THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF A HERTFORDSHIRE PARISH: A STUDY IN RURAL COMMUNITY.

Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Ph.D.

by

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ABSTRACT

'The Social Structure of a Hertfordshire Parish: A Study in Rural Community'. Thesis submitted for Ph.D degree, by V.G. Pons, in March, 1952.

The thesis presents the findings of a field study conducted in a small rural parish situated in a farming area that was severely affected by the agricultural depression of the second half of the nineteenth century.

Part One is introductory. The development of agriculture in Hertfordshire is sketched, and a brief outline of urban growth in the county is given. Against this background, the present-day social composition of the parish studied is described. Some 50 per cent of the employed population travel to urban areas daily. But in the parish itself, agriculture is by far the principal field of employment, and the population is predominantly of rural stock.

Part Two gives a review, covering the past century, of trends in demographic structure, in migration, and in the social recruitment of the population. The greater part of this review is based on data drawn from original census schedules and from marriage certificates.

Part Three is concerned partly with the development of the family situation of the working-class inhabitant,

and partly with the social relations obtaining between kinsmen resident in the parish to-day. A type of extended family organization is encountered among the native farmers of the area. Among the working-class section of the population no semblance of familistic organization is found, but social relations between close kinsmen nevertheless constitute a vital part of the individual's total life.

Part Four presents an analysis of the parish's community system. The method of analysis used is that of studying the nature of all organised and semi-organised leisure-time groups in the parish. The conclusions arrived at are that while there have been certain changes in recent years, basic traditional values remain important determinants of the form and structure of the community.

PREFACE

I have made no attempt to conceal the identity of the parish community to which this study refers. In not giving the parish a pseudonym, I have assumed that the interests of anyone who may read this thesis are akin to my own in writing it, and that readers will treat all information concerning individuals and families with the respect which a field sociologist automatically accords to data gathered by himself. I did think it fair to conceal the identity of individuals as far as possible, and have taken the liberty of 'scrambling' details of information reported in the following pages wherever this could be done without destroying their significance. But often this was impossible.

The suggestion that I should undertake the study of a rural parish in England was first made to me by Professor D.V. Glass, to whom I would express my deep gratitude for the careful consideration which he has given to my work whenever I have sought his advice. Had I done so more often, the possible value of my study would certainly have been greater than it is.

Although this thesis in its present form is not addressed to the inhabitants of the parish studied, I would like to acknowledge the help which I received from

them, as well as the warmth of the hospitality extended by many persons to my wife and myself during the period of my field work in the community.

To my wife I am deeply indebted for invaluable assistance in gathering field data and for sharing with me much laborious clerical work.

Finally, I gratefully acknowledge a research grant received from the Central Research Fund of the University of London to cover expenses incurred in obtaining information from marriage certificates and original census schedules in the custody of the Registrar General.

INTRODUCTION

I

It is a strange fact that in Britain's planning age there is an extreme dearth of precise information on the social effects of urban growth and technological advance on rural society. This lack of systematic knowledge constitutes a serious drawback for the country-planner. And it clearly has its own unpleasant implications for the would-be rural sociologist who might be expected to fill the gap.

Where does the sociologist start? For guidance on the problems to be studied he can turn to the scientific monographs on rural communities in other countries, to general sociological theory, to English fiction and journalism, or to the notoriously biassed English 'middle-class' stereotypes of country life. Each of these has, to a certain extent, influenced the selection of facts gathered in the course of the field inquiry reported on the following pages. But, clearly, none of the above sources can shed much light on the sociological nature of present-day rural situations in England.

It is well known that the variables influencing English village situations are many. Orwin has probably touched on all the major ones, when writing of rural

settlements in this country as follows:

'In size, they may range from hamlets of a hundred people, or fewer, to places which could be described as small towns, with two or three thousand inhabitants. In plan, they may vary from the compact settlement round a village green or at four cross-roads, to a roadside ribbon development of a mile or more, or to parishes without a nucleus of any noticeable concentrations of population within them. There is the feudal village clustering under the shadow of the great house, the village in which everyone works for one or two big farmers, the community of small working farmers, all of them mastermen; the mining village; the suburban or dormitory village; the community part agricultural and part dependent on some local industry; the village which is a tourist's place of pilgrimage, and others which are combinations of any of these in varying proportions." [1]

The existence of these variables is common knowledge to most Englishmen. But it is precise knowledge of the type of sociological situations underlying the apparently varied villages of England that is required.

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1 C.S. Orwin: Problems of the Countryside. Cambridge, (1945) p.13.

And until monographs on local communities are made available, ideas of formulating a working typology of rural communities, or of trying to assess the influence of particular sociological and economic variables will be of no avail.

It was with this belief that the present investigation into one small parish community was undertaken.

II

The rural parish selected for study is situated in the North-East of Hertfordshire. For two main reasons the view was taken that it was unimportant to select a parish according to any fixed criteria. Firstly, there was, with the present lack of rural community studies, no question of conducting an investigation which might complement, or be compared to, an existing one.[1] Secondly, the possible value of a single local study does not depend on its being regarded as representative of a particular universe, but rather on its demonstrating how various factors in the situation combine to make the community what it is.

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1 Since the present investigation was started one such study has been published. A.D. Rees, Life in a Welsh Countryside, Univ.of Wales Press (1950) Attention should also be drawn to the work of G.Duncan Mitchell reported in a number of articles. See, e.g.'Social Disintegration in a Rural Community', Human Relations, Vol.III No.3.1950, 'The Relevance of Group Dynamics to Rural Planning Problems' Sociological Review, Vol.XLIII, Section I,1951, and 'The Parish Council and the Rural Community', Public Administration, Vol.XXIX, Winter, 1951.

Thus, the choice of a parish was left to be determined partly by chance and partly by practical and personal considerations. These imposed two main requirements: that to ensure an easily manageable field situation the parish should not exceed 500 to 600 inhabitants, and that it should be relatively accessible from London. It may be added, that the writer was also prompted by a personal whim to select a parish which was predominantly agricultural and as well-removed from towns and main roads as possible while still being near London.

After paying casual visits to some 30 parishes in North-East Hertfordshire, the choice fell on Little Munden, which is situated 25 miles from the centre of London. At the time of the study in 1950, the parish was probably as much of a rural backwater as could have been found anywhere in Hertfordshire and, with 420 inhabitants, it was sufficiently small to allow its various activities to be watched during the course of a short field study.

III

The writer first visited Little Munden parish casually in May 1950, and he lived there from July to December of that year. Most of the data presented in this study were gathered during this period. It must be added, however,

that in 1953 a second spell in the parish - as an ordinary resident engaged on other work - enabled a number of points to be cleared up.

For the first few weeks of the field-work period, time was devoted to three principal activities: obtaining an outline account of the structure of the parish from a few knowledgeable persons; becoming acquainted, mainly through participation in day-to-day social life, with as many inhabitants as possible; and, explaining the purpose of the inquiry to anyone in the parish who cared to listen.

Subsequently, a concentrated effort was made to gather data by a combination of what have come to be loosely referred to as 'anthropological' and 'sociological' field techniques.

First, a census-type schedule was drawn up asking for the following basic information:

(a) Demographic data.
(b) Data on occupations and education.
(c) Formal affiliations to voluntary organizations, inside and outside the parish.
(d) Family history of residence in the parish and present kinship affiliations there and in neighbouring parishes.
(e) Habits in respect to visiting nearby towns and villages.

The completion of this schedule for every household in the parish was only one limited objective, so that the procedure adopted in approaching families had to be such

as not to rule out the possibility of coming into less formal social contact with inhabitants. The 'shock tactics' of the social surveyors or Gallup Poll interviewer were avoided as far as possible, and it was decided that, at least in the initial stages of the inquiry, a household would not be approached for formal interrogation unless one of its responsible members had first been 'met socially', and until an opportunity had been found to explain the purpose of the investigation to the persons concerned. The first schedule was completed after six weeks in the field, and three months later about 80 of the parish's 130 households had been interviewed. Thereafter, it was found necessary to approach households more directly, and without prior appointments and explanations. On leaving the parish, there were eight households which, for various reasons, had not been interrogated 'schedule in hand', but the greater part of the information required had, by this time, been gathered for these families through informal conversation with one or more members of each, or from hearsay, or from parish registers.

Secondly, non-statistical data on the nature of interpersonal and intergroup relations in the parish were gathered in a series of formal interviews and informal conversations with all subjects who were willing to respond.

The approach used in gathering data varied according to the occasion. Persons who took an interest in the study were first asked for their own generalizations on various aspects of social relations in the parish. Next they were asked to quote detailed examples in support of their statements, and such interviews invariably developed into topical discussions. Finally, these same persons, and a larger number of others, were asked to describe their own relations with, and attitudes towards, particular groups and persons.

Much of this type of interviewing was conducted whenever and wherever an appropriate occasion presented itself, whether this might be in a pub, travelling to and and from town on the parish bus, at a casual meeting on the roadside, or in a private home. While the interviews were 'free' in the sense that the investigator was prepared to listen to accounts of any interpersonal or intergroup incidents and situations, the accounts expected and sought were of relations between, and attitudes towards, the following particular groups and inviduals: 'the gentry', 'the farmers', 'the villagers', 'these town people' (i.e. middle-class townsmen residing in the parish), 'the parson', 'the schoolmaster', family members, kinsmen, and neighbours.

It is hardly necessary to say that the above method of gathering data cannot lead to exhaustive analyses of

specific problems of intergroup and interpersonal relations. But, on the other hand, the method does allow an investigator to gain an insight into the community situation as a whole in a comparatively short time.

Thirdly, data on the organized and semi-organized social life of the parish were accumulated through day-to-day participation, as well as through interviews with persons in key positions in the parish and in particular voluntary organizations. The specific objectives in gathering data on formal voluntary organizations were to ascertain the level of participation in parish activities, the degree of 'class mixing', the pattern of leadership, and the extent to which social status is reflected in formal activities.

IV

Early during the course of the field work, the church registers of marriages, baptisms, and burials were studied in a cursory way. Initially, the intention was to do no more than to gather such data as might be useful for the purpose of sketching the parish's social history. It became apparent, however, that the marriage registers provided material which could well be used for systematic analyses bearing on social and demographic trends in the community over the past century. But the samples provided

by the registers of Little Munden parish on its own were too small to warrant statistical treatment. Data were therefore gathered from the marriage registers of several neighbouring parishes so as to increase the size of the sample to be analysed. With the progress of this analysis, efforts were also made to reconstruct the development of the social structure of the parish with data drawn from additional sources - published census reports, original census schedules, the minute books of parish organizations, the recollections of elderly natives of the area, Kelly's directories, and general documents and publications referring to the parish or its area.

As a result, a more complete picture of the parish's trends of development than had initially been aimed at began to emerge, and this picture appeared to be of distinct value in explaining the historical process by which the community assumed its present form. It will be seen that an attempt has been made to describe various aspects of Little Munden's structure and composition in 1950 against the background of its historical development.

Inevitably, there are large gaps in the material. In some chapters a trend of change is traced over 100 or 150 years. In others, it has only been possible to compare the present situation with a general picture - sometimes inadequate in itself - referring to the late nineteenth

century. It is believed, however, that in spite of these gaps and inadequacies, the data serve to show the way in which different variables have influenced the community studied.

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PART ONE

CHAPTER ONE

A GLANCE AT THE DEVELOPMENT OF HERTFORDSHIRE

The county of Hertfordshire, sometimes referred to as London's country neighbour, has a mixed character. Prior to this century it was noted mainly for two things, namely, its advanced system of agriculture, and its large number of country houses inhabited by wealthy persons. To-day, the greater part of Hertfordshire is an integral part of the Greater London area. The county's south-western boundary, which is at some points no further than 12 miles from the centre of the capital, runs through a zone of continuous urban development, while its north-eastern areas, adjoining Essex and Cambridgeshire, and lying some 20 to 40 miles from the centre of the metropolis, are still mainly agricultural, and remain typically rural in appearance. Between the rural North-East and the urban and suburban South-West of the county, the relative importance of industrial, residential, and agricultural development varies considerably, but the transition seen as one travels from the South-West to the North-East is not as steady as would be expected if distance from the capital were the sole major variable; although proximity to London is, and has for a long time been, an important determining influence on the economy of all parts of

Hertfordshire, a number of other factors have combined to endow the county with a complex pattern of towns and villages. It would be difficult to describe the interaction of these factors in a few pages and no attempt will be made to do so here; our object is simply to convey an impression of the changing character of Hertfordshire over the past century or more, so that the parish of Little Munden and its immediate environs may be viewed in their regional setting.

Agriculture

For hundreds of years prior to the important changes which took place in the second half of the nineteenth century, Hertfordshire was famous as a corn-growing district. The county's soil is not particularly fertile, [1] but proximity to London greatly stimulated its cereal cultivation in days when transportation was poorly developed and costly. Walker's account of the county in the late eighteenth century states that Hertfordshire 'is justly deemed the first and best corn county in the kingdom',[2] that 'by far the greatest part (is) adapted to tillage,—— except that is reserved for pleasure in the parks of gentlemen',[3] and

1 There is much variation within the county in respect to soil fertility, but the areas of highly fertile soil (e.g. the Lee Valley) are small. According to the 1941-43 'natural fertility' classification of counties, Hertfordshire is one of the least fertile in England and Wales. National Farm Survey of England and Wales (1941-43), Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, H.M.S.O. (1946).

2 D. Walker, General View of the Agriculture of the County of Hertford, (1795) p.30

3 Op.cit.p.12

that 'the fields have been constantly under plough time out of mind'.[1] Indeed, the writings of Ellis supply ample evidence that Hertfordshire farmers had been very energetic and progressive in their work long before they were visited by Walker; in the first years of the nineteenth century Young commented that, at the time of Ellis (1732), the agriculture of the county had already 'arrived to a certain degree of perfection, then superior to the rest of England',[3] and the report of a modern economic survey pays an eloquent tribute to the pre-1732 farmers in saying that 'so far as the management of soil and crop is concerned, there is little he (Ellis) could learn from the present generation of farmers'.[4]

Early advances in farming methods, and the eminence of the county as a corn-producing area, were accompanied by the development of a modern system of agricultural organization, and we find that, by the beginning of the eighteenth century, Hertfordshire was very largely

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1 Op.cit. p.25
2 W. Ellis; The Practical Farmer or the Hertfordshire Husbandman, (1732)
3 A. Young, General View of the Agriculture of Hertfordshire, (1804)
4 Economic Survey of Hertfordshire Agriculture, Cambridge University, (1931), p.2

enclosed, except for certain areas in the extreme North.[1] And such common fields as remained at that time were, 'mostly by agreement among the owners and occupiers, cultivated nearly in the same way as in an enclosed state'.[2]

Judging from scattered evidence, it can be said that the 'typical' Hertfordshire farmer of the first half of the nineteenth century was a tenant,[3] an employer of labour,[4] and the occupier of a farm that could be referred to as small to medium in size.[5]

From the mid-nineteenth century onwards farming in Hertfordshire underwent some important changes. Firstly, the extension of railways partly robbed the county's corn fields of the advantage they had for

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1 Many of the parliamentary enclosure awards for Hertfordshire were made comparatively late (in the nineteenth century), but these awards frequently applied only to small strips of common land, and the greater part of farming land had been effectively enclosed long before the awards were made.

2 Walker, Op.cit.

3 Arthur Young was struck by the absence of owner-occupiers in Hertfordshire. 'In the more eastern counties', he wrote, 'the farmers have been very considerable purchasers of land; a circumstance that has not happened except in very few instances in Hertfordshire'. Op.cit.p.18.

4 The 1831 Census revealed that 79.2 per cent of Hertfordshire farmers were employers of labour as against 58.4 per cent in England and Wales.

5 In 1804 Young estimated that 'the size most common is from 150 to 400 acres', and Caird, writing in 1851, estimated the average size as 200 acres. See Young, Op.cit.p.23, and J.Caird, English Agriculture 1850-51, London, (1852).

centuries enjoyed by virtue of their proximity to London. Secondly, the arrival in Britain of American wheat in the 1870s and 1880s led to a serious decline in arable farming. Over the course of the years, cereals were virtually replaced by livestock as the Hertfordshire farmer's chief source of income.[1] The change was gradual, but may be deemed to have continued uninterrupted, except for a temporary reversal at the time of the first world war, till the outbreak of the second world war. The collapse of cereal farming, coinciding as it did with increasing demands from London and from the county's own urban centres for produce that could not easily be transported over long distances, led to the development, in some parts of Hertfordshire, of agricultural holdings specialising in dairying, poultry farming, market gardening, and glasshouse cultivation. But over the greater part of the county, including the North-East, conditions were not particularly suitable for a high degree of specialisation, with the result that the majority of farms remained general holdings. Following on the agricultural subsidies of 1939, there was a rapid return to cereal farming, and the continuation

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1 Economic Survey of Hertfordshire Agriculture, Op.cit.

of the war-time agricultural policy up till the present time has caused the position to remain fairly stable since 1945.

During the past 100 years there have, of course, been important developments in the organization of farming. We shall refer to some of the changes later in outlining the history of Little Munden's immediate environs. In spite of changes in farm organization, however, the 'typical' Hertfordshire farmer of to-day is, as he was in the early nineteenth century, a tenant who occupies a small to medium-sized farm, and a capitalist who depends on hired rather than family labour.

The Growth of Urbanisation

Lacking any important mineral wealth, and remote from iron and coal deposits, Hertfordshire was little affected by the Industrial Revolution of the eighteenth century, and modern urban growth in the county virtually dates back no further than early Victorian days. Thus, in 1831, when the county had a population of just under 150,000, close on a half of its adult men were still engaged in agriculture, either as farmers or labourers, and a quite negligible proportion were employed in manufacturing industries. Next to agriculture, service industries claimed the largest

TABLE I OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION OF ADULT MALES IN HERTFORDSHIRE, 1831.

	Number	Percentage
Farm occupiers	1,917	5.5
Labourers employed in agriculture	14,700	42.1
Employed in manufacture or in making machinery	290	0.8
Employed in retail trade or in handicraft as masters or workmen	9,426	27.0
Capitalists, bankers, professional and other educated men	1,429	4.1
Labourers employed in labour not agricultural	4,101	11.8
Servants	1,161	3.3
Others	1,886	5.4
TOTAL	34,910	100.0

Source: 1831 Census of England and Wales.

proportion of the labour force, mainly as tradesmen and craftsmen. (See Table I)

An analysis of the 1831 census data conveys a picture of the composition, in terms of rural and urban settlements, of the county at that time. (See Table II) Of 139 settlements (i.e. parishes, except in the case of municipal boroughs), only 24 had a population exceeding 1500 persons, and none exceeded 6000 inhabitants, while approximately one half of all

inhabitants in the county were living in settlements with a population of less than 1500 persons. As would be expected, there was a tendency for the size of a settlement to be associated with its proportion of men engaged in agriculture. Thus, in the smallest

TABLE II HERTFORDSHIRE SETTLEMENTS (PARISHES AND MUNICIPAL BOROUGHS) IN 1831

Size of settlement (No.of inhabitants)	No.of settlements	Percent of population inhabiting settlements of different sizes	Mean no.of men engaged in agriculture per settlement	Mean no.of men NOT engaged in agriculture per settlement	Mean percentage of men engaged in agriculture
Under 200	15	1.2	24.5	5.9	80.7
200-399	27	5.4	52.7	18.8	73.7
400-599	27	9.6	79.1	47.0	62.7
600-799	14	6.9	114.0	58.8	65.9
800-999	12	7.6	135.7	82.4	62.2
1000-1199	12	9.1	168.9	99.4	63.0
1200-1499	8	7.6	180.8	162.6	52.7
1500-2999	13	17.7	326.1	419.2	43.8
3000-6000	11	35.0	315.0	787.0	28.6
All settlements	139	100.1	119.5	131.6	47.6

Source of data: 1831 Census of England and Wales

settlements, 80.7 per cent of all adult males were either farmers or farm workers, whereas in those with several thousand inhabitants only 28.6 per cent of the men were engaged in agriculture. There was, however, little variation in the proportion of agricultural workers in settlements of medium size (400-1200 inhabitants), and this suggests that what might be termed the 'standard' rural community of the times varied fairly considerably in numbers. Small parishes (i.e. those with populations of less than 400 persons) were apparently unable to support the same proportion of non-agricultural personnel as the 'standard' or medium-sized settlements, but it was only when the population passed the 1200-person mark, that a settlement tended to develop distinctive urban functions uncommon in the 'standard' parishes.

Altogether the county had 32 centres with a population of over 1200 persons each. Of these 'large' settlements, 18 were recognised market towns, some also being centres of industries connected with agriculture, such as malting and brewing (e.g. Ware and Royston). Most of the market towns and a number of the large villages lay on one or other of the several great roads which traversed the county on their way from London to the Midlands, the North of England, and East Anglia, and there can be little doubt that the size of such centres

was accounted for, to a significant extent, by their respective situations on coaching routes. As early as the sixteenth century Norden had commented that Hertfordshire 'is much benefited by thorrow-fares to and from London Northwardes ——, (which) maketh the markets to bee the better furnished with such necessaries, as are requisite for Innes, for the entertainment of trauaylers',[1] and a number of writers made similar observations in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. But the first appreciable signs of modern urban growth only came after the construction of railway lines through the county from the 1830s onwards. The outstanding example of a town that grew rapidly as a result of such external stimulation is Watford, which was destined to lie on the London-Birmingham railway line opened in 1837. In 1831, Watford had a population of 5,293; in 1881 it totalled 15,507, and by 1911 it had 40,939 inhabitants. Few of the 'large' centres of 1831 developed as rapidly as Watford, but most of them experienced marked growth before the end of the nineteenth century.

It would, however, be an over-simplification of the facts to regard Hertfordshire's nineteenth-century urban growth as

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1 John Norden: A Description of Hertfordshire (1598) (Reprinted 1903), Ware.

resulting entirely from the county's location in relation to London's roads and railways. Dickinson has shown that a measure of concentration of population and urban functions during the course of the nineteenth century was marked even in the agricultural counties of East Anglia,[1] and doubtless the developments in Hertfordshire were partly the outcome of the county's particular situation on the periphery of London, and partly of the general material progress of the times.

The extent of urban growth in the county prior to the twentieth century is shown in Table III. From 1831 to 1901, the number of settlements with populations exceeding 3000 rose from 11 to 22, and the proportion of the total population inhabiting such settlements from 35 per cent to 64 per cent. On looking at the table in another way, we see that while the absolute number of inhabitants in the county nearly doubled over the 70 years preceding 1901, the number of persons inhabiting centres with a population exceeding 1200 more than doubled, and the number of persons inhabiting settlements with populations of under 1200 dropped slightly.

A glance at the 1947 figures in the same table (Table III) might suggest no more than that the

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1 R.E. Dickinson: City, Region, and Regionalism, London, (1947) Chap.3.

nineteenth century trends of urban growth had continued up till recent times at a fairly steady pace. It can be seen, for example, that since 1901 the number of centres with populations exceeding 3000 persons has risen

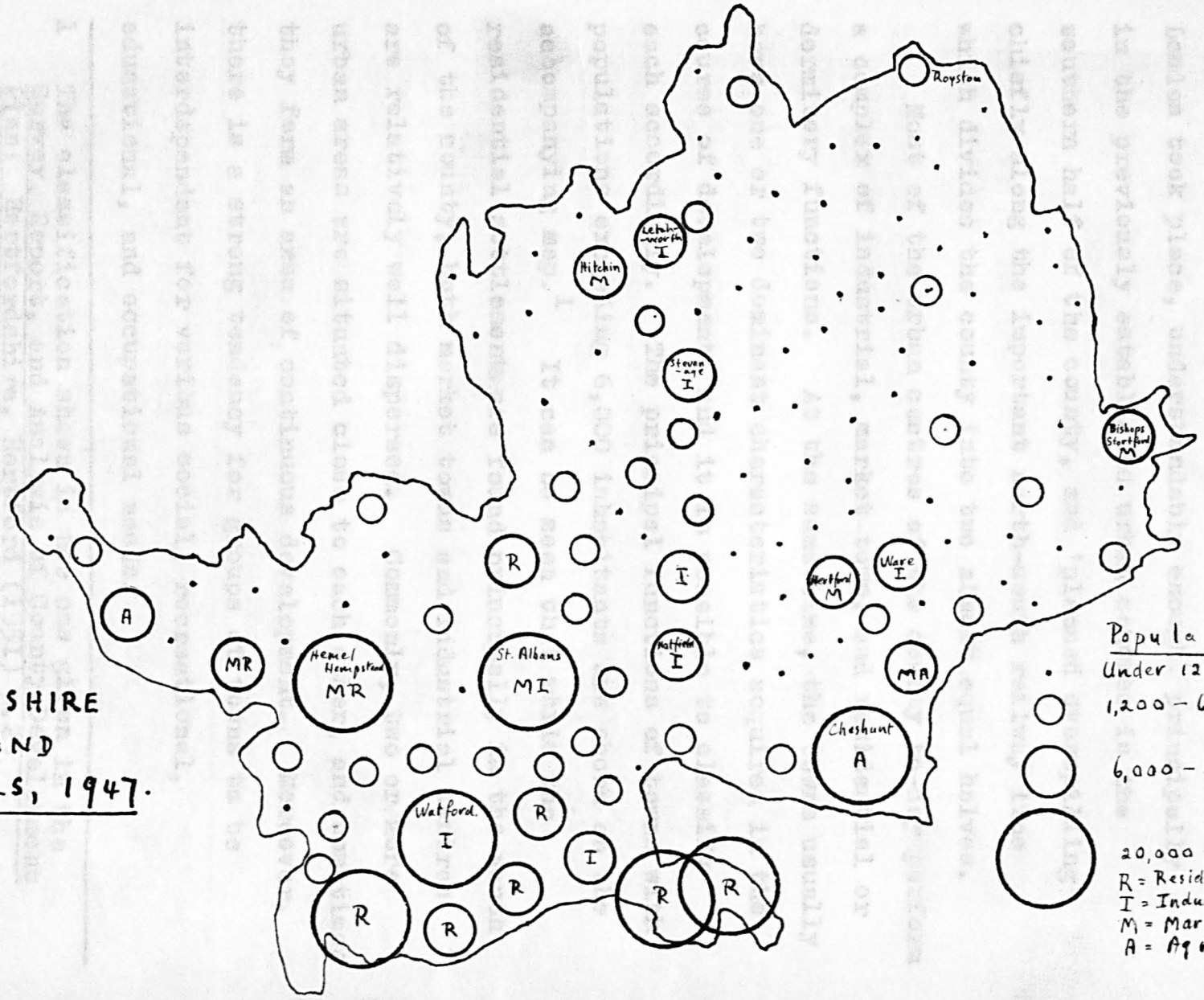
TABLE III POPULATION AND SIZE OF SETTLEMENTS IN HERTFORDSHIRE, 1831, 1901, and 1947

Size of settlement	Distribution of settlements, by size			Distribution of the population by size of settlement inhabited (in thousands)			Percentage distribution of the population, by size of settlement inhabited		
	1831	1901	1947	1831	1901	1947	1831	1901	1947
0–400	42	51	43	9	11	10	6	4	2
400–1200	65	58	49	47	42	34	33	16	6
1200–3000	21	21	19	36	40	37	26	16	6
3000–6000	11	14	12	50	64	48	35	25	8
6000–10000	-	3	4	-	23	27	-	9	5
10000–20000	-	4	12	-	50	174	-	19	30
20000–40000	-	1	5	-	27	132	-	11	23
40000–80000	-	-	2	-	-	115	-	-	20
TOTAL	139	152	146	142	257	577	100	100	100

Source of 1831 and 1901 data: Censuses of England and Wales.
Source of 1947 data: Survey, Report, and Analysis of County Development Plan: Hertfordshire (1951). The 1947 population figures given in this volume are estimates.

from 22 to 35, and that 84 per cent of the population in 1947 were inhabiting towns of 3000 or more as against 64 per cent in 1901. But under the conditions of easy daily movement that have developed since 1901, statistical distributions of the kind examined above cease to have the same significance, and the fact is, of course, that Hertfordshire is now virtually a single labour market, and even, to a considerable extent, a segment of the London market. All towns in the county draw substantial elements of their working populations from beyond their own boundaries, and all settlements - rural or urban - have a greater or smaller proportion of persons who either work in London or travel daily to one or other of the county's own centres of employment.

The urban growth processes of the past half-century were, of course, complex, but three main types of development may be distinguished for descriptive purposes. Firstly, the 'natural' process of urban concentration which started in the nineteenth century has continued at an ever-increasing rate. Secondly, Hertfordshire towns have received much 'spontaneous overspill' of industry and people from London. Thirdly, there was 'planned overspilling' from the capital (i.e. the establishment of Garden Cities and New Towns). 'Natural' growth has affected all the nineteenth century towns in the county.



HERTFORDSHIRE TOWNS AND VILLAGES, 1947.

Growth as a result of 'spontaneous overspill' from London took place, understandably enough, principally in the previously established urban centres in the southern half of the county, and 'planned overspilling' chiefly along the important north-south railway line which divides the county into two almost equal halves.

Most of the urban centres of the county to-day perform a complex of industrial, market-town, and residential or dormitory functions. At the same time, the towns usually have one or two dominant characteristics acquired in the course of development, and it is possible to classify each accordingly. The principal functions of towns with populations exceeding 6,000 inhabitants are shown on the accompanying map.[1] It can be seen that while the residential settlements are found principally in the south of the county, both market towns and industrial centres are relatively well dispersed. Commonly, two or more urban areas are situated close to each other, and sometimes they form an area of continuous development. Moreover, there is a strong tendency for groups of towns to be interdependent for various social, recreational, educational, and occupational needs.

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1 The classification shown is the one given in the Survey, Report, and Analysis of County Development Plan: Hertfordshire, Hertford (1951) p.25

Only 8.7 per cent of the total population working in the county is now engaged in agriculture,[1] and the

TABLE IV INDUSTRIAL CLASSIFICATION OF PERSONS REGISTERED AT HERTFORDSHIRE EMPLOYMENT EXCHANGES, 1948[2]

	Number	Per cent
Extractive Industries:		
Agriculture	20,030	8.7
Other	606	0.3
Intermediate manufacture:		
Chemicals, paint, and oil	9,327	4.0
Other	2,922	1.3
Capital Goods manufacture:		
Engineering	18,284	8.0
Vehicles and aircraft	16,030	7.0
Other	8,330	3.7
Consumer Goods manufacture:		
Paper and printing	15,699	6.8
Food, drink, tobacco	7,052	3.0
Clothing	4,635	2.0
Other	13,484	5.9
Services:		
Distribution	22,138	9.7
Building	19,881	8.7
Transport and communications	10,197	4.5
Other	60,326	26.4
TOTAL	228,941	100.0

Source: Survey, Report, and Analysis of County Development Plan, Hertfordshire (1951).

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1 The absolute number of persons employed in agriculture is actually considerably higher to-day than in 1831, but this is mainly accounted for by the growth of the specialised glasshouse industry in the Lee Valley in the South-East of the county.

2 Stress must be laid on the fact that this table gives a classification of persons working in Hertfordshire, and not of persons resident in the county.

only extensive area which remains predominantly rural in terms of population density and size of settlements, is found in the North-East, where a rough circle, formed by the towns of Royston, Bishops Stortford, Ware, Hertford, Stevenage, and Letchworth encloses some 50 country parishes. But even within this circle, all village settlements are partly 'dormitories' for the adjacent towns, for the urban areas in central and south-west Hertfordshire, and for London itself. Although census and employment-exchange statistics cannot be used to ascertain precisely the occupational structure of the rural North-East as a whole, an examination of the available data would suggest that approximately one half of this area's total working population travels to town daily,[1] and that about one third of the population working within the area is engaged in agriculture.

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1 For example, in the employment exchange of Buntingford, which lies in the North-Eastern sector of the county and which contains no urban centres, only 19 per cent of the inhabitants are working within the boundaries of that employment exchange, whereas the proportion of employed to resident population is 36 per cent in the county as a whole. See County Development Plan, Op.cit. p.47.

CHAPTER TWO

INTRODUCTION TO THE PARISH OF LITTLE MUNDEN AND ITS PEOPLE

The parish of Little Munden, which covers an area of 1774 acres, falls in an area of undulating countryside characterised by small villages and hamlets. The parish itself comprises three distinct nucleated settlements, namely, Dane End, Haultwick, and Green End. About 80 per cent of the total population of 420 men, women and children live in these hamlets, and the balance inhabit scattered homesteads, few of which lie more than half a mile from one or other of the settlements.

To the townsman passing by casually, Little Munden presents a pleasing rural scene which is only marred by two rows of uniform council houses - one in Dane End and one in Haultwick. Apart from these and a few other signs of modernity such as overhead telephone wires, macadamized roads, and a few television aerials, the parish can be little different in general outward appearance to what it was a century ago.

The local bus conductors refer to the parish as 'Dead End' - a parody of Dane End, - but the evidence suggests that it is no more 'dead' than any other parish of its size in the area. Amongst its services and amenities it counts a church, an elementary school, two small shops

(one with a post office), four public houses, a good parish hall, cricket and football fields, two public telephone booths, and an old forge which now functions mainly as a motor service station with two petrol pumps. The parish has a parson, a school master and an assistant school mistress. In addition it has a nurse and a policeman, but these two, though resident in the parish, serve wider areas covering Little Munden and several adjoining parishes.

Little Munden is situated in the North-Eastern sector of Hertfordshire, 25 miles from the centre of London and 6 miles north of the twin towns of Hertford and Ware on which it is principally dependent for shopping and service facilities. Two busy main roads skirt the parish's environs. The A1 road from London to the North of England passes 5 miles to the west, and the less important London-Cambridge road 2½ miles to the east but these have little or no direct influence on the parish. No fewer than six motor roads lead in and out of the parish, though none of these forms part of a direct route between any two towns in the area, and there is comparatively little passing traffic.

A bus service, which passes through the parish approximately every two hours from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m., links Little Munden to Hertford and Ware, as well as to the towns of Stevenage and Letchworth, some six to eight

miles to the north-west. The bus is, however, far from being the only means of transport to the local towns; 32 per cent of Little Munden's 130 families are owners of motor-cars or motor-cycles, and bicycles are commonly used for travelling back and forth by large proportions of young people and of adult men. Cars are owned by all the upper-class families and all the farmers, and by three-quarters of the 'urban middle-class' families, while one villager or working-class family out of every ten has either a car or motor-cycle.

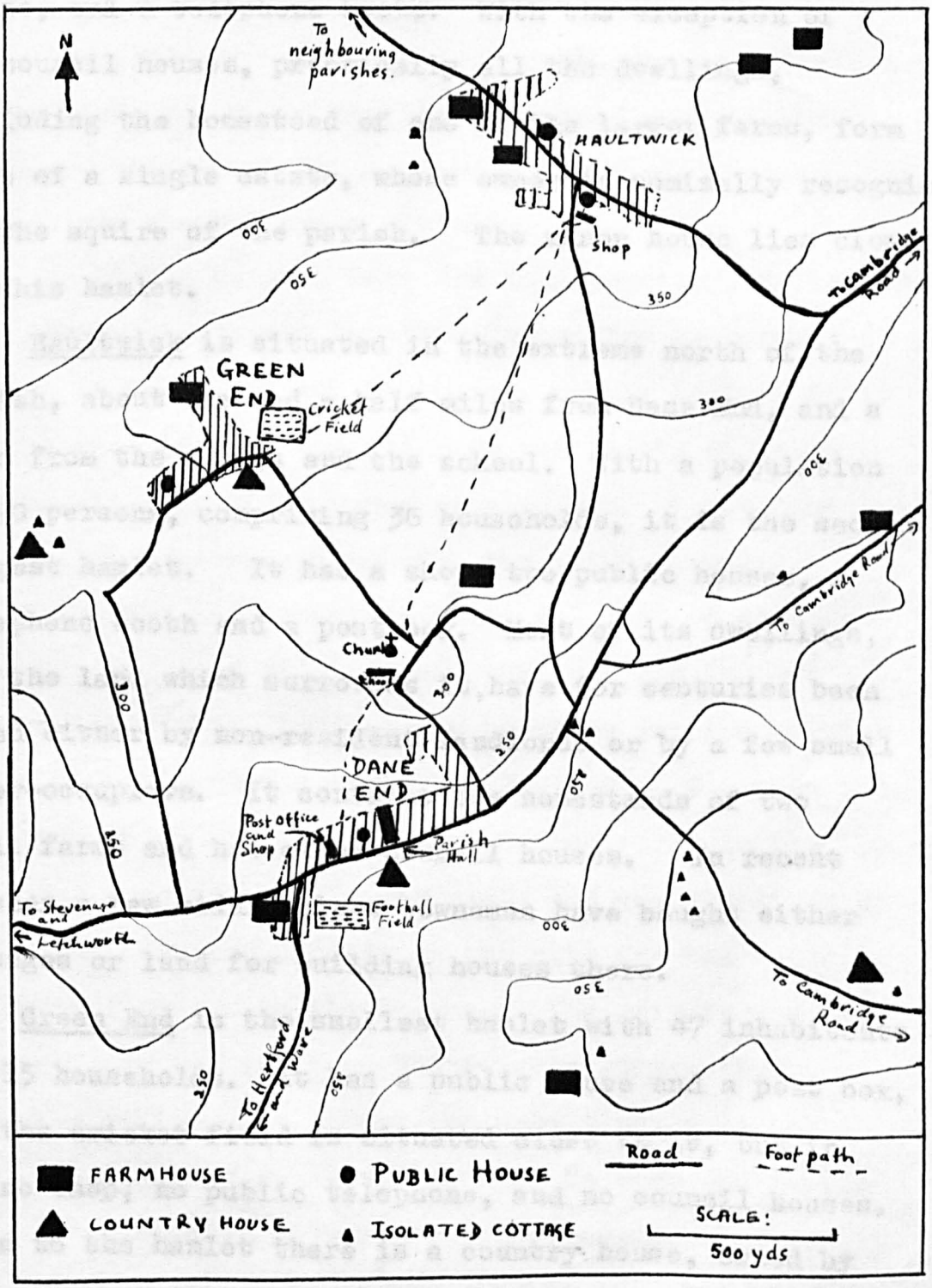
The Hamlets

The layout of the parish is shown in the map on the following page. A particular feature, which is rather unusual for the area, is that the church and the school are not situated in a village or hamlet but in 'no man's land' at a point where roads from Dane End, Haultwick, and Green End meet.

The principal characteristics of the distinct settlements in the parish are as follows:

Dane End is the gateway to Little Munden. Situated in the south of the parish and on the road to Hertford and Ware, it is the only one of the three hamlets to lie on the bus route which, for numbers of local inhabitants, is the principal link with the nearby towns. With a population of 218 persons, comprising 59 households, Dane End is also the largest hamlet. In or close to it,

LITTLE MUNDEN PARISH



are located one shop (with the parish post office), the parish hall, the football field, the forge, one public house, and a telephone booth. With the exception of 30 council houses, practically all the dwellings, including the homestead of one of the larger farms, form part of a single estate, whose owner is nominally recognised as the squire of the parish. The manor house lies close to this hamlet.

Haultwick is situated in the extreme north of the parish, about one and a half miles from Dane End, and a mile from the church and the school. With a population of 90 persons, comprising 36 households, it is the second largest hamlet. It has a shop, two public houses, a telephone booth and a post box. Most of its dwellings, and the land which surrounds it, have for centuries been owned either by non-resident landlords or by a few small owner-occupiers. It contains the homesteads of two small farms and has eight council houses. In recent decades a few middle-class townsmen have bought either cottages or land for building houses there.

Green End is the smallest hamlet with 47 inhabitants and 15 households. It has a public house and a post box, and the cricket field is situated close to it, but it has no shop, no public telephone, and no council houses. Close to the hamlet there is a country house, owned by its occupier, who is also the owner of half a dozen of

the cottages and of a few acres of land. The rest of the hamlet, including one of the parish's large farmhouses, forms part of the Dane End Estate.

The dwellings in the parish which are not situated in or close to one of the above hamlets include the rectory, the school house, five farm houses, two country houses and about a dozen cottages.

In Little Munden, Dane End is generally referred to as 'the village', and is often frequented by persons living in Green End and Haultwick, partly because it is on the road to Hertford and Ware, and partly on account of its slightly wider range of services. Throughout the nineteenth century and up till the 1920s, however, Haultwick was more populous than, and just as important a centre as, Dane End. Haultwick then had its own blacksmith's shop, and was the terminus for the carrier carts that linked the parish to Hertford. But when the building of council houses was started early in the 1920s, Dane End received the larger quota and was earmarked by the Rural District Council as the site for the building of further houses in the future. The main reason for this appears to have been Haultwick's comparative inaccessibility. About the same time, a parish committee decided to erect the hall in Dane End in the face of an opposition movement which advocated that the new building should be placed next to the church and the

school.

Concurrently with the growth of Dane End, the importance of Haultwick waned as a result of the increasing use of bicycles and motor-cars; in the days when most inhabitants circulated about the parish on foot, the people in Green End sometimes made use of Haultwick's services which were then more accessible to them them were the services in Dane End. (Cf Map p.21) To-day, however, Green End inhabitants seldom visit Haultwick; there is no direct road between the two hamlets, and the footpath which links them is practically unused.

Old inhabitants recall that in years gone by the spirit of rivalry between hamlets was keen. Inhabitants took part in many community activities as members of their respective hamlets. Children used to group themselves into hamlet teams in playing games and it was customary for persons to seat themselves in different parts of the Church according to their places of residence. Furthermore, the social divisions between hamlets were sufficiently marked to be taken into account in the formal organizations of the parish.[1]

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1 For example, the Minutes of the 1914 Easter Vestry record that amongst the principles laid down by the Rector in proposing the formation of a Parochial Church Council was one 'that the council should be representative of all localities in the parish.'

Under present-day conditions of easy and rapid movement between the hamlets, and to nearby towns, the layout of the parish into three distinct settlements has lost much of its former social significance. An inhabitant of, say, Haultwick, is, of course, still likely to be in casual contact with a resident of the same hamlet more often than with a person living in Green End or Dane End. But the sense of 'belonging' to one or other hamlet - the sense of 'we', the Haultwick people, and 'they', the Green End or Dane End people - has declined over recent decades. One rarely hears sentiments of rivalry expressed between inhabitants of different hamlets, and the old custom of seating oneself in Church according to one's place of residence is only observed by a handful of elderly folk.

Land and Dwellings

Some two-thirds of Little Hamden's 1774 acres and 42 out of its 130 dwellings fall on the Dane End Estate, whose present owner is the seventh inheritor since the property was last sold nearly 150 years ago. Of the remaining 88 habitations in the parish, 38 are houses owned by the Rural District Council and erected from the 1920s onwards, and 50 are the property either of private owners, most of whom are not local residents, or of organizations such as the Church (which owns the Rectory and the school house), various breweries (which own the four public houses) and the County Council (which owns the nurse's cottage). Table I lists dwellings of different

types in the parish according to how they are held by their inhabitants, and distinguishes between Estate and other property. The list helps to convey a global impression of the conditions under which Little Munden householders occupy their dwellings. It can be seen

TABLE I LITTLE MUNDEN DWELLINGS, 1950

	Estate Property	Other Property	Total	Per cent
Owner-occupied	The manor house	3 Country houses 2 Farm homesteads 4 Cottage-type dwellings 9 Medium-sized houses	19	14.6
'Tied' Tenure	7 Cottage-type dwellings 'tied' to employment at the manor house or the estate	6 Cottage-type dwellings 'tied' to employment at country houses other than the manor house		
	12 Cottage-type dwellings let to farmers and used for their workers	6 Cottage-type dwellings 'tied' to farm work	38	29.2
		4 dwellings 'tied' to public houses 3 Misc. (Rectory, school house and nurse's cottage)		
'Free' Tenure	4 Farm homesteads 16 Cottage-type dwellings 2 Medium-sized houses	3 Farm homesteads 10 Cottage-type dwellings 38 Council houses	73	56.2
TOTAL	42	88	130	100.0

that only 19 out of the 130 dwellings are owned by their occupiers. Thirty-eight are 'tied',[1] and 73 are held in 'free' (as opposed to 'tied') tenure. This situation is one which has changed appreciably during the past thirty years, principally through the building of 38 'free' houses by the Rural District Council. In 1920 some two-thirds of the householders in the parish were inhabiting estate property, and a similar proportion were living in 'tied' accommodation. Particular attention is drawn to this contrast over time because the change is one which has an obvious bearing on the important question of the influence of both squire and farmer on the life of the parish.

The one-third of the parish land that does not fall within the Estate is also much divided in ownership. Each of the three country houses (additional to the manor house) forms part of a property comprising some tens of acres of gardens, pleasure grounds and woodlands, while the two smallest farms in the parish are owned by their occupiers. The remainder of the land that is not owned by the squire, is, with very minor exceptions, owned by non-resident landlords, and, like the greater part of the Estate, is let to local farmers.

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1 i.e. inhabited in conjunction with the holding of a particular job or position in the parish.

Farms and farmers.

There are nine farms which fall wholly or largely in Little Munden parish. In size, they vary considerably: two are under 50 acres in extent, two are between 50 and 100 acres, one is between 100 and 200 acres, one between 200 and 300 acres, two are between 400 and 500 acres, and one is between 500 and 600 acres.

We noted earlier that the two smallest farms are owned by their occupiers. Of the seven tenant farmers, four (the occupiers of the three largest and of the fifth largest farms in the parish) hire all or most of their lands from the local squire. In addition, their own homes and practically all the cottages which they sub-let to their workers are Estate property. The three farmers who are tenants of non-resident landlords also hire the greater part of their farms as whole units. Here and there, however, a single field or farm cottage may be held by a farmer from a second landlord.

None of the larger farms is an entirely compact unit, and the general impression one gains of the physical layout and structure of the farms is of diversity and considerable variation from one to another.[1]

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1 The writer did not set out to study farms as such, but general observations led him to the conclusion that, in so far as the lay-out of farms is concerned, there is a quite striking similarity between conditions in the Little Munden area and those reported in detail of an Oxfordshire area in 1943. See Country Planning, The Agricultural Economics Research Institute, O.U.P., (1944)

With the exceptions of the smallest and the third smallest farms, which are specialised dairy and fruit-growing undertakings respectively, all may be termed general or mixed holdings. Under the agricultural conditions prevailing since 1939, cereals constitute the principal source of income for the occupiers of the mixed farms.

It is well known that agriculture experienced a war and post-war boom, and the farmers are now seen by the rest of the population as a wealthy and dominant section of the community. 'The farmers are the emperors round here', a professional middle-class man explained, 'the gentry don't come into it any more. No one knows what the farmers make, and they don't know themselves. When the war came they all made money without any effort, and since then they've not looked back.'

But 'the farmers' must not be thought of as a discrete layer in the social hierarchy of the community. Rankings by a few Little Munden inhabitants reveal that some of the parish's larger farmers are thought of as the social equals of lower-grade professional men. (None of the rankers would agree to place any local farmer on a par with an 'average' doctor or lawyer.) And the smaller farmers are regarded as occupying lower positions.

Country houses and upper-class inhabitants

Up till 1912, Little Munden had two 'big houses'. The

first of these was the manor house, owned and occupied since the early nineteenth century by descendants of a family with century-old traditions as landowning gentry in the North of England. The second house also formed part of the Estate; it had at one time (circa 1840) been occupied by the squire's brother but, by 1912, had a long history of being let to strangers for periods of a few years on end. In 1912, two changes took place. Firstly, the second house referred to above was sold to a wealthy merchant who took up residence there, though he had no previous connections with the parish. Secondly, a large farm-house was bought, also by strangers, and rebuilt to become the third 'big house' in the parish. In 1924, the ranks of the gentry received further reinforcements when the Church decided to build a small Rectory - better suited to the style of life of most twentieth century parsons than the spacious dwelling in which local incumbents had hitherto been housed - and the old one, which was sold to relatives of the squire's family, became the fourth of the 'big houses'.

The particular composition of the group of upper-class families has changed several times over recent decades. But the four houses have been continuously inhabited, except for short interruptions, and at the present time all are occupied by their owners. It is of importance to note, however, that for the greater part of the

past 40 years the manor house itself was occupied not by its owners, but either by strangers or relatives of the squire's family.

The upper-class inhabitants, or 'the people from the big houses', as they are generally referred to locally, are seen by the local population as members of a clearly differentiated social stratum. Exclusive to the four 'big house' families are, for example, the facts of having public school backgrounds, of still keeping at least one resident domestic servant, and of the head of the family leaving the parish daily, or once or twice a week, in a chauffeur-driven car for a destination in The City. Two out of the four families run homes in London as well as in Little Munden. Differences in social standing between the 'big house' families are recognised and commonly discussed in the parish; the Ws and the Xs are held to be 'well-connected gentry', whereas the Zs and Ys are said to lack the 'right connexions' and the 'right background' in order to be classed as 'real gentry'. Nevertheless, all four families lead a style of life which members of other sections of the population do not attempt to emulate, and all four are unhesitatingly named, by local people, as the parish's top-ranking families.

Middle-class inhabitants and villagers

The section of the population which is referred to in this study as the middle class comprises 24 families of

professional or managerial occupational status (excluding the upper-class inhabitants). Included in the group are the parish's Rector, schoolmaster, schoolmistress and nurse, as well as daily commuters and persons living in the countryside on retirement. In Little Munden, the local professional community servants tend to be seen as a team, but are generally referred to in terms of the particular positions which they hold (e.g. the Rector), while the daily commuters and those on retirement are sometimes spoken of by the farmers and villagers as 'these town people', with the vague suggestion that they do not fit in with the traditional pattern of parish life.

The mass of the population, consisting of 93 households of agricultural labourers, working-class commuters, estate and country-house employees, and local self-employed tradesmen and craftsmen, are usually referred to by farmers and by upper and middle-class inhabitants, in terms such as 'the village people' or 'the ordinary villagers'. In keeping with this usage, they will be referred to throughout the study as villagers.

Occupations

We have indicated that Little Munden is partly a dormitory parish. It can be seen from Table II that just over a half of the men and women employed in a full-time capacity leave the parish and its immediate environs daily.

TABLE II PLACE OF WORK OF LITTLE MUNDEN INHABITANTS, 1950

	Men		Women		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Little Munden or a parish in the immediate environs	72	52.6	21	55.3	93	53.1
Nearby towns (mainly Hertford and Ware)	56	40.9	16	42.1	72	41.1
London	9	6.5	1	2.6	10	5.7
	137	100.0	38	100.0	175	99.9

Most of the commuters work in Hertford and Ware, but small numbers are employed in each of half-a-dozen Hertfordshire towns and a few professional and business executives travel daily or several times a week to the centre of London.

The wide range of occupations followed by persons working outside the immediate locality is shown in Table III. It can be seen that 15 or 18.5 per cent are engaged in professional, managerial or executive occupations. The remaining 67 persons, who represent 81.7 per cent of the total commuter population, are predominantly manual workers, most of whom are employed in building and service industries.

The occupations of persons working either in the parish or in its immediate environs are given in Table IV. Agriculture is far the principal field of employment and accounts for 63.4 per cent of the population employed locally.

TABLE III OCCUPATIONS FOLLOWED BY LITTLE MUNDEN INHABITANTS WORKING IN A FULL-TIME CAPACITY OUTSIDE THE PARISH AND ITS IMMEDIATE ENVIRONS, 1950.

Occupation	Men	Women	Total	Per cent
Professional, managerial and executive workers:				
Accountant	1	-		
Builder's merchant	1	-		
Company directors	3	-		
Company secretary	1	-		
Civil servant (junior)	1	-		
Factory manager	1	-	15	18.3
Journalist	1	-		
Land surveyor	1	-		
Librarian	-	1		
Research scientist	-	1		
School teachers	2	-		
Solicitor	1	-		
Total	13	2		
Other workers:				
Army sergeant	1	-		
Bricklayers, carpenters, electricians, plumbers, painters	12	-		
Bus conductors	2	-		
Butcher	1	-		
Charwomen	-	2		
Compositor	1	-		
Dressmaker	-	1		
Factory hands	1	8	67	81.7
Labourers (non-agricultural)	11	-		
Lorry drivers	10	-		
Motor fitters and mechanics	3	-		
Office clerks	-	2		
Postmen	3	-		
Shop assistants	1	2		
Works foremen (Road and factory)	6	-		
Total	52	15		
TOTAL	65	17	82	100.0

TABLE IV OCCUPATIONS OF LITTLE MUNDEN INHABITANTS WORKING IN A FULL-TIME CAPACITY IN THE PARISH OR ITS IMMEDIATE ENVIRONS, 1950.

Occupation	Men	Women	Total	Per cent
Agricultural workers:				
Farmers (and relatives)	10	1		
Farm workers	33	1		
Gardeners (incl. nursery workers)	10	1	59	63.4
Smallholders	3	-		
Total	56	3		
Estate and country house workers:				
Caretaker	1	-		
Chauffeurs (private)	4	-		
Domestic servants	-	8	16	17.2
Gamekeeper	1	-		
'Odd-job' men	2	-		
Total	8	8		
Distributive, public service, and public utility workers:				
Builder and decorater	1	-		
Canteen cook (school)	-	1		
Forge owner and petrol pump attendant	1	-		
Policeman	1	-	14	15.1
Publicans' wives [1]	-	4		
Readmen one	3	-		
Shopkeepers and/assistant	-	3		
Total	6	8		
Professional workers:				
Clergyman	1	-		
Nurse	-	1	4	4.3
School teachers	1	1		
Total	2	2		
TOTAL	72	21	93	100.0

1 The four publicans in the parish only attend to their pubs in the evenings and ever the week-ends. During week days each has another occupation and the pubs are then run by their wives.

In addition to farmers and their labourers, agricultural workers include men employed in the partly commercialised gardens of the country houses, the staff of a small nursery run in conjunction with one of the gardens, and three smallholders. It may be noted that the importance of the farmers as employers of labour is barely greater than that of the country-house inhabitants. (When the gardeners are counted as country-house employees, the number of persons working for the 'big houses' and the estate is 27 as against 34 persons employed by the farmers).

A small group of distributive, public service, and public utility workers make up 15.1 per cent of the population employed locally, while the professional community servants account for 4.3 per cent.

In Chapter I we gave a gross picture of the development of Hertfordshire, and in the foregoing pages we have outlined the present-day composition of the parish of Little Munden. In the next part of the study we shall devote attention to past demographic trends in Little Munden and in parishes of its immediate environs.

PART TWO

CHAPTER THREE

POPULATION AND OCCUPATIONS IN LITTLE MUNDEN AND ITS ENVIRONS, 1801-1950

The First Half of the Nineteenth Century

In 1801 the area covered by Little Munden (pop.453) and its adjoining parishes of Benington (pop.487), Great Munden (pop.396), Sacombe (pop.255) and Watton (pop.602), had 2,193 inhabitants. From 1801 to 1851 the level of population rose continuously and at the turn of the half century had reached the level of 3,147 persons - an increase of 954 or 43 per cent over the 1801 figure. This was a result of natural population growth - common to the nation as a whole - and was accompanied over the same period by increases of 49.5 per cent in the number of inhabited houses, and of 39.2 per cent in the number of 'census families'.

It should not be thought, however, that urbanward migration from the Little Munden area had yet to start. In 1851 the Registrar General's census report commented that 'a large portion of the population in the market towns, the county towns, the manufacturing towns and the metropolis was born in the country', and that 'in England and Wales town and country are bound together, not only by the intercourse of commerce but by a thousand ties of blood and affection'.[1] This observation must already

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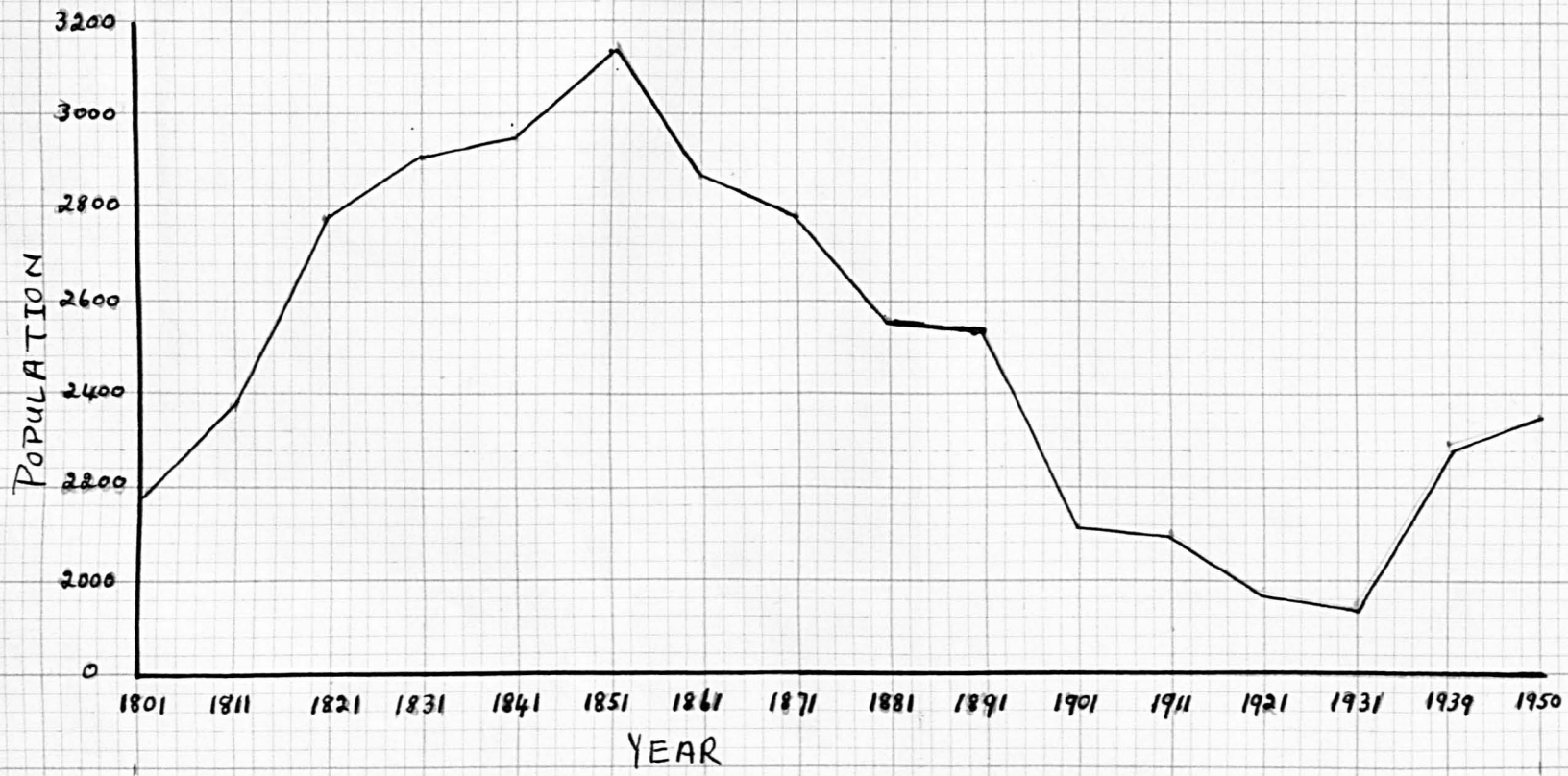
1 1851 Census of Great Britain, Population Tables. Vol.I

Population Trend In The Little Munden Area.

1801 – 1950

(Parishes of Benington, Great Munden, Little Munden, Sacombe and Walton)



have been true of the relationship between the parishes in our area and their local towns. Hertford and Ware which between them shared the functions of county, market, and transport centres for the district, were still small centres by twentieth century standards, but they were showing early signs of a greater proportional increase in population than were the surrounding villages. Thus, while the population of the Little Munden group of parishes registered an average increase during the first half of the century of 43 per cent, Hertford and Ware registered increases of 70 and 72 per cent respectively.

Probably the fact that numbers of young men and women were leaving the parishes to seek employment in the towns was not new even to this period,[1] though the rate of migration must certainly have been higher in the early 1800s than ever before. Nevertheless, there is no evidence to suggest that, at this particular time of unprecedented natural increase, the urbanward movement had any untoward influence on our area by causing either a shortage of labour or a dearth of young people. Late nineteenth century writers on the preblems of depopulation generally regarded the urbanward migration of the first half of that century as 'natural overflowing', beneficial

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1 Hirsch has pointed out, in a summary account of rural depopulation in this country, that 'the endeavour to maintain the agricultural population and to prevent migration has created headaches for our statesmen and legislators' for centuries. G.P.Hirsch, 'Migration from the Land in England and Wales', The Farm Economist, Vol. VI.No.9, 1951.

urban society and harmless to the countryside.[1]

The economy of the area was geared to an advanced system of cereal farming which was characteristic of Hertfordshire at that period. Of 765 men, over twenty years of age, living in Little Munden and its adjacent parishes in 1831, 534 or 69.8 per cent were engaged in agriculture either as farmers or farm labourers, 108 or 14.1 per cent were either tradesmen or craftsmen, 33 or 4.3 per cent were 'capitalists, bankers, professional or other educated men',[2] and 90 or 11.7 per cent were male servants, non-agricultural labourers, or 'others'. The census recorded only one female occupational group, namely, domestic servants. Of these, there were 82 in our area, and they probably comprised far the greater part of all women who were regularly employed. It can thus be seen that, apart from agriculture, there were only two avenues of possible employment for the bulk of the population, viz. the 'big houses', and the establishments of tradesmen and craftsmen catering for the community's day-to-day needs. But neither of these avenues employed more than a small minority of the working population.

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1 See, for example, P.Anderson Graham: The Rural Exodus, Methuen, (1892).

2 This was the census terminology of the day.

Agriculture was mainly in the hands of capitalist tenant farmers. A study of census data for the Little Munden group of parishes shows that, out of 53 farmers in the area, only 9 were not employing labourers in 1831. The remaining 44 employed an aggregate of 481 men over 20 years of age, so that the average number of labourers per farm employing hired workers was approximately eleven. Making an allowance for youths, the average number of employees on these farms was probably 13 to 14.

Census data for the area suggest that the occupational composition of the population was not entirely static during the period under review. As shown in Table I, from 1811 to 1831 there was a decline in the proportion of families in the area who were directly dependent on agriculture, though their absolute numbers remained constant to all intents and purposes, and the changing proportion of families 'chiefly employed in agriculture' (the term used by the census reports of the times) is accounted for mainly by an increase in families classified by the census reports as 'others'. These last must have consisted in our area of wealthy persons and their servants.

It is an acknowledged historical fact that the agricultural labourer's conditions of life in England

at this period were very poor,[1] The conditions in Hertfordshire were no exception. After his tour of the county in the earliest years of the nineteenth

TABLE I TREND OF CHANGE IN THE OCCUPATIONAL STRUCTURE OF LITTLE MUNDEN AND ITS FOUR ADJACENT PARISHES 1811 - 1831

	1811		1821		1831	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
Families 'chiefly' employed in agriculture'	414	84	438	77	389	68
Families 'chiefly employed in trade and manufacture'*	63	13	87	15	96	16
'Others'	15	3	48	8	94	16
TOTAL	492	100	573	100	589	100

* There was no manufacturing industry in the area and the families classified as 'chiefly employed in trade and manufacture' must have been those of village tradesmen and craftsmen.

Source of data: Censuses of England and Wales, 1811,1821, and 1831.

century, Arthur Young reported that 'the cottagers have nowhere any land, more than the small amount of insufficient garden', and that 'great part of the labour of farmers is performed by annual domestic servants, whose labour commences and ceases at no stated hours', while he expressed particular

1 See, for example, W.Hasbach, A History of the English Agricultural Labourer, London, (1920), Chaps.II and III.

concern at finding 'that women and children had little or no employ'.[1] The poor rates in the county were high, despite the advantage of Hertfordshire being, Young writes, 'the residence of a great number of people of fortune, whose charitable attention to the poor must have operated in keeping down the poor-tax', and despite 'the county's agriculture (which) affords a great and regular system of employment'.[2] In the Little Munden area the economic plight of the labourer must have been particularly acute, for we find that, of the poor rates which Young quotes in his report on Hertfordshire, those in the parishes of Little Munden and neighbouring Sacombe were the highest in the whole county, while those in the north-east generally were well above those in the southern half of the county.

Compared to the labourers, the village tradesmen and craftsmen of the times must have constituted a relatively prosperous section of the community. A study of the original census schedules of 1851 for Little Munden reveals that in this single parish, which then contained 125 households, there were 31 men engaged in providing

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1 Young: Op.cit. pp. 21, 217, 222.
2 Young. Op.cit. p.31

the community with various goods and services;[1] out of these 31, 19 were self-employed, including 9 who were themselves employers of one or more journeymen, apprentices, or general labourers. Further evidence of the relative prosperity of this section of the population is contained in the 1840 Tithe Map for the parish, which reveals that a number of the tradesmen and craftsmen owned or held the tenancy of small plots of land - an advantage which can have been enjoyed by very few, if any, labourers in the parish.[2]

The wealthy inhabitants of the area were not all large landowners, nor were all the estates large. In

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1 In writing this and some of the chapters to follow, information has been freely drawn from the original census schedules of the year 1851. These documents are amongst the Home Office records held by the Public Record Office. It will later be seen that use has also been made of census extracts from the censuses taken in the parish of Little Munden in the years 1891 and 1921. These extracts were obtained from the General Register Office, (The original returns of Censuses taken in 1861, and decenially thereafter, are not open to public inspection.) The original schedules of the 1841 census are held by the Public Record Office, and are open to inspection, but they were not used by the writer.

2 The 1840 Tithe Map shows that a number of householders in Little Munden occupied holdings (other than house gardens) which ranged in size from 1¼ to 8½ acres. It would probably be possible to ascertain the occupational status of these persons with fair accuracy by collating their names (recorded on tithe map records) and information drawn from parish registers. For the purpose of this study, it was not considered worthwhile

this respect also, Young's general description of the Hertfordshire situation appears to have been quite applicable to the Little Munden area: 'Property in Hertfordshire is much divided; the vicinity of the capital, the goodness of the air and roads, and the beauty of the county, have much contributed to this circumstance, by making this county a favourable place of residence, and by attracting great numbers of wealthy persons to purchase land for building villas: this has multiplied estates in a manner unknown in the more distant counties'.[1] In Little Munden itself the situation was that one resident landlord owned an estate covering about two thirds of the parish, while a second country house was occupied by a family who did not own land in the parish or the area. The position varied in the adjacent parishes: in one, a single landlord owned practically all the land; in another, no one landlord held sway in the parish as a whole. But each parish had at least one or two wealthy families. Whether they were landowners or not, the first half of the century was for them a period of engrossment in the pleasures of their country homes and, most probably, of participation in the social and political life of London.

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to conduct such detailed research, but a study of the names of plot-holders (as shown on documents accompanying the map) and of the names of occupiers of service establishments (e.g. blacksmith's shops and public houses) showed quite conclusively that the majority of small holdings were in the hands of tradesmen and craftsmen.

1 A. Young, Op.cit. p.18.

The Second Half of the Nineteenth Century

The second half of the nineteenth century was a period of far-reaching and, in some respects, fairly violent changes in the economic and demographic structure of Little Munden and its immediate environs.

In the country at large, the turn of the half-century coincided with the numerical balancing-up of the rural and urban populations, and was followed by the most rapid phase of rural depopulation in the country's history. In 1851 some nine million or 49.8 per cent of the 18 million people in England and Wales were living in rural areas. By 1901 the rural population totalled approximately seven and a half million, and these persons represented no more than 23.0 per cent of the country's thirty-two and a half million inhabitants. Virtually all agricultural areas were affected by depopulation to a greater or lesser extent, and urbanward migration came to be silently accepted by many country-born persons as an inevitable part of their lives. The causes of the rural exodus (e.g. progressive mechanisation in farming, the agricultural depression of the 1870s and 1880s, and the attraction of town life and town standards) are well known. There is no need to discuss them here, except to emphasize the fact, raised by most writers on the subject, that the movement was a result of two sets

of circumstances: the 'pull' from the urban industry and the 'push' from agriculture and village life.

In Little Munden and its neighbouring parishes the population began to decline in the 1850s. From 1851 to 1901 the number of inhabitants in the area fell by 1030 from a total of 3147 to 2117 - a fall of 33 per cent. In 1901 the largest of the five parishes had a population of 710 as against 976 in 1851, while the smallest parish had 210 inhabitants as against 313 fifty years earlier. The fall in population, as is usual in this type of movement, was accompanied by the individual emigration of considerable numbers of young unmarried people. Thus it is not surprising to find that while the number of people in the area dropped by 33 per cent from 1851 to 1901, the number of households or 'census families' only fell by 17.6 per cent (from 613 households in 1851 to 507 in 1901). The mean size of a household which had been over five throughout the first half of the century fell from 5.14 in 1851, to 4.53 in 1891, and to 4.18 in 1901. (See Table II). Of course, emigration of young adults may not have been the sole factor operating to reduce the size of the household in the area, but the difference between the mean size of urban and rural households definitely suggests that emigration contributed to it. (The comparable mean household sizes in the town of Hertford were 6.09 in 1851, 5.45 in 1891, and 4.73 in 1901).

TABLE II THE NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS, NUMBER OF PEOPLE AND NUMBER OF PERSONS PER HOUSEHOLD IN LITTLE MUNDEN AND ITS FOUR ADJACENT PARISHES 1801 - 1950

Year	No. of households	No. of people	No. of persons per household
1801	410	2193	5.35
1811	454	2368	5.22
1821	486	2790	5.74
1831	548	2892	5.28
1841	580	2939	5.07
1851	613	3147	5.14
1861	594	2873	4.84
1871	607	2779	4.58
1881	576	2554	4.43
1891	560	2538	4.53
1901	507	2117	4.18
1911	500	2098	4.20
1921	489	1975	4.04
1931	528	1947	3.69
1941	-	-	-
1950	(130)	(420)	(3.23)*

*1950 figures refer to Little Munden only.

Sources of information: 1801-1931 Census Reports of England and Wales, 1950 Local field inquiry.

Partly as a function of depopulation, the age structure of the population began to alter. The nature of changes in this respect is illustrated in Table III, which refers to the parish of Little Munden. It can be seen that from 1851 to 1891 - a period during which the number of children born per family can scarcely have decreased in the countryside - the proportion of persons under 20 years of age fell slightly from 48.1 to 45.4 per cent, the proportion aged 20-39 years dropped more appreciably from 27.2 to 21 per cent, and the proportion aged 40 years or more rose from 24.7 to 33.6 per cent. In thinking of the effects of depopulation on these small parishes, however, it is pertinent to note not only the tendency for the proportions of people in the younger age groups to fall, but also that there was a reduction in the absolute size of all, except the eldest, age groups. Sheer paucity of numbers emerged, at this time and especially in the twentieth century, as an important factor hindering the development of organised social life in communities with no more than a few hundred inhabitants.[1]

In England and Wales as a whole the second half of the nineteenth century witnessed no decline in the number of farmers, but there was a continuous fall in the number of agricultural employees.[2] The relevant

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1 Cf. Country Planning, Agricultural Economics Research Institute, Oxford. (O.U.P.), 1944. Chap.XII

2 The figures have been conveniently assembled by G.P. Hirsch in his study referred to earlier.

TABLE III THE AGE STRUCTURE OF LITTLE MUNDEN, 1851, 1891, 1921, AND 1950

Age Group	1851		1891		1921		1950	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
0 - 9	174	27.7	85	22.8	51	15.6	77	18.3
10 -19	128	20.4	84	22.6	66	20.2	54	12.9
20 -29	93	14.8	45	12.1	42	12.8	56	13.3
30 -39	78	12.4	33	8.9	45	13.8	64	15.2
40 -49	59	9.4	42	11.3	48	14.7	63	15.0
50 -59	50	8.0	31	8.3	26	8.0	45	10.7
60 years and over	46	7.3	52	14.0	49	15.0	61	14.5
TOTAL*	628	100.0	372	100.0	327	100.1	420	99.9

* The fall in the absolute number of inhabitants between 1851 and 1891 is somewhat exaggerated owing to the fact that a tract of land with some scattered cottages was enumerated as a part of Little Munden in 1851 but not in 1891, 1921, and 1950.

Sources of information: 1851, original census schedules held by the Public Record Office; 1891 and 1921, census extracts supplied by the General Register Office; 1950, local field inquiry.

census data for Little Munden and its neighbouring parishes are not readily available,[1] but there is no doubt that the national trend was reflected in our area. In the single parish of Little Munden, the mean number of labourers per farm employing hired workers in 1891 was between 7 and 8 as against the average of 11 quoted earlier for the year 1831. Not only was agriculture being increasingly mechanised, but cereal farmers were amongst the hardest hit in the country by the depression of the 1870s and 1880s, and they were making every effort to reduce labour.

The number and the average size of farms did not alter, nor have they altered appreciably to this day. (Cf Table IV). But the standard of living enjoyed by farmers was severely reduced. After his extensive tour of agricultural areas in the country in 1901 and 1902, Rider Haggard wrote that, 'with certain exceptions, they (the farmers) do no more than make a living, and in many cases they are actually losing capital'.[2] There is local evidence in Little Munden that numbers of old-established farming families left the land altogether in the 1880s. In a later chapter, we shall see that

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1 From 1861 onwards, census reports have not shown occupational data for individual parishes.

2 H. Rider Haggard: Rural England (1901) Vol.II p.543

TABLE IV NUMBER AND SIZE OF FARMS IN LITTLE MUNDEN AND ITS FOUR ADJACENT PARISHES, 1851 AND 1950

Size	1851	1950
11 - 50 acres	5	13
51 -100	3	5
101 -300	22	21
301 -500	13	14
Over 500	2	4
Unknown	1	-
TOTAL	46	57

Notes (1) What appears to be a significant increase in small farms is a reflection not of an increase in the number of general or mixed farms, but of the establishment in the area during recent decades of a few nurseries and market gardens.

(2) Information from Kelly's Directories fails to suggest any significant fluctuation in the number of farms in the area during the period between 1851 and 1950.

Sources of data: 1851 Original Census schedules
1950 Files of the Hertfordshire Agricultural Executive Committee.

once the prosperous agricultural years of 1850-1870 were over, new trends in the recruitment of farmers set in, the old established families being gradually replaced by immigrants from afar and, to a lesser extent, by local men from the lower ranks of rural society.

On the other hand, it cannot be said that the position of the labourers left behind in the area deteriorated during the course of the depression. Basing himself on the evidence given before the Royal Commission on Labour (1893), Hasbach considers that the income and general conditions of the labourer in England had shown 'a mild improvement' in the 1870s and 1880s,[1] while Rider Haggard wrote, in the earliest years of the present century, that 'undeniably they (the labourers) are more prosperous to-day than ever they have been before'.[2] Judging from this last author's account of conditions in North-East Hertfordshire, there is no reason to doubt that this was the case in our area. At the same time, however, the labourer remained miserably poor by the standards of the present-day and, even, by those which he was to achieve during the course of the first

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1 W. Hasbach, Op.cit. pp 322-328
2 H. Rider Haggard, Op.cit. p.545.

world war.[1]

The decline in numbers was not confined to agricultural labourers, and the relative fall in standards of living was not confined to farmers; tradesmen and craftsmen suffered in both ways. In the five parishes covering our area, the number of shops and service establishments fell from a total of 72 in 1882 to 54 in 1902;[2] in the single parish of Little Munden they fell over the same period from 19 to 14 (See Table V). We find, too, that the jobs of tradesmen and craftsmen were increasingly being taken over by sons of labourers,[3] while the sons of of tradesmen and craftsmen were, presumably, leaving the area.

The impoverishment of the countryside following on the agricultural depression did not fail to affect the landowners.[4] Rider Haggard specifically mentions Hertfordshire as one of the counties where, at the turn

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1 Cf. Maud Davies, Life in an English Village: An Economic and Historical Survey of the Parish of Corsley in Wiltshire, T.Fisher Unwin, (1909), and H.H.Mann, 'Life in an Agricultural Village in England', Sociological Papers, Vol.I (1904). Davies found, for example, that, as late as the first decade of the present Century, 'poverty& was only avoided by the labourer when there were no children in the household or when there were few children and women were wage earners.

2 Information drawn from Kelly's Directories.

3 The evidence is presented in Chapter IV

4 See, amongst others, H.Durant, 'The Development of Landownership, 1873-1925', Sociological Review, Vol.XXVIII, No.1 Jan.1936.

TABLE V SHOPPING AND OTHER SERVICES IN LITTLE MUNDEN, 1851, 1882, 1890, 1902, 1914, 1929 AND 1950

	1851	1882	1890	1902	1914	1929	1950
Baker	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Blacksmith	2	2	2	2	1	1	1
Builder or bricklayer	3	2	-	1	1	1	1
Butcher	1	1	-	-	-	-	-
Carrier	1	1	2	3	-	-	-
Carpenter	1	2	2	-	-	-	-
Draper	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Grocer or general shop	1	3	3	3	1	1	2
Higgler	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Post Office	-	1	1	1	1	1	1
Public house or beer house	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Shoemaker	2	1	1	-	-	-	-
Tailor	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wheelwright	1	1	1	-	-	-	-
Total Number	19	19	16	14	8	8	9

Sources of data: 1851: Original Census schedules
1882-1929: Kelly's Directories
1950: Field Inquiry.

of the century, landowners were often failing to pay their way out of rents, and where, he wrote, 'the possession of land is becoming, or has already become, a luxury for rich men, to whom it is a costly toy ---' [1] But the principal landowners in our particular area managed (and have continued to do so up till the present time) to keep the greater part of their estates intact. Furthermore, the number of upper class inhabitants (including residents who were not large landowners) appears to have remained constant.[2]

The Twentieth Century

During the early decades of the present century there was an abatement in the decline of population in the Little Munden area. (Refer back to Fig.I) As in the case of the population changes which occurred in the nineteenth century, this was a reflection of the national trend and the product of forces originating far beyond the parish boundaries.

By the 1930s, the population of the area was, for the first time in 80 years, actually rising again. Both the characteristics and the causes of the recent increase bear little similarity to those of the population growth witnessed during the first half of the nineteenth century.

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1 H. Rider Haggard. Op.cit.p.543
2 This statement is made on the basis of evidence (in the form of lists of private residents) contained in Kelly's Directories.

Whereas the increase during the first half of the nineteenth century took place as a result of rapid natural growth and in spite of a measure of emigration, the rise in the level of the population in recent decades must be seen - against the background of the national age and sex structure and reproduction rate - as the outcome of two processes: a gradual limitation of the urbanward drift, and a new inward movement attendant on the expansion of London and the development of Hertford and Ware as industrial and suburban centres. London and the local towns have been throwing out to their rural fringes 'middle-class' persons prepared to travel considerable distances to their work places, while the urban-industrial expansion of the region has resulted in 'fixing' natives of the area in their villages.

But for the new opportunities of travelling to town, most of the present-day country-born commuters would doubtless have emigrated as so many thousands did during the last century. The practice of travelling daily to work in urban areas started in Little Munden and its immediate environs about the time of the first world war. The total number of commuters prior to the 1920s was not large, but the fact that travelling to town in search of work had started must soon have affected parish life for

we find that an urgent demand arose for more housing accommodation in the area at a time when opportunities of employment on the land were still falling.[1] It is well known that the past few decades have witnessed an ever-increasing application of machinery to farming. To-day, the Little Munden farms, though similar in size and lay-out to what they were 100 years ago, are highly mechanized, and the average number of workers per farm has fallen to four, as against seven or eight at the close of the last century.

The demand for housing since the early 1920s has been met mainly by the building of council houses,[2] and only to a very limited extent by private building. The rapid growth and suburbanization experienced by many

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1 The demand for houses by local inhabitants is illustrated by the following extract from a resolution passed by the Little Munden Parish Council in 1926: 'We would again call the attention of the Rural District Council to the urgent need for cottages in this parish. This was illustrated very clearly some few weeks ago when one vacant cottage caused so many applications to be made.' Similar resolutions were passed in 1929,1930 and 1935. The wording of the 1926 resolution suggests that it was not the first to be passed, but earlier ones were apparently not recorded in the minutes.

2 Council houses erected in the area 1921 - 50;

	Little Munden	Great Munden	Benington	Watton	Sacombe	Total
1921-30	16	22	10	16	-	64
1931-40	12	6	11	-	4	33
1941-50	10	-	8	22	6	46
Total	38	28	29	38	10	143

villages close to railway lines in central and southern Hertfordshire was avoided, and the population of the area now remains predominantly of rural stock.

Not surprisingly, however, the demographic structure of the area began to lose its distinctive rural features. As the gap in social and economic conditions between our area and the nearby towns narrowed, so did their demographic characteristics tend to become similar.[1] To take an illustration, we may compare the changes in mean size of households in the Little Munden area and the town of Hertford. It will be recalled that, at the turn of the century, households in our area were still appreciably smaller than in Hertford; by 1921 the mean household size in the Little Munden group of parishes was 3.99 and in 1931 it was 3.65, while in Hertford it was 4.02 in 1921, and 3.66 in 1931.[2]

We described the present-day occupational structure of Little Munden's resident population in the previous chapter. The position in the neighbouring parishes is broadly similar in that a very substantial proportion of earners in each are daily commuters. But differences have

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1 This is, of course, true of the rural and urban populations of the country as a whole. Cf. A.W. Ashby 'The Effects of Urban Growth on the Countryside', The Sociological Review, Vol. XXXI. No. 4 Oct. 1939

2 Averages calculated from published census data.

arisen between the parishes in respect to the type of employment available locally. To explain these differences, we must refer to the influence of motor transport on the trade and craft establishments of the area. We said earlier that in the second half of the nineteenth century parishes in the area had witnessed a decline in self-sufficiency as regards commercial services. As motor transportation improved during the course of the present century this decline continued apace. But not all the trade and craft establishments of the area suffered; the majority did so, while a small number staged a successful fight in bidding for custom from beyond their respective parish boundaries. A blacksmith's shop in an adjacent parish may be cited as an example. The establishment in question had, throughout the latter part of the nineteenth century and up till the 1920s, been a small concern employing one or two hired workers at the most. Shortly after the first world war, it began to develop as a repair shop for agricultural machinery, and is to-day a large engineering firm employing over a hundred workers. It now serves customers drawn from an area extending over the greater part of North-East Hertfordshire, and many of its own workers are commuters from nearby parishes.

The establishment referred to above is exceptional in regard to the extent of its growth, and reference to it is only intended to illustrate the fact that while the

development of recent decades have been towards an integration of town and country, they have also been towards the integration of rural parishes which were largely independent of each other in earlier days.

In the parish of Little Munden the decline in self-sufficiency since the time of the first world war was not reflected in any further fall in the number of commercial establishments. (Refer back to Table V). But the relative prosperity of each has continued to decline. To-day the four publicans in the parish have other jobs, their wives attending to the pubs during the day. The two shops (one with the post office) are run by married women whose husbands also have other jobs. And both the blacksmith, who derives the greater part of his income from the sale of petrol, and the local builder and decorator have incomes comparable to the wages of a farm labourer.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE SOCIAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL ORIGINS OF THE PEOPLE

In 1950, 80.8 per cent of Little Munden's adult inhabitants were not natives of the parish, 70 per cent were persons who had settled there since leaving school, and 46.8 per cent were not even natives of Hertfordshire. These figures may not strike the reader as surprising in view of the parish's location on the outskirts of London. Yet, statistics of the kind quoted above drew expressions of surprise from several Little Mundeners to whom they were shown; there is a general belief in the parish that a higher proportion of inhabitants are natives of the place than is actually the case, and the community is not one which has experienced drastic or sudden change as a result of immigration.

The factors contributing to this seeming lack of agreement between the demographic facts and the inhabitants' ideas are unimportant in themselves. What is of interest, however, is that the apparent contradiction suggests that immigration is not new to the parish. In the first part of this chapter, we shall examine birthplace data of parish inhabitants since 1851 to see to what extent this is true. In the second part we shall present data on the closely allied subject of the population's social origins. In the final section we shall briefly explain the extent to which 'old families' are to be found in the parish, as well as indicate the social background of this hard core in the community.

Birthplaces of Little Munden adults in 1851, 1891, 1921, and 1950

Table I compares the birthplaces of Little Munden inhabitants, aged 20 years and over, at four different points in time over the past century. Reference to the table shows that it is not a new situation for the parish to contain a minority of native-born inhabitants. As far back as 1851 no more than 27.0 per cent of the adults were parishioners by birth. And although this proportion rose to 37.9 per cent in 1891, it seems most unlikely that parish natives should have been in a majority at any time over the past century. However, if we add adults born in the immediate environs of the parish to the number of Little Munden natives, we find that the proportions of inhabitants whom we might term 'local', fell from 69.9 per cent in 1851, to 65.0 per cent in 1891, to 47.8 per cent in 1921, and to 36.2 per cent in 1950. Furthermore, looking at the proportions in the table of inhabitants born beyond the boundaries of Hertfordshire, it can be seen that the biggest change - from 22.2 per cent to 42.8 per cent - was registered between 1891 and 1921. Thus the very appreciable increase in the proportion of non-indigeneous persons in the parish would seem to have taken place early in the twentieth century, and not in recent decades.

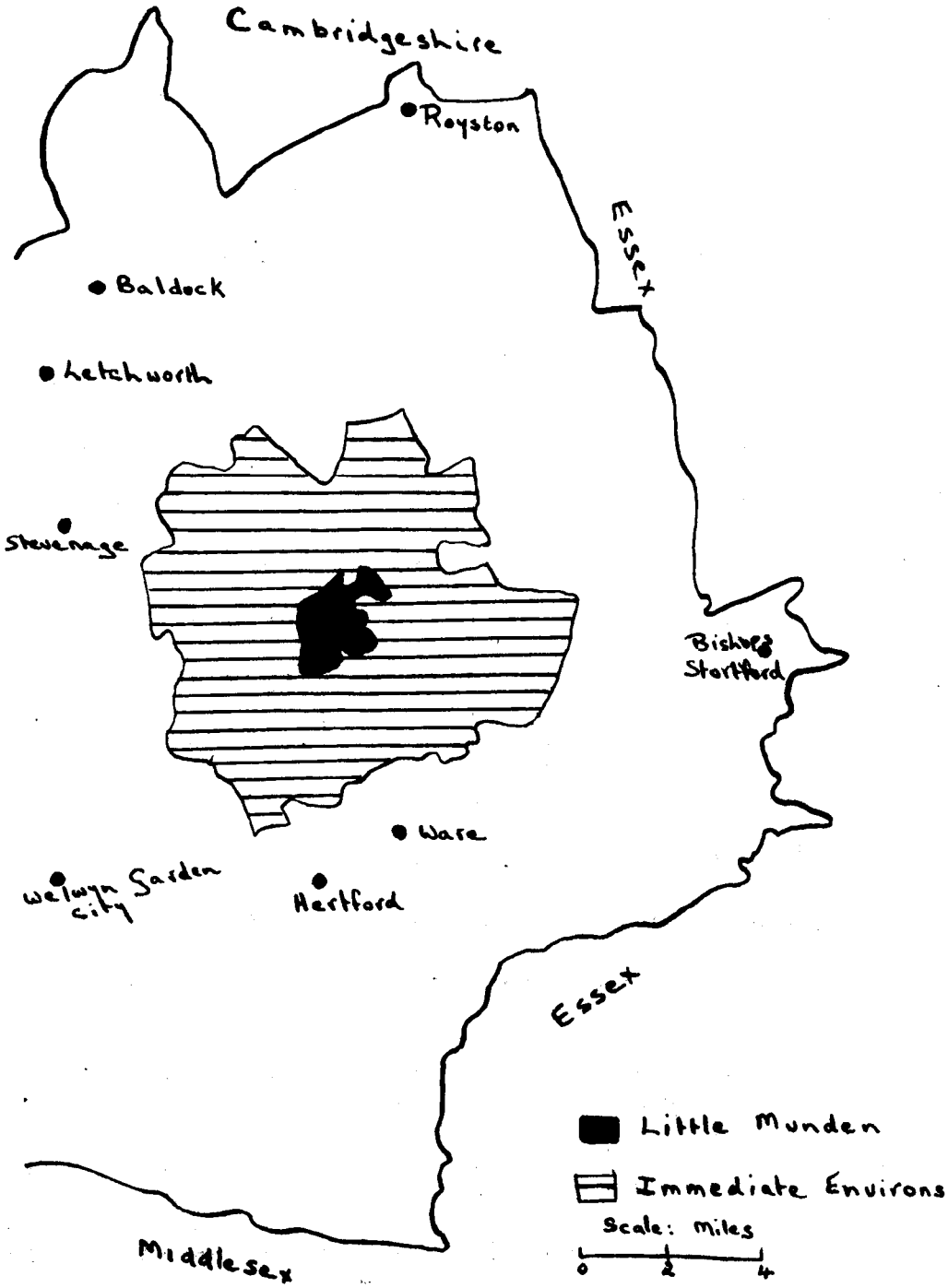
TABLE I DISTRIBUTION OF LITTLE MUNDEN INHABITANTS, AGED 20 YEARS AND OVER, BY AREA OF BIRTH: 1851, 1891, 1921, AND 1950

Area of birth	1851		1891		1921		1950	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Little Munden	88	27.0	77	37.9	44	21.9	54	19.2
Outside Little Munden but in the immediate environs of the parish*	140	42.9	55	27.1	52	25.9	48	17.0
In Hertfordshire but beyond the immediate environs of the parish	39	12.0	26	12.8	19	9.4	48	17.0
Outside Hertfordshire	59	18.1	45	22.2	86	42.8	132	46.8
TOTAL	326	100.0	203	100.0	201	100.0	282	100.0

* The immediate environs were defined as the area covered by parishes whose principal villages or hamlets lie within a radius of four miles of Little Munden's centre. The parishes included in the environs by this definition were: Ardeley, Aspenden, Aston, Bengeo Rural, Benington, Great Munden, Sacombe, Standon, Walkern, Watton and Westmill. (Cf. Map on the following page)

Sources: 1851: Original census schedules.
1891 and 1921: Census extracts, obtained from the General Register Office.
1950: Local field inquiry.

MAP ILLUSTRATING THE DEFINITION OF 'IMMEDIATE ENVIRONS' GIVEN IN A FOOTNOTE TO TABLE I.



The foregoing observations give an overall impression of the changes in the geographical origins of the population over the past century. In Chapter V it will be seen that throughout the period under review the inhabitants of the Little Munden area have tended, more and more, to recruit marriage partners from beyond their own locality. Obviously, this tendency has contributed to the increase in the proportion of inhabitants who are not natives by birth. But, if the data given in Table I are compared to those discussed in Chapter V, it can be inferred - despite the fact that the two sets of statistics do not lend themselves to fine comparisons - that the recruitment of 'foreign' marriage partners has not been the sole, or even the major, channel through which strangers by birth entered the parish over the past century.[1] Throughout the period under review, there has been continual inward and outward movement , not only of individuals, but also of families.

The range of migrations, and the conditions promoting them, naturally varied from one section of the community to

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1 For example, we find that in 1851 only 27.0 per cent of the adults were parishioners by birth (Table I, this chapter), but that during the period 1850-59, over 80 per cent of the brides and bridegrooms of the area married a partner resident in the same parish as themselves (Tables I and II, Chapter V). The position revealed by the field inquiry may also be cited: in 1950 Little Munden contained 228 adults who were not natives by birth, and only 15 of these had come to the parish on marriage.

another. Tables II-IV were therefore drawn up to show the following information for each section: (a) the proportion of adults who were born in Little Munden (Table II), (b) the proportion born either in Little Munden or its immediate environs (Table III), and (c) the proportion born in Hertfordshire, including the parish and its environs (Table IV).

With the aid of these tables we may consider various sections of the population in turn:

The upper and middle classes: In the second half of the nineteenth century, persons of upper or middle class standing were to be found in only four parish homes, namely, those of the squire, the parson, the inhabitant of the parish's second country house, and the schoolmistress. When the 1851 and 1891 censuses were taken, none of the adults in these homes was of parish or even of Hertfordshire birth. (The squire himself, who may have been a native by birth, was absent on both occasions). By 1921, the nucleus of upper and middle-class inhabitants had risen to 24 persons, but we again find that nearly all were strangers by birth to the parish, the area, and the county. This was still the case in 1950 by which time their number was about double the 1921 total. The 1950 field inquiry further revealed that most of the inhabitants concerned were

TABLE II PROPORTIONS OF LITTLE MUNDEN INHABITANTS, AGED 20 YEARS AND OVER, WHO WERE BORN IN THE PARISH, DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN DIFFERENT SECTIONS OF THE POPULATION: 1851, 1891, 1921, AND 1950

Note The percentages in this table are of persons in each group who were born in Little Munden. N represents the total number of persons in a particular section of the population. Thus it can be seen, for example, that in 1851 there were 181 persons aged 20 years of age and over who were members of agricultural labourers' families and that, of these 181 men and women, 34.8 per cent were natives of the parish by birth.

Section of the population	1851		1891		1921		1950	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Agricultural labourers and their families	181	34.8	122	43.4	86	27.9	70	17.1
Parish tradesmen and craftsmen and their families	61	23.0	24	50.0	26	42.3	21	33.3
Urban working-class commuters and their families	-	-	-	-	-	-	76	32.8
Farmers and their families	28	14.3	22	22.7	24	16.7	22	13.0
Personal servants, estate employees, 'big house' gardeners, and their respective families	45	17.8	26	26.9	41	7.3	49	12.3
All sections excl. upper and middle classes	315	27.9	194	39.7	177	23.7	238	22.2
Upper and middle classes	11	0.0	9	0.0	24	8.3	44	2.3
ALL SECTIONS	326	27.0	203	37.9	201	21.9	282	19.2

See footnote to Table IV.

TABLE III PROPORTIONS OF LITTLE MUNDEN INHABITANTS, AGED 20 YEARS AND OVER, WHO WERE BORN IN THE PARISH OR ITS IMMEDIATE ENVIRONS,* DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN DIFFERENT SECTIONS OF THE POPULATION: 1851, 1891, 1921 AND 1950

Note The percentages in this table are of persons in each group who were born in the parish or its environs. As in Table II, N represents the total number of persons in each section of the population.

Section of the population	1851		1891		1921		1950	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Agricultural labourers and their families	181	84.5	122	78.8	86	73.3	70	41.4
Parish tradesmen and craftsmen and their families	61	60.7	24	70.8	26	53.8	21	61.9
Urban working-class commuters and their families	-	-	-	-	-	-	76	50.0
Farmers and their families	28	57.1	22	31.8	24	45.8	22	39.1
Personal servants, estate employees, 'big house' gardeners, and their families	45	44.4	26	42.3	41	14.6	49	24.5
All sections excl. upper and middle classes	315	71.7	194	68.0	177	53.1	238	42.8
Upper and middle classes	11	18.2	9	0.0	24	8.3	44	2.3
ALL SECTIONS	326	69.9	203	65.0	201	47.8	282	36.2

* Immediate environs of the parish defined as for Table I See footnote to Table IV.

TABLE IV PROPORTIONS OF LITTLE MUNDEN INHABITANTS, AGED 20 YEARS AND OVER, WHO WERE BORN IN HERTFORDSHIRE, DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN VARIOUS SECTIONS OF THE POPULATION: 1851, 1891, 1921 AND 1950

Note The percentages in this table are of persons in each group who were born in Hertfordshire. As in Table II and III, N represents the total number of persons in a particular section of the population.

Section of the population	1851		1891		1921		1950	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Agricultural labourers and their families	181	96.1	122	91.8	86	83.7	70	60.0
Parish tradesmen and craftsmen and their families	61	80.3	24	75.0	26	65.4	21	81.0
Urban working-class commuters and their families *	-	-	-	-	-	-	76	67.1
Farmers and their families	28	71.4	22	50.0	24	54.2	22	60.9
Personal servants, estate employees, 'big house' gardeners, and their respective families	45	48.9	26	57.7	41	24.4	49	49.0
All sections excl. upper and middle classes	315	83.8	194	80.4	177	63.3	238	63.0
Upper and middle classes	11	27.3	9	22.2	24	12.5	44	4.5
ALL SECTIONS	326	81.9	203	77.8	201	57.2	282	53.2

* It can safely be assumed that there were no urban working-class commuters residing in the parish in 1851 and 1891. In 1921, place of work was recorded on census schedules; two Little Munden workers were employed in Hertford, and several who had no fixed place of work may have been urban commuters. In compiling the above and the two previous tables, the small group of commuters - 'definites' and 'possibles' - were allocated to other appropriate sections of the population.

persons who had come to the parish from London, though the birthplaces which they reported were widely dispersed throughout the country.

The fact that upper and middle-class inhabitants are, almost invariably, strangers to their respective parishes is general in the Little Munden area. The exceptions may be classed into three categories. First, there are the occasional upper-class persons who are still clinging to their ancestral homes. The occupiers of the manor house in Little Munden would fall into this category, though, even in the case of this family, no member was actually born and brought up in the parish. Secondly, there are isolated cases of persons who, while achieving middle-class status through the educational and occupational channels of the urban world, have retained residence in their parishes of origin. One such case can be cited in Little Munden. We shall later refer to the social problems involved for persons in this situation. Thirdly, there are the locally 'self-made men', who have achieved middle-class status through the successful development of small commercial establishments into relatively large-scale business organizations. We cited a case of this kind in the previous chapter. There are none such in Little Munden itself.

In the area as a whole, the total number of cases in

these three categories undoubtedly represents a very small proportion of all upper and middle-class inhabitants.

Farmers: Data given in Table II suggest that the number of adults in farmers' families who were natives of the parish by birth, was low throughout the past century. But both the proportion of persons born in the immediate environs and the proportion born in Hertfordshire fell appreciably between 1851 and 1891, and up to the present day they have remained lower than they were in the middle of the last century. (See Tables III and IV) Admittedly, the absolute numbers on which the percentages are based are too small for significance to be attached to the proportions as such, but we know that during the latter decades of the nineteenth century Hertfordshire was invaded by immigrant farmers, mainly from Scotland and the West of England,[1] and the census data for Little Munden clearly confirm that the parish was affected by this wave of migration. The flow of immigrants continued during the lean agricultural years of the present century, and both

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1 After his visit to Hertfordshire in 1902, Rider Haggard wrote: "Were I asked what struck me most in that county I think that I should answer, the submergence of the Hertfordshire farmer. 'But where are the home people?' I inquired after visiting a long succession of Scotch and Cornish agriculturists. 'You must look for them in the backwoods', was the reply. By 'backwoods', I may explain, was meant those districts which are a long way from the railway line or station...." Op.cit.509-510 Vol.11.

first and second generations of immigrant farmers are commonly found in the area to-day. In Little Munden itself, only four of the nine farmers in 1950 were of Hertfordshire stock. Three were immigrants from the pre-war years, and two were sons of immigrants.

Servants: In 1851, the families dependent on the country houses and the estate contained low proportions of natives from the parish, the immediate environs, and the county, as compared to either farm labourers or the group of tradesmen and craftsmen. (See Tables II-IV) A scrutiny of the 1851 census schedules revealed that the higher grade servants (e.g. the coachmen, head gardeners, and gamekeepers) were rarely recruited locally. Often they were natives of distant counties, probably having either followed their employers about the countryside or moved from one 'big house' to another in the course of their careers. The situation is similar to-day. Although the specific occupational composition of the servant group has changed over time - there are now fewer personal servants and a greater proportion of the persons employed by the country houses are gardeners - we still find that most members of the group are 'foreigners'. Nearly all have personal records of continual removal in search of better positions or better housing. Few have any real attachment to the parish, except through their work, and

those who do regard the parish as a permanent home are, in most cases, elderly persons approaching retirement.

Tradesmen and craftsmen: An inspection of the relevant birthplace data in Tables III and IV shows that the area within which adults in tradesmen's and craftsmen's homes were recruited, is very similar to-day to what it was in 1851. Then, as now, some 80 per cent of the persons in this section of the population were of Hertfordshire birth, and about 60 per cent were natives of the immediate environs. The absolute numbers involved in 1950 (and also in 1891 and 1921) are small, and we would not be justified in generalizing from them. But the impressions conveyed are, firstly, that the group has for long been less 'foreign' than either the servant or the farmer sections of the population and, secondly, that it has lost little of its indigeneous character over time.

Working-class commuters: The group of urban working-class commuters, which has developed in the parish over the past 30 to 40 years, shareswith the tradesmen and craftsmen the distinction of having the highest proportion of natives to the parish, the immediate environs, and the county. (Tables II-IV) The fact that there are many 'locals' among the commuters is easily explained; the policy followed by the Rural District Council in allocating

council houses, which comprise the greater part of the accommodation not 'tied' to agricultural work, has consistently been to give preference to inhabitants who are natives or who have resided in the parish for a long time. Unlike the middle-class commuters, workers who leave the parish daily are, for the most part, members of families that are deeply involved in the life of the parish by virtue of kinship connexions, childhood experiences and the like.

Labourers: In 1851, 96.1 per cent of the adults in labourers' homes were natives of Hertfordshire, 84.5 per cent were natives of the immediate environs, and 34.1 per cent were persons born in the parish. (See Tables II-IV) Clearly, they were almost entirely an indigeneous group, though short-range migration between parishes in the immediate environs must have been common.[1]

The figures given in the tables for 1891 show that during the course of the second half of the century the proportion of parish-born adults in labourers' homes rose slightly. Probably this change was a result of the more

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1 The system of hiring men and boys annually for farm work was still being practiced in the area, and unmarried labourers were probably very mobile. At the same time, there is ample evidence on original census schedules that the migration of married men from one perish to another was also common. We find, for example, that in 1851 some 30 per cent of the labourers' homes in Little Munden contained one or more children who were not born in the parish. The

mobile elements being drawn off to town. But it was not until recent decades that any very significant change in the geographical recruitment of agricultural labour took place. In 1921, 73.3 per cent were still natives of the parish and its environs, as against 78.8 per cent in 1891 and 84.5 per cent in 1851, whereas by 1950, the corresponding figure had fallen to 41.4 per cent. The tendency to recruit marriage partners from further afield must be taken to account for a part of this change, but there is evidence of another significant movement, namely, that, as transport facilities improved and as the demands for labour in the nearby towns increased after the first world war, natives of Little Munden and its area tended to relinquish farm work. The indigeneous labourers now often explicitly discourage their sons from going on the land; a job in town, and security of tenure in a council house, if available, are usually considered infinitely more attractive than farm work and a 'tied' cottage, and the demand for agricultural labour has been met, more and more, by immigrants to the area. Thus it is that the proportions of strangers to the county,

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obvious inference is that at least thirty per cent of all labourers had moved to the parish as married men. And this figure must be considered as a low estimate, for, with children leaving home at an early age and with a high rate of infant mortality, it is to be expected that the census schedules for numbers of immigrant families should bear no entries betraying their removal to the parish as a family unit.

the area, and the parish in farm labourers' homes are now higher than in those of either parish tradesmen and craftsmen or working-class commuters. For example, only 17.1 per cent of agricultural labourers and their wives were born in Little Munden, as against 33.3 per cent of adults in tradesmen's and craftsmen's homes, and 32.8 per cent in the homes of working-class commuters. (See Table II, and evidence of the same contrast in Tables III and IV)

Parental Origins of Brides and Bridegrooms in the Little Munden area, 1850-1949.

The data: In order to gain an insight into trends in the social recruitment of the population over the past century, an analysis was made of the occupational entries found on the certificates of marriages that were contracted between 1850 and 1949 by partners, one or both of whom claimed residence in the parishes of Little Munden, Benington, Sacombe and Watton.[1]

Marriage certificates in England bear three occupational entries - described on the official form as 'rank or profession' - referring in turn to the bridegroom,

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1 Information from these certificates was also used for an analysis of the geographic recruitment of marriage partners, which is reported in Chapter V. The reader will find, in an appendix to Chapter V, a discussion on the coverage provided by the certificates consulted.

the bridegroom's father and the bride's father.[1] In principle, such basic information can be used for several far-reaching analyses bearing on the questions of the social recruitment and social selection of a population. Unfortunately, however, marriage registers are not ideal sources of data for studies of this kind. Apart from the technical point that brides and bridegrooms cannot, in any community, be regarded as strictly representative of the persons graduating into the adult population, there is the more serious fact that the total sample may be severely biased through one or more sections of a local population being recruited wholly or partly as married adult immigrants. For example, most of the present-day middle-class inhabitants of the Little Munden area are immigrants, and nearly all of them settled in the countryside as adults. As a result, we find that this particular group is scarcely represented in the local marriage registers and the few middle-class cases encountered have, in fact, been discarded. But other sections of the population have also, at various times during the hundred years under review, contained greater or lesser proportions of persons who came to the area as married immigrants. Thus the data

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1 The official form also provides a space for the entry of the bride's 'rank or profession,' but in practice this item is seldom recorded and no attempt was made to use it.

may well contain bias, which we have no means of assessing. Obviously, this limits their value for any statistical analyses. Elaborate treatment has therefore been avoided, and our object here is confined to discovering the kind of parental background from which persons in various sections of the population have been drawn.

The upper class:[1] Occupational entries on marriage certificates cannot be expected to shed light on really pertinent questions concerning the social recruitment of upper-class inhabitants, and the fact, shown in Table V, that 96.9 per cent of all upper class bridegrooms were sons of upper class men, is certainly not startling. More surprising, perhaps, are the figures in Table VI, which show that close on 20 per cent of the brides of upper class men were not daughters of such. Inquiries in 1950 revealed that the isolated cases, within living memory, of upper class inhabitants marrying 'down', were remembered by the local population as events which had been the subject of much gossip, and usually the couple concerned had not remained in the area after marriage.

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1. Having regard to the fact that the social status of clergymen was higher in the last century than it is to-day, parsons were classified as members of the upper class for the purpose of the present analysis.

TABLE V SOCIAL ORIGINS OF UPPER CLASS BRIDEGROOMS

(in percentages)

Bridegroom's father's category	Date of Marriage 1850-1879	1880-1909	1910-1949	Whole period 1850-1949
Upper class	95.7	100.0	96.6	96.9
Farmer	-	-	3.3	1.5
Tradesman or craftsman	4.3	-	-	1.5
Servant	-	-	-	-
Labourer	-	-	-	-
Total	100.0	100.0	99.9	99.9
N	23	13	30	66

TABLE VI SOCIAL ORIGINS OF BRIDES OF UPPER CLASS MEN

(in percentages)

Bride's father's category	Date of Marriage 1850-1879	1880-1909	1910-1949	Whole period 1850-1949
Upper class	78.3	76.9	86.2	81.5
Farmer	17.4	15.4	3.4	10.8
Tradesman or craftsman	-	7.7	10.3	6.2
Servant	4.3	-	-	1.5
Labourer	-	-	-	-
Total	100.0	100.0	99.9	100.0
N	23	13	29	65

Note: In compiling Tables V and VI the data drawn from the main marriage register sample (based on the records of Benington, Little Munden, Sacombe, and Watton) were supplemented with comparable data from two additional parishes in the area (Great Munden and Hertingfordbury).

Farmers: Table VII shows that, over the past century, 84.7 per cent of bridegrooms who were farmers, were themselves sons of farmers, and that this proportion fell from 95.2 per cent over the period 1850-1879 to 81.3 per cent over the period 1910-1949.[1] It can be seen, too, that out-group recruits to farming came principally from the lower ranks of village society.

But, although the self-recruitment rate strikes one as being high, the results of local inquiries suggest that the entry into farming of sons of tradesmen and craftsmen, servants and labourers, has, over the past 70 or 80 years, made a very substantial contribution to the displacement of old-established families of Hertfordshire farmers. The details of these inquiries are as follows: information was obtained concerning 19 out of 20 farm occupiers in the two parishes of Little Munden and Great Munden in 1950. It was found, firstly, that nine are of native stock in the sense that, as far as they know, their ancestors 'have always lived in these parts,' while the other.

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1 It is of interest to note that the self-recruitment rate for 1910-1949 is similar to those reported by two earlier inter-war studies in Wales. In 1925 Ashby and Jones found that 75 per cent of a sample of 624 Welsh farmers were sons of farmers, and Rees reported similar results from an investigation carried out in 1939-40 into the origins of the occupiers of 70 farms of 20 acres and over in Northern Montgomeryshire. Cf.A.W. Ashby and J.M.Jones "The Social Origin of Farmers in Wales" The Sociological Review Vo. XVIII No.2, April 1926. p.135, and Alwyn D.Rees Life in a Welsh Countryside, University of Wales Press, 1950, p.184.

10 for whom information was obtained, are immigrants or sons of immigrants. Out of the nine who are of native stock, only two are descendants in the male line from persons who were farming before the agricultural depression of the 1870s and 1880s. Both claimed, in reply to specific inquiry, that their ancestors were 'gentlemen farmers', but social distinctions between these two and some of the 'ordinary' local men who have risen to occupy larger farms, are no longer discernible.

Table VIII shows that, over the past century as a whole, close on 50 per cent of farmers' brides were daughters of farmers and just over 20 per cent were daughters of tradesmen and craftsmen. But both these percentages are lower for the most recent period shown in the table (1910-1949). On the other hand, the proportion of farmers' brides who are daughters of servants or labourers has not changed appreciably, and it is clear that the recent decreases in the recruitment of farmers' brides from amongst daughters of farmers and of tradesmen and craftsmen is compensated for by increasing recruitment from amongst daughters of men with urban-industrial occupations.[1] Clearly, the data suggest that there has

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1 In this connexion, it must be explained, that increasing recruitment of brides or bridegrooms from amongst sons of men with urban-industrial occupations does not necessarily reflect increasing recruitment from the urban world. This remark applies to all the tables given in this section of our study. Fathers (of brides and bridegrooms) with urban-industrial occupations may well be, and no doubt many are, countrymen by birth and upbringing who

TABLE VII SOCIAL ORIGINS OF FARMERS (BRIDEGROOMS)

(in percentages)

Bridegroom's father's category	Date of Marriage 1850-1879	1880-1909	1910-1949	Whole period 1850-1949
Upper class	-	4.0	1.6	1.8
Farmer	95.2	84.0	81.3	84.7
Tradesman or craftsman	4.8	4.0	7.8	6.3
Servant	-	-	4.7	2.7
Labourer	-	4.0	3.1	2.7
Urban-Industrial	-	4.0	1.6	1.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.1	100.0
N	22	25	64	111

TABLE VIII SOCIAL ORIGINS OF FARMERS' BRIDES

(in percentages)

Bride's father's category	Date of Marriage 1850-1879	1880-1909	1910-1949	Whole period 1850-1949
Upper class	-	-	6.5	3.7
Farmer	52.4	58.3	43.5	48.6
Tradesman or craftsman	28.6	25.0	17.7	21.5
Servant	4.8	8.3	3.2	4.8
Labourer	9.5	4.2	8.1	7.5
Urban-Industrial	4.8	4.2	21.0	14.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.1
N	21	24	62	107

Note: In compiling Tables VII and VIII the data drawn from the main marriage register sample (based on the records of Benington, Little Munden, Sacombe, and Watton) were supplemented with comparable data from two additional parishes in the area (Great Munden and Hertingfordbury)

been a significant change over recent decades, and this receives some corroboration from information on the social origins of farmers' wives in Little Munden and Great Munden in 1950: out of 20, only 5 were farmers' daughters. Although farmers are largely recruited from amongst sons of farmers, farmers' families apparently constitute a less discrete section of the community than they used to.

Tradesmen and craftsmen: Table IX shows that the self-recruitment rate of tradesmen and craftsmen declined from 65.8 per cent over the period 1850-1879 to 41.2 per cent in 1910-1949. And even these figures hide the full extent of the fall over the past century; a more detailed analysis (not shown here) revealed that in the 1850s and 1860s just over 72 per cent of tradesmen and craftsmen were sons of tradesmen and craftsmen. (The corresponding figure for 1930-1949 was virtually the same as for 1910-1949, i.e. about 40 per cent.)

The decline in the proportion of tradesmen and craftsmen who followed their fathers' occupations ranks among the most important changes wrought in the rural

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worked in the nearby towns. On the basis of marriage register data it is impossible to distinguish between fathers who were townsmen and fathers who were countrymen working in town.

TABLE IX SOCIAL ORIGINS OF TRADESMEN AND CRAFTSMEN (BRIDEGROOMS)

(in percentages)

Bridegroom's father's category	Date of Marriage 1850-1879	1880-1909	1910-1949	Whole period 1850-1949
Upper class	1.3	1.1	-	0.7
Farmer	7.6	9.9	3.7	6.5
Tradesman or craftsman	65.8	52.7	41.2	51.0
Servant	12.7	11.0	16.2	13.7
Labourer	12.7	16.5	28.7	20.9
Urban-Industrial	-	8.8	10.3	7.2
Total	100.1	100.0	100.1	100.0
N	79	92	136	306

TABLE X SOCIAL ORIGINS OF TRADESMEN'S AND CRAFTSMEN'S BRIDES

(in percentages)

Bride's father's category	Date of Marriage 1850-1879	1880-1909	1910-1949	Whole period 1850-1949
Upper class	-	-	-	-
Farmer	12.3	8.9	7.4	9.1
Tradesman or craftsman	33.3	40.0	25.7	31.9
Servant	18.5	14.4	15.4	16.0
Labourer	34.6	33.3	30.1	32.2
Urban-Industrial	1.2	3.3	21.3	10.7
Total	99.9	99.9	99.9	99.9
N	81	90	136	307

community over the past century. As the prosperity of many service establishments in the area declined, so were these increasingly taken over by sons of labourers and servants, and of men with urban-industrial occupations.

Naturally, factors tending to resist the dispersal of the old stock of tradesmen and craftsmen were not entirely wanting. Family traditions and the inheritance of capital invested in small service establishments undoubtedly played a part in checking the desertion of the countryside by descendants of this class. Isolated cases of small service establishments which are held, or which have only recently been given up, by descendants of pre-1850 tradesmen and craftsmen are still found in the area. Two examples encountered in the course of field work may be cited. The first is that of a blacksmith's shop which was owned and run by members of the same family from the early eighteenth century up to the 1930s. Throughout this period numbers of sons in the family migrated to town, but one or two members of each generation remained to carry on the family tradition until, in the 1920s, all the sons of the then owner left for London to join a prosperous firm established by an uncle who had himself left the area some years earlier 'to seek his fortune'. The second example is that of a public house run by the same family from about 1780 until a few years ago, when the surviving

heir, who has achieved a considerably higher social status than his father, declined to follow the family trade at the time of his father's death.

One of the above cases was found in Little Munden itself, but to-day this parish contains no tradesman or craftsman who has followed his father's footsteps. The two shops, the four pubs and the forge are all run by sons or daughters of labourers, and the local self-employed builder also is a labourer's son.

The data given in Table X suggest that over the past hundred years close on a third of the wives of tradesmen and craftsmen have been the daughters of men of similar standing. It might have been expected that in the 1850s, 1860s and 1870s, at which time the men in this class were more heavily self-recruited, the proportion of brides who were daughters of tradesmen and craftsmen should also have been higher, but the data yield evidence of little change over time, except such as can be accounted for by increasing recruitment of wives from amongst daughters of men with urban-industrial occupations.[1]

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1 It must be stressed that the figures in Table X cannot be interpreted as evidence that there was no status distinction between tradesmen and craftsmen, on the one hand, and labourers, on the other. The present series of tables shows the actual composition of brides of men in different categories. To make any attempt to determine whether there was a status difference between say, tradesmen and craftsmen, on

Servants: Tables XI and XII set out data on the recruitment of servants and their brides. It can be seen that over the 100-year period there has been relatively little variation about the average in-group recruitment rates of 34.8 per cent for bridegrooms and of 19.3 per cent for brides, and that out-group recruits have been drawn principally from the ranks of tradesmen and craftsmen, and labourers.

Agricultural labourers: From Tables XIII and XIV it can be seen that over the past hundred years 80 per cent of labourers and 75.5 per cent of labourers' brides were children of labourers, but the figures for 1910-1949 show a marked fall as compared to earlier periods. In fact, an analysis (not shown in the table) for 1930-1949, revealed that over this period only 57 per cent of labourer bridegrooms and 54 per cent of labourers' brides were children of labourers, and that the remaining recruits to the 'class' of agricultural labourers have been drawn

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the one hand, and labourers, on the other, we would first have to assume that our sample of brides and bridegrooms contained correct proportions of persons from different sections of the population. We have already explained that our sample may be strongly biassed, and we clearly cannot assume that it is not. It may be said, however, that an analysis (not given here) made on the probably false assumption just mentioned, did suggest that differences between tradesmen and craftsmen, on the one hand, and labourers, on the other, were more marked in the second half of the nineteenth century than they are to-day. The same analysis failed to suggest any status difference between servants and the group of tradesmen and craftsmen.

TABLE XI SOCIAL ORIGINS OF SERVANTS (BRIDEGROOMS)

(in percentages)

Bridegroom's father's category	Date of Marriage 1850-1879	1880-1909	1910-1949	Whole period 1850-1949
Upper class	-	1.0	-	0.5
Farmer	2.9	2.0	1.4	1.9
Tradesman or craftsman	20.0	19.2	19.2	19.3
Servant	31.4	37.4	32.9	34.8
Labourer	45.7	34.3	28.8	34.3
Urban-Industrial	-	6.1	17.8	9.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.1	100.0
N	35	99	73	207

TABLE XII SOCIAL ORIGINS OF SERVANTS' BRIDES

(in percentages)

Bride's father's category	Date of Marriage 1850-1879	1880-1909	1910-1949	Whole period 1850-1949
Upper class	-	-	-	-
Farmer	3.0	3.0	1.3	2.4
Tradesman or craftsman	27.3	30.3	25.0	27.9
Servant	21.2	22.2	14.5	19.2
Labourer	48.5	38.4	36.8	39.4
Urban-Industrial	-	6.1	22.4	11.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	33	99	76	208

TABLE XIII SOCIAL ORIGINS OF LABOURERS (BRIDEGROOMS)

(in percentages)

Bridegroom's father's category	Date of Marriage 1850-1879	1880-1909	1910-1949	Whole period 1850-1949
Upper class	-	-	-	-
Farmer	1.9	1.3	2.7	2.0
Tradesman or craftsman	6.7	9.6	15.4	10.1
Servant	3.4	3.2	8.8	5.0
Labourer	87.3	83.4	66.5	80.0
Urban-Industrial	0.7	2.5	6.6	3.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.1
N	267	157	182	606

TABLE XIV SOCIAL ORIGINS OF LABOURERS' BRIDES

(in percentages)

Bride's father's category	Date of Marriage 1850-1879	1880-1909	1910-1949	Whole period 1850-1949
Upper class	-	-	-	-
Farmer	2.3	2.5	2.2	2.3
Tradesman or craftsman	11.2	11.1	15.5	12.5
Servant	3.9	3.1	7.8	4.8
Labourer	81.8	81.5	61.1	75.5
Urban-Industrial	0.8	1.9	13.3	4.8
Total	100.0	100.1	99.9	99.9
N	258	162	180	600

increasingly, from amongst children of tradesmen and craftsmen, servants, and urban-industrial workers. This trend points to the loss of identity of agricultural labourers as a distinctive element in the community.[1] Farm work is now only one of a number of avenues of unskilled and semi-skilled employment in the area. It is still the least favoured, but commonly, men enter it simply for the sake of temporary advantages that it presents (e.g. for the housing that goes with it) and sometimes with the express intention of transferring to another occupation after a few years. Understandably under such conditions, mobility in and out of agricultural work is high, and the tendency to regard it as the natural career of farm labourers' sons has disappeared. Excluding immigrant labourers, farm workers in Little Munden to-day are quite as likely to be sons of, say, lorry drivers or gardeners, as sons of labourers.

Urban commuters: Table XV gives the parental origins of bridegrooms in the sample who were resident in our area but who were following occupations of an urban-industrial character. A few of these bridegrooms may,

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1 The marriage register data given here naturally tend to reflect the origins of labourers who are local. Among the immigrant labourers the proportion of those who are sons of labourers is undoubtedly higher.

of course, have been working in one of our parishes but it is safe to assume that the large majority were urban commuters. It can be seen that for the period 1910-1929 only 20 per cent of such workers were sons of men who

TABLE XV ORIGINS OF BRIDEGROOMS RESIDENT IN THE COUNTRY BUT ENGAGED IN URBAN OCCUPATIONS (EXCLUDING UPPER CLASS RESIDENTS) 1910-1949.

Bridegroom's Father's category	1910-1929 No.	1910-1929 %	1930-1949 No.	1930-1949 %	1910-1949 No.	1910-1949 %
Farmer	3	8.6	5	6.3	8	6.2
Tradesmen or craftsmen	12	34.3	25	26.6	37	28.7
Servant	3	8.6	7	7.4	10	7.8
Agricultural Labourer	10	28.6	19	20.2	29	22.5
Urban-Industrial	7	20.0	38	40.4	45	34.9
TOTAL	35	100.1	94	99.9	129	100.1

had themselves followed urban-industrial occupations, and that this proportion increased to 40.4 per cent over the period 1930-1949. An analysis of the data (not shown in the table) for 1940-1949 suggested that by 1950 the corresponding proportion was a little over 50 per cent.

For reasons which we have already explained, in connection with earlier tables, we cannot assume that the sons of urban-industrial workers were sons of rural

residents working in town, and it follows that the data do not necessarily show an increase in the self-recruitment of country-born commuters. But the point of interest is that, whether or not sons of urban-industrial workers are sons of countrymen, at least 50 per cent of the bridegrooms in this section of the population are still children of countrymen.

The analysis of the origins of commuters' brides need not be given in full. It is sufficient to say that, as would be expected, the data showed a similar large proportion of urban workers' wives to be of rural origins.

In introducing the foregoing analysis on the social origins of the people, we stressed that the data available to us cannot be expected to yield precise knowledge concerning the recruitment of the population. Nevertheless, two points are abundantly clear from the tables reviewed, as well as from our study of the data on the birthplaces of Little Munden's inhabitants. Firstly, the community is one in which there is, to-day, considerably less homogeneity in origins than was the case in the last century, or even 30 years ago. Secondly, the trends towards the diversification of backgrounds of various sections of the population have on the whole been slow but steady. This second point is the more important one to

remember in viewing the present-day community situation.

'Old families'

With the comparatively high rates of inward migration that have prevailed over the past century, it is conceivable that the descendants of Little Munden inhabitants of, say, the mid-nineteenth century could have been altogether replaced by new families over the course of time. But this has not happened, and the parish to-day has a quite substantial nucleus of 'old families'. The fact is not merely of passing interest; the presence of 'old families' is, in a very real sense, an integrating factor in community life.

This point is well illustrated by the following extract from a letter, written by the local Rector in the Parish Magazine in 1935:

> 'An event of interest to our Church and parish has just taken place. Mr. John Smith having recently passed the age of 80 years has felt it necessary to resign his position as Parish Clerk and Sexton. He would have completed 40 years service at the coming Easter. ..... His resignation makes a break in a long family connection; his grandfather, William Smith, became parish clerk 111 years ago and was followed by his son James, and he by our friend John, nephew of James. Mr.Tom May

> has been appointed to fill the offices with the assistance of his wife, who is a great-grand-daughter of John Smith. So though we have lost the old name, we are able to keep up the succession....' [1]

A first impression of the size of the nucleus of 'old families' can be obtained by comparing surnames recorded on the 1851 census schedules with those encountered in the parish in 1950. According to the 1851 census schedules, there were, at that date, 125 households in the parish and between them they bore 92 different surnames. Of these names, 22 were borne by 40 of Little Munden's 130 households in 1950. Thus, 23.9 per cent of the names from 1851 were still found in the parish in 1950, and 30.7 per cent of the families of the present-day bear such names.

Not knowing to what extent the above figures could be taken as an indication of the proportion of families who are descended from 1851 parish stock, or of the proportion of families of the year 1851 that still have descendants in the parish, a study of the histories of residence of present-day families was undertaken. Using such information as inhabitants could supply, as well as local marriage, baptismal, and burial registers, and the 1851 census schedules, it was ascertained that 34 or 26.2 per cent of the parish's families (households) in 1950

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1 Fictitious names have been used in this quotation.

in fact contained one or more persons who are descendants of families inhabiting the parish one hundred years earlier. The 34 present-day families concerned, include the squire, one middle-class family, two farmers, five tradesmen and craftsmen (publicans, the self-employed builder, shopkeepers, etc.), 17 families or urban working-class commuters, six of labourers, and two of estate employees. In addition to these, there are a further 12 families (households) containing members who, though not descendants of 1851 inhabitants, are parishioners by birth and, in several cases, by a family association of two or three generations. Moreover, there are also a number of families with members descended from 'old families' of neighbouring parishes.

It can thus be seen that despite the continual migrations of the past century, the population contains a substantial proportion of families with deep roots in the parish, and is, therefore, one that would be expected to have strong sentimental associations with the locality.

CHAPTER FIVE

DECLINE IN THE SOCIAL SELF-SUFFICIENCY OF PARISHES, 1850-1949

(An analysis of the geographic recruitment of marriage partners)

In Chapter III we referred to the influence of advances in methods of transport on different aspects of the economic and demographic structure of Little Munden and its environs. We noted in particular that the use of motor transport has affected the self-sufficiency of parishes in regard to the provision of retail goods and services, and that the general improvement in transport facilities, combined with the fact of the area's location in relation to urban areas has led a large section of the population to retain rural residence while seeking employment in urban areas. To what extent has the ever-increasing ease of travel about the countryside, and to the nearby towns, effectively influenced the social dependence of the individual on his immediate parish group? How far has the parish remained a socially self-sufficient community?

In the present chapter we do not aim to answer the above questions in the terms in which they are posed; our object is confined to analysing the pattern of geographic recruitment of marriage partners over the past century.

But the questions indicate the relevance of the analysis attempted to a central theme of our study. On the basis of every-day experience we can postulate that the extent to which the parishes in our area are, and have been, discrete community or neighbourhood groups must be reflected in the extent of what we may, for convenience, call parish 'endogamy' and 'exogamy'. The tabulations presented on the following pages are therefore designed to discover (a) the proportions of inhabitants recruiting marriage partners from inside and outside their own parishes, (b) the trends of change over time in this respect, and (c) the differences existing between various sections of the population.

The data and the method.

The data used in this analysis are drawn from four parishes - Benington, Little Munden, Sacombe, and Watton - each of which has for long been a well-demarcated community, comprising two or more villages or hamlets, and leading its own communal life. Although alterations have been made to the boundaries of the four parishes from time to time over the past century, none of these changes has seriously affected their respective village and hamlet compositions, and all four parishes thus constitute convenient units of study for our present purposes.

Certificates of marriage bear, amongst other details,

the addresses of both a bride and a bridegroom at the time of their marriage, and it is a simple matter to tabulate persons who were married at different periods according to whether they married a partner from the same parish as themselves, from a nearby parish, or from any other particular area. Attention must, however, be drawn to two major methodological questions which arise in connection with the use of the marriage certificate data.

Firstly, there is the question whether the particular certificates consulted for the inquiry provide an adequate coverage of all marriages contracted by residents of the four parishes. The point is discussed in an appendix to this chapter. The conclusion drawn there is that while the coverage is not absolutely complete, it is sufficiently wide for us to attach significance to the analysis presented in this chapter.

The second methodological question that arises is whether we are justified in assuming that the places of residence recorded on a certificate are the places where a bride and a bridegroom were in fact living prior to their marriage. On a small number of the certificates, the bride was recorded as having two addresses - one in a local parish and one away. It is not difficult to see how this arose. A girl would leave her parish to work in London or elsewhere, but would return to her parental home for her wedding. Now, the difficulty is that

we cannot know the number of such cases for which only one address was recorded. Furthermore, we must face the possibility that a certain number of men who emigrated from the area over the past century may also have used their parental home addresses when making declarations to marriage officers.[1] In retrospect, there is no direct way of ascertaining the number of 'false' addresses that may have been recorded in the marriage registers. But it will be seen that a careful study of the data allows us to make certain assumptions on this score.

Changes over Time in the Overall Rates of Parish 'Endogamy' and 'Exogamy'

Table I gives, for each decade since 1850, the proportions of persons claiming residence in one or other of the four parishes, who married (a) partners from the same parish as themselves, (b) partners from the immediate environs of their respective home parishes, (c) partners from Hertfordshire beyond the immediate environs of their home parishes, and (d) partners from outside the county. Inspection of the first column in the table reveals an apparent fall over the past century of 42.3 per cent in

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1 It is not only a question of whether a bride or bridegroom returned 'home' for his or her marriage, but of whether they claimed residence at 'home' when having banns of marriage published. It is explained in the appendix to this chapter that a person marrying away, but claiming residence in one of our parishes, would fall into our sample.

TABLE I GEOGRAPHIC RECRUITMENT OF MARRIAGE PARTNERS, 1850-1949 (PARISHES OF BENINGTON, LITTLE MUNDEN, SACOMBE AND WATTON)

Percentage distributions for successive decades of marriage partners claiming residence in the parishes of Benington, Little Munden, Sacombe and Watton who married:

(a) partners resident in the same parish as themselves;

(b) partners resident in a parish in the immediate environs of the home parish;*

(c) partners resident in Hertfordshire beyond the immediate environs of the home parish;

(d) partners resident in another county.

Year of Marriage	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	Total	N
1850-59	81.5	7.3	8.2	3.0	100.0	233
1860-69	76.9	12.2	4.9	5.9	99.9	286
1870-79	68.1	11.8	8.7	11.4	100.0	229
1880-89	61.1	12.1	9.5	17.4	100.1	190
1890-99	52.2	12.8	13.8	21.2	100.0	203
1900-09	47.5	7.6	18.4	26.5	100.0	223
1910-19	47.8	11.5	12.0	28.7	100.0	209
1920-29	43.9	17.3	17.3	21.5	100.0	237
1930-39	41.4	20.7	18.8	19.2	100.1	261
1940-49	39.2	13.6	17.7	29.4	99.9	265

* The immediate environs were defined as those parishes whose principal village or hamlet lies within a radius of four miles from the home parish. Thus each parish had a slightly different 'immediate environs' area. The environs of Little Munden, Sacombe, and Watton covered 12 parishes each, and the environs of Benington covered 11 parishes.

the proportion of persons who married within their own parish communities.[1] Taking all the data shown for the period 1850-59, it would appear, firstly, that a century ago it was exceptional for inhabitants to marry 'exogamously' and, secondly, that a large majority of the few persons who did then marry outside their own parishes, married within the county. The figures for the period 1940-49 would suggest a very different picture; a little over 60 per cent of the inhabitants appear to have been marrying outside their respective parishes, and between one quarter and one third to have married partners from outside Hertfordshire. When the tabulated data for intervening decades are scrutinized, it would seem that the period of most rapid change came before the end of the last century. (Note, for example, the percentage distribution for 1890-99 bears a closer resemblance to that for 1940-49 than to the distribution for 1850-1859.) In other words, the evidence suggests, without critical examination, that the decline in the social self-sufficiency of the local parish groups was

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1 Emphasis must be laid on the fact that the table shows proportions of persons marrying 'endogamously' (Col.a) and 'exogamously' (the sum of Cols.b,c, and d), and not proportions of 'endogamous' and 'exogamous' marriages. To clarify the point, let us consider the data for a particular decade: during the course of the period 1850-59, 233 individuals (men and women) from one or other of the four parishes married; of these 233, 190 or 81.5 per cent married within their respective

most marked before the days of the bicycle, the motor-car and the bus.

Having noted these points, let us consider the evidence for, and against, accepting the figures in Table I as an indication of the rate and extent of expansion in the area within which marriage partners are drawn.

We know that it is traditional for girls but not for men to return to parental homes for their marriages. Thus, if 'false' addresses were frequently recorded on certificates over the past century, we would expect the fact to be reflected in our data by the number of brides claiming residence in one of the four parishes being significantly in excess of the number of bridegrooms doing so, and, in consequence, by an apparently lower rate of parish 'endogamy' for women than for men. Table II shows that this is exactly what we do find when the data for brides and bridegrooms claiming local residence are analysed separately. Throughout the depopulation phase (i.e. up to the 1920s) the number of brides who, according

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parishes, and 43 or 18.5 per cent married outside their respective parish groups. Thus 95 or 68.8 per cent of the marriages - one or both of whose partners were resident in one or other of the four parishes - were 'endogamous', and 43 or 31.2 per cent were 'exogamous'. It can be seen that the proportion of persons recorded as marrying 'endogamously' fell from 81.5 per cent in 1850-59 to 39.2 per cent in 1940-49 (Table I). A separate analysis, not shown here, revealed that the proportion of 'endogamous' marriages fell over the same period from 68.8 per cent to 24.9 per cent.

TABLE II NUMBERS AND PROPORTIONS OF MEN AND OF WOMEN MARRYING INSIDE THEIR OWN PARISH COMMUNITIES, 1850 - 1949

(Parishes of Benington, Little Munden, Sacombe and Watton)

(a) Total number of bridegrooms claiming residence in one of the four parishes at time of marriage.

(b) Number of bridegrooms each of whom married a bride claiming residence in the same parish as himself.

(c) Percentage of bridegrooms each of whom married a bride claiming residence in the same parish as himself. (i.e. (b)/(a) x 100)

(d) Total number of brides claiming residence in one of the four parishes at time of marriage.

(e) Number of brides each of whom married a bridegroom claiming residence in the same parish as herself.

(f) Percentage of brides each of whom married a bridegroom claiming residence in the same parish as herself. (i.e. (e)/(d) x 100)

Year of marriage	BRIDEGROOMS			BRIDES		
	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)
1850 - 59	109	95	87.1	124	95	76.6
1860 - 69	137	110	80.2	149	110	73.8
1870 - 79	101	78	77.2	128	78	60.9
1880 - 89	80	58	72.5	110	58	52.7
1890 - 99	84	53	63.0	119	53	44.5
1900 - 09	97	53	54.6	126	53	42.1
1910 - 19	86	50	58.1	123	50	40.7
1920 - 29	110	52	47.3	127	52	40.9
1930 - 39	138	54	39.1	123	54	43.9
1940 - 49	141	52	36.9	124	52	41.9

to the marriage certificates, claimed to live in the Little Munden area, was consistently higher than the corresponding number of bridegrooms. As a result, the proportion of women marrying 'endogamously' appears considerably lower than the corresponding proportion for men, the difference between the male and female rates being as high as 20 per cent in the 1880s.

Clearly, this strongly suggests that the percentages of men marrying 'endogamously' over the past century must be regarded as the better index of the resident population's emancipation from the narrow confines of the parish groups.

But we must still ask ourselves whether we can be sure that male emigrants did not also commonly claim parishes of origin as places of residence in making declarations to marriage officers. A clue to answering this question is found in the bridegrooms' occupations recorded on the marriage certificates. We know that during the period of depopulation large numbers of young unmarried men left our area for urban destinations. We also know that up to 30 or 40 years ago the area had a 'typically rural' occupational structure.[1] If there was an

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1 By a 'typically rural' occupational structure, I mean a population consisting almost exclusively of upper-class inhabitants, farmers, tradesmen and craftsmen, servants, and agricultural labourers.

appreciable tendency during the depopulation phase for men migrating to town to claim parish residence at the time of their respective marriages, we would expect to find a significantly large number of persons with urban-industrial occupations included in our sample of supposedly local bridegrooms. In actual fact, however, we find that up to and including the first decade of the present century, the number of bridegrooms having both an urban-industrial occupation and a local address, was almost negligible. (See Table III) From the period 1910-1919 onwards, we find an increasing number of

TABLE III BRIDEGROOMS CLAIMING RESIDENCE IN BENINGTON, LITTLE MUNDEN, SACOMBE OR WATTON, WHO HAD URBAN-INDUSTRIAL OCCUPATIONS, 1850-1949

	No. of bridegrooms claiming residence in one of the four parishes	No. of those in Col.(1) who had an urban-industrial occupation	Col.(2) as a percentage of Col.(1)
	(1)	(2)	(3)
1850-59	109	0	0.0
1860-69	137	2	1.5
1870-79	101	5	5.0
1880-89	80	3	3.8
1890-99	84	4	4.8
1900-09	98	5	5.1
1910-19	86	15	17.4
1920-29	110	22	20.0
1930-39	138	29	21.0
1940-49	141	71	50.3

bridegrooms with occupations that cannot be classified as rural, but it is reasonable to assume that this increase is accounted for entirely, or very largely, by the changing occupational structure of the area. We can thus infer that men migrating to town did not normally claim parish residence after they had left the area for an urban destination. And, this being so, there is no reason to suppose that an appreciable number of 'false' addresses should have been declared by men who had left one or other of our parishes for a rural destination.

The conclusion emerging from the foregoing discussion would be, then, that the changing rate of endogamy for men should be relied on as an index of emancipation from the parish in preference to the combined male and female rate. Having made this observation, let us return to check on the inferences tentatively drawn on the basis of the data given in Table I. Two points in particular must be made. First, it can be inferred from Table II (Col.3) that the fall over the past century in the extent to which inhabitants married persons living within the same parish as themselves was in fact slightly greater than is suggested by Table I. (Table I shows a fall from the 1850s to the 1940s of 42.3 per cent, whereas Col (3) of Table II shows a fall of 50.2 per cent). Secondly, on the basis of the relevant data in Table II, it appears incorrect to suggest that the period of most rapid decline came in

the nineteenth century, before the days of motor transport. In actual fact, the fall in the proportion of local men who married local brides was fairly steady throughout the past century.

What does this decline in the recruitment of parish brides signify? Does it mean that more men are actually meeting their brides outside parish boundaries? Or can it be that they still meet them in the local community but that migrations taking place between the time of meeting and the time of marriage account for the decreasing rate of parish 'endogamy'?

For guidance in answering these questions, inquiries were made into the places where Little Munden men, who had married 'foreign' girls between 1940 and 1949, first met their wives. It was found that there were six marriages of Little Munden bridegrooms to brides claiming residence beyond the immediate environs of the parish but within Hertfordshire, and eight marriages of Little Munden men to girls claiming residence outside the boundaries of Hertfordshire. For one of the six marriages in the former category, information concerning the place where partners met could not be ascertained. But in all the remaining five cases, men had met their brides in the local towns.

Out of the eight marriages of Little Munden men to

girls claiming residence outside the boundaries of Hertfordshire, one was between two partners who had actually met when both were permanent residents of the parish. The girl had subsequently migrated and the impression that the marriage was an 'exogamous' one is therefore misleading. But the remaining seven cases were all of partners who had genuinely met outside their respective areas of permanent residence, though at a time when one or the other was temporarily away from his or her home (e.g. on holiday or in the army).

The difference between the two categories of cases reported suggests that the increasing rates of 'exogamy' recorded over past years reflect two distinct trends: increasing movement of a kind which in most cases does not amount to permanent migration, and increasing participation on the part of parish inhabitants in the life of the local towns.

Both these trends have led to the individual being exposed, more and more, to the risk of marriage outside his own parish. But we clearly cannot interpret the fact that people travel outside the county more than they used to do as necessarily indicating a reduction in the social dependence of the individual on his parish group in day-to-day life.

Ideally, therefore, we should, in order to arrive at an index of the decreasing social self-sufficiency of

parish groups, calculate an 'exogamy' rate based only on the cases of men who met their brides when both partners were resident in their respective homes. This cannot be done with the data at our disposal, but it seems reasonable to assume, on the basis of the small sample investigated in Little Munden, that a rate based on the marriages of such local men as married brides with Hertfordshire addresses should be a good indication of the extent to which exposure to marriage with persons from nearby towns and villages has increased.

Further calculations were therefore made to show the ratio of local men marrying brides from their own parishes to local men marrying brides from Hertfordshire but not from their own parishes. In other words, all men with brides from beyond Hertfordshire boundaries were altogether excluded from the new calculations. The results showed that the parish 'endogamy' rate computed in this way fell by 11 per cent from 86.7 per cent in 1850-1859 to 75.7 per cent in 1900-1909, and by 21.4 per cent, since 1900-1909, to 54.3 per cent in 1940-1949. Thus, the position to-day is that a man in the Little Munden area is about as likely to go courting in a nearby village or town as he is to do so in his own parish, whereas a century ago it was exceptional for one's courting activities to be staged outside one's own parish.

Differential Rates of Parish 'Endogamy' and 'Exogamy'

Table IV gives the proportion of men in three particular sections of the population whose brides were recruited from the same parish as themselves. Unfortunately, the number of marriages contracted by farmers' sons in our sample is small (upper-class marriages of men living in the area were even fewer and have not been tabulated). The table nevertheless shows conclusively

TABLE IV DIFFERENTIAL GEOGRAPHIC RECRUITMENT OF BRIDES OF MEN, DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN THREE SECTIONS OF THE POPULATION, 1850-1949

The percentages indicate the proportions of men whose brides claimed residence in the same parish as themselves.

(a) Sons of farmers

(b) Sons of tradesmen, craftsmen and servants

(c) Sons of labourers.

Period	(a) %	(a) N	(b) %	(b) N	(c) %	(c) N
1850-1869	63.6	11	68.4	38	89.6	182
1870-1889	53.8	13	60.6	33	83.7	104
1890-1909	42.9	14	55.1	49	70.5	95
1910-1929	55.0	20	52.9	70	55.4	83
1930-1949	25.0	25	44.5	83	41.0	78

that in the middle of the last century there was a marked difference between the proportion of labourer's wives who were recruited from the same parish as their husbands, and the corresponding proportion for the other sections of the population. This difference remained during the second half of the century, but has largely disappeared over the past few decades.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER V

A Methodological Note on the Adequacy of the Coverage Provided by Marriage Certificates Consulted in the Inquiry on the Geographical Recruitment of Marriage Partners

The data on the geographical recruitment of marriage partners presented in Chapter V were gathered from the following sources:

(1) Marriage registers of the parish churches of Little Munden, Benington, Watton and Sacombe.

(2) Banns-of-marriage registers of these parish churches.

(3) Marriage registers in the custody of the Superintendent Registrars for the registration districts of Hertford and Ware.

The registers in the custody of Superintendent Registrars included records of marriages contracted in (a) the register offices of the two districts and (b) the churches and chapels, other than parish churches, falling within the two registration districts and registered in terms of the Marriage Act, 1836, as buildings in which marriages may be solemnized. The registered buildings of the two districts included Methodist, Congregational, and Baptist Chapels, and Roman Catholic Churches.

The above sources were searched for evidence of all marriages, contracted between 1850 and 1949, by partners, one or both of whom claimed to be living in the area covered by the parishes of Little Munden, Benington, Watton and Sacombe. Evidence of 1672 marriages or banns-of-marriage publications was found. In cases for which the evidence consisted of banns records only, an individual search was instituted for the record of each marriage. This was done with the assistance of clergymen from the areas where the banns records indicated that the marriages should have been contracted and, in the last resort, with the assistance of the General Register Office.

The various steps taken in the search for evidence finally resulted in complete marriage certificate details being obtained for a total of 1629 marriages.

There were 43 cases of banns publications constituting 'suspected marriages' for which marriage register evidence could not be traced. Now, banns records do provide the name of the parish of residence of prospective marriage partners, but this information was not used in Chapter V, since it is probable that in a number of cases inability to trace proof of a marriage is due to the fact that the marriage was not contracted. We have, of course, no means of knowing how often this was the case, but the

'suspected marriages' for which no proof of marriage was found only constitute 3.1 per cent of all cases in which marriages - 'real' and 'suspected' - in our sample were preceded by the publication of banns. Furthermore, these cases are distributed throughout the 100-year period under review. Thus their omission cannot constitute a significant source of bias.

The tables in Chapter V are based on the places of residence claimed by the partners to 1629 marriages. In order to assess the validity of the information as an index of community boundaries we need to ask ourselves whether, having regard to the statutory regulations governing marriage procedure, it is likely that persons resident in our area married without leaving banns publication or marriage certificate evidence in the records which were searched.

The whole sample of 1629 consists of marriages which were contracted in the following ways:

(1) Church marriage preceded by publication of banns 1370

(2) Church marriage preceded either by obtaining a common or special licence from the Church, or by obtaining a Superintendent Registrar's certificate 77

(3)	A register office or registered building marriage preceded by obtaining a Superintendent Registrar's certificate	131
(4)	A register office or registered building marriage preceded by obtaining a certificate and a licence from a Superintendent Registrar	51
		1629

The 1370 cases in which marriage was preceded by the publication of banns present no query. For partners not resident in the same parish, the statutory requirement is, and has in fact been since Hardwicke's 1753 Marriage Act, that banns must be published in both parishes. Thus, wherever the marriage may have taken place, the coverage provided by the search of banns registers is complete for this group.

The coverage is less adequate for the remaining three classes of marriages. There is no need to explain the statutory requirements in regard to the various procedures by which it is possible to marry. But the point must be made that the sources searched would be expected to contain evidence only of such of these marriages as were actually solemnized in the four parish churches or in the register offices and registered buildings (chapels and R.C. churches)

in the Registration Districts of Hertford and Ware. Now, if a person A, resident in Little Munden (in the Registration District of Ware), married B, resident in Hertford town (in the Registration District of Hertford), the marriage would certainly have been picked up either in the Ware records or in the Hertford records. But if B was resident in any district other than that of Ware or Hertford, the chances for and against picking up the marriage in the records of Hertford and Ware would be even. (If the couple married in A's district of residence, we would have picked up the marriage; if the couple married in B's district, the marriage would have escaped our notice). Similarly, the evidence of a marriage preceded by obtaining a church licence would be found in one church only. Thus, since church records were only searched within the four 'home'parishes, the marriage of a Little Munden person to, say, a Londoner, would also stand no more than an even chance of having been picked up during the course of our search.

To estimate the approximate number of marriages which escaped notice in this way, each one of the cases from classes (2), (3) and (4) above, were examined individually. Taking into account the place of residence of the second or 'outside' partner, and also the regulations covering the notification of particular classes of marriage, the

number of cases in which marriages would not have appeared amongst the records searched, had they been contracted in the place or district of residence of the second partner, was assessed. The result of this operation was as follows:

Period	No. of marriages that would have been missed	Total number of marriages in our sample	Col.(1) as a percentage of Col.(2)
	(1)	(2)	
1850-59	8	135	5.9
1860-69	10	165	6.1
1870-79	3	145	2.1
1880-89	3	128	2.3
1890-99	5	147	3.4
1900-09	3	168	1.8
1910-19	9	156	5.8
1920-29	7	180	3.9
1930-39	12	196	6.1
1940-49	31	209	14.8

No attempt has been made to correct the tables in the text in the light of these calculations, though they do show that in recent years a significant number of outside marriages have escaped the net provided by our sources of evidence. But, although it is evident that the findings in the text might be slightly affected by a correction,

the general trends observed over the hundred years would remain essentially the same.

PART THREE

CHAPTER SIX

CHANGES IN THE FAMILY SITUATION OF THE VILLAGER

In approaching the study of Little Munden as a community group, it is illuminating to review the major changes over the past century in the family and household situations of the villager. The patterns of family life among the remaining sections of the population - the upper class, the professional or urban middle class, and the farmers - are, of course, of equal intrinsic interest. But it is the transition of the working-class family that is of particular relevance to the present study. In this chapter, an attempt is therefore made to depict the principal features of the agricultural labourer's home situation in the middle of the nineteenth century, and to view the characteristics of the villager's family at the present time against this background.[1]

We have previously noted that, over the period 1851-1950, there was a steady fall in the mean size of Little Munden households - from 5.14 persons per household in 1851 to

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1 General information on the labourer's family situation in the second half of the nineteenth century was drawn mainly from two sources: E.Grey, Cottage Life in a Hertfordshire Village (Op.cit.) and Flora Thompson, Lark Rise, (Guild Books) (1946). The former is a self-styled account of 'How the Agricultural Labourer Lived and Fared in the late '60s and '70s. Thompson's account is a description of the daily life of an Oxfordshire hamlet in the 1880s.

3.23 persons in 1950.[1] In 1851, all but 15.2 per cent of Little Munden's households had more than two members, and three-, four-, and five-person households constituted the modal size-groups. Only 24 per cent of all homes contained no children (defined as unmarried persons under 20 years of age), and there were 3.1 children per household that was not childless.[2] A century of change closed in 1950 with the two-person household as the mode, with 40 per cent of all homes having no more than two members each, with no children in 52.6 per cent of the households, and with an average of two children per household that was not childless. (See Tables I and II)

The crude indices given above reflect a number of interacting trends, which we cannot attempt to discuss in detail here. A few main points must, however, be referred to. Both the decline in the size of the household and the fall in the proportion of homes containing children were

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1 Cf. Chapter III Table II

2 Unless otherwise stated, the demographic statistics used in this chapter are based on all sections of Little Munden's population. Villagers' homes have, however, always constituted a clear majority of all parish households, and the statistics may be taken as reflecting trends in the composition of villagers' households.

All the demographic data quoted in this chapter were compiled from one of the following sources: 1851 Census schedules, census extracts for 1891 and 1921 supplied by the General Register Office, and the 1950 local field inquiry in Little Munden.

TABLE I DISTRIBUTION OF LITTLE MUNDEN HOUSEHOLDS, BY SIZE, 1851 AND 1950

No. of h.hold members	1851			1950		
	No.	Per cent	Cumulative percentage	No.	Per cent	Cumulative percentage
One	3	2.4	2.4	10	7.7	7.7
Two	16	12.8	15.2	42	32.2	40.0
Three	20	16.0	31.2	32	24.6	64.6
Four	20	16.0	47.2	26	20.0	84.6
Five	20	16.0	63.2	8	6.2	90.8
Six	17	13.6	76.8	6	4.6	95.4
Seven	13	10.4	87.2	1	0.8	96.2
Eight	5	4.0	91.2	3	2.3	98.5
Nine	7	5.6	96.8	1	0.8	99.3
Ten and over	4	3.2	100.0	1	0.8	100.1
TOTAL	125	100.0	-	130	100.1	-

already marked in 1891. (See Table II) By that date, young people were tending, more and more, to migrate to town rather than to move into other parish homes as kinsmen, lodgers, or servants. Moreover, the proportion of elderly persons in the population was increasing. People were living longer and, with sons and daughters migrating to town and cottages falling vacant about them, a larger number of old folk were struggling to run their

own homes. These factors can be taken to account for the greater part of the decrease in the size of the household and for the reduction in the proportion of homes with children.

TABLE II INDICES OF HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION, LITTLE MUNDEN, 1851, 1891, 1921, AND 1950.

	1851	1891	1921	1950
Mean size of household	5.1	4.5	4.0	3.2
Percentage of childless households	24.0	42.0	44.7	52.6
Mean No. of children per household that is not childless	3.1	3.1	2.5	2.0

Note: Children were defined as unmarried persons aged under 20 years.

The change which reflects a more important fact - more important, that is, when considering family structure - was only to come in the twentieth century. As can be seen from Table II, the average number of children per household with children had fallen to 2.5 in 1921, despite the fact that children were by then leaving home at an appreciably older age than 40 or 50 years earlier; the small family system had set in. To-day, the very occasional

woman in the parish who happens to have three or four unspaced children is either regarded with sympathy or becomes the object of puzzled gossip.

But before discussing the small family and household of the present, let us go back to the mid-nineteenth century, and try to view the home situation as a whole.

In 1851 and the period which it represents for us here, child-bearing and child-rearing were major functions of a conjugal family throughout the greater part of its life-cycle. Two young people launched on to the task of child-rearing soon after marriage, and they often failed to outlive it. Not only were births uncontrolled but the expectation of life was short. Furthermore, the few married couples who survived the tasks of rearing their own children were frequently called upon to receive illegitimate and orphaned grand-children into their homes. This is well illustrated by data drawn from the original census schedules of 1851: out of 16 labourer's wives aged over 50 years in Little Munden, eight had one or more grand-children in their homes, and only four of the 16 had no young children in their charge (i.e. neither their own nor anyone else's).

At the same time, young children were not the only persons to crowd the labourer's small cottage; widowed parents and other aged or dependent kinsmen were also

incorporated into cottage households to a greater extent than they were to be in twentieth-century days. To receive into one's home, however restricted the accommodation, an aged parent or parent-in-law, who would otherwise be destined for the workhouse, was a normal obligation. There was probably seldom any possibility of evading it by children living locally.

Many children left their homes at an early age. Indeed, had they not done so, it would often have been a physical impossibility for the cottages of the parish - with no more than one or two small bedrooms - to accommodate dependent kinsmen or even the members of a conjugal family at the peak of its growth.

TABLE III UNMARRIED PERSONS AGED 10-24 YEARS LIVING IN HOUSEHOLDS OTHER THAN THOSE OF THEIR PARENTS? LITTLE MUNDEN, 1851

Age Group (in years)	Total number of unmarried persons	Number of unmarried persons living in households as lodgers, servants, or kinsmen	Col.(2) as a percentage of Col. (1)
	(1)	(2)	(3)
10-14	59	9	13.2
15-19	33	21	38.9
20-24	13	22	62.9
TOTAL	105	52	33.1

When young people left their parental homes, they either migrated to town, or went to live as lodgers and kinsmen, with

the few elderly persons who had spare accommodation in their cottages, or as resident servants on farms and on the premises of the 'big houses'. The practice of children leaving parental homes before marriage and setting up their own households is reflected in the figures given in Table III. It can be seen that close on 40 per cent of young unmarried persons aged from 15 to 19 years in the parish in 1851 were living in households of which they were not conjugal family members. And if we had data on the number who were living in town, we would doubtless find that the proportion of those living away from their parents was appreciably higher than Table III would suggest at first sight.

To appreciate the significance of the foregoing facts, it is necessary to think of the economic conditions under which the cottage household eked out its existence. In return for long hours of toil - a ten-hour day, a six-day week, and no holidays except Christmas Day - a man, if he was an ordinary farm labourer, brought home a wage which varied in Hertfordshire between nine and thirteen shillings a week, depending on the season. As a head cowman or head ploughman, he earned up to 15 shillings a week.[1] According to available accounts, wages of this order were barely

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1 The wages and hours of work refer to the position in the 1860s and 1870s. E. Grey, Op.cit. 57-63.

sufficient to cover regular weekly expenditures (e.g.fuel, rent, groceries, and a man's pub allowance). Clothing and household articles that did not figure as items in the weekly budget of the home were normally purchased out of supplementary earnings. But these were limited, for men, to extra money paid at harvest-time and hay-time, when, in the words of Grey, 'the wise labourer would buy himself new boots, corduroys or some other articles of clothing, or maybe clear off some outstanding family debt'.[1] Opportunities for wives to augment their husbands' wages were virtually restricted to occasional work in the fields, such as mangold-pulling and stone-picking. For these tasks, women were paid by the local farmers at piece rates. No doubt the money a wife earned was much valued, but it cannot have augmented the income of the household to any really appreciable extent.[2]

Boys started work from the age of about ten years, which was, in most cases, before they had left home. A boy's first hiring agreement with a local farmer was normally contracted on his behalf by his father, and was often with his father's

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1 E. Grey, Op.cit. p.63

2 It may be noted that the position was quite different in West Hertfordshire. Here straw plaiting was a regular and renumerative home industry, practised by both women and children. But there is no evidence that straw plaiting, or any comparable industry, ever spread to the Little Munden area.

own employer. For the next few years, the son would hand over his weekly pittance to his mother[1] (if he saw his wages at all, for often they were paid straight to his father). Some boys slept on the farm premises, only going home for the day every second or third Sunday. Sleeping away from home did not necessarily imply that a son's economic link with his parents had been severed; wages might still be claimed from a boy who was not living at home, and, in that event, food was supplied to him by his parents, daily if convenient, or else in sufficient bulk to last two or three days. According to Grey's account, however, such arrangements seldom lasted long; after a few years boys might break away from the household unit, either to lodge with the farm household, or to continue living on farm premises while buying their own provisions which were cooked in the farmhouse kitchen. Thompson recalls that in Oxfordshire parents sometimes opposed a boy's move to break away from home, 'for their money, though barely sufficient to keep them in food, made a little more in the family purse'.[2]

Girls started work two or three years later than boys

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1 Grey records that 'older boys and lads' received 3s.6d. to 5s. per week in the 1860s to 1870s. Op.cit p.57.
2 Flora Thompson, Op.cit. p.139.

and usually stayed at school a little longer. Domestic service was the most usual avenue of employment for girls, and 'going into service' necessitated leaving the home and, more often than not, the area. Opportunities for working in the parish were restricted; farmers normally recruited their domestic servants locally, but in the upper class homes parish girls were as a rule confined to junior positions, such as those of kitchen and housemaids.. Whatever the case, in Little Munden the supply of girls seeking work far exceeded the local demand. Thompson records that, in similar circumstances in Oxfordshire, mothers put more pressure on girls than on boys to leave home;[1] not only was a girl at home likely to be an economic burden, but a girl who left was, in the long run, less likely to cease helping the home than a boy who did so. Daughters habitually received holidays when in domestic service, and they returned home for these, as well as for their weddings. Moreover, girls were always liable to be thrown back on the parental home in the event of unmarried motherhood.

But neither for sons nor for daughters were there great material advantages to be gained from the parental home. On the contrary, there were mainly burdens to be carried as parents grew older.

Not surprisingly, under the economic conditions described,

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1 Flora Thompson, Op.cit. p.139.

emancipation from the rather harsh parental authority imposed on the large number of small children in the home was automatically achieved by young people at an early age. And the selection of a marriage partner was, in comparison with peasant communities, of little concern to a young person's family. Courting was referred to as 'talking to', and, at a slightly more advanced stage of the proceedings, as 'walking out with'.[1] These terms in themselves suggest that the arrangement of a marriage was carried out with a maximum of personal initiative, and a minimum of family pressure. Such savings as the partners to a marriage might have accumulated were pooled to purchase the bare household necessities for a rented cottage, and a home was launched with no economic security and with no hope of ever achieving any.

The husband's and father's position of formal headship in the home carried with it virtual freedom from the everyday cares and responsibilities of ordering household affairs. In fact, a man spent little time in his home; the greater part of his daily life is represented in Thompson's account as having been passed between the field and the pub in an exclusively male group of fellow workers and neighbours.

The woman, on the other hand, is represented as having been absorbed, to the virtual exclusion of all else, by the tasks of caring for her many children and keeping her home

1 E. Grey, Op.cit. p.146.

running. It was the wife and mother who handled the households finances, it was she who effectively ordered household affairs, and who occupied the central position in the home. She sought such assistance as she needed to tide her over times of confinement, illness, or other crisis, from those of her daughters who were still at home, and from the village women - neighbours and often, probably, kinswomen. The cottage housewives must have lived in the closest contact with each other for, even in normal times, there were constantly needs and opportunities for co-operation in various tasks (e.g. in gleaning the wheat fields, in drawing water from the well, and in making use of a communal oven for baking). Within this housewives' world, a woman was judged on her competence (often perhaps on her lack of misfortune) in the conduct of household affairs and the tasks of child-rearing, and on the success or failure of her daughters in avoiding pre-marital confinement.

Such was the general nature of the labourer's home situation in the early and middle years of Victoria's reign. The value of this background picture, in viewing the family of the present-day villager - labourer, small tradesman, and skilled or semi-skilled worker - can be appreciated when we realise that the major changes in the social and economic setting of the working-class

family date back no further than 30 to 40 years. It is true that the latter years of the nineteenth century did bring new influences to bear on the traditional functions of the home, and on the relations between husband and wife and between parents and their children: the economic plight of the labourer improved slightly, the school-leaving age was raised, and new ideas and values from the urban world gradually encroached on the countryside as communications improved and literacy became general. But the twin pressures of mass poverty and a large number of children only began to relax effectively as the twentieth century advanced and, more particularly, from the time of the first world war.

To-day, the working-class home in Little Munden is economically stable, and has developed distinct phases in its life-cycle. The child-bearing phase is almost invariably followed first, by a period in which young people are present in the home but no small children requiring attention are following them, and, subsequently, by a wholly adult phase during which a husband and wife are often the only members of the household.

The child-bearing phase may still impose economic strain, but it does not plunge the family into poverty. The parent-child relationship is no longer dominated by the considerations of small children being an unavoidable economic liability, and of elder children being an

economic asset if they can be enduced to keep in touch with the home. Nor is there any need for children to leave the home before marriage. There are no cases in the parish of families whose unmarried children are living away (except boys on National Service). On leaving school most children find work in the nearby towns, but automatically continue to live with their parents. As unmarried wage-earners, they normally contribute towards the home, but mothers do not expect to make a 'profit' out of them. Parents usually encourage their children to save, and the latter are almost invariably free to spend their earnings as they wish. 'I never ask my boy (17 years old) what he does with his money', one man said, 'he gives his Mum something, but what he does with the rest, is his business; to tell you honest, I don't know what he gets'.

This particular case of a man claiming not to know the amount of his son's wage may be exceptional, but the fact of parents not being closely concerned with their children's earnings is general, and is typical of the freedom which young people enjoy in the home.

The fact that young people have, over the past few decades, largely transferred from agricultural work (for boys) and domestic service (for girls) to urban occupations is of special significance in considering the relationship

between parents and children. The transfer, in the course of one generation to the next, from the rural occupations to skilled and semi-skilled work in town, has invariably been seen by parents as advancement: and the superior occupational and economic status often achieved by children has ensured them the freddom of the home, where they are often found to set the standard of leisure-time and recreational activities.

Occasionally one still encounters parents who profess to believe that 'nowadays things are much too easy for the children', but, although this attitude is common among the elderly persons whose children are no longer in the home, most parents of the present day are satisfied and proud that their sons and daughters are having opportunities which were denied to them when they were young. Parental pre-occupation concerning the jobs to be followed by children is marked. Often the aspirations which they express are ill-defined, except that they almost invariably imply a departure from the pattern of their own careers. Asked what occupation he would like his son to follow, one man answered, 'anything he likes, but not on the land'. Replies of this kind are common from labourers, but skilled or semi-skilled workers tend to formulate aspirations on behalf of their children in terms of grades of employment, if not of particular jobs. As

would be expected, the most desired occupations are skilled trades.

The husband-wife and home-community relationships can be described in terms of two patterns, each representing an opposite extreme. Among the older, native inhabitants we find that the husband takes virtually no part in household duties. Associated with this characteristic are the facts of husband and wife very rarely taking part in parish activities jointly, and of their usually having numbers of kinsmen in the community. In such cases, the individual relationships of the husband and the wife to the parish group have, in the course of the years, been determined separately and are dominated by associations and acquaintances of old standing.

Among the younger married couples we find that the generally accepted norm is for the father and husband, when he is at home, to share with the wife and mother many of the duties of child-rearing, and to participate in household duties. The relationships of the two partners to the parish are of a quite different order to those characteristic of the old native inhabitants. There is a strong tendency for recreations outside the home to be planned jointly. Participation in activities in the parish hall and even in the pub, is,quite commonly,

on a corporate basis. Where there are young children in the home, the husband is expected to stay in occasionally to enable his wife to attend women's activities or to visit her own relatives if they are in the parish or the environs.

The two patterns of husband-wife relationship referred to above are, of course, not found in pure form. Moreover, we must qualify our statement that the one pattern is characteristic of old couples and the other of younger married people. The transition towards the 'companionship marriage' is associated with the development of a whole range of urban and 'middle-class' values; the characteristics of husband-wife co-operation in the home and of joint participation in social gatherings are, if age is held constant, likely to be more pronounced in homes that have an urban-bred member, as well as in those in which the pre-occupation concerning children's advancement is greatest.

CHAPTER SEVEN

KINSMEN

Family bonds are often said to play a preponderant part in governing social relations in the countryside. In Little Munden, so-called 'foreigners' in the parish attribute great importance to the influence of kinship on internal community relations. Working-class newcomers and immigrant farmers allege that it is difficult to be 'accepted' locally, and they usually explain this with statements such as: 'all these people are related; if you're not one of them, they won't look at you', or, as another man put it, 'there are only three names that count in this place, and its no use trying to join in unless you have one of them'. Upper and middle-class inhabitants also refer to the kinship composition of the community with a good deal of emotion. 'They (the local people) are all intermarried'; one upper class inhabitant said, 'they have been intermarrying for years and getting stupider and stupider all the time. You have to be careful talking to them. After living here half my life, I keep on finding out that so-and-so is related to so-and-so'.

Needless to say, testimonies of this kind, which are given either with scorn or resentment, must not be taken literally. Their interest is that they reveal attitudes which are important facts. The obvious scorn of the man who suggested - possibly without really believing it -

that the local population had been getting 'stupider and stupider' over the years, is characteristic of upper and middle-class inhabitants, while the resentment felt by persons alleging that activities in the parish are dominated by a few family groups is common among 'foreigners' in both the villager and farming sections of the population.

The extent to which family bonds do affect internal community relations in the parish will not be discussed in this chapter. Our object here is to set out the facts concerning the degree of kin nucleation, as well as to indicate the type of social relations which obtain between kinsmen. The influence of family feeling on the parish as a communal group will be explained in the course of subsequent discussions.

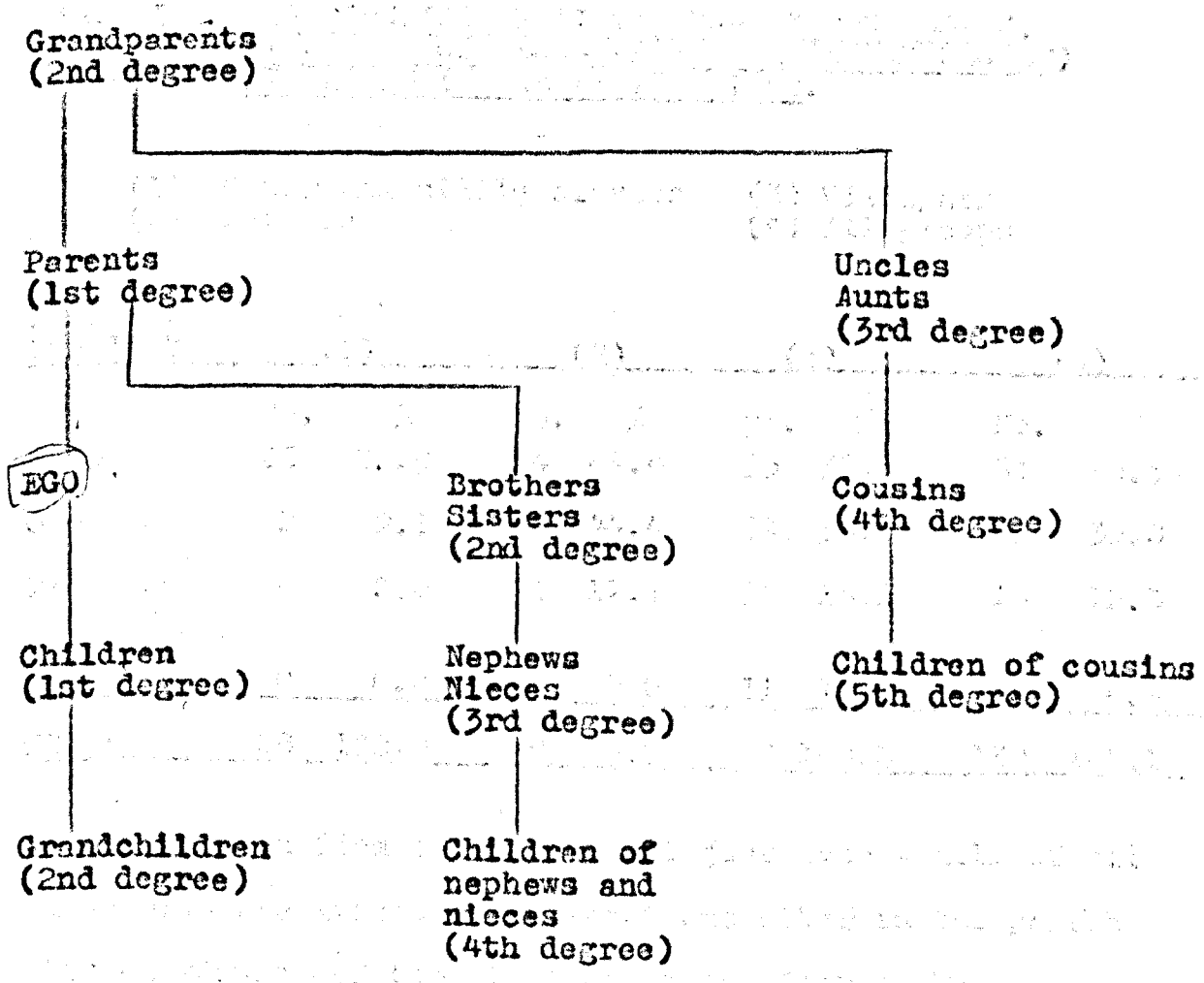
Kin nucleation

Table I gives the percentage distribution of households[1] by their number of close kin links in the parish. The table distinguishes between three groups viz. the upper and middle classes combined, farmers, and villagers. Close kin were defined as relatives of first or second degree (i.e. ego's parents, children, siblings, grandparents, and grandchildren Cf. Fig.I). When any adult member of a household, A, had a parent, a grandparent, or an adult brother, sister, child or grandchild, in one

1 The term 'household', is here used interchangeably with that of 'conjugal family'.

Fig. I

DEGREES OF KIN



other parish household, A, was scored as having one close kin link in the parish; when A had relatives of the above order in two parish households, it was scored as having two close kin links; etc.

TABLE I DISTRIBUTION OF LITTLE MUNDEN HOUSEHOLDS, BY NUMBER OF CLOSE (FIRST OR SECOND DEGREE) KIN LINKS IN THE PARISH, 1950.

(1) Upper and middle classes
(2) Farmers
(3) Villagers
(4) All groups

Number of kin links	(1)		(2)		(3)		(4)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
None	26	92.9	4	44.4	33	35.5	63	48.5
One	2	7.1	4	44.4	34	36.6	40	30.8
Two	0	0.0	1	11.1	15	16.1	16	12.3
Three or more	0	0.0	0	0.0	11	11.8	11	8.5
TOTAL	28	100.0	9	99.9	93	100.0	130	100.1

It can be seen from the table that just over a half of all households are linked to at least one other in the parish through kinsmen of the first or second degree, but there is clearly a marked difference in this respect between upper- and middle-class inhabitants on the one hand, and farmers and villagers, on the other. It is exceptional for upper or middle-class households to have kinsmen in the immediate locality, whereas a minority of

farmers and villagers are without at least one closely related household in the parish. Excluding the upper and middle classes, nearly two-thirds of the homes have close kinsmen in at least one other household in the community, and a little over a quarter are linked to two or more.

When kinsmen of the third and fourth degrees (i.e. kinsmen of the order of first cousins, uncles and aunts, nephews and nieces) are taken into account, 57.7 per cent of all households are found to be related to at least one other in the parish, as against 51.5per cent when we count first and second degree kin only.

TABLE II PROPORTION OF LITTLE MUNDEN HOUSEHOLDS WITH AT LEAST ONE THIRD OR FOURTH DEGREE KIN LINK IN THE PARISH, DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN THOSE WITH NONE, ONE, AND TWO OR MORE CLOSE KIN LINKS

	Total Number	Number of households with at least one third of fourth degree kin link	Col.2 as a percentage of Col.1
Households with NO close kin links in the parish	63	8	12.7
Households with ONE close kin link in the parish	40	9	22.5
Households with TWO OR MORE close kin links in the parish	27	17	63.0
All households	130	34	26.2

Table II shows that the households with multiple close kin links are often related to one or more additional families through kinsmen of the third or fourth degree. But no more than a small proportion of families with one or with no close kinsmen have further removed relatives in the parish.

To explain additional features of the situation in respect to kin nucleation, we may liken the parish to a disc with three concentric rings.

Within the inner ring we find households that live in an environment of dense kinship connexions. Most of these households have close relatives, as well as third or fourth degree kinsmen in the parish. Some are also linked to one or more other households through kinsmen of the fifth and higher degrees (e.g. second cousins and first cousins once removed) though this is rare. All are households either of villagers or of farmers. Invariably, one or other adult member of each is descended from a family with a long history of residence in the parish.

It should not be thought that all the households in this inner ring of our imaginary disc form part of a single continuous network of kinsmen. There are four main clusters of related households. Three of these consist principally of villagers and one comprises mainly farmers.

Between a quarter and third of all households in Little Munden may be considered as falling within this ring.

In the second or middle ring of the disc we find small groups of two, and occasionally more than two, inter-related households. In most cases these households are linked to others in their respective groups by parent-child or sibling-sibling relationships. They seldom contain members of families with a long history of residence in the parish. In fact, few of them even contain parish-born adults and, quite commonly, the small groups (in many cases, pairs) of inter-related households to which they belong arise as the result of an immigrant to the parish finding a job on a local farm or country house for one of his or of his wife's close kinsmen. In other cases a group may develop when the son or daughter of an immigrant household marries, and then settles in the parish. This middle ring of our imaginary disc contains about one quarter of the parish households.

The third or outer ring consists of households with no local kinship ties. It contains close on a half of the households in the parish and included among these are nearly all upper and middle-class households and slightly less than a third of those of farmers and villagers.

Obviously, the inner and middle rings are not well-defined categories, and our purpose, in depicting the parish homes in this way, is no more than to convey an impression of the varying density of the kinship environment in which members of the community conduct

their daily lives. To the description given, it may be added that the inner-ring households are also those which most often have kinship connexions in neighbouring parishes.

An Extended Family Grouping

We said above that one of the clusters of inter-related households in the parish consists principally of farmers. In contrast to the remaining groups and pairs of households that are linked by kinship connexions, this particular cluster forms part of a larger kinship grouping, the whole of which manifests a type of familistic structure and constitutes a solidary social unit.

Before discussing the structure of this extended family, two points must be made clear. Firstly, the kinship grouping to be described cannot be considered as typical of the farmers in the area. We explained earlier that over the past seventy-five years, Hertfordshire has received wave upon wave of immigrant farmers, and also that the farms in the area vary considerably in size. The farmers to which we are referring here need to be defined in both these respects: they are of native stock and nearly all of them are among the occupiers of 'large' farms (over 150 acres).

Secondly, only four Little Munden households (three of farmers and one classified as that of a villager) fall

within the grouping, which we shall refer to as 'the family' or 'the clan'.[1] But 'the clan' itself comprises some 30 households scattered in nine or ten parishes in the area. Only five or six of the member households are not those of farmers. The overlapping network of kinship connexions between households comprising 'the family' is intricate. No attempt will be made to describe it in detail, but the 'clannish' nature of the group can be appreciated when it is said that, out of fifteen male members of 'the family' contracting marriages between 1930 and 1949, 5 married first cousins, and another 4 married girls that were already members of 'the family' in one way or another. Furthermore, out of the 15 brides, 11 (including 8 of the 9 who were members of 'the family') were daughters of farmers from the area. As far as can be ascertained, marriage within 'the family' was just as frequent in the preceding generation (i.e. among members who married between, say, 1900 and 1930).

These facts are sufficient to indicate that the member households of 'the family' are intricately related to each other through kinship connexions. Systematic inquiries concerning the factors promoting this inter-

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1 These are the terms in which the group is normally referred to by Little Mundeners.

marriage could not be made within the scope of the present study, especially as few members of the group were resident in the parish community under observation. Not surprisingly, however, outsiders to the group allege that the principal motive has been to keep 'the money in the family'. Whether or not this is true - and probably there is some truth in the assertion - the question which we must attempt to answer is what keeps 'the family' together.

Under present-day conditions in the area, the existence of such a grouping appears anomalous, and it is therefore worthwhile trying to reconstruct what we can of its origins. The agricultural depression of the 1870s and 1880s witnessed the entry into farming of a number of tradesmen and craftsmen from the Little Munden area and members of 'the family' are descended mainly from such men. (Over the past 70 or 80 years the 'gentlemen' farmers and farmers of lower-grade origins have intermarried, but if we take account of descent in the male line only, it can be said that approximately two-thirds of the members of 'the clan' are second- or third-generation descendants of tradesmen or of craftsmen). Now, according to accounts given by elderly members of 'the family', and to stories told to younger

ones by their parents, farming in the late nineteenth century was hard, and the struggle to run the relatively large holdings of the area was won by those native farmers who relied partly on family labour, and who combined other remunerative activities with farm-work (e.g. one farmer was a straw- and hay-dealer regularly carting loads to London, and another was a commercial carrier). It would seem that the standard of living accepted by these farmers was lower than that of the immigrants, while their rate of survival (i.e. as farmers in the area) was higher.

Probably, too, the native farmers - whether sons of farmers or drawn from the lower ranks of village society - were much dependent on each other in farm-work, and it is not difficult to understand how the closely-knit unit of families arose under such conditions.

The histories of the children born in one particular family living in Little Munden between 1880 and 1900 serve to convey something of the social and occupational opportunities open to sons and daughters of farmers at this time:

> Out of six sons who survived to adulthood in this family, four left the parish shortly after leaving school: two became carpenters, one a boiler-maker, and one a cabinet-maker. All settled in London, married there, and never

returned to live in the parish. Both of the two sons who remained in the area worked on their father's farm. After the death of the father, one took over the tenancy of the family farm and the other found a farm in a neighbouring parish. Both these sons married parish girls, one the daughter of a farmer and the other the daughter of a tradesman.

Out of four daughters in the family, two married farmers (one from the parish and one from a neighbouring parish), one emigrated to London where she became a nursemaid, and one stayed at home, remained a spinster, and lived with a sister after the death of her parents.

We cannot know for certain whether the native and immigrant/mixed farmers socially, but the fact that none of the inquiries into the descent of present-day members shows evidence of intermarriage with immigrants is probably significant.

In at least two parishes in the area - Little Munden and one other - the local representatives of 'the family' gained ascendancy over other farmers in political affairs. Furthermore, members of 'the family' became prominent in the life of one particular chapel in the area.

members of
It was from a background such as this that/'the family' emerged after the 1914-1918 War with a higher standard of living than they had previously experienced and as the dominant farmers in several parishes of the area.

To-day, when the need for family co-operation in farm-work is less than ever before and when the recent prosperity of the individual farmer(who is, by local standards, very wealthy) has created new opportunities of recreation for him, the solidarity of 'the family' is being strained. Some of the younger members are showing an inclination to break away from the family circle, and two or three, who were formally active participants in the group, are counted as renegades. But the social isolation of 'the family' from other farmers and the fact that the lives of individual members have largely been built up around the same local organizations - a Chapel, cricket clubs in two of the parishes, and parish politics in several - continues to maintain the unit virtually intact.

The extent to which members are in contact with each other varies considerably, and there are of course differences in social relationships between constituent households, partly according to individual likes and dislikes and partly according to degrees of kinship. But for most members, practically all persons with whom they are in regular visiting relationship are also within

'the family'. Routine visiting is often done according to a roster, and on some evenings two, three, four or five households will meet together in the home of one.

Once a year there is a gathering of 'the clan' for a dinner and social in the village hall of one or other of the parishes. In addition, however, there is an almost complete turn-out of members at certain annual functions of at least two of the parishes, including Little Munden itself.

Social relations between kinsmen in the parish population as a whole

Outside 'the family' there are no solidary groupings of households comparable to either 'the family' as a whole, or to the sub-groups occasionally constituted by some three or four member households within 'the family'. This is not to say that the existence of clusters of related households in the villager section of the population is an unimportant factor in the total community situation. We shall later show how the fact of having multiple kinsmen in the community, associated as it generally is with descent from an 'old family', operates to make an individual feel that the parish is his home and to differentiate between 'we', the people of Little Munden, and 'they', the outsiders. But to enable us to examine this question, we shall first describe the nature of

social relations between close kinsmen, whether these form part of clusters or of pairs of related households.

With very rare exceptions, any two households that contain close kinsmen are in constant and intimate touch with each other. This contact is most frequent and regular between two households linked by a parent-child relationship. The proportion of homes that are linked in this way is high. We saw earlier that 67 homes of the/130 total of have one or more close kinsmen in the parish. Of these 67, 40 can claim to have either a married child (or married children) or a parent (of the wife or of the husband) living locally. To break these figures up further, of the 40 there are 18 which contain a parent (or parents) with one or more married children living locally, there are three in which both the husband and the wife have a parent (or parents) in the parish, there are 11 in which only the husband has his parental home nearby, and 8 in which only the wife has her parent (or parents) in the community.

Apart from conveying a global background impression of the frequency of parent-child links between households, these statistics reveal one important fact calling for a comment, and this is that the number of women settled in the same parish as their parents is nearly as high as the corresponding number of men. Local inhabitants say that,

on marriage a greater proportion of girls marrying men from the local towns are settling in the parish than in earlier days.

The frequency of contacts between members of a parent household and that of a married child naturally varies according to the composition of each and to other fairly obvious circumstances. For example, if a married child's household is in the same hamlet as that of a parent, or if the former household contains young children, or if the parent household is that of a widow or widower, then the frequency of contacts tends to be higher than when circumstances of this kind are absent. Taking all parent households into account, about 50 per cent receive visits from children, or children-in-law, or young grandchildren, several times a week, and, not uncommonly, several times a day. A further 25 per cent (approximately), have children, or members of children's conjugal families, calling at the home on an average of onee a week. Among the remaining 25 per cent, there are one or two parents who are rarely visited by a child living locally, but such cases are exceptional. Usually, when visits are less frequent than once a week, it means that they are irregular but that they are none the less paid now and again during the course of a month. On the whole, parents visit their children less often than the children visit them.

Visits between members of a married child's family and his or her parents are commonly linked with the performance of some household task in the home visited, with a joint outing (before or after) to town, or with any one of a number of minor services and activities requiring co-operation. These calls are usually paid by individuals rather than by a family, but men, women and children all become involved in them in one way or another. More prolonged visits are often governed by standing arrangements (e.g. regularly on Sunday afternoon, or on a particular evening when the persons concerned may together participate in watching television or listening to a radio programme). On these occasions husband and wife, as well as children, are likely to be jointly involved.

Altogether 45 households in the parish (out of the total of 130, and out of the 67 that have close kin links) have a sibling-sibling connexion with at least one other. The contacts taking place between two households connected by a sibling-sibling link are, in a number of respects, similar to those between the respective families of a parent and a child. But, the sense of obligation to be regular in visits, or to visit at all in normal times (as opposed to times of illness or other misfortune), is

weaker between siblings than between parents and children.

Amongst villagers the type of inter-family (i.e. inter-household) contacts referred to above are a vital part of social life. The household without such kinsmen may have no one entering the home for weeks and months on end. The fact of having one or more close kinsmen nearby almost amounts to being an essential pre-requisite to leading a happy life in the parish. Women, in particular, are often heard to discuss the joys, advantages, and convenience of being close to family members, or, if they are not in that fortunate position, of expressing the wish that they were.

Excepting amongst 'the family' of farmers, close and constant contacts between households linked by kinship connexions of the third and fourth degrees (i.e. aunts, uncles, first cousins) are uncommon. But, of course, closely integrated relationships between households, and between individuals having access to each others' homes can and sometimes do develop quite irrespective of kinship connexions. At this juncture, therefore, we should distinguish between relationships in which the kinship tie is an operative factor and those in which kinship is incidental. The question is one which would require a systematic inquiry on its own, and we

cannot answer it adequately on the basis of a study such as the present one. But observations in the parish would suggest that kinship ties of the order of uncle and nephew, aunt and niece, can and do tend to form the basis of inter-household relationships such as those found between parents and children and between siblings, and especially so when close kinsmen are few or absent from the parish. On the other hand, social relations between cousins are seldom of a different quality to those obtaining between 'old' inhabitants with no kinship ties.[1]

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1 Cousins are usually acknowledged as kinsmen and are normally amongst guests invited to, say, a wedding. Even on this point, however, there is evidence of a certain amount of variation.

P A R T F O U R

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE DEVELOPMENT OF PARISH LIFE

The Old Order

We have already seen that in the second half of the nineteenth century, Little Munden was almost a 'closed' and self-sufficient group for the labourer and his family. Farmers, tradesmen, craftsmen and servants tended to transgress the parish boundaries more often than the labourers, but they none the less lived the greater part of their lives within the immediate locality. The gentry were the only persons in the parish of whom this may not have been true. We know that the squire of the parish was for some years a Member of Parliament, and doubtless both his family, and the one occupying the parish's second country house, spent a considerable part of their time either in London or in the local county town.

The communal life of the parish was centred in, and governed by, the three principal institutions of church, school and pub. Parish records suggest that the Church and the school functioned much as would have been expected in a 'typical' parish of the times. The Church was dominated by an autocratic rector, living a style of life akin to that of the local gentry. These last probably worked in close alliance with the parson, though it would seem

that the squire himself devoted little attention to the parish and the rector was the dominant figure in the community. Several anecdotes concerning dictatorial incumbents of the late nineteenth century are still told by elderly inhabitants to-day.

Records of the Church Vestry reveal that, in the administration of the parish, the parson had for long received the regular support and services of a small band of farmers. At the same time, the influence and interest of parson and gentry in local civic affairs was probably declining, and we find that in 1894, when the Parish Council was established in pursuance of the Local Government Act of that year, all the members elected to this new body were farmers. The parson's participation in the council's affairs appears to have been limited to taking the chair at the first election meeting, and no parson or 'gentleman' was to sit on the council until the present century.

In the organized social life of the parish, however, parson and gentry were the leading figures, and the farmers appear to have played little or no part. Notes left to us by a painstaking incumbent of the 1880s contain repeated complaints of the poor attendance of farmers at social and church gatherings. These same notes would indicate that the only active organizer, apart from the Rector himself,

his wife, and the gentry, was the local schoolmistress, who is recorded as having run either a school concert or a children's choir from time to time.

The school, established in 1825 by the National Society,[1] was, as its origin implies, under the direct control of the Church. The school building - erected to accommodate 85 children according to the standards of the year 1825, but considered too small for about 40 children to-day - was the usual venue for public meetings other than church services.

The kind of social gatherings organized under the auspices of church and school may be gauged from the Rector's Notes referred to above. We are told of teas given by the gentry for labouring men and boys at harvest time, of suppers at the Rectory for choir members, bell ringers, and Bible class members, of Sunday School games in the grounds of one or the other of the 'big houses', of school concerts, of Mothers' Meetings organized by the parson's wife, of attempts to run a reading room, and of temperance meetings. The tenor of these activities is well illustrated by the following extracts referring to two meetings held in the parish in 1881 and 1882:

(1) 'This afternoon a tea was given in the

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1 The National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church.

schoolroom to labouring men and boys by —— (a local gentleman). About 90 men sat down on the floor and enjoyed bread and butter, jam and cake, ... A few farmers took tea at a side table with the waiters.'

(2) 'A meeting was held in the schoolroom, ... there were 84 men and boys, but the room was more than filled for the songs and the address ... The farmers were again conspicuous by their absence. ... Rev. —— (a visitor) gave a most interesting address. He showed how drinking emptied heads of sense, houses of comfort and churches of worshippers, while it filled the work-house, the hospital, the jail, the asylum and ultimately the graveyard.'

The attendances reported at these meetings are interesting; when related to the number of men aged 15 years and over in the parish at this particular period, the figures suggest that between 50 and 60 per cent of the adult male population of the parish turned out on such occasions. And the proportion of labourers who attended must have been considerably higher. As a general indication of the grip of church, parson and gentry on the people, this is not out of keeping with data such as those gathered by the church attendance census of 1851. [1]

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1 See chapter X, , -

Social activities sponsored by parson and gentry were the only formal 'recreations' in the parish. There was no organized sport, nor was there a Non-Conformist Chapel to give a fillip to the associational life of the community. An attempt was made circa 1870 to establish a Methodist preaching station, and a cottage was converted into a Mission Room for this purpose. But the movement can have met with little success, for the room was no longer being used for religious services by the early years of the present century.

The public houses were important centres of social contact for the men. It was here that the labourers gathered informally, and it was from here that the Savings Clubs, Loan Clubs, and Sick Clubs were run. Little Munden had four pubs, the same ones that are in existence to-day. The clientele of each cannot have been large. On the basis of data recorded on the 1851 census schedules, it can be assessed that the hamlet which was, at that time, the largest of the three in the parish had some 40 cottage households to two pubs, and the two smaller hamlets had about 15 and 30 cottage households respectively to one pub each. By the end of the century, the average number of cottage households per pub was considerably lower, but it would appear that each publican still made a living out of his trade.

No documentary evidence on public-house life in the second half of the last century has been preserved in Little

Munden, but the recollections of old inhabitants lead us to accept the essential points made by Thompson in an account of mid-Victorian pub-life in an Oxfordshire hamlet:

> 'The adult population (of men) gathered every evening, to sip its half pints, drop by drop, to make them last, and to discuss local events, wrangle over politics or farming methods, or to sing a few songs 'to oblige'. It was an innocent gathering. None of them got drunk; they had not money enough ... Yet the parson preached from the pulpit against it,... Only about half a dozen men held aloof from the circle ... The others went as a matter of course, appropriating their own special seats on settle or bench. It was as much their home as their own cottages, and far more homelike than many of them ... It was exclusively a men's gathering. Their wives never accompanied them; though sometimes a woman who had got her family off her hand, and so had a few half-pence to spend on herself would knock at the back door with a bottle or jug, and perhaps linger a little, herself unseen, ... [1]

If the absence of organized sport and a Chapel in Little Munden appears out of keeping with popular conceptions

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1 Flora Thompson, Op.cit. pp.52-53.

of English village life in the second half of the nineteenth century, it must be remembered that we are referring to a small and impoverished parish in which labourers' families predominated. In North-East Hertfordshire, parishes which were, at this period (say 1880), supporting non-conformist chapels, were usually larger than Little Munden.[1] It would appear, too, that a larger and more diversified population was a pre-requisite for running an organization such as a cricket club. Grey has written of a Hertfordshire parish which, in the 1860s and 1870s, had 'an excellent cricket club',[2] but he is referring to a community which then had some 3,000 inhabitants. And the author himself explains that the 'majority of members (of the cricket club) were men of more leisure (than ordinary cottagers)... masters of their own time, such as farmers' sons, tradesmen, professional men, and others of independent means.'[3] On the basis of scattered evidence such as this, it seems probable that Little Munden's poverty in formal organization

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1 We may cite Little Munden's immediate neighbours as examples: in the 1880s, Watton and Bennington, with populations in the order of 800 and 600 respectively, each had a chapel; Little Munden and Great Munden, with some 450 inhabitants each, had mission rooms or halls, and Sacombe, with under 300 inhabitants had no non-conformist place of worship. (Information from Kelly's Directories)

2 E. Grey, Op.cit. p.202

3 E. grey, Ibid.

for leisure was not exceptional for a parish of its size and composition.

The absence of a chapel, the clear evidence that the basic values of the old order of country living were still dominant in governing the community, and the location of the parish, which was well removed from a railway line, probably all lend point to the attitude of a progressive Scots farmer who, after spending some years in Little Munden in the 1890s, spoke of it as a remote and backward place, and named it 'The World's End'.[1]

The Growth of Formal Associational Life

In 1903 a cricket club was founded in Little Munden, and this date may be taken as marking the beginning of the new or modern order of life in the parish.

The active leadership of the Cricket Club in its early days lay in the hands of a small group of farmers and villagers, with a gardener in the employ of the squire as the prime organizer. Judging from the reputation which this individual, who is now deceased, still enjoys among local inhabitants, as well as from the active part which he was later to play in other spheres of parish life, there is little doubt that he was a man with exceptional

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1 Quoted by H. Rider Haggard, Op.cit. Vol I p.526

charismatic qualities. The available evidence, both verbal and documentary, would indicate that neither parson nor gentry were amongst the active leaders of the club, but the organization sought and received the support and patronage of those the traditional leaders of the parish. From the date of the club's foundation till the present day, the parson and one or more members of the upper class have at various times been honorary vice-presidents of the club, while sons from the Rectory and the 'big houses' have occasionally taken part in games on the field. It is difficult, in retrospect, to ascertain where the real driving power behind the club lay, but it is evident (and the point is of particular interest) that the club's existence depended, in one way or another, on the co-operation of persons drawn from all social strata. By the time of the first world war, the club had developed into an important organization, and was able to run three regular playing teams, which is a clear indication of the general participation of the population in its activities.[1]

The Cricket Club was the first organization established in the parish with the specific aim of catering for modern recreational needs. It was also the first leisure-time

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1 To appreciate the significance of this, it must be recalled that up to the 1920s the population of Little Munden was falling (and, of course, aging). In 1921, for example, the parish had 327 inhabitants, but no more than some 60 males between the ages of 15 to 40 years.

organization that did not fall under the direct auspices of the Church and the school. It was to be followed by a branch of the Women's Institute in 1918 and, thereafter, by a men's social club (which has since lapsed), a football club, and several less important organizations. In fact, following on World War I, there was a minor efflorescence of secular clubs and groups with at least a semblance of formal organization.

In 1923 a well-equipped parish hall was erected and the modest school building, sheltering in the shadow of the Church, ceased to be the venue for public gatherings. The erection of the hall may be taken as an indication of how firmly established the new standards of social and recreational life were by this time.

These local developments of the period must be thought of as following and accompanying national trends. In the country at large, a new conception of rural life, which had been developing slowly since the late nineteenth century, received a fillip from the first World war. Ideas and standards which had developed slowly with the spread of education and newspapers, with general material progress, and with the multiplication of contacts between rural and urban inhabitants, became firmly established in village society. Rural life in England was to be increasingly characterised not only in terms of the age-old institutions

of church, school, and pub, but also in terms of the Village Hall, the Whist Drive, the Women's Institute, and various formally organized clubs and recreational activities.[1] Judging from outward signs of development, such as the founding of organizations and the erection of the parish hall, it appears that the transition from the old to the new order of parish life was effected rapidly in Little Munden, and by the 1920s the level of formal recreational activities was quite as high as it is to-day. We obviously cannot attempt to provide an adequate sociological explanation for this seemingly rapid transition, but one 'accidental' factor must be pointed out. Between 1912 and 1924, the number of 'big houses' in the parish rose from two to four, and this strengthening of the upper-class element, together with the fortuitous fact that among the new inhabitants were enthusiastic supporters of the parish, undoubtedly stimulated the

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1 The spread of the Women's Institute movement is probably a good index of the development of the new order of village life. The first branch of the Women's Institute in this country was established in 1915. The rate of the movement's growth since that date may be judged from the following figures.

Year:	1917	1918	1919	1921	1925	1927	1937	1952
No. of branches in England and Wales:	199	760	1405	2237	3500	3397	5534	7840

See Inez Jenkins: The History of the Women's Institute Movement of England and Wales, O.U.P. (1953)

growth of organized social life. At no time during recent decades has the community been without at least two or three upper-class inhabitants who were keenly interested in local affairs. Thus, we find that in its early days the local branch of the Women's Institute was sponsored and led by ladies from two of the 'big houses', while the parish hall, though said to have been built by public subscription, benefited from a single donation of £500 without which it would certainly not have been erected as early as 1923.[1] Examples of leadership and patronage of this kind during the inter-war period could be multiplied.

It is against this background of development that we have to study the present associational life of Little Munden. To-day, leaders in the parish often complain that the community is 'breaking up' and that difficulties in organizing social activities are becoming more acute. There can be no doubt that this is true. Many factors are blamed by organizers for the greater difficulty which they experience in bringing people together (e.g. the competition from the home as a centre of recreation, the

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1 It is interesting to compare Little Munden's experience to that of two neighbouring parishes. In one of these, a hall had been built at the entire charge of the local squire as early as 1852. In the other, which had no benefactor, a building fund remained open for many years and the hall was only erected in 1950.

relative facility of travel to the local towns, and the sending of children over eleven years of age to a school outside the parish). But the form of community life has by no means disintegrated, and such change as there has been in the structure of the community over recent decades has been slow and gradual.

CHAPTER NINE

PARTICIPATION IN PARISH SOCIAL LIFE

Little Munden's religious, political, and recreational life is run through a number of organizations which offer parish inhabitants a wide range of opportunities for coming into face-to-face contact with each other. Our objects in this chapter are, firstly, to take stock of these organizations and, secondly, to analyse data on their memberships so as to ascertain the overall pattern of participation in parish social life. Naturally, there are group activities in which people can take part without being formally affiliated members (e.g. church services and whist drives), while nominal affiliation to an organization does not necessarily imply active participation. Nevertheless, by analysing an individual's memberships in all possible organized and semi-organized groups, we obtain a good index of his participation in social activities.

Definition of a Social Organization: In gathering the statistical data presented on the following pages, a social organization was defined as any association, club, committee, or other organized or semi-organized group which is run in such a way that its meetings are generally regarded by members as events in their respective rounds of leisure-time activity, and which effectively provides opportunities for

gaining social recognition in the parish. This is a much wider definition than any normally implied in sociological literature by the term 'voluntary association', and it was interpreted broadly so as to include organizations ranging from relatively amorphous 'groups' (e.g. public-house loan clubs and the library) to statutory bodies (e.g. the Parish Council) and well-defined associations (e.g. the Women's Institute and the Cricket Club). Much of the participation in parish social life would be missed if we were to confine ourselves to voluntary associations in the accepted sense of the term. This may be illustrated by the Mothers' Welfare Clinic,[1] which we have included as a social organization, but which would not normally be considered as a formal club or association.

The Mothers' Welfare Clinic is a service financed by the state and run by a professional nurse in the employ of the County Council. But in Little Munden the clinic is run in such a way that it has many features characteristic of a leisure-time social organization. Mothers attend ostensibly to have their babies weighed and physically examined - a routine procedure which normally takes no more

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1 The organization referred to here as the Mothers' Welfare Clinic is officially known as a Child Welfare Clinic. I have followed Little Munden usage because our interest is in the social function of the organization as a Mothers' 'club'.

than a few minutes for each baby. But most women make a prolonged outing of their visits; they linger on after the babies have been examined to have a cup of tea, to meet and make friends, to gossip, and to display their babies, as well as babies' clothes and prams. The 'social' aspect of the clinic is further emphasized by the presence of voluntary helpers, and by the running of two annual functions: a Christmas Party, said to be for the babies, and a Jumble Sale, the proceeds of which finance the Christmas Party.

Field Method: The method used to gather statistical data was as follows. Through systematic inquiry, a list of all organizations, as defined above, was first compiled. This check-list was shown to persons interviewed during the course of the field investigation. Every interviewee was asked to name the organizations to which he was formally affiliated, as well as to give details of any official positions held. The information gathered in this way was subsequently checked against official membership lists or, failing that, against information obtained verbally from committee-members and organizers. Few discrepancies were found between the lists supplied by organizations and those compiled from the answers given in the course of the house-to-house inquiry. It is worth noting, however, that the interviews clearly

revealed the value of using a list of organizations to elicit accurate responses from subjects in an investigation of this kind. In a number of cases, interviewees were first asked the question: 'To what clubs, committees, associations, and groups in the parish do you belong?' The number of memberships given in answer to this inquiry was frequently smaller than the number elicited by the follow-up question: 'Would you mind checking this card to see whether there are any organizations which you may have forgotten to mention?'

The failure of some subjects to volunteer the desired information before being shown the list can be accounted for in two ways. There was evidence in isolated instances of indifference on the part of the interviewee, and in such cases the showing of the list usually elicited a little extra co-operation. More generally, however, incomplete answers clearly arose out of a misunderstanding concerning the information that was required. On being shown the list of organizations, subjects frequently made remarks such as: 'I didn't know you were counting the church'; or, 'if you're wanting to know about darts clubs, I belong to the one at The Swan'. This emphasizes that many of the 'groups' in which people participate are not thought of as formal associations or clubs.

Parish Organizations

Altogether 32 organizations were found to be functioning in the parish in 1950. Of these, 26 are run exclusively or predominantly for adults and six for young people and children. The mean size of organizations is 24.1 members, but, as shown in Table I, the range in size is wide. By definition, the public committees are small. Next in average size come church auxiliaries, and youth and children's organizations. These expect assiduous attendance at meetings. The public-house clubs are shown to have an average of 26 members, but a distinction must be drawn between darts and loan clubs. The former have smaller memberships, and are less amorphous than the loan clubs which virtually include all the loyal customers of their respective pubs. The sports clubs must have a fairly large membership to function at all, and this is also true of most 'miscellaneous' adult organizations.

All the organizations, and particularly the larger ones, have a proportion of members who are less active than others. Furthermore, it is obvious that some are closely identified with each other. This is so by definition with the Church and its auxiliary organizations, for example. It is also the case with some of the darts and loan clubs; few members of a darts club are not also members of the loan club in the same pub.

TABLE I MEAN SIZE OF DIFFERENT KINDS OF SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS, LITTLE MUNDEN, 1950

Note: Figures in brackets indicate the number of formal members in each organization.

Type of Organization	Organizations	Mean no. of members
1 Public committees	(Parish Council (6), Parish Hall Committee (14), Charity Trustees (3), School Board of Managers (5), Mission Room Committee [1] (4))	6.8
2 Auxiliary Church organizations for adults	(Bell Ringers' Assn. (7), Parochial Church Council (16) Choir (23), Women's Meeting (16), Church Missionary Soc. Working Party (10), Mothers' Union (12))	14.0
3 Youth and children's organizations (Church and Non-Church)	(Boys' Club (12), Cadet Corps (10), Youth Club (22), Sunday School (30), Girl Guides Coy. (18), Brownies (21))	16.1
4 Public-house clubs	(3 Darts Clubs (20,18,16), 4 Loan Clubs (19,32,34,43))	26.0
5 Sports clubs	(Cricket Club (49), Football Club (27))	37.5
6 Miscellaneous adult organizations	(Church [2] (82), Conservative Assn. (58), Library (71), Women's Institute (30), Mothers' Welfare Clinic (25), Agricultural Workers Union (18))	47.3

1 The Mission Room Committee is not a body with evangelical associations, as one would suppose from its name. The room run by the committee was the venue for Methodist gatherings in the late nineteenth century, but is now used for various purposes, e.g. as a dressing room for the Football Club, as the headquarters of the Youth Club, and for meetings of the Agricultural Workers' Union.

2 Church membership here refers to the number of persons on the electoral roll.

Of all memberships in parish organizations, 16.4 per cent are held by persons who are not inhabitants of Little Munden. The proportion of memberships held by non-residents is negligible in the public committees, as well as in the Church and its auxiliary organizations, but rises to 18 per cent in the 'miscellaneous' adult organizations (excluding the Church), to 19 per cent in the youth and children's organizations, to 25 per cent in the public-house clubs, and to 29 per cent in the sports clubs. The participation of outsiders may usually be traced to one or two circumstances. Firstly, there are organizations which recruit members from parishes in which there are no similar bodies. Thus, we find that the Women's Institute has several members from the neighbouring parish of Sacombe, which was forced to close down its branch a few years ago owing to lack of support. Although the Welfare Clinic extends its services to Great Munden and Sacombe in addition to Little Munden, only a handful of women from the two outside parishes attend. The Girl Guides Company, which is the only organization of its kind in the Little Munden area, succeeds in drawing members from several neighbouring parishes. And the Conservative Association, originally sponsored by Little Munden inhabitants, attracts a few farmers and middle-class inhabitants from Great Munden. In the same way, a small number of local inhabitants travel

to neighbouring parishes to participate in organizations which have no counterpart in Little Munden (e.g. a Non-Conformist chapel). On the whole, the parish tends to draw members from centres smaller than itself and to contribute to the life of larger ones.

Secondly, a number of outsiders who are members of local organizations come from parishes which themselves have similar bodies. This is especially the case in the two sports clubs and in the public-house groups. Occasionally, an individual from a neighbouring parish may join a Little Munden organization after having quarrelled with members of a corresponding group in his own community. More generally, however, outside members are either former residents who, on leaving for a destination nearby, have continued to take part in local activities, or friends and relatives who have been drawn into the life of the parish through personal ties.

In all cases but one, the effective leadership and control of organizations in Little Munden is held by local inhabitants. The single exception is the Cricket Club, to which we shall refer in detail in a later chapter.

A glance at the names of the organizations shows that a number of them cater predominantly or exclusively for members of one sex. Adult male memberships tend to be concentrated in the sports and public-house clubs, as well

as in the public committees. Adult female memberships are found mainly in the church auxiliaries and, of course, in the Women's Institute and the Mothers' Welfare Clinic. Sex segregation in children's organizations is also common. These facts are well known, and there is no need to dwell on them, except to note that in recent years there has been a slight change. Women are tending to take part in some of the predominantly male organizations to a greater extent than before. Thus we find that about 10 per cent of the darts club members and 25 per cent of the public committee members are women.

In a small and socially graded community like Little Munden, all organizations that are run on a parochial basis must inevitably cater for the villager or working-class population, and it is only in the public committees that villagers do not predominate. All the members of public-house clubs are villagers, while in a number of other activities the only 'non-villagers' are encountered as official organizers and honorary members. The principal organizations in which farmers and persons of upper and middle-class standing do participate as ordinary members, are the Church (but rarely the church auxiliaries), the Conservative Association, the Cricket Club, and the Women's Institute.

Membership of Organizations

It is clear from the foregoing that numbers of Little Munden inhabitants habitually come into contact with each other outside work and family situations, and otherwise than as neighbours, personal friends, fellow-travellers on the bus, or passers-by on the road. Our immediate concern now is to establish the way in which these contacts are distributed amongst individuals in different sections of the population. Who are the participants in organized social life? Where does the apathy complained of by parish leaders lie? Do the data bear out the common allegation that 'things work in family circles'? A contribution to answering these questions is made in Tables II - VI.

Multiple Memberships: Table II sets out the distribution of the inhabitants, aged 16 years and over, by the number of memberships held by each person.[1] It can be seen that less than a quarter of the inhabitants are 'non-joiners', and close on a half, who hold one or two memberships each, may be termed 'poor joiners'. About one-fifth hold either three or four memberships, and we may refer to these persons as 'moderate joiners'. Finally, there is a small nucleus

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1 Children under the age of 16 years are excluded from all the tabulations. It must also be noted that the tables are based solely on memberships held in Little Munden organizations, by Little Munden inhabitants.

TABLE II DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AGED 16 YEARS AND OVER, BY NUMBER OF MEMBERSHIPS HELD IN PARISH ORGANIZATIONS, LITTLE MUNDEN, 1950

No. of memberships held by an individual	No. of persons	Percentage
None	73	23.8
One	90	29.3
Two	53	17.3
Three	40	13.0
Four	22	7.2
Five	17	5.5
Six	4	1.3
Seven	4	1.3
Eight	2	0.7
Nine and over	2	0.7
TOTAL	307	100.1

of inhabitants, comprising about one-tenth of the population, who are 'regular joiners', each being formally affiliated to five or more organizations.

When the aggregate number of memberships held by persons in each of the above categories is calculated as a proportion of the total, we find that the small group of 'regular joiners' accounts for 29.7 per cent, the 'moderate joiners' for 36.2 per cent, and the large group of 'poor joiners' for 34.1 per cent.

Age and Sex: Table III compares men and women in respect to number of memberships held. It can be seen that differences between the sexes are unimportant. The proportion of men who are 'non-joiners' is a little lower than the corresponding proportion for women, but the proportion of women who are 'regular joiners' is a little higher than the same proportion for men, and the average number of memberships per person is virtually the same for both sexes. Of course, this does not preclude the possibility of there being differences between men and women of the same age, and a comparison of the average number of memberships per man and per woman in three broad age-groups shows, in fact, that there are such differences. (See Table IV) The average number of memberships per man is highest between the ages of 16 and 30 years and does not rise in the middle age-group, whereas the corresponding averages for women reveal an increase in the middle age-group from a low level between the ages of 16 and 30 years. It can be seen, too, that women of over 50 years have a higher number of memberships than men in the same group, whereas amongst young adults, men are greater joiners than women.

In view of these differences the combined male and female averages for findr age-groups cannot shed much light

TABLE III DISTRIBUTION OF MEN AND WOMEN, AGED 16 YEARS AND OVER, BY NUMBER OF MEMBERSHIPS IN PARISH ORGANIZATIONS, LITTLE HUNDEN, 1950

No. of memberships held by an individual	Men		Women	
	No.	%	No.	%
None ('Non-joiners')	34	21.8	39	25.8
One or two ('Poor joiners')	74	47.4	69	45.7
Three or four ('Moderate joiners')	35	22.4	27	17.9
Five and over ('Regular joiners')	13	8.4	16	10.6
TOTAL	156	100.0	151	100.0
Mean no. of memberships per person	1.85		1.90	

TABLE IV AVERAGE NUMBER OF MEMBERSHIPS IN PARISH ORGANIZATIONS PER PERSON, BY THREE BROAD AGE-GROUPS, DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN, LITTLE HUNDEN, 1950

(1) Number of men in the population
(2) Number of male memberships in parish organizations
(3) Average number of memberships per man
(4) Number of women in the population
(5) Number of female memberships in parish organizations
(6) Average number of memberships per woman
(7) Average number of memberships per person (male and female)

Age Group (years)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
16-30	38	84	2.21	46	70	1.52	1.83
31-50	68	131	1.93	56	120	2.14	2.02
Over 50	50	73	1.46	49	97	1.98	1.72
TOTAL	156	288	1.85	151	287	1.90	1.87

on the overall pattern of affiliation to organizations. They are, therefore, not given in detail here, but it must be recorded that the impression, conveyed by Table III, that the average number of memberships per person falls off on passing the 50-year mark, is misleading. In actual fact, the combined average for men and women aged 51-60 years is no lower than the average for persons aged 41-50 years, and the decline only occurs at some time after 60 years of age.

The number of affiliations which a person or a group has to local organizations is, of course, not a pure or absolute measure of social participation, and it would be wrong to view the above statistics as anything more than a general indication of age and sex differentials.

At the same time, one particular difference between men and women is undoubtedly significant, and that is the higher average number of memberships held by young men as compared to young women. On outgrowing youth organizations, young men find a number of opportunities for participating in parish life through the two sports clubs and the public houses, but young unmarried women find far fewer outlets locally.[1]

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1 This, combined with the fact that cycling to town in the evenings (to attend cinemas and other amusements) presents greater difficulties for girls, appears to contribute to

Sections of the Population: Although inhabitants other than villagers are not sufficiently numerous to afford statistical samples for a convincing analysis of participation by members of different sections of the population, the data given in Table V can be used as a basis for verbal descriptions of differential participation.

The table shows that the mean number of memberships is highest for the upper-class, and that only two out of twelve persons in this group are 'non-joiners', while the proportion of 'moderate' and 'regular joiners', taken together, is higher than for any other section of the population. These figures reflect an important fact, namely, that the tradition for upper-class inhabitants to associate themselves with parish life is still marked. Their participation is often motivated partly by a sense of obligation and it is usually tainted with patronage and condescension. For example, one upper-class gentleman, in explaining how he came to hold a particular position

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young men being, on the whole, less dissatisfied with country life. This was noticed in Little Munden and tends to be corroborated by the preliminary results of a study into the attitudes to town and country life of adolescent boys and girls in a Secondary Modern School in North East Hertfordshire. This study, conducted by the writer in 1954, has not yet been completed, but it can be said that in answers to a range of questions bearing on the subject, the proportion of girls expressing discontent with rural life was consistently and significantly higher than the corresponding proportion for boys.

TABLE V DISTRIBUTION OF MEN AND WOMEN, AGED 16 YEARS AND OVER, BY NUMBER OF MEMBERSHIPS IN PARISH ORGANIZATIONS, DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN VARIOUS SECTIONS OF THE POPULATION, LITTLE MUNDEN, 1950

(1) Upper class (3) Farmers

(2) Middle class (4) Villagers

No. of memberships	(1)		(2)		(3)		(4)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
None ('Non-joiners')	2	16.7	13	40.6	4	18.2	54	22.4
One or two ('Poor joiners')	5	41.7	11	34.4	15	68.2	112	46.5
Three and over ('Moderate and 'regular joiners')	5	41.7	8	25.0	3	13.6	75	31.1
TOTAL	12	100.1	32	100.0	22	100.0	241	100.0
Mean number of memberships per person	2.67		2.09		1.36		1.85	

on a parish committee, said, 'I would much prefer not to be bothered with it, but the people have always expected us (i.e. the gentry) to take a lead; the difficulty here is that no one in the village can read or write!' At the same time, however, there is evidence that the traditional attitude of upper-class inhabitants to participation in parish life has been changing. On being asked whether she was a member of the Womens' Institute, one woman protested with emphasis, 'I see no reason for taking part in anything that does not interest me', while another of similar standing, explained that 'the village people do not expect us to play the same part as before the war; they know that we have our backs to the wall just as much as they have'.

The spheres of organized social life in which members of the upper class participate may be seen from the record of their most active representatives (one man and two women), amongst whom are to be found three Church members (including the Rector's Warden), three Parochial Church Councillors (including the Secretary of the Council), three members of the Conservative Association (including the President), two Vice-Presidents of the Cricket Club, one member of the Parish Hall Committee, one choir member, one member of the School Board of Management, one Vice-President of the Women's Institute, the Secretary of the Mothers'

Union, a voluntary helper at the Child Welfare Clinic, and a trustee of the Parish Charities. This list is impressive, but we shall see later that the sphere within which upper-class inhabitants wield an important influence has been narrowed down, over recent years, to a greater extent than their nominal memberships would suggest.

The group of middle-class inhabitants has the second highest average number of memberships per person; yet it has a higher proportion of 'non-joiners' than any other section of the population. (Refer back to Table V) This seeming paradox is not difficult to explain: the middle-class category in the table includes two distinct elements. Firstly, there are the professional community servants. Secondly, there are the urban commuters and the elderly folk on retirement in the countryside. These two elements must be discussed separately.

The professional community servants (and their families) have a very high record of participation; the group, which consists of the parson and his wife, the schoolmaster and his wife, the assistant schoolmistress and the nurse, has an average of just over six organization memberships per person. Several of these memberships automatically devolve upon the holder of one or another of the professional positions in the parish e.g. the parson is ex officio chairman of several committees such as the Parochial Church

Council, the School Board of Management, the Mission Room Committee, and the Parish Charities, and the nurse runs the Mothers' Welfare Clinic as part of her normal duties. The remaining memberships held by the professional community servants are voluntary in principle, but it is not surprising that most of them are in organizations which are directly linked to the work of the Church and the school. And of their few memberships in sports clubs and other organizations, a number are held in response to the traditional expectation that the parson and the schoolmaster, in particular, should take part in the general social life of the parish.

In contrast, the group of middle-class commuters and retired urban residents has a poor record of participation. Out of 26 persons in the group, 13 are not affiliated to any organization and the mean number of memberships per person for all of them is 1.2 (as against 6.1 for the professional community servants). Usually, the experience of living in a country parish is new to the middle-class commuters. They have no local kinship connexions, no obligations to anyone in the parish and, very often, no interests other than those of their own homes. In essence, the parish is for them a place to which they return after work to find the comfort of their homes and to enjoy the beauty of the countryside, and they seldom become involved in the life of the community, though their wives do so more

often. 'I came to live here because this is one of the last bits of rural England left, and not to get mixed up in village affairs', one commuter said. And his attitude is typical of several others, as it often is of the retired people who are, quite naturally, not very active.

Those of the middle-class residents who do take part in parish life, tend to enter it at the same points as the professional community servants. Thus, for example, there are amongst them several members of the Church, (including the People's Warden), as well as a few keen members of the Women's Institute.

With 1.36 memberships per person, the farmers and their families have a low index of participation. But, as shown in Table V, they have a high proportion of 'poor joiners', and a low proportion of 'non-joiners'. In other words, most of them are associated with parish life in one way or another, though it is unusual for them to find constant social outlets locally. The 'poor joiners' are found, for the most part, as members of diverse organizations, including the Church, the Conservative Association, the Cricket Club, the Women's Institute, the public committees, and the public-house clubs. These last, however, are joined only by family members of the two

smallest farmers whose social status in the community is akin to that of villagers.

Two representatives of the group of farmers are members of more than five organizations each, and these two - one man and his niece - between them hold, in addition to a few ordinary memberships, two seats on the Parish Hall Committee (including that of Chairman), two seats on the Parish Council (including that of Chairman), two seats on the Mission Room Committee, and one seat on the School Board of Management. The membership record of these two individuals is significant. It reflects the fact that although the parish farmers place little reliance on local organizations for their social outlets, members of 'the family' [1] have retained a keen interest in the public life of the community. There is a good deal of truth in the assertion, cited in an earlier chapter, that 'farmers are the emperors round here'. This point will be discussed more fully later.

The villagers of the parish have 1.85 memberships per person. This average is lower than the corresponding figures for the upper class and for the professional community servants but higher than those for farmers and urban residents. Altogether 446 out of the 575 memberships held by parish inhabitants, over 16 years of age, are in the hands of villagers who outnumber representatives of other sections of the population

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[1] i.e. the extended family of farmers described in Chapter VII.

TABLE VI DISTRIBUTION OF VILLAGERS, AGED 16 YEARS AND OVER, BY NUMBER OF ORGANIZATION MEMBERSHIPS, DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN MEMBERS OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH NO CLOSE KIN LINKS, WITH ONE, AND WITH TWO OR MORE SUCH LINKS IN THE PARISH.

(1) Members of households with no close kin links

(2) Members of households with one close kin link

(3) Members of households with two or more close kin links

(4) Members of all villager households.

No. of memberships	(1) No.	%	(2) No.	%	(3) No.	%	(4) No.	%
None ('Non-joiners')	31	32.3	13	15.5	10	16.4	54	22.4
One or two ('Poor joiners')	40	41.7	48	57.1	24	39.3	112	46.5
Three and over ('Moderate and 'regular joiners')	25	26.0	23	27.4	27	44.3	75	31.1
TOTAL	96	100.0	84	100.0	61	100.0	241	100.0
Mean number of memberships per person	1.63		1.79		2.3		1.9	

Chi-square = 15.38; $P < 0.01$.

Note: Close kin links were defined as in Chapter VII.

in every kind of organization except the public committees which have an aggregate of only 32 memberships. It follows, therefore, that the distribution of villager memberships in various types of organizations tends to approximate to that of all memberships.

Table VI was drawn up to establish whether there is a positive association between the intensity of an individual's kinship environment and his degree of involvement in the network of social organizations. The data show that there is such an association, and it is particularly significant to note that a difference is present not only between persons 'with close kin links' and 'without close kin links', but also between those with/multiple links. In describing particular organizations in later chapters we shall attempt to indicate the significance of this association.

Comment

In giving the foregoing account of participation in parish life, an attempt has been made to give a comprehensive view of the principal foci of social contact between members of different sections of the population. In the remaining chapters of our study we shall take up in turn various organizations and, by studying the nature of social contacts that take place in and through the ones selected for description, we shall attempt to analyse the parish as a functioning group.

CHAPTER TEN

THE CHURCH

'When I was a boy', a 60-year-old Little Mundener explained, 'if you came to Church late, you couldn't get a seat except right in front, but now there's only a handful of people there on Sundays.' We know it is true that church life has declined, and also that, in conformity with national tendencies, ecclesiastical influence in civic and social affairs has suffered over past years. But there are nonetheless a number of reasons for placing the Church first in our review of parish organizations. There is still a fairly widespread acceptance of the Church as a 'natural' and essential part of Little Munden life. The Church continues to be an active organization, as well as the institution which, more than any other, exerts a unifying influence on the parish. The parson remains an important figurehead in the community, even though his authority and prestige are much diminished. The Church is still the focal point of contact between the upper class and the remainder of the population, and church life is the only sphere of parish activity in which the gentry now wield any considerable influence. All these facts render the Church the logical starting point for a review of parish organizations.

The Denominational Allegiance of the Population

The Anglican Church is the only place of worship in Little Munden, and the parish has no effective social divisions along denominational lines.[1]

As is shown in Table I, nine out of ten parish inhabitants, aged 18 years and over, claim to adhere to the Church of England. And even this figure tends to

TABLE I DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION, AGED 18 YEARS AND OVER, BY RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION, LITTLE MUNDEN, 1950

Religious Denomination	No.	Per cent
Church of England	269	90.6
Non-Conformists (mainly Methodists)	19	6.4
Roman Catholic	6	2.0
'No religion'	3	1.0
TOTAL	297	100.0

1 The absence of religious strife is common but not universal in parishes of the area. To emphasize the variation which does exist in this respect, it is worthwhile reporting the case of a parish a few miles away in which religious services are organized, for a population of 800 persons, by representatives of no fewer than seven different religious denominations. In this particular parish, denominational rivalries are said to affect the entire system of social relations to an appreciable extent and, although Anglicans constitute an absolute majority in the population, the influence of the Established Church is weak, as compared to what it is in Little Munden.

underestimate potential support for the Established Church as a few Non-Conformists come to services regularly, while a further handful, who habitually attend a chapel in a neighbouring parish, support the Little Munden Church on special occasions.

The few persons who attend both church and chapel are members of 'the ruling farming family' in the parish. Their dual allegiance is a revealing illustration of the Church's position in the community. Both out of consideration for these Non-Conformists and out of the desire to maintain their support for the Parish Church, the Little Munden parson endeavours, whenever possible, to arrange special services (e.g. Harvest Festivals) at times which do not clash with those of the chapel in question.

The parish has never had more than a small number of Non-Conformist families, and the absence of religious strife between the existing ones and the Church dates back at least a generation. The Parish Council Minute Book records an incident which suggestsfriction between chapel supporters and the local parson in 1907. At that date, the election of parish councillors was contested for the first time since the creation of the Parish Council in 1894.[1] At a stormy public meeting, attended

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1 It may be noted that there have only been two election contests since 1907. These were in 1946 and 1949. They are referred to in Chapter XIII.

attended (according to the minutes) 'by about 40 inhabitants', eight candidates stood for election to a council of five, and one of the nominees who failed to be elected was the Rector. The minutes reveal that Rev.X made a stubborn, but unsuccessful, effort to have himself elected on the grounds that 'the majority of the Council should be Churchmen, and not Non-Conformists, as, in the event of the School being handed over to the Council, it would be better if such were the case'. As far as can now be ascertained, however, the real issue at stake was partly a personal one between a turbulent 'old style' parson and a number of local inhabitants, not all of whom were Non-Conformists. Furthermore, although the Parish Council has at various times been dominated by persons who happened to be Non-Conformists, there is no evidence that, either before or after the 1907 elections, it failed to align itself with the interests of the Church and the School. Thus even this incident cannot be taken as evidence of serious religious strife.

The half-a-dozen Roman Catholic inhabitants, some of whom are devout in going to Mass at their own place of worship in a nearby parish, do not attend Anglican services. But it does occasionally happen that one or other of these persons supports the Church, indirectly and perhaps unthinkingly, by attending a sale of work or other social function under Church auspices.

Church Membership and Church Attendance

Table II sets out data on the number and percentage of persons who are on the electoral roll of the Church.[1] Individuals usually attach little importance to whether or not their names are on the electoral roll, but Church leaders in the parish make a practice of canvassing for enrolment anyone who regularly shows an interest in Church activities. In consequence, the electoral roll gives a useful first indication of the number of persons with whom the Church officers are effectively in touch. It can be

TABLE II NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF MEN AND WOMEN, AGED 18 YEARS AND OVER, WHOSE NAMES APPEAR ON THE ELECTORAL ROLL OF THE PARISH CHURCH, LITTLE HUNDEN, 1950

	Men	Women	Men and Women
(1) Number of parish inhabitants aged 18 years and over	150	147	297
(2) Number claiming 'to be Church of England'	135	134	269
(3) Number on the electoral roll	36	46	82
(4) Electors as a percentage of parish inhabitants aged 18 years and over (i.e. $\frac{(3) \times 100}{(1)}$)	24.0%	31.3%	27.6%
(5) Electors as a percentage of those claiming 'to be Church of England' (i.e. $\frac{(3) \times 100}{(2)}$)	26.7%	34.3%	30.5%

1 According to the Church of England Rules for the Representation of the Laity, persons aged 18 years and over are entitled to be enrolled as electors (a) if they 'are baptized and declare that they are members of the C. of E. and do not belong to any religious body which is

seen from the table that 27.6 per cent of all persons aged 18 years and over, and 30.5 per cent of those professing allegiance to the Church of England, are formally enrolled as electors. The proportion of women on the roll is in both instances somewhat higher than the corresponding proportion for men. When the proportions of male and female electors are computed, it is found that women comprise 56.1 per cent of the church electorate.

Our second set of statistical evidence on participation in church life comes from an attendance census undertaken in the parish at morning and evening services on six ordinary Sundays (i.e. Sundays not associated with either a Church Festival or a special national occasion.) The average attendance figures at morning and evening services over the six Sundays are given separately for men, women and children in Table III. The salient facts that are shown in the table, or that can be calculated from it, are the following. First, attendances at evening services are slightly more than double those at morning services, and children comprise a rather high proportion of all persons attending in the mornings. Secondly, few persons

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not in communion with the C. of E., (b) if they are resident in the parish, or, whether or not so resident, have habitually attended public worship in the parish during a period of six months prior to enrolment, and (c) if they have signed the form of application for enrolment.

TABLE III AVERAGE ATTENDANCES - OVER SIX ORDINARY SUNDAYS - OF MEN, WOMEN, AND CHILDREN AT MORNING AND EVENING SERVICES, LITTLE MUNDEN CHURCH, 1950

	Men (18 yrs. & over)	Women (18 yrs. & over)	Children (6 - 13 years)	Total (aged 6 yrs. & over)
(1) Number of parish inhabitants	150	147	72	369
(2) Average number of persons at morning service	5.2	6.8	8.0	20.0
(3) Average number of persons at evening services	14.2	20.2	8.2	42.6
(4) Average number of persons attending church on a Sunday [1]	17.0	23.7	12.8	53.5
(5) Average number of persons attending church on a Sunday as a percentage of all inhabitants (i.e. $\frac{(4) \times 100}{(1)}$)	11.3%	16.1%	17.8%	14.5% [2]

attend church twice a Sunday. Thirdly, men are outnumbered by women at both services, and 58.2 per cent of all 'adults' attending church
/are women. (This percentage corresponds fairly closely

1 The number of persons attending Church on a Sunday is the sum of those at morning and evening services less the number of persons who were present on both occasions.

2 For purposes of comparison, it may be noted that the number of persons attending Church on an ordinary Sunday represents 12.7 per cent of the population of all ages (i.e. including children under 6 years of age.)

to the proportion of persons on the electoral roll who are women viz. 56.1 per cent). Fourthly, the proportion of the population, aged six years and over, attending Church on an ordinary Sunday is 14.5 per cent, though this figure would be higher if we were to include children attending Sunday School.[1]

On the basis of independent evidence supplied by Church leaders in the parish, it can be estimated that about 10 per cent of the Little Munden inhabitants are regular church-goers (persons who habitually attend at least one service every Sunday). A further 30 per cent may be regarded as irregular church-goers (persons who are church-goers but who do not make a practice of attending weekly, plus persons who may be expected to attend at times of Church Festivals only). Finally, non-church-goers represent about 60 per cent of the population. When questioned, numbers of persons in this last category explain/ that

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1 It is of some interest to compare this picture of church-going with that revealed by the church attendance census of 1851. The proportions of the total population of Hertfordshire attending different church services on Sunday, March 30, 1851 were as follows: morning, 30.6 per cent; afternoon 29.1 per cent; evening 14.9 per cent. From these data we cannot tell what proportion of the population attended church at least once on the day of the census, but it must certainly have been higher than the 30.6 per cent recorded at morning service alone. Furthermore, it must be stressed that the percentages are calculated as proportions of the population of all ages. If, for the sake of illustration, we assume that children aged five years and under could not be expected to attend church, and, if we then relate the church attendance

'they had enough of it when they were young', or that 'they used to go when so-and-so was Rector, but gave it up after he left'. A quite negligible proportion of non-church-goers profess to be anti-church.

The statistics on church attendance given in Table III refer to ordinary Sundays only. At religious festivals (e.g. Christmas, Easter, and Harvest Thanksgiving), and at times of national crisis, celebration or mourning, the attendances rise sharply, and the Church comes close to rallying its full strength; not uncommonly, the church building, which has seating accommodation for about 250 people, is nearly filled to capacity on such occasions. These large congregations are swelled by former residents, and by relatives and friends living outside the parish. Estimates of attendances on particular festival days or seasons suggest that approximately two-thirds of the persons, aged 18 years and over, who enter the church at such times are local residents. These comprise between 35 and 40 per cent of the parish's 'adult' population, and between them represent close on half of the

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percentages for Hertfordshire to the Little Munden population aged over five years in 1851, we arrive at the estimate that close on 40 per cent of the population attended morning service on the day of the enumeration. The data on church attendance referred to here are drawn from Religious Worship, Census of Great Britain, (1851) (published 1853).

parish's homes. Persons who attend church on festival occasions include the overwhelming majority of the inhabitants on the electoral roll.

Differences between sections of the population in respect to church attendance habits are shown in Table IV.

TABLE IV AVERAGE ATTENDANCES - OVER SIX SUNDAYS - OF PERSONS, AGED 18 YEARS AND OVER, DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN DIFFERENT SECTIONS OF THE POPULATION, LITTLE HUNDEN, 1950

(a) Upper class (c) Farmers
(b) Middle class (d) Villagers
(e) Total.

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
(1) Number of parish inhabitants	11	32	21	233	297
(2) Average number of persons attending church on a Sunday	3.0	8.3	3.0	26.4	40.7
(3) Average number of persons attending church on a Sunday as a percentage of all inhabitants (i.e. $\frac{(2) \times 100}{(1)}$)	27.3%	25.9%	14.3%	11.3%	13.7%

It can be seen that although villagers make up about two-thirds of the congregation at Sunday services, the average proportion of villagers who attend church is low, while the proportion for farmers and members of their families is

not much higher.[1] The striking difference observed is between farmers and villagers on the one hand, and upper and middle-class inhabitants on the other; the number of upper and middle-class inhabitants to be found in Church on a normal Sunday represents a little over 25 per cent of all residents falling in these sections of the population, whereas the corresponding figure for farmers and villagers is only half as high.

In addition to the normal round of two 'open' services and one celebration of Holy Communion per Sunday, opportunities for participation in Church life arise in several auxiliary organizations which have regular meetings and a relatively wide range of social and religious activities. (Cf. Table V) Taking all these organizations into account, there are three to four 'church' meetings a week in the parish (excluding those, such as a Sunday turn-out of the choir, that coincide with services). The participants in the activities of the church auxiliaries are mainly women

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1 This refers to attendance at the Parish Church only. If the few persons who habitually attend a religious service outside the parish were taken into account, the proportion for farmers would be higher, and roughly comparable to the proportions for upper and middle-class inhabitants.

TABLE V AUXILIARY CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS

Organization	No. of members	Frequency of meetings	Remarks on activities and members
Bell Ringers' Association	8	Once a week for practice; twice a Sunday for services	Mainly men; occasional visits to and from similar outside associations.
Church Missionary Soc. Working Party	10	Once a month during autumn and early winter	Women's sewing and knitting circle for fund-raising purposes.
Choir	23	Once a week for practice; twice a Sunday for services	Mainly women and children
Mothers' Union	12	Once a month	Devotional, social, and instructional; occasional visits to and from branches in other parishes
Women's Meeting	16	Once a month	Evangelical; run in conjunction with a thrift club
Youth Club	22	Once a month in winter	Adolescent boys and girls; lectures on religious and topical subjects; occasional organized outings.
Boys' Club	12	Once a month	Pre-adolescent boys; games
Sunday School	30	Once a Sunday	Mainly pre-adolescent children; Annual coach outing
Parochial Church Council	16	Once every two months	Men and women; church business.

and children. Men who take part in such organizations represent 5 per cent of the parish's male inhabitants, and 17 per cent of those who are on the electoral roll. By contrast, 32 per cent of the women in the parish and 74 per cent of the female electors are formal members of at least one church group. The structure of auxiliary organizations will be described later.

Among the group of parishes comprising its neighbours, Little Munden holds the reputation of leading a comparatively vigorous church life and on at least one occasion in recent years, a parson in a nearby village publicly commended his parishioners to follow Little Munden's example in so far as attending church services is concerned. But Little Munden parsons of recent decades have regarded this as poor consolation, and one of them is reputed to have told his parisioners, in a farewell sermon on resigning the living, that he was leaving because 'he was tired of preaching to empty pews'. The truth is probably that while church attendance in Little Munden compares favourably with that in the 'average' parish in the area, the difference is slight.

The Authority Structure

The direction of church life in Little Munden is largely vested in the hands of upper and middle-class inhabitants. This is true of the various auxiliary

organizations and of the Church as a whole. The Rector himself fills several of the more important official positions; he is Chairman of the Parochial Church Council, Head Sunday School Teacher, Choir organizer, and Convener of the Youth Club. The Rector's Warden, the Secretary of the Parochial Church Council, and the Secretary of the Mothers' Union are upper-class persons. The People's Warden is a middle-class townsman, the President of the Mothers' Union is the Rector's wife, the Church Treasurer is the local schoolmaster, and the Convener of the Church Missionary Society Working Party is the schoolmistress. (This list is illustrative not exhaustive) It is true that a number of lesser offices are held by villagers and one is filled by a farmer's wife. All the Church Sidesmen, 7 out of 13 Parochial Church Councillors, and one out of three Sunday School teachers are villagers. But no key position is held by anyone who is not of middle or upper-class standing. As far as can be ascertained, this has always been so, excepting that farmers have in the past played a slightly more important part. That they no longer do so, may, for our purposes, be regarded as accidental.[1]

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1 It just happens that for some years there has been no Anglican farmer prepared to fill any of the higher positions in the Church.

The fact that villagers hold none of the higher grade positions is fully in accordance with tradition. Going through the available records and drawing on the memory of local inhabitants, only a single instance could be found of a villager who had, during the past 20 to 30 years, held one of the positions listed above as now being in the hands of either upper or middle-class persons.

In principle, the government of the Church rests in two organs. The first is a Standing Committee, consisting of the Rector, the Rector's Warden and the People's Warden, and the second is the Parochial Church Council, which consists of the Standing Committee plus 13 councillors elected by Church members.

As the name suggests, the Rector's Warden is nominated by the Rector. Throughout the past century the position has been filled by an upper-class resident, except for a few years when it was held by a middle-class person. The People's Warden (elected by the people) has always been either a middle-class person or a farmer. Furthermore, neither of the remaining two key positions (secretary and treasurer of the Parochial Church Council, both of which are filled by election) has ever been in the hands of a villager.

The present-day situation must be seen against the background of development since democratic ideas in church affairs were first introduced to Little Munden

in 1914. The Minutes of the Annual Easter Meeting of that year report the local Rector, who had succeeded the last of the parish's 'old style' parsons, as saying: 'For centuries both the secular and ecclesiastical affairs of a country parish have been mainly left in the incumbent's hands, but during the last 50 or 60 years things secular have been gradually withdrawn. The Laity of all classes, through the Parish Council Act of 1894,[1] have been encouraged to take an active part in the administration of the secular affairs of the parish. This being so, ought they not to have a larger share in ecclesiastical matters than merely nominating their Church Warden each Easter? ... To be passively satisfied with things as they are may betoken lack of interest. Even if things are well managed, might they not be better managed?' Following on this proposal a Parochial Church Council was established in 1914, but cannot have been a success for in 1919 we find the same incumbent being reported as follows: 'I am very anxious to revive the Parochial Church Council which has been dormant these past few years, and to make it larger and more representative... We live in democratic days, and it has all along been my wish and aim to give as large a measure of self-determination as possible to all who attend and value the services of the Church.'

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1 The reference is, of course, to the Local Government Act of 1894.

Since 1919 the re-established Council has functioned regularly, and has always contained a number of villagers, though its proceedings in early days were very largely dominated by the parson, the gentry, the schoolmaster and an occasional farmer or middle-class resident. 'The ordinary people voted but did not speak', an informant explained, and the Minutes of the Council's Meetings as late as the 1930s would suggest that this was almost literally true. To-day the Council does not lack villagers who are prepared to voice their opinions on, say, whether an article of furniture should be moved from one corner of the Church to another, but they still do not aspire either to positions of real authority or to the offices of higher status.

We shall see that this is also generally true outside the sphere of the Church. The values of the traditional system linger to a surprising extent and not only account for the lack of aspirations by villagers to hold positions of authority, but also, in part, for the relative decline in the ready acceptance of the authority of the traditional leaders whose own social and material circumstances have changed so much within living memory. For if the villager does not himself aspire to authority, he is the first one to resent positions of high status being held by someone who does not conform to his conception of what the holder

of such a position should be.

An extreme example of this attitude may be seen in the following outburst by an elderly villager, born and bred in the parish, on the subject of 'middle-class' parsons:

'I've got no patience with theseparsons... any ordinary man can become a parson nowadays.

'But you take old ——, him that was here when they started the cricket club. He had four gardeners, three horses, six maids, two grown up daughters in the house doing nothing, and one son in college'. They (the parsons) were all like that in those days... If someone was sick they didn't visit him; they just sent something round... Andevery now and again they'd give you a dinner in their house, it would be all laid out and everything of the very best, mind you. You'd never foget it.

'You see, they (the parsons) were all people with money. They were born in those families and they were just naturally religious. When they got up in the pulpit, you could listen to them talk. They knew what they were saying.

'But these parsons, nowadays, they're different. I know they're in Church every Sunday,

but they're not the same. I've got no time for them. They're just ordinary, same as us.'

Few Little Munderers would formulate their feelings so explicitly, and few recall the contrast so clearly, but many share and experience some measure of difficulty of adjusting to 'democracy', which has, as in the case of the Parochial Church Council, been introduced to them by their traditional leaders.

'Our Church and Our Parish'

The parson and the gentry, who are still the effective leaders of the Church and the most important figureheads in the community, continually place before parishioners the ideal of 'our church and our parish' as an indivisible unit.

The following are characteristic examples of orations by the parson and by the lay leaders of the Church:

(1) 'Sunday, November 1st. is All Saint's Day and the Patronal Festival of our Parish Church.... We want all who have any love or regard for Little Munden to join us at one of the Services on that day. This is the spiritual home of all within our parish boundaries and not

a few who live in other parts. Our Church on the hill.... speaks to us of many affectionate associations. Maybe our names appear in one or more of the Church Registers, reminding us of our baptism, confirmation or marriage, whilst God's acre over stirs up loving memories of those whom we love but see no longer.'

(From one of the Rector's monthly lettersin the Parish Magazine,1951)

(2) 'Last Sunday in Church we sang Psalm 133 and one of the verses comes back to me; 'Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity'. In Little Munden, we are united. We love our parish and our Church. We are grateful that we have a good Rector and two good school-teachers. With them here, we are in good hands... We do not all attend church, but if the Church and Rector were to disappear from our midst, and if the bells ceased to ring at 10.30 a.m. every Sunday, there would be a big gap in all our lives'.

(From an opening speech by an upper-class inhabitant at a Church Fete.)

The frequency with which references to the embodiment of the Church in the community is made by Church leaders undoubtedly betrays conservative pre-occupations that the parish is 'breaking-up', and that both Church and parish are suffering in the process. But, obviously, statements such as those quoted above are more than propaganda for the people; they also express sentiments which are strongly embedded in the outlook of a section of the working-class population, albeit a declining minority.

The Organization of Church Auxiliaries

Both in stability and in degree of formal structure, the various Church auxiliaries vary considerably, but a basic and well-defined pattern of organization is easily discernible in them. The conveners and leaders are drawn mainly from the group of middle-class community servants (the parson himself, his wife, and the local assistant schoolmistress being the chief active organizers). They, in turn, enlist one or two subordinate helpers (villagers) to carry out specific duties (e.g. to keep the minutes, or to be responsible for collecting affiliation fees, to see to the tea arrangements, and the like, according to the nature of the particular

auxiliaries concerned). These helpers usually bear an official title, such as secretary or treasurer, but in practice they exercise very little initiative in running activities. The effective organizers are commonly heard to complain that they have to remind the secretary or the tea-maker or the treasurer of his or her duties, and that any meeting or activity depends on their own presence to such an extent that they cannot delegate responsibility to any member of the group for more than one or two meetings in succession at the most.

The rank and file of all the adult organizations is heavily loaded with villagers who are either natives of the parish or who have lived there many years, and who are fully integrated and 'accepted', and well known to each other. Occasionally, a newcomer to the parish will join one of the organizations at the specific invitation of its middle-class organizer, but this is rare even in the case of persons who are keen Church members.

There is one auxiliary that deviates a little from this pattern. The Mothers' Union was established, two years prior to this investigation, with one deliberate objective of attracting at least some village women who

were active Church members but who could not be induced to participate in the existing groups. In this it has largely succeeded, and the way in which its organizers achieved the success was to invite as its first members upper and middle-class women. Having set a 'high' standard, the number of members was gradually increased by invitation so as to keep a balance between members of 'old families' and newcomers.

The relative failure of Church auxiliaries to attract working-class newcomers to the parish - except by a deliberate concerted effort - reflects a major problem in parish life, which we shall refer to again in the following chapters.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

PUBLIC-HOUSE LIFE

'In the olden days all the men round here went to the pub every night. There was nothing else to do. Now, if you go for a drink on a week night, you feel you're keeping the publican out of bed! Its the young fellows that don't come. They just sit about at home or find something else to do'. In these words a labourer summed up what he considered to be the most important change in the pub-life of the parish since he first became a 'regular' at a local public-house some 35 years ago. We need have no doubt in accepting as true the assertion that attendances at public-houses have fallen over the past few decades.[1] But the decline in pub-life has, in one general way, been analogous to that suffered by the life of the Church; although persons are, on the whole, to be found in public-houses less often than before, the pubs continue to be important centres of social activity in the parish.

The Publicans and their Houses

We explained in an earlier chapter that the four publicans in Little Munden are wage-earners who go out to

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1 In the United Kingdom beer consumption has fallen almost continuously from over 30 gallons per head in 1899/1900 to well under 20 gallons per head in 1951/52. See figures assembled by T. Cauter and J.S. Downham in The Communication of Ideas, London, (1954), p.89.

work during the day, leaving the pubs in the care of their wives, and the men themselves only serve behind the counter during the evenings and over week-ends. Two of the publicans are agricultural labourers employed in the parish, and two have semi-skilled manual occupations in town. One of the four says that he keeps his pub primarily for the sake of the housing accommodation that goes with it, and that his takings in the business would, on their own, be insufficient inducement for him and his wife to keep the pub. His lack of enthusiasm in running the house, which is situated in the smallest hamlet in the parish, is all too apparent, and he has few customers other than neighbours and personal friends. The remaining three publicans claim that their profits are a worth-while supplement to their wages, though they all complain that 'people don't drink so much these days', and that 'there isn't a living wage in running a house anymore'. They would be happier if there were fewer pubs in Little Munden

The fact of having part-time publicans is not new to the parish. As far as can be ascertained, the local pubs have been run by men who were either retired or who drew the greater part of their income from another source for over thirty years, and the trend of decline in the prosperity of local publicans has probably been continuous since the

time in the last century when depopulation and the general impoverishment of the countryside first affected all trade establishments in the parish.

The public-houses themselves all bear at least one visible reminder of earlier, more prosperous days viz. the saloon bars/which nowadays are usually unlit and unused. On the whole, however, the standard of equipment in the Public Bars does not compare too unfavourably with that of small pubs in nearby urban areas. Three of the four houses have electric lighting, one has a television set, another has a piano, and all have adequate equipment for games such as darts, dominoes, and cribbage.

The Nature of the Pub-Group

In order to appreciate the nature of the pub-group, we may briefly outline the different kinds of activities that take place in and through 'the local'. In the first place, as is well known, the pubs attract individuals for casual drinking, conversation, and games, and are the centres of celebration on occasions such as Christmas and New Year, and, not infrequently, at times of family rejoicings (e.g. birthdays and weddings). Secondly, closely associated with the group celebrations that take place between family members and friends are the loan or slate clubs run in the pub. In principle, these clubs enable members to obtain

small loans or to set aside sums for their own use at special times either of hardship or of rejoicing. But it is exceptional for an individual to join a loan club for the specific purpose of benefiting from the facilities provided for borrowing or saving money. On the contrary, the loan club is an integral part of pub-life and, in practice, formal membership is virtually coincident with informal membership of what we shall refer to here as the pub-group. The loan clubs have few formal gatherings, the principal ones being 'pay-out evenings' about Christmas time, and even these are loosely organized. But they have small elected committees and varying constitutions. Some of the regulations governing a club's affairs are designed to safeguard against corrupt practices, while others simply serve to introduce elements of competition and amusement into the organization.

Thirdly, three of the four pubs in the parish run darts clubs, which also have formal memberships and elected committees. The clubs are affiliated to leagues, and/in winter they play weekly matches against teams from other pubs in the district.

Finally, coach outings to seaside resorts and to other places of amusement (e.g. theatres and race tracks) are occasionally arranged by publicans. The frequency of these trips varies. In 1950, one of the publicans in the parish ran a single outing during the whole year, two

arranged three each, and one arranged four.[1]

Between the man or woman who visits a pub casually on rare occasions and the man or woman who is involved in all the outings, activities, and clubs organized by a pub there is, of course, a wide range in degree of participation. The casual visitor can rarely be considered as a member of the pub-group, and his occasional visits to the pub may have little influence on his social relations within the parish. But for a majority of men and a smaller proportion of women, membership of a pub-group provides a substantial proportion of their total social outlets, and the inter-personal relations maintained or established in and through the pub are essential parts of their lives.

No systematic statistical inquiry into the frequency of visits to the pub was undertaken in Little Munden, but the results of an inquiry into the pub-going habits of men in the neighbouring parish of Great Munden,[2] and

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1 The coach outings organized in the name of a pub, loan club or darts club, are not the only ones arranged from the parish. During the course of 1950, between 40 and 50 coach-loads left Little Munden on pleasure outings. In addition to those run by the publicans, there were trips organized in the name of the Church, the Girls' Guide Company, the Youth Club, the Women's Institute, and the Football Club. Coach outings have become regular features of the life of all these organizations.

2 In 1952, Messrs. R. Cori and R.A. Parker conducted a social investigation in the parish of Great Munden. Among the questions asked in a house-to-house survey, were ones on

the statistics on formal affiliation to darts and loan clubs, can be used as a basis for a verbal description.

In 1950 there were 22 women in the parish, each of whom was a member of one or more darts and loan clubs. With the single exception of the wife of a small farmer, all 22 women were villagers, and they represented 14.9 per cent of the parish's total female population, aged 18 years and over, and 17.6 per cent of the population of female villagers. Of the men, aged 18 years and over, 59 were affiliated to one or more public-house club, and formal members represented 39.3 per cent of the men in the parish and 46.6 per cent of villagers. Only two affiliated members were not villagers, both of these being small farmers.

The number of persons - both men and women - who occasionally visit a pub is, of course, higher, but very few persons who are not affiliated members of a club are regular joiners in the activities of the pub concerned.

Table I sets out for comparison the distribution of Great Munden men according to their declared habits in regard to visiting public houses. It can be seen that habitual pub-goers represent 54.8 per cent of the total adult male population. This figure refers to the visits

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frequency of visits to the pub. I am indebted to Messrs. Parker and Cori for permission to extract and use data from their original field schedules.

of men to any pub, inside or outside the parish. When the proportion of men claiming to be habitual clients at local pubs was computed, it was found to be within 5 per cent of the proportion of Little Mundeners who are affiliated members of one or more public-house darts and loan clubs. This tends to corroborate the observation

TABLE I PUB-GOING HABITS OF THE ADULT MALE POPULATION OF GREAT MUNDEN, 1952

	No.	Per cent
Habitually during the course of the working week (and by implication at week-ends)	35	28.2
Habitually at week-ends only	33	26.6
'Occasionally'	17	13.7
Very seldom or never	39	31.5
TOTAL	124	100.0

made in Little Munden that habitual attendance at a local pub normally implies participation in its organized and semi-organized activities.

Attention should also be drawn to the fact that almost a half of the habitual pub-goers in Great Munden go to the pub at week-ends only. This finding, too, is in keeping with general observations in Little Munden, where the three larger pubs are always very well attended on Saturdays and Sundays, whereas on week-days each

normally has no more than a handful of 'regulars'.

The participation of women as regular members of pub-groups is on the increase, but still represents deviant behaviour in the community. No serious stigma is placed on a woman who attends the pub regularly, but a local woman who does so definitely loses status, and it is significant that most women recorded as affiliated members of loan and darts clubs are 'foreigners'. There are, however, fine gradations in the scale of values according to which women are judged in regard to pub-going. Thus, for example, occasional attendance at times such as Christmas or New Year evokes little comment from the population at large, and the same is true of more regular participation in a pub-group by a woman of urban, or even of rural but 'foreign', origin.

Cliques or informal groups whose members are bound by old acquaintanceship sometimes tend to attach themselves to one or other particular public house. The domination of a pub by such a group of 'locals' may, to a limited extent, discourage the participation of newcomers. This was observed to be so in two of Little Munden's four pubs. But in neither case was the group effectively closed to outsiders, and the male pub population of the parish as a whole is not appreciably loaded with natives or persons with a long record of

residence locally.

The Attitude to the Local Pubs of Persons other than Villagers

We have said that the members of Little Munden pub-groups are almost exclusively villagers. Fleeting visits may be paid to the local pubs by members of other sections of the population, but prolonged or regular participation in the diverse social activities of the pub is quite exceptional.

Most farmers and middle-class inhabitants deliberately avoid the local pubs in favour of those in nearby villages and towns. Their motives in doing so are illustrated by the following quotations:

(1) 'I don't go to the Adam and Eve. It's not a question of class. You know that I go to the Fox and Hounds (in a nearby village) where the crowd is much the same, but they don't know me there. Down here (at the Adam and Eve), old —— is always there. The first time I went, he wanted to stand me a drink. Well, I can't accept'.
(Middle-class man, prominent in parish life)

(2) 'You get a better crowd in places like 'The Bull' at Hertford. I never know what to talk about with these people'. (i.e. the villagers)
(Middle-class woman)

(3) 'Not to be a snob, but I don't believe in drinking with the men (farm employees); if I want a drink I go right out of the place'.

(Farmer, employer of labour)

(4) 'Where do I go for a drink? Not to The Swan. Familiarity breeds contempt'.

(Farmer, employer of labour)

In a larger village in the area, with 12 pubs, there is a fairly marked difference between one of them which is distinctly middle-class in character, and the remaining eleven, which have a predominantly working-class custom. In Little Munden, however, the non-villager population is too small to allow such differentiation to develop with the result that middle-class persons and farmers are driven out of the parish for any, but the most casual visits to a public-house.

CHAPTER TWELVE

THREE VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATIONS

The social activities centred around either the Church or the public-house constitute important parts of Little Munden's total social life. But the settings of church and pub do not provide us with a fair cross-section of the situations in which Little Mundeners come into contact with each other. Our purpose now is to fill in the important blanks by describing the three major leisure-time associations of the parish: the Cricket Club, the Football Club, and the Women's Institute. Our reason for selecting these three is not only that they are among the leading organizations in the parish, but also, and mainly, that they provide examples of a number of different aspects of the structure of social relations in the community.

The Cricket Club

The Cricket Club is nominally an organization that is representative of the parish. It runs two teams, though in recent years the second team has played irregularly. The teams play matches against clubs from other parishes in the area and from nearby towns. The club is affiliated to a cricket league and the matches played, whether they be 'league fixtures' or 'friendlies', are played in the name of Little Munden. Out of the club's 49 formal members, 36 are residents of the parish, and these include the president, 6 out of 9 vice-presidents,

the secretary, and 29 out of 39 players.

But, very significantly, 10 out of 16 players who normally play for the first team are outsiders - as far as residence is concerned - and they include the captain, the vice-captain and the treasurer of the club, and much of the enthusiasm which keeps the club going comes from persons who are not local inhabitants. To illustrate this point we may refer to the club's annual function which takes the form of a Whist Drive. The event enjoys the reputation of being one of the biggest social functions of the year in the parish. In 1950 it was attended by 184 persons, but only one out of every five supporters was a local inhabitant. In Table I this attendance record is compared to that at comparable social functions run by other organizations such as the Football Club and the Girl Guides' Company. It can be seen that the outside support received by the Cricket Club is exceptionally high, while the number of local inhabitants attending is not significantly higher than at other whist drives.

The explanation lies in the fact that the Cricket Club is very largely, as many local inhabitants allege, 'a farmers' club', and 'a family club'. In discussing 'the family' of farmers in the area in an earlier chapter, we said that its social life was focussed in a few

particular organizations in the area, and we quoted the Chapel in a neighbouring parish and two cricket clubs as examples.

TABLE I ATTENDANCES AT FOUR WHIST DRIVES, DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN PARISH INHABITANTS AND NON-RESIDENTS, 1950

	Number present	Parish Inhabitants	Non-Residents	Percentage of Non-Residents
Cricket Club Annual Whist Drive	184	38	146	79.4
Girl Guides' Company Annual Whist Drive	65	44	21	32.3
Football Club Annual Whist Drive	50	35	15	30.0
Special Whist Drive in aid of funds for a School Outing	38	28	10	26.3

For further comparison it may be noted that the average attendance at the monthly whist drives organized by the Women's Institute in October, November and December, 1950 was 62 persons. The proportion of outsiders ranged from 33.9 per cent at one of these events to 46.7 at another.

To most intents and purposes, the Little Munden Cricket Club is run by, and for, a particular branch of 'the family', and at the annual function support is given

to the club from 'the family' as a whole.

The kinship connexions between 12 former members of the club - there is only one former club-member who is not in 'the family' - are shown diagrammatically on the following page. If the diagram is closely scrutinised to trace the kinship connexions between, say, the president of the club and each individual who is a member of both 'the family' and the club, the following particular relationships are seen:

one vice-president is the president's brother,

one vice-president is the president's niece's husband,

one vice-president is the president's niece's brother-in-law,

one vice-president is the president's niece's father-in-law,

one vice-president (and player) is the president's nephew,

the treasurer, who is also a player, is the president's nephew,

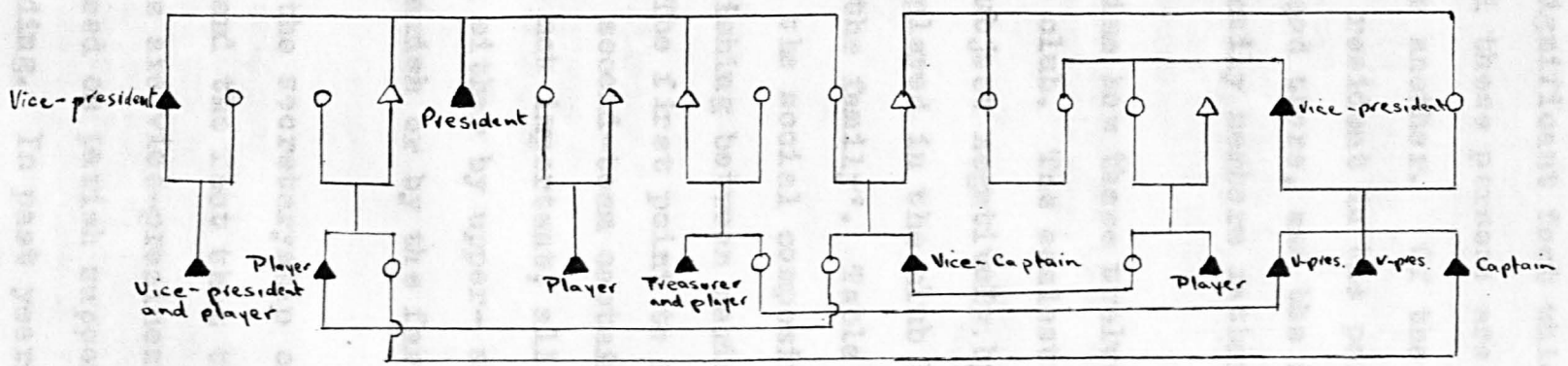
the first-team captain is the husband of a niece of the president and the brother-in-law of another,

the first-team vice-captain is the president's nephew,

two ordinary first-team players are the president's nephews and one is a brother-in-law to the president's nephew.

No suggestion is made that the details of these interconnexions are important for understanding the working

DIAGRAM SHOWING THE KINSHIP CONNEXIONS BETWEEN TWELVE FARMER MEMBERS OF THE CRICKET CLUB



Club members shown in black

of the club. The significant fact which it is desired to stress is that all these persons are members of 'the family' in one way or another. Of the 12 members concerned, three are resident in the parish, three spent most of their childhood there, and the remaining six have joined the club as family members rather than as parish inhabitants.

Let us now examine how these twelve members of 'the family' fit into the club. The easiest way of doing this, is to approach the subject negatively by explaining the small part which is played in the club by persons who are not members of 'the family'. Table II gives the basic information on the social composition of the club as a whole, distinguishing between parish inhabitants and non-residents. The first point to note is that with the exception of the second-team captaincy and vice-captaincy, which are not important, all official positions in the club are held either by upper- and middle-class inhabitants of the parish or by the farmers already referred to.

The holding of the secretaryship of the club by the local schoolmaster, and the fact that the parson and three upper-class residents are vice-presidents suggests that the club is still based on parish support, but the impression is misleading. In past years honorary vice-

TABLE II CRICKET CLUB MEMBERSHIPS HELD BY PERSONS IN DIFFERENT SECTIONS OF THE POPULATION, DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN LITTLE MUNDEN INHABITANTS AND NON-RESIDENTS, 1950

Members	Little Munden Inhabitants	Others
President	Farmer	
Vice-Presidents	3 Upper class inhabitants 1 Middle-class inhabitant (the local parson) 2 Farmers	3 Farmers
Secretary	Middle-class (the local schoolmaster)	-
Treasurer	-	Farmer *
Captain of the first team	-	Farmer *
Vice-Captain of the first team	-	Farmer *
Captain of the second team	Villager *	-
Vice-Captain of the second team	Villager *	-
Players who, when given a game, normally play for the first team	2 Farmers ** 4 Villagers	1 Middle-class person 6 Farmers 3 Villagers
Players who, when given a game, normally play for the second team	23 Villagers	-

* These persons and one of the vice-presidents (a farmer) are included in the table twice viz. as holders of particular positions and as first- or second-team players.

** One of these farmers is not a member of 'the family'. He holds no official position in the club.

presidencies involved their holders in the natural obligation of making substantial donations to the club, but since the war this convention has lapsed. None of the larger farmers in the club would have the effrontery to expect more than a token subscription from the parson or the gentry, and the club's existence is in no way dependent on patronage from 'above', as it undoubtedly was in earlier days. The parson occasionally puts in an appearance at an important match, but it is quite exceptional for upper-class inhabitants to do so. Similarly, for several years now, neither the parson nor any one of the upper-class vice-presidents has taken the trouble to pay so much as a fleeting visit to the cricket club Whist Drive which is the organization's annual social function. Nor does the schoolmaster play an effective part in the club; it is a well-established convention that he should be the club's secretary, but to-day all the routine duties normally exercised by an official in this position, are carried out either by the treasurer or the first-team captain. Pre-arranged committee meetings are never held, and the effective conduct of the club's affairs is entirely in the hands of 'the family'.

Summarising the above, it can be said that except for the parson's occasional presence at an important match, the upper and middle-class 'officials' display a complete indifference towards the club, and that the

real leaders of the club make no attempt to rekindle their interest. According to all accounts, this situation has only reached its climax during recent years.

Concurrently with this post-war trend, there has developed a certain amount of resentment within the parish against the farmers. It can be seen from Table II that differences in social composition between the first and second teams are marked. Out of 16 members who rank as first-team players, eight are farmers, whereas no farmer is to be found in the second team which contains only local villagers. 'The second team is just the riff-raff', explained a disinterested middle-class onlooker. It is hardly surprising that it is usually said that 'the farmers' run the club for themselves' and that 'ordinary people don't get a chance to have a game'. Views of this kind were openly aired by one individual at a recent annual meeting, and are undoubtedly held by most inhabitants. The farmers' retorts, during the subsequent period when the matter was commonly discussed in the parish, were that 'the village people complain but won't do anything for the club', that 'the first team have to play in whites and many of the working fellows in the village cannot afford it', and that 'the village people don't stick to anything these days, and it is difficult trying to arrange things for them'.

To-day, the members of the second team are mainly youths, some of whom gain promotion to the first team from time to time, but there is no effective leader to keep the second team together, and interest has waned to the point that regular matches are now arranged only for the first team.

As a result of these trends, inter-village matches, which formerly commanded the interest of the parish as a whole, now attract no more than a small proportion of the village population, and the annual 'Derby Day', when the match against the parish's traditional rival is played, has come to be known as a 'Farmers' Day'.

It should not be thought that the control of the cricket club by the farmers has developed recently. Members of 'the family' have been prominent enthusiasts in the club since the time of its foundation. According to all accounts, however, it is only since the last war that the second team has virtually disintegrated and that the club has come to be as exclusively a farmer's organization as it is to-day.

The change in the cricket club situation reflects a general change in the relationships between farmers and villagers, which was described to the writer by one tradesman in the parish in the following words:

'In the olden days (say, the 1920s) the gentry were the people with money. Now its the farmers, and I can't

understand what's come over them. There used to be no difference between them and us (i.e. working-class people). Now they hardly look at you, and they don't even study their own workers. When 5 o'clock is gone, they (the farmers) just drop them (the workers)'.

And the same man, describing how the Men's Social Club in the parish had lapsed, came back to the point: 'You see, in those days the farmers used to give a hand. They used to mix with us. You didn't think of them as being different to anybody else'.

The claim that 'there was no difference' between farmers and villagers must, of course, not be read as meaning that there was no social distinction between them. We know very well that the farmers were socially differentiated from their workers, but a measure of inter-personal intimacy and of co-operation in the pursuit of organized leisure-time activities between farmers and workers was more general than it is at the present time.

The Football Club

The Football Club is of interest as an example of an organization that is run mainly by villagers for villagers.

Like the Cricket Club, it has a number of members who are not parish residents. Some of these are former inhabitants and a few have been recruited by individuals

from among friends and work associates in town in an effort to raise the number of regular players in the club. But, unlike the Cricket Club, the organization has no dominating family and no solidary groupings within its ranks. Its members are drawn,without distinction, from amongst 'old families' and 'foreigners'. All the playing members are villagers, as are also, with one exception, the spectators at matches played in the parish. The single exception is, once again, the parson.

The history of the organization can be described briefly. The club was founded in the 1920s. According to retrospective accounts, it then received some support from the local farmers, though it is said that these never devoted the same interest to football as they did to cricket. One informant maintained that there was a tendency for the farmers to regard football as a working-class game. And, although a few farmers' sons did take part in games on the field from time to time, the support which the club received from this quarter was given because playing members were mainly employees. To-day, on the other hand, most of the club-members are workers employed in town, and there is no reason for farmers to continue supporting the organization. The club's status in the parish has never been high enough for it to venture soliciting upper-class inhabitants as honorary members and, apart from farmers, its principal sponsors over

past years were the Rector and the schoolmaster.

To-day the farmer who lends his field for football games (and whose father did so before him) is officially recorded as the president, but he shows no interest in the club's affairs. Permission to use the field in question is taken for granted, and the president is not expected to play any part in the club.

The club committee consists of a chairman, a secretary-treasurer, the playing team's captain and four other members. The chairman is the Rector. All the other members are villagers employed in urban areas and, with one exception, all are men who were brought up in the parish, who attended the village school and who are drawn from the hard core of 'old families'. Significantly, the one exception of a man who came to the parish as an adult, is the team captain. He is acclaimed as a hero by local schoolboys on the touch-line, and undoubtedly holds his position on the committee by virtue of his sporting ability which is exceptional by village standards. But he is not in any true sense a leader off the playing field.

The way in which the committee works provides a good example of one aspect of social structure in the parish. Despite his many other interests, the parson is no footballer and has no enthusiasm for football as such. Without question, he takes the chair as a duty expected

of him. Yet his participation is vital to the functioning of the club, for he is the authority who appeals for co-operation and support from the local population, or in whose name such appeals are made by the active organizer. Club events receive publicity from the pulpit, and it is primarily the parson's formal association with the club which serves to raise its status as an organization above that of a darts club.

The active organizer of the club is the secretary-treasurer, who is the son of a labourer and a member of an 'old'parish family. His work for the club is regarded by his own parents and by a few close friends as being quite outstanding, and it is true that he is one of the few villagers in the parish who fills a key position in any sphere of social life excepting in the pubs. His own background prevents him from being an effective leader in his own right, and he is not uncommonly accused of being 'too big for his boots'.

The Women's Institute

Since the date of its foundation (1918) the local branch of the Women's Institute has not ceased to be an active organization. As originally sponsored, the group functioned in much the same way as one of the auxiliary organizations in the Church. Its leadership was in the hands of upper-class women, and its very existence appears

to have been dependent on their interest. The Institute's minute books suggest that this remained so throughout the inter-war period. Since the end of the war, however, the influence of upper-class ladies in the organization has diminished, and in recent years the presidency of the Institute has, at one time or another, been in the hands of a woman drawn from each section of the population in turn. Such a record of the passing on of the principal position in an organization from one class to another, is unique in the parish. But we must say right away that it reflects an integration of diverse elements in the population rather than a change in the aspirations of working-class women of local origin.

The decline in upper-class influence is significant. Only one 'lady' is a member of the organization and she has deliberately taken a back seat since the war. She is recognised as having been one of the pillars of the Institute in pre-war days, and she has consented, under pressure, to remain one of its two Vice-Presidents. The second Vice-President is replaced annually, but the 'lady' in question retains her position and will probably do so throughout her life-time. Her own interpretation is that there is no longer any need for

her to be an active member. This attitude is now fairly general among the upper-class inhabitants, except in the Church.

This, then, is one significant change reflected in the Women's Institute.

The second marked change is that the Institute has developed a strong middle-class character. Unlike most church auxiliaries, the Institute is not led by middle-class women for the benefit of villagers. Women classified as villagers do predominate as members, but a nucleus of wives of middle-class commuters have joined the organization and are now the dominant element. The composition of the Institute is shown in Table III,

TABLE III WOMEN'S INSTITUTE MEMBERSHIPS HELD BY PERSONS IN DIFFERENT SECTIONS OF THE POPULATION, DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN LITTLE MUNDEN INHABITANTS AND NON-RESIDENTS, 1950

Members	Little Munden Inhabitants	Others
President	Middle-class (The Nurse)	-
Vice-Presidents	Upper-class resident Villager	-
Secretary	Middle-class resident	-
Treasurer	Villager	-
Ordinary members	4 Middle-class 1 Farmer's wife 13 Villagers	3 Middle-class* 4 Villagers **

* All from nearby towns
** All former members of the defunct branch of an Institute in a neighbouring parish.

from which it can be seen that there are even middle-class members from nearby urban areas. Two of these were formerly inhabitants of the parish (a schoolmaster's wife, and a nurse). The fact that these return to the parish regularly to participate in the organization, testifies to the difference in the attitude which middle-class women have towards the Institute and that which they have towards the Church auxiliaries, where they tend to perform a duty in attending.

This growth of middle-class interest has been accompanied by a trend towards the integration of 'foreign' working-class women. Members of 'old families' are in the majority, but in sharp contrast to the situation in most church auxiliaries, the 'old' inhabitants do not dominate the scene; it is possible for a newcomer to the parish to enter the group without being the only member with no kinship connexions within the group, and without being the only person unversed in the antecedents of the remaining members. In the 'closed' church auxiliaries, relationships are finely balanced; no group forms a solidary kinship unit, but such kinship connexions as there are between participants are known to others, as are their individual histories.

The rather different situation obtaining in the Women's Institute tends to submerge the 'old' inhabitants.

These still display little or no aspiration to positions of authority and high status in the organization, but, in the atmosphere described, they accept the claim of 'foreign' working-class women to do so. It is significant, for example, that the two working-class women who occupied the positions of vice-president and treasurer in 1950, as well as the only working-class woman who is a former president, are outsiders - one a Londoner and the other two of rural but 'foreign' origin.

Comment

When the voluntary associations discussed in this chapter are compared with each other and with the groups centred on the Church and the public-houses, it is seen that, in structure and in form of integration, there is a wide range of variation within parish organizations. The examples of the Cricket Club and most of the Church auxiliaries show what degree of truth there is in allegations such as that 'all these people are related and if you're not one of them, they won't look at you'. But the Women's Institute shows that, at the other extreme, the integration of newcomers can and does take place on the basis of common interest and common residence. The pub groups and the Football Club fall in between the two extremes. It will be

recalled that we said of the latter that playing members were drawn indiscriminately from among 'old' inhabitants and newcomers, though the committee tends to be a 'closed' group, while in some of the pubs there is evidence of a slight tendency for men to form cliques of their own.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

TENURE OF OFFICE IN PUBLIC COMMITTEES

There are five local committees that are, to a greater or lesser extent, concerned with directing matters of public interest in Little Munden. By making certain appropriate allowances, an analysis of the membership of these committees can yield an accurate indication of who governs local affairs, thus completing the picture of authority structure and leadership which has emerged so far.

It will be recalled that the five committees are the Parish Council, the Mission Room Committee, the School Board of Management, the Parish Hall Committee, and the Parish Charity Trustees. To call all of these 'organs of government' is to use a high-sounding phrase to refer to committees which have very limited powers, and which would appear, on the surface, to be of minimal importance. But our interest in them springs from the fact that it is in and through these committees that the community's politics are enacted. Moreover, they are all active, functioning committees. Most of their members hold the conviction that their duties and powers are not trivial. And, for most inhabitants, it is in these committees, if anywhere, that they can hope to find a chance of realising

such aspirations as they may have to the tenure of public office.

The Position of the Five Committees in the Community

The powers and duties of the committees are not of much relevance to our discussion. We shall, therefore, confine ourselves to indicating the position of each committee in the community, in the briefest possible terms.

The Parish Council has five elected members plus a clerk appointed at a salary of £10 per annum. It has a number of well-known duties and responsibilities to perform. The one regarded by the local population as the most important is that of making recommendations to the District Council as to the order in which council houses should be allocated to applicants (whose number invariably exceeds the number of houses available). In practice, the Parish Council is the effective arbiter in the allocation of houses. The second most important function of the Council is to act as the mouthpiece of the community in dealings with external public authorities and corporations. An actual example will illustrate the type of situation which arises fairly frequently: recently the inhabitants of the parish's smallest hamlet thought

they were entitled to a bus service; the Parish Council was the organization to take the matter up with London Transport and, after refusal, with the Member of Parliament for the Division.

The Parish Hall Committee as its name suggests, attends to the running of the hall, and controls the letting thereof to local organizations, to the County Council (for Welfare Clinic and school use) and to individual families. The community has a certain amount of pride in its Parish Hall, which is considered to compare favourably with the general run of parish halls in the area. The Committee comprises elected members as well as three representatives of the Parish Council, the Women's Institute and the Cricket Club respectively. Next to the Parish Council, the committee is regarded as the most influential committee in the parish.

The School Board of Management was, in years gone by, an important committee. To-day its powers over the school are severely limited. The school has 'controlled' status, in terms of the Education Act of 1944, which means that the Board does not hold the power to appoint or to dismiss teachers, and that it does not meet any part of the cost of running the school. The school buildings do, however, remain the property of the Church, and the latter continues to be closely interested in the running of the school.

Mission Room Committee: The Mission Room was in the late nineteenth century a Methodist preaching station. In the 1920s, it was given by the Methodists, to the local Rector - to be passed on in turn, to his successor, and to the successor's successor and so on. The motive of the Methodists in making the gift was to ensure that the room should never be sold, and, in particular, that it should never fall into the hands of a brewery owning the public house next door. The room has always been used by the Rector for the benefit of the community. A small committee attends to its upkeep.

The Charity Trustees are three in number. They are responsible for allocating certain benefits, which to-day appear ridiculously small, to the poor, aged and infirm of the parish. Like the School Board, this Committee is, by tradition, associated with the Church.

Committee Memberships held by Villagers

Table I sets out the basic facts on the social composition of the various committees in 1950. It can be seen from the last row of figures in the table that there is a gross disproportion in the distribution of committee memberships among different sections of the population. There are 40.1 villagers, aged 16 years and over, for every one membership held by a villager, whereas the ratio for the population as a whole is 10.2, and for

TABLE I PUBLIC COMMITTEE SEATS HELD BY MEMBERS OF DIFFERENT SECTIONS OF THE POPULATION, LITTLE MUNDEN, 1950

UC = Upper class MC = Middle class

F = Farmers V = Villagers

Committee	UC	MC	F	V	Total
School Board	2	1*	2	-	5
Charity Trustees	1	1*	1	-	3
Parish Hall Committee	1	4	5**	4	14**
Mission Room Committee	-	1*	2	1	4
Parish Council	-	1	4	1	6
TOTAL	4	8	14	6	32
Number of persons holding one or more public offices	3	5	7	5	20
Average number of offices held per office-holder	1.3	1.6	2.0	1.2	1.6
Number of persons, aged 16 years and over, in a particular section of the population, to every one membership held by a representative of that section	3.0	4.0 (PCS, 1.3)*** (MDC, 8.5)***	1.8**	40.1	10.2**

* Position held, ex officio, by the parson.

** Among the farmers on the Parish Hall Committee are two non-residents. One sits as a representative of the Cricket Club, and the other is a former resident of the parish who retained his seat on departure. These two were excluded from the calculation designed to show the number of persons per every one office which is in the hands of a particular section of the population.

*** PCS = Professional Community servants (e.g. parson) ; MDC = Middle class daily commuters and retired folk

all other sections of the population the corresponding figure is significantly lower than the average for the community. Following on earlier references to the traditional acceptance of social inequality in parish affairs, the gross difference between villagers and non-villagers needs little explanation. What is more likely to surprise the reader is that as many as five villagers are found on parish committees, and that these five represent a quarter of all persons holding one or more memberships.

An individual study of each of these cases provides valuable evidence on the whole problem of the presence or absence of aspirations to positions of authority on the part of villagers.

The first case which we shall study is that of an agricultural labourer who is a Parish Councillor and a member of the Parish Hall Committee. His major achievement is that he has on two occasions successfully fought Parish Council elections (1946 and 1949).

To appreciate the significance of this we must review the history of elections to the council. In Chapter X we recorded that in 1907 a Parish Council election was unsuccessfully fought by the local Rector. From that date till 1946, the minutes of the Parish Meeting record every three years, with unfailing monotony,

incidents such as the following:

1910 'Five nomination papers were handed in .... after the usual interval these were declared to be duly elected.'

1922 'The only electors present were the retiring councillors. Five nomination papers were handed in and these candidates were duly elected.'

1931 'Present at the meeting were the five councillors and two electors. Only five nominations were handed in .....'

1943 'All the retiring councillors were re-elected.'

The persons participating in the Council during the 40 or 50 years prior to 1946 were almost exclusively farmers, and upper and middle-class inhabitants. The following are typical examples of parish councils during these years:

1913: 'Chairman: the local schoolmaster
Ordinary councillors: Four farmers (all members of 'the family').

1922: Chairman: Upper-class resident
Ordinary councillors: One upper-class resident, two farmers (members of 'the family') and one villager, to whom we shall refer presently.

1937: Chairman: Upper-class resident
Ordinary councillors: Four farmers (three of whom were members of 'the family')

The data speak for themselves. The only villager who, at any time during this period, became a councillor was a gardener and the circumstances of his participation were unusual in several ways. Firstly, he was originally co-opted to the Council to fill a vacancy in between two elections. Secondly, he was a man with exceptional charismatic qualities. (We referred to him in Chapter VIII as having been one of the prime enthusiasts in finding the Cricket Club in 1903). Thirdly, by the time he joined the Council, he had become related through marriage to 'the family' of farmers.

In 1946, we find a real challenge being made to the past leaders of the Council. At the election meeting nine nominations were handed in. There were as follows:

1. Farmer (member of 'the family' and Chairman of the Council)
2. Farmer (member of 'the family')
3. The assistant schoolmistress
4. A middle-class townsman who had worked on the land during the war and who had then served on the Council
5. A retired middle-class woman
6. An agricultural labourer, employee of No.1
7. A Gardener

8. A Publican

9. A Shopkeeper.

The election was by show of hands and the meeting was 'well attended' according to the minutes. Although there was no organized canvassing for election, it was well known in the parish that Nos. 6, 7, and 8 were standing as 'Labour Party candidates', inspired and led by No.6 who was challenging his employer. Nos. 1 to 4 and No.6 were elected.

Three years later in 1949, when the wave of Labour feeling had somewhat subsided, the agricultural labourer who had been elected in 1946 was the only 'Socialist candidate' and he was opposed by two farmers, the local schoolmaster, one middle-class townsman and a 'Conservative' villager, who was urged to stand for election by the farmers. The sole 'Labour candidate' was elected.

These incidents are not recounted as evidence of the growth of aspirations among the local population of villagers. Quite the contrary: the successful Labour candidate of 1946 and 1949 is a former industrial worker from the Midlands who migrated to the area following on the economic depression of the 1930s. The fact that he found sufficient support to be elected is itself of some slight significance, but if the train of events is followed through to 1952, we find that by this time the

individual concerned had left the parish, and that the Council elections were once again unopposed.

The cases of the remaining four villagers who were serving on parish committees in 1950 yield but little evidence to refute the conclusions drawn so far. Three are elected members of the Parish Hall Committee. Of these, two are members of the Women's Institute and though they do not officially represent this organization, they are encouraged to come by the official W.I. representative 'to make up the numbers'. One villager committee-member is the 'Conservative' man who was unsuccessful in fighting the 1949 Parish Council election. His case is of some interest. He was born and bred in the parish. His father was a semi-skilled manual worker in town. The son is a qualified artisan and he has risen above the social status of his father. His position in the parish is insecure. He might be termed a borderline villager and occasionally mixes with one of the immigrant farmers.

Finally, there is the case of one villager who holds a position on the Mission Room Committee at the invitation of the parson. We have previously encountered him working in close co-operation with the Rector as secretary-treasurer of the Football Club (Cf.Chapter XII).

The Division of Committee Memberships between Upper-Class and Middle-Class Inhabitants and Farmers

The minority strata of the community between them rule the parish. (Refer back to Table I) We have already referred to the grip of 'the family' of farmers on the Parish Council and their position is equally strong in the Parish Hall Committee. In the case of both bodies, the influence of the farmers is probably stronger to-day than ever before as a result of the virtual abdication of the upper-class inhabitants whose active interest is now confined to the Church and its associated committees (the School Board and the Charity Trustees).

Middle-class representation on the public committees is not decisive in parish affairs. The parson and the schoolmaster set the tone of the representatives who are conscientious in safeguarding the interests of the Church, the school and the parish generally, but who tend to remain detached from local interests.

By contrast, the farmers bring to the committees personal and family interests fostered and maintained over two to three generations. Fourteen, or nearly a half of all committee memberships in the parish, are held by farmers. Of these fourteen memberships, only

one (on the Parish Hall Committee) is held by a farmer who is not a member of 'the family', and one man, who is without question the most influential person in the parish, sits on all five committees. He is the acknowledged leader of the parish and usually presides over any ad hoc committees set up from time to time to consider matters of public interest that are not dealt with by the existing bodies. If one of the upper-class inhabitants happens to be interested in the work of any committee, he or she normally replaces the farmer as chairman, but this rarely happens unless the matter in question concerns the Church.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

THE SO-CALLED 'BREAK-UP' OF THE PARISH

It is a widely held belief that the villages of England have tended to become, in the words of the Scott Report, 'loose and indeterminate'.[1] And we have said, on more than one occasion, that some Little Mundeners maintain that their community is 'breaking-up'. The descriptions given in the foregoing pages show, however, that the community system is relatively rigid and stable. There have been changes over past decades, and particularly in recent post-war years, but the basic social structure has by no means disintegrated. It now remains for us to indicate, in this concluding chapter, how the relative stability of the social structure and the so-called 'break-up' of the community combine to create some of the problems with which Little Munden and its inhabitants are faced.

First of all, what do the 'old' inhabitants mean when they say the parish is 'breaking-up'? Different people refer to various particular trends, and, of course, there is no clearly formulated idea in the community as to what the 'break-up' implies. But generally the

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1 Report of the Committee on Land Utilisation in Rural Areas HMSO Cmd.6378 (1942) p.53.

assertion is linked to statements such as that 'people don't mix' and 'don't know each other as they used to', that it is difficult to organize group activities, and that when children have been to school outside the parish they become apathetic in supporting local organizations. All these statements are relative, and it seems probable that, as such, they are true expressions of current trends. There is an ever-increasing dissection of contacts and, in consequence, a lessening of intensity in the relationships maintained within the parish.

At the same time, we have seen that a majority of the total population still associates itself with parish organizations in one way or another. The real problem, seen from the angle of the group organizer, is that under present-day conditions the mere fact of residing in the parish does not render the inhabitant dependent on the locality for the whole range of his social outlets. Some individuals can afford to make a deliberate choice as to where and when they will associate themselves with the community, and some can, as a few people do, dissociate themselves altogether from the parish group.

We explained earlier that this latter course is often favoured by middle-class townsmen. This in itself carries no important implications for the parish. The question whether, if middle-class townsmen were to participate

more regularly in the community, they might have the same influence on it as a few of their wives have had through the Women's Institute, is largely conjectural. Of far greater importance is the fact that numbers of villagers and farmers also tend to break away from the parish.

Most of the immigrant farmers who are not members of 'the family', never became integrated into the life of the community and their position is comparable to that of middle-class townsmen, in that they tend to rely on social outlets found in nearby towns and large villages that are less closely-knit than Little Munden, and where, in consequence entry into the group is easier.

Villagers, who are newcomers, on the other hand, seldom enjoy the same opportunities for travelling back and forth from the parish to the towns during leisure hours, and those who do not find some outlets locally comprise a fairly large mass of families living in a state of semi-isolation and only entering into contact with local persons in situations which involve no lasting obligations.

Another category of persons who often lead their lives independently of the organized activities in the parish are emergent or borderline villagers. From some points of view, it might be expected that this group should contain active participants in local affairs,

but this is rarely the case. The emergent villager tends to be estranged from the community by forces which are just as powerful as those which deter the middle-class person from full participation within the parish. To illustrate this we may quote the case of a native-born woman who had risen from a working-class family, followed a clerical occupation and married one of her office associates. 'The biggest trouble in this village', she explained, 'is that you can't keep people at a distance. They don't judge you on what you are, but on your family history. Because people like X, played with me when I was a child, they call me by my Christian name. I'll get out of here as soon as ever I get the chance'. In the meanwhile, this woman was living an isolated life in the parish without taking part in any group activities which might involve embarrassing contacts with childhood friends and even with certain of her kinsmen.

Finally, there are villagers of all grades for whom non-participation in, or merely casual association with, the local community arises out of a desire to evade the traditional authority and control of the parish groups. There is practically no open rejection of the norms of the community, but, when these prove irksome and when local life appears uninteresting, the attractions of Sunday newspapers, football pools, radio and television,

and, occasionally, of active participation in town life, tend more and more to replace the activities which can be followed in the parish.

It is the accumulation of all these categories of 'non-joiners' and 'poor-joiners' into an absolute majority of the total population which often leads parish leaders to despair. It is, too, the fact that so large a number of persons are apathetic, but not hostile towards the parish group and not deeply involved in alternative group life, that enables the parish to act as a solidary unit on rare occasions of crisis or celebration (e.g. the Coronation in 1953, when some three-quarters of the inhabitants participated in local celebrations).