

HAMPSHIRE AGRICULTURE IN THE MIDDLE AGES: THE BISHOP OF WINCHESTER'S MANOR OF NORTH WALTHAM

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ABSTRACT

The bishops of Winchester were the richest bishops in medieval England and they dominated landownership in Hampshire. Moreover, they left the fullest surviving documentation for any large estate in medieval England. This article uses a sample of the documentation to examine the agriculture of the great estate and some of the influences on it. By examining the lord's activity on a single well-documented manor it seeks to help our understanding of developments in Hampshire agriculture: its growth and contraction, its arable and pastoral farming, and the employment of its labour.

INTRODUCTION

Hampshire agriculture has for long shown considerable variety. While mixed farming predominated in medieval Hampshire, its precise form was influenced by geography and landscape. The latter is dominated by the chalklands which run in a broad sweep across its centre. North and south of this lay the claylands which increasingly saw a predominance of cattle rearing while by contrast sheep dominated the chalklands, allowing the conversion of the poor downland pastures into valuable assets. This can clearly be seen by comparing stock numbers in 1390 on the estates of Titchfield Abbey, most of whose lands lay in the south of the county, and those of the Cathedral Priory at Winchester, most of whose lands were concentrated in the chalklands of Hampshire and Wiltshire. The Cathedral Priory was by far and away the larger of the two estates and possessed almost ten times as many sheep as Titchfield, but only about twice as many cattle (Hare 2016,

197–8). Further to the south-west lay the very different economy of the New Forest, but this too showed a clear emphasis on cattle as seen in the Beaulieu Abbey accounts of 1270. It too had manors from different regions but with a concentration in the New Forest area. While it had a quarter of the later flock of the Cathedral Priory, it had cattle numbers almost 50% more (Hockey 1975, 28–9). Even in the chalklands there were differences between the areas of poor chalk plateau, for example North Waltham, and those settlements in the richer more fertile richer valleys, such as Overton and Chilbolton, between the newly colonised land with its enclosed fields and the traditional open field settlements (Hare 1994, 159–68; idem 2006, 190–209). The patterns of medieval agriculture were influenced by a variety of factors: by geography, by the expansion and then contraction of the population, by changing market demands, and by different management policies. The population growth of the eleventh to thirteenth centuries led to a growing expansion of arable farming and settlement. This was then followed by a period of low population in the post-Black Death century, in which agriculture and settlement had to adapt to changing circumstances.

One of the peculiarities of English agricultural history in the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries is that many lords cultivated large parts of their land and kept this in hand, rather than, as earlier and later, leasing it to tenants. The manorial accounts record the details of the lord's agriculture, the number of livestock, the types of grain sown and produced, their yields and prices, and the cost of the labour employed. We therefore know much more about the agriculture of the lord than of their



Fig. 1 Map showing bishopric of Winchester's estates in Hampshire

tenants, and, because their records survive more fully, much more about the estates of the ecclesiastical estates than those of the laity.

North Waltham is particularly fortunate in its documentation for agriculture since it belonged to the bishopric of Winchester, whose surviving documentary coverage is both unique and massive. The Bishops of Winchester were the richest in England with estates from Taunton in the west to Southwark in the

east, from the Isle of Wight in the south to Adderbury in North Oxfordshire (Fig. 1, for the Hampshire manors). Moreover, they dominated landownership in Hampshire. Remarkably, their manorial accounts start much earlier than on any other estate in England and they show continued agriculture and its related records much later than many other estates. Each year the individual accounts of the bishopric manors were enrolled on separate accounts at

the bishopric headquarters at Wolvesey palace, Winchester. The accounts survive relatively completely, more so than for any other medieval great estate. At North Waltham, as elsewhere, they survive for most years during the period of direct management between 1211 and 1425. It is a unique source in its completeness and allows us to reconstruct much of the working and development of the bishop's own demesne farms at North Waltham and elsewhere, as well as providing a remarkable source of near-continuous medieval statistics (Page 2002; Britnell 2003; Campbell 2003; Titow 1962, 1969, 1972). North Waltham is not offered as a 'typical' example of medieval Hampshire agriculture, but it is hoped that it may help shed light on agriculture elsewhere in the county and particularly in the chalklands.

NORTH WALTHAM AND MEDIEVAL COLONISATION

North Waltham itself occupies a sheltered hollow in the rolling downland plateau of east Hampshire in the hinterland of the important medieval town of Basingstoke (Hare 2017). It was granted to the bishop of Winchester in a charter of 903 (Sawyer 1968, 377), although doubts have been expressed about the document's authenticity (Finberg 1964, 43–4). North Waltham does not appear in the Domesday Book when it was probably part of the bishop's manor of Overton. But the grand quality of some of the earliest parts of the church, shows that a village existed before the beginning of the accounts. North Waltham remained in episcopal hands, with a short exception, into the twentieth century.

Comparison with other bishopric estates shows that the manor possessed a relatively small demesne, that is the land cultivated directly by the lord, coming 26th out of 38 (Mullan & Britnell 2010, 21), but it had a significant number of tenants. The 1327 taxation assessments suggest a middling sized village in an area of small settlements *Hants Tax List, 1327*. A custumal of 1290, subsequently updated several times until c. 1321, records the presence of 26 virgators, 3 ½-virgators, 15 ½-cotlanders, a cottage and a cottage and

purpresture, or assart (BL Egerton Mss 2418; Mullan & Britnell 2010, 17). Study of the land market also suggests that there was no great peasant attraction to take up land here. It was a small manor, falling well down the list of numbers of entry fines both before and after the Black Death (Mullan & Britnell 2010, 159–60). The rate of familial inheritance was low, suggesting one in which men were able to find more attractive opportunities elsewhere (Mullan & Britnell 2010, 93, 96). There was a lack of accumulation of holdings here such as was found on many manors elsewhere on the estate, reflecting either the size of the manor, and its less attractive qualities, or the alternative availability of land nearby (Mullan & Britnell 2010, 135, 137). We should probably envisage a series of tenant farmers to which was added a new demesne.

The chalk downland of eastern Hampshire had been covered with a superficial coat of clay-with-flints on which there was still much woodland. It was part of the royal forest of Pamber. Hampshire was one of the most forested counties in the country, although this should not be seen as implying a landscape of nothing but trees. Instead we should envisage a mixture of patches of arable fields, downland pasture and woodland in which the king and his followers could indulge in hunting. The growing population of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries placed this extensive hunting land under pressure and the bishops of Winchester and above all Peter des Roches, bishop of Winchester (1205–3), sheriff of Hampshire and a key figure in royal government, were well-placed to exploit these opportunities and to ignore any restrictions on encroachment into the royal forests (Vincent, 1996, 157–9).

This manor saw little apparent peasant or demesne colonisation of previously uncultivated land in the main part of the thirteenth century. This contrasted with substantial expansion of the demesne itself at the start of the century. The first of the bishopric pipe rolls (1208/9), does not include North Waltham, although three horses were sent there from Merdon, suggesting that preparatory work for expansion may have been underway (*Pipe Roll, 1208–9, 36*). Following the death of the previous tenant, the bishopric resumed cultivation. The account

for 1209/10 is missing, but the following year demesne agriculture was clearly underway. It was evidently an exceptional year. The number of oxen (42 and 40) was much higher than at any other time, and by 1212 had fallen to the more normal level of 23 with four oxen sent to Merdon in 1214 (*Pipe Roll* 1211, HRO 11M59/3 & 4). The need for such an exceptional number of oxen probably reflected the demands of opening up previously uncultivated land. This increase is reminiscent of the 13 oxen acquired for creating a purpresture or new enclosure at Ashmansworth in 1221 (Titow 1962, 75). Secondly, the sowing of oats at North Waltham was on an exceptionally large scale, with 70% of the sown area being given over to this crop. What we seem to witness is the colonisation of new land, with the lord cropping the whole area that he was planning to use, and which was at least ready for the spring crop sowing. The bishop was creating a new farm from former woodland and pasture outside the existing village. It was located to the west of the village and its fields were reflected long after in the concentration of the demesne in the tithe map of 1839 (HRO 21M65/F7/174/2). With a possible brief exception in 1216–18, arable farming was maintained by the lord until 1425 (Titow 1962, 7) (Fig 1). A similar creation of a new demesne at Bishopstone in Wiltshire occurred in 1212 (Hare 2011, 21). These were large-scale acts of colonisation by the bishop. In the decade 1217–27 it has been calculated that the bishopric added over two and a half thousand acres to its existing demesne arable. In addition, on many estates there was substantial colonisation by tenants, although this varied from manor to manor, but North Waltham appears as one of those manors with no tenant colonisation at all (Titow 1962, 82). This manor reminds us that the apparent absence of new tenant assarts might go along with large-scale seigneurial colonisation at the beginning of the century in places where previously there had been little or no demesne. This rapid and early expansion will not show up in the changing statistics of the thirteenth century.

This expansion on the bishopric estate was also part of a much wider trend which saw the ploughing up of much more common pasture

or woods on the chalk downland plateau, and its superficial covering of clay with flints, and saw them transformed into arable by other lords. This can be seen on the lands of the new twelfth century ecclesiastical foundations in the area. They could acquire grants of wood and pasture and gradually create a farm or manor on the periphery of existing parishes and settlements. This development can be seen in the development of a grange at Herriard Wintney, belonging to Wintney Priory focused on the boundary between Herriard and Ellisfield (Hare 2015, 193–4), in the hospitallers' Godsfield estate built up on the periphery of other manors and parishes, between the various Candovers, Swarraton, Old Alresford and Abbotstone, with initial grants of assart or common pasture being converted into a coherent manor (Beard 2006, 160–9). Another ecclesiastical estate that was growing in the area was that of Waverley abbey founded in 1128 and which built up granges on the fringes of existing parishes as at Litchfield (with Steventon and Ashe), Dummer, and Swarraton (with Northington) (Service 2010, 238–241; Deveson 2005, 200; Morrin 2016, 32–3). North Waltham was part of this wider dynamic growth.

ARABLE FARMING

At North Waltham, as elsewhere on the bishopric estate in Hampshire, arable cultivation by the lord was at its peak in the thirteenth century. As Jan Titow, who made a detailed study of all the bishopric manors, remarked of all its Hampshire estates of the bishopric, 'reclamation of land was the dominant feature of the thirteenth century and contraction the dominant feature of the period after about 1270' (Titow HRO 97M97/C1, 27–8). At North Waltham, there was an average of 221 sown acres in 1209–70 (Fig. 2). Thereafter, the acreage fell, reaching 60% of this by the second quarter of the fourteenth century, just before the Black Death. The manor showed one of the greatest falls in the area under seed on the estate during the periods before 1350 (Titow 1962, 42a; Titow 1972, 140–4). Again, this decline was typical of general developments on the bishopric estate, although there was much

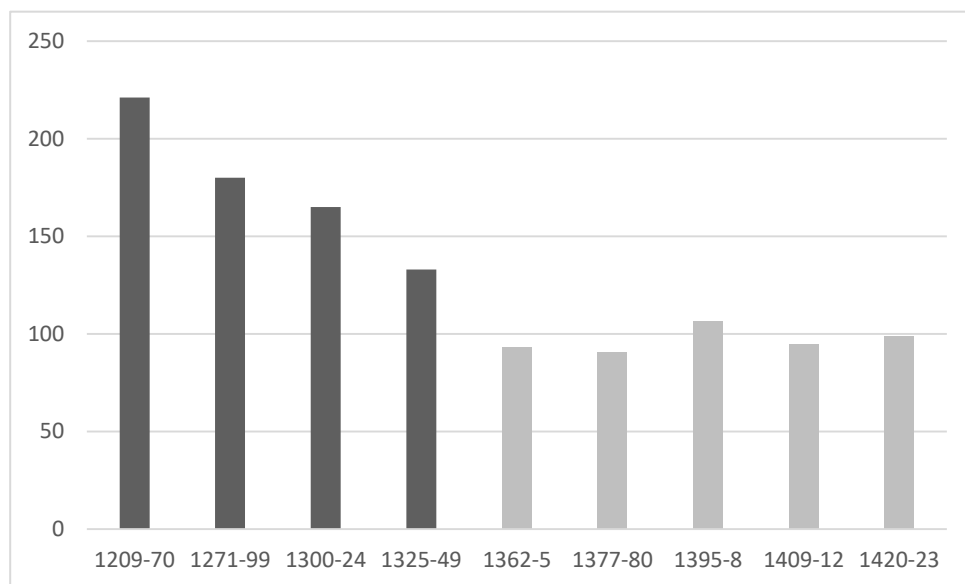


Fig. 2 North Waltham: average sown acreage (Sources: 1209–1349 from Titow (1972,138); 1362–1423 from Farmer, (1977, 562). The accounts ran from Michaelmas (29 September) to, Michaelmas not by calendar years. Farmer dated by the first Michaelmas, Titow by the second. I have adjusted Farmer's dates to the latter form

local variation. Between 1277 and 1333 the total sown acreage fell from 12,000 acres to about 7,500 acres, and a fall in total production of a half in a similar period from 20,000 quarters to 10,000 quarters (Titow HRO 97M97/C8; Titow 1969, 53). In part this may have reflected the impact of falling yields, whether due to over-optimistic and over-exploitative farming or strategic decisions. It is important to emphasise that here as elsewhere on the estate, dramatic decline preceded the devastating impact of the Black Death.

Thereafter, decline was more limited, and the acreage stabilised at this new lower level. By the time that the demesne at North Waltham was leased in 1425, the sown acreage of the whole estate had dropped by a quarter of the pre-Black Death figure. Again the local trends reflect those on the wider estate. The period from *c.* 1335 to the end of the century seems one of relative stability, the bishopric estate still retained 80.5% of the sown acreage of the 1340s, before the Black Death (Titow, HRO 97M97/C8). Decline on the bishopric estate as a whole was most rapid in the fifteenth century, with a drop to under 3,000 acres by

1435 (Titow, HRO 97M97/C8), but this was not the product of piecemeal change but the result of a wholesale shift in policy as the lords now withdrew from direct farming and leased out the demesnes. This process had begun in 1390s but had not got far by 1420 particularly in Hampshire, where in 1419–22, 18 out of 23 manors still maintained direct cultivation (Hare 2006, 210). In North Waltham the demesne arable was leased in 1425 (HRO 11M59/170 m11) although the flocks were leased much later.

North Waltham was not typical of the chalklands. The poor downland soils of east Hampshire produced some of the lowest yields of the bishopric estate and North Waltham was no exception. Thus, yields of wheat and barley before the Black Death placed it 31st out of 39 on the estate (Mullan & Britnell 2010, 23). In general, the accounts make clear that arable farming became dominated by wheat and oats (Fig. 3). Oats was the most extensive crop, reflecting the poor quality of the soils, with about 40–50% of the acreage. Wheat and beremancorn (a winter sown mix of spring barley and wheat) made up about 40%, and

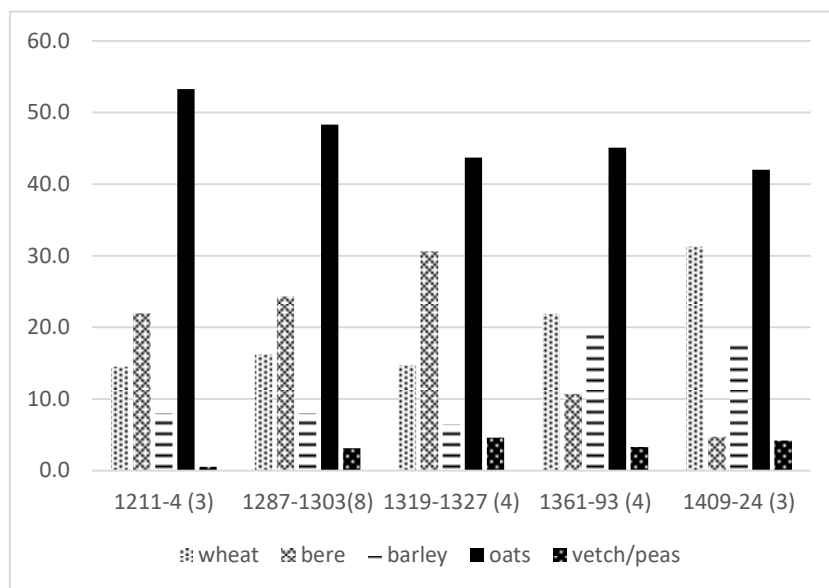


Fig. 3 Types of crops sown, as a percentage of the total acreage

Table 1 Use of grain (Sources: Pipe Roll, 1211; Pipe Roll, 1302, HRO 11M59/B1/93; B2/26/1; B1/134; Pipe Roll, 1410)

		as a percentage of the total					
		1211	1302	1341	1361	1383	1410
Wheat	Total	34.5	56.3	21.8	24.5	24.5	31.1
	(qtrs.)						
	Sown	8.7	21.8	40.8	26.1	32.6	22.9
	Feed	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4
Beremancorn	Sold	91.3	78.2	59.2	74.0	67.4	76.8
	Total	69.0	64.0	35.0	29.5	29.5	3.4
	(qtrs.)						
	Sown	24.6	28.1	19.7	28.5	22.0	58.8
Barley	Feed	50.7	56.3	47.7	71.2	0.0	41.2
	Sold	23.9	15.6	34.3		78.0	
	Total	36.5	21.9	21.6	31.6	41.6	45.5
	(qtrs.)						
Oats	Sown	54.8	22.8	38.0	29.7	20.4	17.9
	Feed			32.4	13.3	23.3	51.6
	Sold	45.2	77.2	29.6	57.3	48.8	30.5
	Total	242.5	165	50.5	64.4	70	58.4
	(qtrs.)						
	Sown	36.3	31.2	56.0	42.9	30.9	35.1
	Feed	22.7	15.5	25.0	18.0	15.0	21.4
	Sold	41.0	53.4	19.0	35.9	44.7	19.3

spring barley 5–14%. This predominance of oats and relative neglect of barley was characteristic of the downlands of east Hampshire, and contrasted with the greater extent of barley in the more fertile river valleys elsewhere in the chalklands, as in Chilbolton and Overton (Hare 2006, 195–6). In the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, wheat and barley became more important, bere fell dramatically and oats also declined in importance, a reflection of a general upgrading of grain consumption and reduced planting on poorer land in the changed demographic conditions of the later Middle Ages.

The new North Waltham demesne farm seems to have possessed three main fields Southfield, Middlefield, Eastfield/Northfield and there was also one mention of a Westfield although this only maintained a few acres of vetch suggesting that this was not a full field like the others. Such new fields were probably enclosed rather than divided up into the strips within the open fields that typified the older established settlements. Each year one of the fields was given over to the winter crop of wheat and beremancorn, one to the spring crop of barley and oats and one was left fallow. The latter would have provided both rest for the soil and enabled the manuring impact of the sheep flocks to prepare the soil for the next crop. Small quantities of peas and vetch were also sown. North Waltham was both part of a wider estate and yet possessed its own peculiarities.

The use made of the grain probably varied from year to year, reflecting changing circumstances and policy decisions, but a few general comments may usefully be made. Somewhere between a fifth and a third was generally used for sowing though the figure was above this level for oats. Some of the grain was used for consumption within the manor, whether for feeding workers or animals. Finally, the remaining grain could be sold, although it is often not clear from the documents whether this was a sale in the market or whether the grain was used by the lord and his households outside the manor, but either way they were being produced for external consumption. Wheat and oats were the main cash crops. About half the oats and barley were sold and about three quarters of the wheat. But oats were grown

in much larger quantities, and so its sales were more important. By 1410, the manorial feed bill had shifted from beremancorn, the winter barley mix, to the spring barley. One interesting development on the bishopric estate as a whole, and in which North Waltham played its part, was the development of an estate malting house at Bishop's Sutton in the 1390s, to which the near-by estates, such as Hambledon, Cheriton and North Waltham now sent their barley (HRO 11M59 B1/145; B2/22/6; B2/22/9; B2/13). It seemed operational by 1390 when it served its own manor and the parsonage of Overton (HRO 11M59/B1/142). By 1410 Bishop's Sutton processed barley into malt from Hambledon, Alresford, Cheriton and Overton as well as that from North Waltham and Bishop's Sutton itself (*Pipe Roll* 1410, 322).

PASTORAL FARMING

Power on the farm was provided by oxen and horses, and human muscle. There were generally about nine–ten oxen and six–18 horses. In 1319/20, a bovine plague or pestilence swept across England (Slavin, 2012 1240–2, 1265). The impact at North Waltham was devastating. In 1318 there had been eight oxen, but six of these and a cow, that came from a tenant's heriot, had died of illness by the end of this year. There were no cattle left in the following year and until 1326 when four oxen were bought (HRO 11M59/B12/79). It was only in 1327 that numbers began to approach normality. In the meantime, the farm was dependent on horses, and it was not until 1326 that there were again more oxen than affers or horses (Titow 1962, table II). But in the long run, oxen and horse numbers shrank in line with the reduction of the sown area. Only three bishopric manors showed a greater fall in the number of working animals, in 1232–44 (Titow 1962, 42a). Occasionally, a few cows were kept for breeding and cheese, but then only between one and three, and rarely after 1279 (Titow 1962, 47). Instead, new stock was bought from outside, usually from within the bishopric estate particularly from Overton. Here as with the sheep flocks, there was a growing specialism between manors on the bishopric estate.

One of the distinguishing characteristics of

Table 2 Sheep flocks on the manor of North Waltham (Source: *Titow, 1972, 138; # Calculated by the author (the number of entries examined has been placed in brackets))

Date	flocks (average)
*1209–70	420
*1271–99	233
*1300–24	300
*1325–49	110
#1350–75 (6)	608
#1376–1400 (8)	541
#1401–24 (5)	470
#1425–50 (6)	500
#1456–63 (6)	400

chalkland agriculture was the use made of the downland pastures to maintain large sheep flocks. The bishop of Winchester was one of the greatest sheep farmers in England with a flock at its peak approaching 35,000. Sheep provided wool (which was in high demand at home and abroad) as well as meat and manure. Sheep were vital to the sustained fertility of these poor soils. North Waltham's did not possess one of the larger bishopric flocks, but it was nevertheless significant. Here long-term trends reflected those on the wider bishopric estate (Table 2). Flock numbers fluctuated both as a result of the mortality of the sheep, and of that of the bishops themselves. When a bishop died the sheep passed to the executors, so that the flocks had to be rebuilt. Flock sizes could also be affected by management decisions. There were times when North Waltham appears to have lacked a resident flock (as in 1282–7, 1321–3 and 1339–41), although its pastures may then have been used by the bishopric flock from the neighbouring manor of Overton (Titow 1962, appendix 4; HRO 11M59/B12/46, 47). Flocks averaged over 400 up to 1270, with a peak of 697 in 1260, but fell thereafter. In the second quarter of the fourteenth century flocks averaged as low as 100, although this fall was exaggerated by there being many years when,

as we have seen, there were no sheep at all. The flocks then recovered and seem to have reached a peak in 1370s and remained at a consistent high figure of over 500 in the later fourteenth century. These general trends at North Waltham reflected those elsewhere on the estate (Stephenson 1988, 386). One notable feature was the high flock sizes in the last quarter of the later fourteenth century at both North Waltham and the estate at large (Page 2004, 111). This expansion seems typical of the downland flocks in Hampshire and Wiltshire and is apparent in other estates. It may be seen in such widely contrasting estates as those of Winchester Cathedral Priory (after the bishop the richest estate in the county) and Winchester nunnery's manor of Froyle, or by contrast the nearby manor of the small and poor nunnery of Wintney Priory at Herriard (Hare 2006, 203; BL 17477–17506; Hare 2016, 197). Why did flocks increase? It was not because of a shrinkage of the demesne, since this had occurred long before. It was probably a result of a combination of factors: lower running costs compared with the increasing cost of labour, and growing demand from cloth manufacturing. Such large-scale sheep farming continued in the fifteenth century, when the flocks were sufficiently important to be maintained by the lord, long after the arable had been leased.

Since the flock at North Waltham was being maintained on sometimes harsh downland, the lords did not usually maintain a breeding flock here, but instead kept a flock of wethers, the castrated sheep that provided a heavier fleece and meat. This was a pattern that was found on many of the poorer downland manors on this estate, as at Woodhay, Highclere, Ashmansworth and Bishop's Sutton, as well as on other estates as with some of those of the Cathedral Priory (*Pipe Roll* 1410, 261, 228, 255–6, 323; Hare 2006, 206) The wethers would need to be replenished with juvenile stock usually from elsewhere on the estate, particularly Overton, a neighbouring manor with extensive lands covering downlands and valley. It possessed the full three flocks, a breeding flock in the valley, the juvenile sheep and the wether flock on the downs (e.g. HRO 11M59/B1/ 192, 194; B2/26/4, *Pipe Roll* 1410, 219). Occasionally sheep for North Waltham were driven from other manors such as Merdon

or Alresford since these and many others such as Twyford, East Meon, Bishops Waltham and Cheriton maintained the full range of breeding and wool flocks, where they possessed more sheltered valley pastures (*Pipe Roll* 1410, 368, 271, 190–1, 347). The flock would be sheltered in winter in a sheep house with additional feed provided (e.g. *Pipe Roll*, 1302, 102; *Pipe Roll*, 1410, 249–51). Earlier, a different policy was pursued with both wethers and a breeding flock being maintained, as in 1211–14 (*Pipe Roll* 1211, 55; HRO 11M59/B1/4). The wool from North Waltham was usually sent with that of most other flocks to Wolvesey palace in Winchester where it could be sold in a large mass sale, usually to foreign or London merchants.

The rearing of pigs by the tenantry was reflected in the payment of pannage, a rent payment for feeding pigs in the woods, but here as elsewhere the bishop seemed to pay little attention to this part of the rural economy. In this he contrasted with some other estates and particularly with that of the Cathedral Priory where pig rearing grew substantially in the fourteenth century, while that on the bishopric, which had never been very extensive, fell (Hare 2006, 198–9, 207). At North Waltham no pigs were maintained at the start of the century, and only one and its offspring by 1410 (*Pipe Roll* 1302, 104; 11M59/B1/57; *Pipe Roll* 1410, 251).

WORKING THE LAND

The human labour required on the demesne farm came from three main sources. There were a group of workers or *famuli* who were paid an annual stipend or given a reduced rent. In 1302 there were three drovers, a carter, a hayward, a reeve and three ploughmen. Secondly, most of the tenants were required to perform labour services at the busiest times of the years in return for their land, in ploughing, harrowing and harvesting. Thirdly there was work done at piece rates. This last group did much or all the threshing and winnowing and some of the harvesting. Throughout the period, here as elsewhere on the bishopric estate, there was a move from customary work to wage labour, although the pace varied from manor to manor (Titow 1972;

HRO 97M97/C10). This was already evident by 1302, when some tenants were having their labour services commuted for £2 with others employed to do the work. Now, only seven of the tenants who owed ploughing services were then doing them, while all the harrowing works had been commuted. Thereafter these services were further reduced. Harvest boon works continued in 1361 but had ceased by 1410, except for the washing and shearing of sheep and any works on the park enclosures at Highclere. The latter was a relic of past usage. In 1361 and 1410, the core of the labour force was provided by the manorial servants who comprised one carter who doubled as a ploughman, two drovers and one shepherd, and an additional plough holder (*Pipe Roll*, 1302, 101–3; HRO 11M59/B2/26/1; *Pipe Roll*, 1410, 246–51). We can also see something of buildings of the manorial farm, through the references to repairs to individual structures. Here there was also a small residence for the bishop and his household, one of over 20 in the thirteenth century (Hare 2017, 199–200). Thus in 1298, there was a hall, a chapel and several chambers (for the lord, for the bailiff, and for the lord's knights) as well as a great barn, a hay barn, a bailiff's stable, a stable and an oxshed (HRO 11M59/B1/54). To these should be added a sheephouse, a granary and a dovecote (HRO 11M59/B1/79; *Pipe Roll* 1302, 102). The presence of the lord's and the knights' chambers and a chapel suggests something more substantial than just a collection of farm buildings. There was evidently an orchard as seen in the Overton account for 1302, which recorded cider being produced with apples from North Waltham (*Pipe Roll* 1302, 99).

LEASING THE DEMESNES

This pattern of direct cultivation of the land by the lord came to an end in the fifteenth century. The process seems to have generally been later in the chalklands than elsewhere, and at least on the ecclesiastical estates had made little progress by 1400 (Hare 2006, 209–10). Within a single estate, the process may also have been protracted, beginning on smaller and more distant manors. The bishopric was slow in

leasing and nowhere more than in Hampshire. In 1419–22, 18 out of 23 Hampshire manors still maintained direct cultivation. The process of leasing continued and by 1432–3 the number had fallen to 11. North Waltham was one of those leased in the intervening period (Hare 2006, 210). In 1425, the arable farm was leased to John Cole, and subsequently to William Cole in 1457–61, Geoffrey Baker from 1461–1473, and Nicholas Damvale from 1472–1522 (HRO B2/26/4; B1/170, 195, 201, 208, 212, 216, 224, 232). But as on many chalkland manors in Hampshire and Wiltshire lords, such as the dukes of Lancaster, Winchester cathedral priory, or the bishops themselves, continued to maintain sheep flocks long after the arable had been leased (Hare 2006, 211; and idem 2011, 87–8). At North Waltham the seigneurial sheep flocks lasted another 40 years until 1463 or 1464 (HRO 11M59/B1/196, 197), with the wether flocks supplemented by younger sheep from outside, sometimes at least from Overton. It is not clear whether we should explain this continuation of the chalkland seigneurial flocks in terms of their profitability, the need for sheep to maintain the fertility of the soil, or the absence of men prepared to take on the financial risk of running a flock. Nationally wool exports fell, but this was more than made up by the growth of the cloth industry, and this included the important cloth producing industry in the Basingstoke area (Hare 2017, 30–7, 51–6).

CONCLUSION

North Waltham is a well-documented chalkland manor, but this does not make it typical of medieval Hampshire or even of the chalk. It was small and marginal, but it went through a process of considerable demesne expansion in the early thirteenth century, under the dynamic and unfettered leadership of the council of bishop Peter des Roches. This was part of a wider expansion of arable farming here as elsewhere, a process that warrants further examination. At North Waltham it was seigneurial led rather than peasant driven. In their enthusiasm, the bishop's council may have been over ambitious, and it proved unable to sustain the full extent of the new arable

farming activities. This shrinkage was already evident long before the Black Death and the changed environment of the later Middle Ages. At the heart of the chalkland agriculture of the period lay the mixture of arable with large sheep flocks as reflected in the continuation of the seigneurial flocks long after the arable had been leased out. There was a growing specialisation, with North Waltham having specific roles within the estate, increasingly a satellite of the larger manor of Overton. It was a dependent manor with no breeding stock. Ultimately, in the fifteenth century, here as elsewhere, the lord withdrew from agriculture and settled for the easier task of receiving the large fixed annual cash payments, thus forgoing for its successors the benefits of the Tudor price inflation. In so doing they opened up new opportunities for some of the tenantry to expand their own farming activities. But this brings one on to new issues and problems where the Pipe Rolls will be of little use.

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I have studied a sample of the North Waltham accounts and have sought to place it in the context of the rest of the estate through the work of others as well as my own. My comments are very much made in the belief that examining individual manors and samples of records can be a worthwhile exercise in exploring this remarkable estate: that if we are to understand its richness and complexity and that of English agrarian history, we need to examine the local as well as the national. Any student of the bishopric estate owes an immense gratitude to the heroic efforts of Dr Jan Titow and the figures that he has made available, above all Titow (1962) and Titow (1972). For statistics of the post Black Death era, I have used the figures in Farmer (1977). The post 1350 yields for North Waltham have been published in Campbell, 2007. Four of the accounts have been published: *Pipe Roll 1209*, *Pipe Roll 1211*, *Pipe Roll 1302*, *Pipe Roll 1410*. The last two are in translation. In addition, accounts for individual manors have been published in Gras and Gras, 1930, and Stone 2017. For an introduction and general discussion of previous

work on the bishopric estate see Titow 1969; Page 2002; Britnell, 2003 and Campbell 2003.

In addition to the published texts, I have examined a sample of the manuscripts in the Hampshire Record Office (see below). The Record Office also houses the archive of Jan Titow's work on the Winchester estate including unpublished papers of which two are

referred to: 97M97/C8 (Arable cultivation on the estates of the bishops of Winchester, 1993) and 97M97/C10 (Labour problems and policies on the Winchester estates 1208–1475, 1995),

This study is very much dependent on the labours of others on the bishopric estates to whom I am most grateful. My thanks also go to the staff of the Hampshire Record Office during my many visits.

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