animals. Particularly good examples have been excavated at Foxcotte (Hampshire) where an ancillary structure, from which a curry comb and horseshoes were excavated, might reasonably be interpreted as a stable (Russel 1985). A similar ancillary block, also associated with equestrian equipment forms a part of a house compound at Wythemail (Northamptonshire; Hurst and Hurst 1969; Figure 9.4), while a cobbled floor adjacent to a house at Martinsthorpe

Table 9.3: Average proportion of inventoried wealth held as economic (Eco.) and domestic (Dom.) goods by wealth in the escheators' and coroners' datasets.

Total Inventoried Wealth	Rural			Small-Town		
	No. Lists	Mean Eco.	Mean Dom.	No. Lists	Mean Eco.	Mean Dom.
Escheators'						
<100d	16	25.0%	75.0%	6	12.2%	87.8%
100–299d	26	42.4%	57.6%	13	26.3%	73.7%
300–599d	33	58.1%	41.9%	11	45.5%	53.9%
600–799d	9	72.4%	27.6%	1	33.3%	66.7%
800–1099d	6	50.1%	49.9%	5	54.6%	45.4%
1100–1499d	6	63.5%	36.5%	2	48.8%	51.2%
1500–1999d	4	47.8%	52.2%	1	84.9%	15.1%
2000–2999d	8	62.7%	37.3%	0	–	–
3000–3999d	7	71.8%	28.2%	2	45.7%	54.3%
>4000d	10	59.5%	40.5%	3	61.5%	38.5%
Coroners'						
100–499d	11	47.9%	51.3%	3	14.6%	84.2%
500–999d	10	49.2%	50.4%	3	44.6%	53.7%
1000–2999d	12	82.0%	17.5%	4	34.5%	59.6%
3000–9999d	10	71.1%	21.6%	1	67.6%	29.6%
>10000d	4	83.0%	11.7%	2	42.7%	32.9%

(Rutland) is interpreted as a byre (Wacher 1964). Other examples from our study area, at West Cotton (Northamptonshire; a stable), Cedars Park (Suffolk; a sheepcote) and Gomeldon (Wiltshire; a barn) are highlighted in Dyer's (2019a) survey of animal housing.

Evidence can also be found for the storage and processing of crops, for example a barn and corn drying kiln associated with a longhouse at Beere (Devon; Jope and Threlfall 1958). Enclosed crofts also allowed for small-scale arable or horticultural cultivation within the houseplot. Particularly good examples are the excavated houses and enclosures at West Whelpington (Northumberland; Jarrett 1970; Evans and Jarrett 1987). Here the plots are laid out around a green which could have been used as common pasture, with sizeable enclosures to the rear of the houses. In upland areas in northern and south-western England,

a particularly close relationship between animal husbandry and domesticity is indicated by the distinctive longhouse, or byre-house, form (Dyer 2019a, 38–40). These have a byre at one end, sheltering households and their animals under one roof. Once thought to be widespread across England, reinterpretation of this type by Gardiner has shown it be to a localised form of dwelling, well suited to the requirements of upland pastoralists (Gardiner 2000; 2014b). In Devon and Cornwall, for example at Okehampton Park (Devon; Austin 1978), at sites on Dartmoor (Beresford 1979) and at Treworld (Cornwall; Dudley and Minter 1966), clear examples of byre houses exist, and similar types occur in Yorkshire, Northumberland and the north-west. The type appears to become common from the thirteenth century (Gardiner 2014b, 158), being one of a suite of solutions adopted by households for the sheltering of animals particularly during the winter months. As proposed by Dyer (2019a), this evidence demonstrates how in rural contexts, domestic architecture was adapted to the needs of agriculturalists, with different arrangements potentially reflecting both the general husbandry regime, but also the scale and organisation of animal ownership. It is to this variability that we can turn through a discussion of the evidence offered by the escheators' and coroners' records.

Households with small numbers of animals

In the escheators' records, most households that possessed five or fewer animals had total inventoried wealth of under 600d/£2 10s (Table 9.4). Similarly, the majority of those within this class in the coroners' records had total inventoried wealth of under 500d/£2 1s 8d. However, even within the broad categories of agriculturalist that we have applied to the escheators' and coroners' datasets, there is considerable variability in the number and range of animals possessed by households. This is well demonstrated by those households possessing few animals (Table 9.5). In 1428 John Vynche of Yalding (Kent) had two piglets (12d) and in 1383 Simon Brayn of Boddington (Northamptonshire) had one pig (12d).[408] Vynch and Brayn both had total inventoried wealth of <100d and their limited holdings of livestock appear typical for the least well-off households within our sample; their lists probably reflect the archetypal pig-keeping economy of the poor cottager or labourer. We might anticipate that such households are underrepresented in the dataset, for example if an animal had recently been slaughtered and eaten, but was yet to be replaced. Any relationship between wealth and livestock ownership inevitably has a degree of circularity to it, as livestock often account for a significant proportion of inventoried wealth (see also Goldberg 2008, 128). We can see the profile of animal ownership changing in relation to household wealth. Among those households with total inventoried wealth of 100–299d, there are some, such as Nicholas

[408] E101; E750.

Table 9.4: Relationship between the inventoried wealth and household economy of rural households in the escheators' and coroners' datasets. The percentages show the proportion of each category of household economy within each wealth class.

Agriculturalists									Non-Agriculturalists		Total Lists
Total Inventoried Wealth	**Few animals**	**Few animals (with grain)**	**Arable**	**Grain**	**Pastoral**	**Pastoral (with grain)**	**Mixed**	**Artisan with agricultural interest**	**Artisan**	**No economic objects**	
Escheators: Rural											
<100d	19.0%	10.0%	14.3%	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%	3.2%			38.8%	**16**
100–299d	38.1%	20.0%	42.9%	50.0%	15.4%	0.0%	3.2%		33.3%	27.8%	**26**
300–599d	33.3%	40.0%	42.9%	16.7%	53.8%	10.0%	16.1%		33.3%	16.7%	**33**
600–799d	4.8%				15.4%	10.0%	12.9%	50.0%			**9**
800–1099d						10.0%	9.7%			5.6%	**6**
1100d–1499d						10.0%	12.9%		16.7%		**6**
1500–1999d		10.0%					6.5%			5.6%	**4**
2000–2999d		10.0%				30.0%	6.5%		16.7%	5.6%	**8**
3000–3999d		10.0%			7.7%	20.0%	6.5%	50.0%			**7**
>4000d	4.8%				7.7%	10.0%	22.6%				**10**
Total Lists	**21**	**10**	**7**	**6**	**13**	**10**	**31**	**2**	**6**	**19**	**125**

(*Continued*)

Table 9.4: Continued.

Agriculturalists									Non-Agriculturalists		Total Lists
Total Inventoried Wealth	**Few animals**	**Few animals (with grain)**	**Arable**	**Grain**	**Pastoral**	**Pastoral (with grain)**	**Mixed**	**Artisan with agricultural interest**	**Artisan**	**No economic objects**	
Coroners: Rural											
100–499d	66.6%				50.0%		4.5%	50.0%		33.3%	**11**
500–999d	33.3%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%			4.5%			33.3%	**10**
1000–2999d					50%	100.0%	31.8%	50.0%		16.7%	**12**
3000–9999d							40.9%			16.7%	**10**
>10000d							18.2%				**4**
Total Lists	**9**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**4**	**1**	**22**	**2**	**0**	**6**	**47**

Table 9.5: Patterns of livestock ownership by rural households with few animals in the escheators' records. Values = number of lists containing specific combinations of animals.

Total Inventoried Wealth	Pig	Cattle	Horse	Pig & Sheep	Cattle & Pig	Cattle & Horse	Horse & Pig	Total Lists
<100d	4			1				**5**
100–299d	2	2	1	1	1	3		**10**
300–599d	1	4			2	2	2	**11**
600–799d		1						**1**
1500–1999d							1	**1**
2000–2999d		1						**1**
2000–3999d		1						**1**
>4000d			1					**1**
Total Lists	**7**	**9**	**2**	**2**	**3**	**5**	**3**	**31**

Foscote of Cosgrove (Northamptonshire) whose livestock were similar to those of the poorest households; he possessed a single piglet (18d) in 1424.[409] Others had cows, perhaps for domestic milk production. John Walssh of Tamerton (Devon) had one cow (8s) in 1430, while in 1380 Hugh of St Albans of Apethorpe (Northamptonshire) had a calf (40d).[410] These represent different types of investment: cow ownership involved a large investment in an animal which can produce milk over a long period of time, but which required care, grazing and large quantities of food, while pigs represent a lower-level investment in an asset which was essentially disposable but required minimal care. We can see this spectrum of animal ownership continuing among those households with total inventoried wealth of 300–599d, for whom cattle ownership was of considerable importance. Households typically possessed one or two cows, presumably for domestic dairying. William Shepherd of Holcot (Northamptonshire) had a cow (7s 4d) and a mare (6s 8d) in 1403, and Ralph Tyryngton of Lund, Yorkshire, had a cow (9s) and two sows (20d each) in 1418.[411] Similarly, the chaplain Simon Hull of Blatherwick (Northamptonshire) had one cow (8s) among goods worth £2 in 1410, and another chaplain, John Curson of Gateforth (Yorkshire) had a cow (5s 6d) and a horse (2s) among goods worth 27s 2d in 1415.[412]

[409] E631.
[410] E746; E1502.
[411] E1604; E277.
[412] E299; E400.

Additional evidence for this small-scale, domestically focussed mode of animal husbandry is provided by two artisans with animals. Thomas Isenden of Sutton Valence (Kent) was clearly a tailor or mercer as his list contains large stocks of cloth, specifically described as 'in the shop' (Chapter 8). In 1383 he also possessed a single pig (18d), a cow (5s 6d) and two horses (15s) (the cow and horses being described as *debilis*). Similarly, the smith Robert Smyth of Sutton (Wiltshire), had two horses and a sow in 1422.[413] These instances suggest a model whereby households with low or modest levels of wealth were able to acquire small numbers of animals for domestic level production or consumption. This was a mode of husbandry that was also utilised by wealthier artisans (like Isenden) to supplement their main income, with animals perhaps kept within the house compound, or messuage.

Among the coroners' records, the animals possessed by households with small numbers of animals are typically cattle, but usually held alongside other animals. For example, when he committed suicide in 1543, John Hudson of Kirk Hammerton (Yorkshire) had a cow (10s), heifer (3s 4d) and two sheep (2s), and in 1580 Miles Backhouse of Preston (Westmorland) had a cow (16s), swine and poultry (valued together at 5s).[414] Occupations are provided for three individuals: all are labourers rather than being identified as agriculturalists, supporting the suggestion that this small-scale animal ownership was largely intended to support the needs of a household as a supplement to other sources of income.

The wealthiest households in the escheators' dataset display a somewhat different pattern of animal ownership. The wealthy franklin William Leder of West Lavington (Wiltshire) had possessions worth just over £13 15s in 1404. His animals are distinctive, comprising only three horses (40s).[415] Similarly, the clerk, John Waryn of Cardinham (Cornwall), had six high value horses (£12) among goods valued at £93 13s 4d in 1419.[416] Horse ownership was not unique to these households, for example William Alleyn of Sancroft (Suffolk) had one horse (5s) and one cow (6s) among goods valued at 20s 4d in 1384,[417] but the number and value of the horses kept by these wealthier households is distinctive.

Most surprising are households possessing bullocks rather than cows. These may have been acquired as potential traction animals, or retained as stud animals, which could potentially deliver some income to the household. Examples are John Stoyle of Charlton (Worcestershire) who had three bullocks (5s 4d each) in 1420, and the husbandman Richard West of Watford (Northamptonshire) who in 1447 possessed three bullocks (18d each, a strikingly lower value) and two mares (2s).[418]

[413] E768; E1281.
[414] C42; C271.
[415] E28.
[416] E1503.
[417] E777.
[418] E364; E123.

Pastoral agriculturalists

This group comprises households that possessed six or more animals, with no clear evidence for engagement in arable agriculture. Across the rural escheators' sample, there are 23 households which can be identified as primarily pastoral agriculturalists, of which 13 possessed small quantities of grain (Table 9.6). These are spread across the spectrum of household wealth, with variation exhibited around the number of animals and level of specialisation. For example, in 1389 Thomas Burmond of Gaywood (Norfolk), whose goods were worth 13s 4d, had three sheep (20d), two piglets (16d) and one pig (20d), and two calves (2s 4d).[419] As such, he might be considered a small-scale domestic agriculturalist, like those already encountered. Similar examples are present in the coroners' records; the shepherd Richard Webbe of West Lavington (Wiltshire) had nine sheep (18s) and poultry (6d) in 1565.[420]

In the escheators' records, the stated occupations of those who were pastoralists suggests a degree of agricultural specialisation. The pastoralists comprise four husbandmen and a yeoman, as well as five clergymen (three parsons and a clerk) and a butcher, Roger Harre of Herne (Kent) whose two heifers with calves (valued together at 13s 4d) and five bullocks (20s) might be considered a form of stock for his business.[421] The coroners' records offer a similar picture: the three pastoralists whose occupation is stated comprise two husbandmen and a shepherd.

In the escheators' evidence, it is only in households with a total itemised wealth of over 600d/£2 10s that we see larger-scale, specialist pastoral husbandry. In 1402 John Shepherd of West Acre (Norfolk) had goods valued at over £2 16s, including 40 sheep (£2) and two pigs (6s 8d).[422] However, others, such as John Bowyer, probably of Great Wishford (Wiltshire), had a wider range of animals: 10 sheep (10s), three bullocks (10s), two cows (12s) and a horse (10s), his goods being worth 60s 4d in 1433.[423] The possession of large sheep flocks, typically with a variety of other animals, is also a feature of the wealthiest households. For example, Henry Sparowe of Blacktoft (Yorkshire) whose goods were valued at £10 12s 6d in 1417, had 24 sheep (40s) and 35 ewes and hoggets (6d each), as well as a horse (3s 4d), a mare (6s 8d), three calves (6s) and two pigs (5s).[424] Similarly wealthy agriculturalists with large sheep flocks can be observed in the coroners' sample. John Jacson, a husbandman of Bampton (Westmorland) had 20 sheep (40s), a heifer (5s), two bullocks (20s), a cow (16s), two oxen (40s) and two horses (26s 8d) in 1575, for example.[425]

[419] E841.
[420] C158.
[421] E900.
[422] E1422.
[423] E1530.
[424] E583.
[425] C215.

Table 9.6: Livestock ownership by rural pastoralist households in the escheators' and coroners' datasets.

Total Inventoried Wealth	List No.	Value of Forfeited Property (d)	Name	Year	Occupation	Cattle	Fowl	Horse	Pig	Sheep	Total Animals
Escheators'											
100–299d	841	160	Thomas Burmond	1389	–	2			3	3	8
	886	160	Richard del Cote	1392	–					6	6
300–599d	405	300	John Ruthland	1435	Husbandman				28		28
	311	409	Walter Fox	1420	–	1		1		8	10
	612	462	Thomas Taliour	1423	–	2		3	4		9
	108	480	John Gange	1428	Husbandman	3		2	2	4	11
	625	496	John Balle	1424	Yeoman	3		1	6		10
	1538	500	Richard Penyng	1434	Husbandman					8	8
	900	560	Roger Harre	1398	Butcher	9					9
	363	568	John Style	1420	Husbandman	6					6
600–799d	1422	680	John Shepherd	1402	–				2	40	42
	1530	724	John Bowyer	1433	–	5		1		10	16
	127	763	Robert Larke	1448	–	7		1		11	19
800–1099d	773	960	Richard Sexteyn	1384	–	5		2	8		15
1100d–1499d	1	1204	William Moldessone	1372	–	1			1	30	32

(*Continued*)

Table 9.6: Continued.

Total Inventoried Wealth	List No.	Value of Forfeited Property (d)	Name	Year	Occupation	Cattle	Fowl	Horse	Pig	Sheep	Total Animals
Escheators'											
2000–2999d	399	2600	Richard Ellughton	1415	Parson	6				60	66
	37	2780	Henry Milner	1404	–	9		3	4	26	42
	728	2874	John Rennewey	1422	Parson	3		2		211	216
3000–3999d	185	3140	John de Stonton Wyuill	1379	Parson	2	29	4	10		45
	217	3976	John Plumme	1412	–	4			5		9
	583	3976	Henry Sparowe	1417	–	3		2	2	59	66
>4000d	785	4417	William de Brereton	1383	–				12		12
	215	5702.5	Hugh Cetur	1414	Clerk			11			11
Coroners'											
300–399d	158	369	Richard Webbe	1565	Shepherd		2			9	11
1600–1999d	173	1752	Walter Barnard	1566	Husbandman	5				40	45
2000–2999d	428	2004	Nicholas Cussyn	1597	–	5	5		1	6	17
	215	2620	John Jacson	1575	Husbandman	6		2		20	28

The largest-scale pastoralist within the coroners' sample is Walter Barnard of Erlestoke, Wiltshire, who had three cows (58s), two bullocks (8s), 28 wethers and 12 ewes (£3 6s 8d) in 1566.[426] In such households we might see animals being possessed for different reasons: sheep for wool production, providing an important source of household income, and the pigs and cows providing for the subsistence needs of the household.

Mixed agriculturalists

This group comprises households with evidence for both arable cultivation and pastoral husbandry. Within both the escheators' and coroners' datasets, mixed agriculturalists are typically the wealthiest agriculturalists in the samples (Table 9.4). At the lower end of the spectrum, John Reynekyn had goods worth 6s 8d in 1384 (Table 9.7).[427] These include 2s 4d-worth of barley in sheaf and a yearling calf (2s), suggesting a household primarily concerned with cultivation and keeping a cow for domestic use. Similarly, John Beneyt of Shaw (Wiltshire) had wheat worth 3s 4d in stack, and two heifers (2s 8d) in 1421.[428] A similar individual among the coroners' records is Robert Davys of Wroughton (Wiltshire) who possessed a cow (10s), a mare (3s 4d), a pig (2s) and a 'yarde' of barley (12d) in 1565.[429]

There are examples of households of middling wealth who appear to have engaged in larger-scale arable and pastoral husbandry. In 1393 William Watte of Whitstable (Kent) had goods worth 34s 2d, including 12 ewes (8s) as well as a wheat crop (2s), peas and vetch in sheaf (2s) and further quantities of wheat (3s) and oats (16d).[430] In contrast, John Chyddeston of Royton (Kent) had three acres of wheat (40d per acre), four acres of peas and vetch (12d per acre) and three 'yards' of barley (18d total), in addition to the yield of 0.5 acres of hay meadow (20d), but his animals were limited to a sow and seven piglets (4s 4d), a cock and six hens (14d) and four geese (12d) when he was indicted for treason in 1381.[431] Similarly, William Newman of Boughton Mallard (Kent) had a cow (23s 4d) and three small hogs (8s), as well as an acre and a 'yarde' of wheat (13s 4d), an acre and a half of beans (10s) and an acre of oats (6s 4d) when he committed suicide in 1550.[432]

The evidence shows two general models for middling agrarian households in the dataset. The first is characterized by the pastoralists specialising in sheep husbandry, but with small numbers of other animals discussed in the previous

[426] C173.
[427] E717.
[428] E528.
[429] C172.
[430] E902.
[431] E669.
[432] C104.

Table 9.7: Livestock ownership and the occurrence of crops in the lists of rural households identified as mixed agriculturalists in the escheators' and coroners' lists. Items: C = Cattle, F = Fowl, H = Horse, P = Pig, S = Sheep, N/S = Not Stated, B = Barley, H = Hay, Ma = Malt, Ms = Maslin, O = Oats, B/L = Beans or Legumes, R = Rye, St = Straw, V = Vetch, W = Wheat, U = Unidentified crop, P? = Possible plough. For crops: C = Crop growing in fields; H = Harvested crop; X = Crop listed but state undefined.

Total Inv. Wealth	List No.	Name	Year	Occ.	Animals						Crops											P?
					C	F	H	P	S	N/S	B	Ha	Ma	Ms	O	B/L	R	St	V	W	U	
Escheators'																						
<100d	717	John Reynekyn	1384	–	1						H											
100–299d	528	John Beneyt	1421	H	2															H		
300–599d	1599	Henry Le[..ill..]n	1403	–	1						H								H			
	902	William Watte	1393	–	2		1	3	12						H	H			H	C & H		
	669	John Chyddeston	1381	–		11		8			C	C				C			C	C		
	883	William Malyne	1393	–	3				18												H	
	1451	Robert Ferthyng	1410	–	3		2														X	
600–799d	556	John Spark	1420	H	4		1	6	6		C											
	721	John Golyff	1385	–	3		2		20		H				H							
	720	John Mason	1385	–	1			2	10				X		H					H		
	1279	John Hobelet	1408	–	4		2	1							C	C			C	C		
	1233	Thomas Piper	1395	–	2		1	2			C									C		
800–1099d	1275	John Gobyon	1408	–	1		4		32		C					C	C			C		
	1558	John Margretson	1445	Y				4			H					H				H		

(*Continued*)

Table 9.7: Continued.

Total Inv. Wealth	List No.	Name	Year	Occ.	Animals						Crops											P?
					C	F	H	P	S	N/S	B	Ha	Ma	Ms	O	B/L	R	St	V	W	U	
Escheators'																						
1100d-1499d	879	Thomas Buk	1393	–	2		3														H	
	712	William Mavndevile	1419	–			4	3	30			H			H							
	492	Richard Talmage	1417	P			1		28		H					H				H	X	Y
	314	? Bassyngham	1438	H	6		1		7				X	H		C & H				H		
1500–1999d	226	John Neet	1413	Bu	9		4		5				X								H	
	677	Robert Senyng	1381	–			1	16	12		H		X		H	H	H	H	H	C & H		
2000–2999d	256	John Croos	1390	–	4				40	4		H	X								C	
	244	John Stevenson	1416	–			2		3			X								H	H	
3000–3999d	588	William Thomson	1417	–	7																C	
	257	William Cole	1390	–	3		4	3	40		H	H				H				H		Y
>4000d	230	Robert Warcop	1414	–	16										C	C				C		
	274	Thomas Nele	1415	H	9		3				X				X	X	X			X		
	348	William Wodeward	1418	Y	11		5	17			H	H				H		H		H		Y
	1440	John Caresbroke	1403	–		24	2			2	H					H				H		Y
	148	John Malleroy	1448	P	11		4		260		X				X	X				X		
	1213	John Ingram	1392	C	30						C				C	C				H		
	45	John Moigne	1405	–	114	8	10	84				H	X	H		H				C & H		

(*Continued*)

Table 9.7: Continued.

Total Inv. Wealth	List No.	Name	Year	Occ.	Animals						Crops											P?
					C	F	H	P	S	N/S	B	Ha	Ma	Ms	O	B/L	R	St	V	W	U	
Coroners'																						
300–399d	172	Robert Davys (alias Peters)	1565	–	1		1	1			C											
500–999d	104	William Newman	1550	–	1			3				H			C	C				C		
1100–1599d	184	Walter Poyncherde	1566	–	2		1													C		
	280	Nicholas Hillez	1584	–	5		3	8							C					C		
	431	Robert Hunter	1597	–	3							H								C	H	
2000–2999d	230	John Wyvenden	1576	L	9	5		4				H			C & H					C & H		
	185	Peter James (alias Vyncent)	1566	H	2		2		32		C									C		
	194	Robert Crowne	1567	–		3		2	3		X		X		X	X		X		X		
	183	Edward Burges jnr	1566		4		1	6	4		C	H			C	C			C	C		
3000–3999d	289	Anthony Curlynge	1585	L	3		5	6	5												H	Y
	121	William Abbot	1552	H	4		3	9	X		C &H		X						C	C		Y
	202	John Sperenge	1569	–	4	4		2			C &H		X		C					C		Y

(*Continued*)

Table 9.7: Continued.

Total Inv. Wealth	List No.	Name	Year	Occ.	Animals						Crops											P?
					C	F	H	P	S	N/S	B	Ha	Ma	Ms	O	B/L	R	St	V	W	U	
Coroners'																						
4000–5999d	346	George Bowre	1588	–	6	1	1														C	
	472	William Payne	1600	Y	4		1	3	10	1	H		X		H	H			H	C & H		
6000–9999d	467	Elisha ('Ellizeus') Gregory	1600	H	2		2	4	15		H				H					C		
	126	Thomas Thomas	1551	T?	1		3	7			H	H		H					H	H		Y
	446	William Bacheler	1541	–	5	12	1	3	14		H		X		C & H					C & H		
	212	John Sharpe	1574	–	5		1		47		H	X			X	X	X					
>10000d	358	Henry Neale	1590	–	20		3	8	209												C & H	Y
	458	John Feyrechilde	1598	–	21	2	X	11	171	7			X		C					C		Y
	447	Henry Cooper	1595	–	23		5	11			C	X	X	C						C & H		Y
	382	John James	1577	Cl	31		14	21	223		H	H	X		H	X			X	C		

section. For instance, in 1404 John Gobyon of Duston (Northamptonshire) had an acre of peas (22d), 4 acres of barley (8s 6d), one rod (0.25 acres) of rye (12d) and an acre of wheat (2s), as well as 20 ewes and 12 lambs (22s), a cow (4s), two mares (5s) and two horses (6s), among goods worth 67s 3d altogether.[433] Similarly, Peter James of Tollard Royal (Wiltshire) had a flock of 32 sheep (£3), two geldings (20s), a cow (13s 4d), a bullock (5s), five acres of wheat and five of barley (each valued at 33s 4d) in 1566.[434] The second is typified by mixed husbandry, specialising in arable cultivation with small numbers of animals, typically working animals or those required to meet the household's subsistence needs. For example the yeoman John Margretson of Market Overton (Rutland) had goods valued at over £4 in 1445, including wheat (6s 8d), barley (20s) and peas (10s) in stacks, and four pigs (2s each), while Nicholas Hillez of Colbury (Hampshire) had half an acre of wheat (6s) and half an acre of oats (2s), as well as three cows (60s), two 'little calves' (5s), a mare (6s) eight pigs (6s), and two colts (6s 8d) in 1584.[435]

Among the very wealthiest households, large cattle herds could also be possessed. John Moigne of Warmington (Northamptonshire) had goods valued at over £75 in 1405.[436] These include 84 heads of cattle (£33 12s), as well as 14 bullocks (70s) and 14 calves (23s 4d). The coroners' records provide the example of Henry Cooper of Cowlinge (Suffolk), who in 1595 had 14 cows (£30), three calves (24s) and six two-year-old bullocks (£7 10s), as well as pigs, horses and a variety of crops growing in named fields.[437] However, of the four wealthiest households within the coroners' records, the remaining three specialised in sheep husbandry, having substantial flocks, with smaller quantities of cattle, pigs, horses and poultry.[438] Even when operating at this scale, however, some households seemingly kept livestock purely for domestic consumption. In 1418, the yeoman William Wodeward of Abbots Morton (Worcestershire) had only a single cow (6s) and three yearling calves (6s), a sow and seven piglets (3s) and six hoggets (3s 6d), in addition to oxen and horses and a large quantity of produce and faming equipment among goods valued at just over £20.[439]

As with the pastoralists, where occupation is stated, the mixed agriculturalists appear to largely be agricultural specialists. In the escheators' group, the most common occupation is husbandman (four), followed by two yeomen and two clerics. A more unusual case is the carpenter John Ingram of Nursling (Hampshire) who had eight oxen (eight marks, or £5 6s 8d), 10 cows (100s), six bullocks (30s) and six calves (18s), as well as four acres of wheat, nine acres

[433] E1275.
[434] C185.
[435] E1558; C280 (here '*shutt.*' is understood to mean pigs, though it is possible the reference is to sheep).
[436] E45. See Chapter 2 for Moigne and his list.
[437] C447.
[438] C358; C382; C458.
[439] E348.

of barley and five acres of oats and pulses, suggesting that he was a well-established agriculturalist despite his stated occupation.[440] The mixed agriculturalists in the coroners' sample include two husbandmen, a yeoman and a clergyman. However, as with the escheators' records, there are individuals who are associated either explicitly or implicitly with other occupations. Thomas Thomas of Longbridge Deverill (Wiltshire), treated here as a tanner on the strength of his tan-vats and hides, had a small number of animals, conceivably to serve the needs of his household (seven pigs worth 14s, a cow worth 20s, and three geldings worth £3). However, he also had cartloads of wheat, barley and maslin, as well as plough, indicating cultivation.[441] The lists of two labourers, John Wyvenden of Hawkhurst, Kent and Anthony Curlynge of St Lawrence, Kent, are also suggestive of small-scale mixed agriculture to supplement their wage. Both had cattle and pigs, and Curlynge also possessed three ewes and two lambs.[442] Wyvenden had four acres of wheat 'in the ground' as well as in the sheaf, while Curlynge had a crop of corn in a barn.

Arable agriculturalists

The evidence relating to arable agriculturalists is limited, but demonstrates a problem with utilising lists of goods and chattels as a measure of household wealth, due to the exclusion of land, itself inconsistently mentioned. This is well illustrated by the list of Richard Cogayn, who has inventoried wealth of only £1, yet was cultivating five acres with mixed crops (Table 9.8).[443] We know the value of his crops, but not of the land on which they grew. The wealthiest arable agriculturalist is John le North, who possessed three horses. He had grain growing, valued at over 20s, but no detail about acreage or crop type appears.[444] The list of husbandman Simon Bolt of Shell (Worcestershire) does not contain any crops, but he possessed three horses and a plough, suggesting, perhaps, substantial arable acreage.[445] While these households appear poor on the basis of their household goods, the range of crops cultivated and the information on arable acreage implies the opposite. This is also likely to be the case for some mixed agriculturalists, who may have held significant proportions of their wealth in land. Among the coroners' records there is only one arable agriculturalist, William Bridge of Stelling (Kent). His list follows the trend evident in the escheators' data: he is apparently of modest wealth (total inventoried wealth 872d) but farmed at least 1.5 acres.[446]

[440] E1213. The description of the wheat indicates that the crop had been 'entered into the barn in sheaves'.
[441] C126.
[442] C230; C289.
[443] E1461.
[444] E840. The legibility of the crop valuation is poor.
[445] E360.
[446] C309.

Table 9.8: The occurrence of crops in the lists of rural households identified as arable agriculturalists in the escheators' and coroners' records. C = Crop growing in fields; H = Harvested crop. These lists are limited to those where it is clear that the felon was engaged in the cultivation of these crops, and excludes lists which feature quantities of grain (the category 'grain' in Table 9.4).

Total Value of Forfeited Property	List No.	Name	Date	Barley	Wheat	Peas	Vetch	Oats	Grain	Hay	Plough	Cattle	Horse
Escheators'													
100–299d	1461	Richard Cogayn	1410	C	C	C							1
	671	John atte Ryzth	1381	C	C	C	C	C					
	360	Simon Bolt	1420								Y		3
300–599d	99	William Benet	1428						C				
	904	Richard Swetere (alias Mason)	1393					C					
	840	John le North	1389						C				3
Coroners'													
500–999d	309	William Bridge	1586		C			H		H	Y	2	

Summary: rural agriculturalists

This analysis demonstrates that while there may be a tendency for rural households to hold much of their wealth as economic goods, the reality is considerably more complex. Wealthier households often held higher quantities of wealth in animals than poorer households, while the evidence of animal ownership shows investment in livestock for a range of reasons, ranging from domestic consumption to large scale wool, dairy, or meat production across the social spectrum. Pastoralists, whatever their wealth, typically held higher proportions of their wealth as animals compared to other groups, although there is considerable variability. In contrast, those specialising in arable husbandry held lower proportions of their wealth in animals, only possessing draught or traction animals. It is clear that a generalisation which says rural households invested principally in livestock and land cultivation overlooks a number of important issues. While it is the case that wealthy households held large quantities of land (where it can be observed) and livestock, the analysis here highlights a trend for poorer households to invest primarily in domestic goods, and for those of middling wealth to specialise in agricultural production to varying degrees; economic specialisation was apparent in the proportion of household wealth held as economic, rather than domestic, goods. Goldberg (2008, 128) emphasises that the proportion of inside:outside goods only tells part of the story, and that a key difference between urban and rural value systems relates to *how* households consumed, what he characterises as systems of value. What this analysis demonstrates is that while Goldberg (2008) is correct in his general contention that rural households held significant proportions of their wealth as livestock and in objects connected with agrarian production, a detailed analysis demonstrates that precisely *how* this wealth was held varied considerably in relation to the type of agriculture practised, and a household's wealth. In other words, the analysis suggests that although a general contrast between Goldberg's urban evidence and the rural evidence presented here can be sustained, the rural 'signature' is highly variable.

Small-town agriculturalists

Small-town households could also have substantial agricultural interests, making it necessary to consider the extent to which the patterns of investment in livestock and agricultural production seen in the countryside apply to them, as is implied by Goldberg's (2008) analysis of lists from Northallerton. Archaeological evidence for 'urban' cultivation and pastoralism is more ambiguous than in rural contexts. At Low Fisher Gate, Doncaster (Yorkshire), excavated features include a corn-drying oven, dating to the later thirteenth to early fourteenth centuries (McComish *et al.* 2010, 84). At other sites, such as The Spinney, Sherburn-in-Elmet (Yorkshire), archaeobotanical evidence is suggestive of

the grazing of animals nearby (Antoni 2004), and at Stricklandgate, Kendal (Cumbria), the build up of subsoil points to horticultural activity (Whitehead, Williams and Mace 2013, 111).

Households with a small number of animals

The escheators' and coroners' records provide valuable information on the economic basis of small-town households that engaged in agricultural production. Among those households with few animals, there is a general level of correspondence between the small-town and rural datasets. Of the seven escheators' lists within this category, the majority have a total valuation of less than 350d/£1 9s 2d, and we can observe a similar pattern of animal ownership, whereby cattle and horses were more prevalent among the wealthier households. For example, Richard Bothe of Bingley (Yorkshire), whose goods were valued at 8s, had one pig (14d) in 1419 and Thomas Sugge of Kidderminster (Worcestershire), whose goods were valued at 13s 10d in 1404, had two piglets (20d).[447] Others, such as Robert Fogheler of Seamer (Yorkshire) whose goods were valued at 4s 10d in 1394, had cattle, in this case a single calf (16d).[448] Seamer is an interesting case: Everett considers it a sixteenth-century market town, but it only received its market charter in 1382, clearly placing it at the 'rural' end of the urban spectrum. Those of more modest wealth did sometimes possess horses. An example is the labourer William Chitynden of Cranbrook (Kent) whose goods were valued at 26s 4d, including one cow (6s) and two calves (3s) and a horse (5s) in 1435.[449] Those with higher value lists have more diverse animals, for example Robert Durham of Aldbourne (Wiltshire). Aldbourne is a good example which demonstrates the ambiguous distinction between villages and small towns. It had 253 poll-tax payers in 1377 and a market was first recorded in 1311. It was identified by Everitt as a market town in 1600, but it was also a place where the community were involved in extensive arable and sheep husbandry (Hare 2011, 13). It is perhaps best characterised as a market village. Certainly Durham's animals – three horses (6s each), a cow (5s) and three pigs (20d each) among goods worth £4 6s 8d in 1426 – would not have been out of place among the rural households discussed previously.[450] As mentioned in the Chapter 8, there are clear examples of small-town dwellers who were primarily artisans, but had animals. The tanner Thomas Knyth of Great Torrington (Devon) had a cow and calf (6s 8d) in 1422 and William Neweton of Oakham (Rutland), seemingly a trader, had a horse (5s) and bullock (5s) in 1382.[451] The 1422 list of the goldsmith Richard Swalwa, also of Great

[447] E505; E337.
[448] E880.
[449] E918.
[450] E793.
[451] E736; E747.

Torrington, is useful in this regard.[452] The list is not suitable for detailed analysis of valuations due to the grouping of items, but he had two cows and a calf, plus at least one horse (6s 8d), plus a horse-mill (Chapter 8). Overall, while the data is limited for those households that possessed small numbers of animals, it appears that wealth was the principal variable determining the extent of animal ownership in both small towns and in the countryside.

Pastoral agriculturalists

Within the escheators' records, small-town households that engaged in pastoral husbandry with no substantial evidence of other economic activity fall into the range of total valuations above 800d/£3 6s 8d. The range and number of animals is generally limited. For example, in 1406 Thomas Serle of Liskeard (Cornwall) had goods worth £4 7s, including a horse (26s 8d, a high valuation), two oxen (8s), two cows (8s) and two bullocks (4s).[453] Even the animals belonging to those among the wealthiest households represented in the coroners' records – such as Alexander Newbye of Dartford (Kent) – are relatively limited, in this instance to six 'small hackney nags' (£8), two milk cows (£3), three bullocks (£3) and 6 hogs (30s), suggestive of a smallholding.[454] However, there are small-town pastoralists with substantial numbers of animals, suggesting specialisation. In 1419, John Forster of Thrapston (Northamptonshire) had two old horses (6s 8d), two cows (13s 4d) and 34 sheep (34s), matching the profile of a specialist sheep farmer with a small dairy stock, perhaps for household use.[455] Similarly, in 1590 John Cosen of Ashburton (Devon) had 44 sheep (£5 12s), 14 wethers, ewes and lambs (36s), a nag and mare (33s 4d), a cow (40s) and pig (24d), showing that those living in small towns could hold considerable quantities of livestock, in this case accounting for 48.6% of his total inventoried wealth.[456]

Mixed agriculturalists

There are only two mixed agriculturalists from small-town contexts in the escheators' records for whom we have sufficient information to consider the value of goods. Both are identified as yeomen and provide further evidence of extensive engagement in pastoral husbandry, as well as arable cultivation. In 1451, Thomas Gribell of Tenterden had 10 pigs (15s 2d altogether), 100 sheep (12d each), 10 cows (6s 8d each), six calves (18d each), and four bullocks (5s each), among goods worth nearly £22. He also had a plough (4s) and six oxen

[452] E517.
[453] E519.
[454] C548.
[455] E310.
[456] C357.

(13s 4d each) and 20 quarters of wheat and oats.[457] In 1443, Roger Lounde of Masham (Yorkshire) had similar agricultural stock: 80 sheep (30d each), seven cows (55s altogether), three bullocks (6s 8d each), a bull (10s) and 12 oxen (20s), as well as unthreshed wheat and barley to a value of £10, his total possessions being valued at £49 5s.[458] Other small-town dwellers with mixed agricultural interests, but without sufficient information around valuation, include the husbandman Nicholas Gerard of Attleborough (Norfolk), John Godard of Sandwich and Thomas Cretynden of Cranbrook (both Kent).[459] The evidence suggests the existence of a particular type of small-town, yeoman household, which engaged in fairly large-scale mixed husbandry, akin to that undertaken by the wealthiest rural households within our samples.

Summary: small towns and agriculture

Overall, there is little to differentiate the agricultural activities of small-town and rural households. There is a high degree of similarity in the pattern of animal ownership, with those categorised as pastoralists displaying the highest proportion of wealth held in animals in both contexts. Although based on a limited dataset, this emphasises how small towns were an integral part of manorial economies, in which many residents were engaged in agriculture (Goddard 2011). We can place some of these households in a broader context. Sandwich, the home of John Godard, was an important port town with a diverse economy, but even here open areas were used for grazing, townspeople leased grazing land on the surrounding salt marsh and local regulations prohibited grazing on the ramparts, emphasising the prevalence of animals within the townscape (Clarke *et al*. 2010, 118, 142, 225). A similarly close relationship has been demonstrated in the nearby port of Lydd, where the town dwellers had a range of agricultural interests (Dimmock 2001). The town of Thrapston was surrounded by open fields with small areas of woodland and clayland, perhaps the pasture used by John Forster, within the township (Foard and Ballinger 2000). Of course, some of the individuals stated as resident in a location containing a small-town may in fact have resided outside the urban portion of the township or parish, and there is no way of detecting this. This may in part help to explain our overall finding of a general correspondence between the small-town and rural datasets in terms of the proportion of wealth held as animals by households engaging in similar modes of agricultural production, although in general terms, a higher proportion of rural than small-town wealth was held in animals.

Although artisans resided in the countryside, one important characteristic of the lists from small towns is the presence of a range of crafts. There are a

[457] E477.
[458] E1178.
[459] E10; E106; E284.

number of artisans within the small-town dataset whose possessions give no indication of engagement in agrarian activity. However, a further distinctive feature of this dataset is a group of artisans who possessed animals, on average accounting for around 7% of their inventoried wealth. This is much lower than other small-town agriculturalists. These small-town agriculturalist households can be loosely characterised into different 'types': a labourer with few animals; wealthy yeomen mixed agriculturalists; a butcher and a tanner who supplemented their incomes with small scale agrarian activity. While the dataset cannot reveal the ubiquity of agrarian activity among small-town communities, it does demonstrate the importance of animal and crop husbandry to the domestic economy of some households in such urban settings.

This in no way invalidates Goldberg's contrast between investment in agrarian production between urban and rural households, but demonstrates that this specific 'urban' mode of consumption is likely to be limited to larger towns. It does, however, reiterate the conclusion drawn from the rural evidence, that how households engaged in agrarian activity varied, an observation as pertinent for small towns as more rural areas. Overall, our evidence emphasises the ambiguity of the dividing line between town and country.

Tools, materials and stock

Economic goods are not limited to animals, arable produce and farming equipment; some lists detail the tools and materials associated with craft production, or retail stock. These often account for the elevated investment in 'outside' goods among Goldberg's (2008, 130–2) 'mercantile' group. Investment in tools and stock appears highly variable, being closely associated with the economic specialisation(s) of households in both town and country. Within rural households involved in intensive arable, pastoral or mixed husbandry, only small proportions of wealth were held as tools and materials. Where these items are present, they most typically take the form of equipment associated with brewing or textile manufacture, two activities commonly organised at the domestic scale (see Chapter 8). In some cases, this could account for considerable proportions of itemised wealth. For example, in 1420 Walter Fox of Brigstock (Northamptonshire) had four leads, including three 'groutleedys' (leads for grout, or malt infusion). These were clearly for brewing and account for over a quarter of the value of his goods.[460] He was a small-scale pastoralist, with a flock of eight ewes and a cow. More typically, items associated with brewing or textile manufacture (including wool) account for less than 10% of a household's inventoried wealth. There are a small number of instances where households possessed items associated with other economic activities. Most obvious is John Ingram, discussed earlier, who was a substantial agriculturalist

[460] E311.

with a large flock of sheep, but is described in the records as a carpenter.[461] A quarter of his inventoried wealth was held as timber, presumably stock. In other cases, tools and materials may have been kept for general tasks, such as the 'timber lying in the courtyard', worth 5s, held by William Wodeward the Worcestershire yeoman.[462] This general pattern is reflected among the pastoralists and mixed agriculturalists in the small-town sample; for example John Forster of Thrapston had two leads, presumably for brewing, as well as fleeces and wool (likely from his own sheep) and firewood. These items, along with 'other household utensils', accounted for a quarter of John's inventoried wealth.[463] Among the rural lists, it is also the case that only a limited range of tools and materials were held by those households with few animals, again typically associated with brewing and textile production or working. Others, such as Robert Wysman of Thompson (Norfolk) had general tools (an axe; 6d), but none demonstrate any evidence of a specific economic specialism.[464]

This data suggests two things. Firstly, in small towns as well as villages, those specialising in agriculture only invested low proportions of household wealth in items associated with craft production, typically activities such as brewing or textile production which provided supplementary income, or materials and basic tools which could be used around the home. Secondly, among the poorest households, specifically those with few animals, there was also limited ownership of items associated with production, suggesting that these households relied on waged labour, perhaps as agricultural labourers rather than investing domestic income into economic activities. These households would likely have struggled to raise the capital required to acquire specialist tools, materials or spaces for craft production, as discussed in relation to textile production, metal and leather working in Chapter 8.

A contrast is provided by those households which clearly specialised in craft production. In these cases, limited investment in animals and agricultural equipment suggests that any agricultural activity was a supplementary economic activity. As demonstrated in Chapter 8, those engaged in metal, leather or textile crafts could all have agricultural interests. In the countryside, items associated with craft production of various sorts typically account for around 20–25% of household wealth among those identified as artisans. In urban contexts this figure is much higher, for example 51.3% of the inventoried wealth of John Coupere of Wellingborough (Northamptonshire) was held as timber, a lead and hoops for barrel manufacture.[465] Although the dataset is small, higher proportions of the inventoried wealth of urban artisans appears to have been invested in goods associated with their trade than in rural contexts, perhaps

[461] E1213.
[462] E348.
[463] E310.
[464] E846.
[465] E304.

implying a higher intensity of manufacture (and therefore greater ability to stockpile resources) and a greater level of household specialisation.

We have observed previously (Jervis, Briggs and Tompkins 2015) that the escheators' records typically list specialist tools, while a wider range of more common and multipurpose items are present in the archaeological record. The larger dataset presented in this book supports this suggestion. If we look at axes, for example, which we might anticipate were common tools for chopping firewood or undertaking domestic repairs, these occur in only 21 lists. One of these is the list of a carpenter, Thomas Partrik, who had a broad axe and a two-edged axe (*twybutte*, i.e. twibill), specialist tools associated with his trade.[466] We can anticipate therefore that the proportion of household wealth invested in tools which could have been used both domestically and by those undertaking waged labour is underestimated. This view is supported archaeologically, for example, by evidence from West Whelpington (Jarrett 1970). Tools associated with textile production, woodworking and stone-masonry, as well as metalworking waste and agricultural equipment, were recovered from the houseplots of a rural agricultural community, revealing a diversity of small and inexpensive tools rarely, if ever, recorded in the escheators' and coroners' datasets.

Finally, investment in tools and materials only represents one element of craft production. Many crafts, such as tanning or smithing, also require physical infrastructure. As discussed in Chapter 8, there is strong evidence for industrial processes being undertaken in distinctive spaces and these would have required households to acquire, or negotiate access to, further land while also investing in the creation of infrastructure such as tanning pits or furnaces, much of which was temporary and would have therefore required periodic investment in labour.

Summary: investment in economic goods

The overwhelming picture presented by the escheators' and coroners' data is one of variability; in accordance with wealth, economic specialisation and, to a lesser degree, between (small) town and country. In both town and country, the poorest households were unable to invest in more than a few animals, most likely for consumption within the home. The proportion of household wealth invested in livestock varies considerably, with wealthier households typically both having the largest stocks and investing the highest proportion of income in agricultural production. Even within small towns, wealthier households invested in agricultural production, either as a primary source of income or to supplement a craft. However, non-agrarian economic specialisation appears stronger in small-town contexts. While some rural agriculturalists engaged in

[466] E1210.

textile manufacture or brewing at the household scale, they did not typically invest heavily in specialised tools or stocks of craft materials, as is the case for a number of small-town craftsmen. This data shows that a simplistic division between small-town and rural households is not tenable, but rather that investment in economic goods is dependent on household economy and structure. While a contrast can be drawn between certain urban households such as those examined by Goldberg (2008) and rural consumption at a general level, the data presented here suggests a considerably more contextually varied and nuanced approach to consumption, a reality acknowledged by Goldberg in his discussion of the variation within urban inventories. Furthermore, archaeological evidence from craft production, and references to cultivated land, remind us that inventoried movable wealth excludes investment in land and infrastructure, which demanded different levels of investment by households depending on where they lived, but also the economic activities which they undertook. With this in mind, we can turn to a further area of investment apparent archaeologically, but largely invisible in the archival datasets – domestic buildings.

Beyond production: investment in housing fabric

Houses were both domestic and economic spaces. Therefore, the distinction between domestic tools and equipment and items associated with the household economy is blurred by a range of objects that are absent from the historical records: the fixtures and fittings associated with the houses themselves. The role of tenants in the upkeep and building of houses has recently been the subject of debate. Slocombe (2018) contends that while there is clear evidence that both leasehold and copyhold tenants had a level of responsibility for the upkeep of properties, the building of houses was undertaken and funded by landowners. Both Currie (2018) and Dyer (2019b) contest this, drawing on numerous examples to show that while in some cases some funds for building or rebuilding may have been provided, it was usual for the tenant to take on the financial burden of construction and repair (Dyer 1986, 22). In addition to the materials, these costs would typically include the employment of professional craftsmen, with the cost of building a typical peasant dwelling estimated at £2–£4 (Dyer 1986, 34). In the case of freehold tenancies, the situation was much clearer, with tenants having greater freedom over building activities (Dyer 1986, 23). The situation in boroughs, where houses were often rented from an intermediary, was different in that it was the holder of the property, rather than the renter, who shouldered this cost (Currie 2018, 38). The general picture appears to be that in the countryside tenants typically funded the erection, rebuilding or maintenance of houses, while in towns, including smaller boroughs, there might be a more mixed picture. It is well established that the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries saw substantial rebuilding and modification in both urban and rural areas and this work would therefore represent substantial investment by households (e.g. Alcock 2010; 2015; Johnson 1993; 2010; Mileson 2015; Roberts 2003).

Occasional references to the room in which items are stored in the coroners' records shows this transformation, including mentions of parlours and kitchens, as well as specialist spaces such as brewhouses and woolhouses; however, these references are too scarce to allow for detailed analysis. The modification of houses is most clear through the dendrochronological analysis of standing buildings, which allows the date of alterations to be obtained through the dating of timbers. This shows regional variability in the timing and pace of this change; however, excavated evidence also provides insights into a longer process of modification and repair in domestic architecture.

Investment in domestic structures is well demonstrated at Foxcotte, where a complex of buildings dated to the fifteenth–sixteenth centuries and destroyed by fire was excavated (Russel 1985). These comprise a large structure, divided into three rooms and incorporating an oven, interpreted as a malting kiln (Russel 1985, 183), in the westernmost room. Another structure to the north incorporates an oven and is interpreted as a detached kitchen, while a smaller and more slightly built structure to the west is discussed as a stable above. The finds from the building itself principally comprise structural metalwork: over 50 nails, principally from the western and eastern rooms, a wall hook and two pintles, a hinge and latch which indicate the presence of a door. The Foxcotte complex is important because it demonstrates investment in infrastructure for production which may exceed the needs of the household, in this case malting and, perhaps, baking. While tenants may have been granted access to woodland on the manor, it was usually necessary to turn to the market for timber (Dyer 1986, 27). As with tools, structural metalwork could be salvaged and reused or recycled (see Britnell 2015). The value of structural ironwork is shown by the systematic clearance of houses. For example, at West Cotton, the hamlet was abandoned around 1400 and the occupied area seems to have been largely stripped of any structural metalwork; indeed most of the excavated objects were small items such as belt fittings, perhaps lost and not recovered, or improvised objects such as a bone flute and two stone gaming boards, which had no salvage value.

The metal fittings from both small-town and rural households are overwhelmingly nails. Ironwork typically relates to internal fittings, such as wooden doors or window shutters, with nails used to attach door furniture, or potentially to secure boards or laths to internal walls. It is unfortunate that nails are rarely identified to a particular type by archaeologists, either due to a lack of resources or high levels of corrosion. Deposits associated with the street frontage at the County Sports site, Staines (Middlesex; Jones 2010) demonstrate how understanding variability in the nails present can provide insights into domestic structures. While most of the nails could not be identified, the majority of those which could are flat-headed with a square or rectangular shape (Goodall Type 1; Figure 9.3). The remainder comprise three narrow flat-headed nails (Type 3), 10 with a faceted rectangular head (Type 5) and five with a flat-headed figure of eight shape. It has been suggested that this latter type was used in the securing of internal panelling (How *et al.* 2016), while the predominant use of

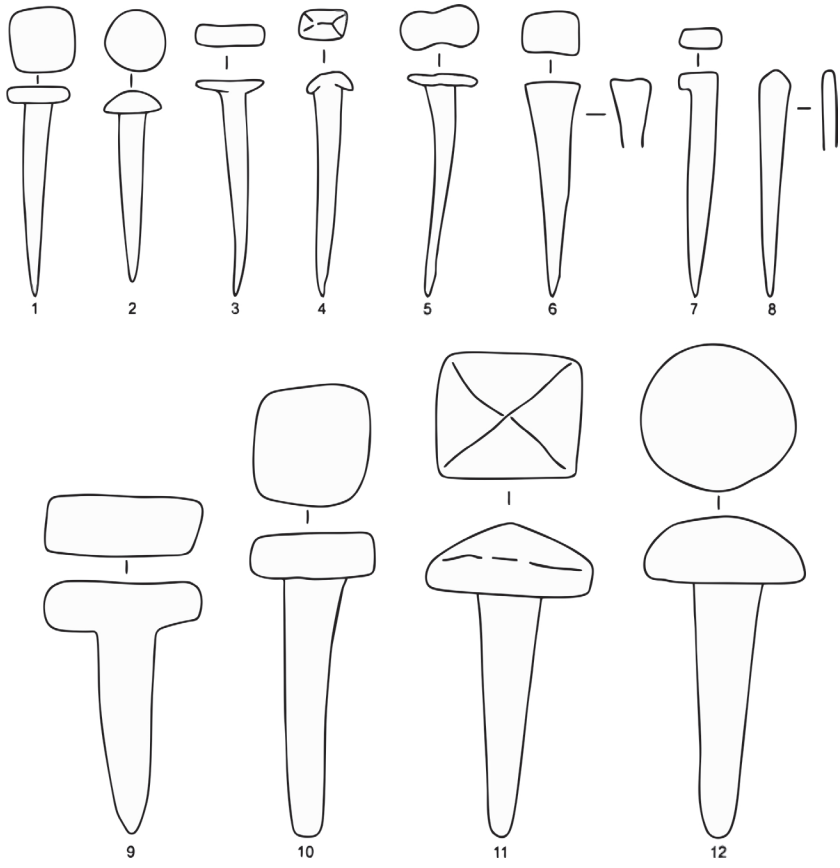

Figure 9.3: Nail types from archaeological contexts. 1: Flat head of square, rectangular or rounded shape; 2: Raised head of circular or rounded shape; 3: Flat head of narrow, rectangular shape, 4: Faceted or rectangular head; 5: Flat head of figure of 8 shape; 6: Flat rectangular head formed by flaring, wedge-shaped shank; 7: Flat L-shaped head; 8: Headless nail: 9: Stud with long flat rectangular head; 10: Stud with rectangular or occasional rounded flat or faceted head; 11: Stud with rectangular pyramidal head; 12: Stud with circular head (Goodall 2011, figure 9.1. © Society for Medieval Archaeology and Ian H. Goodall, Reproduced by Permission Society for Medieval Archaeology).

flat-headed nails suggests a general use of nails for securing panels or laths in place, as those used to secure door and window furniture are typically larger, with domed or faceted heads (see Goodall 2011 163–4). A different range of nails came from the rural site at Parlington (Yorkshire; WYAS 2010). The majority are flat-headed with an L-shaped profile (Type 7; typically used today for securing floorboards), while other types present include a wedge-shaped flat-headed nail (Type 6) and nails with a circular, domed head (Type 2). While

a much larger sample of nails needs to be identified to type for meaningful comparisons between buildings and contexts to be possible, it is clear that the range of specialised nails used in vernacular building, as well as the common occurrence of items such as hinges and pivots, hasps and latches, points to structures with a variety of interior fittings, which could have facilitated comfort (e.g. insulation, privacy) and display (e.g. decorative panelling) in ways which are not visible in the consideration of portable goods alone.

While historical discussion of housing in our period has typically focused on the so-called 'great rebuilding' of the sixteenth century (Hoskins 1953), archaeological evidence presents a picture of continual and incremental modification, with occasional episodes of complete demolition and clearance throughout the middle ages (see also Dyer 1986, 40; Gardiner 2014a) (Figure 9.4). At Upton (Worcestershire) it is suggested that excavated houses (one of which may have had an upper storey) were modified in multiple phases. The first house in this sequence was of timber, being rebuilt in stone, with a further annexe being added in a third phase. An adjacent building was also modified in several phases. While the exact date of these construction episodes is unclear (the excavator suggests a thirteenth-century date, though reconsideration of the finds undertaken during data collection suggests a longer chronology), it is proposed that this example represents rebuilding within a single holding over several generations (Rahtz 1969, 93–8) Similarly, at Rowhope Burn (Northumberland) several phases of rebuilding were identified between c.1280 and 1550 (Dixon 2014; Figure 9.4). More strikingly, at Popham (Hampshire), several phases of building were excavated (Fasham 1987; Figure 9.4). No finds were associated with the first structural phase but the second, associated with the erection of a building with flint footings, has several finds associated with it. These include a large quantity of ironwork: 26 nails, a chisel tip and 36 further unidentified iron objects, as well as a horseshoe, arrowhead, iron buckle and copper alloy strip. The majority of these items are likely to be structural, potentially relating to the demolition of an earlier timber building or decayed elements of this building. In structural phase 3, this building was rebuilt on a different axis and postholes indicate the presence of an ancillary structure. Similarly, at Wythemail (Figure 9.4) two phases of stone foundations were identified, a later building superimposed at right angles to an earlier structure (Hurst and Hurst 1969). The bulk of the finds relate to the later building. Both sites show evidence of extensive investment in the rebuilding of houses.

Similar evidence for modification can be seen among small-town sites (Figure 9.5). The strongest evidence comes from Low Fisher Gate, Doncaster, where plots were established in the twelfth–thirteenth centuries (McComish *et al.* 2010). Subdivision in the early fourteenth century stimulated the construction of new buildings, with further timber structures erected in the fifteenth century. Whether these houses were built by the households that occupied them, or were constructed as speculative rental properties is unclear, although the latter is likely. At Oyster Street, Portsmouth (Hampshire), an existing forge

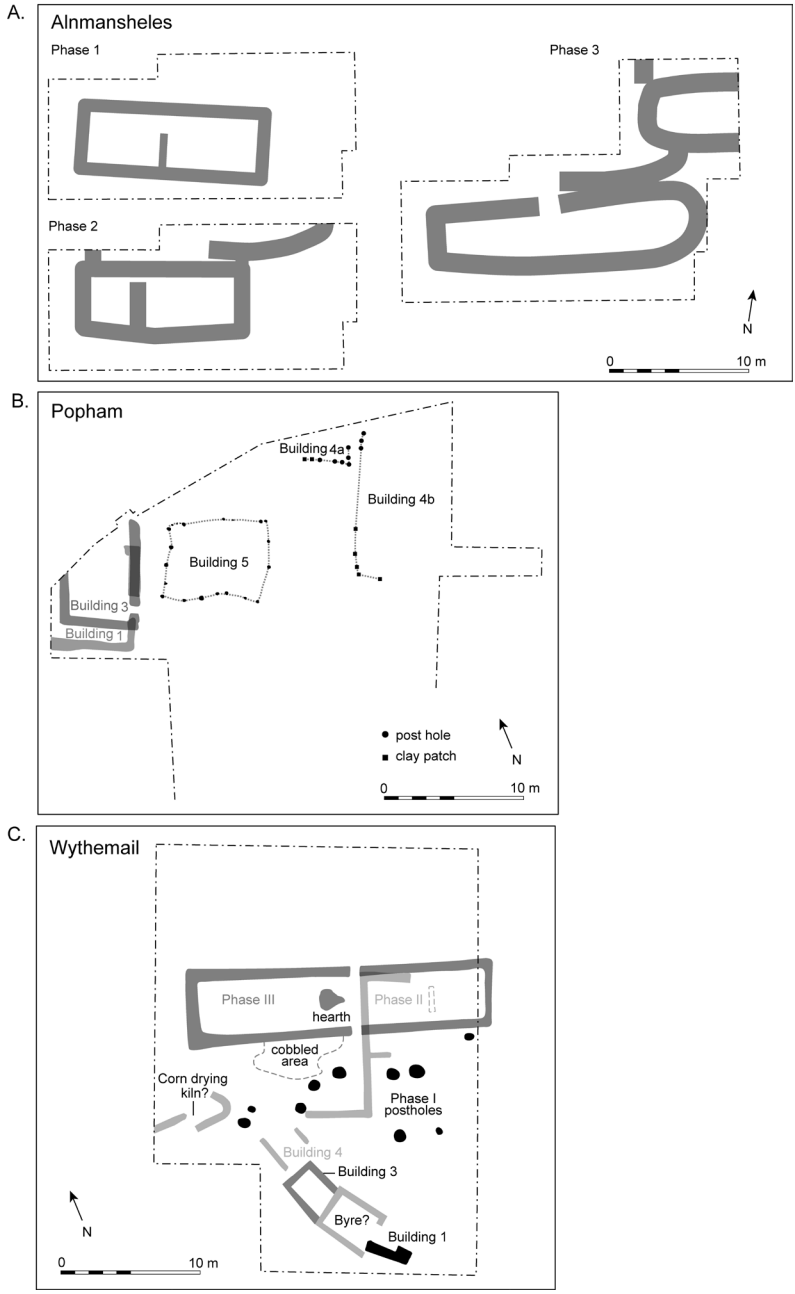

Figure 9.4: Examples of rebuilding at rural sites. Almansheles/Rowhope Burn, Northumberland (Dixon 2014); Popham, Hampshire (Fasham 1987) and Wythemail, Northamptonshire (Hurst and Hurst 1969). Redrawn by Kirsty Harding.

appears to have been incorporated into a domestic tenement during a period of substantial modifications to the waterfront (Fox and Barton 1986). Evidence of modification through the subdivision of previously open spaces can be seen in the excavated house at Fore Street, Exmouth (Devon) while at Wolborough Street, Newton Abbot (Devon) two buildings were excavated, one dating to the fourteenth century and the other to the fifteenth (Weddell 1985; Figure 9.5). Evidence of substantial modifications to domestic buildings can also be seen at Market Street, Alton (Hampshire; Millet 1983).

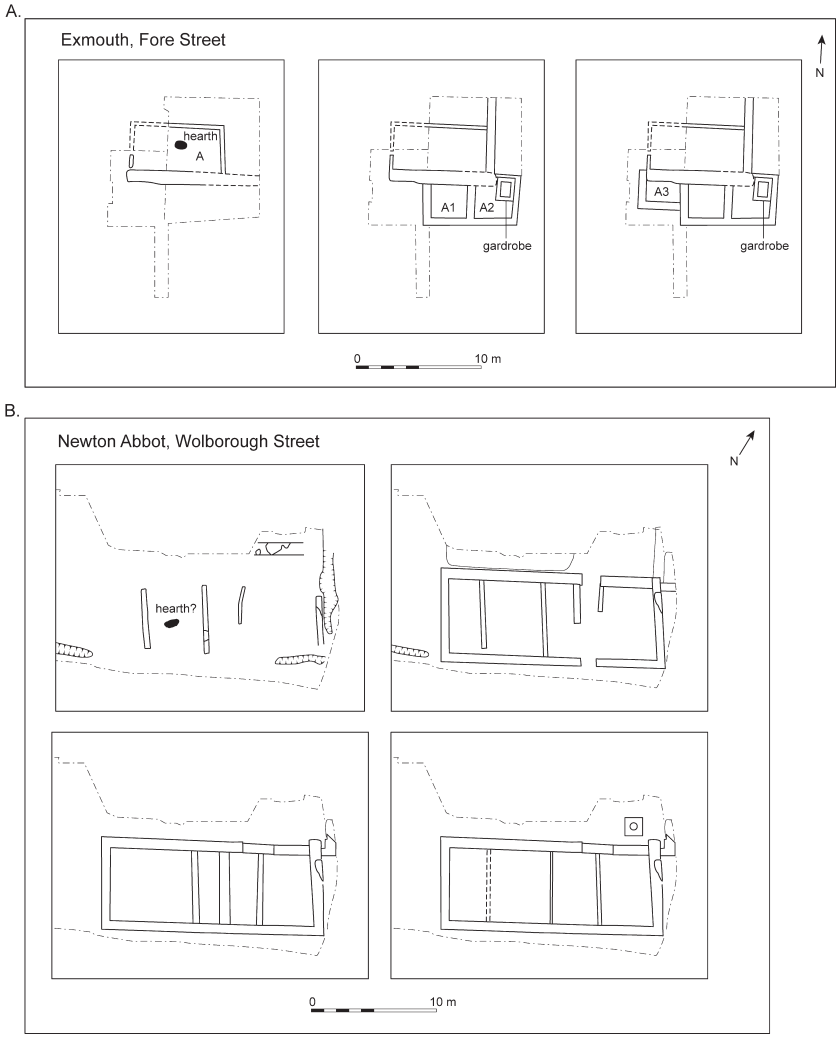

Figure 9.5: Examples of rebuilding at urban sites. Fore St, Exmouth (Weddell 1980) and Wolborough St, Newton Abbot (Weddell 1985). Redrawn by Kirsty Harding.

Although the average proportion of wealth accounted for by economic goods is higher in the countryside than in small towns, there are considerable similarities in the ways that households of similar socio-economic status acquired livestock and other economic goods. One explanation for the apparently higher consumption of domestic goods by those living in small towns may be the structure of property ownership. Dyer (2005, 153) notes how the erection of new peasant houses was likely undertaken on the initiative of peasants themselves, who employed specialist masons and carpenters, representing disposal of considerable household wealth, perhaps acquired through the consolidation of landholdings (itself representing a further means of disposing household wealth). In contrast, in towns there was a sizeable rental sector (Casson and Casson 2016; 2019), in which tenants might be expected to meet costs of modification or repair but would be less willing to do so given the comparatively short-term nature of leases. While this is particularly the case in larger towns, speculative building has also been proposed in some smaller towns, as might be the case, for example, at Low Fisher Gate. We might therefore anticipate that poorer or lower–middling urban households that occupied rented properties without the incentive or means to invest in property might disproportionally invest in portable domestic goods, particularly if they did not have the capacity to acquire or keep animals. While such households existed in the countryside too, the concentration of rental properties in towns might be one factor leading to an apparent polarisation between urban and rural consumption of domestic goods. In this case, the acquisition of domestic goods relates to a different set of circumstances than in those wealthy urban households analysed by Goldberg. While proportionally higher consumption of domestic goods may be a signature of urbanity common to larger and smaller towns, the causes and nature of that consumption are more variable.

The consumption of domestic goods

We have already determined that there is considerable variability in the proportion of inventoried wealth held as domestic goods, particularly in relation to household wealth and, to a lesser degree, between small towns and the countryside. In summary, we demonstrated that in both town and country, and in both the escheators' and coroners' records, there is a generally negative correlation between household wealth and proportion of inventoried wealth held as domestic goods; that is, the poorest households held the highest proportions of wealth as these items. We also demonstrated that, in general, higher proportions of wealth were held as domestic goods in small towns than in the countryside, and that this polarisation appears more marked among the coroners' records. In exploring these patterns further, we can consider ownership of particular types of domestic goods, specifically those discussed by Goldberg (cooking equipment, bedding and tableware; summarised in Table 9.9) and assess investment patterns in relation to the economic activities of households.

Table 9.9: The proportion of inventoried wealth held as domestic goods and as cooking ware, bedding and tableware (expressed as percentage of inventoried wealth held as domestic goods) in the escheators' and coroners' records.

Total Value of forfeited Property	Mean Domestic Goods as %ge total Wealth	Mean as %ge domestic goods		
		Cooking Ware	Bedding	Tableware
Escheators'				
Rural				
<100d	75.0%	32.2%	38.9%	5.6%
100–299d	57.6%	29.6%	26.5%	4.7%
300–599d	41.9%	31.8%	23.1%	3.9%
600–799d	27.6%	13.6%	16.0%	13.5%
800–1099d	49.9%	21.0%	10.8%	5.7%
1100–1499d	36.5%	20.9%	14.4%	9.0%
1500–1999d	52.2%	14.8%	23.9%	6.8%
2000–2999d	37.3%	14.3%	19.9%	15.9%
3000–3999d	28.2%	21.7%	35.2%	5.4%
>4000d	40.5%	15.0%	12.6%	4.3%
Small-Town				
<100d	88%	25%	39%	3%
100–299d	74%	43%	23%	10%
300–599d	54%	35%	34%	9%
600–2999d	44%	26%	31%	5%
>3000d	43%	17%	24%	9%
Coroners'				
Rural				
100–499d	51.3%	30.6%	26.9%	4.8%
500–999d	49.2%	19.5%	25.5%	6.6%
1000–2999d	17.5%	24.7%	24.7%	24.7%
3000–9999d	21.6%	25.6%	25.5%	10.8%
>10000d	11.7%	21.6%	24.7%	6.8%
Small-Town				
100–499d	84.2%	10.3%	39.5%	8.5%
500–999d	53.7%	12.8%	31.9%	11.0%
1000–2999d	59.6%	25.8%	19.6%	4.5%
3000–9999d	29.6%	49.8%	32.4%	6.7%
>10000d	32.9%	16.3%	35.0%	17.7%

Cooking equipment

Goldberg (2008, 127–8) considers the relative value of bedding and cooking utensils to be a key marker of 'urban' and 'rural' systems of value and modes of consumption. He argues that, together, these goods typically represent a lower proportion of rural than urban goods by value, A contrast is drawn between peasant households, who invested proportionally more in cooking, and urban households who invested proportionally more in sleeping. Furthermore, he suggests that rural households typically invested only in 'essentials' for eating and sleeping, while a greater diversity of goods were found in urban homes. In order to assess whether these observations are confirmed by the escheators' and coroners' dataset, we can consider the proportion of domestic goods held as cooking equipment, as well as the composition of cooking ware assemblages.

Cooking equipment is defined here as pots and pans (including vessels such as posnets, skillets and kettles), roasting equipment and other utensils such as trivets and pot hooks.[467] Among the rural households represented in the escheators' records, there is considerable variability in the proportion of itemised wealth held as cooking ware, with this generally decreasing as wealth brackets increase (Table 9.9). The coroners' records show a lower degree of variability than the escheators' records, although a similar general trend can be distinguished. Despite this, in general terms, wealthier households had a more diverse range of cooking equipment. For example, 45% of the domestic goods by value belonging to John Coupere of Buckenham (Norfolk) in 1387 (a low total valuation at 6s 8d; 55% domestic goods) consisted of two brass pots and a pan, valued together at 20d.[468] In contrast, two brass pots, three pans and a posnet, as well as several wooden containers, account for 35% of William Wodeward's domestic goods by value (total valuation £20 13½d; 31% domestic goods).[469] Similarly, among the coroners' records, 52.9% of John Hudson of Kirk Hammerton's domestic goods by value were cooking vessels (a pot and a pan) (total valuation of just £1 1s; 27% domestic goods), while 13.9% (by value) of the domestic goods of William Bacheler of Mereworth (Kent) in 1541 (total valuation £28 6s 10d; 8% domestic goods), were pieces of cooking equipment, including a brass pot, a cauldron, a kettle, a pan, a pot hanger, two trivets, an andiron and various pieces of processing equipment.[470] In short, this data does not support a conclusion that rural households lacked diversity in the cooking equipment that they possessed.

Among the escheators' records, items associated with roasting are typically found in those lists related to rural households of high and, to a lesser

[467] Where inventories list spaces, Goldberg's analysis focusses specifically on goods found in the kitchen, excluding those in spaces such as brewhouses and pantries.

[468] E839. The remainder of his household goods are referred to simply as household utensils, and may conceivably include additional cooking equipment.

[469] E348.

[470] C42; C446.

extent, middling, wealth. It was generally also these households that possessed additional cooking items such as frying pans and posnets. It is also the case among the rural coroners' records that rural kitchenware assemblages generally become more complex in direct relation to wealth, with roasting equipment being more prevalent among wealthier households, although they appear to become more accessible to households of lower and middling wealth in the sixteenth century. As these were not expensive items, this likely relates to the increasing availability of meat or architectural changes to rural homes which created space where roasting could take place. Therefore, both datasets suggest that although the wealthiest households typically had the widest range of cooking items, this does not represent a particularly high investment in cooking equipment as a proportion of the total household goods.

The situation for small towns deviates slightly from the rural pattern in both the escheators' and coroners' datasets, with roasting equipment and additional cooking equipment such as posnets being a feature of households of lower levels of inventoried wealth. For example, in 1394 Robert Fogheler of Seamer (Yorkshire) had goods worth just 4s 8d, but these include a roast iron (2d) and brass pan (8d), while Richard Bothe of Bingley (Yorkshire), whose goods were valued at 8s in 1419, had a posnet (6d).[471] In both cases these goods account for around three-quarters of the wealth held as domestic goods. This pattern continues among those households with goods worth between 100d/8s 4d and 299d/£1 4s 11d, which include the butcher John Stanke, whose goods worth £1 4s 4d in 1404 included a gridiron (4d) and spit (6d).[472] As a butcher, Stanke would have had easy access to meat, and this may account for the presence of roasting equipment in his home. Yet other cases such as that of John Lebarde of Thrapston, whose goods worth 19s 4d in 1415 included an iron griddle (3d), cobbard and spit (9d), as well as three pans (22d) and two pots (3s), accounting for 58% of his domestic goods by value, may suggest that meat was generally more accessible to less wealthy small-town households than their rural counterparts.[473]

Within both datasets, the limited number of small-town lists present an opposing picture to the rural ones, in that the urban households of lower or middling wealth had the widest variety of cooking ware. This is reflected in the diminishing proportions of domestic goods (by value) held as cooking ware (Table 9.9). Indeed, the wealthiest small-town household to possess roasting equipment in the escheators' sample is that of Thomas Hert of Folkestone (Kent), whose (probably partial) list contains goods worth £5 10s in 1421.[474] This data may present a false impression; several higher value lists include entries for 'other household possessions' which might include these low value

[471] E880; E505.
[472] E30.
[473] E303.
[474] E715.

items of kitchenware, although the majority do not, suggesting that this may be a genuine pattern. The archaeological data for cooking ware is extremely limited, but perhaps offers some support to this interpretation of small-town/rural contrast. For example, of the three skimmers in the archaeological sample, two are from small-town sites (the other being from the moated site at Wimbotsham (Norfolk)). One reason may be the lower proportional investment in domestic goods by wealthier households, with the bulk of wealth being spent on craft resources, animals or agricultural land, or the modification of domestic buildings. For those poorer households, who rented urban houses, or were unable to afford capital investment, equipment for cooking more elaborate meals perhaps allowed them to take advantage of the increasing availability of meat in the urban market.

It is therefore not the case that rural households simply invested higher proportions of their wealth in cooking ware than their small-town equivalents. Indeed, within the escheators' records the average values (Table 9.9) are remarkably similar between small-town and rural households. A stronger pattern of deviation can be seen among the *types* of kitchen equipment held by small-town and rural households, with less wealthy small-town households seeming to have more complex ranges of kitchen ware than their rural counterparts, with wealthy rural households being more likely to have complex ranges of cooking ware than their small-town equivalents. The analysis suggests a small-town signature which is, perhaps, related to the wider diversity of objects found in larger towns, but does not support a clear distinction between small towns and the countryside in relation to the proportion of wealth held as cooking equipment. Based on the observations made here, we might propose that the pattern observed by Goldberg is less of an urban/rural contrast but more an expression of the relationship between household wealth and the proportion of that wealth held as cooking ware given the character of his urban sample. This suggests that investment in cooking ware is more complex than a straightforward distinction between town and country, also fracturing along lines of wealth in a variable manner.

Cushions and bedding

Goldberg (2008, 127) argues that cushions are a key feature of urban consumption, being a 'predominantly urban phenomenon from at least the third decade of the fourteenth century until the second half of the fifteenth century'. As discussed in Chapter 5, cushions (a category into which we might also incorporate bankers, bolsters and pillows) are rare in the escheators' dataset. This absence might, in general terms, be interpreted as corroborating Goldberg's findings. Of the lists containing these items where the place of residence is stated, 9 relate to small towns and 12 to rural households. This evidence demonstrates that they were not exclusively the possessions of urban households, but also

that they were by no means ubiquitous among those living in small towns. It is noteworthy that cushions generally appear in lists from larger small towns, such as Basingstoke, Faversham, Rochester and Dartford, and that where they occur in the countryside, they are principally the possessions of wealthy agriculturalists or clergy. Goldberg's observation about the increasing prevalence of cushions in rural households is borne out in the coroners' dataset, where the majority of households possessing these items are rural.

A further characteristic of urban households in Goldberg's sample is a comparatively higher level of investment in bedding than is seen in the countryside, with a more diverse range of bedding being present in urban homes. Specifically, he highlights that the proportion of wealth held as bedding is higher in relation to that held as cooking ware in towns than in the countryside. This relationship is not clearly observable in the escheators' records other than among the poorest and wealthiest households (Table 9.9).

In the escheators' records, the proportion of interior items (by value) held as bedding follows a similar trend to cooking ware. The average proportion of inventoried wealth represented by bedding is highest among the poorest households (39%) but typically accounts for between 10% and 25% of household items by value (Table 9.9). As with the total proportion of interior wealth, there is stronger correlation between the poorest and wealthiest rural households, with those of middling wealth generally investing a lower proportion of wealth in bedding. In contrast, bedding consistently accounts for around a quarter of domestic goods (by value) among the rural households in the coroners' sample, and a third of the domestic goods (by value) of the small-town households within the same sample.

As might be anticipated, the rural households with the lowest levels of inventoried wealth in the escheators' sample typically possessed only basic items of bedding: sheets, coverlets and blankets. An exception is the chaplain John Lynde, who had a quilt and mattress (4s) and a canvas (8d) in 1432, in what is likely an incomplete list.[475] Within the 100–299d category, the picture is much the same. Exceptions are, again, a clergyman; the clerk Isaak Grene of Great Walsingham (Norfolk), who in 1445 had an old tester (24d), a mattress (16d), a pair of blankets (2s), a pair of sheets (2s) and a bedcover (2s), and John Wryde of Ospringe (Kent) who in 1399 had two blankets, an old and worn mattress and two feather pillows (6s 8d) 1399.[476] Wryde also had a spade, a dung-fork and a mattock, but no livestock, or items associated with a craft. Like those in the lower wealth category, he seemingly chose to invest his limited disposable income in items of comfort; in addition to his bedding, he also had a dorser, banker and four cushions. A similar case is the Wiltshire husbandman and civil outlaw John Ferrour, whose list contains goods worth £2 2s 4d, but features no items associated with agricultural or craft production. Ferrour had at least

[475] E983.
[476] E1548; E901.

four coloured coverlets with testers (64d in total), five worn sheets (10s, a high value), accounting for 36% of his interior goods by value in 1416.[477] More elaborate bedding is a more regular feature of the lists detailing higher quantities of itemised wealth. For example, William Mandevile of Colnbrook (Middlesex) had goods worth 101s 10d including a quilt, curtain and pillows, in addition to sheets, blankets, coverlets and mattresses in 1419.[478] Similarly, in 1412 John Plumme of Cliffe at Hoo (Kent) had a featherbed (5s), and a tester, coverlet, three pairs of sheets and three blankets valued at an impressive 26s 8d among goods valued at just over £16 10s.[479] The general picture is therefore one of bedding becoming increasingly elaborate in line with household wealth, but with some poorer households, particularly those not engaged directly in agricultural activity, displaying ownership of these items. There are similar exceptions among the coroners' records. Thomas Bullock, a tailor of Hawkhurst (Kent) had two painted ceilings (6d) in 1577, and the husbandman William Bridge of Stelling (Kent) had a bed with a bolster and tester within the 'widow's bed chamber' in 1586. However, more elaborate items such as bedsteads, pillows and testers only begin to appear with regularity among lists with a total valuation above 3000d/£12 10s.[480]

For the small-town households in the escheators' sample, there is a general trend of declining proportional investment in bedding as wealth increases. This is in line with that for investment in interior goods as whole, although the average of 26.5% for the 100d–299d range is perhaps anomalously low. The poorest household with a tester is that of Thomas Dodmere of Rochester (Kent), whose goods worth 36s 10d in 1381 included a tester (valued with three coverlets at 6s), a worn mattress (12d) and three worn sheets (3s).[481] Also in 1381, Geoffrey Potet of Dartford had two pillows (valued with a featherbed at 20d), as well as three coverlets (10s) and two pairs of sheets (5s) among goods worth 42s 10d.[482] In neither case is there evidence of engagement in agricultural production, although Potet possessed tippler's vessels, suggesting he may have been in the brewing or victualling trade. Overall, however, the small number of small-town lists do not show the general trend towards wealthier households possessing more elaborate bedding observed in the countryside, with pillows, quilts and elements of hanging beds appearing in lists with relatively low total values. However, this may be a result of the small number of usable lists. The coroners' records are striking in that all but one of the small-town lists include bedsteads, standing in contrast to the rural lists, and that pillows are common, even among the least wealthy households. Like the escheators' records, the small-town coroners' records show no correlation between household wealth

[477] E237.
[478] E712.
[479] E217.
[480] C457; C309.
[481] E668.
[482] E656.

and the level of elaboration in the bedding present. For example, the widow Catherine Goodale of Ludgershall (Wiltshire) had two pillowcases, one bolster and three feather pillows in 1569.[483] The data therefore shows that among small-town households, there was investment in a greater and more elaborate range of bedding by those of lower levels of wealth than in the countryside. As with cooking ware, polarisation between urban and rural households is therefore most apparent among those with the lowest levels of inventoried wealth, while the bedding used in wealthier rural households is perhaps more comparable with that found in equivalent urban homes, reflecting the observations made in relation to cushions.

Overall, the data presented here suggests that even for small towns, Goldberg's suggestion that urban bedding was more varied than rural bedding is borne out. Yet they show also that wealthy rural households exhibit diversity, and were able to acquire typically 'urban' objects such as cushions. The data suggests, however, that when bedding is expressed as a proportion of inventoried wealth, with the exception of the poorest and wealthiest households, small-town households had more in common with their rural than urban counterparts.

Silver spoons and tableware

A further object identified by Goldberg as a particular feature of urban households is the silver spoon. Here it is useful to consider this alongside other metallic tableware such as pewter dishes. As with cushions, the low numbers of spoons occurring in the escheators' lists might be interpreted as supporting this argument. Spoons occur in lists from both small towns and the countryside. Around half of the lists with silver spoons relate to small towns, and in both town and country typically occur in groups of 6 or 12. Where profession is stated, spoons typically belonged to wealthy agriculturalists, artisans or members of the clergy. The escheators' evidence suggests that the difference between urban and rural consumption of silver spoons is not as marked as Goldberg would suggest, but that these objects occur only in particular types of rural and small-town household.

Goldberg does not discuss the relative quantities of tableware in relation to total inventoried wealth. However, it is instructive to discuss the occurrence of pewter ware, alongside that of silver spoons, as this might be understood as a luxury good when compared to the bedding and cooking ware which Goldberg treats as essential. Tableware is not listed in a large proportion of escheators' lists, and where it does occur the proportion of wealth that it accounts for varies considerably, with there being no correlation between the total value of a list and the proportion held as tableware (Table 9.9). A similar observation can be made for the coroners' records, albeit with a stronger trend in the latter sample towards

[483] C207.

wealthier households investing a higher proportion of domestic goods (by value) as tableware in both small towns and the countryside (Table 9.9). Variability can be seen, however, in the character of tableware assemblages. For example, the fuller Clement Vynche had goods worth 3s 10d in 1428, which included two tin dishes (3d) as well as a tablecloth, and John Greynour of Langley Burell (Wiltshire), whose goods were worth 5s 2d in total in 1421, had four pewter dishes worth 12d.[484] Among the households with goods valued between 100d and 299d, tableware typically takes the form of napery and/or a ewer and basin, although the suicide John Wryde of Ospringe, who as we have seen had more elaborate bedding than is typical, also possessed three chargers, 15 dishes and four salt cellars (all apparently pewter, and valued together at 2s 6d) (Table 9.10).[485] This is an unusually high quantity even for a wealthy household, but there is no evidence that his possessions include stock-in-trade. Even among rural households with goods valued at 1100d/£4 11s 8d–1499d/£6 4s 11d, full sets of pewter dishes are unusual. William Mandevile of Colnbrook (Middlesex) had six pewter saucers and six pewter platters, as well as well as a single charger and single dish (valued together at 2s), a basin and ewer (valued with a latten candelabra at 2s) and three salt cellars (2d).[486] Similarly mixed assemblages occur in the coroners' records. For example, in 1570 the chandler Reynold Carter of Chiddingstone (Kent) had pewter comprising three platters, two dishes, two saucers, two salt cellars and two pots (2s in total).[487] Overall, there is a persistently high variation in the composition of these tableware collections.

Where the rural escheators' records are concerned, it is only in those households with goods worth over 1200d/£5 that sets were a more common occurrence (among the coroners' records, a similar threshold appears around 3000d/£12 10s, but even so, groups of silver spoons and/or pewterware are considerably mixed in character). For example, George Braweby of Old Malton (Yorkshire) had 12 silver spoons (24s) in 1426 and John Rennewey of Dummer (Hampshire) had 12 pewter pieces (20d) in 1422.[488] Even so, the range of tableware in the wealthiest households is variable. This is well demonstrated by the yeoman William Wodeward, who had 6 pewter dishes, a platter and charger (2s), but also 12 wooden dishes (2d) in addition to other items of napery and a salt cellar in 1418.[489] Even so, there is a tendency for wealthier rural households to have both a higher quantity and wider variety of plate (Table 9.10). The most diverse range of tablewares belonged to the Wiltshire clergyman John James, who had specialist items for the serving of eggs and custard, as well as a range of plate including a silver salt cellar and a range of pewter items for the serving and eating of food.[490]

[484] E102; E535.
[485] E901.
[486] E712.
[487] C208.
[488] E789; E728.
[489] E348.
[490] C382.

Table 9.10: Summary of possession of tableware by rural and small-town households in the escheators' records.

	Total Inventoried Wealth	List No.	Name	Year	Napery	Ewer and/or Basin	Plate			Silver Spoons
							No. Items	No. Types	Set of 6 or 12	
Rural	<100d	649	John Grayn	1382	X					
		846	Robert Wysman	1390		X				
		102	Clement Vynche	1428	X		2	1		
		535	John Greynour	1421			4	1		
		111	John Gundry	1428		X				
	100–299d	356	Simon Wodeley	1418	X					
		841	Thomas Burmond	1389		X				
		843	Henry Thomesson	1389		X				
		557	Nicholas Gulot	1420			6	1	Y	
		631	Nicholas Foscote	1424		X				
		901	John Wryde	1393	X	X	22	3	Y	
		671	John atte Ryzth	1382	X					
	300–599d	670	John Meller	1382	X					
		664	John Spenser	1382		X				
		120	Agnes Wacy	1447			6	Not Specified	Y?	
		311	Walter Fox	1420		X	2	1		
		1609	Richard Walsh	1425		X				

(*Continued*)

Table 9.10: Continued.

	Total Inventoried Wealth	List No.	Name	Year	Napery	Ewer and/or Basin	Plate			Silver Spoons
							No. Items	No. Types	Set of 6 or 12	
Rural		1538	Richard Penyng	1434		X				
		237	John Ferrour	1416	X					2
		307	Robert Tyuerton	1419	X		11	4		
		609	John Tye	1422		X				
	600–799d	556	John Spark	1420	X	X				
		720	John Mason	1385		X				
		1281	Robert Smyth	1408	X					
		127	Robert Larke	1448			20	Not Specified	Y?	
	800–1099d	407	John Northern	1437			1	1		
		773	Richard Sexteyn	1384		X				3
	1100d-1499d	1	William Moldessone	1372		X				
		712	William Maundevile	1419	X	X	17	5	Y	
		492	Richard Talmage	1417		X				
		314	? Bassyngham	1438		X	10	2	Y	
	1500–1999d	525	Malet Malet	1419			1	1		
		677	Robert Senyng	1382	X	X	15	3	Y	

(*Continued*)

Table 9.10: Continued.

	Total Inventoried Wealth	List No.	Name	Year	Napery	Ewer and/or Basin	Plate			Silver Spoons
							No. Items	No. Types	Set of 6 or 12	
Rural	2000–2999d	1193	Henry Hole	1439			1	1		12
		1174	Richard Kyng	1443			24	Not Specified	Y?	
		789	George Braweby	1426	X		3	2		12
		728	John Rennewey	1422	X	X	12	Not Specified	Y?	
	3000–3999d	185	John de Stonton Wyuill	1379		X				
		768	Thomas Isenden	1384	X	X	8	Not Specified	Y?	4
		28	William Leder	1404	X					
		217	John Plumme	1414	X	X				
	>4000d	785	William de Brereton	1383	X	X	8	2	Y	
		348	William Wodeward	1418	X	X	12	5	Y	
		215	Hugh Cetur	1414		X	8	5		7
		45	John Moigne	1405	X	X	8	2		
		1503	John Waryn	1430	X		16	Not Specified	Y?	12
Urban	<100d	100	John Gardiner	1428	X	X	7	2		
		1552	William Strode	1445			12	1	Y	
	100–299d	667	Richard Bocher	1382		X				
		489	John Mone	1417		X	10	2	Y	
		303	John Lebarde	1416	X	X				
		30	John Stanke	1404			3	1		

(*Continued*)

Table 9.10: Continued.

	Total Inventoried Wealth	List No.	Name	Year	Napery	Ewer and/or Basin	Plate			Silver Spoons
							No. Items	No. Types	Set of 6 or 12	
Urban	300–599d	918	William Chitynden	1435	X					
		638	John Tiler	1420		X	7	2	Y	6
		419	John Noreys	1468	X					
		748	Richard Dawe	1383		X				
		668	Thomas Dodmere	1382		X				
		656	Geoffrey Potet	1382	X					6
		747	William Neweton	1382		X				
	800–1099d	793	Robert Durham	1426		X	1	1		
		519	John Serle	1422		X	1	1		6
		1130	John Alman'	1441			1	1		
	3000–3999d	20	John Poughole	1404	X		14	4		
		736	Thomas Knyth	1422		X				6
	>4000d	820	Thomas Tylthe	1426	X		7	2	Y	
		477	Thomas Gribell	1451		X	8	Not Specified	Y?	

A similar general pattern and degree of variability can be seen in the urban lists. Among those in the escheators' sample with the lowest levels of itemised wealth, the clerk William Strode of Fordingbridge (Hampshire), whose goods were valued at 7s in 1445, is remarkable in having 12 pewter plates (12d).[491] The only other household with tableware is that of the butcher John Gardiner of Dartford, who had a ewer and basin (18d), four tin dishes and three saucers (8d), a worn tablecloth and a napkin (4d) in 1428.[492] Typically, those of middling wealth do not seem to have possessed items of plate. John Tiler of Odiham (Hampshire), whose goods were worth 26s 8d, is exceptional in having six pewter dishes (6d), a salt cellar, ewer (3d) and six 'worn' silver spoons (3s 8d). His was also one of the few households within the sample to possess cushions.[493]

Overall, wealth enabled the acquisition of sets of plate, but households could also invest in occasional items, either sufficient to meet household need or as stores of wealth. As with bedding, some poorer households appear to have acquired unusually high quantities of plate, reflecting a general pattern whereby these households invested in goods for comfort and display, rather than economic production – perhaps because they worked as waged labourers or did not have access to sufficient land to support agricultural enterprise. This stands in strong contrast to the 'peasant' mode of consumption, characterised by the acquisition of 'essential' household goods and a limited diversity of possessions, defined by Goldberg. The latter mode perhaps most comfortably fits those households of middling wealth within the escheators' dataset. The general trend identified here is apparent in both the small-town and rural escheators' datasets and can also be traced in the very limited sample of coroners' records. Ownership of sets of plate, as well as of silver spoons, appears to vary in accordance with household wealth, rather than whether households resided in small towns or the countryside. Furthermore, at least one item of tableware, which is likely to have been of pewter or a silver spoon, occurs in 16% of the rural escheators' records considered here and 7% of small-town lists, with the same feature occurring in 70% of the rural coroners' records considered here and 93% of the small-town lists. The data therefore shows an increasing investment in plate across society, with it initially being rare in both small-town and rural contexts, but potentially becoming more strongly associated with small-town households by the sixteenth century.

Investment in small things: archaeological evidence for market engagement

While archaeological evidence does not allow us to present a quantitative view of consumption and investment, it does permit us to consider the extent to which rural households engaged with the market. We have already seen

[491] E1552.
[492] E100.
[493] E638.

through the discussion of objects such as padlocks (Chapter 5) and buckles (Chapter 6) that many small objects permeated rural markets and households, with little distinction apparent between urban and rural consumption. Of particular value in this regard are objects which can be provenanced, as we can be sure that they were obtained from a non-local source. Ceramics have not been considered in detail in this study; however, previous work on pottery provides a starting point for considering the structure of local marketing networks as revealed through archaeological evidence.

Pottery is valuable to archaeologists because it can be both closely dated and related to production centres, revealing the extent of local marketing networks. Studies of imported pottery show how those living in coastal locations had access to a range of goods otherwise only available to higher status households inland. This has been shown through the distribution of imported wares in south-west England (Allan 1994) as well as in Hampshire and the south-east, where Jervis (2017b) proposes that this distribution does not relate to the intrinsic worth of these objects but the ways in which larger households dealt directly with merchants in larger urban centres. Pottery distributions show how regions were served by particular industries. In Devon, for example, assemblages from the north of the county are characterised by the presence of products from the kilns at Bideford and Barnstaple, while in east Devon it is wares from the Blackdown Hills which are the predominant type (Allan, Dawson and Mepham 2018). Similarly, in Wiltshire and western Hampshire, Mepham (2018) has mapped the distribution of products from the Laverstock kilns near Salisbury, which principally served the city but were also exchanged through surrounding markets, making up over 98% of the medieval pottery from excavations in Fordingbridge, for example. In Hampshire, Jervis (2011) has identified marketing networks centred on major centres, which seemingly became subsumed into a wider network in the fifteenth century. Particularly sophisticated mapping of market regions in Kent by Streeten (1982) shows similar sub-regionality, but with wares produced at Tyler Hill and marketed through the principal town of Canterbury having a much wider distribution. In the midland and northern counties considered here, the distribution of pottery has been less intensively studied. In Norfolk, Jennings and Rogerson (1994) have shown that Grimston ware has a distribution focussed in the north-west of the county, but is found more widely in smaller quantities, having been traded out of King's Lynn along the coast and through the river systems.[494] At the national scale, pottery distributions therefore provide valuable insights into the local marketing networks of which rural households were a part, and the dominance of larger towns such as Canterbury and Salisbury in these networks. Further insight into these networks is provided by three types

[494] Note major studies of medieval ceramics in Norfolk and Suffolk (Sue Anderson) and Northumberland (Andrew Sage) are ongoing.

of stone objects which can be provenanced and their trajectories of exchange reconstructed to varying degrees: Norwegian schist whetstones, quernstones and stone mortars.

Whetstones of Norwegian schist[495] are particularly illustrative. Prior to the thirteenth century, imported whetstones are primarily of Purple Phylite, with Eisborg Schist becoming the dominant stone used after this point (Moore 1978; Crosby and Mitchell 1987). Recent scientific analysis of archaeological fish remains shows that this corresponds with the expansion of the North Sea stockfish trade (Barrett *et al.* 2011; Orton *et al.* 2014) and the presence of whetstones can be understood as a by-product of the intensifying trade in English grain and Norwegian fish (Hybel 2002). Norwegian schist whetstones dominate the excavated whetstone assemblages from east coast towns such as Colchester, York and Ipswich, and are also common in Winchester (Crummy 1988, 76–9; Ottaway and Rogers 2002, 2793–7; Williams nd). Prior to the fourteenth century, Kings Lynn had strong trading links with Norway, but from the 1280s restrictions imposed by the Hanse saw Boston rise to prominence as the main port trading with Norway (Carus-Wilson 1962; Reed 1994, 63–4). Through our period, trade continued between east coast ports, including London and Hull, and Norway, with German merchants also engaging in the re-distribution of goods through the Hanseatic network. While not trading regularly with Norway, both Berwick-upon-Tweed and Newcastle were integrated into east coast trading networks, with links between Berwick and King's Lynn demonstrated by stone ballast from the Berwick region being reused as building material in the Norfolk port (Fraser 1969; Hoare *et al.* 2002). The distribution of whetstones is strongly skewed towards eastern England (Figure 7.2). Findspots at Wythemail (Hurst and Hurst 1969), Weekley Wood Lane (Northamptonshire; Molloy 2015) and Oakham (Rutland; Gathercole 1958) are within 10 miles of Northampton and Stamford respectively, locations of major fairs through which goods imported into Boston were redistributed (Carus-Wilson 1962), while sites at Wimbotsham (Shelley 2003) and Walpole (Norfolk; Clarke 2009) are situated within the river systems feeding King's Lynn, while Capel-St-Mary (Suffolk; Tabor 2010) is close to Ipswich, another North Sea port with Baltic links (Bailey 2007, 269) and Wharram Percy (Yorkshire) and Doncaster are within the hinterland of Hull (Chadwick 2008; Harding, Marlow-Mann and Wrathmell 2010). Strong links between Boston and Coventry may have provided a means for these stones to penetrate the market in Worcestershire, where they have been excavated at Goldicotte and Upton (Palmer 2010; Rahtz 1969) These may also have been derived from the London market, with merchants who took wool to the capital returning with a variety of goods for resale (Dyer 2012b, 118). In Wiltshire, the established trade between Southampton

[495] A fuller analysis of the distribution of whetstones can be found in Jervis (2023).

and Salisbury, which included herring from the east coast (Hare 2015a) as well as the major fair at Winchester likely accounts for findspots in the county.

The majority of quern fragments within the archaeological sample are of German lava, which was the principal stone type used for hand querns in the twelfth–thirteenth centuries, particularly in eastern England; however, some examples may be residual as the type is also common in the Roman and Anglo-Saxon periods (see Pohl 2010). The distribution of these lava querns is focussed on East Anglia and Kent, areas in which suit of mill was weak, but also with access to North Sea trading networks (see Chapter 3; Fig 3.3). Unlike whetstones, these were bulky items which could be more easily transported over water than land, creating a demand for these stones in areas in which local stone was not suitable. In Yorkshire, Northumberland and Rutland the small number of querns are more commonly of locally sourced sandstone or Derbyshire millstone grit, which was also exchanged westwards into Worcestershire, as demonstrated by an example from Upton. However, Worcestershire also had access to red sandstone, used for querns at Goldicotte and Whittington (Hurst 1998; Palmer 2010).

The distribution of stone mortars provides a further perspective on these regional economic networks (Figure 3.7). Within the dataset, there is a single example of a Caen Stone mortar, from Wimbotsham, presumably imported via King's Lynn (Shelley 2003). The majority of mortars in the dataset are of Purbeck stone, being found at sites in southern England in Kent (Lydd, Greenwich; Barber and Priestly Bell 2008; Cooke and Philpotts 2002), Middlesex (Staines; Jones 2010), Hampshire (Foxcotte, Fordingbridge; Russel 1985, Harding and Light 2003) and Devon (Newton Abbott; Weddel 1985). This closely matches the distribution of Purbeck stone used in the construction of monastic, ecclesiastical and secular buildings which cluster in south-central England (Leach 1978). Beyond the counties included in this survey, mortars are most abundant in non-elite contexts within this core zone of Purbeck stone use. This suggests that the trade in building stone made mortars accessible to a wider range of households than further north and west, where they almost exclusively occur in elite or institutional contexts (Dunning 1966; Jervis 2022d). The production of mortars was likely a side-industry for the Purbeck stone industry, and the distribution suggests that these items travelled with building stone. This is supported by recent finds from the Mortar Wreck excavated in Poole Harbour, from which Purbeck stone grave slabs, mortars and blocks were recovered. Some more localised networks can also be identified: at Gomeldon, a mortar of local Chilmark stone was excavated, as were examples identified as being of Quarr Stone from the Isle of Wight (Musty and Algar 1986). At Goldicotte (Worcestershire) a mortar fragment of white lias was recovered (Palmer 2010). While a soft stone, probably not well suited to the production of mortars, this stone outcrops in the immediate region, running north-easterly between Bristol and Stratford-upon-Avon (Swift 1995), while Oolithic limestone outcrops in the Cotswolds

and this is the likely source of the mortar from Upton (Worcestershire; Rahtz 1969). At Doncaster and Wharram Percy, mortars of dolomitic limestone were also likely produced from stones outcropping locally. The mortars show a strong relationship with the building stones used locally, particularly in the case of Purbeck stone in the ecclesiastical architecture, as well as in the construction of church monuments (Badham 2007). The circulation of mortars is likely supplementary to that of building stone; however, investment in these items represents the acquisition of a specialist vessel for the processing of condiments, and may imply the availability of these, as well as a desire to produce flavoured foods (see Chapter 3). The low quantity of mortars suggests that these bulky items were not readily available on the local market, perhaps only becoming available when building work was undertaken locally, bringing a supply of building stone to an area and, with it, small quantities of mortars for resale or creating opportunities for stone masons to make use of waste fragments.

The distribution of these three types of stone object show how rural households were enfolded into trading networks in a variety of ways, and were able to source commodities from distant locations. They likely represent low level investments in useful objects. While querns were a major imported commodity and widely traded, whetstones and mortars perhaps represent more opportunistic commercial activities; mortars perhaps associated with the movement of building stone, and schist whetstones being exchanged through the fairs which redistributed the commodities imported into Boston and other east coast ports through the Scandinavian, German and Baltic trading networks. These stone objects present a picture of the integration of rural households into commercial networks at a level not immediately discernible from the objects listed in the escheators' and coroners' records.

Summary: domestic goods

Our datasets show a complex relationship between consumption in the countryside, in smaller towns and in the larger towns which are the subject of Goldberg's thesis. Key variables include household wealth and the accessibility of markets. The evidence provided by stone objects from archaeological excavations helps us to perceive the complex redistributive networks in which both urban and rural households were engaged, with market access likely being a key determining factor in the variety of objects which households were able to obtain, a theme explored further in Chapter 10.

In general terms, we can perceive small-town and rural households possessing increasingly similar ranges of goods, and disposing of wealth in increasingly similar ways, as we move up the scale of wealth. However, differences can be observed in relation to the three modes of urban and rural consumption defined by Goldberg. To summarise:

- Small-town and rural households held similar proportions of wealth as cooking ware relative to bedding. This is in contrast to Goldberg's evidence from larger towns, where cooking ware typically accounts for a lower proportion of inventoried wealth than bedding.
- In both town and country, wealthier households had a wider range of cooking ware than less wealthy households. However, poorer, small-town households appear to have had a wider range of cooking ware and bedding than their rural counterparts.
- Wealthier households in both small towns and the countryside had a wider variety of bedding than poorer households, but poorer, small-town households had a wider range of bedding than equivalent rural households. This suggests some similarity between larger and smaller towns, given that Goldberg proposes that a feature of urban modes of consumption is substantial investment in a diverse range of bedding. It is noteworthy that cushions occur rarely in the escheators' records, supporting Goldberg's association of these with households residing in larger towns.
- In both small towns and the countryside, the range and value of tableware increases in relation to household wealth. This implies that the acquisition of luxuries was a component of rural life, and contrasts the rural mode of consumption defined by Goldberg, which is characterised by the acquisition of essential items associated with cooking and sleeping. The evidence supports Goldberg's association of silver spoons with urban consumption, with them occurring only in a small number of lists, related to specific types of consumer.

Conclusion: patterns of investment and consumption

In concluding this chapter, we return to the model presented by Goldberg, to examine the extent to which his observations about rural households are sustained by our evidence, and to assess whether models of consumption in larger towns can be applied to their smaller counterparts.

At a general level, Goldberg's rural mode of consumption is reflected in the escheators' and coroners' records and can be applied both to rural households and to many of those residing in small towns. In general terms, a difference can be observed in the proportion of inventoried wealth held as livestock and equipment, with this being higher among rural households. On close inspection, the data does not support a clear distinction between rural and small-town experience. It should be noted that urban agriculturalists are a feature of Goldberg's dataset and their goods are recognised as appearing more 'rural' than 'urban' in character. The escheators' and coroners' records are revealing in regard to the extent to which small-town households engaged in agriculture and, particularly, wealthier households held significant proportions of their inventoried wealth in livestock. The data suggests that Goldberg's modes of consumption

relate to the extremes of urban and rural consumption. The evidence presented here suggests a more complex and diverse picture, and supports the notion that rather than there being a stark dichotomy between urban and rural consumption, there is a spectrum of consumer behaviour, which diffracts in relation to factors such as household economy, market accessibility, property ownership and, critically, wealth.

Good examples of this diffraction are the acquisition of cooking ware and bedding. In small towns, poorer households had a wider variety of cooking equipment than their rural counterparts. This accords with Goldberg's observations about larger towns, whereby urban households more typically possessed a wider range of goods beyond the essential pots and pans required for basic cooking. However, the evidence also demonstrates how the diversity of cooking ware increases in relation to household wealth in both small towns and in the countryside, even as the proportion of that wealth held as cooking ware decreased. In general, though, cooking ware accounts for a higher proportion of domestic goods by value in small-town households than in Goldberg's urban sample, situating these households closer to the rural mode of consumption. Similarly, in regard to bedding, greater polarisation between small towns and the countryside is seen among the poorest households, with bedding becoming more numerous and diverse in line with household wealth. Both the small-town and rural households contrast with Goldberg's urban sample, but in both small towns and in the countryside, investment in bedding appears more significant than Goldberg's model of rural consumption implies.

In summary, as might be expected, the data shows that while clear differences between the, predominantly wealthy, urban households and rural households are demonstrated by Goldberg, the inclusion of smaller towns and a more diverse range of rural households reveals that urbanity was not the only factor shaping domestic consumption. The archaeological evidence helps us to consider one of the reasons for this complexity – the varying networks through which goods circulated. Market access was not simply a case of proximity to a market, but to types of market and commodity chains, as seen in the case of whetstones and querns in particular. In order to better understand this patterning we can move to look at a single region in greater detail. This is the county of Wiltshire, which forms the basis of Chapter 10.

CHAPTER 10

Consumption in Context: The Case of Wiltshire

In this chapter we explore in greater detail how and why consumption patterns vary between households, building on the conclusions reached from national scale analysis in Chapter 9. Wiltshire has been chosen as a case study county for several reasons. Firstly, it is well served by escheators' and coroners' lists, as well as archaeological excavations. Secondly, a high proportion of the county was administered by ecclesiastical estates, meaning that there is an excellent baseline of demesne records from which to understand patterns of agriculture and landholding (see discussion in Hare 2011). Thirdly, the landscape facilitates comparative analysis. The county can be divided into two main areas: the chalklands to the south and east, and the clay vale to the north and west, characterised by distinct agricultural and tenurial regimes (Figure 10.1).

During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, Wiltshire became increasingly synonymous with the wool and cloth industries, initially centred on Salisbury, but later in the western part of the county (Hare 1999; 2011). Salisbury developed into one of the major towns of later medieval England (Hare 2009), while the county was within the wider hinterlands of the principal ports of Southampton (Hicks 2015) and Bristol. The commercial landscape was largely characterised by a network of small towns and rural markets, falling into the market hinterlands of the large towns of Newbury, Gloucester and Oxford to the north, as well as Bristol and Salisbury.

The chapter is divided into three parts. The first compares household economy and patterns of consumption between the chalkland and the vale. The second assesses the relationship between patterns of consumption and market proximity. The final section compares rural consumption with evidence from Salisbury. The chapter is based on the evidence from 59 escheators' lists, 35 coroners' lists and 32 archaeological sites from across the county. Lists have been included only where they provide a specific place of residence within Wiltshire for the forfeiting individual. This means we exclude lists only identifiable as relating to 'Wiltshire' or to 'Hampshire or Wiltshire'. The analysis therefore

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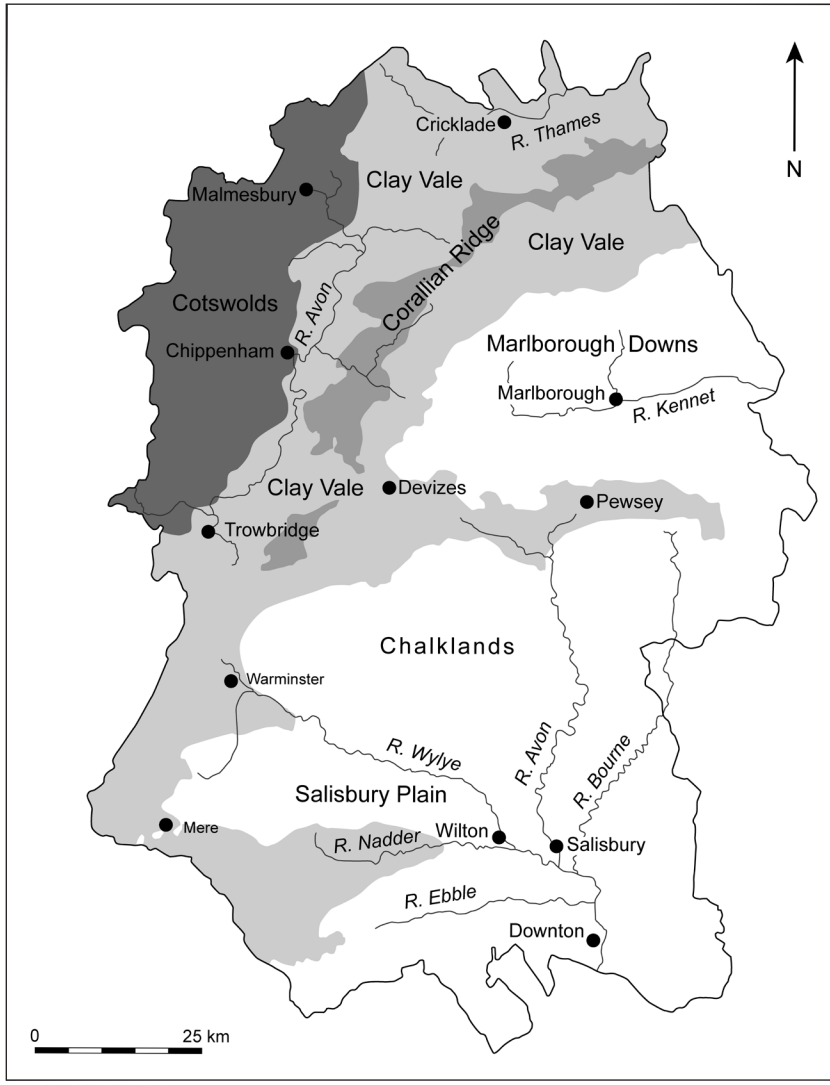

Figure 10.1: Map of Wiltshire showing the main geographical regions and towns. Redrawn by Kirsty Harding from Hare (2011).

allows us to assess the relative importance of household economy, regionality and market proximity in determining patterns of medieval consumption.

Regional variability

As noted, the landscape of Wiltshire can be divided broadly into two zones, chalkland and clay vale, punctuated by the sandstone of the Cotswolds and Corallian ridge in the west (Figure 10.1). Analysis of demesne records suggests

that, in general terms, these two main areas are characterised by distinctive agricultural regimes. The chalklands were dominated by intensive sheep-corn husbandry, with persistent direct demesne cultivation by some landowners (Hare 2011, 43). Wheat gradually gave way to barley as the main crop in this region, with the late fourteenth–early fifteenth century being a moment of transition. The fifteenth century saw the expansion of sheep flocks, with demesne flocks being exceptionally large and intensively managed (Hare 2011, 60–70). Cattle were relatively unimportant to the chalkland agricultural regime, with herds typically comprising fewer than 10 animals, although, particularly in the wooded areas to the east, demesnes could have fairly large herds of pigs (Hare 2011, 71–2). Analysis of tithe records suggests a general correspondence between demesne and tenant agriculture in this region, with tenants often devoting a greater proportion of their sown acreage to barley (Hare 2011, 55–7; 75). The concentration of land in the hands of large ecclesiastical landowners, particularly the Winchester estate, on the chalklands means that this zone is well served by records, a situation not paralleled in the vale. Hare's (2011, 80) analysis of a more limited range of demesne records suggests that the vale concentrated more intensively on the cultivation of wheat and oats, developing a specialisation in dairying through the fifteenth century. A contrast can also be drawn between these areas in terms of patterns of landholding and tenurial arrangements, with both direct demesne cultivation and customary tenure persisting for longer in the chalkland than the vale, albeit with a high degree of regional variation (Hare 2011, 118).

Analysis of regional variability in consumption must rest on a comparative understanding of household economy in these areas. The escheators' and coroners' records provide a valuable additional insight into the agricultural activities of tenants, allowing us both to contrast tenant and demesne agricultural practice, and highlight regional variation in investment in agrarian production.

Chalkland

Hare (2011, 43) comments that the chalkland can be divided into two subregions. The upper chalk (including Salisbury Plain) is the area characterised by intensive sheep-corn husbandry, while the lower chalk, around the Vales of Pewsey and Wardour, had a greater emphasis on wheat cultivation. Such subdivision can be seen to a certain degree in the escheators' records which, in general terms, correspond with the regional patterning in demesne and tenant cultivation identified by Hare from tithe records (2011, 53–8).

The escheators' records reveal two households on Salisbury Plain that had particularly large sheep flocks, although the largest, that of suicide Robert Sprakelyng of Codford, who had 472 sheep, is still dwarfed by demesne flocks and appears small in comparison with some estimates of flock size (Table 10.1).[496]

[496] E317.

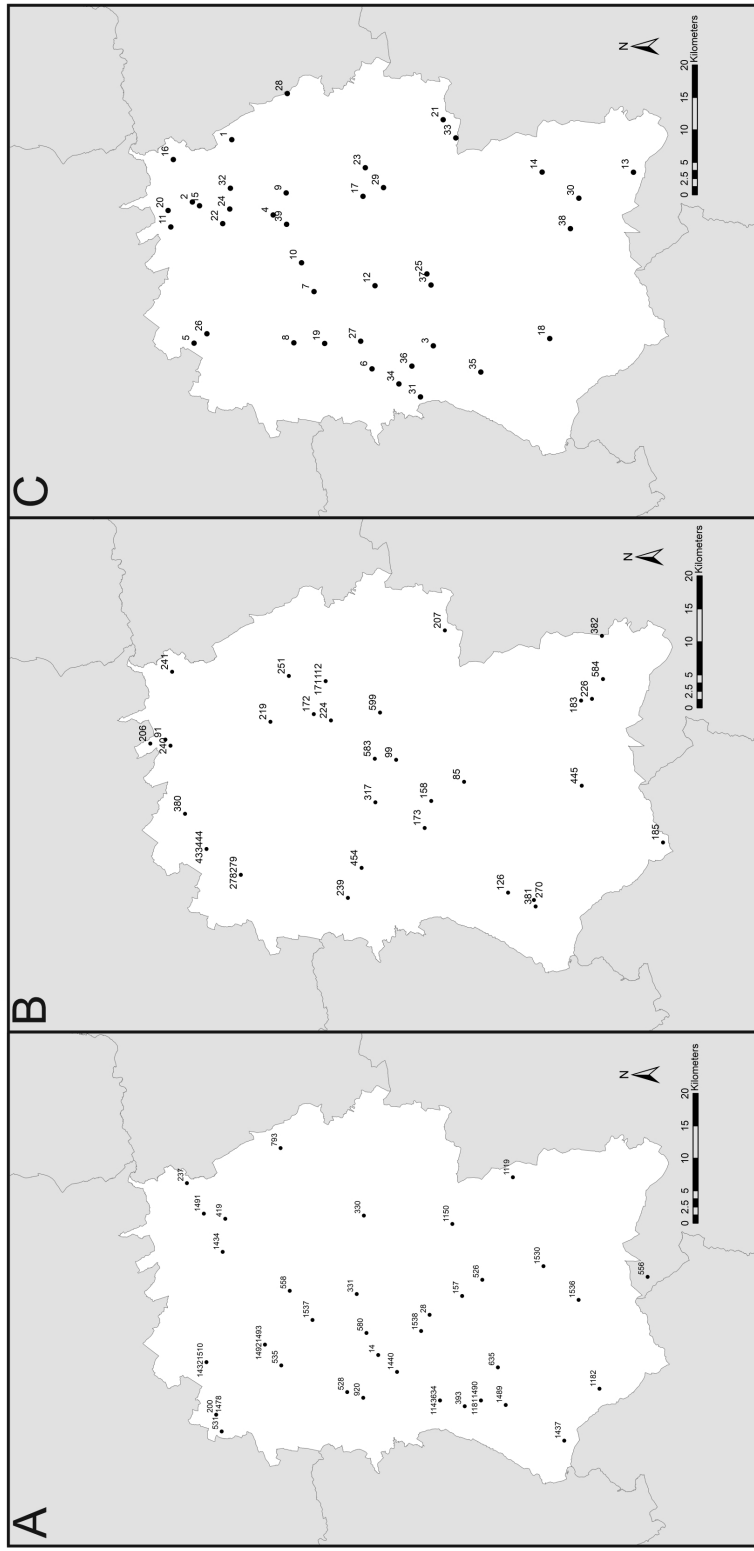
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Figure 10.2: Distribution of lists and archaeological sites in Wiltshire. A: Escheators' lists. B: Coroners' lists. C: Archaeological sites. For archaeological sites: 1: Bishopstone; 2: Blunsdon St Andrew; 3: Bratton; 4: Broad Hinton; 5: Brokenborough; 6: Broughton Gifford; 7: Calne; 8: Chippenham; 9: Chiseldon; 10: Compton Bassett; 11: Cricklade; 12: Devizes; 13: Downton; 14: Gomeldon; 15: Haydon Wick; 16: Highworth; 17: Huish; 18: Inner Ashley Wood (Berwick St Leonard); 19: Lacock; 20: Latton; 21: Ludgershall; 22: Lydiard Tregoze; 23: Malmesbury; 24: Mannington; 25: Market Lavington; 26: Marlborough; 27: Melksham; 28: Membury; 29: Pewsey; 30: Salisbury; 31: Southwick; 32: Swindon; 33: Tidworth; 34: Trowbridge: 35: Warminster: 36: West Ashton; 37: West Lavington; 38: Wilton; 39: Winterbourne Bassett.

It should be noted, however, that the distribution of lists is largely focussed on the fringes of the chalkland, with no lists relating to the land held by the Winchester estate, and this may offer some explanation for this (Figure 10.2a). The other large flock is that of John de Polton of Tilshead.[497] These two households seem to have been engaged in sheep-corn husbandry, albeit at a smaller scale than demesne farmers. Sprakelyng had significant quantities of wheat and barley as well as ploughs and harrows, while de Polton had wheat and barley in sheaf (Table 10.2). A smaller scale producer arguably engaged in a similar style of husbandry is John Soutere of Imber, also a suicide, who had 33 sheep and small quantities of wheat and barley.[498] These three individuals provide evidence of households engaged in, potentially intensive, sheep-corn husbandry, focussing on similar crops to those found in the demesne sector. It is notable that Sprakelyng was also operating as a smith, though the lists of de Polton and Soutere do not provide any suggestion of additional economic activities. Archaeological evidence for a similar husbandry regime is perhaps provided by excavated plots at Tidworth. Here, one plot appears associated with low intensity domestic activity, while an adjacent plot had seemingly been cultivated with wheat, barley and oats, typical of the chalkland husbandry regime. Crop cultivation is supported by finds, including a plough blade and fragments of quern (Milward *et al*. 2010).

Elsewhere on the chalkland around Salisbury, both the escheators' and coroners' records provide evidence of households seemingly engaged in only small-scale pastoral husbandry. At Great Wishford, John Bowyer had 10 sheep, as did John Holewey of Fittleton and John Spark of Martin.[499] In the coroners' records, Henry Thacher of Whaddon to the south of Salisbury possessed 10 sheep (Tables 10.1 and 10.4).[500] These examples provide evidence of rural households

[497] E157.

[498] E315.

[499] E1530; E1150; E556.

[500] C584; it is possible that Thacher was a resident of Whaddon near Melksham, which is situated on the clay. While acknowledging the circularity of the argument, the possession of sheep makes it likely that he was resident in Whaddon near Salisbury.

Table 10.1: Animal ownership in Wiltshire as demonstrated by the escheators' records. N = Number of animals, V = Value of animals (d).

Region	List No.	Name	Place	Year	Cattle		Sheep		Pigs		Horses		Total
					N	V	N	V	N	V	N	V	
Chalk	28	William Leder	West Lavington	1404							3	480	3
	70	Robert Rede	Salisbury	1427									0
	157	John de Polton	Tilshead	1372	4	640	250	4200	17	240	3	280	274
	315	John Soutere	Imber	1403			33	396			2	50	35
	317	Robert Sprakelyng	Codford	1403	13	700	472	2201	48	175	6	480	539
	330	Robert Brasier	Oare (in Wilcot parish)	1404	2	60			1	8	4	264	7
	331	John Cauntfeld	Bishops Cannings	1403							2	36	2
	555	Richard Godynche	Liddington	1420	7	324	20	240	2	40			29
	556	John Spark	Martin	1420	4	182	10	76	2	28	1	30	17
	793	Robert Durham	Aldbourne	1426	1	60			3	60	3	216	7
	1119	Edmund Wattys	Newton Tony	1458	2	120					1	160	3
	1150	John Holewey	Fittleton	1443	1	40	10	120					11
	1279	John Hobelet	Yatesbury	1408	4	280			1	4	2	40	7
	1436	Nicholas Waldebeof	Ugford [Burcombe parish]	1401			4	48					4
	1530	John Bowyer	Great Wishford	1433	5	164	10	120			1	120	16

(*Continued*)

Table 10.1: Continued.

Region	List No.	Name	Place	Year	Cattle		Sheep		Pigs		Horses		Total
					N	V	N	V	N	V	N	V	
Cotswold	200	Thomas Idery	Sherston Magna or Parva	1415									0
	531	Richard Levyot	Sopworth	1421									0
	1362	William Bench	Grittleton	1407	4	–			3	–	3	–	10
	1510	Richard Walssh'	Malmesbury	1430									0
Ridge	1440	John Caresbroke	Keevil	1403							2	424	2
	1491	Henry Filkes	Stratton	1430							1	80	1
	1537	John Fabell'	Calne	1434	7	816	12	192	5	60	2	100	26
Vale	14	Edward Knyght	Seend	1404	5	304							5
	528	John Beneyt	Shaw	1421	2	32							2
	558	John Hulledіewe	Highway	1420	7	424	20	240	12	24	1	16	40
	872	John Butiller	Warminster	1391			3	–					3
	1143	John Burgeys	Westbury	1442							1	16	1
	1182	Margaret Burdon	Semley	1444	40	1600							40
	1434	John Lange	Lydiard Tregoze and Lydiard Millicent	1401	3	314			4	88			7
	1437	Nicholas Shawe	Mere	1401							1	160	1
	1490	Roger Cokeman	Warminster	1430					3	80			3
	1493	Richard Danyell	Christian Malford	1430					1	12			1
	1536	Richard Sawetell	Compton Chamberlain	1434									0
	1538	Richard Penyng	Great Cheverell	1434			8	144					8

(*Continued*)

Table 10.2: Arable cultivation in Wiltshire as demonstrated by the escheators' records. Qty = Quantity of crop listed, V = Value of crops (d).

Region	List No.	Name	Place	Year	Wheat		Barley		Drage/ Vetch		Oats		Pulse	
					Qty	V	Qty	V	Qty	V	Qty	V	Qty	V
Chalk	28	William Leder	West Lavington	1404										
	70	Robert Rede	Salisbury	1427										
	157	John de Polton	Tilshead	1372	2 qtr	120	2 qtr	80						
	315	John Soutere	Imber	1403	1 qtr	48	1 bushel	16						
	317	Robert Sprakelyng	Codford	1403	21 qtr	1407	18.25 qtr	730						
	330	Robert Brasier	Oare (in Wilcot parish)	1404	5 acre	100	1.125 qtr	36	1 bushel	3			5 acres (with drage)	60
	331	John Cauntfeld	Bishops Cannings	1403			7 acre	56	6 acre	24				
	555	Richard Godynche	Liddington	1420	?		?						?	
	556	John Spark	Martin	1420			3 acre	60						
	793	Robert Durham	Aldbourne	1426										
	1119	Edmund Wattys	Newton Tony	1458										
	1150	John Holewey	Fittleton	1443			1 qtr	32						

(*Continued*)

Table 10.2: Continued.

Region	List No.	Name	Place	Year	Wheat		Barley		Drage/ Vetch		Oats		Pulse	
					Qty	V	Qty	V	Qty	V	Qty	V	Qty	V
	1279	John Hobelet	Yatesbury	1408	7 acres (with drage)	112					8 acres and more	36		
	1436	Nicholas Waldebeof	Ugford [Burcombe parish]	1401			2 acre	60						
	1530	John Bowyer	Great Wishford	1433										
Cotswold	200	Thomas Idery	Sherston Magna or Parva	1415										
	531	Richard Levyot	Sopworth	1421	Stack	–	Stack	–						
	1362	William Bench	Grittleton	1407										
	1510	Richard Walssh'	Malmesbury	1430										
Ridge	1440	John Caresbroke	Keevil	1403	20 qtr	1440	12 qtr	480					?	748
	1491	Henry Filkes	Stratton	1430										
	1537	John Fabell'	Calne	1434			6 qtr	240						
	14	Edward Knyght	Seend	1404	4 bushel	20	?				?		?	
	528	John Beneyt	Shaw	1421	?	40								
	558	John Hulledіewe	Highway	1420	4 qtr	208			4 qtr	96				
	872	John Butiller	Warminster	1391										

(*Continued*)

Table 10.2: Continued.

Region	List No.	Name	Place	Year	Wheat		Barley		Drage/ Vetch		Oats		Pulse	
					Qty	V	Qty	V	Qty	V	Qty	V	Qty	V
Vale	1143	John Burgeys	Westbury	1442										
	1182	Margaret Burdon	Semley	1444										
	1434	John Lange	Lydiard Tregoze and Lydiard Millicent	1401	3 acres	96	6 qtr	240					5 qtr	213
	1437	Nicholas Shawe	Mere	1401										
	1490	Roger Cokeman	Warminster	1430	4 bushels	40								
	1493	Richard Danyell	Christian Malford	1430										
	1536	Richard Sawetell	Compton Chamberlain	1434	4 qtrs	160								
	1538	Richard Penyng	Great Cheverell	1434										

Table 10.3: Arable cultivation in Wiltshire as demonstrated by the coroners' records. Q = Quantity of crops, V = Value of crops (d). Quantities: A = Acre, B = Bushel, C = Cartload, Q = Quarter, Y = Yard.

Region	List No.	Name	Place	Date	Wheat		Barley		Drage		Oats		Pulses		Rye	
					Q	V	Q	V	Q	V	Q	V	Q	V	Q	V
Chalk	85	Walter Drewett	Tilshead	1547	10A	–	11.5A	–								
	99	Robert Duke	Wilsford	1549			1A	24								
	112	Roger Rowland	Marlborough	1551												
	158	Richard Webbe	West Lavington	1565												
	171	Thomas Chylrey (alias Tayler)	Marlborough	1565												
	172	Robert Davys (alias Peters)	Wroughton	1565			1Y	12								
	173	Walter Barnard	Erlestoke	1566												
	183	Edward Burges jnr	Laverstock	1566	6A	420	11A / 0.5Q	762	2A	100	5A	200	1A	40		
	185	Peter James (alias Vyncent)	Tollard Royal	1566	5A	400	5A	400								
	207	Catherine Goodale	Ludgershall	1569												

(*Continued*)

Table 10.3: Continued.

Region	List No.	Name	Place	Date	Wheat		Barley		Drage		Oats		Pulses		Rye	
					Q	V	Q	V	Q	V	Q	V	Q	V	Q	V
	382	John James	West Dean and Newton Tony	1577	11A/ 21 B/ 36Q/ ?	12162	20B/ 70Q	?	?	?	?	?	?	?		
	583	William Amor	All Cannings	Unk.	?											
	599	William Reves	Wilcot	1555			?									
Cotswold	584	Henry Thacher	Whaddon	1551												
Vale	444	Unknown	Malmesbury	1598												
	126	Thomas Thomas	Longbridge Deverill	1551	1C	160	1C	80								
	240	John/ Bartholomew Browne/ Howford	Chelworth	1577												
	445	Thomas Parker	Compton Chameberlayne	1598	?	120	?	120			?	120	?	120	?	120
	454	Edith Self	Melksham	1598									?	24		

Table 10.4: Animal ownership in Wiltshire as demonstrated by the coroners' records.

Region	List No.	Name	Place	Date	Cattle		Sheep		Pig		Horse	
					No.	Value (d)	No.	Value (d)	No.	Value (d)	No.	Value (d)
Chalk	85	Walter Drewett	Tilshead	1547	5	–			5	–	2	–
	99	Robert Duke	Wilsford	1549	1	192	20	400				
	112	Roger Rowland	Marlborough	1551			3	176				
	158	Richard Webbe	West Lavington	1565			9	216				
	171	Thomas Chylrey (alias Tayler)	Marlborough	1565							1	80
	172	Robert Davys (alias Peters)	Wroughton	1565	1	120			1	24	1	40
	173	Walter Barnard	Erlestoke	1566	5	672	40	800				
	183	Edward Burges jnr	Laverstock	1566	4	432	4	64	1	–	5	–
	185	Peter James (alias Vyncent)	Tollard Royal	1566	2	220	32	720			2	240
	207	Catherine Goodale	Ludgershall	1569	3	280						
	382	John James	West Dean and Newton Tony	1577	31	11648	223	7890	24	874	14	3648
	583	William Amor	All Cannings	Unk	3	–					4	–
	599	William Reves	Wilcot	1555								
Cotswold	584	Henry Thacher	Whaddon	1551			10	200				
Vale	444	Unknown	Malmesbury	1598							1	1440
	126	Thomas Thomas	Longbridge Deverill	1551	1	240			7	168	3	720
	240	John/Bartholomew Browne/ Howford	Chelworth	1577	3	960						
	445	Thomas Parker	Compton Chameberlayne	1598								
	454	Edith Self	Melksham	1598	1	–			4	–		

maintaining small sheep flocks probably for wool, perhaps to exploit the market in Salisbury. Of particular interest in this regard is the escheators' list of Nicholas Waldeboef of Ugford, who had a two-acre crop of barley in 1401, suggestive of the specialisation in this crop identified by Hare (2011, 43) in manors around Salisbury, indicating localised adaptation to meet the demands of this growing urban market (Table 10.2).[501] Slightly further afield, John Spark of Martin also had a barley crop. In the coroners' records, this can perhaps also be seen in the case of Edward Burges of Laverstock, who farmed 11 acres of barley, as well as six of wheat, five of oats, two of vetch and one of lentils (Table 10.3).[502] Additionally he maintained a small flock of four sheep. The deserted village of Gomeldon (Musty and Algar 1986) provides some archaeological evidence for husbandry in this region, with finds including horseshoes, possibly associated with traction, shears (suggestive of sheep shearing) and querns (suggestive of cereal processing). The economy of the village was built on sheep-corn husbandry, with the demesne having been farmed out by 1518.

Sheep owning also extended into the fringes of the chalkland. Richard Godynche of Liddington had 20 sheep and was also cultivating wheat, barley and beans (Table 10.3).[503] Liddington is situated in north Wiltshire at the foot of the North Wessex Downs, and therefore this can be seen as a transitional area between vale and chalkland. The coroners' records suggest a similar situation at Erlestoke, where the husbandman Walter Barnard had 40 sheep (Tables 10.3 and 10.4).[504] Excavations at Huish, situated between Devizes and Pewsey, identified evidence for a barn and smithy (Thompson 1972). It is likely that these structures are associated with the manorial complex. Huish has a particularly complex manorial history, its ownership being disputed through the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, with demesne lands dispersed across several parishes (Baggs *et al.* 1975, 77–82). In 1363 the manor comprised 240 acres of arable land, six acres of meadow and common pasture. The surrounding uplands supported sheep grazing, with Huish Hill affording pasture for 940 sheep in the sixteenth century. The demesne was farmed out by the mid-sixteenth century. Finds from Huish include a large number of horseshoes, some of which are associated with the smithy, but may indicate the use of horses for traction, with finds of agricultural equipment including a billhook, sickle and hoe. A further excavated manorial complex on the chalk is that at Chapel Meadow, Membury, for which the wartime excavations are unpublished. The site, identified as a fortified manor house with an associated chapel, was held as a separate manor in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, before becoming re-amalgamated into the Bishop of Salisbury's manor of Ramsbury, possibly leading to the desertion of the house, although the chapel continued to be endowed until the dissolution, when it was claimed by the Crown from the tenant of Membury farm (Baggs *et al.* 1975, 12–46). The demesne at Membury

[501] E1436.
[502] C183.
[503] E555.
[504] C173.

comprised a roughly equal mix of arable and pasture, which had been leased by 1396, and included pasture for 240 sheep. As at Huish and Gomeldon, the excavated remains provide little clear evidence of the agricultural basis of the household, although they do include shears and horseshoes.

A similar case to that of Chapel Meadow, Membury is the probable fifteenth-century house at Inner Ashley Wood, Berwick St Leonard to the west of Salisbury (Stallybrass 1906). A rich assemblage of finds was recovered, including equestrian equipment and an arrowhead. The quality of these finds, which include an apostle spoon, and the substantial building, suggest that this may be the site of the manor of Berwick St Leonard, held from Shaftesbury Abbey until the dissolution (Freeman and Stevenson 1987, 100–05). The abbey had a demesne flock of over 200 sheep in the fifteenth century, with the arable leased, though the excavations provide no clear evidence for these agricultural activities. These examples show that households which perhaps grazed considerable demesne sheep flocks leave little archaeological trace of their economic base within the occupied areas. This highlights the importance of the escheators' and coroners' records for detailing the diversity in the size of tenant flocks through the fourteenth-sixteenth centuries, given the comparatively sparse archaeological record from most settlement sites. A case analogous to that at Berwick St Leonard is perhaps the coroners' records of the clergyman John James, who possessed over 200 sheep.[505]

Generally, however, among the coroners' records in particular, records of sheep-owning households on the chalkland are surprisingly rare. Two reasons can be posited for this. Firstly, the case of John James and the evidence provided by the large demesne flocks kept in this region, sometimes directly and sometimes by lessees, emphasises the variability in scale of household agricultural activities in the sixteenth century, and points to the concentration of sheep husbandry into the hands of a smaller number of wealthier landowners. The second is regional variability: coroners' lists largely relate to the lower chalk or the easterly wooded fringe of the chalkland, which are less well suited to large-scale sheep husbandry (Figure 10.2b).

On the lower chalk, the balance of household production appears tipped towards arable. Specialisation can be seen in the list of John Cauntfeld of Bishops Cannings, who in 1403 was cultivating 13 acres of grain – seven acres of barley, and six of vetch, a feature of demesne husbandry at the nearby manors of Avebury and Winterbourne Monkton (Hare 2011, 44) – and also in the list of the plough owning Robert Brasier of Oare, who was farming five acres of wheat and five of pulses and drage.[506] Similarly, at nearby Yatesbury, John Hobelet cultivated seven acres of wheat, drage and vetch, as well as eight or more acres of oats.[507]

[505] C382.
[506] E331; E330.
[507] E1279.

As in the demesne sector, cattle husbandry is not a feature of either the escheators' or coroners' lists. Households possessing cattle typically had one or two cows, and oxen are sparse, reflecting a tendency in the demesne sector to use horses as traction in the chalkland area (Tables 10.1 and 10.4). Hare (2011, 51) concludes that on the chalkland horses, rather than cattle, were the primary traction animal, and it is noticeable that archaeological finds of equestrian equipment were recovered primarily from settlements on the chalklands, and this is reflected in the presence of horses in escheators' and coroners' lists, which show a particular concentration in the chalklands (Tables 10.1 and 10.4).

As a group, chalkland households appear fairly diverse in their agricultural activities. However, clear regional differences are apparent, with varying forms of sheep-corn husbandry taking place on Salisbury Plain and with households in the villages around Salisbury seemingly tailoring production to the needs of the expanding urban market. In the lower chalk, there is greater diversity, with a wider range of crops being cultivated, but with some investment in sheep husbandry, although generally less extensive than that on Salisbury Plain.

The vale, Cotswolds and Corallian ridge

As in the demesne sector, the escheators' lists suggest a focus on arable rather than pastoral cultivation in the vale. Only a few households have unusually large numbers of animals. Neither the escheators' nor coroners' records provide any clear indication of the regional specialisation in dairy production (Tables 10.1 and 10.4). The 40 animals (a very large number) of civil outlaw and widow Margaret Burdon of Semley in the Vale of Wardour were bullocks.[508] Among the coroners' records, the largest group of cows are the three belonging to the labourer John Browne of Chelworth (1577) and, much earlier, among the escheators' the four cows belonging to Edward Knyght of Seend in 1404.[509] However, the regional preference for oxen is apparent in their appearance in lists such as that of John Hullediewe of Highway which include a cow, two oxen and two bullocks. Hullediewe had wheat and drage in sheaf; this may have been cultivated with the assistance of the oxen which presumably provided traction for his cart and dung pot (probably a small tip-cart; Langdon 1986, 154).[510]

The region is characterised, however, by a greater focus on arable production, with a wider diversity of crops being cultivated than in the chalklands. Edward Knyght of Seend had wheat, barley, beans and oats in a barn. In 1400 John Lange, who evidently farmed in both the adjacent parishes of Lydiard Tregoze and Lydiard Millicent, possessed a plough and two oxen and three acres of wheat, while also holding small quantities of peas and barley.[511] The coroners' records

[508] E1182.
[509] C240; E14.
[510] E558; Hullediewe also owned a gelding which may have provided additional traction.
[511] E14; E1434.

show that in 1551 Thomas Thomas of Longbridge Deverell had cartloads of barley, hay, maslin, and wheat, and Thomas Parker of Compton Chamberlain had unspecified quantities of various grains.[512] Archaeological excavations from areas of the vale around Swindon, such as at Shaw Farm, provide little evidence for pastoral agriculture.[513] Whetstones, possibly associated with the sharpening of agricultural tools, are common finds from these sites and a quern from Shaw Farm is indicative of grain processing. Equestrian equipment occurs but at a considerably lower frequency than at sites on the chalk, implying of the use of oxen for traction in this area.

A greater focus on low-scale sheep husbandry can be seen around the Corallian Ridge in the north of the county. At Keevil, John Caresbroke had a good deal of threshed wheat and barley and a plough and harrow with gear, as well as unspecified 'diverse animals' apparently seized and sold by the felon's lord, all of which suggests intensive arable production.[514] At Calne in 1434, the husbandman John Fabell had four oxen, a cow, a bull, a yearling, a sow and four piglets and 12 sheep, also suggestive of a greater pastoral focus.[515] A similar mixed husbandry regime may be tentatively proposed in this region from two excavated sites. At Latton, excavations on the Cricklade to Broad Blunsdon gas pipeline revealed the footings of a two-cell structure, associated with a medieval field system (Cotswold Archaeology 2002). Dating to the thirteenth–fifteenth centuries, the artefact assemblage includes a curry comb and horseshoes, indicating the keeping of horses, as well as shears suggestive of sheep husbandry on the slopes of the Corrallian Ridge. To the south, at Eysey (Brett 2003), finds include shears, horseshoes and a heckle comb tooth, which may imply the cultivation of flax.

A final archaeological excavation to consider is that at Little Snarlton Lane, Melksham, which provides evidence of a non-agrarian rural household dating to the very beginning of our period (Hardy and Dungworth 2014). Slight remains of a two-cell domestic structure are associated with the remains of a site specialising in the smelting and smithing of iron (see Chapter 8) at the edge of Melksham Forest. Environmental samples from the site provide no evidence of cereal processing, but the exploitation of wild fruit and nuts is suggested. Exploitation of the woodland resources may also be illustrated by an arrowhead recovered from the site.

A focus on arable husbandry in the vale, with a specialism in wheat cultivated alongside other crops, is suggestive of a degree of similarity between demesne and tenant husbandry regimes in this area. Neither the escheators' nor coroners' records provide evidence for large-scale dairying.

[512] C126; C445.

[513] The dataset includes a number of unpublished artefact assemblages housed in Swindon Museum, recorded by Dr Alice Forward for this project.

[514] E1440.

[515] E1537.

Regional variability in wealth and patterns of investment

The evidence of lay subsidies shows that in the early fourteenth century, a distinction can be made between the generally wealthier households of western Wiltshire, around Salisbury and the Vale of Pewsey, and those in the vale (Campbell and Bartley 2006, 343). This appears to be reflected in the total valuations of escheators' lists from the county. In these records, the mean value of goods from chalkland households (1109d/£4 12s 5d) is more than twice of that of households in the vale (502d/£2 1s 10d). The underlying reason for this appears to be the higher levels of animal ownership among chalkland households, with economic goods (as defined in Chapter 9) accounting, on average, for 58% of household goods by value in the chalkland area and 35% in the Vale, although with considerable variability in both regions. The coroners' dataset is too small to evaluate investment in economic goods in relation to total inventoried wealth between regions. However, where the coroners' material is concerned, the discrepancy in wealth between the two areas is somewhat less marked: the average total valuation in the vale is 1561d/£6 10s 1d and in the chalkland is 5743d/£23 18s 7d, dropping to 887d/£3 13s 11d when the exceptionally rich list of John James (totalling nearly £350) is removed.[516] This suggests that the discrepancies in wealth between these two areas may have lessened in the fifteenth century, with the vale potentially overtaking the chalklands, although any conclusion in this regard must be tentative due to the small sample size.

To consider patterns of investment between the chalkland and vale in detail, it is necessary to focus in on specific categories of items which are sufficiently common to allow for comparison, yet which also lack the ubiquity of items such as brass cooking pots. Following the discussion in Chapter 9, we can consider soft furnishings and tableware to be particularly sensitive differentiators of consumption behaviour.

The most common type of soft furnishings is items of bedding. Across Wiltshire, in the escheators' lists items of bedding other than the typical coverlet, blanket and sheet are rare. There are single exceptions to this rule within each sample, chalkland and vale. In the chalkland, the franklin William Leder had two quilts and two bankers, while in the vale John Ferrour of Sevenhampton had several worn and torn testers.[517] Leder has the highest total valuation in the chalkland sample, whereas Ferrour's possessions are worth less overall. The lists both arose from civil outlawry, and perhaps omit some items, but it is nonetheless interesting to note that neither household appears to have invested in animals or items for arable cultivation, beyond the three horses possessed by Leder (Table 10.5). Testers are rare in the coroners' dataset, occurring in the lists of the carpenter John Oke of Britford and the clergyman John James in

[516] C382.
[517] E28; E237.

Table 10.5: Wiltshire households in possession of soft furnishings and tableware in the escheators' records. Bedding: Q = Quilt, T = Tester, Ba = Banker, C = Cushion. Tableware: D = Dish, P = Plate, S = Saucer, E = Pewter, Dr = Drinking vessel, T = Tablecloth, N = Napkin. %ge domestic goods relates to the proportion of the inventoried wealth accounted for by domestic goods.

Region	List No.	Name	Location	Year	Bedding				Tableware							Total Inventoried Wealth (d)	%ge Domestic Goods
					Q	T	Ba	C	D	P	S	E	Dr	T	N		
Chalk	28	William Leder	West Lavington	1404	2		2	3						2	3	3304	39%
	70	Robert Rede	Salisbury	1427									22			19720	–
	317	Robert Sprakelyng	Codford	1403										1		7364	–
	556	John Spark	Martin	1420										1	1	611	22%
	793	Robert Durham	Aldbourne	1426			1	6								1040	60%
Cotswold	200	Thomas Idery	Sherston Magna/Parva	1415									1			480	100%
	1294	Thomas Smyth	Chippenham	1411										1	3	840	–
Vale/ Ridge	14	Edward Knyght	Seend	1404					8							1700	–
	237	John Ferrour	Sevenhampton	1416		5								2	5	508	100%
	393	William Blaelewell	Upton Scudamore	1453								12				68	–
	419	John Noreys	Swindon	1468										2	2	324	42%
	535	John Greynour	Langley Burrell/ Kington Langley	1421					4							62	100%
	580	Richard Eyr	Rowde	1422					2							60	100%
	1182	Margaret Burdon	Semley	1444									1			1920	–
	1437	Nicholas Shawe	Mere	1401										2	2	292	24%
	1489	John Galon	Longbridge Deverill	1430						9	3					32	100%
	1490	Roger Cokeman	Warminster	1430						6						1200	18%
	1492	John Courney	Christian Malford	1430						5						44	100%

Table 10.6: Wiltshire households in possession of soft furnishings and tableware in the coroners; records. Bedding: B = Bolster, P = Pillow, C = Cushion, T = Tester, Ceiling. Tableware: Pl = Platter, P = Plate, C = Cup, Bs = Basin, Bo = Bowl, Po = Pottinger, S = Saucer, SC = Salt cellar, E = Pewter, O = Other, T = Tablecloth, N = Napkin. %ge domestic goods relates to the proportion of the inventoried wealth accounted for by domestic goods.

Region	List No.	Name	Place	Year	Bedding					Tableware												Total Inventoried Wealth	%ge Domestic Goods
					B	P	C	T	Ce	Pl	P	C	Bs	Bo	Po	S	SC	E	O	T	N		
Chalk	85	Walter Drewett	Tilshead	1547	2	2				6												–	–
	158	Richard Webbe	West Lavington	1565		3						1			1	1						369	39%
	171	Thomas Chylrey	Marlborough	1565	1	2	2			3					3							456	56%
	172	Robert Davys	Wroughton	1565							4											310	33%
	173	Walter Barnard	Erlestoke	1566	2												1	7				1752	15%
	183	Edward Burges	Laverstock	1566						1						1						2680	7%
	185	Peter James	Tollard Royal	1566	1									1	1							2240	6%
	207	Catherine Goodale	Ludgershall	1569	1	3					5	2								7	1	604	52%

(*Continued*)

Table 10.6: Continued.

Region	List No.	Name	Place	Year	Bedding					Tableware												Total Inventoried Wealth	%ge Domestic Goods
					B	P	C	T	Ce	Pl	P	C	Bs	Bo	Po	S	SC	E	O	T	N		
	226	John Oke	Britford	1576	1	1		1	1									X		1		3048	73%
	240	John Browne	Chelworth	1577	1																	1032	–
	251	Phillipa Shorte	Ogbourne St George	1578	1																	696	–
	382	John James	West Dean	1577	9	4	8	6		10	1	2	3		9	8	4	1	15	3	17	83449	18%
	239	Edward Cooke	Atworth	1577						1												610	–
	278	Mary Carter	Hullavington	1585	1					1					2	1						775	43%
Vale	126	Thomas Thomas	Longbridge Deverill	1551	3	3		2		15			1		1		1			3		6650	19%
	317	William Purches	Devizes	1587	1	2	3			4		3			3	4	1					1092	88%
	445	Thomas Parker	Compton Chamberlayne	1598	1	2				2				1	2							778	54%

the chalkland, and in that of the tanner Thomas Thomas of Longbridge Deverell in the vale.[518] All three also possessed bolsters, items which occur in five other chalkland coroners' records and in four from the vale (Table 10.6). A contrast can be drawn between those households possessing bolsters in the vale and chalkland areas. In the former, except for Thomas Thomas, bolsters are found only in households for which there is no evidence of substantive investment in agricultural production, whereas in the chalkland they occur among those with the largest agricultural holdings such as Walter Barnard and Peter James.[519]

Cushions are much rarer, in the escheators' lists occurring only in the list of the wealthy William Leder and Robert Durham of the small-town of Aldbourne, both in the chalkland (Table 10.5).[520] This is a pattern which can also be observed in the coroners' records, whereby cushions occur only in lists from the towns of Marlborough and Devizes, and in that of John James (Table 10.6). Napery exhibits a somewhat different distribution. In the chalkland, William Leder, John Spark and Robert Sprakelyng had tablecloths, and Leder also possessed three napkins. Thomas Smyth of Chippenham (in the Cotswold zone) had a tablecloth and three napkins. In the vale, multiple tablecloths and napkins oocur in the lists of John Ferrour, John Noreys and Nicholas Shawe. In the coroners' record they occur in the lists of Thomas Thomas (vale), Catherine Goodale, John Oke and John James (chalkland).[521] Overall, soft furnishings occur in a limited number of households, typically those with the highest levels of inventoried wealth, principally within the chalkland zone. Tablecloths appear to buck this trend, perhaps due to the importance of the table for the public presentation of the household (see Chapter 4).

Investment in these items of comfort can be contrasted with the evidence for the acquisition of tableware. Among the escheators' lists, the only chalkland household with items of tableware is that of the Salisbury merchant Robert Rede (possibly stock), although the husbandman John Spark had a candlestick, perhaps of pewter.[522] Items of pewter are exclusively found in the vale, typically in rural households such as those of Edward Knyght, who had eight pewter dishes, and William Blalewell of Upton Scudamore, who had 12 pewter pieces (Table 10.5).[523] This is a pattern repeated in the possession of ewers and basins, these being found in a single chalkland household, that of Robert Durham.[524] Noticeably, those households with these items do not possess large numbers of animals or provide evidence of intensive engagement in arable cultivation, implying that household income could be used to acquire items for display.

A similar pattern can be seen among the coroners' records where, with the exception of John James, chalkland households invested only modestly in items of tableware although these households do include agriculturalists such

[518] C226; C382; C126.
[519] C85; C173; C185.
[520] E28; E793.
[521] E28; E237; E317; C126; C207; C226; C382.
[522] E70; E556.
[523] E14; E393.
[524] E793.

as Edward Burges and Peter James, who are among the wealthiest householders in the sample (Table 10.6).[525] However, the most varied collection (again excepting James) is that of the shepherd Richard Webbe, who had a more modest overall level of inventoried wealth, which may be due to him undertaking waged labour, rather than being an agriculturalist in his own right.[526] In the vale, wealthy householders such as William Purches of Devizes, the tanner Thomas Thomas and Thomas Parker of Compton Chamberlain had more varied collections of tableware than is typically seen in the chalkland.[527]

In contrast to the escheators' and coroners' records, our archaeological evidence allows us to draw very little if any contrast between the goods of households in the chalkland and vale areas (Table 10.7). As we would expect from the national sample, knives, for example, are ubiquitous across the county. Similarly, quern stones, which occur exclusively in the archaeological dataset, can be found in the chalklands at Gomeldon (Musty and Algar 1986), Tidworth (Milward *et al*. 2010) and Wilton (Hutcheson 1997) and in the vale at Bishopstone (Draper 2008), Warminster (Smith 1997) and Shaw Farm, Swindon. Bishopstone, Gomeldon, Wilton, Warminster and Swindon were all served by mills in our period, so it is unclear whether the use of querns relates to active resistance to, or flexibility in, the enforcement of suit of mill, or to activities such as the grinding of malt for brewing. In any case, they point to investment in goods for the domestic processing of, presumably fairly small, quantities of arable produce across the county. In contrast, the distribution of whetstones is, with the exception of examples from Gomeldon (Musty and Algar 1986), entirely focussed on the vale and Cotswold areas. While this may relate to the local availability of sandstone, it suggests a greater concern with the sharpening and upkeep of agricultural tools, perhaps due to the arable focus of this area or the higher direct involvement in agricultural production by tenant, rather than demesne, farmers.

The incidence of some items from excavations shows some regional variability. Barrel padlocks and keys, for example, come almost exclusively from the chalkland, although two examples are from probable demesne farms at Berwick St Leonard (Stallybrass 1906), Chapel Meadow, Membury and Huish (Thompson 1972), and their occurrence may relate more to the wealth of these households. Buckles occur across the county, with D-shaped buckles and later double or spectacle buckles characterising the assemblage from both the chalkland and vale. Although the range of objects represented in the archaeological sample and the escheators' and coroners' records varies, all suggest a general similarity in the distribution of basic household equipment across the county. It is goods associated with comfort and display which exhibit the greatest level of regional variability, as best demonstrated by the tablewares and soft furnishings seized by the escheator and coroner.

[525] C382; C183; C185.
[526] C158.
[527] C317; C126; C445.

Table 10.7: Occurrence of common goods in archaeological assemblages from Wiltshire.

Region	Site	Knife	Quern	Barrel Padlock	Whetstone	Key
Chalk	Chapel Meadow, Membury	4				2
	Barbury Castle Farm	1				
	Herd St, Marlborough	1				
	Pennings Road and St. Andrews Road, Tidworth		2			
	Gomeldon	5	5	1	5	1
	St John's Hospital, Wilton		1			
	A419 Commonhead Junction, Chiseldon	1				
	Berwick St Leonard	8		1		1
	Huish	4		1		3
Cotswold	Prior Park Preparatory School, Cricklade				1	
	15 St. Mary's St, Chippenham	1				
	Town Wall, Malmesbury	1				
	Market Cross, Malmesbury				1	
	The Forty, Cricklade	4				
	Horse Fair Lane, Cricklade				1	

(*Continued*)

Table 10.7: Continued.

Region	Site	Knife	Quern	Barrel Padlock	Whetstone	Key
Vale	Little Hinton Manor				3	
	Latton (Cricklade to Broad Blunsdon Gas Pipeline)				2	
	Land at Woodrow Road, Melksham	1				
	Haydon Wick, Swindon				1	
	Harlstone House, Bishopstone	1	1			
	Beversbrook Road, Calne					1
	Emwell Street, Warminster	1	1		1	
	Mannington, North-east of Toothill Farm	7			3	
	Martins Hill, Shaw Farm				5	
	Mill Bank, Hinton Parva	1				
	Shaw Farm		1		1	
	The Paddock, Swindon	3			3	
	Dukes Brake to Cricklade Gas Pipeline	3				
	The Grange, Blunsdon St Andrew				1	

Summary: regional variability in consumption

Across Wiltshire, the agrarian economy provides a backdrop for patterns of consumption. In the chalkland, with its emphasis on sheep-corn husbandry in both the tenant and demesne sectors, households typically held greater proportions of their portable wealth as 'economic' objects (principally livestock) than in the vale. In the chalkland, the wealthiest households were able to invest in livestock and a range of items for comfort such as cushions and bolsters. A contrast can be drawn with the evidence for investment in tableware, which is more widespread in the vale in the later fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries than in the chalklands, and is most clearly associated with households in the vale with no clear agricultural interests. By the sixteenth century, this regional distinction appears to have broken down, although the tableware assemblages from the vale appear more diverse than those in the chalkland. The sample is small, but a variety of factors can be posited as influencing this distribution. These include sub-regional agrarian regimes and variability in tenurial customs across the county. The extent to which households were motivated to invest in livestock relates to the sub-regional variations in the agrarian economy and the ability to exploit the associated marketing networks for agricultural produce, built on the large-scale demesne production in the chalkland and evident in the apparent specialisation of producers in the region around Salisbury. Secondly, the level of economic freedom experienced by households varied between manors and regionally across Wiltshire. The more rapid breakdown of customary tenure and serfdom in the vale stimulated a wage economy, while on the chalkland obligations of labour and service meant that households had a less flexible economic base. The lack of records from the west of the county has been highlighted in Chapter 8, and likely conceals further variability brought about by the emergence of specialised centres of cloth production and the ability of households to command wages through the undertaking of piecework (Hare 2011, 193). There is insufficient evidence to contrast investment between agriculturalists and non-agriculturalists, but individuals such as Robert Sprakelyng, a smith who was also a substantial agriculturalist, and Thomas Thomas, a tanner with substantial agricultural interests, suggest that to draw such a dichotomy is not in any case appropriate.[528]

Consumption and market access

A crude measure of market interaction can be provided by considering the diversity of objects present in households in relation to their distance from known markets. Recent analysis of PAS data suggests that certain types of objects, specifically those relating to personal care, literacy and religion are

[528] E317; C126.

more common in the immediate vicinity of known markets (Oksanen and Lewis 2020, 123). It reasonable to suggest similar patterning might be visible both in excavated material and among the goods seized by the escheator and coroner. To undertake this analysis, references to 'goods and chattels' and 'other household utensils', as well as any objects which could not be identified due to illegible records, were excluded from the escheators' and coroners' sample, as were pins, nails, industrial waste and unknown objects from the archaeological dataset.

A hierarchy of markets has been created in which to assess the relationship between market proximity and material diversity. This analysis incorporates the 60 known markets in Wiltshire (Letters 2006), as well as those in neighbouring counties which may have been the closest markets for some households. At the apex of this hierarchy are the major markets of Salisbury, Newbury, Oxford, Gloucester and Bristol, which are the largest towns in Wiltshire and surrounding counties.[529] It should be noted that the hinterlands of these towns are not exclusive; Southampton was engaged in overland trade with all of these large centres for example, demonstrating the interconnectedness between marketing regions (Hare 2015b). The second rank consists of urban markets (those either with a borough charter or identified as being a market town in 1600 by Everett) with a 1334 lay subsidy assessment value of over £100. In Wiltshire, these are Warminster, Lacock, Market Lavington, Amesbury and Chippenham, and the category includes places such as Bath and Cirencester in surrounding counties.[530] This is a problematic measure as it perhaps overemphasises the importance of some markets, but allows the division of the county into smaller marketing zones. The final tier are those places which held a market charter, but excluding those which possessed only a fair. While acknowledging that not all markets were operational throughout our period, this tiered approach allows us to divide Wiltshire into putative marketing zones which form the basis for a consideration of the relationship between market access and consumption (Figure 10.3). Distances from markets are calculated 'as the crow flies', so do not take into account communication routes or terrain. Despite these caveats, the method allows us to identify some trends in relation to the proximity of households to markets of different size and importance.

As will be discussed in the next section, the archaeological assemblage from Salisbury is more diverse than that from rural and small-town excavations across Wiltshire, and this is reflected in the single escheators' list from the city as well.[531] A crude measure of assemblage diversity is offered by the number of functional categories of goods within lists or archaeological assemblages (the categories are animal, farming equipment, craft equipment and materials, tableware, cooking and food preparation, heating, furniture, soft furnishings,

[529] Note that modelling of market hinterlands using Thiessen polygons does not show the hinterlands of Southampton or Winchester extending into Wiltshire.

[530] Note that in Figure 10.3b, this category incorporates the larger markets where these are the nearest town to a settlement.

[531] E70.

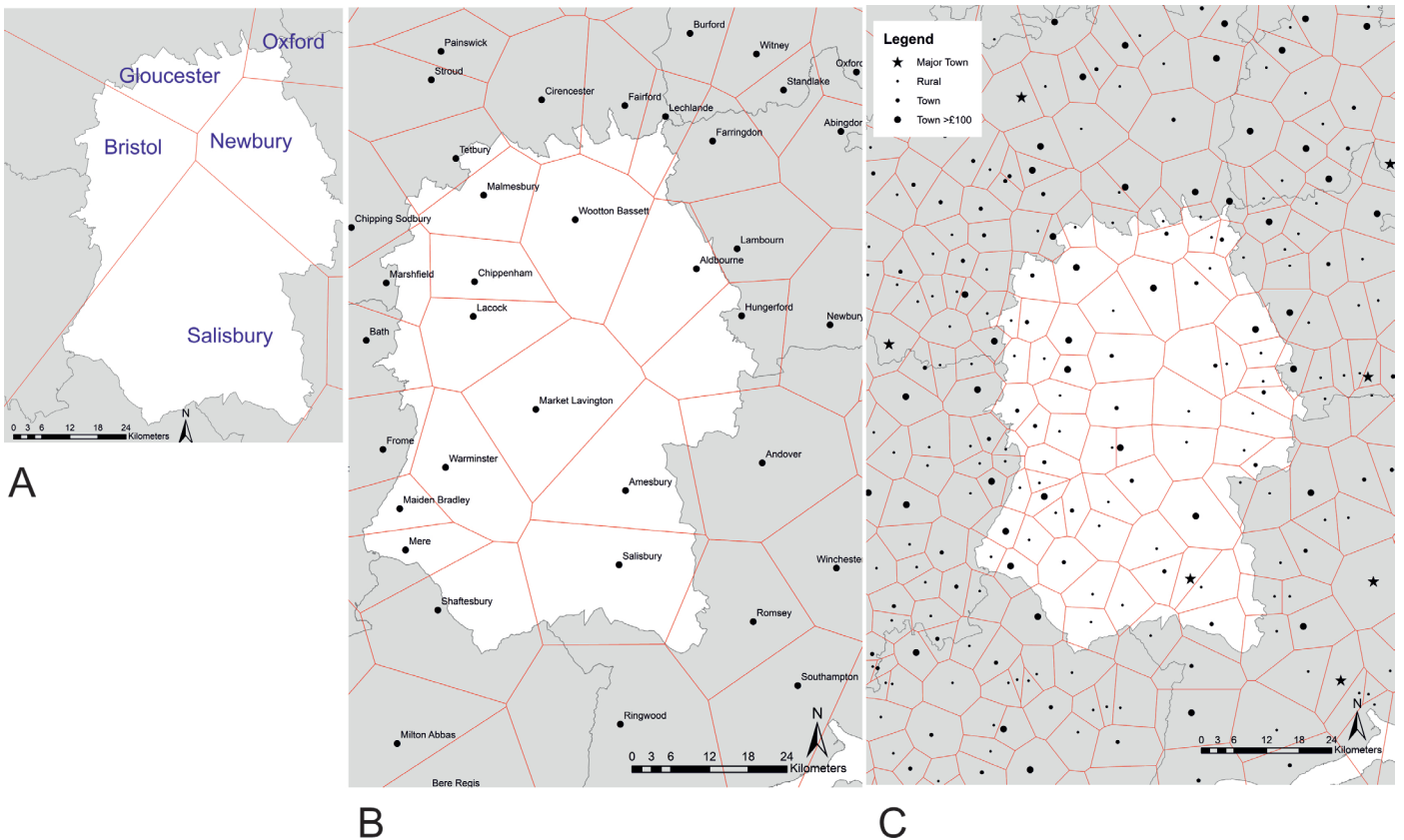

Figure 10.3: Division of Wiltshire into market zones. A: Major markets. B: Towns. C: Nearest market.

crops, personal object, textiles, arms and armour, and clothing and personal adornment). Analysis of this measure of diversity in relation to distance from major markets does not present a clear picture. Whereas coroners' records generally appear less diverse as we move away from major centres, the escheators' records show the converse pattern (Figure 10.4). In both the escheators' and coroners' datasets, there is no clear relationship between the diversity of goods present in households and their distance from the nearest market (Figure 10.5).

Greater nuance can be provided by a focus on the acquisition of specific goods by households in relation to their distance from types of market. We can begin with items which appear ubiquitous, cooking wares. Among the

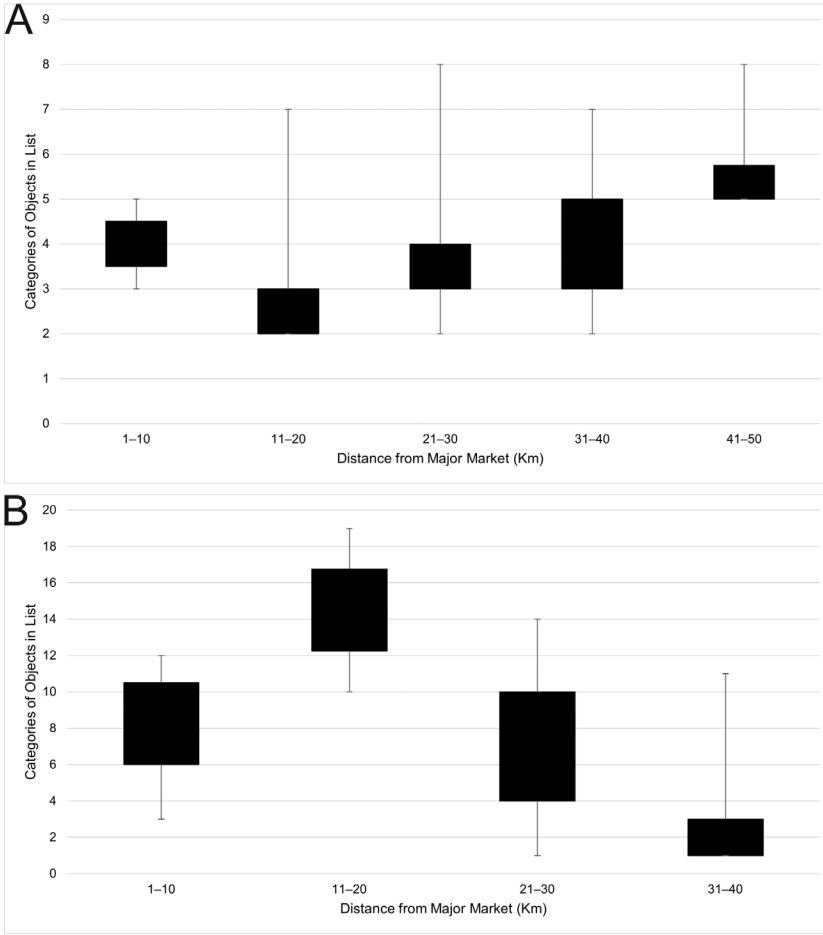

Figure 10.4: The diversity of the goods present (as number of categories represented) in relation to the distance from major markets. A: Escheators' lists. B: Coroners' lists.

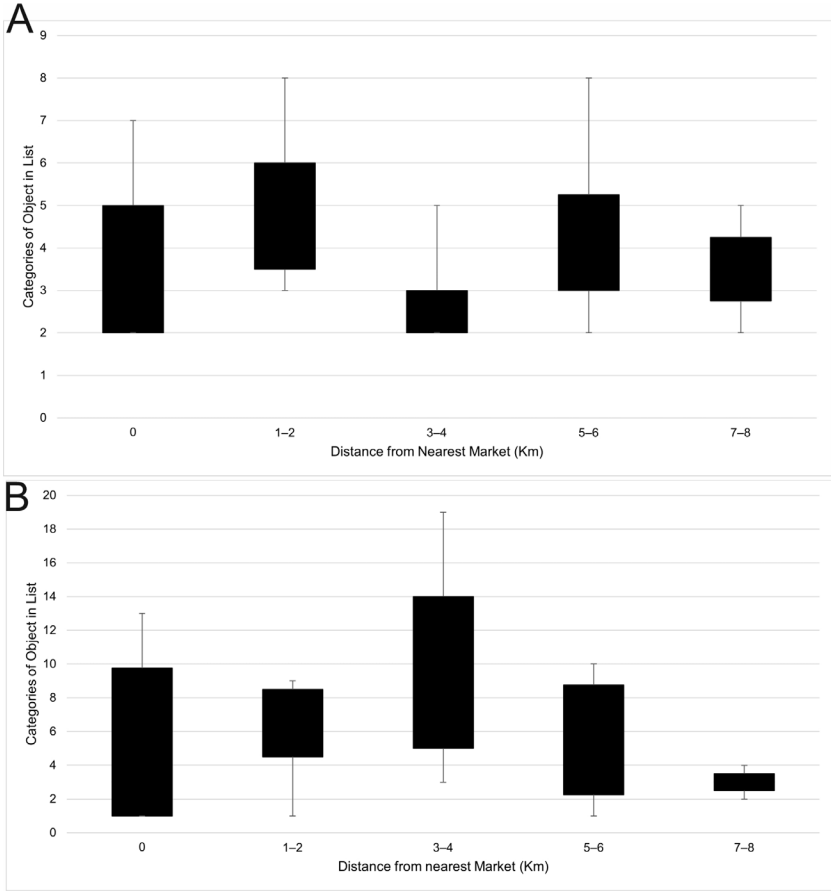

Figure 10.5: The diversity of the goods present (as number of categories represented) in relation to the distance from nearest market. A: Escheators' lists. B: Coroners' lists.

escheators' records, most lists include cooking ware regardless of their distance from major or urban markets (Figure 10.6a). Among those escheators' lists relating to the households most geographically isolated from markets, a lower proportion include cooking ware; however, these items are likely to have been incorporated into a class of household utensils, as is probably be the case for John Hobelet of Yatesbury and John Cauntfeld of Bishops Cannings.[532] The number of lists with equipment other than pots and pans is low for Wiltshire, but items such as roasting equipment are not confined to the immediate locales

[532] E1279; E331.

Table 10.8: Proportion of escheators' (E) and coroners' (C) lists containing cooking equipment, tableware, furniture and soft furnishings in relation to distance from nearest major and urban market.

	%ge with…								Total Lists	
	Cooking equipment		Tableware		Furniture		Soft furnishing			
Distance from Major Market (Km)	**E**	**C**	**E**	**C**	**E**	**C**	**E**	**C**	**E**	**C**
1–10	50%	67%	50%	33%	100%	67%	0%	67%	2	3
11–20	100%	100%	33%	100%	16%	100%	16%	100%	6	2
21–30	69%	58%	46%	67%	38%	83%		67%	13	12
31–40	83%	24%	70%	18%	30%	29%	35%	29%	23	17
41–50	75%	–	25%	–	50%	–	0%	–	4	–
Distance from Urban Market (Km)										
0	78%	33%	89%	33%	56%	50%	44%	33%	8	2
1–5	88%	67%	88%	56%	25%	67%	38%	67%	7	8
6–10	76%	25%	40%	31%	36%	50%	24%	44%	25	18
11–16	71%	75%	29%	75%	29%	75%	29%	75%	8	6

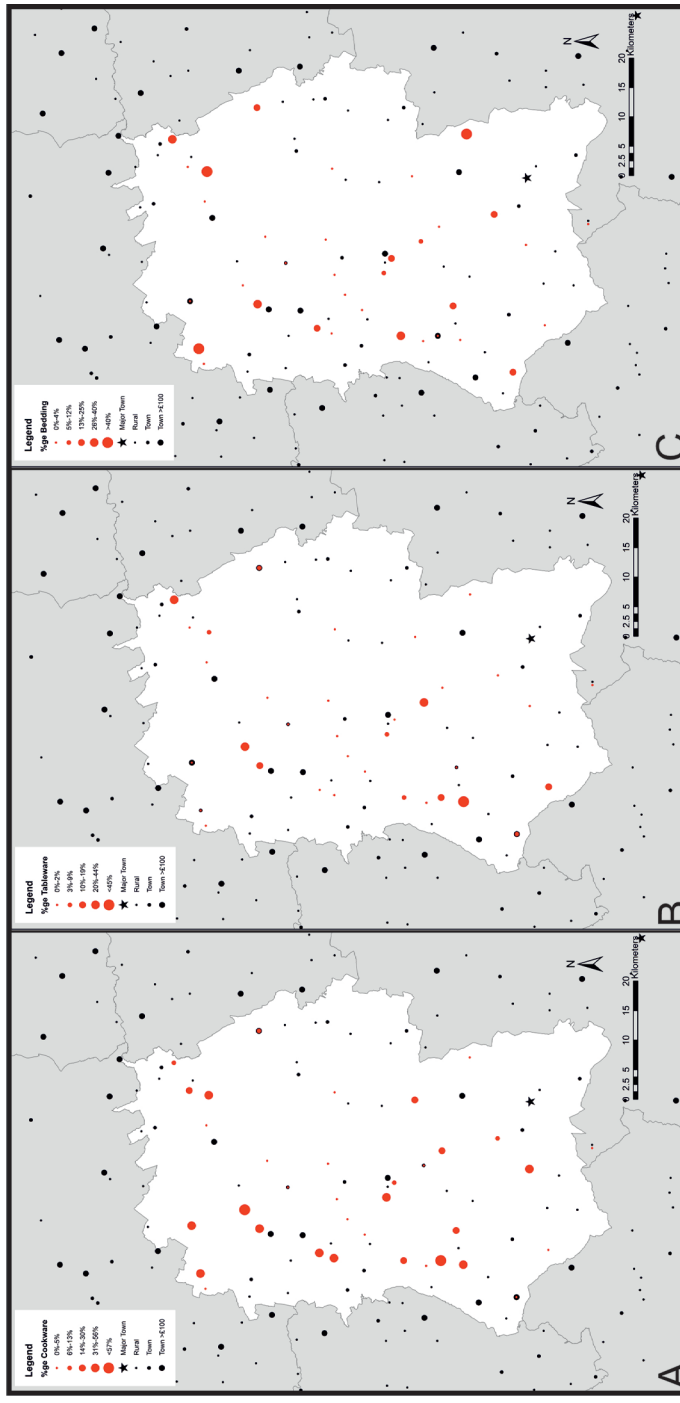

Figure 10.6: Maps showing the proportion of domestic goods (by value) comprised of A: Cooking ware; B: Tableware; C: Bedding in the escheators' lists and the distribution of markets.

of major or urban markets, for example Edward Knyght of Seend, situated 8km from an urban market and 37km from a major market had a spit.[533]

The coroners' records are more difficult to interpret as many of the lists only include a limited range of items: some, for example, only include items of clothing. Here a more anecdotal approach to the data reveals that cooking ware is similarly ubiquitous across Wiltshire. A range of cooking equipment appears in lists of households situated within 31–40km of a major market. Robert Davys of Wroughton had a cauldron, pot, pan and tub, for example, while William Purches of Devizes had a crock, a pan, a cauldron, a chafing dish and various items for food processing among his possessions (Figure 10.7a).[534] The majority of other lists appear incomplete in that they only include agricultural produce, craft resources or clothing, and it is likely for this reason that they do not include any items of cooking equipment. This is also true for those households situated some distance from an urban market. For example Thomas Parker of Compton Chamberlain, situated 11 km from Salisbury had a brass pot, a cauldron and skillet. Fragments of such vessels are rare within the excavated sample but include fragments from possible iron vessels from Barbury Castle Farm, Chiseldon and Huish (Thompson 1972), as well as a fragments of copper alloy from Berwick St Leonard, all of which are at least 21km from a major market and 11–16km from an urban market, further supporting the conclusion that metal cooking ware circulated widely and was accessible through local as well as larger markets.

In contrast, the escheators' records show clearly that the prevalence of tableware (including ewers, basins, pewter, silver spoons and napery) falls off considerably in relation to distance from a market (Figure 10.6b). This is clearest in relation to proximity to urban markets, with over 80% of lists within 5km of an urban market including these items, falling to 40% within 6–10km (Table 10.8). Most of the lists with tableware situated over 6km from an urban market are away from the chalkland, but are highly variable in terms of total inventoried wealth, perhaps suggesting that these items were acquired through informal trading or fairs rather than direct engagement with urban merchants (see Dyer 1989). While the occurrence of households with tableware falls off in relation to distance from urban markets, such a correlation is not apparent in relation to distance from a major market (Table 10.8). This suggests that it was the network of urban markets which were the main centres out of which tableware was redistributed. This may further account for the differences observed in the presence of tableware between households in the vale and chalklands, with the former being better served by small market towns than the chalklands (Table 10.5).

As with the analysis of cooking ware, the coroners' records are more difficult to interpret. However, the data suggests that tableware may have become

[533] E14.
[534] C172; C317.

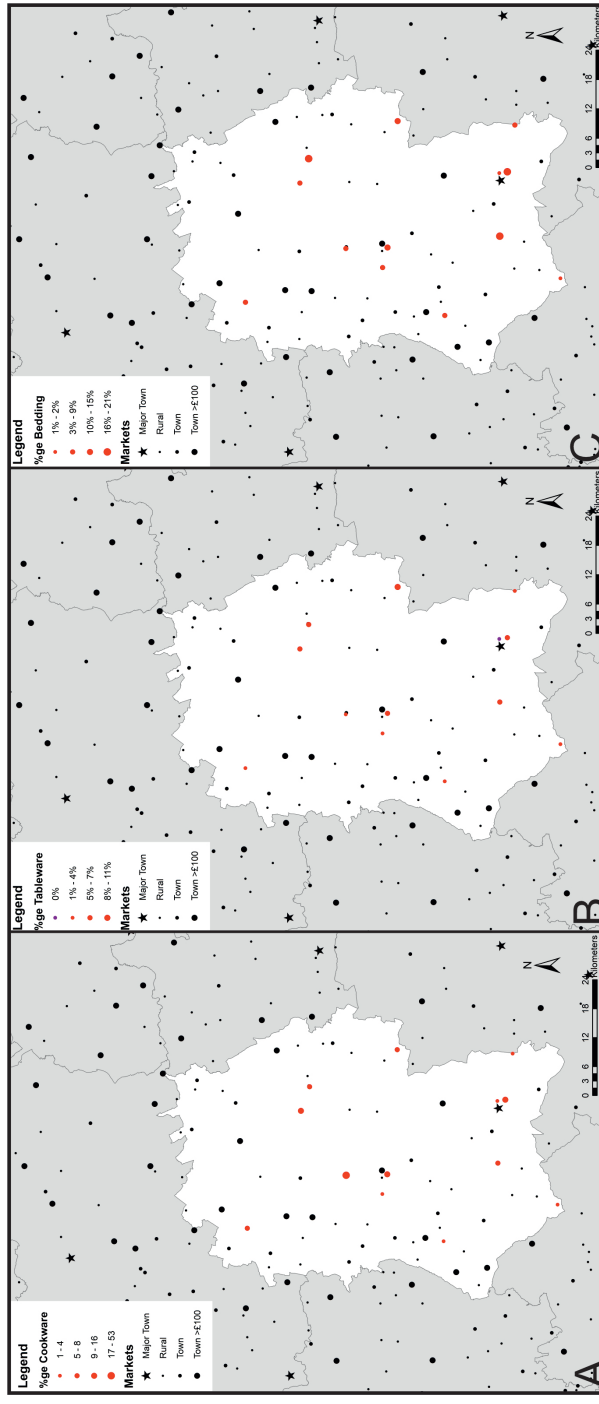

Figure 10.7: Maps showing the proportion of domestic goods (by value) comprised of A: Cooking ware; B Tableware; C: Bedding in the coroners' lists and the distribution of markets.

more widely accessible in the sixteenth century (Figure 10.7b). Of the 16 coroners' lists including these items, four are from households situated 11–16km from an urban market; however, six are from households within 5km of an urban market, with only two being within proximity of a non-urban market (Table 10.8). This suggests that urban markets continued to be the places through which these goods were traded, limiting their accessibility for households that used smaller local markets. Such items are not common in the excavated dataset; however, an apostle spoon was excavated at Berwick St Leonard (Stallybrass 1906), situated over 10km from the nearest major market. A final object whose distribution appears related to market proximity is the stone mortar, the only examples of which from outside of Salisbury come from Gomeldon (Musty and Algar 1986) within the city's immediate hinterland, suggesting that occupants of the village were able to acquire more unusual goods through their use of Salisbury as their local market.

The evidence for the acquisition of items of furniture is more ambiguous. In the escheators' records, the highest proportion of lists containing furniture are those situated within or close to major or urban markets (Table 10.8). Unlike tableware and cooking vessels, furniture was bulky, and may have been produced by a household or a local carpenter, meaning that there need not be a relationship between its occurrence and proximity to a market. To better understand the role of markets in the circulation of furniture, we can focus on a single category of items, chests. As discussed in Chapter 5, it can be suggested that the use and, perhaps, manufacture, of chests seems to have spread westwards during our period, and it is likely that these were traded as finished items, and may even, in some cases, have been imported. Among the escheators' lists, there is no relationship between the occurrence of chests and proximity to major markets, which we might expect if these were considered specialist, and non-locally produced, items. However, chests are limited to those areas in the putative hinterlands of Salisbury, Newbury and Gloucester, rather than Oxford and Bristol (Figure 5.9), despite the presence of lists in the north-east and west of the county. The lack of chests in the north-west of the county, in the area within Bristol's sphere of influence, may support the notion that chests were more directly associated with easterly contact, both Salisbury and Newbury being closely linked to the port of Southampton and its wide-reaching trading contacts (see Hare 2015c, 107–8). They are, however, most prevalent in lists relating to urban markets or their immediate hinterlands, suggesting that they may have been produced by urban joiners largely for an urban market. The coroners' data is skewed by John James who had multiple chests, but most chests within this dataset also fall within 10km of an urban market, and these become less prevalent in relation to other items of furniture away from urban markets.[535]

[535] C382.

Fittings associated with furniture such as chests come from excavations at Devizes (Thomas 1996) and Warminster (Smith 1997), as well as Gomeldon (Musty and Algar 1986) in the immediate hinterland of Salisbury as well as at Eysey (Brett 2003) and at Chapel Meadow, Membury, within 5km of the urban market at Aldbourne and The Paddock, Swindon, within 5km of the urban market of Wootton Bassett. Examples from Huish (Thompson 1972) and Berwick St Leonard (Stallybrass 1906) are further from an urban market, but, as discussed above, the evidence from these sites suggests that they are related to households of higher status, which were in a position to commission such items, or perhaps obtain them through the more expansive marketing networks available to wealthier households dealing directly with urban merchants (Dyer 1989). Therefore, both the escheators' and coroners' records suggest that the adoption of chests can be related to proximity to urban markets. Indeed, among the escheators' records, the further households are situated from an urban market, the more likely it is that their furniture will be limited to tables and benches.

The proportion of escheators' lists with soft furnishings, including items of bedding, shows a similar trend to other items, falling away in relation to distance from urban markets (Table 10.8; Figure 10.6c; Figure 10.7c). While it is unlikely that the more remote households had no bedding, these items could have been lumped together as 'other goods and chattels', or similar, implying that they were low in quantity and value. For example Edward Knyght of Seend had no items of bedding listed but had 'divers goods' and John Taillour of Orcheston had other '*utensilia domus*'.[536] As discussed in relation to the regional consumption of these items, soft furnishings other than basic items of bedding and tablecloths occur only in three Wiltshire escheators' lists, of which two – those of William Leder (West Lavington) and Robert Durham (Aldbourne) – lived in, or within the immediate proximity of, urban markets.[537] The other list, that of John Ferrour, relates to a household situated 6–10km from an urban market, but within 2km of the market at Highworth. A similar pattern is visible among the coroners' records once the exceptional list of John James is excluded, with these items typically belonging to households living within or close to urban markets, an exception being Thomas Parker of Compton Chamberlain, which is 11–16km from an urban market; however, exceptionally this market was Salisbury.[538]

An alternative means of considering these data is to assess the proportion of portable wealth held as particular types of domestic goods, following the methodology used in Chapter 9. The escheators' records exhibit no relationship between proximity to major markets and the proportion of wealth held as domestic goods, with the exception of the most remote households which, on average, held the majority of their wealth as economic goods. This trend is also apparent in relation to proximity to urban markets (Figure 10.8a).

[536] E14; E526.
[537] E28; E793.
[538] C445.

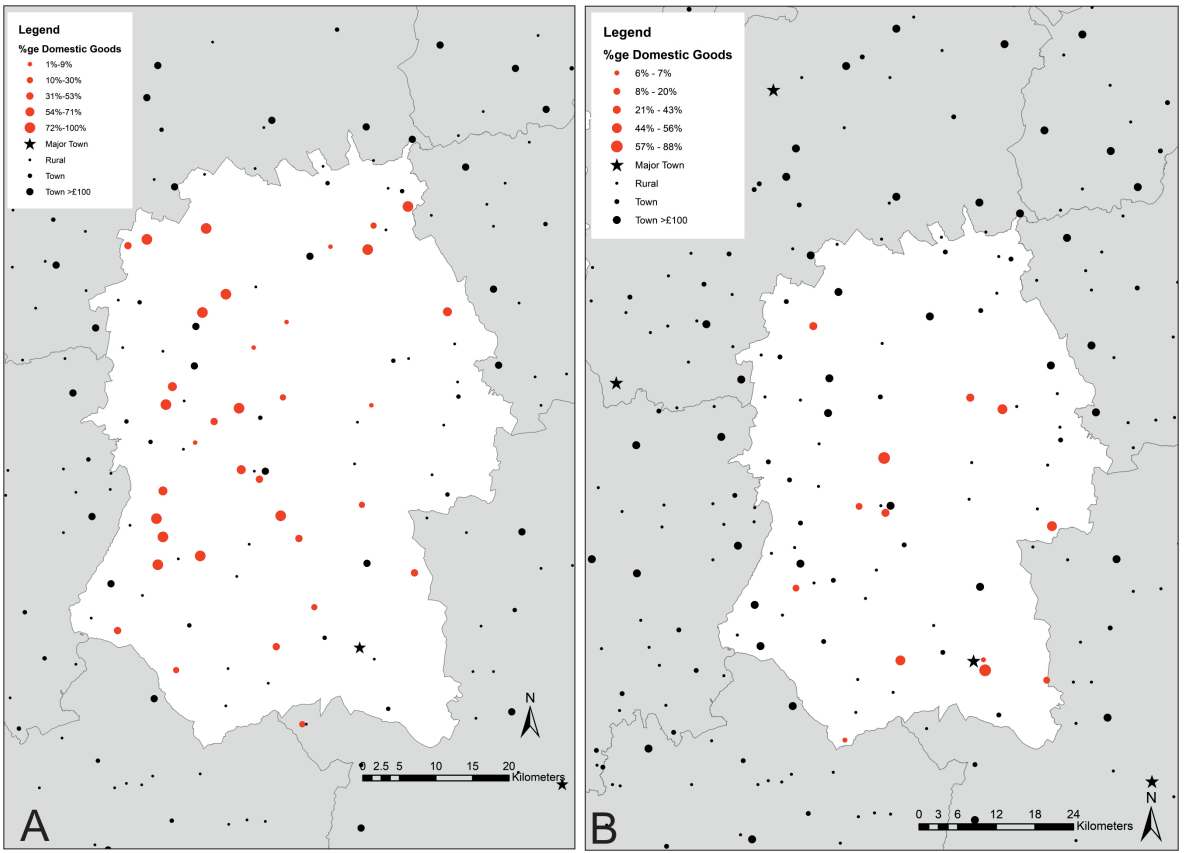

Figure 10.8: Map showing the proportion of inventoried wealth held as domestic goods. A: Escheators' lists. B: Coroners' lists.

The coroners' dataset is much smaller but does suggest a higher proportion of wealth was held as domestic goods by those living in or immediately adjacent to markets, particularly those with urban status. However, the proportion of wealth held as interior goods is highest away from major markets, although these households all had good access to urban markets (Figure 10.8b). The dataset is small and easily skewed by unusual lists, for example the highest proportion of wealth held as bedding in relation to proximity to urban markets are those households situated 11–16km away, but these include the wealthy clergyman John James who had a large house with multiple chambers.[539] Similarly the figure for the proportion held as cooking ware is particularly high for those living in urban markets and this is skewed by the list of William Purches of Devizes, who held over half of his wealth as cooking ware while the figure is generally below 10% for other lists.[540] Overall, there does not appear to be any clearly discernible patterning in the proportional investment in different types of goods in relation to market proximity.

In summary therefore, market proximity appears less important than household economy in determining patterns of consumption. It has been possible to propose that goods circulated in a variety of ways, with basic items of bedding and cooking ware being more accessible than other goods, for example. The mortars excavated at Gomeldon provide a vivid illustration of how rural households living in close proximity to major market had access to a greater diversity of goods than those living in more isolated settlements, but this is an exceptional case. Tablewares and soft furnishings appear to have been less accessible to more isolated households than those living in or around towns. However, while the higher density of urban markets in the vale may account for the higher prevalence and diversity of these items in that part of the county, these goods were by no means ubiquitous, suggesting that market proximity was not the primary cause of difference. Rather, the ability to invest in non-essential domestic goods appears more strongly associated with the extent to which households chose, or were compelled, to invest in livestock and their upkeep or the tools of agricultural production, with the greater economic freedom afforded by the breakdown of customary tenure in the vale offering greater opportunities to generate wealth and dispose of it in a variety of ways.

Urban and rural consumption

As a final means of contextualising rural consumption in Wiltshire, we can compare the objects used by Salisbury households with those from rural and small-town households. The escheators' records contain a single example relating to a Salisbury forfeiture, that of the merchant and civil outlaw Robert Rede.[541] His list is difficult to interpret as it likely comprises a mix of stock

[539] C382.
[540] C317.
[541] E70.

and personal possessions. His goods comprise 10 beds, blankets and pairs of sheets (conceivably for the use of his household), six silver adorned belts (likely stock), six dozen silver spoons (likely stock), 10 silver bound mazers and 12 silver bowls (potentially stock), an iron plate and two old wooden chests in addition to sizeable quantities of coal, wood and wheat. Rede's possessions included items such as silver spoons and chests which we might typically associate with urban households, but his list lacks evidence of the elaborate bedding and soft furnishings (e.g. cushions) suggested by Goldberg to be indicative of bourgeois consumption and which are found in a small number of rural or small-town Wiltshire households.

A further source can be used to contextualise the list of Rede's goods. Extents for debt include inventories of goods and property seized to settle debts. While subject to similar doubts about completeness as the lists of the escheator and coroner, they do serve to provide broadly comparable information on the goods to be found in medieval homes. For Wiltshire, the best evidence comes from lists relating to residents of Salisbury (Conyers 1973). Two date to the fourteenth century. In 1306 the merchant William Huloun had what we might understand as a typical range of domestic goods: a bed, linens, two chests and brass pots, but also a range of objects which are rare in rural and small-town households. These include a fixed table, several candlesticks and two pewter dishes. More comparable with the escheators' lists in chronological terms is the list of Robert Redyng's goods, dated to 1382. He had soft furnishings, including a dosser and banker, five chairs, a fixed table and two pairs of crystals (perhaps drinking glasses) among his possessions.

By the sixteenth century, the possessions of Salisbury merchants were considerably more diverse and numerous. These later extents of debt also detail the rooms in which items were located. In 1513 the mercer Nicholas Chaffyn had goods seized from his house on Winchester Street. This was one of several properties in the city owned by his family. His hall contained soft furnishings, including three short bankers and six old cushions. Unusually, when compared to the coroners' lists, he had a latten laver (ewer), while the walls were decorated with old hangings. Further old hangings could be found in the parlour, which also contained five old cushions and two chairs. The buttery housed multiple pewter vessels and six small candlesticks, while Chaffyn also possessed a range of cooking vessels, including a stone mortar. His chamber contained eight bedsteads and two truckle beds, as well as multiple items of soft furnishings. The remaining goods are the furnishings, equipment and stock associated with Chaffyn's business. A further example is that of Thomas Hele, a merchant whose goods were seized in 1542. Most of the items listed are stock, including spices and a diverse range of textiles. In his hall he had two ewers and three basins as well as various cushions and a bible. His buttery included a variety of napery and pewter vessels and he had a wide range of cooking items. His house had five chambers, one of which was carpeted, and all of which contained various soft furnishings. While at the higher end of the social spectrum of Salisbury residents, these lists demonstrate how much more elaborately furnished

urban mercantile houses were than the majority of rural dwellings considered throughout this study.

Returning to the escheators' lists, Rede's goods compare well with those of the Southampton merchant Richard Pafford, whose goods were seized following outlawry in a civil suit in 1404.[542] Like Rede, he had six spoons, a silver adorned belt, three chests and multiple items of bedding, although these include 'diverse' bankers and cushions. Unlike Rede, his list includes items of cooking and tableware, including two mortars. The Southampton Terrier, a survey of property in the town taken in 1454, suggests that Pafford had owned property in the waterfront area of the town, living on St Michael's Square, occupying a cellar on the corner of Simnel Street and owning property now listed as vacant around the waterfront (Burgess 1976). Pafford was clearly a successful merchant, and his wealth is perhaps reflected in his investment in items of comfort and display. His total inventoried wealth amounts to 66s 7d, lower than several rural Wiltshire households, who held the majority of their wealth in animals, highlighting the contrast between urban and rural household economy and its implications for investment in domestic goods. These examples could be put forward to suggest that the model developed by Goldberg is appropriate for contrasting the goods of the merchant class of larger towns with those of rural households.

Further contrast is provided by the archaeological evidence. The finds from excavations in Salisbury are less well known than the well-published collections from Winchester (Biddle 1990), York (Ottaway and Rogers 2002), Norwich (Margeson 1993), London (Egan 2010) and Colchester (Crummy 1988), but provide a clear insight into the differences between the household economies of rural and urban households in the middle ages.

The evidence is principally derived from excavations at Endless Street, the Old George Mall, Brown Street and Gigant Street, which have recovered large assemblages of material when compared to those from contemporary rural sites, and a range of structural evidence (Figure 10.9). The economic and social geography of Salisbury can be reconstructed based on surviving medieval buildings (Pearson 2009, 6). Along the High Street and around the market square, buildings are characterised by the presence of two- or three-storey dwellings without open halls, with some large open hall houses. In more peripheral areas, houses are smaller and include rows with and without open halls. One such area is Endless Street, where excavations have revealed the chalk footings of a thirteenth–fourteenth century rectangular building and its associated yard area (Porter 2014). Excavations have taken place across Salisbury, allowing us to consider variability in domestic material culture across the city, as well as between the city as a whole and other settlements in the county.

Starting within the core of the town, investigations at the Old George Mall identified a number of buildings along the New Street frontage (Butterworth

[542] E16.

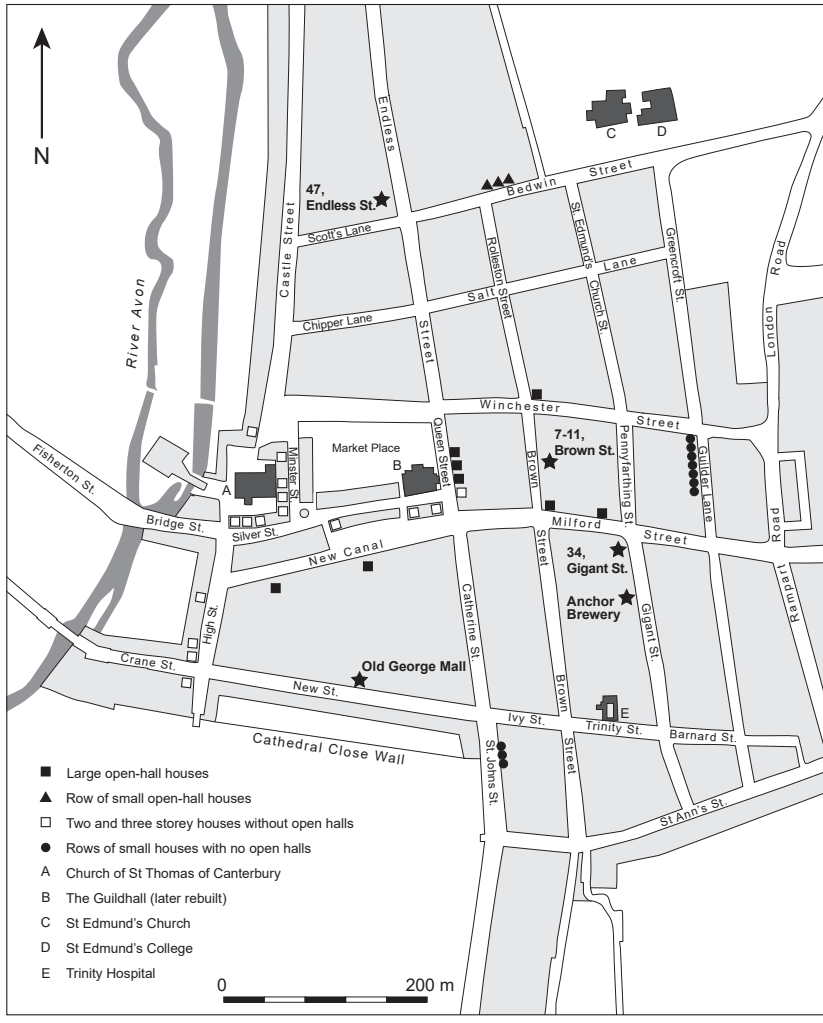

Figure 10.9: Plan of Salisbury showing the location of the excavated sites. Redrawn by Kirsty Harding from Pearson (2009).

2005). The excavations were small in scale, but demonstrate an ongoing process of building and modification through the thirteenth–fourteenth centuries. Moving eastwards, on Brown Street excavations revealed a dwelling with at least three downstairs rooms with a chalk-lined cess pit (Rawlings 2000). A further large building was excavated at the corner of Milford Street and Gigant Street (Currie and Rushton 2005; Barber 2005). This was a stone building dating to the fourteenth century, erected on a site which appears to have been used for a high-temperature industrial process in the preceding decades. Other houses fronting on to Milford Street include surviving large open hall

houses. During the fourteenth century, the plot was the possession of William Teynturer, who owned several properties in the town and can be considered to be of similar wealth and status to those households discussed above. This appears to be part of a wider-scale redevelopment of the Gigant Street frontage, where a row of two-cell houses with a main hall containing the hearth fronting onto the street, with a rear room and a passage leading into the yard area, were erected. During the fifteenth century, the hearths appear to have moved from a central location to the corner of the main room, suggesting a two-storeyed arrangement with a fireplace and chimney. This row of houses may be similar to the standing row of small houses on Gilder Street. Finally, on Endless Street in the northern part of the city, excavations revealed the footings of a small rectangular building and several backyard pits (Porter 2014). The excavated evidence therefore appears to correspond with the standing architecture to show how the main streets were fronted with the large houses of the city's mercantile elite, with smaller houses on the north-south streets, including rows of properties which are likely to have been rentals. To assess the level of variability in consumption patterns within these households, we can compare the items recovered, before contrasting them with those from smaller towns and rural sites in the county.

Economic objects

Archaeological excavations have revealed evidence of copper alloy working, spinning, carpentry and trade, as well as a pottery kiln at the periphery of the city, although lacking evidence of any associated domestic activity (Algar and Saunders 2014) (Table 10.9).

The most compelling evidence for domestic economy comes from the excavation at 47 Endless Street. Here, copper alloy wire and sheet fragments, along with copper run-off (casting waste), a stone mould, fragments from two balances and a lead weight, and bone and iron tools suggest that the plot was occupied by a non-ferrous metalworker in the fifteenth century. This is an important assemblage and while small, provides strong evidence for copper alloy working, which is particularly rare (Goodall 1981). The process of copper casting creates little waste and does not require high temperatures. Copper was received as wire or sheet from which objects were subsequently made. Small scales and balance pans are associated with moneyers but also with goldsmiths and could be in the possession of traders in spices or other lighter goods. Here, the two scale arms, one made in copper alloy and the other of iron, are likely to be associated with the evidence for copper alloy working. While there are no crucibles within this assemblage, there is a fragment of spill possibly from pouring hot metal into the stone mould to shape the objects. Following this, tools to smooth off cast objects and to decorate them were required. There are a few iron objects that are recorded as unidentified which could potentially be small tools for carrying out decorative work. Further evidence for non-ferrous

Table 10.9: Economic objects from selected excavations in Salisbury.

Category	Object	Old George Mall	47 Endless St	Anchor Brewery, Gigant St
Tools and Craft Equipment	Awl		1 (Bone)	1 (Iron)
	Stone mould			
	Iron chisel			1
	Ceramic crucible			
	Hammerstone			3
	Linen smoother		1 (Bone)	1 (Glass)
	Copper alloy needle	1		
	Stone spindle whorl	2		1
	Copper alloy thimble		1	
	Iron timber dog	1		
	Iron wedge			
	Whetstone	2		7
	Copper wire	1	8	2
	Iron wire		5	
Equestrian equipment	Horsehoe	2	2	
	Rowel spur			
Production waste	Bone working debris	2		1
	Copper slag	1	1	
	Iron slag	1	1	
	Fired clay			
Trade and commerce	Balance		2	
	Balance pan	1		
	Coin	1	2	3
	Jetton			6
	Weight		1	

metalworking comes in the form of copper alloy drip from the Old George Mall and a copper alloy working crucible from Brown Street. Historical evidence also attests to non-ferrous metalworking, with braziers known to have worked on Culver Street and around Guilder Lane, with excavated bell casting pits at Milford Street (Algar and Saunders 2012, 68–9).

The Endless Street assemblage provides limited evidence of other craft activities. A thimble and a bone linen smoother indicate textile working, while an iron tool may provide evidence of carpentry. Finds from other sites in the city are more domestic in character but include evidence for spinning from the Old George Mall and Gigant Street in the form of spindle whorls. Other finds include whetstones, a needle and carpentry tools, but there is no clear evidence either from the excavated features or the finds relating to the economic basis of these households. There is limited evidence for commerce, with coins being recovered from most of the sites and a balance pan coming from the Old George Mall and a weight from Gigant Street.

We can place the evidence from Salisbury into a wider context through comparison with other published urban assemblages. The excavated contexts in the centre of Salisbury are broadly analogous with the exceptionally productive deposits excavated at Lower Brook Street, Winchester. As in Salisbury, the economic objects are dominated by items associated with textile production, primarily spindle whorls, with evidence of lead and copper alloy working, as well as bone working, in addition to tools associated with carpentry (Biddle 1990). A similar range of activities are evidenced by finds from excavations in York, Norwich and Colchester, where items associated with production are dominated by those associated with textile production and working (Crummy 1988; Margeson 1993; Ottaway and Rogers 2002). Items associated with horticulture, absent from the Salisbury assemblage, occur in these towns in small quantities: pitchforks from Colchester and York, spades from Norwich and York, and a sickle from York, for example. The archaeological finds assemblage from Salisbury is lacking the strong evidence for textile production, in the form of an abundance of objects such as spindle whorls and tenterhooks that might be expected given the strong association of the city with cloth production (although objects such as spinning wheels and looms would not leave an archaeological trace), but the focus on textile and non-ferrous metal working appears to correspond with the majority of evidence for household economy presented by excavations in comparable towns.

Comparing urban and rural household economy

The economic evidence from Salisbury is dominated by objects associated with production, primarily non-ferrous metalworking. As discussed in Chapter 8, evidence for non-ferrous metalworking is limited in the national sample; however. there is evidence for copper alloy working at 35 West Street, Wilton,

in the form of copper slag and crucible fragments. There is limited evidence for iron working in Salisbury in the form of iron slag from Old George Mall, Endless Street and Brown Street. Regionally, evidence for iron working is more comprehensive, being overwhelmingly rural in character. The most comprehensive evidence comes from Little Snarlton Lane, Melksham, and there is further evidence for smithing at Chapel Meadow, Membury and at rural sites at West Ashton, Barbury Castle Farm, Chiseldon, Latton and Blunsdon St Andrew, for example, as well as from the small-town of Calne. It is clear from the escheators' records that smithing was a rural as well as urban industry, as exemplified by the list of the smith Robert Sprakelynge. It is difficult to determine the extent to which rural households in Wiltshire specialised in smithing due to the poor level of documentation. The excavated smithy at Huish provides clear evidence of the infrastructure of iron smithing, but finds from the site include agricultural tools. Again, the case of Robert Sprakelynge demonstrates clearly how smiths could have extensive agricultural interests.[543] At Barbury Castle Farm, Chiseldon there is also evidence for bone and, probably, wood working for example.

It is surprising that the excavated evidence from rural sites in Wiltshire does not include any objects associated with textile production, given the importance of that industry to the county's economy. This is reflected in the PAS data for the county which, for the period c.1300–1600 includes only two lead alloy objects identified as possible spindle whorls, both from Shrewton. The spindle whorls from Salisbury are all of stone, so this may account for their absence from the PAS record. The dominance of stone whorls is reflected at Winchester, where the excavated houses at the Brooks appear to have specialised in textile production, suggesting that the use of stone is reflective of regional spinning technology (Woodland 1990). This use of stone for whorls does not, however, explain their absence from excavated rural sites; it is surprising, for example, that no spindle whorls were recovered at Gomeldon, a site with clear archaeological and historical evidence for sheep husbandry. It is possible that this can be explained by the use of spinning wheels; however, these are not routinely recorded in the escheators' and coroners' records but occur in two escheators' lists and four coroners' lists from Wiltshire. While we know that spinning and weaving became increasingly important to the economy of Wiltshire in general terms (Hare 1999), it is unfortunate that the data presented here does not lend itself to a detailed consideration of the importance of textile production to urban and rural households in the county. Limited evidence for the production or exchange of cloth is provided by eight cloth seals in the PAS dataset. The majority of these carry generic text. However, one from Wingfield, near Trowbridge, indicates a cloth sealed in Wiltshire and another, from Malmesbury, appears to be a type associated with Somerset.[544] These can be compared with

[543] E317.
[544] WILT-64EF71; WILT-7B9BB6.

the large collection of seals from Salisbury which is dominated by unattributable examples, with the majority of provenanced examples coming from Wiltshire, Devon and Somerset, with additional examples from London, Norfolk, Kent, Essex and the continent, suggesting that Salisbury was an important centre for the finishing of cloth from diverse sources, supported by findspots around the rivers running through the city centre (Egan 2001).

As is to be expected, objects associated with agricultural production are absent from the Salisbury assemblage. Evidence for sheep husbandry comes in the form of excavated shears from Chapel Meadow, Membury, Latton, Eysey and Gomeldon. The PAS dataset includes four crotal bells; however, the decoration on these may suggest that these were intended to adorn items of dress (Egan and Pritchard 2002, 336–7) rather than being used as sheep bells, and the same interpretation might be extended to the example from the Old George Mall, Salisbury. Evidence for agricultural tools is limited to the small collection from Huish, comprising a bill hook, fork, hoe and sickle, a plough blade from Tidworth and rake fragments from Latton. As discussed above, the evidence offered by escheators' and coroners' records supports varied levels of involvement by rural households in agricultural production, and this seems to be something which, as in other large towns, was insignificant to the economy of Salisbury households, although there is clear historical and archaeological evidence for urban gardens, which may have provided some produce to associated households or the wider urban market (Currie and Rushton 2005, 228).

The escheators' records suggest a less clear-cut distinction between urban and rural, however. Small-town households were engaged in agrarian activity. For example, John Butiller of Warminster had three sheep, and the weaver Roger Cokeman of Warminster three piglets, while Richard Walssh of Malmesbury had two harrows.[545] In the coroners' dataset, Roger Rowland of Marlborough had three sheep.[546] These examples show how small-town households maintained agrarian interests, although their investment in livestock and agricultural equipment is considerably less than in the countryside. Small-town households in Wiltshire do, however, show a tendency for investment in production; Thomas Smyth of Chippenham had iron smithing equipment, John Nichol of Malmesbury two spinning wheels and Roger Cokeman various items associated with cloth production.[547] Similarly, such items are not exclusive to urban households. While the smith Robert Sprakelyng and the tanner Thomas Thomas are the most obvious examples of rural agriculturalists who were also artisans, further examples of the combination of craft production with agriculture are John Hullediewe of Highway (1420) and Thomas Parker of Compton Chamberlain (1598), both of whom had spinning wheels.[548] It is noticeable, however, that in all cases the value of goods associated with artisanal production is

[545] E872; E1490; E1510.
[546] C112.
[547] E1294; E1432; E1490.
[548] E317; C126; E558; C445.

considerably lower than that of those associated with agrarian production. The evidence of the escheators' and coroners' lists does support the evidence from the archaeological record for a narrower range of crafts being undertaken in the countryside than in towns.

Objects associated with trade and commerce are not common in the Salisbury assemblage, largely comprising weights which could have been used in other activities, such as copper alloy working. Eight weights probably associated with trade have been recovered by metal detectorists from rural contexts across the county. These come principally from the chalkland, although the sample is too small to draw any meaningful conclusions. Several coins have been recovered from archaeological contexts in the city, and a small number of finds from rural excavations also demonstrate widespread coin use across the county, an image amplified by the PAS data which includes over 1800 coins dating to the period 1300–1600 from across the county.

As is to be expected, the data suggests a stronger bias towards agrarian production in the countryside and artisanal production in the town, with the latter seemingly requiring lower levels of capital investment, potentially creating the opportunity for greater investment in domestic goods. However, a stark dichotomy cannot be drawn; the escheators' and coroners' lists, as well as the archaeological evidence, show small-town households engaged in agricultural production and rural households in metal and textile working. Rather we can observe a spectrum of household economy between town and country, a picture which appears to also be reflected in the evidence for the consumption of domestic goods.

Domestic objects

The quantity and range of domestic finds from Salisbury is limited when compared to the large corpuses from excavations in places such as Norwich, Winchester and York (Table 10.10). This is in marked contrast to the wide range of domestic goods itemised in the extents for debt lists from Salisbury. The finds do, however, provide some insights into variability in consumption patterns within the town, and provide a general signature of consumption that can be compared to rural sites in Wiltshire.

Unusually, Salisbury is lacking in well stratified, large ceramic assemblages. Where ceramics have been excavated, assemblages are dominated by local Laverstock-type wares, produced just outside of the city, to supply both the Salisbury market and the royal palace at Clarendon. As is typical of urban assemblages (see e.g. Hayfield 1988; Jervis 2012), the ceramic assemblage from Salisbury contains a higher proportion of jugs than comparable rural assemblages (Mepham 2018), suggesting differences in consumption behaviour and perhaps highlighting the need to transport small quantities of liquid around multiroomed dwellings or between households, as well as suggesting

Table 10.10: Domestic objects from selected excavations in Salisbury.

Function	Object	Old George Mall	Gigant St	47 Endless St	Anchor Brewery, Gigant Street
Food consumption	Copper alloy spoon				1
Food preparation and cooking	Stone mortar		1	1	2
	Quern	1			1
	Copper alloy vessel	1			
	Iron vessel			1	
Furniture	Furniture fitting	2		1	5
Knife	Bone handle	1			
	Knife	5		14	7
Leisure	Bone die	1			
Lighting	Iron candlestick			1	
Literacy	Copper alloy book fitting	1			
	Lead alloy stylus				1
	Glass bead			1	
	Jet bead	1			
	Stone bead	1			

(*Continued*)

Table 10.10: Continued.

Function	Object	Old George Mall	Gigant St	47 Endless St	Anchor Brewery, Gigant Street
Personal adornment	Copper alloy belt fitting	1			1
	Copper alloy buckle	1		1	2
	Iron buckle			3	2
	Crotal bell	1			
	Copper alloy dress fastener			1	8
	Copper alloy dress fittting			1	
	Copper alloy lace tag	1		5	8
	Iron patten	2			
	Shoe iron	1			
	Copper alloy strap fitting	1		2	
	Iron strap fitting			2	
	Textile	1			
Pin	Pin	11		28	18
Religious practice and belief	Pilgrim badge			1	
Security	Key	4		1	
	Lock			1	

an emphasis being placed on entertaining within the home (see Green 2017). Other objects associated with food production and cooking are fragments of metal cooking vessels from the Old George Mall and from Endless Street. Arguably of greater interest are the quernstone fragments recovered from the Old George Mall and Gigant Street suggesting the domestic processing of grain or malt within the city. It has been suggested that querns from excavations in Winchester and Norwich were used for the grinding of malt rather than flour (Biddle 1990, 882; Margeson 1993, 202), and therefore these objects could provide evidence of domestic brewing, supported by the high occurrence of barley in the charred plant remains assemblage from Gigant Street (Hinton 2005, 197). Four stone mortars have also been recovered, both from the large house on Gigant Street/Milford Street and from the apparently lower status households occupying the smaller properties along Gigant Street and at Endless Street. A comparable mortar is valued at 6d in the extent for debt list of Nicholas Chaffyn, while Thomas Hele had a brass mortar with an iron pestle valued at 15s. The availability of spices and condiments is suggested by the stock of Nicholas Chaffyn and Thomas Hele which include ginger, cloves, mace, pepper and anis among other foodstuffs.

Furniture fittings occur at Gigant Street, Endless Street and the Old George Mall, typically taking the form of decorative copper alloy strips or mounts. A lock plate from Endless Street is probably from a chest, and keys were recovered at the Old George Mall and from Endless Street. An unusual object is the iron candlestick from Endless Street. Based on the extents for debt examples, as well as the list of Robert Rede, Salisbury households had considerably higher numbers of chests and candlesticks than the households examined through this study. The assemblage of furnishings and fittings is dominated, though, by iron structural fittings including brackets, door hinges and nails, which are far more common here than at rural and small-town sites in the sample, a situation mirrored in other large urban centres for example at Lower Brook Street, Winchester, where a variety of items of structural ironwork were excavated (Biddle 1990). This is likely due to a variety of factors, including the more complex spatial organisation of urban houses (requiring, for example, internal doors and floorboards for upper storeys), but also perhaps investment in decorative panelling which is not apparent in the majority of rural contexts, either due to the salvage of iron work during the demolition of buildings or because of a genuine difference in the construction and decoration of urban houses.

Other than nails and pins, the most common items in the Salisbury assemblage are personal items. Knives occur in the three large assemblages discussed here, and other finds include a bone die and a book fitting from the Old George Mall and a stylus from Gigant Street. Items associated with literacy occur in small quantities in most large town assemblages. Clothing is represented by a range of metal fittings, and these demonstrate the adoption of new fashions in the fifteenth century, through the occurrence of lace chapes in three assemblages, as well as dress fittings and fastenings. A crotal bell from the Old George

Mall may have adorned clothing, while there are belt fittings and buckles from all three sites. While the substantial excavations in Norwich, Winchester and York have produced a wider variety and higher quantity of personal items, the material from Salisbury appears representative of comparative urban assemblages, with strong evidence for the acquisition of small personal items, furniture and a range of items for the processing and serving of food and drink beyond the basic necessities of cooking pots.

Comparing urban and rural consumption

While ceramic evidence from Wiltshire suggests a degree of variability between urban and rural food practices, the non-ceramic evidence does not present such a clear picture. One type of object, the stone mortar, is the exception. These occur at several sites within Salisbury, with the sample from modern excavations being supplemented by historical examples in the Salisbury Museum collection. Within the excavated sample, the only rural examples are those from Gomeldon, supplemented by finds in the Salisbury Museum collection from the Bishops' Palace at Downton and from Stockton in the Wylye Valley (Drinkwater 1991). A further stone mortar from Cricklade has been reported to the PAS.[549] As in the national sample, the distribution of mortars likely relates to two factors, household status (as a determinant of access to culinary and medicinal knowledge, as well as access to flavourings) and market accessibility, as discussed in Chapters 3 and 9. While excavated querns from Salisbury may be indicative of brewing, those in the countryside could have been used for the small-scale domestic milling of wheat. Among the escheators' records, the only Wiltshire household with items associated with brewing is that of Robert Sprakelyng, who had 'vessels for brewing'.[550] In the escheators' and coroners' records a diverse range of cooking wares occur in both town and country. As discussed in Chapters 3 and 9, the distribution of these items is likely most directly associated with wealth and the ability to acquire a broader range of foodstuffs and the occupation of larger houses with specific kitchen spaces, which occur in both town and country.

Fragments of metal cooking vessels occur both within the city and at rural sites, with 40 examples in the PAS dataset from across the county, as is to be expected from their ubiquity in the escheators' and coroners' datasets. Whetstones are fairly common and include schist examples, contrasting the picture from rural sites where they are primarily sandstone and largely limited to the north-east of the county. This reflects a general trend whereby whetstones are more common in large urban assemblages from places such as Northampton, Winchester and Norwich, than in rural settings. A range of explanations can

[549] WILT-DD9F82.

[550] E317; possibly wooden (the section of the list describing these is partly illegible).

be provided for this, from market access to the need for urban craftsmen to sharpen delicate tools and the greater availability of natural or structural stone in the countryside which could be used to sharpen blades without the need for a specific object to fulfil this function.

From an archaeological perspective, other items may be more suggestive of distinctive urban forms of consumption. The iron candlestick from Endless Street, as well as a further four copper alloy candlesticks from the city in the Salisbury Museum collection (Goodall 2012, 116), is not paralleled in the excavated data from Wiltshire, and these items are rare in the national sample (see Chapter 5). However, there are three candlesticks and eight candle holders in the PAS dataset from Wiltshire, occurring across the county. Similarly, the coroners' records present evidence of rural households using these objects. In all, these items occur in 13 coroners' lists, primarily relating to rural households, as well as the escheators' list of John Spark.[551] For example, Thomas Thomas had four brass candlesticks and Thomas Parker had one, while John James had iron and latten candlesticks.[552] These objects demonstrate neatly the varying picture of consumption provided by different sources of evidence. The rarity of candlesticks in the escheators' records, as well as rural excavations, may suggest that these were initially associated principally with urban or higher status households, becoming more widespread in the countryside by the sixteenth century.

There are 26 book fittings in copper or silver alloy in the PAS dataset from across the county, including two examples from Salisbury, adding to the excavated example from the Old George Mall. As the escheators' and coroners' records suggest, the ownership of books is not necessarily an urban phenomenon in this period, but, in the countryside at least, is particularly associated with the clergy; the only Wiltshire list containing books is that of the clergyman John James.[553] The only item associated with literacy in the archaeological sample from outside of Salisbury is a scriber from Berwick St Leonard, a house which may be associated with clergy as a manor of Shaftesbury Abbey. Locks and keys are rare in the excavated sample from Wiltshire as a whole. Examples are limited to the seemingly higher status sites at Huish, Chapel Meadow, Membury and Berwick St Leonard, in addition to urban examples from Calne and Salisbury, with rural examples from the exceptional site at Gomeldon. This rarity is also reflected in the PAS dataset for the period 1300–1600, which includes a single padlock from Wiltshire, found at Castle Eaton near Swindon. Keys are more common, principally taking the form of casket keys, and it is noticeable that their distribution is largely focussed on the east of the county, a pattern also observed in the distribution of chests in the escheators' records. The escheators' records do not suggest that chests are particularly associated with urban or rural households, although in the vale their occurrence is limited to

[551] E556.
[552] C126; C445; C382.
[553] C382.

the town of Malmesbury, and the comparatively wealthy John Lange of Lydiard Tregoze and Lydiard Millicent (total value just over £5), in the north-eastern corner of the county. The exception is John Burgeys of Westbury (total value 2s 10d), whose list appears incomplete, comprising only clothing, six wooden plates and a horse, in addition to his 'small chest'.[554]

The most striking distinction between town and country can be seen in the evidence for dress, and particularly the occurrence of chapes or lace ends, suggestive of the adoption of tighter fitted clothing towards the end of our period. These occur at a number of sites in Salisbury, particularly from sites of fifteenth–sixteenth century date, suggesting the widespread adoption of these fashions within the city. In the rural sample, examples are limited to single pieces from Highworth and Broad Blunsdon (a site dated to the fourteenth century), and an exceptionally large group of 53 from the site at Berwick St Leonard. This patterning is difficult to interpret. Where sites could be closely dated, the majority date to before c.1450 and therefore an absence of lace ends is, perhaps, to be expected. However, their general absence from rural sites in Wiltshire could suggest that new styles of dress were less enthusiastically adopted in the countryside than in the city of Salisbury. This is, perhaps, supported by the PAS dataset, which includes only a single lace tag, from Longbridge Deverell. Further evidence supporting a slower uptake of new fashions in the countryside is provided by the coroners' records. Both urban and rural lists include new fitted items such as jerkins and doublets, but the same lists often include items such as tunics and gowns. Noticeably, where occupation or status is given, those adopting these new fashions include labourers, a yeoman and a probable merchant or shopkeeper, all individuals who would have engaged in waged or entrepreneurial labour.

The dataset from Salisbury is too small to allow for comparison of consumption patterns within the city, but can be combined to create a composite signature which can be compared to the rural evidence. The picture which emerges is not one of clear urban/rural polarisation, but a more nuanced one of overlapping and varying patterns of consumption. A clear urban/rural divide cannot be drawn in relation to items associated with food, with the possible exception of mortars. While pewter tableware is absent from the archaeological sample for reasons of preservation, the escheators' and coroners' data suggests that it was in use in rural households from the first decade of the fifteenth century. The extents for debt suggests Salisbury's mercantile households used pewter in greater quantities. Subtleties can be deduced however, for example the likelihood that querns from the city were more likely associated with brewing, while those in the countryside could have been used for milling small quantities of grain from household agricultural holdings. Other objects occur in the Salisbury assemblage but are largely absent from the excavated settlements. However, coroners' and PAS data suggests that objects such as candlesticks and

[554] E1434; E1143.

holders were not exclusively used in the city, and their absence from rural excavations may be an issue of recovery. The evidence for locks and chests may suggest variability in rural consumption along the lines of wealth or status. As with the national analysis presented in Chapter 9, the evidence suggests that rather than simply seeking an urban or rural signature, variability must be understood in relation to a variety of factors, including wealth, household economy and market connections.

Conclusion: understanding consumption patterns in medieval Wiltshire

The purpose of this discussion has been to assess the importance of a range of factors in determining the consumption habits of medieval households through a targeted case study. A wider range of objects appear to have been available to consumers in the city based on excavated material; however Portable Antiquities Scheme data suggests that objects such as candlesticks were used in the countryside, and this is supported by rural escheators' lists which include items commonly perceived as 'urban' such as items of soft furnishing and pewter tableware. The limited evidence provided by lists of seized goods from Salisbury suggests that it is the quantity of these goods which is the key marker of differentiation between Salisbury and the rest of the county, rather than their simple presence or absence. Where consumption is concerned, the distinction between town and country appears most marked in relation to dress. However, the strongest difference between town and country, as is to be expected, is in relation to the household economy, with a focus on craft production rather than agriculture being clearly demonstrated by the excavated evidence from Salisbury. This analysis, which incorporates the evidence of small towns, demonstrates that rather than positing a stark urban:rural dichotomy in terms of consumption, it is more appropriate to think of a continuous scale of variability, with difference being more marked in relation to specific categories of object, but also varying along lines of wealth and household economy, as was demonstrated in Chapter 9.

It might be anticipated that market proximity would be a key determinant of household consumption, but this is not borne out in the data. While objects such as stone mortars may have been available to rural households using the Salisbury market, the escheators' and coroners' data suggests that objects circulated widely through Wiltshire's commercial network. Metal cooking ware provides an example of a group of objects which appear to have been ubiquitously available. Other goods, such as tablewares, may initially have been available only through urban markets but came to be exchanged more widely over time. Where these rarer goods are present in households away from markets, it seems necessary to consider the alternative methods of exchange which these households may have, such as making use of the growing network of inns as trading

places, or direct engagement between households and merchants in the larger towns of the region. In sum, market proximity is more relevant in relation to the circulation of particular types of goods including tableware, soft furnishings and stone mortars. However, households with the means and desire to acquire goods not available in local markets appear to have found ways to do so.

It is the means to acquire these goods which appears to be the most significant variable in determining patterns of consumption in Wiltshire, with the strongest contrasts in consumption being visible in relation to household economy and regional agrarian regimes. As in the national sample, it is those households of middling wealth within our sample who appear to have invested less heavily in domestic goods, instead choosing to invest in agrarian production. For those poorer households who did not have the means or land to acquire and care for livestock, or for wealthier households, we can observe greater levels of acquisition of domestic goods beyond the basis items required for cooking and sleeping. The greater prevalence of such items in the vale might be associated with the breakdown of customary tenure, creating greater opportunities to engage in waged labour, as well as the arable, rather than pastoral, focussed husbandry regime of this region, which released households from the costs associated with animal husbandry.

CHAPTER 11

Conclusions

In concluding this study, we can return to the two research questions introduced in Chapter 1: What goods did medieval households consume, and what factors influenced these patterns of consumption? In broad terms, this study has demonstrated that households acquired and used a wide range of goods, which generally became more varied over time. We see, for example, a diversification of items associated with cooking and eating, the growing popularity of fixed tables and varied types of bed. Clothing, too, changed as fashions developed, and we can observe the persistence of loose-fitting items such as tunics alongside the introduction of tighter items such as jerkins. Yet, as our analysis demonstrates, patterns of consumption were not uniform. The discussions in Chapters 9 and 10 show how a variety of factors appear to have determined priorities and preferences, chief among these being the household economy. While the evidence provided by the escheators' and coroners' records shows diversity in the acquisition of furniture and metalware in particular, the archaeological dataset highlights further variability in the presence of smaller items. The contrasting examples of quern stones, the distribution of which appears related to regulatory regimes around the imposition of suit of mill, and whetstones, determined by a mix of market access and regional variability in geology, illustrate clearly that medieval consumption was shaped by a variety of influences. In closing this study, we wish to return to a number of the themes introduced in Chapter 1, to consider how this data and the analysis presented here can progress our understanding of the relations between medieval households and their possessions.

Medieval consumption and the 'consumer revolution'

A principal area of concern discussed in Chapter 1 is the degree to which a revolution can be observed in consumption in the later middle ages and, relatedly,

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the extent to which medieval consumption is distinct from (early) modern consumption. Viewed in the round, our evidence leads us to question the extent to which we see clear or straightforward evidence of an acceleration in the quantity and range of goods consumed in the century after 1370, or their progressive spread into a growing number of social groups. More broadly, there are few grounds for a simple story of a rise in the number of goods and the accessibility of these goods and, relatedly, a stronger degree of reliance on the market for commodities.

Our data instead demonstrates that an increasing variety of goods were available through our study period as a whole, but also that certain types of goods fell out of favour, a finding corroborated by Sear and Sneath's (2020, 302) analysis of the origins of the consumer revolution. We see, for example, the decline of specialist ewers and basins for handwashing through the early fifteenth century, and the replacement of posnets with skillets and saucepans through the sixteenth century. Among the archaeological objects, stone mortars appear to relate only to the period before c.1450. Pewter tableware was present throughout our study period, but one may observe quite clearly that it comes to be consumed more widely and occurs in a greater variety of forms. Through the sixteenth century, we can observe the increasing diversity of cooking ware with, for example, the introduction of kettles. Bedding too becomes more complex, with the introduction of truckle beds and a greater prominence of soft furnishings, while the escheators' and coroners' records reveal a shift to fixed tables in preference to trestles. This diversity can also be seen in the archaeological evidence through the introduction of new knife forms. Clothing, too, developed: both the lists of forfeited goods and the archaeological evidence demonstrate the introduction of new styles. Even so, among the escheators' records, the mean number of functional categories of goods present in lists consistently ranges from four to six between the 1380s and 1430s (the decades for which there is sufficient data), with little fluctuation in the proportion of household wealth invested in the main categories of goods: cooking equipment, tableware and bedding. However, as our analysis in Chapters 3, 4 and 5 demonstrates, when considered in terms of the diversity of goods present and the number of households possessing these items, a clearer pattern of increasing diversity and availability becomes apparent across our longer 200-year plus period. There is a strong contrast between the mid-fifteenth-century escheators' lists and the coroners' records. This may relate to differences in the way that records were created in the two regimes of felony forfeiture, but also implies that the later fifteenth century was a key period of transformation in consumption in which new types of goods emerged. This suggests that roughly similar proportions of household wealth were spent on these goods, but the quantity and range of goods to which this investment relates expanded.

The diversification of goods can, in most cases, be equated to a process of specialisation; new types of furniture, kitchenware and tableware do not typically fulfil new functions, but rather relate to specific functions in a more exclusive

way: a dining table rather than a multipurpose trestle table, a kettle rather than a multipurpose pot. The archaeological evidence for buildings, as well as the occasional references to specific rooms in the coroners' records, demonstrate that these twin processes of object diversification and functional specialisation did not occur in isolation. They correspond with changes to domestic architecture, especially the enclosing of domestic space discussed by Johnson (1993). In her analysis of early modern wills from Kent, Elisabeth Salter (2006, 67–8) suggests that the relationship between domestic space and objects is a complex one, and that it is the possessions which make the rooms, rather than the other way around, a proposal supported by references to the bequeathing of whole 'rooms' (such as 'my chamber') and the highlighting of goods which are seemingly out of place. This insight is important as it demonstrates that we are not seeing an expanding world of goods to meet the needs of new architectural forms, or indeed changes in architecture to accommodate more diverse goods, but rather a broader societal shift, a fundamental move from the multipurpose hall and the multifunctional, portable objects it entailed, to a specialisation of space, goods and domestic roles. As Hamling and Richardson (2017, 109) highlight, this was a long-term process of change and adaptation rather than a simple process of 'modernisation'; spaces, objects and household economy moved in dialogue with each other. Because middling houses functioned as places of work, into which outsiders entered, there was an increasing need for private or specialised spaces (Hamling and Richardson 2017, 61), and it was in these middling houses, where households had the ability to invest both in architectural modification and the range of goods required for tasks such as food processing, that this diversification appears most marked.

Our analysis of the ownership of domestic and economic goods (Chapter 9) demonstrates how wealth, arguably a proxy for social status, was a key determinant of patterns of investment. We suggested that higher proportions of the incomes of lower status households were invested in domestic goods than was the case with middling households, which invested more strongly in economic goods. In part this can be related to patterns of labour. On the one hand, wages facilitated the ability of lower status households to acquire domestic goods, while, on the other, as other households became places of work, the need for labouring households to invest in economic goods was weaker. Although in some cases these household goods were limited to the necessities – basic cooking ware and bedding – as discussed in Chapter 9, there is also evidence for these lower status households investing in goods which might be considered luxuries.

As we see greater specialisation in domestic space and the erection of barriers – albeit permeable ones – between the 'private' and 'public' spaces of the medieval home, so we see an increasing range of goods associated with the latter distinction. The discussion of chests, and in particular the occurrence of locks, influenced by the work of Sarah Hinds (2018) and Katherine Wilson (2021), shows how the meaning of objects could change in relation

to commercialisation but also to the contexts and ways in which these goods were encountered. The increasing concern with privacy was translated into an increasing concern with security, with these objects as items associated with concealment and enclosure rather than display. In turn, we see the emergence in the coroners' records of goods associated with display: almeries, cupboards and sideboards, which can perhaps be associated with the rising use of pewter vessels.

These examples are not suggestive of a break, or a revolution, in household consumption. Rather, we can conceive of domestic consumption as one component of a developing socio-economic context, reflected by, but also shaped by, changes in architecture, patterns of work and property ownership in the centuries after the Black Death. This is perhaps best exemplified by the emergence of a middling sort. Our findings therefore correspond with those of Sear and Sneath's (2020, 300) analysis in which they conclude that the evidence of wills and probate inventories does not suggest a 'dramatic consumer revolution' in the later medieval or early modern periods. There is a risk of using our data to simply push back the date of developments commonly associated with the early modern period. However, it is more productive to view our data as providing a new insight into the long-term and progressive nature of change, rather than simply proposing a new date for that moment of change. In this regard, it is perhaps plausible to argue that the proliferation of wills and inventories from the sixteenth century has created a false horizon for changes which have deeper roots and, as the disappearance of objects such as mortars and ewers show, are often cyclical rather than linear.

The increasing commercialisation of the middle ages certainly increased the opportunities for households to engage with the market and acquire new types of goods. This is perhaps most obvious in the case of pewter ware, which became fairly widespread. The variability in the range and quantity of goods acquired may suggest that these items were acquired outside of the market (for example through inheritance), but equally suggest a flexible market, where it was possible to acquire single items rather than investing in whole sets. Initially, fairs may have provided a means for these goods, produced in the larger urban centres, to circulate. The evidence from Wiltshire does not suggest that market access was a particularly important factor in determining the presence of pewter items in households, and if this were replicated across the country it would be logical to propose that goods were able to circulate fairly widely and were available to most households with the means and desire to acquire them. Even so, the evidence for dress demonstrates that the dangers of consumption, for destabilising the social order, were recognised, and transgressions did occur.

While certain goods circulated widely, the archaeological evidence points to examples of goods which were less widely available, showing how the reach of markets, although extensive, was not fully developed. As discussed in Chapter 9, the marketing trajectories of imported stone items, which likely came in relatively small quantities, can be traced through networks emanating from the

principal ports. Whetstones are likely to have been relatively cheap goods, while mortars may have been inexpensive, but their use was reliant on access to herbs and spices. The distribution of these goods perhaps highlights the limits to the development of commercial networks; economies of scale did not yet exist to produce and import whetstones in quantities which would be profitable, and demand for mortars was reliant on the ability of households to engage in longer-distance trading networks for exotic condiments, or to access the medicinal and culinary knowledge associated with their use. Similarly, the easterly focus in the distribution of chests in the earlier part of our period, when dendro-provenancing of surviving examples suggests a use of imported wood, implies that redistribution networks were not fully developed, or that levels of demand were not as intense as they would later become. These examples, along with that of sumptuary legislation, demonstrate the contrasts with comparatively unregulated modern mass consumption; imported goods provide evidence of particular articulations of globality, of 'global' networks which seeped into the material experiences of households in medieval England while lacking the intensity of those of modernity.

Rather than claiming a medieval revolution in consumption, the evidence presented here is more suggestive of processes of longer-term socio-economic transition. Consumption cannot be considered outside of changes to the organisation of labour and architectural change, for example. While commercial networks grew and stabilised, the intensity of economic activity had not reached a tipping point at which, for example, there was an economy of scale sufficient for the profitable mass importation and exchange of cheap imported goods. Later medieval consumption had its own limitations: it was performed at a lower intensity, and it was strongly regulated. At the same time, however, the way in which commodities entered homes and were shaped by, and became agents of, social change is not unrecognisable to the modern eye; the insights into medieval consumption provided by these records show it to be distinctive but familiar.

Consumption and household economy

Patterns of ownership of domestic and economic goods (Chapters 9 and 10) suggest that the economic base of a household was the key determinant of its consumption behaviour. Our analysis suggests that those of middling wealth invested heavily in economic goods, typically animals, but also arable cultivation and craft production, at the expense of investment in non-essential domestic goods. In contrast, poorer households, which did not possess the capital to invest in or maintain animals, and perhaps engaged in waged labour using the tools of their employer, could occasionally acquire unusually high quantities of plate and bedding. Wealthier households had the capacity to acquire both economic and domestic goods, and typically had the most diverse range of

objects. This would imply that these wealthy households, which generally had the largest groups of animals and may have had extensive arable holdings, also had the highest potential to generate profit, widening the wealth gap between agriculturalist households.

The evidence for animal husbandry perhaps most vividly highlights variability in the modes of household production. We can observe one group of agriculturalists in both small towns and countryside who had a small number of animals, seemingly to meet the needs of the household: a cow for dairying, a small flock of sheep or a few pigs. These can be contrasted with the larger agriculturalists who were producing meat, crops and secondary products for the market. Production for the market can be seen particularly in the evidence for textile production within our dataset (Chapter 8). Particularly in areas such as Northamptonshire, contrasts have been drawn between households which appear to have processed their own wool, and larger agriculturalists who sold on wool, as well as those households engaged in the processing of wool, either for household use or for the market. Our evidence probably does not reveal the presence of wool acquired for piecework, as this would have been the possession of the employer, but these households would have had to invest in spinning wheels in order to operate as commercial producers.

Investment in the infrastructure and materials of production can be seen in the archaeological evidence for tanning and retting pits, as well as in the escheators' and coroners' records in the form of investment in looms, or skins for tanning. Where the leather industries are concerned, contrasts can be seen between town and country, with rural light leather workers engaging in a mixed economy of agricultural and craft production, a pattern which can also be seen in the evidence for metalworking discussed in Chapter 8. The high standards of living obtained by artisans such as the smith Robert Sprakelyng, whose household practised such a mixed economy, demonstrates the levels of profitability and therefore consumption potential, which could be obtained through catering to the needs of the growing market for commodities.[555]

Our evidence relating to the processing of foodstuffs is more limited. The evidence for brewing within our datasets suggests that it was supplementary to agricultural production, and that such 'by-work' is most typical of those households of middling or higher levels of wealth. Indeed, for the early modern period, Buxton (2015) highlights the need for space and specialist equipment as a limiting factor in poorer households engaging in activities such as brewing or baking. Certainly, evidence for investment in dairying, baking and other food processing activities is very limited, suggesting either a reliance on communal facilities or produce available on the market. While the poorest households in the dataset were investing in domestic, rather than economic, goods on the whole, it is important to remember that it is these households that were

[555] E317.

also likely to be most reliant on the market for foodstuffs (although they may have received foodstuffs from employers, for example during harvest time).

The evidence for the acquisition of bedding and tableware in relation to household economy paints a picture of variation. Of particular interest is the acquisition of small quantities of tableware, below the levels of a full 'service'. This may suggest selective acquisition to meet the needs of a household, the acquisition of these goods as stores of wealth, or, perhaps the acquisition of these goods outside of the market. The data suggests that it is not simply the case that wealthier households had more plate, but rather they present a more subtle picture, where households with different types of economic basis had different needs, inhabited different kinds of spaces and, as such, acquired these items in specific ways, as argued in Chapter 9.

Our period therefore sees an increasing alienation of production, but is also characterised by households with broad economic foundations. The profitability of economic activities was related to the scale of production which could be achieved, opening up the potential for inequality to emerge. Even so, possessions do not simply reflect the wealth of households, but rather households chose to dispose of wealth in a variety of ways, influenced both by the immediacy of market engagement but also the longer-term nature of investment in animals or land (and the obligations that they brought) or craft resources. It was, of course, the solidification and development of commercial networks which provided the context both for the acquisition of goods and household economy, and it is to the influence of the market which we can now turn.

Markets and towns

Our analysis of the relationship between consumption behaviour and market access in Wiltshire (Chapter 10) suggests that market proximity was not a major determinant of consumption behaviour in the county, although this varies in relation to particular sets of goods. Cooking ware appears to have circulated widely, and tableware appears to become more widely available in the sixteenth century, while non-essential soft furnishings may have had to have been acquired in urban markets, unless they were produced by the household. Archaeological evidence does, however, show how the availability of certain objects was limited; the exclusive occurrence of mortars at Gomeldon, a village only a few miles from Salisbury, and, at the national scale, the distribution of imported whetstones are particularly vivid examples.

The different forms of evidence show how households were enmeshed in a variety of commercial networks, from the local to the international, and that the accessibility of goods could vary within and between regions. The focus of chests and locks in eastern England is one example; however, other goods were much more widely distributed, such as the ubiquitous dog-head ewers discussed in Chapter 4. Markets and fairs can be considered as economic

lubricants, creating possibilities for households to encounter goods and enfold them into their household practices and environments. We can, however, observe some regional variability. None of the escheators' lists from Cumberland and Westmorland or Northumberland include items of plate or elaborate items of bedding. Although the records from these localities are dominated by animals, agricultural produce and tools, meaning this feature may be an artefact of seizure practice, a further factor could be the comparative isolation of these households from the commercial centres of midland and southern England. In contrast, the range of goods in households in the south-west are fairly varied, perhaps demonstrating the strong links between the south-west ports and the London region (Allan 1984, 118; see also Sear and Sneath 2020, 302–3 on regionality in consumption patterns over the long term).

The market also played a role in shaping household economies. We see in the historical and archaeological datasets the orientation of production to the demands of the market, be that in the intensification of pastoral husbandry, or craft specialisation. The analysis presented in Chapter 9 demonstrates complex patterns of variability in the domestic economy of rural and small-town households. While in general terms, it can be argued that the majority of households considered within the study conform to what Goldberg (2008) characterises as a 'peasant' mode of consumption, with an emphasis on economic and essential goods, consumption habits varied in accordance with a range of factors including market access, household wealth and economic activities. A strong distinction between small-town and rural evidence is difficult to sustain. As discussed in Chapters 8 and 9, and as is to be expected, we can observe higher levels of craft specialisation in small towns, but rural households were engaged in metal extraction and the textile and leather trades, so this is not a clear divide. In small towns, there is evidence for engagement in agricultural production and while this mostly took the form of small groups of animals, there are small-town households which engaged in more intensive livestock rearing. In small towns and in the countryside, the market does not appear to have stimulated polarised specialisation, but rather households typically maintained a mixed economy, albeit on a spectrum of economic activities. The evidence from Salisbury provides a contrast in this regard, with good evidence for economic specialisation by households in this large town, although the range of excavated objects suggests that even here households engaged in a variety of productive activities which might have been variously targeted at the market (e.g. non-ferrous metalworking) or intended for household consumption (e.g. spinning).

Contrasts between town and country are apparent in the acquisition of cooking equipment, with the occurrence of roasting equipment in poorer small-town households perhaps relating to the greater availability of meat on the urban market. The coroners' records present a picture of increasing small-town/rural polarisation in the acquisition of domestic goods, which may in turn relate to a growing distinction between small-town and rural economies emerging in the sixteenth century (e.g. Everitt 1974). Within the Wiltshire sample, a distinction

can be seen between the archaeological objects from Salisbury and those from elsewhere in the county, suggesting that there was a greater diversity of objects available on the market here, although this is not borne out so clearly in the escheators' and coroners' records. This may be related to the pattern observed in the relationship between the acquisition of tableware and market proximity, which becomes less marked in the sixteenth century, potentially indicating an elevated role for urban markets in provisioning rural households.

The evidence for clothing perhaps provides the best means for considering both difference between town and country and also the influence of larger centres on rural consumption. In Wiltshire, lace ends are rare outside of Salisbury, and the coroners' records imply that new fashions were embraced more enthusiastically in the urban setting. Lace ends are, however, found at rural sites, although they are particularly prevalent in the hinterlands of the major urban centres of Norwich, York and London, perhaps suggesting urban influences on rural consumption. A similar pattern has been identified in Kent in Salter's analysis of dress items found in wills. The evidence for footwear, as best exemplified by the assemblage from Selby, shows an adoption of trends first seen in London, albeit with some time lag.

The data does not suggest a simple relationship between markets and patterns of consumption. The example of chapes shows that new fashions could emanate from major urban centres into the surrounding countryside, yet the evidence from Wiltshire shows that this was not a universal pattern. Strong distinctions between consumption in the countryside and smaller towns are not immediately apparent, with wealth and household economy seemingly being more significant determinants of consumption behaviour. While goods did not flow through marketing networks evenly, meaning that more remote households may not have had immediate access to items such as pewter tableware, the evidence from Wiltshire suggests that this diminished over time. The most significant pattern appears to be the increasing polarisation of small-town and rural household economies in the sixteenth century, which can also be seen to a degree in the evidence for consumption. In relation to bedding, for example, we see poorer small-town households investing in a more diverse range of goods than their rural counterparts, although this distinction is not apparent among the wealthier households.

People and things

So far, the discussion of consumption has largely been framed in economic terms. However, it is important to consider both the motivations for consumption, as well as the possibility of the circulation of goods outside of the market. Evidence for the latter is circumstantial, but is suggested in the escheators' and coroners' records both by references to old or worn objects, and unusual combinations of objects. Old and worn objects include cooking vessels, bedding

and items of furniture. All of these could conceivably have been purchased secondhand, had a long use-life within the home, or have been items inherited or passed on to a household through marriage or some other mechanism. It is likely that many of the objects within households were 'old' and this has only been noted by the escheator or coroner where it has an impact on the valuation assigned to these goods. Items such as bedding were commonly passed through the female line (see Chapter 5). While it is impossible to identify these items, it is important to acknowledge that goods circulated outside of the market and also that people themselves moved between urban and rural households, which may account for a degree of the 'blurring' between the possessions of those living in town and country. Tentative evidence for inherited or curated goods might be seen in the occurrence of ewers in lists dating to the period after which these items appear to have fallen out of popular use.

Ewers, as well as silver (or pewter) spoons and other items of tableware, can be considered a category of non-essential goods which were acquired by households in town and country across the social spectrum. As discussed in Chapter 4, the motivation for acquiring these goods can be brought into focus through a consideration of their design, material and use. It is common for items of pewter tableware to be considered as stores of wealth and also as items for display, creating an image of prosperity which may be important in negotiating social standing within a community, or credit relations with external parties. Archaeological analysis allows us to consider the design and iconography of these items and to put forward alternative explanations, which may complement, rather than contradict, such interpretations. The liturgical references associated with handwashing, the turn to domestic devotion and ultimately the Reformation all provide a context for the increasing visibility of devotional activity within the home, with all these objects potentially providing additional or alternative material media for devotional activity. Interdisciplinary perspectives therefore open up potential to consider alternative interpretations, in which consumers were not simply beholden to the economic value of goods, but can be understood as having varied and complex motivations behind their choices.

The evidence for clothing does provide an insight into the ways in which people fashioned visible identities. The contrasts between town and country, and within the hinterlands of larger centres, in the adoption of new fashions suggests varying levels of social capital could be built up through presenting oneself in a particular way. While the escheators' records suggest a general adherence to sumptuary legislation, investment in coloured or furred gowns suggests that some dared to transgress, presumably being ambivalent about the potential consequences. While the majority conformed and were perhaps wary of the consequences of consumption, commercial growth, increasing economic freedom (for example the ability to acquire rural land) and levels of personal wealth furnished consumers with the agency to acquire goods which challenged the social order and made statements about their social standing and wealth.

We can consider therefore that the changes in the availability and accessibility of goods identified through these analyses created opportunities for material goods to be manipulated in a range of ways. They could be used as symbols of wealth, as indicators of taste, expressions of agency and individuality, or provide opportunities for distinctive material experiences which transcend the importance of the object in purely economic terms. In this way, objects do not simply reflect economic and societal change, but were active participants in these developments, being components of the social relations through which the medieval social order was recalibrated.

Interdisciplinary perspectives

The 'Living Standards and Material Culture' project was conceived of as an explicitly interdisciplinary endeavour, and in closing it is worth reflecting on the benefits of such an approach for understanding medieval consumption, society and economy. At a basic level, the archaeological and historical datasets provide different insights into the possessions of medieval households, which rarely overlap. Archaeological objects are often the small items ignored by the escheator or coroner. In contrast, the lists of forfeited movables include objects such as textiles or metalware which would have been recycled or decayed, making them rare occurrences in the archaeological record. At a basic level, the data presented here offers a reminder of the dangers of basing conclusions on a single source of evidence, and demonstrates the richer insights which can be provided by drawing data of different types together.

It was always our ambition to extend our interdisciplinary analysis beyond this basic exercise of 'filling in the gaps', to try to understand what interdisciplinary study can bring to our understanding of systems of value and medieval experiences of the material world. There are instances where this perspective has allowed us to present a more informed interpretation: it was only possible to understand the occurrence of querns in Kentish households as observed through the escheators' records against the distribution of such items in the archaeological dataset, for instance. Our understanding of silver and pewter spoons is informed both by their occurrence in particular types of households, but also through developing an understanding of the iconography and appearance of these items, which allows us to consider them as tactile and immensely personal objects, rather than simply as items for display or wealth storage.

Archaeological evidence also allows for a stronger consideration of how objects function within space and reveals the ongoing processes of architectural modification which took place across our period. Just as the 'consumer revolution' should not be considered a single event, so too the 'modernisation' of domestic architecture can be seen as the result of longer-term processes, as discussed in Chapter 9. The deeper understanding of domestic space provided by excavated houses allows us to understand better some of the patterns

observable in the possessions of medieval households; for example, the declining importance of trestle tables as spaces became more specialised. Evidence of building fittings also allows us to understand how households made changes to domestic architecture, and the consequences of this in terms of their ability to invest in movable goods, particularly non-essential items.

Finally, archaeological evidence has contributed considerably to our understanding of production and the household economy (Chapter 8). Archaeological evidence provides an excellent source of information on technological processes. However, considering this in relation to the wider evidence for mixed household economies provided by the escheators' and coroners' records frames this evidence in different ways. A focus on a mixed household economy necessitates a greater consideration of the landscape context of technological infrastructure, how it relates to agricultural land, processes of enclosure and also how activities might have been undertaken seasonally around the agricultural calendar.

Closing thoughts

The analysis presented in this study offers a picture of the material world of the medieval household as vibrant, complex and variable. It is clear from the analysis of a hitherto largely unknown body of source material – the escheators' and coroners' records – that we have underestimated the variability and complexity apparent in the possessions of households in the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries. This situation arose due to the limited availability before now of written sources listing the goods of low status households, and to the relatively narrow range of objects which survive archaeologically. Even so, archaeological evidence has enriched our understanding of the documents, highlighting areas in which certain object types are underrepresented, but also demanding that we consider the references to things in these lists in more than economic terms. While the commercial intensification of the middle ages created a context for this consumption behaviour, it is apparent that this behaviour was determined by more than the simple availability of goods and the presence of the infrastructure through which they circulated. A key theme to emerge from this study is the need to consider the productive and consumption activities of households together, to understand household economy in the round. The acquisition of luxury goods by non-elite households, including some of the poorest in our sample, demonstrates the need to critique simplistic links between objects and social status, and to shift focus to the household as a site of a complex range of material engagements, all of which played a role in shaping rural experiences in this period of economic, religious and social transition.

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ARTS, HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

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This book presents a synthesis and analysis of the possessions of non-elite rural households in medieval England. Drawing on the results of the Leverhulme Trust funded project 'Living Standards and Material Culture in English Rural Households, 1300-1600', it represents the first national-scale interdisciplinary analysis of non-elite consumption in the later Middle Ages.

The research is situated within debates around rising living standards in the period following the Black Death, the commercialisation of the English economy and the timing of a 'revolution' in consumer behaviour.

Its novelty derives from its focus on non-elite rural households. Whilst there has been considerable work on the possessions of the great households and of people living in larger towns, researchers have struggled to identify appropriate sources for understanding the possessions of those living in the countryside, even though they account for the majority of England's population at the time. This book addresses the gap in understanding.