

List of Books and Articles on Agrarian History issued since June 1969¹

Compiled by DAVID HEY

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Letters to the Editor

MADAM,—In her interesting article on 'The Economic Problems of the See of York' (Volume 18, Supplement), Miss Cross sets out to demolish a myth "that the archbishops of York in the sixteenth century endured grievous spoliation at the hands of the Crown." Her conclusion that this myth is "a pious deception," however, is not consistent with the important new evidence she has discovered.

Let us take her figures of income, adjust them to the only price index we have, namely that of Phelps-Brown and Hopkins¹ and see the result in standard prices of the 1530's. It is fair to say that the Phelps-Brown index is a cost of living index for the poor, and not for an archbishop. The archbishop was partly cushioned from the shock of rocketing food prices by a home farm and some rents in kind, while his expenses were more diverse and more weighted to labour costs and manufactured products than those of the poor. But if one uses the Kerridge² rent index instead, the results are the same.

Date	Archi- episcopal Income	Approximate Kerridge Rent Index	Approximate Phelps- Brown Price Index	Archi- episcopal Income at 1530's prices
1536	£2,000	100	100	£2,000
1560	1,800	170	180	1,000
1600	1,800	300	300	600
1640	?	430	400	?
1700	2,800	[430?]	400	700

After making allowances for the inadequacies of the indices used, the conclusions seem inescapable. Even after the recovery of some of the lost property in the reign of Mary, the income of the archbishop, in terms of purchasing power or of anticipated rental per acre, was little more than half what it had been twenty-five years before. It fell again drastically during the reign of Elizabeth, presumably because of long leases at low rents extracted from the un-

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¹ E. H. Phelps-Brown and S. Hopkins, 'Seven Centuries of Prices of Consumables. . .', *Economica*, n.s. xxiii, 1956, p. 311, reworked to 1639 in L. Stone, *The Crisis of the Aristocracy, 1558-1641*, Oxford, 1956, p. 771.

² E. Kerridge, 'The Movement of Rent, 1560-1640', *Econ. Hist. Rev.*, 2nd ser., vi, 1953, p. 24, reworked in L. Stone, *loc. cit.*