

'THE MOTIVE WHICH HAS OPERATED ON THE MINDS OF MY PEOPLE' 1830, The Propensity of Hampshire Parishes to Riot

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ABSTRACT

"A Want of Good Feeling": A Reassessment of the Economic and Political Causes of the Rural Unrest in Hampshire, 1830' (Afton 1987), explored the economic and political conditions in Hampshire which led to unrest and rioting by agricultural labourers, craftsmen, artisans and small farmers in November, 1830. However, whilst the unrest was caused principally by widespread economic hardship and was ignited by the political tension, the county was not uniformly affected by the agitation. Northeastern Hampshire and the New Forest were largely free of rioting, whilst almost all farms in some areas of the central Hampshire Downs were visited by mobs. Winchester and Alton escaped unrest, but Fordingbridge and Andover were major centres of the rioting. This article will attempt to identify the primary factors which caused particular farms, estates, and mills to be attacked and individual parishes to be affected by riots.

There are several problems inherent in such a study. First, the number of parishes involved prevents more than a selective look at the more outstanding examples of riotous and non-riotous areas. Secondly, while information as to which areas were disturbed is reasonably complete, data on the place of residence of the individual rioters are rarely provided. The mobs were known to move from parish to parish gathering support and pressing the unwilling. Individuals from Houghton, Compton, Broughton, Mottisfont, Micheldever, Tytherley, and Lockerley were involved in a riotous and tumultuous assembly in Romsey parish. There were riots in Burghclere and Weyhill, but authorities in both claimed that no one from the parish had participated. It is therefore impossible to specify the conditions which may have caused rioting in a particular parish without being aware that neighbouring areas almost certainly contributed to the crowds. Within these limitations some observations on conditions which predisposed certain areas to unrest can be made. Three particular factors appear especially important in determining the location of riotous parishes: the agricultural practices and customs, population growth and the way a parish responded to the associated problems of unemployment and poverty, and the relationship between a landowner and his labourers.

THE INFLUENCE OF AGRICULTURAL CONDITIONS

The unrest of 1830 is often referred to as the 'Revolt of the Agricultural Labourers', and, although this tends to ignore the significant role played by other parts of the community, it does emphasize the importance of agricultural conditions on the situation in Hampshire in November, 1830 (Afton 1987). There was a close correlation between the propensity to riot and the nature and fertility of the soil, with rioting being concentrated in the more easily farmed areas of central Hampshire. This was because the nature of the soil helped determine land use, farm size, and agricultural practices, as well as influencing the type of landowner most likely to be attracted into the area.

Central Hampshire was a region of chalk subsoil which, because drainage was good, could be reasonably productive without excessive effort or expense. Much of the land had been uncultivated downland until ploughed up during the Napoleonic Wars (Wilkinson 1861, 290-1). Although the soil quickly lost its fertility if it were neglected, a system of crop rotation was practised on the Hampshire Downs in which sheep were folded off root and grass crops to fertilize the soil for grain crops (*ibid*, 290-302). This helped maintain the value of the land and diversified the farmer's investment with possible profits from corn, wool and meat. The ease with which the land could be farmed attracted newcomers and encouraged investment. Because there was little need to spend money on soil improvement, available capital could be invested in more land or spent

on opulent living, expensive stock or farm implements. Holdings on the Downs were consequently large, with some containing more than 1,000 acres. This part of Hampshire became known as 'the land of gentlemen farmers' (*ibid*, 290). The larger landowners separated themselves from their labourers in large houses surrounded by acres of park and garden. On the Hampshire Downs during the 1830 unrest the polarization between such men and both smaller tenants and workers typically resulted in acts of machine breaking, extortion, and wage demands (HRO 14M50/2).

The more fertile areas along the escarpment between the Hampshire Downs and the London Basin and parts of the Hampshire Basin and the Weald were also affected by the unrest. Along the escarpment erosion helped produce a fertile blend of chalk and clay which resulted in good wheat land. The Greensands of the Weald produced hops, arables, and good pasture. The river valleys of the Hampshire Basin had rich alluvial soil. Even marginal land around Portsmouth and Southampton was intensively farmed in an effort to meet the demands of a growing urban population. However, the variability of the soil even over a small area and the expense of land near the cities meant that few holdings comparable in size to those of the Downs developed. The smaller size of the average farm was reflected in the nature of the unrest of 1830. Contact with authorities both at village and estate level appears to have been more personal than on the larger downland holding. When hostility did arise it often was aimed at specific individuals rather than being expressed as anger at conditions in general. The Reverend Cobald at Selborne and Mr Fry, assistant overseer of the poor, at Fawley were singled out as targets by the rioters who claimed they personally were responsible for much of the distress in the two parishes (*The Times* 22 Nov-27 Nov 1830). Arson, often an act of revenge, and the sending of threatening letters were more prevalent in the Hampshire Basin and especially the Portsmouth area than in any other part of the county (HC 22 Nov-29 Nov 1830). J B

Purvis, a magistrate in the Gosport area, received the following threat:

Tyrant, at seven o'clock last evening the mussel of a gun was elevated at your heart and one moment your soul would have been in hell; by your momentary impulse in starting as the gun was aimed at you, I lost the present opportunity but must wait for another. Tyrant, prepare to meet your God; your life is short and your death is certain; . . . five delegates . . ., three at Gosport and two at Portsea have sworn on a Bible to your death first chance, so you are watcht in all you movements by order of a committee. (HRO Book 328, 67)

In contrast to the more fertile districts, the sandy heathlands of the county including parts of the London Basin and the New Forest in the Hampshire Basin had few riots. These areas tended to have their own cultures and sets of customary rights which showed little resemblance to the rest of Hampshire. The poor, unproductive soils of the forests and heaths were best suited to small scale farming using traditional techniques (Wilkinson 1861, 257-8). Consequently, no unrest was recorded in northeastern Hampshire and the only disturbance within the New Forest was at Lyndhurst where a mob was intercepted as it marched from Poole to Winchester (*The Times* 27 Nov 1830).

The clay soils of the London Basin were expensive and unpredictable to farm. Wilkinson said of this area, 'Few strangers make trial of the unimproved farms of this country' (Wilkinson 1861, 258). Although the soil was fertile and grew good wheat crops, it was cold, heavy, and late. Because drainage was poor the land hardened badly during droughts and became waterlogged when wet. The condition of the soil could be improved but this was expensive. The Duke of Wellington considerably bettered his 15,000 acre estate at Stratfield Saye. During a period of more than thirty years he invested 'the greater proportion of the rental' he received from his tenants on permanent improvements through proper drainage and on

chalking the heavy clays and poor sands and gravels (*ibid*, 260-1). However, improvements on this scale and at such high costs were rare in 1830. More typically, farming was undertaken in small units using a relatively low proportion of labourers to occupiers (*ibid*, 258). Because of the high costs involved, innovation and wide social separation of worker and owner which led to rioting in the more easily farmed areas did not occur. Very few parishes on the clays of the London Basin reported rioting.

One feature of early nineteenth century agriculture which alienated many agricultural labourers was the tendency, especially of large landholders, to introduce practices which reduced demand for labour and increased the emphasis on commercially-orientated farming. Investment in machinery, especially threshing mills was particularly economical on large estates where large quantities of grain had to be processed. Agricultural labourers were hostile towards these machines which they believed, with justification, further reduced employment. On small farms the use of the flail often continued because the large capital outlay on machinery was unjustified when only small quantities of grain were being threshed. The presence on large holdings of labour saving machines helped to cause the unrest and violence in 1830. Over one hundred machines were destroyed during the rioting including machinery on the estates of Sir Thomas Baring (E Stratton), Alexander Baring (Northington), John Fleming (N Stoneham), Lord Carnarvon (Highclere), Sir James Fells (Burghclere), and Sir John Walter Pollen (Thrupton) (HRO 14M50/2).

Industry associated with the manufacture of threshing machines and other farm implements were targets during the unrest. The attacks made on mills during the unrest reflect the hostility towards machinery which was believed to cause redundancies. Taskers of Upper Clatford, near Andover, and Shepherds of Stuckton, near Fordingbridge produced agricultural machinery. Both were badly damaged by large mobs (HRO 14M50/2). Thompsons spinning and weaving mill was

attacked by the same crowd that damaged Shepherds Iron Foundry. This action was considered particularly senseless because the mill employed many women and posed no real threat to male workers, but the fact that an already agitated mob carried out the attack helps to explain it (HRO 14M50/2). Generally textile mills were unaffected. Silk mills were ignored at Whitchurch, in Alton and in Winchester.

OVERPOPULATION AND POOR RELIEF

As the population of England rapidly increased between 1800 and 1850, agricultural communities such as those found in Hampshire and which had a finite and somewhat limited demand for labour found it difficult to increase employment opportunities correspondingly. The most obvious solution was to take more land into cultivation. Enclosure of open fields and commonland was one way this could be done. Much has been written concerning the adverse affects of enclosure on the labouring population, and it has been cited as a major cause of the 1830 unrest. J L and Barbara Hammond in *The Village Labourer* especially supported this view. To a lesser extent E Hobsbawm and G Rudé also suggested this when they argued that 'The social history of the nineteenth century village . . . is the story of poor men's attempts to escape from the economic and social dependence on those who gave them employment and relief' (Hobsbawm & Rudé 1973, 16). The loss of 'rights' to common pasture, to gather wood and turf, or to build dwellings on commonland, as well as the alleged injustices perpetrated by Enclosure Commissioners fuel the argument. However, there appears to be no correlation between areas where enclosures were made between 1780 and 1830 and areas of rioting in November, 1830. On occasions when new land was taken into cultivation, labour was needed initially to clear and fence the newly created fields, and then, provided the enclosure was not used predominantly for pasture, to work the land. Here enclosure

could increase employment opportunities in an agricultural community. However, by 1830 the question had become somewhat irrelevant as the rate of enclosure during the previous decade had decreased. Many of the enclosures had occurred a generation earlier, even before the Napoleonic Wars. During the post-war depression, the low price of corn was actually causing the amount of land under cultivation in Hampshire to be decreased as marginal land was returned to grass and then left in a natural state (BSP Agriculture 1833, 203). The ability to employ the bulk of the labour force in an agricultural county with a rapidly growing population became increasingly impossible.

In some parts of Hampshire it was this overpopulation and its associated problems of unemployment and poverty which seem to have been the dominant factors causing the unrest. When this growth was particularly swift it had a direct influence on the likely outbreak of unrest in a parish. Rapid growth tended to indicate a parish in which authority was less autocratic, non-conformist religion was more common, and people moving into the parish brought new ideas and customs. The greater freedom of expression that often existed in 'open' parishes encouraged political awareness. Unrest was more likely to develop than it was in a parish where a single landowner exercised complete autocratic control. Of Hampshire's twenty fastest growing parishes, eleven, including the top four, were riotous, and another five were contiguous to, and hence probably involved with, riotous parishes (see Table 1). The rapid growth of population in riotous parishes is therefore significant since, for the county as a whole, only 29% of the parishes reported rioting.

The ability and willingness of a parish to deal with the poverty created by overpopulation was another factor governing the propensity of a parish to riot. The operation and administration of poor relief varied with the parish. Bramley in the north of the county and Broughton in the west both based relief, at least in part, on the price of bread (HRO 63M70/PO3; HRO 137M71/PO5). A sliding scale varying with need appears to have been

standard. At Broughton, men with eight dependents received between 12s and 18s 8d during the month of October, 1829 (HRO 137M71/PO5). At Compton, south of Winchester, Thomas Braiser with a family of five children received 17s 6d while Charles Sprall was given only 10s 6d to support the same number of people (HRO 47M74/PO1). Payments were made to some on a regular basis while others were relieved during a short period of unemployment or illness. Because of the variation in payments, the exact payment per person and the proportion of individuals on relief in a parish cannot generally be determined. However, relief does not appear to have differed greatly in the actual payments made by the various parishes.

The attitude of a parish to its poor appears to have been more significant than the actual payments of relief. The high cost of relief to rate payers caused some hardship and hostility. At Kingsclere (pop 3151) 193 rate payers contributed to the £2,058 7s 4d spent on poor relief in 1830 (HRO 90M72/PO8 & PO10). At Selborne (pop 924) during the same year seventy-one people paid for relief costing £1,237 14s 3d (HRO 32M66/PO6 & PO8). At Fawley in April, 1829, a vestry meeting was held 'to take into consideration the present unequal State of the Poores Rate, and it was agreed that a revision of the Rate should take place immediately' (HRO 25M60/PV1). As the population continued to grow, with an increase of 255% between 1801 and 1831, the burden on the parish became intolerable. In March, 1831, a public meeting was held to find a solution to the continuing problem. The Vestry minutes record:

... It appears to us that a custom is prevailing in most Parishes, of sending home labourers that do not belong to them.

From the above circumstances we have so many sent to us, that we have not Houses to put them in, and it have increased the surplus Labourers to that extent, which with the present *high price of labour*, it is litterly impossible the parish can maintain it.

We cannot think but of one remedy to

Table 1. Rate of Population Growth 1801-1831

Parish	Population		Percentage Change	State of Parish in Nov 1830
	1801 ⁽¹⁾	1831		
Micheldever	145	936	546%	Riotous
Fawley	518	1839	255%	Riotous
East Stratton	114	386	239%	Riotous
Tytherley, W	162	497	207%	Riotous
Week	65	182	180%	Contiguous to Littleton, Compton & Sparsholt
Farlington	302	778	157%	Contiguous to Portsmouth
Odiham ⁽²⁾	1525	3310	117%	Non-riotous
Popham	48	104	117%	Contiguous to Micheldever & Stratton
Farleigh Wallop	50	108	116%	Contiguous to Basingstoke & Clid-desden
Ewhurst	13	28	115%	Riotous
Itchen Stoke/Abbotstone	125	267	114%	Riotous
Kingsworthy	161	345	114%	Riotous
Millbrook	1304	2735	110%	Riotous
Morestead	44	90	105%	Riotous
Pamber	238	479	99%	Riotous
Widley	277	512	85%	Non-riotous
Greatham	129	238	84%	Riotous
Milton	522	956	83%	Non-riotous
Nursling	487	884	82%	Contiguous to Romsey, Millbrook & Stoneham
S Hayling	324	588	81%	Non-riotous

(1) Because the methods of collection and tabulation of the two Censuses differed, this information may not be completely comparable. It does, however, give a general view of the population increase for the parishes of Hampshire.

(2) This figure includes data for the Tything of Lyss-Turney. Without that tything the figures are: 1801, 1058; 1831, 2647, increase 150%.

Source: BSP Census Abstract, 1801-1831, 231-8.

assist us at present, which will be very considerable, that is by ceasing (though reluctantly), *but from necessity*, to employ those that do not belong to our said Parish. (*ibid*)

In November, 1829, Mr Thomas Fry was appointed overseer of one of Fawley's four districts. By March, 1830, he had become a salaried assistant overseer of the poor and was

responsible for the payment of relief in the entire parish (*ibid*; HRO 25M60/PO11). It was his use of the parish paupers to pull the parish cart which incited many to riot in November, 1830, at Fawley (*The Times* 29 Dec 1830). Such inhumane treatment was also, at least in part, responsible for the attacks on the poorhouses at Selborne and Headley - the institutions 'having so long been objects of general and deep rooted dislike' (HRO Photocopy, 378/4).

However, when the response to the poor was positive and compassionate, the chances of unrest were considerably reduced. In Odiham where geographical location and a population increase of 117% in 30 years would suggest a high predisposition to riot, no agitation occurred. Of the parishes situated along the escarpment between the London Basin and the Hampshire Downs, Odiham was the only parish with a population increase of over 35% between 1801 and 1831 which did not riot. Although the strain on the parish must have been great, for many years Odiham had taken considerable care to provide for the poor. In 1814 the vestry agreed to build ten double cottages to house the poor at a modest rent during a period of generally high rents (Odiham Parish Book, 1814-89). In addition to generous treatment of the poor, the parish also was concerned to ensure employment wherever possible. On 31 December, 1816, a meeting of the vestry:

Resolved unanimously that it is the opinion of this Vestry that in the present time of distress and difficulty to find Employment for the labouring poor it would be expedient to discontinue the use of Threshing Machines within this parish. (*ibid*)

By 1830 the parish appears to have been coping well with its growing population. In a parish containing 2,647 inhabitants, only 437 people (16.5%) were receiving relief (*ibid*).

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LAND-OWNERS AND LABOURERS

The attitudes of the landowners and their relationships with the labourers was another important factor in determining the propensity of a parish to riot. During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries a large amount of new wealth came into Hampshire's agriculture. In 1810 Charles Vancouver noted in his survey of Hampshire, 'much of the county has undergone a transfer of late years from its former owners and in

which have been included some very large and valuable estate' (Vancouver 1810, 51). Although some of the land was purchased from existing large landowners, far more was sold by small farmers who had overextended themselves during the Napoleonic Wars. It was during these years that the Barings established themselves in Hampshire. Sir Thomas Baring farmed on the estate begun in 1800 by his father in the East Stratton, Micheldever, and Popham areas (White 1859, 115). Alexander, his younger brother, created a 12,500 acre estate centred on Northington between 1816 and 1839 (Thompson 1980, 37-8). By 1830 the Duke of Wellington established, through grant and purchase, an estate of 15,000 acres at Stratfield Saye (Windle 1973, 109). As the size of the estate increased the social and emotional ties between the landlord and his workforce weakened. Newly arrived landowners often had little knowledge of, or acquaintance with, their labourers and frequently did not receive the respect customarily shown to long established families. The growing popularity of ostentatious living which affected Georgian England emphasized the distance between the rich landowner and the disaffected agricultural labourer. The Grange at Northington, home of Alexander Baring, contained 530 acres of garden and parkland while the rest of the homesteads and gardens in the 3,100 acre parish occupied only twenty-six acres (Duthy 1839, 154). The extravagant expenditure on art and entertainment by the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos resulted in near bankruptcy in 1827 (White 1859, 119). Absenteeism was common with many landowners dividing their time between their Hampshire estates and interests outside the county. The Duke of Wellington was Prime Minister until November, 1830. Sir William Heathcote, John Bonham Carter, Paulett St John Mildmay, Sir Thomas Baring, Francis Thornhill Baring, and George Purefoy were all important landowners who represented Hampshire boroughs in the House of Commons some time between 1820 and 1830. The Earl of Carnarvon and the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos both had substantial estates in other

Parish	No of Allotments	Area A R P	Produce	Cost	Profit
Avington	25	12 0 36	177/1/6	37/12/0	139/9/6
Easton	16	15 0 3	143/2/0	47/9/6	95/12/6
Itchen	22	9 2 10	122/0/0	31/11/9	90/8/3

counties as well as in Hampshire. The Barings, four of whom were resident in Hampshire, were amongst the most powerful bankers in Europe.

However, the unrest was more complex than a simple hostility towards the aristocracy. The likelihood of rioting depended on the individual owner and how he organized his estate. The Duke of Buckingham and Chandos combined control and paternalism in his relationship with his labourers on the Avington Estate. He was a complete autocrat, dispensing justice as he chose. Richard Deller, a farmer at Easton, was summonsed to appear before magistrates for poaching hares of the Duke's estate. His trial took place at Avington House, with the Duke sitting as a JP, with the Duke's gamekeepers acting as witness and informer (Hansard 2nd ser *viii* cols 1293-4). However, the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos was considered a good, respected landlord. William Cobbett, a friend of Deller and rarely complimentary to the aristocracy, encountered a group of women turnip-hoers on the Duke's estate at Avington. These women:

seemed happier and better off than any work-people that I saw in the fields all the way from London . . . They were well dressed, too, and I observed the same of all the men that I saw down at Avington. This could not be the case if the Duke were a cruel or hard master. (Cobbett 1936, vol I, 191-2)

On the estate there was little poverty. In November, 1830, nine people, or less than 5% of the population of Avington parish, were on relief. Six of these were women or children who received 2s to 3s 6d per week. A man was paid 5s 6d weekly (HRO 22M69/PO2). The Duke adopted a system of allotments, an example

followed by many landowners after the riots, in the spring of 1830 in an attempt to increase the well-being of his workers. The 1832 results of this system were published (see above).

Potatoes, wheat, barley, beans and peas were grown on the allotments. The occupier paid rent which varied but was approximately £1 per acre, and provided labour, seed, manure, and carting. At Easton, where details of all allotments were recorded, profits ranged from 15s 3d received off one acre to £20 8s 3d from two acres. At Avington, one in eight people occupied allotments with which they could supplement the diet of a family and provide produce to sell at market (*The Labourers Friend* 1835, 218-22). The paternalistic attitude of the Duke was repaid. When a crowd from Winchester attacked Avington House, the only riotous act in the parish, over one hundred of the Duke's own men loyally protected the estate and prevented any damage.

At Stratfield Saye the Duke of Wellington also used autocratic powers to maintain order. He was a new landowner in Hampshire and practised progressive, innovative agriculture on his estate. However, the respect he received was due less to his 'aristocratic' status than to his ability as a general. During the unrest he fortified his estate with special constables from London. He showed little compassion for the rioters, writing:

I induced the magistrates to put themselves on horseback, each at the head of his own servants, retainers, grooms, huntsmen, gamekeepers, armed with horse-whips, pistols, fowling pieces and what they could get, and to attack in concert, if necessary, or singly, those mobs, disperse them, and put in confinement those who could not escape. (Hobsbawm & Rudé 1973, 217)

John Flemming of North Stoneham had the advantage of being a member of a long established, aristocratic, Hampshire family. However, unlike the parishes controlled by the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos, the Stonehams were not closed parishes. The population from the growing city of Southampton was encroaching into the area and many new labourers required employment. Efforts were made by the parish vestry in 1818 to help control the growth and to ensure employment of local men. John Flemming reinforced this with a clause in tenancy agreements requiring that the tenant 'employ such a proportion of the poor in the said parish in conformity with the Plan drawn up and agreed to at a Meeting of the Inhabitants . . . And moreover . . . shall not . . . hire or take into his employment as a yearly servant . . . any male person . . . not being of the said Parish' (HRO 102M71/E57). However, the paternalistic ties the Flemmings once had were too greatly reduced by the arrival of newcomers. John Flemming was unable to exert sufficient control to prevent rioting.

The Barings were also subjected to tumultuous behaviour in 1830. They have been much maligned for their role in the revolt. William Cobbett hated the family because of its commercial wealth (Cobbett 1936, vol I, 130-1). Some modern historians have criticised them for their lack of paternalistic feelings (Pack 1967, 74-5). In fact, the Barings tended to be genuinely concerned with the well-being of the families on their estates. In his testimony before a Select Committee on Crime in 1828, Sir Thomas Baring showed his sympathy for the men convicted of crimes committed largely because they were driven by poverty:

I think nearly the whole of the individuals who were in prison in the year 1826 and 27 for offences under the game laws were unable to gain employment or such employment as was equal to their support. (BSP Crimes 1828, 441)

He was a sponsor of the Labourers' Friend

Society which published information that they believed would encourage better conditions for agricultural labourers in England. He had a school built on his estate to teach the workers' children basic reading and writing as well as moral and religious instruction, and before the rioting occurred he was receiving correspondence on the construction of suitable housing for estate workers (White 1859, 115). When the rioting began in November, 1830, the Barings were able to inspire some loyalty. William Bingham Baring, writing of an expected attack by several hundred men on Stratton Park, noted that Sir Thomas . . .

advanced resolutely expecting to fight when conceive his surprise he found that the band was composed of his Stoke men who heard he was in danger, had mustered over to the Grange armed themselves out of the carpenters shop, stuck spruce boughs in their hats and called themselves the Spruce body. He was affected even to tears . . . (HRO 100M70).

Francis Thornhill, however, identified several of the men of the 'Spruce Body' as having been involved in earlier riots against the Baring Estates and amazed everyone by arresting several on the spot (*Journals* 1905, 75). Thus, in spite of the concern shown by the family for the labourers, they were major targets during the November rioting. William Bingham Baring was assaulted by Henry Cooke. The threshing, grass sowing, and chaff cutting machines on the estate at Stratton Park were destroyed. Francis wrote that the farmers of his father's estate were 'out of their senses with fear' (*Journals* 1905, 75). Sir Thomas Baring wrote:

I am sorry to say that Stratton and Micheldever have been the most active. Those I have been most kind to and who were best provided for have taken the lead. The motive which has operated on the minds of my people has not been distress but the revolutionary spirit. (*Journals* 1905, 79)

An explanation for this apparent paradox lies in the 'open' nature of the parishes dominated by the Barings. Between 1801 and 1831 Micheldever's population increased by a staggering 546%, East Stratton's by 239%, Popham's by 117% and Itchen Stoke's by 114%. The presence of this wealthy family helped attract people into the area. It resulted in an overpopulated workforce which included many skilled craftsmen. The rapid growth put a severe strain on the economy of the parish and created a high concentration of dissatisfaction. The presence of several political activists – Diddams, Winkworth, the Mason brothers, Kear – was all that was needed to ignite a revolt.

The Barings failed, in spite of their paternalism, to attract the loyalty given to the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos. They did not have the autocratic nature that comes either from long entrenched aristocratic authority or from command of men in battle. Like John Flemming they failed to prevent the growth of an open, independently minded parish. This suggests that the deciding factor in the propensity of such parishes to riot was the presence or absence of an authority which could maintain the traditional agricultural community with minimal pressures induced by an increasingly industrial and commercial society.

THE AFTERMATH

In November, 1830, when the people of Hampshire gathered together in protest, they had certain aims: to increase wages sufficiently for a man to support his family, to end the use of machinery and thereby increase the amount of work available, to establish a guaranteed rate of poor relief which was both fair and honourable, and to force landlords to lower farmers' rents and the clergy to reduce or abolish tithes so farmers could more easily afford the increased wages demanded by the labourers. In areas where mobs were politically motivated they demanded justice and equality under the law and the establishment of univer-

sal suffrage, annual parliaments and secret ballots. In December and January the rioters were severely repressed. Many of the natural leaders, the 'troublemakers' to the authorities, were transported. After ten days of revolt the labourers, craftsmen and small traders of Hampshire were again subjugated by the old authority. No revolution occurred. The revolt failed to establish a 'new and better' society. Can the 1830 Revolt therefore be regarded as a success or failure?

The economic position of the labourers improved almost immediately. Wage meetings around the county including those at Romsey, Alresford, Fawley, Liphook, Micheldever, Ampport and Hambleton agreed to raise wages from their pre-revolt level of between 7s and 9s per week to 10s or, more commonly, 12s weekly, an increase of between 11% and 71%. Poor relief was to be linked to the price of bread and was generally established at a given, less arbitrary rate. Machinery was far less available – much had been destroyed and the industrial mills in the county where more could be manufactured had been severely damaged. Tithe reductions were signed. Landowners considering lowering rents (Afton 1987). However, these concessions were temporary. On 21 November, 1830, at Ampport, wages were raised to 12s weekly for able-bodied adult males. On 15 January, 1831, a vestry meeting reduced wages to 10s weekly (HRO 43M67 A/PR5). By 1834 a Royal Commission surveying poor relief in England found that wages in Hampshire averaged between 8s and 10s weekly (BSP Poor Laws 1834, app B pt 1 vol xxx). Parish relief at Lockerly shows a similar, temporary fluctuation. On 16 November, 1830, Sarah Southwell received 1s 6d and Thomas Dennett 3s 4d for the week; on 27 November, 1830, weekly payments were 3s and 6s respectively; by November, 1831, they had fallen to 1s 11d and 4s weekly (HRO 47M66/2). In a letter to the Lord Lieutenant dated 2 December, 1830, H Fare regretted the rise in the price of labour from 9s to 12s weekly. He believed, 'The mischief arising from this sort of imprudence will be great: because, the employers cannot, with wheat is

at its present price continue to pay such a rate: and therefore they will be eventually obliged to lower their rate again or be ruined' (S U Lib Wellington Papers 4/1/2/2/40). The tithe payment at Selborne was not reduced to £300 as promised but remained at £608 12s 6d (HRO 32M66/PO8).

It is difficult to assess the rate of reintroduction of agricultural machinery. Many machines were undoubtedly undamaged. One of the most sophisticated mills in Hampshire at Hockley, near Twyford, was still in use in 1835 (HRO 10M69/T172). On smaller farms, where machinery was introduced during the labour shortage caused by the Napoleonic Wars, it was not economically sound to purchase a machine when labour was cheap and unemployment would only increase poor rates. On many farms machinery was reintroduced. At Fawley in 1840 farmer George Hearn was warned 'If he uses the threshin Machine to thrash any More Wheat, he and his Son shall be in Danger of their Lives, etc. etc.' (Drummond vol 1/36). By 1839 Taskers was again listed in local directories as an agricultural implement manufacturer (Robson 1839, 32). The rioting appears to have only temporarily reduced the use of labour and time saving machines.

Politically, the unrest produced mixed results. Several pieces of subsequent legislation were beneficial to those involved. The Tithe Commission Act of 1836 ended payments of tithes in kind and replaced them with a rent charge based on corn prices. The Allotment Acts of 1831 and 1832 encouraged the provision of garden space for the private use of labourers. However, the rioting often produced the opposite of the intended effect. Reform of parliamentary representation when it came did not encompass universal suffrage but instead set property qualifications sufficiently high to exclude many small farmers, artisans and traders and to completely exclude agricultural labourers. The advocates of the 1834 New Poor Law used the 1830 rioting to justify the introduction of centralization of poor relief administration and the reduction of outdoor relief. This law was detrimental to the

able-bodied poor who were victims of over-population. It also reflected the trend towards the replacement of local authority with more centralized state authority. When the vestry and individual landowners were unable to contain the unrest in 1830, central government stepped in: troops were sent in, the King and government demanded action by the county, the court which tried the rioters was not local but was instead a Special Commission of Assize presided over by a non-Hampshire man. To some extent, the power of local government was being eclipsed; the rioting was the excuse needed to make this move.

The personal effect on the people involved in the unrest was equally mixed. Landowners, the clergy, magistrates and village officers were forced to reassess their relationships with the workers of their parishes. Many genuinely tried to make long term improvements in labourers' conditions. The provision of allotments and improved labourers' cottages were such attempts. The fear created by the mobs was not easily forgotten and the labourers were, perhaps, treated with a certain grudging respect. The rioters, on the other hand, expressed a mixture of regret, shame and hostility. The 'troublemakers' and 'ring-leaders' of the village were gone taking with them much of the initiative and natural leadership which could have benefitted the village.

The repression of the riots, and particularly the severity of the sentences, created long term feelings of bitterness and injustice. Writing three-quarters of a century later W H Hudson recorded the somewhat inaccurate recollections of an old Wiltshire shepherd:

Wheat was at a high price at that time, and the farmers were exceedingly prosperous, but they paid no more than seven shillings a week to the miserable labourers. And if they were half-starved when corn was reaped with sickles, what would their conditions be when reaping machines and other new implements of husbandry came into use? They would not suffer it; they would gather in bands everywhere and destroy the machinery, and being united, they would be

irresistable; and so it came about that there were risings or 'mobs' all over the land. (Hudson 1981, 147)

Today people of Micheldever seek the burial place of Henry Cooke whose grave is reputed to 'never be covered by snow'. The riots have been romanticised in an era when mechanization and underemployment again rule many workers' lives. Although the labourers of 1830 were defeated, they gained a small feeling of class identity and power. They took a tentative, often reluctant, step out of traditional rural society into the modern world.

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Abbreviations

BSP British Sessional Papers, House of Commons
 HC *Hampshire Chronicle and Southampton Courier*
 HRO Hampshire Record Office, Winchester
 S U Lib Southampton University Library, Wellington Papers

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