Skill, status and the agricultural workforce in Victorian England

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In the late 1840s the London-based newspaper the *Morning Chronicle* sent two of its correspondents, Alexander Mackay and Charles Shirley Brooks, to investigate rural life and labour as part of its nationwide survey of the condition of the working classes in England and Wales. The correspondents, selected for their background in descriptive writing and reporting, visited twenty-eight counties, with a short sojourn in each. Their reports were bleak in their evaluation of the agricultural labouring class. They belonged, readers of the paper were informed, to an 'inferior grade of being when compared to the factory operative, the worker in the mines, the fisherman, the artizan, or the stable boy'. His dress, the smock-frock, represented the 'attire of centuries gone by', and he was 'awkward, cumbrous, and mechanical in his actions'. Although women who worked on the land certainly did not escape scrutiny or opprobrium – their absence from home said to cause innumerable 'evils' – the focus here was mainly on the male labourer. Moreover it was those who lived and worked in southern England, and particularly the south-west counties of Somerset, Cornwall, Devon and Dorset, who were identified as representing the nadir of this class. These men were shrouded in 'intellectual darkness', their demeanour 'more that of an animal than of a man'. Readers were assured that such findings were not exaggerated. 'Search any county throughout the south and west', it was asserted, 'and the examples start up around you in hundreds'.[1]

Although agricultural labourers who lived and worked in northern counties of England, relatively better paid and better fed, usually fared more

favourably in mid-century public discourse, they were not beyond reproach. In Yorkshire, John Eddowes, the vicar of Garton-upon-the-Wolds, warned that time spent with a farm labourer in the fields would involve 'the most disgusting' language, no appreciation of nature as it held 'no charm for him', and little interest in the work; 'when his master's eyes are absent', Eddowes declared, 'he cares for it little more than does the horse he drives'. The married labourer would return home to a cottage that was 'dirty, untidy, comfortless', the farm servant to a 'back-kitchen' in the farmhouse with 'the least semblance of comfort'. In consequence both were driven to the public house. 'We hear a great deal now and then of the wickedness that abounds in manufacturing localities', Eddowes continued, 'but it may be pretty safely affirmed that those demoralising practices for which our land is unhappily notorious, abound to a greater extent in country places than in crowded towns'.[2]

Although their origins and motives differed, much of this commentary converged around a stereotypical portrayal of the English agricultural labourer as 'Hodge'. A complex and sometimes contradictory epithet, with deep-rooted origins, by the early Victorian era Hodge was represented through a series of largely unsympathetic and condescending tropes. Much of the focus was on moral and physical condition, which, as we have already seen, was characterized by inertia and backwardness. K. D. M. Snell has shown that commentators commonly employed 'words of bovine and comic connotation' and insisted upon 'a language of the secret, insidious unknowable rural poor' at this time.[3] The *Morning Chronicle* reporter quoted above found agricultural labourers 'timid and shrinking' when addressed, 'suspicious' and 'doubtful'

when questioned, seemingly oblivious to the inequity that stifled such encounters.[4] In Mark Freeman's words, these reporters 'never really sought to overcome the barriers of class, status and gender to communicate meaningfully with the labouring population'.[5] In an influential essay published in 1996, Alun Howkins set out to unpick the Hodge stereotype in more detail, claiming the negative depiction of Hodge reflected deterioration in the position and status of the agricultural labourer in late eighteenth and early nineteenth century England. 'Terms like Hodge', Howkins argued, 'became universally terms of contempt expressing a belief that the countryman is stupid'.[6]

The characterisation of the agricultural labourer as Hodge went further than this however. For some early Victorian observers there was a correlation between the moral and intellectual position of the agricultural labourer and the nature of the work that he performed. In contrast to other occupations, agricultural work was depicted as dull and repetitive, its supposedly unchanging cyclical nature inculcating vacuity in those employed in it. For Eddowes manufacturing towns were 'hives of industry', their congested environs helping inhabitants to 'improve their intellectual condition' as they sought to 'educate one another'. Whereas operatives in the textile towns of Lancashire and Yorkshire were 'too busy with their hands and too active with their intellects to spend their time in mere animal pleasures', the agricultural labourer performed his work in 'solitude and silence' and remained oblivious; 'of the ordinary topics which interest the operative', Eddowes claimed, the agricultural worker 'is utterly ignorant'.[7] The *Morning Chronicle* reporter mused on the difference between the work and status of agricultural workers and Cornish miners and fishermen, claiming the latter two groups displayed a

‘very superior’ intelligence. This was due not to their level of education, their access to learning having been the same as agricultural labourers. It was instead ‘almost exclusively attributable to the peculiar characteristics of their occupations’. Mining and fishing demanded ‘knowledge of their respective crafts’. This stimulated ‘into activity their mental energies’ and governed ‘the success of their enterprises and the amount of their gains’. The agricultural labourer, in contrast, was ‘a machine’, given orders to carry out his work, which was ‘merely of his hands’ and ‘scarcely ever directed by the mind’. As a result miners and fishermen were ‘quick, shrew, and calculating’, whilst agricultural labourers were ‘slow, stolid, and mechanical’. Thus whilst miners and fishermen were conferred occupational status and work-based identity, their income levels denoting the quality of their craftsmanship, agricultural labourers, whose work processes were repetitive, toilsome and undemanding, and whose remuneration was low, belonged ‘to an inferior grade of beings … a physical scandal, a moral enigma, an intellectual cataleptic’.[8]

Whilst highlighting the detrimental effect that dilapidated and overcrowded housing, seasonal unemployment, temperamental employers and lack of access to decent education had on the rural poor, the coverage made clear connections between economic and environmental factors and moral and physical character. Farm work was depicted as a formulaic, unvarying and mind-numbing occupation. Its workers were low paid and low skilled, and were destined to remain so; they lacked prospects for advancement, devoid of the means or ability to progress. ‘His work, far from being ennobling’, Howkins stated, was reduced ‘to animal status’ in these reports. ‘Such a characterization at one stroke devalues both the man and his

work'.[9] According to Snell representations such as these were reflective 'of the unprecedentedly low social standing in which rural labour had come to be held by 1850'.[10] It was an urban elite characterisation, which found expression in a wide range of official and popular publications.

How far the image of Hodge was challenged and reworked in the later part of the nineteenth century has been the focus of some debate. According to Howkins, the impact of agricultural trade unionism, an extended franchise and continuing rural out-migration, all of which were played out against the backdrop of economic depression, forced significant modifications to the stereotype in the 1870s and 1880s. All served, in different ways and with uneven results, to extend the social, economic and political horizons of the agricultural worker. This promoted, Howkins claimed, not only a new assertiveness and self-realisation amongst workers (a change in 'consciousness'), but also a reassessment by the rural and metropolitan elites of the place of the rural poor in local agrarian communities ('no longer simply quiescent in his bondage') and in broader narratives of national character and history (the agricultural labourer being appointed as 'the bearer of Englishness').[11] Barry Sloan has taken this latter theme further, detailing the shift from the depiction of Hodge as a 'drudge' of the nation, to the embodiment of a quintessential Englishness in the late nineteenth century. He was, according to Sloan, identified as 'the residual source of uncompromised, authentic English manhood just as his numbers were decreasing'.[12]

However whilst the Hodge label was frequently contested in the late nineteenth century and the term itself increasingly fell out of favour, other historians have shown that many aspects of the stereotype continued in

common usage and thought up to and after the First World War. Constructions of the 1880s and 1890s focused on Hodge's ignorance – of politics and the natural environment in particular. Hodge, it was argued amid the completion of the Third Reform Bill, 'knew nothing' of politics and was enfranchised in 1885 'much to his own surprise and his master's'.[13] Although disputed and repackaged, such images of Hodge resembled in some aspects, as Freeman has argued, portrayals from half a century earlier.[14] Comparing the writing of William Cobbett in the 1830s to those of Richard Jefferies published in the 1880s and 1890s, Deborah Maltby showed that, 'somewhat amplified and changed by circumstances, negative attitudes toward the rural poor still existed'. By the late nineteenth century, Maltby claimed, middle class opinion, fearful of threats to the traditional social order, continued to insist that 'Hodge was still Hodge, and he was still the Other'.[15]

Part of Howkins' argument, which has not been subsequently explored in any detail, concerned how the portrayal of agricultural labour changed within these broader debates about Hodge. According to Howkins, a new recognition that agricultural work, far from being mindless toil was skilled work, with a customary basis that demanded respect and conferred value, emerged, if unevenly, in the second half of the nineteenth century. Firstly this came from 'within' the industry, in the pages of the specialist government investigations of agriculture. He argues that the 1843 Report on the Employment of Women and Children in Agriculture echoed the typical negative representations of that time, presenting a picture 'of village after village populated with immoral and degenerate almost sub-human creatures'.[16] Elements of this representation were replicated in the 1867-70

Royal Commission on the Employment of Children, Young Persons and Women in Agriculture, although the notion that agricultural labour was highly skilled also materialized in these volumes. He goes on, 'it is firmly present in the Royal Commission on Agriculture of 1881 and dominates discussion of labour in the reports of the 1890s'. This perspective, Howkins argued, then crossed over 'externally', into the wider public debates on the rural 'problem' so that by the turn of the twentieth century the valourization of agricultural labour was well established in many strands of the literary, artistic, musical and photographic arts.[17] Whilst the latter point is explained evidentially, Howkins has little room to expound on how notions of skill were presented and represented 'internally'. This article will develop this theme.

The concept of skill was historically fluid. It was a construct that fluctuated over time and was shaped and reshaped not only by economic and technological determinants but by changing social and cultural attitudes. It was also gendered; categorization of jobs as skilled or unskilled could rest as much on ideological assumptions about those who performed the work as on the nature of the work itself.[18] Perceptions of skill structured levels of reward, status and self-worth, and whilst some workers were afforded protection and sought ways to preserve their position, others were vulnerable and expendable. This applied as much to the agricultural workforce as any in the nineteenth century. This article will analyse the occupational hierarchy that defined agricultural work firstly by discussing the occupational categories adopted by the census from the mid nineteenth century. It will then utilize the great agricultural investigations of the Victorian era – the 1843 and 1860s volumes on women and children cited above, along with the 1880-2 Royal

Commission on the Depressed Condition of the Agricultural Interest, the 1893-4 Royal Commission on Labour, and the 1900 Report on Wages and Earnings of Agricultural Labourers in the UK – to assess from an 'internal' perspective, how far and in what ways farm work was perceived as skilled.

The collection and presentation of evidence in these official enquiries was far from value-free. The commissioners were mostly barristers, who possessed varying knowledge of, and practical contract with, rural society and its inhabitants. They tended to rely on the evidence of landowners, farmers, land agents, Poor Law Guardians, or medical practitioners, the rural elite with whom they shared a common understanding. The reports were driven and informed by changing dominant ideologies of gender, childhood, domesticity, and nationhood. Yet a careful rereading of the evidence suggests a modification to Howkins' chronology of transition is needed. The article will show that aspects of agricultural work were recognized as skilled work right from the beginning of the Victorian era but that terms of hiring, rates of pay and perceived levels of skill were shaped by age, gender and locality. How these perceptions changed across the nineteenth century, in particular how far technological change in agriculture altered interpretations of skill, are also considered. Evidence contained in the Royal Commissions was widely disseminated at the time and was, in many quarters, 'held up as an affront to England's standing in the world and a disgrace in a purportedly Christian country'.[19] Historians interested in representations of the Victorian rural poor have also extensively dissected their contents, seeing the government reports as a medium in which ideology and 'fact' collided.[20] Whilst they popularized 'some highly unflattering representations of particular subgroups' in rural

society, as Freeman argued, this article will show that an alternative picture of the skill and status of agricultural work can be found within their pages.[21]

I

Despite being an era increasingly characterised by rapid regional industrialisation and urbanisation, farmworkers remained numerically the most significant occupational group in mid-nineteenth century England. Agriculture was labour intensive and with most of the labour still done by hand over a million men, just under a fifth of the adult male labour force, were engaged in agricultural work across the English counties alone in 1851. In order to provide some uniformity and structure to this large body of workers, the mid-Victorian census, which was concerned with tabulating the full-time, regular workforce, adopted a tripartite classification for male farmworkers. This was based on a broad distinction between those it termed indoor or outdoor workers. Between 1851 and 1871 men were recorded in the three separate categories of farm servant (indoor), agricultural labourer (outdoor) and shepherd (outdoor). In 1851, eighty-five per cent of male farmworkers in England were classified in the two outdoor groups, the vast majority (866,582) as agricultural labourers (against 155,070 farm servants).[22]

The indoor/outdoor designation did not necessarily refer to the site of labour but to the type of accommodation associated with the mode of hiring. Indeed in mid Victorian England it was the hiring which was the crucial difference. Indoor farm servants were those taken ‘into the house’, and in 1851, whilst the census traced this practice ‘through every county’, its regional

stronghold was in areas of northern England.[23] Farm servants were a diverse group who experienced variation in their working conditions and living arrangements, some housed with the farmer, some on-site with the bailiff, and some as a family unit, but all were distinguished by their long-term labour contract (six or twelve months), which included board and lodging and was upheld by law. They were also defined by their youth and mobility. In 1851 over half of all farm servants in England were under the age of twenty and it was exceptional for them to remain at the same farm for more than two or three years, with many moving on at the end of every contract.[24]

The agricultural labourer category covered men hired by a variety of systems. Those who worked with livestock were the core or constant men, employed across the whole year though at weekly wages and not on a legally binding contract. Then came those labourers hired by the week or day, often on a regular basis but susceptible to short days and interruptions in work depending on season and weather conditions.[25] Although it was not an epithet used in the census, it became common in the mid nineteenth century government reports to use the term ‘ordinary’ to describe these labourers. The core men were paid more than ordinary labourers, although their hours may have been longer, with Sunday working a necessity to tend and feed animals. An estimate of average earnings across a number of English poor law unions in the 1890s found that shepherds earned 18s 2d per week, horsemen and cattlemen 17s 2d per week compared to an average of 15s 11d for ordinary labourers.[26] More labourers were employed where there was a predominance of large farms that specialised in arable production, notably in the eastern, south-eastern and south Midland areas. Barry Reay has calculated that in

1871 ninety-seven per cent of men who worked on farms in the south-east fell into the agricultural labourer category, and over a quarter of agricultural labourers in England as a whole came from the five counties of Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Kent and Sussex.[27] Alongside the core and ordinary men were employed groups of casual, seasonal and migrant labourers, vital to the successful conclusion of the Victorian agricultural cycle, but not necessarily captured in the official census count.

That shepherds were afforded an occupational designation distinct from other agricultural workers was a reflection of both the physical separation that defined their work and the high regard in which they were generally held in Victorian times. One of the 'constant' men, they received a relatively privileged status in terms of job security and remuneration. As well as a higher weekly wage than the agricultural labourer, many shepherds were given a rent-free cottage on the farm premises and received a number of additional cash and non-cash allowances, including 'lamb' money (a payment for every lamb reared or alive at a certain 'census' date, with extra for twins), plus coals, beer and food at lambing time. In areas of the north-east (and over the border in the Lothians), shepherds were given 'pack flocks' of sheep in lieu of cash wages, which meant in effect shepherds owned (and received the profits – or losses – from) about a sixth of the sheep herd, although this practice began to die out in the second half of the nineteenth century. Long absences from the farm allowed shepherds an unparalleled independence amongst agricultural workers. They took orders from the farmer, not the bailiff or steward, and worked autonomously, often away from direct surveillance. Observers were quick to acknowledge the skills inherent in shepherding, and

the qualities it fostered in its workers. As one Northumberland farmer told the 1843 Report, ‘They are an extremely intelligent and respectable class of men’.[28]

Despite the familiarity of the shepherdess as an image in popular culture, it was overwhelmingly a male preserve. Thus in the census female workers were divided between only two occupational categories, farm servant (indoor) and agricultural labourer (outdoor). Although in 1851 it was acknowledged that it was ‘the practice in some counties for women to work in the field’, just under two thirds of women farmworkers were delineated as servants across England as a whole (72,812 servants, 42,931 labourers).[29] Between 1851 and 1871 the census recorded that the number of women working as servants fell by some seventy-five per cent, whilst the total for men fell thirty per cent over the same period. The decline in the agricultural labourer category was fifteen per cent for men and twenty-five per cent for women. We need to be cautious here; the collection and tabulation of this data was problematic, an issue well understood by census officials at the time and subsequently explored in detail by historians.[30]

In 1881 the census began to amalgamate the categories of farm servant and agricultural labourer into a single group for both men and women. It is not clear why this decision was taken. It may have been in recognition that the number hired as servants was declining across some regions, although service remained significant until at least the Great War in areas of northern England.[31] The category of shepherd was preserved and their perceived special status continued. In addition, in 1891 a separate category of horseman was introduced. This experiment was not considered particularly

successful at the time however, as the numbers enumerated under this heading were clearly too low. Only 3.4 per cent of the total agricultural workforce was identified as horsemen, this being ‘less than one for every thousand acres of cultivated area, and less than two for every thousand acres of arable land’.[32] In the two early twentieth century censuses, 1901 and 1911, a more sophisticated threefold classification was developed: those in charge of cattle, those in charge of horses, and those ‘not otherwise distinguished’. This was adopted for both men and women, with shepherd still retained as a distinct group. By the turn of the twentieth century the census was beginning to recognize the hierarchy that shaped farm work, at least by differentiating those who worked with animals from those who did not.

II

The census of 1851 showed that agriculture was the most likely first destination for boys aged fourteen years and under starting work in England. Around one in ten male agricultural workers were aged between five and fourteen in 1851, 1861 and 1871. Most of these boys would have been inured to agricultural work from a young age, fitting casual jobs around a rudimentary schooling, before they joined the ranks of the full-time workforce. When this transition from casual to permanent worker took place depended upon age but most importantly on size and strength. Scaring birds off newly sown and emerging crops and minding livestock were deemed suitable for very young children, working alone and without supervision. These were mostly monotonous and unskilled jobs. Other forms of farm work however demanded

knowledge and skills that could only be learned through practice. Although mid-nineteenth century agriculture lacked a formal training system, it was characterized by high levels of occupational inheritance, with sons following fathers into the industry. Economic need and the lack of alternative employment opportunities were the key drivers behind child labour but as Commissioner Vaughan noted in 1843, rural family life attuned boys to the inevitability of agricultural work in other ways, and they grew up with insignia of hard work. 'It is very common for the flail and the sickle to hang in labourers' cottages', he wrote, 'where they are seen by the young, and looked at as implements of manly labour, which the more active and playful may be ambitious of wielding'.[33] When they started out however, boys were 'seldom employed alone'; instead they were expected to lend their 'modicum of strength to assist the man' (or as we will see below, women) and it was considered counter-productive 'in attempting to give a boy a job to do for which his strength is insufficient'.[34] The attributes desired in children therefore were readiness to learn and a 'quickness of hand'.[35] Whilst this applied to children of both genders, it was boys who were most likely to continue to work in agriculture as they matured and who were therefore the focus of on-the-job training.

As their endurance grew, the tasks boys were expected to perform broadened. At around the age of ten, a boy with the requisite strength began to lead horses at the plough or assist the shepherd at his work, as well as work in the hay and harvest fields alongside 'the numerous little jobs about the farm and farm-yard for which his strength is suitable'.[36] They then graduated to holding the plough and driving the team. One land agent in

Warwickshire believed that boys under ten were ‘scarcely any use to farmers’, in East Sussex boys were ‘no use’ until ‘old and strong enough to drive a plough’ which was ‘rarely’ before age ten or eleven, whilst on the heavy Essex clays it was thought ‘a boy under 11 or 12 would not have strength to get through the day’ driving the plough.[37] This transition was a rite of passage, ‘an emancipation from school discipline, a considerable step towards manhood’, as one observer told Commissioner Austin in 1843.[38] These boys worked under direction of the carter, ploughman or shepherd, a bond that was influential. Sometimes they were relatives. The shepherd’s page was often a son or nephew, who would serve a traineeship in the expectation of becoming a fulltime shepherd in adulthood, with knowledge of the flock and the local ground passed down through the family. Head horsemen were vested with great responsibility, for the welfare and condition of the farm horses but also the supervision and instruction of those workers under him. On large farms horse work demanded team work, each member given a role within the hierarchy, with the head horseman cutting the furrow, followed by less experienced men tracking his line. But whilst some boys were given support and tutelage, others were maltreated. Boys remembered working long hours, coerced by verbal threats that sometimes spilled over into physical violence. At twelve years old, Thomas Hall had already been working for four years when Commissioner Vaughan interviewed him in Kent in 1843. ‘I used to be much fatigued when I first went to work’, he explained, ‘driving the horse at plough makes the legs ache; driving at harrow makes the legs ache more’.[39] Albert Merritt was out driving a plough by the age of ten in 1860s Essex and ‘found himself tired with his day’s work; got so much walking’.[40] Covering

miles a day over ploughed ground, such boys, as Jane Humphries has shown, were locked into a work relationship based on an adult pace that was sometimes beyond the physical capabilities of the young worker.[41]

Once skilled in ploughwork, leading and then driving a team of horses, lads would then add 'the more labourious and difficult operations' such as mowing, reaping, hedging and ditching to his range.[42] Far from being unvarying and predictable – or 'ordinary' – farm work demanded knowledge of different crops, implements and techniques. Shepherds needed to have knowledge of herbage, rotation of grazing, weather and disease, all demanding 'considerable skill, unremitting attention and a hearty interest in his work'.[43] Commissioner Vaughan noted in 1843 that where cultivation was 'varied', farm tools such as the spade, scythe, sickle, axe, hoe, and flail, although sometimes 'vulgar' in form and purpose, required 'no inconsiderable skill to manage with effect'.[44] The flail, two sections of wood, a long handle and a shorter beater, trussed together with a piece of leather and a swivel, was used for hand threshing. Swung over the head and thwacked down hard on the crop, it needed to be handled with care, working in unison with two or three others in a small team, to avoid accidents. The scythe, which had largely superseded the much smaller sickle for cutting crops by the mid nineteenth century, was razor-sharp and physically taxing to wield. Reaping the crop was exacting and exhausting teamwork, each man had to keep to the same time set by the head mower, working behind him in a staggered line. Lads needed to become 'habituated' to working with such tools, making them 'the more expert and valuable workmen', as land agent John Barker told Commissioner Tremenheere in Cumberland in the 1860s.[45] Transmission of

skills was vital; boys therefore learned through observation, imitation and experience to master the techniques of farm work.

Even at the beginning of the Victorian era then, it was recognized by government investigators that agricultural work was far from prosaic and predictable. Full-time year-round workers in agriculture were, in Vaughan's words, 'versatile and accomplished'.[46] Fifty years later William Little appeared exasperated that the 'general impression' of the ordinary agricultural labourer was still of men engaged in work 'which requires little intelligence, skill, or training'. Just like Vaughan, he stressed the reality was of a job full of variety and expertise. Horses had to be trained and managed; ploughing, mowing and sowing were 'arts'; spade and fork work had to be learned. Thus there were 'few duties which he has to perform which do not call for a certain amount of judgment, dexterity, and practice'.[47] All were conscious of the division between the core men and ordinary labourers, or the first-class and second-class men as Arthur Wilson Fox called them by 1900, the former with greater responsibilities associated with the charge of animals. These reporters were aware that agricultural labourers were not a homogeneous group; not all men possessed the same skills and the application of knowledge and strength differentiated men. Edwin Portman believed that much depended 'not only on the physical capability but also on the *energy* of the man himself', whilst Little warned that 'the labourer who had not learned to economise his forces and attack his work at the point of least resistance would be worn out very quickly'.[48] For Wilson Fox the ordinary workers were divided by 'many grades', with men who could undertake 'the more skilled work', such as

thatching, draining, ploughing, and hedging, more secure ‘than the less skilled men’.[49]

III

In a system of informal apprenticeship, weight and strength were the key advantages and determined progression up the wage scale. The extent to which wages rose was an indication of skill development. ‘Their wages, after the first year or two’, Alfred Austin wrote in his report on the counties of Wiltshire, Dorset, Devon and Somerset in 1843, ‘depend more upon their strength and activity, and also on their willingness to work, than their age’.[50] In the 1860s one agent giving evidence to Commissioner Culley noted ‘All persons are not equal in stature and strength at the same age, and should be treated accordingly’.[51] Wages were gradually raised as strength and efficiency increased; boys progressed from ‘quarter-man’ to ‘half-man’ before reaching the status of ‘full-man’. The age at which men reached full-adult rates varied but was usually between eighteen and twenty years. The Vice-Chair of the Bridgewater Union in Dorset, outlined how the system operated in that vicinity in the early 1840s:

> At first they get 3d. a-day and a pint of cider, then 8d. a-day with three half-pints of cider, and then the regular wages of men. Between these periods the wages go on increasing pretty regularly: but it depends upon the boy and sometimes the master: a younger boy is sometimes worth more than an older.[52]

A wage hierarchy based upon strength and experience also defined farm service. Girls and boys entered service between the ages of ten and fourteen, and were expected to undertake a range of tasks indoors and out. On larger farms lads could move up the hierarchy to take on a particular role, usually in charge of horses, whilst on small farms their work was not so clearly defined. The system in Cumberland and Westmorland, where six-month hiring was usual, was described in the late 1860s:

> A boy of 14 when he first enters service receives from 30s to 50s the first half year, and if he proves to be a smart lad and willing, he is very soon in the receipt of 6l or 7l for the half year; and when he can take charge of a pair of horses and hold his own in the harvest field he is entitled to and receives men's wages. Girls go to farm service when about 14 and receive from 30s to 2l the first half year, and as they become stronger and are able to take a more active part in the household or farm work their wages rise rapidly until they receive 5l 10s or 6l for the half year. [53]

Analysis of farm account books from different regions of England has recently confirmed the link between the strength of agricultural workers and their wage profiles. Utilising two farm account books from Derbyshire and Gloucestershire from the 1830s and 1840s, Joyce Burnette found that boys' strength grew significantly between the ages of twelve to twenty, after which it

remained fairly constant to the age of thirty, when it slowly began to decline. Wage levels increased rapidly in the teen years and peaked at around the age of thirty, when they remained stable or declined slightly to the age of sixty, after which they fell. Because wages grew at twice the rate as strength in the teen years, some of this increase was due to skill acquisition. In their twenties, increases in male wages can be attributed to increases in skill as strength profiles flattened. 'Changes in strength explain a large portion of the wage growth during the teens', Burnette explained, 'but wages grew faster than strength up to the age of 30, suggesting that agricultural labourers acquired a significant amount of skill'.[54] In a study of the profiles of workers at Old Hall Farm, Norfolk, David Mitch found that wages rose considerably between the early teenage years and the early twenties, and were then relatively flat between the mid-twenties and mid-forties. There was however, significant fluctuation across the agricultural year, where earnings in a given week could spike considerably, probably reflecting piece-work payments.[55]

IV

Although farmers paid different rates of pay to core and ordinary adult workers, the latter group, who we have seen were a large and diverse body, was rarely given discriminatory wages based on their different age, skill and capacity. A daily flat-rate of pay could differ between farms or parishes, sometimes over very short distances, but the adult labourer in agriculture was paid, as one farmer told Commissioner Norman in the 1860s, 'by the week, and to a very great extent good, bad, and indifferent receive the same

reward'.[56] Piecework was one way that 'ordinary' agricultural labourers could boost their weekly wage, and one from which the core men were usually excluded – it was not the standard practice for them to take part in the harvest or other contracted work. Farmers benefitted from contracting out work by the task as it was in the labourers' interests to complete the work as quickly as possible for payment; task workers worked long hours by choice and profited from the relatively high remuneration that resulted. It enabled 'a distinction to be drawn between the man who is worth his money and the man who is not'.[57] William Little noted in the 1890s that 'these additional earnings depend so much upon the skill, strength, and industry of the labourer that the amount earned varies enormously even where men are working under precisely similar conditions.' He concluded, 'the maximum sum which a skilled labourers receives exceeds the average by much more than where payment is chiefly by time'.[58]

Although systems varied, contracted work was often amongst the most skilled, and included hedging, wood-cutting, ditching and drainage, as well as work connected to the production of particular crops. The harvest was often treated as separate elements of piecework, farmers making an agreement with labourers either as individuals or as a group for the duration of the harvest, which covered the acreage of crop to be cut, wages to be paid and allowances to be included (such as beer and food). Mowing by hand was recognized as 'one of the most exhausting descriptions of work' requiring 'strength, skill and the outfit of a scythe'. Ditching meanwhile, was 'disagreeable work, which has to be paid for by a price which allows a man to increase his earnings and pay for the numerous and rather costly tools which

he requires'.[59] Laying hedges was described as one of the 'higher branches' of the workman's craft; it was said in the 1860s that 'a superior labourer who can lay a hedge, etc, can always get work'.[60]

Certain tasks involved the employment of seasonal labour to supplement the regular workforce. Irish harvesters, skilled in mowing, were a feature of English agriculture in the mid nineteenth century, with around 75,000 working the harvests in the 1850s. Although the numbers fell after this date they remained a constant and important feature in some regions, particularly the north, across the nineteenth century.[61] Groups of English men also worked in gangs, taking on mowing, threshing, hedging, and ditching contracts and traversing well-known routes within and across county boundaries.[62] Although arable agriculture necessitated the largest input of seasonal workers, where sheep flocks were large shearing gangs were also contracted; this was physical work that required 'a good deal of skill' to handle the animal and operate the manual shears in such a way as to ensure a complete fleece of maximum weight in as short a time as possible.[63]

Where farmers contracted out work to their own day labourers, it was often done on the understanding that family teams would complete work. 'By the task-work of the man', Vaughan wrote in 1843, 'both woman and boy, and sometimes the girl, are engaged in the more labourious treatment of the land … the woman shares much of the man's labour at task-work, the boy all of it, even the digging, which is the most severe of any'.[64] Women and children turned, gathered, tied and stacked crops in the hay and harvest fields after it was cut. After hay was cut by scythemen, it was laid out to dry and turned over regularly by women to assist the drying process. It was then raked into

cocks, loaded onto carts and stacked. In the wheat harvest, women worked behind the mowers, gathering the crop into sheaves, whilst children would make the bands to bind the corn. Many of these tasks, although essential, were regarded as ancillary. If hierarchies of strength and skill from boyhood to adulthood defined male agriculture labour, how then did female workers fit into this structure?

V

Women's work was typically classified, alongside that of young boys, as 'the lightest known to agriculture'. Tasks such as hoeing corn, picking stones, weeding crops, and taking up root crops like potatoes and turnips were, it was argued in 1843, 'suited' to women's character 'as having more discretion, greater strength and pliancy of hand, with a worse footing on the soil, owing to her shape and costume'. In this hierarchy women therefore stood between the boy ('whom she often accompanies and directs') and the old man ('whose place she occasionally fills').[65] Whilst some women's work such as turning hay, stooking corn and digging potatoes was seen as physically 'fatiguing', particularly for the arms, its labouriousness came from the length of the working day, 'their being continued through a greater number of hours', rather 'than from their requiring a greater exertion of strength'.[66]

Few women's jobs were awarded skilled status in the same way that male-dominated tasks such as ploughing and reaping were. But for some of these tasks deemed 'lighter', such as turnip hoeing, women's labour was often recognized as 'expert'. Women were quick and accomplished; they were jobs

that ‘cannot possibly be objected to as overtaxing the strength of the female’ and at which women were ‘equal to, if not superior to’ men. But as Commissioner Tremenheere pointed out in his report on Cumberland and Westmorland in the 1860s, they were also jobs that the male workers of that region ‘would regard as a waste of their powers and as derogatory to their manhood if they should be employed in them’.[67]

The different physical capabilities of men and women meant that women were not usually considered suitable replacement labour for adult male farm workers. As Commissioner Austin noted in 1843, ‘The strength required for work performed by men effectually prevents women from being employed in it; and the lower rates of wages for which they work has not had any tendency, therefore, to make them more generally employed’.[68] It also meant that women’s wages in agriculture tended to be ‘sticky’, and although women in the northern counties usually received slightly more for a day’s work than their southern counterparts, across all regions their wages varied little with age. Their capabilities were differentiated at piecework however, where ‘difference in the strength and capacity for women to work influences the earnings’.[69] By adulthood women earned between a half to a third of the average male wage. According to Burnette, ‘If wage growth is interpreted as skill acquisition, then female agricultural labourers acquired very little skill’.[70]

But an assessment of women’s strength and capabilities was arbitrary. In some regions the types of work women were engaged on could vary within very small distances; it was directed by local custom and shows there was some fluidity in gendered roles. In Kent, Commissioner Vaughan found that at Tunbridge Wells women were ‘rarely employed in opening the hills in the hop

grounds' but at Maidstone and Farnham it was 'their common occupation'. Similarly women opened the hills and men cut the plants at Maidstone but at Farnham 'the man opens the hills and the woman cuts the plants'. In the harvest fields there were places were 'the woman does not bind the corn, but only makes the bands; in others the binding is generally assigned to her'.[71] Some women's work in agriculture was also considered both skilled and essential. In the dairy the making and managing of cheese demanded 'skill and attention' and 'great muscular exertion'.[72] Cleanliness was of primary importance, and although dairying was traditionally associated with femininity, it was hard, physical work, with long hours (especially in the peak cheese-making months of May, June and July) and heavy manual labour (turning and pressing cheeses as heavy as 120lbs). Commissioner Stanhope believed that the 'indoor work' of women on dairy farms was 'undoubtedly most severe', with contracts often requiring work from four am to ten pm, as well as Sunday work, 'and during very busy seasons even these hours are exceeded'.[73] In hop work, women commanded such 'skill in tying' it was rarely performed by men, and a 'rapidity and adroitness in picking' which 'commonly' eclipsed men.[74]

Northumberland accounted for the highest percentage of female agricultural labourers in any English county in 1851 and 1871. Their work was year-round: cleaning the land (weeding and stone-picking), planting, hoeing and cutting root crops (particularly turnips), haymaking and harvesting, manuring the land (spreading, forking and turning dung), and winter barnwork (with the thrashing and winnowing machines). These workers were praised for their appearance and physical strength, their stout boots, dress and headgear

‘admirably adapted for their work’. Commissioner Joseph Henley memorably described them in the late 1860s as ‘a splendid race’, whilst George Culley thought Northumberland women workers were ‘a class of women, almost equal to the ordinary run of Bedfordshire male labourers’. In Henley’s view Northumberland women combined regular physical outdoor work with proficiency as housewives and mothers. He claimed that ‘their strength is such that they can vie with the men in carrying sacks of corn’, but there were limits: for pitching and loading hay and corn ‘two women are put to the work of one man’.[75]

Less well known but still remarkable, is Edwin Portman’s report on the Isle of Axholme in north Lincolnshire. Here women’s work was also year-round, and consisted of weeding, singling turnips, planting, picking and sorting potatoes, and ‘all the regular work of the farm’. This was the only area he had ‘found woman’s labour superseding men’s to any extent’. He goes on:

> On some such farms few men find regular employment, while women can, being engaged at half the wages, and after a few years’ practice, do as much work. Some women have been described to me as “more than half men”, and indeed in strength and physical development quite equal. They dress especially for field work and wear long leather gaiter or “yanks”, and tuck in their skirts, so that the dress is very like that of a man.[76]

Women workers in regions such as Northumberland and Lincolnshire were validated because of their proficiency and indispensability, enabling them to

fashion an occupational identity as agricultural workers in their own right. Their distinctive mode of dress and their physical strength, developed through and perfectly fitted for work in the fields, could however arouse disquiet about their ‘muscular’ and ‘inverted’ femininity.[77] Moreover their presence disrupted but did not overturn the sexual division of labour in agriculture: skilled work at ploughing and reaping was still the preserve of men in these areas.

VI

At the start of the Victorian era farm work associated with crop production was dominated by hand labour. By the end of the era this had changed significantly with the introduction of a variety of farm machinery. Threshing and harvesting were the two main tasks to be transformed. In 1850 it has been estimated that around half of the harvest was threshed by horse-driven machine in south-east England; by 1880 as much as four-fifths of all grain was threshed by portable steam machine. Whereas hand threshing was conducted by men working in pairs or a small team over many weeks in barns (taking around forty days to thresh the produce of ten acres of corn), the threshing machine necessitated the labour of between twelve and fourteen people outdoors, to unload the rick and pitch to the feeder, open the sheaves, attend to the sacks and remove the straw and chaff. A stack a day could be processed when a steam thresher was used. Haymaking saw the introduction of mechanical mowers, tedders, horse rakes (to clean the fields), swathe turns (for tossing and turning the hay), stacking machines and elevators after 1850, all worked by horsepower. The wheat harvest saw the introduction of the sail

reaper, which cut the crop, and then the reaper-binder, which cut and bound. Steam-threshing reduced labour requirements by about eighty per cent and mechanical harvesting by about fifty per cent (if the scythe had been used previously). By the late nineteenth century, the majority of chaff cutting, turnip slicing, and mangold pulping was also mechanised.[78]

Initially at least, mechanization was seen by many to have had a positive impact on work practices. Commissioners in the late 1860s noted demand for a different class of labourer, those who had the skills and intelligence to operate machinery, rather than those who simply possessed physical strength. Commissioner Portman claimed 'that mind is wanted as well as brute force …'.[79] A farmer in Cumberland told Commissioner Tremenheere 'what we now want is skilled workers. Machinery is gradually taking the place of manual labour, and we require intelligent men to direct it'.[80] Although women were employed on threshing machines to cut the bands and hand the sheaf to the feeder, or work in the stack with a pitchfork, it was men who took control of farm machinery. This enabled some men to command a better rate of pay for his work. A report from the Hampshire Chamber of Agriculture argued that 'men have learned to look upon a new machines as a friend', and far from harbouring a return of the Swing riots, the threshing machine had relieved 'them of the hardest portions of their work', and introduced 'a new class of skilled labour which is more highly remunerated'.[81]

Alfred Simmons, secretary of the Kent and Sussex Labourers' Union, also promulgated this argument in his evidence to the Royal Commission on Agriculture in 1881. Whilst he accepted that machinery had curtailed the length of harvest and threshing and lessened the demand for female and child

labour – both ‘an enormous effect upon the labourers’ earnings’ – the men ‘prefer the machinery as a rule’ as it had supplanted physically taxing work. The more ‘educated’ of them, according to Simmons, understood mechanisation could secure, rather than undermine their position in the workforce.[82] Joseph Arch, leader of the National Agricultural Labourers Union, was more sceptical however. ‘I have no objection to machinery’, he told the Committee in 1881, but a farmer ‘may have all the machinery he likes, but if he does not have the men he never can be successful … The farmers have machinery as a sort of weapon over the backs of the labourers’.[83] Women lost status due to technological change, especially in the harvest, where they were reduced to subsidiary workers following the reapers. But technology in turn also reduced the necessity for men, as reaping in turn was mechanised.

Whilst mechanization introduced new competencies to agricultural work, the claim that old hand skills were being undermined or forgotten was increasingly articulated in the 1880s and 1890s. Cecil Chapman, reporting for 1893-4 Royal Commission on Labour, thought that ‘the all-round sort of man, who can lay a hedge, thatch a rick, make a drain, and sheer sheep, is becoming a thing of the past’. He partly lay the blame for this on the division of labour on large farms, where ‘ordinary’ labourers had become ‘accustomed to a particular kind of work’, and contract workers were engaged for ‘anything special’. The result was ‘that labourers are more skillful now in the use of machines and less skillful in the use of hand tools than they were’.[84] This conclusion was echoed by Edward Wilkinson, reporting for the same Commission: ‘It is true that machinery has superseded much of the old skilled work, and also true that many of the young men show great aptitude in

learning the management of it', he argued, 'but such things as thatching, hedge-slashing or laying, drain laying, mowing, shearing, are in many parts becoming almost lost arts'.[85]

Part of the blame for this change was also apportioned to workers themselves: young men were no longer willing to spend years learning skills. In the Basingstoke district Commissioner William Bear heard complaints that the new generation of young men 'do not take the same interest in their work' as their predecessors, they 'do not care to learn to thatch, or do other work involving some skill'.[86] Arthur Wilson Fox assessment was perhaps more astute: 'Possibly part of this disinclination for agricultural labour may be traced to a more educated generation shirking and resenting toil which is comparatively badly paid, monotonous, and productive of no material or social improvement'.[87] Between 1881 and 1901, as other major industries continued to expand their labour forces, the number of male farmworkers in England fell by a quarter and female workers by a third, according to the census returns. There was concern that those who migrated into towns were physically and intellectually the most adept, leaving behind a residuum of indifferent workers. The 1881 Census Report surmised that 'the industrial centres attract from the rural districts those who are comparatively strong in mind and body', and William Little worried that 'a desire to attain excellence in work' was not likely to transmitted if 'the more active and intelligent young men of the class are drawn away by various inducements from agricultural pursuits'.[88] Joseph Arch was, as ever, more strident. The 'most intelligent and superior' labourers, he argued, had been 'driven away'; 'if the farmers have only got a lot of inferior labour, it is just what they asked for and it is just what they deserve. They did

not know when they had got good workmen and they did not value them'.[89] Although the real weekly wages of ordinary agricultural labourers rose by about forty per cent between the 1860s and 1900s, this was only about half of the national increase. Even for those skilled horsemen and stockmen at the top of the hierarchy, and those that laid claim to new skills associated with machinery, farm work remained a low paid industry at the end of the Victorian era.

VII

The epithet Hodge, much brandished in mid-nineteenth century literary and cultural circles to symbolize a passive and debased class of agricultural worker, was not a label employed by parliamentary commissioners. It does not appear (except as a personal surname, Mr Hodge) in any of the reports cited in this article. The government-employed surveyors were certainly not immune to castigating agricultural workers, scrutinizing them through their own urban, masculine, middle-class economic and moral frameworks. But they also perceived themselves as professional observers, employees of the state, who stood apart from those journalists, reporters and countryside interlopers in their knowledge and purpose. Henry Vaughan, writing in 1843, perceived that the agricultural labourer 'spends his life amongst the works of nature, possesses much manual skill, a quick sight, a faithful and exact memory (as all must know who have been in the habit of hearing him examined)…', an aside that, although written before the infamous reports of

the *Morning Chronicle*, could be seen to act as a warning to those liable to form quick judgments on limited evidence.[90]

Far from being unvarying and predictable, Victorian parliamentary commissioners recognized that complex and shifting workplace hierarchies based upon age, region, gender and custom defined farm work. The wide range of tasks that constituted agricultural labour involved varying levels of skill. Those who worked with livestock stood at the top of the hierarchy, although prestige depended on the status of the farm and the animal. On arable farms it was the men in charge of horses who were the most skilled and revered of the constant men in Victorian England, whilst in pastoral systems, the shepherd was distinguished from the rest of the workforce. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the status of cattlemen began to rise with the shift towards liquid milk production, even though women had traditionally been associated with dairying. As processes mechanized, men continued to monopolize the most valued and highly-paid work. Although women were seen as accomplished in some tasks, they rarely attained the same occupational identity as (some) men did through their work in agriculture. Writing in 1992 Howkins argued, 'To many contemporaries and, until recently, to most historians the English farm labourer of the nineteenth century was an unproblematic figure … portrayed as a single type. Unskilled, or at best semi-skilled, doomed to day labour and poor pay'.[91] No-one did more to unpick this stereotype of the farm worker than Howkins and communicate the variety of experiences that encompassed living and working on the land in the nineteenth century.

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[2] Rev John Eddowes, *The Agricultural Labourer As He Really Is Or, Village Morals in 1854* (Driffield, 1854), pp. 6-15. Reprinted in Mark Freeman (Ed.), *The English Rural Poor, 1850-1914* (London, 2005), 5 vols, (vol 1)

[3] K. D. M. Snell, 'Deferential bitterness: the social outlook of the rural proletariat in eighteenth and nineteenth century England and Wales', in M. L. Bush (Ed.), *Social Orders and Social Classes in Europe since 1500: Studies in Social Stratification* (Harlow, 1992), pp. 158- 184, at p. 163

[4] 'Labour and the Poor'. The Rural Districts, Letter XIII, *The Morning Chronicle*, 1 December, 1849

[5] Mark Freeman, *Social Investigation and Rural England 1870-1914* (Woodbridge, 2003), p. 25

[6] Alun Howkins, 'From Hodge to Lob: reconstructing the English farm labourer, 1870-1914', in Malcolm Chase and Ian Dyke (eds), *Living and loving: Essays in honour of J. F. C. Harrison* (Aldershot, 1996), pp. 218-35, at p. 218

[7] Eddowes, *The Agricultural Labourer As He Really Is*, pp. 15-16

[8] 'Labour and the Poor'. The Rural Districts, Letter XIII, *The Morning Chronicle*, 1 December, 1849

[9] Howkins, 'From Hodge to Lob', p. 220

[10] K. D. M. Snell, *Annals of the Labouring Poor: Social Change and Agrarian England, 1660-1900* (Cambridge, 1985), p. 6

[11] Howkins, 'From Hodge to Lob, p. 222, p. 224 and p. 226

[12] Barry Sloan, 'Country bumpkin or backbone of the nation? The urbanization of the agricultural labourer and the "unmanning" of the English in the later nineteenth century', in Mary Hammond and Barry Sloan (eds), *Rural-Urban Relationships in the Nineteenth-Century* (London, 2016), pp. 179-193, at p. 191

[13] Quoted in Peter Clarke, 'Hodge's politics: the agricultural labourers and the third reform bill in Suffolk', in Negley Harte and Roland Quinault (eds), *Land and Society in Britain 1700-1914: Essays in Honour of F. M. L. Thompson* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 119-136, at p. 119. See also Patricia O'Hara, 'Knowing Hodge: the third reform bill and the Victorian periodical press', in Laurel Brake and Julie F. Codell (eds), *Encounters in the Victorian Press: Editors, Authors, Readers* (Basingstoke, 2005), pp. 103-116

[14] Mark Freeman, 'The agricultural labourer and the "Hodge" stereotype, c.1850-1914', *Agricultural History Review*, 49/2 (2001), pp. 172-86

[15] Deborah Maltby, '"Hodge?": Cobbett, Jefferies, and the Englishness of rural workers', *Clio*, 38/1 (2008), pp. 17-37, at p. 21 and p. 19

[16] Howkins, 'From Hodge to Lob', p. 221

[17] Howkins, 'From Hodge to Lob', pp. 228-233

[18] Joyce Burnette, *Gender, Work and Wages in Industrial Britain* (Cambridge, 2008), pp. 82-3

[19] Sloan, 'Country bumpkin or backbone of the nation?', p. 181

[20] Karen Sayer, *Women of the Fields: Representation of Rural Women in the Nineteenth Century* (Manchester, 1995), p. 10

[21] Freeman, *Social Investigation and Rural England*, p. 39

[22] Nicola Verdon, *Working the Land: A History of the Farmworker in England from 1850 to the Present Day* (Basingstoke, 2017), p. 58

[23] Census of Great Britain, 1851; Population tables II, Vol. I. England and Wales. Divisions I-VI, p. xci

[24] For further analysis of the regional pattern of farm service see Verdon, *Working the Land,* ch. 2

[25] On the regional differences in hiring see Alun Howkins, 'The English farm labourer in the nineteenth century: farm, family and community' in Brian Short (Ed.), *The English Rural Community: Image and Analysis* (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 85-104 and Alun Howkins, 'In the sweat of thy face: the labourer and work', in G. E. Mingay (Ed.), *The Vanishing Countryman* (London, 1989), pp. 42-56

[26] B.P.P., 1893-4, XXXV, Royal Commission on Labour. The Agricultural Labourer, Vol V, Part 1, General Report by Mr William C. Little, p. 80

[27] Barry Reay, *Rural Englands: Labouring Lives in the Nineteenth Century* (Basingstoke, 2004), p. 36

[28] B.P.P., 1843, XII, Reports of Special Assistant Poor Law Commissioners on the Employment of Women and Children in Agriculture, p. 375

[29] Census of Great Britain, 1851, Population tables II, Vol. I., p. xci; Verdon, *Working the Land*, p. 58

[30] Alun Howkins and Nicola Verdon, 'Adaptable and sustainable? Male farm service and the agricultural labour force in midland and southern England, c.1850-1925', *Economic History Review,* 61/2 (2008), pp. 467-95

[31] Verdon, *Working the Land*, pp. 28-9

[32] 1901 Census Report, p. 104; B.P.P., 1893-4, XXXV, Royal Commission on Labour. The Agricultural Labourer, Vol V, Part 1, General Report by Mr William C. Little, p. 37.

[33] B.P.P., 1843, XII, p. 133

[34] B.P.P., 1843, XII, p. 154 and p. 31

[35] B.P.P., 1867-8, XVII, Royal Commission on the Employment of Children, Young Persons and Women in Agriculture. Report by Edwin Portman, p. 82

[36] B.P.P., 1843, XII, p. 30

[37] B.P.P., 1868-9, XIII, Report by F. H. Norman, p. 224; B.P.P., 1867, XVII, Report by Rev. James Fraser, p. 8; B. P. P., 1867-8, XVII, Evidence to Rev Fraser's report, p. 80

[38] B.P.P., 1843, XII, p. 79

[39] B.P.P., 1843, XII, p. 209

[40] B.P.P., 1867-8, XVII, Evidence to Rev James Fraser's report, p. 202

[41] Jane Humphries, *Childhood and Child Labour in the British Industrial Revolution* (Cambridge, 2010), p. 219

[42] B.P.P., 1843, XII, p. 30

[43] B.P.P., 1893-4, XXX, General Report, p. 36

[44] B.P.P., 1843, XII, p. 155

[45] B.P.P., 1868-9, XIII, Evidence to Mr Trementheere's Report, pp. 529-30

[46] B.P.P., 1843, XII, p. 156 and p. 158

[47] B.P.P., 1893-4, XXX, General Report, p. 38

[48] B.P.P., 1843, XII, p. 156; B.P.P., 1867-8, XVII, Report by Portman, p. 48; B.P.P, 1893-4, XXX, General Report, p. 38

[49] B.P.P., 1900, LXXXII, Report by Mr. Wilson Fox on the Wages and Earnings of Agricultural Labourers in the United Kingdom, pp. 7-8

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[52] B. P. P., 1843, XII, p. 120

[53] B.P.P., 1868-9, XIII, pp. 138-9

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[63] B.P.P., 1893-4, XXV, General Report, p. 67

[64] B.P.P., 1843, XII, p. 134

[65] B.P.P., 1843, XII, p. 134

[66] B.P.P., 1843, XII, p. 4

[67] B.P.P., 1868-9, XIII, Report by Trementheere, p. 136

[68] B.P.P., 1843, XII, p. 27

[69] B.P.P., 1843, XII, p. 6

[70] Burnette, 'How skilled were English agricultural labourers?', p. 712

[71] B.P.P., 1843, XII, p. 133

[72] B.P.P., 1843, XII, p. 5

[73] B.P.P., 1868-9, XIII, Report by Stanhope, p. 15

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[75] B.P.P., 1867, XVII, Report by Joseph Henley, pp. 53-4; B.P.P., 1867-8, XVII, p. xxviii

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[81] B.P.P., 1868-9, Evidence to Mr Portman's report, p. 198

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[85] B.P.P., 1893-4, XXV, Report by Edward Wilkinson, p. 13

[86] B.P.P., 1893-4, XXV, Report by W. E Bear, p. 77

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[89] B.P.P., 1882, XIV, Evidence of Mr Joseph Arch, p. 80

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