

The Long and Short Hundred in Agrarian Statistics

By REGINALD LENNARD

BESIDES the material examined in my article on medieval sheep statistics (AHR VII, 1959, pp. 75-81), a good deal of evidence on the relative frequency with which the long and short hundreds were employed is to be found in the *Inquisitiones Post Mortem* and for the few counties for which these have been published is readily available. It occurs almost entirely in statements about areas of arable which give the value per acre and the total value. Unfortunately the published inquests are given only in translation, and it is just possible that in a few cases the translator may have expressed as a 'hundred' what the original expresses as 'five score'; and such cases would have no bearing on the problem. Some statements too are made useless by discrepancies in the figures due to errors in arithmetic or transcription. Yet a brief summary of the data supplied by documents of thirteenth-century date may be helpful.

1. *Lancashire and Westmorland*. The evidence is very scanty mainly because in these inquests lands are commonly measured in carucates and bovates instead of acres; but these are counties for which I found no evidence at all in my previous article, so it seems worth noting. At Roseacre in Kirkham parish, Lancashire, 215 acres are described as "by the lesser hundred" and valued at £8 19s. 2d. (i.e. ten pence per acre). An inquest of 1298 lists 251½ acres of waste at West Derby "by the long hundred," another 234 acres "by the short hundred," and another 200 acres which the arithmetic shows to have been long hundreds though no statement to that effect is made. The same inquest also uses the long hundred without comment for some land at Wavertree. An inquest of 1247 values 200 acres in Patterdale (Westmorland) at £4: this suggests a use of the long hundred, but one cannot be sure.¹

2. *Nottinghamshire*. Eight cases of the short hundred and two of the long hundred, one of which is described as "of the greater number."²

3. *Staffordshire*. Nine cases of the short hundred and one which is said to

¹ *Lancashire Inquests 1205-1307*, ed. W. Farrer, Lancs. and Cheshire Record Soc., 1903, pp. 266, 285-6, 167.

² *Abstracts of the Inquisitiones Post Mortem relating to Nottinghamshire 1279-1321*, ed. J. Standish, Thoroton Soc., 1914, pp. 21, 33, 34, 61, 79, 81, 173, 176, and for the long hundred pp. 80, 109.

be "by the larger hundred" but actually assumes a five-score hundred in its arithmetic.¹

4. *Worcestershire*. Nine cases of the short hundred, one of the long—also one *probable* case of each.²

5. *Gloucestershire*. Forty-four cases of the short hundred, in two of which (Stinchcombe, 1256; Saintbury, 1300) the figures are stated to embody the "small" or "lesser" hundred. One inquest, of the year 1299, contains four cases of figures which are described as "by the greater hundred" and two (included in the total of forty-four) which employ the short hundred without comment.³

6. *Wiltshire*. Seventy-three cases of the short hundred, in thirteen of which its use is noted.⁴ The long hundred is used (without comment) in one case.⁵

7. *Dorset*. Ten cases of the short hundred, none of the long.⁶

8. *Bedfordshire*. Eight cases of the short hundred (in one of which its use is noted): also six probable cases of the same. Two cases of the long hundred, both accompanied by a statement to that effect.⁷

All the above figures are for measures of land: only in four of the counties do the inquests throw any light upon the methods employed in the enumeration of sheep. At Lechlade in Gloucestershire some pasture for 200 sheep is valued (*temp.* Henry III) at 16s. 8d., which suggests a short hundred as the

¹ *Inquisitions Post Mortem etc., Staffordshire 1223-1327*, W. Salt Collections, 1911, pp. 146, 222, 243, 244, 247, 248, 249, 250, and for the alleged 'larger hundred', p. 243.

² *Inquisitiones for Worcestershire*, Part I, ed. J. W. Willis Bund, Worcestershire Hist. Soc., 1894, pp. 16, 20, 26, 31, 42, 56, 60, 61, 62, 64, and for the "probable" cases, pp. 33, 55.

³ *Inquisitiones Post Mortem for Gloucestershire*, Vol. IV, ed. S. J. Madge, British Record Soc., 1903, pp. 21, 27, 41, 55, 61, 92, 96, 102, 103, 123, 124, 132, 133, 135, 137, 138, 140, 141, 142, 147, 148, 150, 158, 168, 169, 170, 172, 174, 175, 179, 180, 181, 188, 192, 193, 195, 198, 201, 220, and for the last-named inquest, pp. 202-9. A few cases refer to lands outside Gloucestershire.

⁴ *Abstracts of Wiltshire Inquisitiones Post Mortem, 1242-1326*, ed. E. A. Fry, British Record Soc., 1908, pp. 2, 8, 23, 43, 51, 60, 62, 63, 64, 68, 71, 75, 77, 81, 87, 92, 100, 104, 106, 107, 111, 128, 132, 134, 138, 139, 141, 142, 145, 146, 147, 151, 156, 157, 167, 169, 170, 171, 174, 175, 182, 192, 201, 206, 210, 214, 215, 216, 218, 223, 227, 228, 229, 230, 232, 233, 235, 236, 242, 250, 252, 268, 277.

⁵ *ibid.*, p. 245.

⁶ *Dorset Inquisitiones Post Mortem, 1216-1485*, reprinted from *Notes and Queries for Somerset and Dorset*, 1916, pp. 52, 53, 137, 185, 202, 214, 299, 300, 302. This volume is not complete for the county as it is arranged in alphabetical order of the owners and only extends from A to C.

⁷ *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem*, ed. G. H. Fowler, Beds. Hist. Record Soc., v (Part II), pp. 207, 243, 248; XIX, pp. 117, 118, 130, 135, 136, 137, 139, 140, 141; and, for the long hundred, v, p. 235; XIX, p. 114. The published calendar does not extend beyond the year 1286.

total comes to a penny per sheep on that assumption.¹ In Wiltshire the short hundred is used (without comment) in 18 cases, and in five others the figures suggest its use without proving it.² One Dorset inquest values pasture for 150 sheep at 6s., which might be an approximation, based on the short hundred and reckoning a half-penny per sheep, or else a rough valuation at 4s. the hundred.³ Bedfordshire provides one case of sheep enumerated by the short hundred and that without comment.⁴ In none of the counties is there any certain example of the long hundred in sheep statistics; but its use is suggested by the figures at Fittleton and Mere in Wiltshire and, though certainty is precluded by arithmetical errors, the inquests reveal two other probable cases in this county.⁵ In Dorset, pasture for 200 sheep is valued at 4s. at Steeple, and pasture for 100 is said to be worth 2s. at Child Okeford and 1s. at Iwerne Courtney; but whether these figures imply a six-score hundred or are rough valuations per hundred of five score must be regarded as doubtful.⁶

To sum up: the evidence of these inquests supplements that cited in my former article by showing that there was, perhaps, a tendency to favour the long hundred in Lancashire and that it was used occasionally in several counties where its employment had not previously been noticed. But, apart from Lancashire and possibly Westmorland (for both of which the evidence is very slight), the inquests reveal a preponderance of the five-score hundred which tends to confirm my conclusion that in the west a "hundred" should be understood in that sense unless the contrary appears. It should be noticed that the counties to which this applies now include Staffordshire and Worcestershire—counties previously omitted for lack of evidence.

ADDENDUM. Some evidence for another part of the country is afforded by the Yorkshire Inquisitions published by the Yorkshire Archaeological Association in their Record Series. Thirteen of those of thirteenth-century date contain seventeen clear cases of land measured by the long hundred (I, pp. 48, 143, 146, 192, 240, 242, 247, 255, 259; II, p. 108; III, pp. 57, 68, 100). Only in ten cases, contained in six inquests, is it clear that the five-score hundred was employed (I, pp. 40, 68, 160, 169, 222, 223, 224; III, p. 128). It is, however, remarkable that in six of the former examples the use of the

¹ *op. cit.* (Gloucestershire), p. 55.

² *op. cit.* (Wiltshire), pp. 2, 23, 24, 64, 65, 75, 88, 92, 98, 108, 111, 127, 133, 142, 168, 170, 254; and, for the probable cases, pp. 42, 60, 68, 82, 85.

³ *op. cit.* (Dorset), p. 202.

⁴ *op. cit.* (Bedfordshire), XIX, p. 117.

⁵ *op. cit.* (Wiltshire), pp. 107, 277; also Calstone, p. 77, and, more doubtfully, Cherhill, p. 43.

⁶ *op. cit.* (Dorset), pp. 302, 326, 347.

greater hundred is specifically noted, while the five-score hundred is always used without explanation. The method used in enumerating sheep is only illustrated by a single entry: it includes a statement that the reckoning is by the long hundred (I, p. 41).

NOTES AND COMMENTS (*continued from page 90*)

usages adopted in the REVIEW. It is surprising how many articles are sent in with illustrations or tabular matter that obviously will not fit into our page, and with spelling, punctuation, or style of footnote reference which departs in one or more respects from our established practice.

THE AGRARIAN HISTORY OF ENGLAND

The inception of this great undertaking was announced four years ago in Vol. IV of the REVIEW, and a brief report on progress appeared in Vol. V, p. 11. Since then much solid work has been done, particularly on Vol. IV, the pilot volume, which is being edited by Dr Thirsk and covers the period from 1500 to 1640. It is expected that contributors will begin sending in their copy towards the end of this year. Meanwhile, in order to assist the organization of research for other volumes, the Nuffield Foundation has made a further grant of £12,000 to the University of Leicester, whose Department of English Local History is the headquarters of the undertaking. A number of meetings have been held in London, Oxford, and Leicester, to plan the work on Vols. I, III, and VI, and editors have been appointed as follows: Vol. I, Dr H. P. R. Finberg (general editor of the History); Vol. III, Professor M. M. Postan and Dr R. H. Hilton jointly; Vol. VI, Mr J. W. Y. Higgs.

THE BRITISH AGRICULTURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

The Annual Conference for 1960 was held at Harper Adams Agricultural College, Newport, Shropshire, and was attended by about forty members of the Society. The Conference opened on Thursday, 7 April, with a

tour of the College farm, followed by dinner at which the Society was welcomed by the Principal of the College, Mr W. T. Price, M.C. After dinner a paper was given by Miss Dorothy Sylvester on The Open Fields of Shropshire. On the Friday morning members heard papers by Mr Glanville R. J. Jones on The Pattern of Settlement on the Welsh Border and Mr W. T. Price and Mr T. O. Wilson on Recent Changes in Shropshire Agriculture. In the afternoon Miss Sylvester led a tour of west Shropshire. The Conference concluded on the Friday night with a paper by Mr Michael Madden on Agricultural Trades Unionism in England and Wales.

The chair at the annual general meeting on the Friday morning was taken by the Treasurer, Professor Edgar Thomas. The officers of the Society, namely the President, Sir Keith Murray, the Treasurer, Professor Edgar Thomas, and the Secretary, Mr J. W. Y. Higgs, were re-elected, and to fill the places on the Executive Committee vacated by Miss H. A. Beecham, Mr George Ordish, and Mrs Joan Thirsk, the meeting elected Mr George Houston, Mr W. Harwood Long, and Mrs C. S. Orwin.

In the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of the Executive Committee, Mr George Ordish, its report was presented by Professor Edgar Thomas, who said that in the past year membership had risen from 559 to 586. He also reported on the three conferences in the previous year, including the Scottish Conference held in the autumn of 1959, which was a new venture.

In presenting the Treasurer's report, Professor Thomas explained that the financial

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