**University of Alberta**

# War, Economy, and Society:

## The Impact of the One Hundred Years War in Late Medieval England

by

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in

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**Abstract**

A longstanding debate in the history of the Hundred Years War has been whether the war had a negative or positive impact on the English economy during the fourteenth and fifteenth century. For a number of years many historians of late medieval England have leaned towards a negative view of the impact of the war, particularly because of the growing burden of taxation and purveyance throughout the war. Few scholars have examined the impact of the Hundred Years War from a more holistic perspective encompassing issues such as taxation and purveyance, along with wages, ransoms, spoils of war, and the investment in industry as a result of increased English wealth. This thesis attempts to demonstrate that the impact of the Hundred Years War is more positive on the English economy than previously held, or at least is far more complex than the current scholarship indicates.

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# Chapter 1 - Introduction[1]

Modern historians have often taken it for granted that war impacts the economy and society of its participants. In an age where countries are trying to come to grips with the impact of war on their own economies and societies, an attempt to expand our global understanding of the impact of war on the economy and society, past, present and future, is of profound importance.[2] It is generally understood that war can have both negative and positive effects on the economy of its participants, though there is a divergence of opinion about whether the balance of any given conflict is positive or negative. The factors that determine this balance include, among others, the length of the conflict, the destruction or introduction of key industries or natural resources, the impact of the conflict on the populace of the warring countries, and the after-conflict spoils taken from the losers and distributed among the victors.

The long tradition of historical research on warfare in the Middle Ages has only served to reinforce wars' significance in this era. As warfare increased in scale over the latter centuries of the Middle Ages, it grew in importance with regards to its impact on the medieval economy and society. War was a dominant feature in all periods in medieval society and was known to have occupied the

[1] Some of the material in this thesis has been published in an article, B. Wuetherick, "A Reevaluation of the Impact of the Hundred Years War", *Past Imperfect*, vol. 8, 1999-2000, p. 125-152.

[2] For example, a recent attempt has been attempted for the current U.S. war in Iraq and was reported in the article "Blood and Treasure," *Economist* (April 8, 2006). Originally appeared as L. Bilmes and J. Stiglitz, *The Economic Costs of the Iraq War: An Appraisal Three Years After the Beginning of the Conflict*.



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attention, energy, and treasuries of rulers and governments across Europe.[3] This observation could easily be extended throughout history before and since the Middle Ages, reinforcing war's importance to the history of the human race as a whole.[4] This alone, however, does not justify its continued study as an essential field of historical research. Why do we need to continue to examine warfare and its impact on history in an age when our society increasingly frowns upon war as a waste of human life and potential? It is important to realize that the pressures of war greatly influenced the economic, social, and political development of the various regions of medieval Europe, in particular that of medieval England.[5] It has been further argued that war must be considered as an explanatory factor in that development, as well as the product of a whole cultural environment.[6] For historians to understand the 'whole picture' of medieval society it is essential to examine the impact of war.

Within the study of medieval warfare, the link between the economy and the undertaking of war is obvious. There can be no doubt that a large financial investment was made in order to engage in prolonged military conflict in the Middle Ages. Testaments to one aspect of medieval war's investment survive today, in the form of the many castles and town fortifications that remain scattered around Europe. This investment must have played an important role in the development of the medieval economy. The study of war in any form must, therefore, be inherently linked to the development of that economy. To separate

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[3] J. Kaeuper, *War, Justice and Public Order*, p. 11.
[4] Ibid, p. 11.
[5] J. R. Maddicott, "The English Peasantry and the demands of the crown, 1294-1341," p. 285.
[6] P. Contamine, *War in the Middle Ages*, p. xii.



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the two would present an incomplete picture of medieval society. Bridbury has argued that war destroys resources and diverts them from other uses, but it also expedites potentially beneficial developments that may somewhat balance out the damage and the interruption of the ordinary pursuits of life.[7] This acknowledgement that the economy and war go hand-in-hand, in both a negative and positive manner, has led medieval historians to examine the impact war played on society as a whole. This view is supported by Hewitt who argues that it is:

> ... now recognized that an adequate history of any war should include an account of the roles and experiences of the civilians of the warring nations. The field of study is no longer the army-at-war, but the nation-at-war. It should, therefore, cover the work of all who directly or indirectly aid or hinder the nation's effort and the experiences of all whose lives are affected by the war.[8]

These roles and experiences, the workings of the nation-at-war from 'king to beggar', are manifested in the relationship between war and the economy.[9]

Historians must also realize that war was very common in the Middle Ages because war tended to advance the material interests of the nobility, on whose political and financial support the medieval political order was built.[10] Within this framework, it would be easy to misunderstand the significance of war in the Middle Ages if we spoke only in terms of costs and effects (positive and negative) of war. War was as much a part of medieval society as religion, and to treat it as less than that would be misguided.[11] Indeed, warfare played a formative

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[7] A. R. Bridbury, "The Hundred Years War: Costs and Profits," p. 80.
[8] H. J. Hewitt, "The Organization of War", in *The Hundred Years War*, p. 75.
[9] J. Langdon and J. Masschaele, "Commercial Activity and Population Growth," p. 52.
[10] J. Kaueper, *War, Justice, and Public Order*, p. 14.
[11] A. R. Bridbury, "The Hundred Years War: Costs and Profits", p. 82.



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influence on the development of civilization and the social structure of the economy and government in the Middle Ages.[12]

The role played by the Hundred Years War with regard to the relationship between war and the economy of both England and France is of vital importance. According to Keen, the "story of the development of warfare and of the social and economic burden of warfare, the Hundred Years War has always taken its place as a milestone along the road that leads to total war."[13] The Hundred Years War, traditionally dated between 1337 to 1453 and fought primarily between the kingdoms of England and France, was the 'great war' of the Middle Ages. It followed, and built upon, the huge military endeavors of the Crusades, and witnessed, among other things, an increase in the scale of war, a change in the art of war, and the introduction of important technological improvements. The war, arguably, witnessed the development of nationhood, the involvement of all levels of society in both fighting and supporting the war, the investment of huge sums of money by both the French and English, the subsequent burden of taxation that produced millions more in revenue for the respective governments, and the development of a highly specialized administration to deal with all of these changes. All of these factors underscore the importance of the Hundred Years War in relation to the understanding of the connection between war and the economy.

The historiographical tradition of the study of medieval war, in particular that of the Hundred Years War, has followed two completely different methods of

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[12] M. Keen, *Medieval Warfare: A History*, p. v.
[13] Ibid., p. 86.



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research. The first is a discourse on the narrative of war, in particular looking at the political and military development of the art of war, and the second is an attempt to understand war and its effects on the remainder of society. Oman's series, *A History of the Art of War in the Middle Ages*, published in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, is considered to be among the early beginnings of this modern historiographical tradition.[14] He analyzed the various tactics, strategies, technological innovations, and regional differences through a complex narrative framework. Even if many details have been proven wrong by further research in the field (for example, his argument for the western origins of gunpowder), Oman is still acknowledged as the champion of this type of examination into the history of war. Several military historians have carried on this tradition, which often comes down to an examination of battles and a narrative of the course of war. With respect to the Hundred Years War, examples of this type of discussion are the two works by Burne, *The Crécy War* and *The Agincourt War.*[15] These books detail the chronology of significant parts of the Hundred Years War, and also undertake an examination of the tactics and strategies used by the French and English kings to wage the war. Another example of the first historiographical tradition is the work of Seward, who undertook a detailed narrative of the war, aimed largely at the general reader rather than a scholarly audience.[16] The most complete analysis, however, of the political and military aspects of the Hundred Years War was carried out by

[14] C. Oman, *A History of the Art of War in the Middle Ages*, vol. 1 and 2.
[15] A. H. Burne, *The Crécy War*; and A. H. Burne, *The Agincourt War.*
[16] D. Seward, *The Hundred Years War: The English in France, 1337-1453.*



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Perroy.[17] It remains the soundest narrative and the most successful attempt to understand the complicated military and political relationship between the French and the English. This tradition has largely died out over the past decades, in favour of the second historiographical tradition mentioned above. There has, however, recently been an attempt to reopen this type of discourse by Devries and Sumption, among others.[18] Devries' look at the use of infantry in the first half of the fourteenth century, through a chronologically-based battle-by-battle account of war, endeavoured to re-establish the importance of the art of war in the tradition of the history of warfare. Sumption's examination of the first forty years of the Hundred Years War is one of the most detailed chronological summaries of the war since Perroy's important work.[19] . This historiographical trend does not give major consideration to the medieval society and economy. It rarely incorporates any cultural or economic aspects of that society into the narrative and it forces the separation of the study of war from the study of other human activities in the Middle Ages.

The second historiographical trend, which was described above as the attempt to examine war and its effects on the remainder of society, is of more interest for understanding the role that the Hundred Years War played in the economy and society of England. Allmand argued that "the (primary) influence of the 'Annales' school of historical writing (was) ... to place the study of war in the wider social, economic, and cultural background of the societies in which it was

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[17] E. Perroy, *The Hundred Years War.*
[18] K. Devries, *Infantry Warfare in the Early Fourteenth Century: Discipline, Tactics, and Technology.*
[19] J. Sumption, *Trial by Battle: Hundred Years War I*; J. Sumption, *Trial by Fire: Hundred Years War II.*



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fought, to make war part of total history."[20] This move to the study of themes, instead of narrative, can be traced back further to the ground-breaking work of Newhall.[21] He incorporated into his account of the campaigns of Henry V, which admittedly belong to the first historiographical trend, three important sections on military finance, military organization, and the provision of supplies for war. While acknowledging the importance of these areas to the war effort, he nonetheless failed to link them to their influence on the remainder of society. Allmand correctly credited three main scholars with truly beginning this trend of historiographical importance. These were Pieri's "Sur les dimensions de l'histoire militaire", which attempted to demonstrate how military history integrated with other aspects of history; Hewitt's *The Organization of War Under Edward III*, which concentrated on understanding the background and preparation for war; and Contamine's *Guerre, état, et société à la fin du môyen age*, which placed war in the context of the social, economic, political, administrative, legal and cultural history of the Middle Ages.[22] Many have followed, and continue to follow, this tradition of acknowledging war's place within medieval society as a whole.

With respect to the Hundred Years War, attempts to understand war's impact on the economy and society have a long and important tradition as well. One of the first attempts to place the Hundred Years War into the greater picture of English society was undertaken in Postan's "Some Social Consequences of

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[20] C. Allmand, *The Hundred Years War: England and France at War, c. 1300 - 1450*, p. 1.
[21] R. A. Newhall, *The English Conquest of Normandy, 1416 - 1424*.
[22] P. Pieri, "Sur les dimensions de l'histoire militaire"; H. J. Hewitt, *The Organization of War Under Edward III*; and P. Contamine, *Guerre, état, et société à la fin du môyen age*. Unfortunately the first and last of these three have not, to my knowledge, been published in English, which may have somewhat limited their influence, particularly in North America.



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the Hundred Years War."[23] He attempted to demonstrate the negative impacts that the war had on the economy of England in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. This triggered a debate that attempted to determine the role of the Hundred Years War in relation to the economy and society of England.[24]

Postan argued that the costs of the Hundred Years War were 'excessively' negative in terms of their impact on England's economy. In fact, Postan argued that "the Hundred Years War witnessed the victimization of England by its ruling classes ... which neither excitement and adventure nor the spoil could possibly have compensated adequately."[25] McFarlane, on the other hand, characterized the Hundred Years War as a successful business enterprise, which impacted the English economy and society in a positive manner.[26] This is the debate with which I am largely concerned and I attempt to re-evaluate the role that war played in England in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

More recent scholarship regarding the economic impact of the Hundred Years War has continued to expand upon these two different theories. Scholars, such as Bailey, Maddicott, Bridbury, Sherbourne, Miller, Strayer, Prestwich, and others, have all attempted to increase the understanding of the issues originally broached by McFarlane and Postan.[27] The result is a closer understanding of

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[23] M. Postan, "Some Social Consequences of the Hundred Years War".
[24] The main two articles that followed were K. McFarlane, "War, the Economy and Social Change: England and the Hundred Years War"; and M. Postan, "The Costs of the Hundred Years War."
[25] This summary was by A. R. Bridbury, "The Hundred Years War: Costs and Profits", p. 81.
[26] Ibid., p. 81.
[27] J. R. Maddicott, "The English Peasantry and the demands of the crown, 1294-1341"; A. R. Bridbury, "The Hundred Years War: Costs and Profits"; J. Sherbourne, "The Cost of English Warfare with France in the Later Fourteenth Century"; E. Miller, "War, taxation and the English economy in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries"; J. Strayer, "The Costs and Profits: The Anglo-French Conflict of 1294 - 1303"; R. Kaueper, *War, Justice, and Public Order*; and M. Prestwich, *War, Politics, and Finance under Edward I*, to name but a few.



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the relationship between war and the economy of England in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. There has not, however, been an exhaustive study on some of the specific areas referred to by Postan and McFarlane. Maddicott's work on the demands of the crown leading into the Hundred Years War period attempted this, but his work was restricted to an analysis of taxation, purveyance, and the resources of men.[28] He largely ignored any of the positive aspects of the war, including those identified by McFarlane, that could be seen to balance the scales between positive and negative.

There has also been a substantial body of scholarship that has contributed even more to an understanding of the economy and society of England without necessarily participating in the debate begun by Postan and McFarlane. Newhall's study of the conquest of Normandy and Hewitt's study of the expeditions of Edward III both offered some insight into the financing, provisioning, and organization required for war.[29] Allmand's examination of the society at war offered insight into some of the important themes, such as the institutions of war and the conduct of war.[30] And Prestwich's recent book attempted to demonstrate the impact that war had on England, particularly in areas such as rewards and logistics.[31] There are, of course, more than these examples of the work done by other scholars. There are also specific studies on aspects of the debate, especially on the role of the spoils of war and rewards.[32]

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[28] What is meant by resources of men is committing a large number of men to war (and war-related) endeavours that took them away from other (more beneficial) activities.
[29] R. A. Newhall, *The English Conquest of Normandy, 1416 - 1424.*
[30] C. Allmand, *The Hundred Years War.*
[31] M. Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare in the Middle Ages: The English Experience.*
[32] Please see C. Allmand, "War and Profit in the late Middle Ages"; and D. Hay, "The Division of the Spoils of War in Fourteenth Century England."



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Of all the scholarship about the Hundred Years War, no one has attempted to provide an exhaustive analysis of both the war and the economy, which includes all of the various aspects that had perceived negative or positive impacts.

Scholarship that deals specifically with the economy of England or continental Europe during the later Middle Ages is also of interest. The study of the medieval English economy has its own long tradition of scholarship, which goes beyond the purpose of this paper, but there has been a significant amount of work exploring aspects of the economy related to the undertaking of war. This includes attempts to detail aspects of the peasant economy that, even though not specifically treating the impact of war, still help to set the stage for our discussion.[33] The works by Bailey, and more recently by Hatcher and Bailey, detailed the three main schools of thought driving the historiographical analysis of medieval England.[34] The first school, building on the ideas espoused by Malthus, believed that early fourteenth century England experienced a crisis of subsistence, where the level of peasant welfare deteriorated due to a growing imbalance between the population and resources available to maintain the population, from which the nation had not recovered by the end of the Middle Ages.[35] The second school, based on the theories of Marxism, believed that England faced a crisis of feudalism, where the level of peasant welfare deteriorated due to the increased demands placed by landlords on the products

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[33] R. H. Hilton, *The English Peasantry in the Later Middle Ages*; and J. Hatcher, *Rural Economy and Society of the Duchy of Cornwall, 1300 - 1500.*

[34] M. Bailey, "Peasant Welfare in England, 1290-1348"; J. Hatcher and M. Bailey, "Modelling the Middle Ages."

[35] B. Wuetherick, "A Reevaluation of the Impact of the Hundred Years War", p.126.



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and labour of the lower classes.[36] The third school of thought, led by McFarlane among others, believed that England did not face a crisis and the level of peasant welfare "actually improved in the transition to a more efficient, commercialized and monetarized economy."[37] More importantly, there has been an abundance of work produced that, while concentrating on the economy in general in the later Middle Ages, discussed the economic impact of war. Some examples of this include work by Bridbury, Dyer, Postan, Miller and Hatcher.[38] There has also been a recent attempt to address, albeit briefly, the understudied business of war by Hunt and Murray.[39] It is also important to acknowledge the various studies that have been undertaken about the general society of medieval England.[40]

Recently, Wood has attempted to analyze the medieval understanding of economic thought with respect to property, wealth, money, the mercantile system, just prices and wages, usury, and interest.[41] Her analysis focused on English and continental European economic theory and practice throughout the medieval period to determine the extent to which the societies of the Middle Ages understood the context under which their economy was operating. The twelfth through fifteenth centuries witnessed dramatic developments in economic

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[36] Ibid, p. 127.
[37] Ibid, p. 127.
[38] A. R. Bridbury, *The English Economy from Bede to the Reformation*; C. Dyer, *Standards of Living in the Later Middle Ages*; M. Postan, *The Medieval Economy and Society*; and E. Miller and J. Hatcher, *Medieval England: Towns, Commerce and Crafts*.
[39] E. Hunt and J. Murray, *A History of Business in Medieval Europe, 1200 - 1550*.
[40] There are too many sources to mention but an important one that discusses the role of war on society is M. Keen, *England in the Later Middle Ages*.
[41] D. Wood, *Medieval Economic Thought*.



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thought and practice within the framework of a rapidly changing society.[42] While economic thought was heavily influenced by the ideals of the church, which still dominated the expression of economic ideas, the transition to an increasingly monetized economy heralded a move to more secular values. Wood's analysis showed that by the fifteenth century, European nations had used their understanding of economic thought to help shape economic growth. In England, for example, the economy developed in line with what became known as the mercantile system, with trade protectionism, the encouragement of exports, the control of trade routes, and increasingly bullionist policies.[43]

Modern economic theory is also of relevance to the ongoing debate between the traditions begun by Postan and McFarlane. For example, there has been a recent attempt by Langdon and Masschaele to apply Schumpeterian economic theory to the later medieval economy.[44] Schumpeter argued that periods of economic growth started when entrepreneurial activity around new technological and commercial endeavours began to result in sizable profits. He argued further that this economic growth was cyclical in nature and that as other entrepreneurs began to get involved in these new endeavours it eroded the profits from those originally involved in the economic growth. This in turn resulted in slowing or halting the economic growth until such time as a new technological or commercial endeavour began the cycle anew.[45] Langdon argued that the 'long' thirteenth century, spanning from 1185 to 1315, demonstrated

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[42] Ibid., p.206.
[43] Ibid., p. 208.
[44] J. Langdon and J. Masschaele, "Commercial Activity and Population Growth"; J. Langdon, "The Long Thirteenth Century."
[45] J. Schumpeter, *The Theory of Economic Development: An Inquiry into Profits, Capital, Credit, Interest, and the Business Cycle*, p. vii.



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Schumpeter's ideas as medieval society witnessed entrepreneurial activities in areas of technological innovation such as the windmill, increased use of water power for industry, the increased use of horses in agriculture and road transport, and improvements in ship design and navigation, as well as economic innovations such as land clearance, the increased use of markets, developments in transport infrastructure, the spread of accounting and other written procedures, and new mining opportunities.[46] By the end of the 'long' thirteenth century profit margins from these innovations slumped and eventually economic growth was slowed dramatically.[47] Langdon and Masschaele argued that the Schumpeterian cycle, which was followed by a population growth cycle, might be maintained rather longer than could be expected by a "rather artificial forcing of the economy through war", though the benefits of such activities tended to be episodic at best.[48]

All of these historiographical traditions have to be taken into account when attempting an analysis of war's impact on the society and economy of England. As we re-examine these issues, it is important to identify, as eloquently articulated by Bridbury, that there is something paradoxical about interpreting the war as positive or negative on the society of England:

> To think only in terms of costs and effects is to ignore the fact that war was as integral a part of the Middle Ages as religion was. We must see warfare during this period as an inevitable part of society ... and, in doing so, we can hope to demonstrate its influence on the rest of the society and economy.[49]

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[46] J. Langdon, "The Long Thirteenth Century," p. 3-4.
[47] Ibid., p. 6.
[48] J. Langdon and J. Masschaele, "Commercial Activity and Population Growth," p. 41.
[49] A. R. Bridbury, "The Hundred Years War: Costs and Profits", p. 81-82.



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Nonetheless, there is room for a much more thorough examination of how the Hundred Years War impacted the domestic economy in England, as demonstrated in this thesis. In the context of the existing literature a hole remains in our understanding of the role played by the Hundred Years War in England. Few scholars have examined the impact of the Hundred Years War from a more holistic perspective encompassing issues such as taxation and purveyance, along with wages, ransoms, spoils of war, and the investment in industry as a result of increased English wealth.[50] In Chapter Two, this thesis will begin with a re-examination of the rather well researched negative view of war's impact, in particular the arguments of Postan and Maddicott, to determine whether or not taxation and purveyance had as negative an impact on the English economy as previously believed. This will set the foundation for a re-examination of the less well understood positive impacts of war in Chapter Three. In particular, wages, ransoms, and the other spoils of war will be examined to determine whether or not those participating in war had the potential to benefit from engaging in military endeavours. This examination will lead, in Chapter Four, to an examination of whether or not the profits of war were brought from France to England and whether that influx of wealth mitigated any negative impacts the war may have had. It will also inform an examination of whether or not traces of these positive impacts can be witnessed in what we currently know of the industries of England during the period of the Hundred Years War. When these positive and negative impacts are thoroughly examined together as a

[50] There is a similar debate in relation to the British Empire in particularly the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.



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whole in relation to the economy and society of England, it will be possible to demonstrate that the negative and positive influences of the war are much more evenly balanced than has typically been accepted in the literature, and may even arguably tip towards the latter. Hopefully this re-evaluation of the balance will provide a better understanding of the 'whole picture' of medieval England in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and inform and encourage further scholarship in this area.



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## Chapter 2 - Taxation and Purveyance: The Victimization of England?

"The Hundred Years War witnessed the victimization of England by its ruling class" and the war was "a vast diversion of resources from better uses."[1] Or so argued Postan in his widely respected work on the social and economic consequences of the Hundred Years War on the English economy and society of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. There are two main aspects of the Hundred Years War that these historians have pointed to as their principle evidence that the war had a negative impact on the economy and society of England – taxation and the purveyance of goods. Maddicott, in his widely accepted treatise, argued that purveyance was actually a form of taxation.[2]

There have been few attempts to challenge systematically the aspects of the Hundred Years War that resulted in the so-called 'victimization' of England. McFarlane's early attempt to balance the perspective on the issues of the impact of taxation met with little support. His argument centered around the premise that the taxation and purveyance collected from the English people were more than offset on the 'balance sheet for the war' by the ransoms, rewards, spoils of war, and other incomes from French lands.[3] Though there have been subsequent attempts to examine certain aspects of Postan and Maddicott's arguments, there has been a noticeable lack of scholarship bringing these together to reassess the impact of taxation and purveyance. While much

[1] Summation by A. R. Bridbury, "The Hundred Years War: Costs and Profits," p. 81.
[2] J. R. Maddicott, "The English Peasantry and the Crown, 1294 – 1341," p. 290. In fact, to both taxation and purveyance Maddicott adds the removal of men from 'better pursuits'. In my article in the *Past Imperfect* I address the removal of men as a form of taxation though I do not attempt to address it here.
[3] K. McFarlane, "War, the Economy, and Social Change," p. 146.



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additional work is required on the areas of taxation and purveyance, this chapter attempts to provide a reassessment of the current scholarship within the context of the overall impact on the English society and economy during the Hundred Years War.

*Taxation*

Taxation became more and more common in the closing centuries of the Middle Ages. It has been argued that "taxes had a sharp and immediate economic impact" on England.[4] Rulers became more reliant upon the revenue of taxation to maintain the activities of the crown, a marked shift from earlier, more feudal, periods when they could rely solely or at least largely on the revenue from their own estates and land holdings. There are two types of taxation that are relevant to the discussion of the Hundred Years War, direct taxation and indirect taxation. Direct taxation was collected directly from the subjects of the crown, while indirect taxes were collected as customs in markets and ports for the sale, import, or export of certain goods.

A few scholars have attempted to quantify the total amount of taxation raised by the English crown during the Hundred Years War. McFarlane estimated that the total amount of taxation collected was approximately £8.25 million[5], or an average of just over £70,000 for each year of the 117 year duration

[4] Miller focused largely on the reigns of Edward I and Edward II, but his arguments related easily into the Hundred Years War period, and are often used by other scholars in that manner. E. Miller, "War, Taxation and the English Economy in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries."

[5] There will continue to be a discussion of money throughout this paper so it is essential to clarify that £ refers to pounds sterling (the standard English currency of the period), that s. refers to shillings, and that d. refers to pence. The standard exchange rate in medieval England was £1 =



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of the Hundred Years War.[6] McFarlane argued further that, of this total, approximately £3.25 million was generated through direct taxation of the laity and clergy, while £5 million was generated through indirect taxation, "of which the export duties on raw wool, woolfells, and hides seem to have accounted for at least four-fifths."[7] McFarlane's estimate was recently challenged by Ormrod, who estimated the total tax burden during the Hundred Years War at between £9.5 - £10 million, or an average of between £80,000 - £85,000 per year of the conflict.[8] In his analysis of the relative value of direct and indirect taxation through the period of the Hundred Years War, Ormrod demonstrated that, other than the 1330s and 1340s and two small spikes in the 1410s and 1430s, indirect taxation comprised the majority of the tax burden throughout the Hundred Years War. He estimated the laity paid approximately £2.75 million in direct taxation, while the clergy paid approximately £1.25 million. The balance of £5.5 - £6 million was paid through indirect taxation.[9] The approximate breakdown of how much was collected per king during the Hundred Years War is as follows:

| Total of Taxes | Direct Laity | Direct Clergy | Indirect |
|---|---|---|---|
| Edward III (1337-1377) | £20,000 | £7,960 | £46,760 |
| Richard II (1377-1399) | £29,864 | £9,318 | £60,318 |
| Henry IV (1399-1413) | £20,357 | £11,286 | £42,571 |
| Henry V | £44,778 | £20,222 | £61,000 |

20s.; 1s. = 12d.; and 1 mark = 13s. 4d. or £2/3. There are times during the thesis where l.t. is used to refer to pounds tournois (referring to one type of French currency from the period).

[6] K. McFarlane, "War, the Economy and Social Change," p.142-143. These are taken largely from the enrolled accounts in *History of the Revenues of the Kings of England*, vol. ii, Oxford (1925).

[7] Ibid., p. 143

[8] W. Ormrod, "The Domestic Response", p. 87.

[9] For more information, the figures are reproduced by Ormrod. Ibid., p. 89-92.



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| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| (1413-1422) | | | |
| Henry VI (1422-1453) | £13,129 | £7,000 | £37,194 |

**Table 1:** Total of Taxes per Year by Reign, 1337-1453[1]

It is important to emphasize that these are just the revenues collected by the English crown from taxes collected in England. The English crown would, throughout this period, have been collecting taxes on the continent that should be added to these numbers to get a clear indication of the true income of the crown.

An early reliance on direct taxation, along with huge loans from Italian financiers, under Edward III was replaced rather quickly by a more balanced form of taxation that included indirect taxation on overseas trade, which regularly began to provide the majority of the revenue generated. The ratio of indirect versus direct taxation was at its peak during the reign of Henry VI (at £1.85 of indirect taxation vs £1 of direct taxation), followed by the reign of Edward III (£1.67), Richard II (£1.54), Henry IV (£1.35), and finally Henry V (£0.94). It is important to stress the political sensitivity of direct taxation, which led to, among other things, the Peasants' Revolt of 1381. It could be argued that only a strong king, like Henry V, could levy direct taxes at a level to match indirect taxation.

*Direct Taxation*

To understand the burden these taxes had on English society during the Hundred Years War it is essential to examine both direct and indirect taxation more in depth. Direct taxation was usually raised in this period through an assessment on the sources of wealth throughout the country, and included both the secular and ecclesiastical estates. Direct taxation was granted through either



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Parliament for the secular estates, or the convocations of Canterbury and York for the ecclesiastical estates, and were granted for the king's use not only in war, but during years of peace for the ongoing maintenance of the crown (to live at a level commensurate with that of a king of a great country), the payment of crown debts, and the investment in the king's works.[10] For the most part the assessment on the laity was a levy on movables, which included such things as livestock, equipment (like ploughs), or stores of food and grains, all of which could be assigned a monetary value. Typically, the taxes on the laity were levied on settlements across England at rates established by Parliament in 1334. The taxation liability was expressed as a fixed sum that was a communal responsibility, rather than the responsibility of the individual taxpayer responsibility.[11] At various other points during the Hundred Years War the English crown experimented with different forms of direct taxation, the most notorious experiment being the poll taxes at the beginning of Richard II's reign, with varying levels of success. The assessment on the clergy was typically a levy on the income generated by their office.

The laity was only taxed on goods they had for sale, not those goods that were being used for domestic needs. Domestic use referred to those goods or foodstuffs used for the subsistence of the individual and their family. As early as the closing years of the thirteenth century, an exemption was established where an individual required 10s worth of movable goods before they would be charged taxes. Maddicott, in his discussion of the levy on movables, acknowledged that

[10] C. Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, p. 106.
[11] A. R. Bridbury, "The Hundred Years War: Costs and Profits", p. 88.



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movable goods were normally assessed below their real market price and that, in comparison to the rents being charged by landlords, the amounts collected through taxation were relatively small.[12] That said, the fundamental argument of Postan, Maddicott, and others is that the Hundred Years War witnessed "much direct wastage of national wealth"[13] through taxation (and purveyance: discussed below) and the ever-increasing expenditure on the war effort on the continent where much money was sent to pay for alliances and to maintain garrisons and armies. Miller argued that taxation could have a direct and even severe impact upon the subsistence standards of medieval populace, though he acknowledged that peasants, at most, grumbled about taxation, with the obvious exception of the Peasants' Revolt.[14] Maddicott argued that, even though the levy on movables was rarely burdensome on its own, the crown's taxation was inequitable as it largely missed the landlords whose livelihood came primarily from rents. He concluded that it had a great social impact, echoing Postan's victimization of England theme.[15]

Ormrod argued further that thoughout the Hundred Years War governments continued to 'overspend' compared to their revenues and continued to charge taxes for communities based on 1334 rates, which ignored the considerable changes to the population and the fluctuating geographical and societal distribution of wealth.[16] Bridbury raised an entirely different issue with relation to the continued and increasingly inequitable levies agreed to in

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[12] J. R. Maddicott, "The English Peasantry and the Crown", p. 292-293.
[13] M. Postan, "Some Social Consequences", p. 53.
[14] E. Miller, "War, Taxation, and the English Economy", pp. 17-18 and 27.
[15] J. R. Maddicott, "The English Peasantry and the Crown", p. 287.
[16] W. Ormrod, "The Domestic Response", p. 88-89.



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Parliament. While he stressed that Parliament was ready to "accept that taxation was an obligation in cases of real military necessity", he argued that in the last twenty-five years of the fourteenth century, as the favorable position of the landlords deteriorated in the years following the Black Death, "[p]arliament began to grudge every penny of taxation, which its members plainly saw was no longer to be passed on in higher rents but was, if anything, to be digested in lower ones."[17]

There is little direct evidence of complaints among the lower classes, outside of the Peasant's Revolt, that taxes were charged too frequently or that the levels of taxation were too harsh. The most common criticisms referred to the extortion of tax collectors.[18] This was reinforced by Maddicott, who argued that "the oppressiveness of taxation was much aggravated by the corruption and extortion which accompanied its levying."[19] Unless they were reliant completely on wages, the sale of goods was required for the average Englishman to survive during this period, which then made him potentially subject to taxation. Even though the exemption of the equivalent of 10s. in movable goods was implemented by Parliament and the crown in 1298, Maddicott stressed that the most common complaint was the taxation of 'non-taxables' (i.e. the taxing of exempt goods).[20] Even if the exemption was upheld, he also emphasized that 10s. was not more than 2 quarters of wheat, 2-3 quarters of oats, 4-6 sheep, or 1 cow, which a peasant could be selling and still be very poor. Ormrod argued that

[17] A. R. Bridbury, "The Hundred Years War: Costs and Profits", p. 88-89.
[18] E. Miller, "War, taxation, and the English economy," p. 17-18 and 27.
[19] J. R. Maddicott, "The English Peasantry and the Crown", p. 287.
[20] The examples cited, however, are restricted entirely to the pre-Hundred Years War era, from which we may infer that the corruption of tax collectors in this regard was largely rectified by the reign of Edward III. Ibid., p. 293.



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after 1334 communities were potentially able to ignore the exemption when they were assessed a single rate of taxation for the community as a whole, which allowed the "rural and urban proletariat previously exempted from such levies" to be drawn into the system of taxation.[21] Pre- and post-1334, there were many opportunities for the tax collector to profit by officially under-assessing the value of goods and pocketing the difference between what was paid and what was recorded. There were examples, in the inquiry of 1340-42, of the continued practice of chief tax collectors collecting a shilling or two before accepting the tax assessments from their subordinates. There were even special courts set up in 1341 to hear complaints that leaders of communities refused to pay taxes and left the poorer members of their community to do so.[22] Miller argued that the impact of medieval taxes on all ranks of society should not be discounted. He argued that the reluctance to pay taxes, together with common evasion efforts, were some testimony to the resentment that taxes aroused.[23] Even though Dyer argued that only 40% of the peasant class actually contributed to direct taxation, he felt there were still many reasons for regarding the burden of taxation as significant to the rural economy.[24] He argued further that:

> (because the) incidence of taxes rose at a time when economic growth was ending. ... The taxes were also combined with levies of local troops, and of purveyance (requisitioning of goods for which inadequate payment was made). There were complaints that the taxes were assessed and levied unfairly, and that bribes had to be paid. The poor were not exempt from the indirect effects of the taxes. Villages were economic communities, and the removal of a

[21] W. Ormrod, "The Crown and the English Economy", p. 157.
[22] J. R. Maddicott, "The English Peasantry and the Crown", p. 294-295.
[23] E. Miller, "War, Taxation and the English Economy", p. 18.
[24] Summary of C. Dyer in B. Wuetherick, "Reevaluation of the Impact of the Hundred Years War", p. 129.



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> quantity of cash from the better-off peasants must have left them with less to spend on services and goods provided by their poorer neighbours.[25]

How much, then, did the taxation impact the economy and society in England during the Hundred Years War period? Who actually paid the taxes and how much impact did it have on their standard of living? These are fundamental questions to answer in order to understand whether or not Postan et al. are correct in their interpretation of the 'direct wastage of national wealth'. McFarlane argued that the bulk of the taxation burden was carried by foreign merchants through the indirect taxation of goods, which will be discussed later. Bridbury argued that the approval of taxation in the local or national assemblies "was increasingly regarded as an entire community giving agreement, through its representatives, to the levying of financial support in time of war."[26] He also stressed that "the Hundred Years War did not squander assets that might otherwise have been husbanded. It was the war that was fought instead of the war that would otherwise have been fought."[27] Even if it is accepted that direct taxation to support the war effort would not normally have been collected, and that the direct taxation had an impact on the English society, was it as severe as Postan and Maddicott argue?

The inequitable system of taxation that relied on the 1334 custom for each community, which was used by Maddicott as an example of the negative impact of the taxation on the countryside, has also been used to argue that the crown was unable to tap effectively into the wealth of England. For every community

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[25] C. Dyer, *Standards of Living*, pp. 138-139.
[26] C. Allmand, "War and the Non-combatant."
[27] A. R. Bridbury, "The Hundred Years War: Costs and Profits," p. 85.



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that struggled to meet the tax quota that was potentially antiquated, there was another town, family, or unbeneficed priest under-assessed for taxes, or in some cases even totally exempt from taxation.[28] While certainly there were some who suffered under high quotas, the crown's treasury was exhausted much sooner than was the ability of communities to pay. This was because "medieval kings never succeeded in finding ways to tap the real wealth of the communities upon which they called so often and so urgently for money."[29] There are two main reasons for the decline of yields from taxation during the later Hundred Years War period. First, the Parliament and the Convocations became more adamant that the war with France was supposed to pay for itself and were more adept at spreading out the payment of taxes over longer periods, protecting themselves from further and higher taxation. Second, the decline in taxation yields was due to the increasingly wide gulf between the potential and the real tax base across England. [30]

Maddicott even provided examples that reinforced the fact that taxation may have not had as heavy a burden as he would like to argue. He cited examples where the levy was a tenth and a fifteenth, though the true value collected on the goods would total only a twentieth or even a thirtieth of the real market value. Even if the tax collectors charged communities more than what they recorded in the official tax assessments in order to line their own pockets, it might well have benefited the tax payer to some extent. This was particularly the

[28] W. Ormrod, "The Domestic Response," p. 93.
[29] A. R. Bridbury, "The Hundred Years War: Costs and Profits," p. 88.
[30] W. Ormrod, "The Domestic Response," p. 93.



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case when the tax collector could reduce the assessment of taxes for their own community, for the benefit of themselves, their friends, and their neighbours.[31]

With respect to the exemption of the poorest of the peasantry, Maddicott also provided an example comparing both an extent for 1321 and an assessment for a twentieth in 1327 for the community of East Coker in Somerset that, while not in the Hundred Years War period, was still demonstrative of the levels of taxation in comparison to the levels of rents charged by landlords. In this comparison, he found three wealthy members of the community with rents of 6s. 7d. for a carucate of land by knight service; 31s. 10d. for a mill, half a virgate of land, and an acre of meadow; and 6s. 8d. for half a virgate by knight service. In these cases they paid 4s., 5s., and 2s. respectively as tax. Of the five villeins common to both the assessment and extent, each paid 10s. 9d. (or 10s. 11.5d. in one case) for a half a virgate of land and commuted works for the lord, and one was taxed at 6d., two at 1s., and two at 1s. 6d. Finally, of the ten smallest landholders, each with less than a half a virgate of land, only one is taxed at all.[32] That the wealthiest landowners paid significantly more in taxes, in comparison to the poorest landowners of whom only one had to pay at all, reinforced that fact that the exemption protected the members of society that could ill afford to pay the taxes and maintain their standard of living. In fact, as has already been mentioned, Dyer argued that as few as 40% of the populace was actually directly impacted by direct taxation, which supports the argument that rents and other fines had a much more significant impact on the peasants' standard of living than

[31] J. R. Maddicott, "The English Peasantry and the Crown," p. 292.
[32] J. R. Maddicott, "The English Peasantry and the Crown," p. 292-293.



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taxation. Was taxation, however, the proverbial 'straw that broke the camel's back'?

Newhall attempted to quantify the amount of taxation paid by the populace of England during the period of Henry V's conquest of Normandy.[33] Using an approximation of 2.5 million people in England during the years 1416-1422, he estimated that the total tax burden of both direct and indirect taxes would total 13d. per person per year. He further broke this down into an average of £27,365 per year of direct taxation collected, which would average out to 2.66d. per head per year during a period when the average carpenter's wage was at least 4.5d. to 6d. per day, and the average labourer's wage was at least between 2d. to 3d. per day.[34] While Newhall acknowledged that the uncertainty of his population figures makes his numbers tentative, this provides a per capita estimate of the impact of direct taxation during the heaviest period of taxation under Henry V. Bridbury also concluded that during the 1370s, "it is clear that the king's taxes took no more than two or three days' earnings from the ordinary farm-labourer."[35] For example, if a labourer made only £2 per year then direct taxation of 2-3d. would still have translated to less than 1% of his gross income. Even if one multiplied the level of taxation by four to account for other members in the labourer's family, it would still have only come to about 2% of his gross income. These figures could be replicated with relative accuracy (keeping in mind the uncertainty of population figures throughout this period) for every year of the Hundred Years

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[33] R. A. Newhall, *The English Conquest of Normandy*, p. 184-185.
[34] A carpenter is estimated to have enjoyed 230 days of work per annum at this time. Ibid., p. 184-189.
[35] A. R. Bridbury, *The English Economy from Bede to the Reformation*, p. 37.



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War and the picture would be essentially the same. The average amount of taxation charged to the English populace was a fraction of what was regularly charged in rents and other fines.

While two or three days of wages may not seem significant, particularly in comparison to the relative levels of taxation charged in most countries around the world today, Maddicott stressed that the "less regular, more capricious, and more arbitrary demands of the king" posed more of a threat to the livelihood of the peasant than the "customary and largely predictable levies made by landlords."[36] This perspective was challenged in Kitsikopoulos' comprehensive examination of the peasant budget in pre-plague England, where he demonstrated that the average peasant with 18 acres of land, plus access to common meadows, would have seigneurial dues of 19s. 6.5d. per year, which would consume roughly 34% of his total revenues from his land and his wages. Of these seigneurial dues, royal taxes make up 5% of the total (or 1s.), while the rents charged would average at 52% (or 10s. 1.5d.) and the amercements, tallage, and deferred labour services that were commonly charged to the peasantry average at 34% (or 6s. 7d.) or more.[37] Bridbury also argued that:

> ... we have only to compare the taxes of 7d. or 9d. levied in the 1370s, with the fines and amercements of 3d., 6d., and even 12d., which were commonplace in the earliest manorial courts ... to appreciate how very much more thirteenth century manorial authorities were able to wring from ordinary villagers than Parliament allowed the king to take from their descendants.[38]

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[36] J. R. Maddicott, "The English Peasantry and the Crown," p. 288.
[37] H. Kitsokopoulos, "Standards of living and capital formation."
[38] A. R. Bridbury, *The English Economy from Bede to the* Reformation, p. 35-36.



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While this issue would require a significant amount of new research to resolve with certainty (particularly on the impact of fines on the standard of living in the Middle Ages), I believe that these regular payments in rent, and the more haphazard payments of fines in the manorial courts, created a far greater burden on the populace than the crown's direct taxation.

*Indirect Taxation*

If we are to believe McFarlane, the burden of taxation fell mostly upon the foreign merchants who paid the customs on the export of raw wool. The indirect taxation, of which an estimated four-fifths came from the export of raw wool, raised somewhere between £5 and 6 million during period of the Hundred Years War. Indirect taxation began in earnest under Edward I during the period of his heaviest taxation in the 1290s. It continued to be granted by Parliament throughout the Hundred Years War period, and became the most continuous of the taxes collected by the English treasury. While the relative importance of the indirect taxation to royal revenues varied depending on the period of the war and the needs of the crown, it continued to serve as the main security for loans and grants made to the crown throughout the Hundred Years War. It could be argued that indirect taxation paid for the normal operating expenses of the government, while direct taxation helped to cover some of the extraordinary expenses, such as the periodic outbreak of hostilities.

Indirect taxation primarily refers to, as has been mentioned above, the custom and subsidy charged on goods, mainly raw wool, exported from England.



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While the details of the wool subsidy have been examined thoroughly by others, it is crucial to explore some of the details of how the wool subsidy was charged to understand the impact of the subsidy and custom on the economy.[39] Sacks of wool were collected across England and exported to many different areas of the continent, including the Hanse, Flemish towns, and Italy. Each sack of wool, depending on the quality, would have a market value of between £3.5 to £8, though the prices fluctuated throughout the Hundred Years War period. When taxation on wool was first contemplated in 1275 they instituted an 'ancient' custom of 6s. 8d.per sack of wool exported. This would go directly into the crown's revenues. In 1322 this custom was permanently raised by 3s. 4d. to 10s. for foreign merchants. Starting in 1294-1297, over and above the ancient custom, the crown charged a subsidy or maltote of 33s. 4d. per sack of wool exported. This subsidy fluctuated between 20s. to as high as 50s. for English merchants and as high as 63s. 4d. for foreign merchants. The merchants purchasing the sacks of wool would have to recover the custom and subsidy paid to the English crown out of the money generated through selling the wool on the continent.[40]

For much of Edward III's reign England exported over 30,000 sacks of wool each year, generating an average between £53,000 and £87,000 in revenue each year. This revenue had a huge impact not only on the ability of the English to wage war against the French, but on crown's ability to increase

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[39] T. H. Lloyd, *The English Wool Trade in the Middle Ages*; W. Ormrod, "English Crown and the Customs"; J. Munro, *Textiles, Towns and Trade*; E. M. Carus-Wilson, "Trends in the Export of English Woollens in the Fourteenth Century."

[40] A description can be found detailing the timeline for the changes of the subsidy in W. Ormrod, "The Domestic Response," p. 93-94.



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expenditures on a number of other things. Ormrod, for example, showed that during the fiscal year 1357-1358[41] of the £75,000 generated through customs and subsidies over £16,000 was assigned to the King's Wardrobe, just under £20,000 for the repayment of loans, almost £1500 on King's works, £5500 on other royal households, £1400 on direct war expenses (including for war at sea), and over £2300 on the continent (including Calais). In addition to these, and other expenses, the crown retained around 29%, or almost £22,000, in cash receipts for later disbursement.[42] Customs and subsidies on wool came to represent the foundation of royal finances from Edward III on. As McFarlane asked, however, "(w)ere (the taxes) paid for by the foreign consumer, partly by the foreign consumer and partly by the home producer, or wholly by the home producer?"[43]

Unfortunately this question remains largely unanswerable with our current level of understanding, though several inferences can be made from the evidence we do know. Postan and Maddicott argued that this tax had significant impact on international trade, and the wool producers in particular. There is no denying that the sheer amount of revenue raise through indirect taxation was considerable. "If, on top of the regular levy on movables, the local population had to pay for the total of this subsidy (or even a portion of this subsidy) the impact on the rural economy would indeed have been serious."[44] Postan argued that taxation and levies are bound to harm wool production throughout this period,

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[41] Measured from Michaelmas (Sept. 29) to Michaelmas.
[42] Detailed by W. Ormrod, "English Crown and the Customs", p. 35. Originally from PRO E401/443, 446; E403/388, 392.
[43] K. McFarlane, "War, the Economy and Social Change," p. 145
[44] B. Wuetherick, "Reevaluation of the Impact of the Hundred Years War," p. 132.



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and that the English wool trade was thrown into confusion by loans, taxation, and on at least one occasion the confiscation of the entire wool crop. He argued that the burden borne by the domestic grower compared to the foreign buyer was two to one, which is a ratio he believed was justified because of the decline in foreign wool sales throughout the later fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.[45] He continued:

> ... had the tax been as high, and only as high, as the foreigners were prepared to pay, the total exports of wool would have stayed at the same level as before the taxes were imposed. The fact that wool exports slumped sharply and eventually fell to less than one-third of their pre-tax level means that the charges were higher than the traffic would bear. ... We must therefore conclude that the growers were probably receiving less than they would have done had the tax not been levied.[46]

Other historians have pointed out several negative impacts of the wool subsidy, which have been used to reinforce Postan's argument. We cannot, however, deduce simply from the decline in output whether the burden fell on producers or consumers. We need to know the elasticities of supply and demand or the change in price level (see below) to reach such a conclusion. The system of indirect taxation was received with hostility in the 1330s and 1340s because of the restrictive practices showing favoritism to wealthy (and sometimes foreign) capitalists controlling the trade.[47] This was mitigated, however, by the Ordinance of the Staple of 1351, which reformed the system to include a broader base of English merchants and spread the burden more widely (particularly the system of loans that the crown requested regularly to support

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[45] For further discussion about the wool export trade, see Chapter 4 below. M. Postan, "The Costs of the Hundred Years War," p. 41

[46] M. Postan, "The Costs of the Hundred Years War", p. 40-41.

[47] W. Ormrod, "The English Crown and the Customs", p. 28.



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their activities before receiving the revenue from the customs and subsidy). To generate additional revenue the crown imposed wool export bans on English merchants at various points during the war as foreign merchants brought in more revenue in both customs and subsidies. This reduced the ability of English merchants to compete on the continent by denying them the single largest export good England had to offer to the rest of Europe. It did, however, ensure that, as McFarlane argued, foreign money was paying the custom and subsidy to the crown rather than the English populace. There were widespread complaints of corruption among the officials responsible for collecting the customs and subsidies, but when the Exchequer took back control in 1349, they made a clean sweep of personnel to eradicate the connections and influence built up.[48] There were serious problems across England because of inconsistencies in weights and measures for determining what exactly a sack of wool was, but in 1351 a country-wide inquiry into weights and measures developed the 'King's Standard', which was confirmed in a 1352 statute and was vigorously enforced.[49] The most troublesome problem with the customs and subsidies on the wool trade was from smuggling. Both the ban on English merchants' exports of wool and the high rates to be charged by foreign merchants increased the probability of increased attempts at evasion. The crown took smuggling very seriously, and during the 1350s there is repeated evidence of the seizure of smuggled wool as well the arrest and trial of smugglers.[50] After all of these reforms were made, particularly

[48] Ibid., p. 29.
[49] The King's Standard established that there were 14 pounds to the stone, and that there were 26 stones to the sack of wool, making each sack of wool 364 pounds. Ibid., p. 30-31.
[50] Ibid., p. 31.



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after 1349 when the Exchequer took back control of the customs and subsidies, the amount of revenue increased substantially, from an average of £52,500 per year from 1343-1351 to an average of £87,500 per year from 1353-1362, and there were fewer issues raised by contemporaries about the system of customs and subsidies.[51]

McFarlane took the examination of the indirect taxation a step further. He argued that exporters of wool were competing against each other to sell in markets across Europe that did not have an adequate supply of wool. For example, if the export was interrupted it could produce an industrial and political crisis in the Flemish towns.[52] He went on to state that "when raw wool from England cost more in Flanders than the English finished product (of cloth) it is fairly obvious that the consumers rather than the producers were footing most of the bill."[53] The English wool producers were well represented in Parliament throughout the Hundred Years War. That influence resulted in Parliament maintaining that a minimum price per sack of wool had to established prior to Edward III exercising the royal right of pre-emption on a large scale. English wool, although severely taxed, maintained its export volume until the final quarter of the century.[54] In addition to that, once large scale taxation was implemented it would be reasonable to assume that wool prices paid to the producer might begin to fall, but the prices fell in the early 1330s prior to the crown's increased taxation

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[51] Ibid., p. 31.
[52] K. McFarlane, "War, the Economy and Social Change," p. 145.
[53] Ibid., p. 145.
[54] Bridbury also points out that during this period Burgundian and Spanish wools, which were widely held to be the equivalent of English wool, were also heavily taxed, thereby ensuring that English wool was not at a price disadvantage on the continent. A. R. Bridbury, "The Hundred Years War: Costs and Profits," p. 87.



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pointing to a possible currency shortage as the cause for the price collapse.[55] As well, the return to a free market system around 1350, along with among the highest rates of taxation yet charged on wool, had no noticeable adverse effect on prices paid to the consumer, which indeed climbed higher than during the 1340s. Famine, murrain, and plague seemed to have a much bigger impact on the prices of wool than did the customs and subsidies charged by the crown.[56] "It is not unreasonable to conclude ... that a Parliament in which wool-growers were always a substantial if not a dominant political force would never have allowed taxation of such a severity to stand if it had found that wool prices had dropped because of it."[57] This meant that people on the continent purchasing cloth made from English wool were contributing to the English crown's coffers for the war by paying the increased costs associated with purchasing the wool in the first place.

Why then did the volume of wool exports continue to decrease from the end of Edward III's reign to the end of the Hundred Years War, if the levels of taxation were not burdensome on the English wool trade? After 1367 annual exports fell below 30,000 sacks, and by the 1380s averaged below 20,000 sacks. While indirect taxes retained its place as an integral part of the royal revenue, it continued to decline below £40,000 per year even by the end of Edward III's reign. Ormrod argued:

> The French wars themselves have often been blamed for the decline in wool exports that set in during the later fourteenth century. But there were may other factors influencing the state of

[55] T. H. Lloyd, *The English Wool* Trade, p. 173.
[56] Ibid., p. 174.
[57] Ibid., p. 87.



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> trade, not all of them within the control of the English crown; and in many ways it was the success of the wool merchants in resisting such vicissitude that was the most remarkable feature of the English economy at the turn of the fifteenth century.[58]

The decline in revenues arose from an overall slump in trade, but also from a decision taken by Parliament in 1422 to reduce the wool subsidy paid by English merchants by 23%, "in line with its general policy of throwing the fiscal burden onto the king's new dominions in northern France."[59] Ormrod concluded that the decline in the indirect taxation revenues was not a decline in the real tax base, but represented the crown's inability to deal with changing economic conditions where greater quantities of other goods were being exported without being taxed at comparative levels to wool. For example, he pointed out that the crown's income in the 1350s totaled around 18.5% of the total value of imports and exports, yet this dropped to 15% by the 1390s, and to 12% by the 1440s.[60]

Related to this inability by the crown to adjust to changing economic circumstances was the revival of the English cloth making industry, after a depression in the early fourteenth century. The fact that the price of wool paid to producers in England has only a slight downward trend suggests that the supply of wool was almost perfectly elastic (and thus the entire burden of the tax borne by the buyers).[61] However, this seems unlikely, given both the quite different circumstances in which sheep were raised, and also the alternative market provided by the domestic cloth industry. Indeed, the fairly stable prices might

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[58] W. Ormrod, "The Domestic Response," p. 93.
[59] Ibid., p. 93-94.
[60] This implies that there is a significant amount of goods being imported and exported that were not being effectively taxed in comparison to wool. Ibid. p. 94.
[61] Farmer, "Prices and Wages"; Farmer, "Prices and Wages, 1350-1500."



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better be explained by the emergence of that industry: if it fairly quickly became as efficient as the Flemish, it would pay the same prices for raw wool that the Flemish had paid (though the persistence of any raw wool exports is then mysterious). If so, then not only did the burden of the tax fall on the Flemish but the export tax may have successfully nurtured an infant industry that grew to become a central element of English industry. As early as 1347 the crown recognized "the manufacture of cloth was increasing in England, and it is hard to escape the conclusion that this nascent industry received a considerable impetus from the heavy customs duties levied (on raw wool) after 1336."[62] As has already been mentioned the situation arose where English cloth could be purchased on the continent for less than the cost of raw wool, and Lloyd argued that the preeminence of English cloth by the late 1420's could be seen through the retaliatory and protectionist measures banning the sale of English cloth in Holland, Zeeland, and Brabant adopted by their rulers.[63] The growth of the English cloth-making industry will be examined further in Chapter 4 of this thesis.

*Purveyance*

Another area that Postan and, more importantly, Maddicott believed demonstrated the negative impact of the Hundred Years War on the English society and economy was the purveyance of goods to support the military expeditions. The process of purveyance started with a crown request to the sheriff of the county (or counties) concerned to provide quantities of grain, flour,

[62] W. Ormrod, "The Crown and the English Economy," p. 174.
[63] T. H. Lloyd, *The English Wool* Trade, p. 260.



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meat, or other items, and to deliver them to a designated port by a specific date.[64] In addition, purveyors had the right to buy before the goods were sold at market to competing buyers as well as the right, in co-operation with the sheriff, to appropriate a means of transporting the goods acquired to a chosen destination (such as horses, wagons, or boats).[65] These arrangements do not seem to have been overly burdensome on the surface, but scholars, in particular Postan and Maddicott, have argued that there were serious problems with the practice of purveyance, which resulted in a severe burden being placed on the population.

Maddicott's famous work "The English Peasantry and the Crown", which has served as the standard for our understanding of purveyance at the beginning of the fourteenth century, argued that purveyance had a very negative impact on the peasant populace.[66] His argument relies on the assumption that the government largely did not pay for the food that they purveyed, and also that the peasant populace was living within a subsistence economy. Recent work by Masschaele and others has started to challenge both of these assumptions, but no one has done so within the specific context of the Hundred Years War.[67] There is evidence that a much more balanced approach to the issue of purveyance should be taken, and that the assumptions long held by many historians about purveyance must be challenged.

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[64] J. Langdon, "Inland Water Transport in Medieval England," p. 2-3.
[65] Hewitt also gives a more detailed description of the types of items purveyed; they included beef, mutton, pork (usually salted), oats, beans, peas, cheese, fish (commonly dried), wheat, and ale. H. J. Hewitt, "The Organisation of War," p. 81. See also the very detailed table on what was purveyed in his book H. J. Hewitt, *The Organization of War under Edward III*, p. 51.
[66] J. R. Maddicott, "The English Crown and the Peasantry."
[67] J. Masschaele, *Peasants, Merchants and Markets*; C. Neville and C. Nederman, "The Origins of the *Speculum Regis Edwardi III* of William of Pagula."



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Maddicott argued that purveyance was inherently an arbitrary exaction.[68] Problems included: late payments, inadequate payments, or no payments at all for the goods taken; goods being purchased below the going market rate and sometimes being sold for the profit of the purveyor; the uneven burden on the countryside; unfeasible amounts of victuals and other supplies that left the population short of these goods; and sparing the rich while placing the burden on the poor. Purveyance was very difficult to organize properly and efficiently. It was not possible for purveyors to carry large sums of coin with which to make immediate payment. Instead they gave wooden tallies to the individuals they purveyed goods from, which were then exchanged for coins from a crown representative at a later date. Hewitt pointed out that there could be delays in payment that may have caused hardship.[69] The crown could also request excessive levels of supplies to be raised in a very short time frame, from a limited region, for expeditions to France, continental or coastal garrisons, and naval forces. There is a surviving record from the south-western counties where, in the summer of 1355, large quantities of victuals were gathered for the army of the Black Prince waiting at Plymouth, but these were not paid for until the spring of 1357.[70] Maddicott argued further that even though the crown usually intended to pay for the purveyed goods, much of it ended up being taken without payment because of the corruption of local officials and because those officials were not able to pay for what they took.[71] He argued that there were no records that

[68] J. R. Maddicott, "The English Peasantry and the Crown", p. 300.
[69] H. J. Hewitt, "The Organisation of War", p. 82.
[70] Ibid., p. 82, taken from the *Register of the Black Prince*, II, p. 86.
[71] J. R. Maddicott, "The English Peasantry and the Crown," p. 300.



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demonstrated that the villagers were ever fully repaid or that they expected repayment.[72]

The lack of sources indicating payments does not necessarily mean, however, that they were not paid. The absence of complaints by the villagers, which Maddicott links to the lower classes' acceptance of the inevitable, could also be indicative of repayment at a later date. Since the common practice was to provide a wooden tally, the producer of whatever was being purveyed could have claimed the purchase price of the good purveyed at a later date. It is clear that the nonpayment or late payments for purveyed goods generated resentment among the populace. A popular poem written around 1340 condemned the king "who ate off silver, and paid in wooden tallies; how much better to pay in silver and eat off wood."[73] It is also clear from the repeated royal proclamations, stating that supplies were supposed to be paid for promptly made throughout the reign of Edward III, that complaints about the lack of payment reached the crown on several occasions. In a period when royal funds were tight, as was the case during most of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, prompt repayment was not always a realistic expectation. There were not, however, as many complaints regarding the lack of payment as one might expect, which could indicate that non-payment was not a common practice. Late payments, or inadequate payments, seem to be the most likely result in most cases of purveyance, but the "Statutes at Large" state that by the 1350s "it was held that small purveyances

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[72] Ibid., p. 309.
[73] Taken from *Anglo-Norman Political Songs*, p. 186, is cited by M. Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare in the Middle Ages*, pp. 256-257.



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should be paid for at the time of taking and large ones within a fixed period - in 1354, a quarter of a year, in 1360, within a month or six weeks."[74]

Another common complaint that reached the courts and Parliament was that victuals were purchased at rates lower than market prices would grant. The rates at which the purveyors often purchased goods were set by the king in advance as 'fair' amounts. There is evidence that purveyors either under-estimated the value of the victuals, or demanded heaped measures instead of raised measures. This, however, was not the primary complaint. What bothered the peasantry was the recurring problem of men either illegally seizing supplies for reduced rates, or seizing more than what the king had asked for and promptly selling the excess on the market for a large profit. William of Pagula, who wrote *De Speculo Regis* around 1330, stated that:

> ... if the royal purveyors want hay ... they offer 3 d. a bushel for it, although it is worth 5 d.; they pay 3 d. for a bushel of barley, worth 8 d., and 3 d. for a bushel of beans, worth 1 s.. They take the hens which sustain old widows, poor women and orphans, for 1 d. each, although a hen is worth 2 d. Where is the justice in this? It is not justice, but rapine.[75]

Neville and Nederman, however, have questioned Maddicott's repeated use of this source, as they believe that William of Pagula was not commenting on contemporary events at the beginning of Edward III's reign, but offering a warning to Edward III about problems that could arise in the future from excessive levels

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[74] Hewitt argues that there is no reason to believe that these statutes were not largely upheld, though there continued to be some complaints. H. J. Hewitt, *Organization of War Under Edward III*, p. 59.

[75] J. R. Maddicott, "The English Peasantry and the Crown", p. 311, quoting William of Pagula, *De Speculo Regis Edwardi Tertii*, p. 97 and 103.



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of purveyance.[76] Another example was from 1330 when the men of Somerset and Dorset complained "that the sheriff had levied from the two counties five hundred quarters of wheat and three hundred bacon pigs for the king's use. For every twenty quarters taken ... he would allow (pay) them only sixteen, and for these he paid at the rate of 10 d. a bushel, afterwards selling the wheat for 1 s. 3 d. a bushel."[77] This form of corruption appears to have been common enough that changes were instituted by Edward III in 1362 that required purveyors to show the writ that they received from the king, which detailed the amount to be raised within the individual counties.[78]

What may have influenced the economy more was the uneven geographical distribution of purveyance throughout England. The sheriffs, or other royal officials in charge of gathering the victuals, had to finish gathering and transporting the purveyed goods to the disembarkation port within a set time frame. Purveyance fell most often, especially in regards to expeditions to France, on the southeastern areas of England. This was partially because these areas constituted the primary corn growing regions of England, but also because they had a well-developed water transportation network that allowed for the quick movement of goods to the coast.[79] In his examination of water transport in

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[76] C. Neville and C. Nederman, "The Origins of the *Speculum Regis Edwardi III* of William of Pagula," pp. 328-329.
[77] Ibid., p. 311.
[78] Both Hewitt and Prestwich refer to the great outcry leading to the demand for changes in 1362. H. J. Hewitt, "The Organization of War", p. 82 and M. Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare in the Middle Ages*, p. 257.
[79] Maddicott refers to both of these factors as essential to understanding the extra burden placed on the rural areas of the southeast. J. R. Maddicott, "The English Peasantry and the Crown", p. 301-2.



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England, using in particular the purveyance accounts of the fourteenth century, Langdon argued that:

> It was in this eastward-looking area, in fact, that water transport was most prominent, and the decision to purvey in a certain area must have been dictated to some extent by the effectiveness of the transportation network. That relatively land-locked counties such as Leicestershire and Warwickshire were purveyed lightly (3 times up to 1348) ... must be a reflection of this, as must be the fact that Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire were purveyed relatively often (14 times to 1348), thanks to the Trent water system.[80]

Hewitt supported this interpretation of the geographical distribution of purveyance. As well, he stressed the influence that the army's size had on this distribution. Hewitt argued that with smaller armies there was only a need to tap into the resources of a few counties, while such operations as the years of 1346 - 47 required a much more complete distribution of purveyance.[81] There is the possibility, which has yet to be explored in detail, that the number of times that each of these counties were purveyed was indicative of their potential for grain surplus. Even then, in combination with the levy on movables and the wool subsidy, purveyance must have left its mark more on these counties than other counties. In other words, purveyance might have negatively affected only a relatively small area of England.

The fourth impact that purveyance had on the rural economy of England was the unreasonable and unfeasible amount of supplies requested by the crown. Maddicott refers to this for the years 1296 - 97, when the men of Lincolnshire provided the produce from 2700 acres (2741 quarters) of cereals, and the men of Kent provided 4900 acres of cereals (4884 quarters). In the

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[80] J. Langdon, "Inland Water Transport in Medieval England", p. 2.
[81] H. J. Hewitt, "The Organization of War", p. 81-2.



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years following this purveyance, there are records of thirteen sheriffs being reprimanded by the king for depriving some men of all their corn so there was nothing left for their sustenance.[82] In cases like this there can be no doubt of the potentially devastating economic impact that the rural population encountered. This was not the norm, however. Hewitt provided us with two detailed breakdowns of purveyance that occurred during the period of the Hundred Years War, which demonstrated that adequate levels of victuals were obtained without excessive hardship on the counties called upon to supply the crown. The first was a breakdown of purveyance, using the Exchequer accounts, for the expedition of 1346 through ten counties, totaling 2903 quarters of corn, 1059 quarters of oats, 750 salted porks, 399 carcasses of mutton, 134 sides of beef, 27 weys of cheese, and 331.25 quarters of peas and beans. All were purchased at the standard market discount (21 quarters for the price of 20), and the price for wheat was set at a reasonable rate (in relation to the standard price of the day) of 3s. to 4s. per quarter. The second example was a similar breakdown of purveyance for the provisioning of Calais between 1347 - 61. Over the fourteen years in question, 13 138 quarters of wheat, 3964 quarters of malt, 6726 quarters of oats, 2211 quarters of beans and peas, and 2814 carcasses of beef and bacon were purveyed during a time when the population of Calais was wholly dependent upon England for its food. During these years the country was also

[82] J. R. Maddicott, "The English Peasantry and the crown", p. 314-15. During the years 1296 and 1297, R. Kaueper estimates that the crown obtained an impressive amount of 13 500 quarters of wheat and 13 000 quarters of oats in twelve southern counties. R. Kaueper, *War, Justice, and Public Order*, p. 110.



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able to support several expeditionary forces to the continent without a large number of complaints from the rural population.[83]

There is also the possibility that the supplies needed by England's military expeditions provided an outlet for the surplus production of the agricultural industry. In fact, Masschaele went so far as to argue that purveyance was actually indicative of the ability of the English economy to provide an agricultural surplus.[84] Masschaele demonstrated that Maddicott's examples of purveyance in Kent and Lincolnshire, mentioned above, actually represented less than one percent of these counties' total acreage, or as much as five percent if lands in fallow or inhospitable lands are included. In the case mentioned above about the five hundred quarters of wheat being purveyed from Somerset and Dorset, when examined in light of the actual arable land area in these two counties, it was unlikely that the full amount purveyed would have required more than two square miles, which is very small amount in comparison to the total acreage in the two counties. The danger would be if the full amount purveyed was collected in a relatively small area within the two counties. Masschaele further argued that those peasants contributing to purveyance were actually the upper peasantry rather than those living at or close to a subsistence level. Slightly more than half of the contributors in his examples held a virgate or more of land, while another third held between a half a virgate and a virgate.[85] The amounts collected from these peasants were well within their ability to pay. Though it appears that

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[83] H. J. Hewitt, *The Organization of War Under Edward III*, p. 50-63.
[84] J. Masschaele, *Peasants, Merchants, and Markets*, p. 37.
[85] Masschaele used the Hundred Rolls to track peasant names and totals of land holdings and compared them to existing purveyance records. Ibid., pp. 38-40.



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purveyors could force England into a food crisis if they pushed too hard on the population, there was no single year throughout the Hundred Years War period in which starvation was reported on any scale in England. The sale of goods to purveyors may in fact have been a welcome infusion of cash for goods individuals in the community might not have been able to sell otherwise, or might have had to sell at substantially lower prices due to the volume of goods available. This may be especially true in the years following the Black Death when the relative under-population of the countryside and towns did not provide a market for the surplus.

The final aspect of purveyance that aroused the frustration and anger of the rural populace of England was the upper classes' apparent exemption from purveyance. This appeared to have occurred on a consistent basis and, in turn, resulted in the peasantry absorbing most of the economic burden of purveyance. The crown continually gave the nobility exemptions, for their own estates as well as for those of their tenants, on the basis that they were currently serving overseas or were otherwise serving the crown in some capacity. They were also able at times to avoid the effects of purveyance, by being a part of the crown's inner circle. If the manorial lords knew that purveyance would be coming to their area of England in the years that they did not already have an exemption, they would have the potential to sell their extra cereals and meat in the markets at a good rate prior to the crown purveyor's assessments. This may have had a significant negative impact on how most rural producers felt about purveyance.[86]

[86] All of the scholars I have been referring to throughout the section on purveyance are basically unanimous on their view that this was negative to the peasant classes. J. R. Maddicott, "The



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The perception of purveyance will always be soured by such contemporary chroniclers as William of Pagula, who wrote that "purveyors were sent to act in this world as the devil acts in Hell."[87] Opposition to purveyance, however, was predominantly experienced in the late thirteenth and first half of the fourteenth century. By about the middle years of the fourteenth century, and throughout most of the Hundred Years War, with the crown acting more reasonably and managing the purveyance process more effectively, it became much less of an issue between the crown and people.[88]

## Conclusion

While it is undoubted that taxation and purveyance had an impact on the rural economy and society during the Hundred Years War, it is misguided to argue that they necessarily resulted in such serious costs to the English economy and society as to make the Hundred Years War completely negative. This is particularly the case when (as we shall see in succeeding chapters) the issue is examined in conjunction with the positive influences on English society from rewards, ransoms, spoils of war, and increased investment in the industries of England. Also remember that:

> no one seriously objected to paying for the campaigns that culminated in the capture of the king of France ... no one seriously objected to paying for the war that Agincourt vindicated and the colonization of Normandy crowned. It was the abject and irredeemable failure that the country would not stand for. ... The

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English Peasantry and the Crown"; H. J. Hewitt, "The Organization of War"; M. Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare in the Middle Ages*; J. Kaueper, *War, Justice, and Public Order*; and M. Postan, "The Costs of the Hundred Years War."

[87] J. R. Maddicott, "English Peasantry and the Crown", p. 315.

[88] C. Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, p. 98.



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men who lost their nerve in England ... were much more likely to have done so because they found themselves paying more than they thought they should have done for military expeditions which always seemed to end in humiliation and disaster.[89]

[89] A. R. Bridbury, "The Hundred Years War: Costs and Profits", p. 89.



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## Chapter 3: Wages, Ransoms, Rewards, and Spoils of War

> There were few women who did not possess something from Caen, Calais and other overseas town, such as clothing, furs, cushions. Tablecloths and linens were seen in everybody's houses. Married women were decked in trimmings of French matrons and if the latter sorrowed over the loss, the former rejoiced in their gain.[1]

This description of the situation in England in 1348 by the chronicler Thomas Walsingham, following the campaign of Crécy and the siege of Calais, provides some insight into the potential impact of the spoils of war on the economy of England during the Hundred Years War. The impact of these rewards, spoils of war, ransoms, and even wages has formed a very important but understudied aspect of the debate between Postan and McFarlane about the costs and benefits of the war on English society. Postan argued that "however generous we may be in our estimates of net gains from offices, booty, estates, or even ransoms, we should still find it very difficult to make them equal the five million plus spent on national and private accounts."[2] McFarlane, on the other hand, using largely the same information as Postan, argued that the yield of the war effort was bound to be positive for England. He believed that the balance sheet during the Hundred Years War must tip in favour of the English throughout the war, because the war saw the systematic exploitation of the French countryside. This increased wealth was primarily derived from plunder, prisoners' ransoms, the revenues from French fiefs in English hands, the profits of offices in occupied territories, the taxation raised from the inhabitants of such territory, indemnities for resisting the English invasion, and bribes paid to induce the aggressor to go

[1] T. Walsingham, *Chronica Monasterii S. Albani*, p. 292.
[2] M. Postan, "The Costs of the Hundred Years War", p. 50.



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or stay away.[3] How much was received by English forces in the form of wages, ransoms, rewards, and the spoils of war? What impact, if any, did this revenue have on the English economy and society?

Throughout the Hundred Years War it seemed reasonably easy for the English crown or at least English captains to raise substantial armies to engage in the campaigns, chevauchées, and other actions in France and Scotland. There were always a number of motivators for men to participate in war during this period, including the honourable pursuit of the profession of arms, the attainment of fame, the desire for adventure, the 'advantages' or spoils of war, or even the need to gain a pardon.[4] Several studies on the Hundred Years War stress the primacy of the advantages of war as a motivation for participants in the English expeditionary forces.[5] And again, most demonstrate that, even in times where the English were not victorious, they still managed to gather substantial wealth from the French countryside.[6] Increasingly these wars were fought by men who were committed to the profession of arms, or even those individuals in England for whom war had become a business.[7] It has been argued that these enticements could potentially pose a danger in that they held out a strong appeal to those men more concerned with the material advantages that could come from

[3] The indemnities referred to here are considered to be penalty payments charged to the French for resisting the English invasion. In other words, it is a form of extortion. K. McFarlane, "War, the Economy and Social Change," p. 146.
[4] H. J. Hewitt, *Organization of War Under Edward* III, p. 93.
[5] Though this list is far from exhaustive, some of these studies include: C. Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*; M. Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare in the Middle Ages*; K. McFarlane, "War, the Economy, and Social Change"; P. Contamine, *War in the Middle Ages*; D. Hay, "The Division of the Spoils of War in Fourteenth Century England"; and M. Stansfield, "John Holland, Duke of Exeter and Earl of Huntingdon and the Costs of the Hundred Years War."
[6] C. Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*; M. Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare in the Middle Ages*; D. Hay, "The Division of the Spoils of War in Fourteenth Century England"; and K. McFarlane, "A Business-partnership in War and Administration."
[7] C. Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, p. 76.



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war rather than pursuing the kingdom's interest. Throughout this period there was a possibility of raising significant profits, and in a few known cases even small fortunes, through the financial exploitation of war.[8] This chapter explores the primary advantages of war, including wages, spoils of war, ransoms, and other rewards, to assess their impact on the English economy and society during the Hundred Years War period.

*Remuneration and Wages*

There have been several extensive studies on the transformation of English armies of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries from one of feudal obligation, to a paid and increasingly professional army. By 1337, under the leadership of Edward III, England was able to field its first entirely paid army. As early as the late thirteenth century, however, Edward I had attempted to standardize the pay for armies. The payment scale was adjusted slightly by the start of the Hundred Years War period. In 1337 the scale had been established as 6s. 8d. per day for an earl, 4s. per day for a banneret, 2s. per day for a knight, 1s. per day for a sergeant or man-at-arms, 6d. per day for a hobelar (or lightly armoured horseman) or mounted archer, 3d. per day for a foot archer, and 2d. for a Welsh spearman.[9] The purpose of wages appears to have been to ensure that soldiers had enough money to cover their necessities of life, rather than as a reward for service. Often though the crown would offer double or one and a half

[8] Ibid. p. 77.
[9] H. J. Hewitt, *Organization of War Under Edward III*, p. 36. Prestwich states that foot archers received 2d. per day under Edward I but this appears to have changed by the start of the Hundred Years War according to Hewitt. M. Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, p. 84.



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times the standard if they were concerned about recruitment or were highly optimistic about the success of a particular campaign. For example, Edward III offered double wages in July 1338, which he managed to maintain until November 1339 before going back to the standard rate. John of Gaunt in 1369 offered one and a half times the standard wages, but offered double if the force was besieged by enemy forces. In 1370 he extended the double wages to everyone serving.[10] While wages often fluctuated above the standard rate there were also examples of men being paid lower than the standard rate, at least as they mustered before proceeding overseas.

Wages for soldiers in English armies seem to have been affected by the Black Death similarly to the wages of other labourers and skilled craftsmen, even though attempts were made to keep the standard low. Many accounts have the lower elements of the armies – archers and infantry – regularly starting to be paid around 6d. per day in the years following 1350, but English expeditionary forces also began to rely almost exclusively on mounted archers rather than foot archers. By the end of the war, however, the standard appears to have been altered slightly. This is demonstrated in a letter from the treasurer and chamberlain of the exchequer to Henry VI that explicitly states that the men were to be paid as accustomed, or 6s. per day for the captain, 4s. per day for a banneret, 2s. per day for a knight, 1s. per day for spears (men-at-arms), and 6d. per day for foot archers.[11]

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[10] Ibid., p. 85.
[11] The letter was originally published in *Letters and Paper*, ii, p. 479-80, but has been republished in C. Allmand, *Society at War*, p. 78-79.



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These wages were generous compared to the wages paid to men in the English workforce. In Munro's study of wages in England during this time, it is easy to see why people may be enticed to serve in the military. As Table 2 demonstrates, the wage paid to a master craftsman and a labourer in the first five years at the start of the Hundred Years War (1336-1340) was an average of 3.6d. per day and 1.8d. per day respectively.

| Years | Nominal Day Wage in d. for Master | Nominal Day Wage in d. for Labourer | Real Wage Index for Master[12] | Real Wage Index for Labourer |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1331-35 | 4.00 | 2.00 | 59.55 | 44.66 |
| 1336-40 | 3.60 | 1.80 | 64.23 | 48.17 |
| 1341-45 | 3.00 | 1.50 | 55.78 | 41.83 |
| 1346-50 | 3.00 | 1.50 | 49.14 | 36.85 |
| 1351-55 | 3.60 | 1.80 | 46.51 | 34.89 |
| 1356-60 | 4.60 | 2.60 | 59.31 | 50.16 |
| 1361-65 | 5.00 | 3.00 | 57.05 | 51.35 |
| 1366-70 | 5.00 | 3.00 | 58.13 | 52.32 |
| 1371-75 | 5.00 | 3.00 | 62.26 | 56.03 |
| 1376-80 | 5.00 | 3.00 | 77.27 | 69.54 |
| 1381-85 | 5.00 | 3.00 | 73.89 | 66.50 |
| 1386-90 | 5.00 | 3.00 | 81.31 | 73.18 |
| 1391-95 | 5.00 | 3.00 | 79.53 | 71.57 |
| 1396-00 | 5.00 | 3.00 | 75.59 | 68.03 |
| 1401-05 | 5.10 | 3.20 | 75.29 | 71.29 |
| 1406-10 | 5.80 | 3.80 | 87.56 | 85.89 |
| 1411-15 | 6.00 | 4.00 | 92.63 | 92.63 |
| 1416-20 | 6.00 | 4.00 | 89.13 | 89.13 |
| 1421-25 | 6.00 | 4.00 | 98.87 | 98.87 |
| 1426-30 | 6.00 | 4.00 | 91.00 | 91.00 |
| 1431-35 | 6.00 | 4.00 | 92.36 | 92.36 |
| 1436-40 | 6.00 | 4.00 | 85.41 | 85.41 |
| 1441-45 | 6.00 | 4.00 | 108.57 | 108.57 |
| 1446-50 | 6.00 | 4.00 | 99.23 | 99.23 |
| 1451-55 | 6.00 | 4.00 | 100.06 | 100.06 |

**Table 2:** Nominal and Real Wages, 1330 to 1460. From Munro, "Postan, Population and Prices", p. 49-50.

Until 1350 this continued to decline to an average of 3d. and 1.5d. per day respectively before escalating in the post-plague period, particularly in real terms in relation to the purchasing power those wages held in England.[13] In addition to the slightly higher wages paid to soldiers in the English expeditionary forces, the major campaigns of this period,

[12] This is a calculated arithmetic mean based on the years 1451-1475 for real wages (which takes into account the purchasing power for the relative wages).
[13] J. Munro, "Postan, Population, and Prices", p. 49-50.



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starting in 1338-39, the crown was also enticing people with double wages, ensuring that they looked attractive in terms of remuneration to both craftsmen and labourers in England.

To continue this comparison, the post-plague period witnessed an increase to 6d. per day in the wages of many archers as the English relied more and more on mounted archers. This was competing with daily wages that rose to 5d. per day in the 1360's for skilled craftsmen, and 3d. per day for labourers.[14] With these wage levels it is not surprising that it has been assumed that as the war progressed the established peasant landowners and craftsmen were recruited more consistently to fight in the armies of England. This assumption is based on the increased wealth required on the part of the recruit to provide a horse and increasingly more complex equipment, and is made plausible due to the increased wealth of the yeoman farmer and craftsmen post-1350.[15] By the end of the Hundred Years War English foot archers recruited to fight were being paid, according to the custom of the time, 6d. per day, which was the equivalent of a master craftman's daily wage and higher than the 4d. per day that could be expected by a labourer in the middle of the fifteenth century. During the Hundred Years War, many noblemen on expedition in France, especially those of the middle to lower rank, "were so impoverished that they needed the king's wages, which provided them with a better and surer income than did their lands."[16] These same trends can also be seen in the nominal wage data and nominal

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[14] Ibid., p. 48-49.
[15] More work is needed to determine who exactly comprised the expeditionary forces of the English, but this is a reasonable assumption. A. Ayton, "English Armies in the Fourteenth Century," p.32-33.
[16] C. Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, p. 64.



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wage index of Farmer, whose work is often used as the standard for wages during the Middle Ages in England.[17]

Over and above the wages paid to soldiers in the English armies, which appear to be competitive to those paid to the greater populace, there were four other regular aspects of the remuneration that made service in the military even more appealing. The crown increased the level of financial reward without raising the basic level of pay through a 'regard' or bonus, usually offered quarterly.[18] The standard regard appears to be 100 marks per 30 men-at-arms for a three-month period or a level of 6d. per day for each man-at-arm in the force. This reward was paid in a lump sum to the captain of the force and appears to have been offered in the 1340s to help offset the increasingly burdensome purchase of plate armour for men-at-arms among the English forces.[19] Similar to base wages, regards could also be granted at higher levels. There is also evidence that the regard may have been passed down at different levels to the men of lower ranks compared to the level received by the captain of the retinue. For example, in 1374 the Earl of March contracted for customary wages plus a double regard. In this instance, one of the Earl's own men, John Strother, received an even higher rate, even though he then turned around and paid his own men at a lower rate, thereby maximizing his individual profits.[20] The regard was not restricted to the armies of England either, as Newhall

[17] D. Farmer, "Prices and Wages"; D. Farmer, "Prices and Wages, 1350-1500".
[18] M. Prestwich, *Armies and* Warfare, p. 86.
[19] A. Ayton, "English Armies in the Fourteenth Century", p. 24.
[20] M. Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, p. 86.



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demonstrates. In 1417, sailors received wages of 6d. per day for a master, and 3d. per day for a mariner, and they received a 6d. per week regard.[21]

The Crown also offered 'prests' or advances to those serving in the English armies, which would then be subtracted out of their wages while serving overseas. These were usually used as enticements for English allies from the continent, paid to ensure their participation in the coming campaign. There were, however, some among the English who received sizable prests to secure their participation. This included William Stury, a knight, who was paid a prest of £200 by William de la Pole, though in the following year he received two different prests of £2 and 16s. 6d. respectively, which would be a more accurate reflection of the sums received by the English.[22] These would be subtracted from the amount paid to the soldier while serving, but would allow English captains to have the necessary money up front to recruit an effective fighting force, as well as allow knights or men-at-arms to have the necessary money to purchase the equipment befitting a soldier of that stature.

For those English soldiers with mounts, the third aspect of remuneration was the 'restor' or a restoration payment for the loss of a mount on campaign. It was, according to exchequer rolls in 1346, an English custom for men serving overseas or in Scotland to have one horse valued prior to the departure from England. In order to receive a restor an owner would normally have to present the ears and tail of the horse, though a horse did not need to die in order to be reimbursed through a restor. There are occasions articulated in the exchequer

[21] From the PRO Exchequer Accounts 48/21, no. 2 and presented in R. A. Newhall, *The English Conquest of Normandy*, p. 195.
[22] M. Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, p. 86-87.



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rolls that a horse was retired to serve in the baggage train or in some other capacity as it was no longer adequate for the needs of the battlefield.[23] This was a highly bureaucratic process that required detailed accounting of the color of the horse (including distinguishing characteristics) and the value. As well, there were detailed accounts of who had received a payment for the restoration of a horse. The restor was largely dropped after 1360 in favour of other rewards, except in highly exceptional cases like the indenture with Thomas de Wennesley agreed to by John of Gaunt in 1382.[24] Instead of the restor the crown tended to offer a higher regard, and also fundamentally changed the distribution of spoils so that the crown received only a third of the value collected rather than one half.[25] Ayton argues that, though the administrative cost cutting is a part of the reason for this change, the crown was also looking to find a way to provide more favourable terms of service in a more competitive environment for recruitment.[26]

Finally, the fourth aspect of the remuneration 'package' offered to those serving overseas involved the royal protection of their assets in England while serving overseas. As early as 1299 a royal memorandum established protections for members of the English expeditionary force:

> To preserve from harm the earls, barons, knights, and all others who come in person to our army with us ... we have ordained that all the assizes of novel disseisin which are brought against those who have gone or are going to our present war in their own person in our army, should be respited until Easter next.[27]

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[23] Ibid., p. 96.
[24] Ibid., p. 97.
[25] Ibid., p. 97.
[26] A. Ayton, "English Armies in the 14th Century", p. 25.
[27] E101/8/4, m. 2 in M. Prestwich, *Armies and* Warfare, p. 109.



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Letters or writs of protection are documents that are issued by the Chancery giving the recipient security from a wide range of legal actions for a set duration. Most letters appear to have been obtained as a precautionary measure against unexpected legal actions, though it could halt the process of law in a certain situation until a person returned to England.[28] Maddicott refers to the protections that were received by nobles and knights to ensure that they could be excluded from taxation and purveyance. Often the protection would be extended from the lord to his tenants as well, ensuring the economic stability of their own tenants.[29] Such a writ could also be built into the indenture of a captain, as in the case of the Earl of Warwick in 1373, where the king promised that no lands inherited by the earl in England while abroad would be taken by the crown on grounds that the Earl had not paid homage or fealty.[30] There are a few cases where the protection was not respected, as in the 1347 case of John de Beauchamp who had his manors cleaned out by a gang of men, and a few cases where the protection was lifted, as in the case of Robert Neville taking legal action against John Lowe of Canterbury for breach of contract.[31] There is some uncertainty about whether the protection included physical protection of the assets, which Prestwich implied, or if it was just legal protection of those assets. For the most part, however, the protection ensured that members of the forces overseas were protected legally at home. It also appears that they were exempted from some of the burdens (including purveyance and taxation) that they would have had if they

[28] A. Ayton, "English Armies in the 14th Century," p. 23.
[29] Granted, Maddicott uses this point to demonstrate the extra burdens placed on other members of the peasantry through the decrease in taxable and purveyable members of any given community. J. R. Maddicott, "The English Peasantry and the Crown," p. 307.
[30] M. Prestwich, *Armies and* Warfare, p. 109.
[31] Ibid., p. 109.



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had remained at home.[32] These were important considerations for members of the English armies to consider as part of their overall compensation package.

Accepting that the remuneration of English armies was set at a competitive level throughout the Hundred Years War in relation to the pay the English could reasonably expect at home, it is possible to see how this remuneration served as an enticement for men to engage in military service. This enticement is increased even more if you consider the double wages, regards, prests, and restors often offered in addition. Using Kitsikopolous' article on the peasant standard of living, and reinforced by unpublished work of Langdon, a budget model for peasants in this period demonstrates that, on average, a peasant could reasonably expect to live on between 18-24 acres of land (see Table 3). In order to compare the effective welfare of peasants in relation to peasants serving as archers, it is possible to construct a similar annual budget for an archer serving overseas. While many estimations and assumptions go into such a model, it is possible to look at the relative wealth of an archer in 1450 compared to 1340 and the two peasants in the other two estimates.

[32] J. R. Maddicott, "The English Peasantry and the Crown," p. 305.



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**Table 3: Budget of Archer versus Peasant**

| | Peasant Budget pre-Black Death (18 acres)[33] | Peasant Budget pre-Black Death (24 acres)[34] | Archer in 1340 (3d./day) | Archer in 1450 (6d./day) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Income:** | 57s. 7d. | 82s. 4½d. | 57s. 6d. | 115s. |
| **Expenditures:** | | | | |
| Duties to Lord | 16s. 4½d. | 25s. 2d. | 16s. 4½d. | 16s. 4½d. |
| Duties to Church | (paid out of food) | 10s. 7½d. | 5s. 9d. | 11s. 6d. |
| Duties to Crown | 1s. | 10½d. | Deferred (?) | Deferred (?) |
| Other Duties | 2s. 2d. | 6d. | Deferred (?) | Deferred (?) |
| Food | 12 s. 10d. | 28s. 5½d. | 29s. 11½d. | 31s. 3½d. |
| Other Costs | 17s. 7¼d. | 13s. 4¾d. | 17s. 7¼d. | 17s. 7¼d. |
| **TOTAL** | 49s. 11¾d. | 79s. 1½d. | 69s. 8¼d. | 76s. 9¼d. |
| Difference (+/-) | +7s. 7¼d. | +3s. 4d. | -12s. 2¼d. | +38s. 2¾d. |

In this model an archer serving in 1340 might expect to lose money in comparison to a comparable income as a peasant in England, though this changes dramatically in comparison to an archer in 1450. It is important to stress, however, that the peasant budgets presented are both pre-Black Death and a comparable budget is not available for a peasant in 1450. In order to explore this model further it is important to clarify several assumptions that inform the model. First, it assumes that the only source of income for an archer in this period is the wages paid to them from the crown for 230 days (which is what a craftsman or labourer might reasonably expect in an average work year) at the rates mentioned above. It does not account for any income that a soldier might still receive from their lands/profession while on campaign. Second, the model assumes that the duties to the king and other court fines would be deferred for

[33] H. Kitsikopolous, "Standards of Living."
[34] J. Langdon, "Lecture Notes for History 331".



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the archers because of the protection discussed above, though it still assumes that rents to the lord would still be required for property owned or leased at home. Third, it assumes that an archer would pay a 10% tithe to the church, even while abroad. Fourth, it assumes that the archer in 1340 would have the same household costs as a peasant as per the Langdon model, while also assuming that soldiers would still be responsible for the household costs of any family they had in England while on campaign. Fifth, it assumes that an archer on campaign would require a slightly higher food consumption (10% higher) than a peasant budget because of the increased caloric needs of a soldier on active campaign. The model also uses Munro's 'Basket of Consumables' Composite Price Index of 94.32 and 100.25 respectively for 1340 and 1450.[35] It is also important to note that this model does not account for equipment maintenance and replacement costs for equipment while on campaign, which would add an additional burden to the archer.

There are two fundamental questions that this exercise highlights. First, did the soldiery actually pay for the basic necessities of life that historians assume they did? Second, were the wages actually paid to the soldiers? Most historians refer to a standard understanding, and the corresponding literary evidence, that men serving overseas received wages to meet the basic needs of subsistence. There has not been, however, any explanation of the incredible administrative burden that such a system would place on an army moving through France or Scotland. In order for men to have used their wages to pay for

[35] In this calculation of the Composite Price Index the 100 point is the average of the years 1451-1475. J. Munro, "Postan, Population, and Price".



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their subsistence while on campaign, one of two models would be required. Either the men would receive their wages in coin and would exchange these for food (from the baggage train following the army or in French towns where food could be purchased), or there would be some form of accounting to monitor how much food was eaten by every member of the expeditionary force and charged back against the wages owed to that person (individually or by company). While both of these are possible, there is no evidence in the sources for the existence of either.

In the first explanation there would need to be substantial number of coins taken on campaign with the expeditionary force, which does not seem likely for a number of logistical and administrative reasons. We have several examples in the primary sources for the period of extensive supply trains being part of the English forces in France, but they almost exclusively refer to the bowyers, fletchers, armourers, cooks, and other essential staff required for the maintenance of the force on the march. Image 1 is an example from an illuminated manuscript of a baggage train in the field with an expeditionary force.[36] In the surviving references about the men included in the baggage train there is no mention of the clerks and other administrative officials who

**Image 1:** A baggage train c.1480 (from Harley MS 326, f. 90).

[36] Harley MS 326, f. 90 as presented in P. Porter, *Medieval Warfare in Manuscripts*, p. 33.



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would be needed to maintain an extensive accounting system that would accompany such a system of wage distribution. This is, however, an area that warrants further investigation.

In the second possible explanation, there would have to be extensive administrative records maintained to ensure that people received their proper wages compared to the amount of provisions used, which is more likely from the perspective of the size of the accompanying supply trains, but would be extremely vulnerable to mistakes and abuse. In both cases, men on campaign might also be encouraged to eat less and keep their wages, which could potentially weaken the effectiveness and efficiency of the army. Either that or men might be more likely to pillage and forage for food, which could also serve as a distraction from the campaign. It seems to be in the best interest of the army to ensure that all soldiers receive adequate provisions while on campaign. As well, the crown had already paid for the provisions taken through purveyance in England and in English possessions on the continent. If these provisions were subsequently sold back to the participants in the expeditionary force there should be a subsequent charge back to the crown for the money received to offset the original purchase costs. While this could be charged to different accounts, there does not appear to be an income source in any of the sources examined for the purpose of this study where such a record would be expected.[37] Finally, this type of extensive administration does not seem consistent with an army concerned with mobility and quick strikes through the French countryside.

[37] J. Langdon, for example, has used the purveyance accounts extensively (E101 and other Exchequer records) and has not been able to find any such record.



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There are two possible examples where these administrative concerns could be overcome. First, when an army was participating in an extended siege, such as Calais in 1347, it might have been possible to set up a market system that could more effectively handle the administration of reselling food back to the army after being brought to France from England. Second, when the English established an extended garrison at a castle, fortress, or town in France, there would be far more incentive to purchase food from local markets or from provisions brought to them from England. As well, it would be much more probable for the English soldiers to have ready coin, from wages or other rewards, allowing them to purchase what they need for subsistence. These possible examples, however, do not provide a satisfactory explanation for the English campaigns through France, which formed the majority of English actions throughout the Hundred Years War period. It is, therefore, possible that the English crown actually provided the food through purveyance without charging that cost to the English soldiers. The existence of purveyance itself almost automatically indicates this. This would then be supplemented by other food foraged and/or pillaged from the French, or purchased from local French markets. If this were the case, and the English forces had their food predominantly provided by the crown, the budget model discussed above would have to be significantly altered (see Table 4). If in the new model the archers continue to purchase only 25% of their previous levels of food (to represent the time spent in towns or castles during their campaign where they would be



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expected to purchase their food), they still see a substantial increase in their overall budgetary balance at the end of a year.

**Table 4: Budget of Archer vs. Peasant (Revised for Food Costs)**

| | Peasant Budget (18 acres) | Peasant Budget (24 acres) | Archer in 1340 (3d./day) | Archer in 1450 (6d./day) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Income:** | 57s. 7d. | 82s. 4½d. | 57s. 6d. | 115s. |
| **Expenditures:** | | | | |
| Duties to Lord | 16s. 4½d. | 25s. 2d. | 16s. 4½d. | 16s. 4½d. |
| Duties to Church | (paid out of food) | 10s. 7½d. | 5s. 9d. | 11s. 6d. |
| Duties to Crown | 1s. | 10½d. | Deferred | Deferred |
| Other Duties | 2s. 2d. | 6d. | Deferred | Deferred |
| Food | 12 s. 10d. | 28s. 5½d. | 7s. 1½d. (rest provided) | 7s. 1½d. (rest provided) |
| Other Costs | 17s. 7¼d. | 13s. 4¾d. | 17s. 7¼d. | 17s. 7¼d. |
| **TOTAL** | 49s. 11¾d. | 79s. 1½d. | 48s. 3¼d. | 51s. 4¼d. |
| Difference (+/-) | +7s. 7¼d. | +3s. 4d. | +9s. 2¾d. | +63s. 7¾d. |

This model implies that the situation of an archer in 1340 and 1450 would be in a very beneficial economic situation compared to most peasant landholders in the same period, but it still raises the question about whether or not the soldiers actually received their remuneration. The consensus of many historians is summed up by Prestwich in his argument that wages were often inadequate, and were also frequently unpaid or paid late.[38] He cites a number of examples that are important to examine. In 1337 the Earl of Salisbury was owed £2,845 for an expedition to Scotland, and was not paid until 1349 by John de Wesenham, a wool merchant greatly involved in the financing of the war for the crown. There were £20,000 in debts recorded in the royal account book in 1343 when the truce of Malestroit concluded a campaign in Brittany, including £2,343 owed to the Earl

[38] M. Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, p. 87.



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of Lancaster alone. Over the period of 1374 to 1380 the English captains in France, under John of Gaunt, presented their accounts at the exchequer totaling almost £20,000. It wasn't until Henry V that the crown began to provide security for wages, when he started to hand over jewels and plate to those whom he owed wages. These included a golden alms dish to the Duke of York for £332, while the Earl of Salisbury accepted a silver-gilt nef weighing an impressive 65 pounds. Henry even secured the smaller wages owed to his knights, including Thomas Hauley who received a pair of gold spurs, a gilt ewer, and a sword decorated with an ostrich feather for his outstanding wages of £12 8s. 0½d. In 1446 the Duke of York was owed almost £40,000 for his role as governor of Normandy, while John Talbot claimed he was owed £4,627 10s. 6½d. for his service between 1435 and 1443.[39] Postan also points out that between 1372 and 1377 seventeen of the nineteen captains serving in France were owed money, including Hugh Caverley, Edward le Despenser, Ralph Ferrers, Hugh earl of Stafford, and the Duke of Lancaster, all of whom were owed between 60% and 75% of their total wages.[40]

In the vast majority of the examples used by historians to support their argument that wages were not being paid by the crown the men owed wages were of the most privileged class, though there are a few isolated examples of men of the knightly class being owed wages.[41] Historians also point to cases of garrisons serving in France being owed wages for their service to support their

[39] All of these examples are from Prestwich. Ibid., p. 87-88.
[40] M. Postan, "The Costs of the Hundred Years War", p. 43.
[41] Postan cites 163 knights or men-at-arms listed in the Calendar of Close Rolls as king's creditors for wages unpaid in 1341-1343. M. Postan, "The Costs of the Hundred Years War", p. 43. From the *Calendar of Close Rolls*, 1341-1343, pp. 82-8.



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argument. In Newhall's comprehensive study of the English conquest of Normandy he demonstrates that, between wages coming over from England and the grants of money from Norman estates (totaling as much as £100,000 or 400,000 l.t.), the wages appear to have been paid throughout the early occupation, at least until 1424.[42] The two phases of the war where this is less clear are in the primarily defensive actions of the later part of the fourteenth century, and the final twenty years of the war in the fifteenth century. It is often implied that these examples must indicate that the English in general did not receive their wages from the campaigns in France. I would argue differently, however, that it means that the captains serving the crown often fronted the money for the campaigns in France, paying their men throughout their campaigns, and waiting for reimbursement from the Exchequer.[43]

If one were to examine the amount of time served in the cases of the large sums of wages owed to lords used by Prestwich and others they would have to be for a portion of the costs for their entire retinues, as there is no way that their own personal wages could reach such levels during the campaigns in question. It does not make sense that they would wait for these outstanding wages for up to ten years, and then pass it on to the knights, men-at-arms, and archers. This would have resulted in an administrative nightmare for the captain in question. Men would not continue to serve under conditions where they were continually not being paid. There should have been some record of protest on a wide scale if that were occurring. The more likely situation was that the English Captains,

[42] R. A. Newhall, *The English Conquest of* Normandy, p.215-222.
[43] This would require a significant amount of additional work to prove. I do not have any evidence of it from the sources that I have examined.



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who were owed these large sums of money, would pay their men regularly out of their own resources and then go to the crown for reimbursement. This would make far more sense administratively and it seems more likely considering the lack of evidence of a more widespread lack of payment. I believe it is possible to argue, contrary to the standard view of many historians, that the wages were paid regularly to the men of humbler status serving in the English armies, though most likely through the captains' own resources than by regular payments from the crown. It was the men of higher status that required reimbursement from the crown, which is what is demonstrated repeatedly in the records. This argument is supported by the example of John Beaufort, Earl of Somerset and Captain of Calais, who used his own resources to pay for the needs of the town's garrison and petitioned to Parliament in 1403-04 for his arrears, totaled at £11,423 12s. 3d. This was the equivalent of more than the yearly wages for a wartime retinue of 608 soldiers and 75 artisans, which cost £10,509 16s. 8d., or almost two years of wages for a peacetime retinue of 480 soldiers and 75 artisans, which cost £6,301.[44]

*Ransoms and 'Patis'*

In addition to wages and remuneration there are a number of other rewards that were expected as part of service in the armies of the Hundred Years War. The reward that has attracted the most attention from historians were the ransoms paid to secure the freedom of men captured by enemy forces. The major expeditions of 1346-47, 1356, and 1415 each resulted in a large number of

[44] D. Grummitt, "The Financial Administration of Calais", p. 285.



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French prisoners, and many other expeditions also resulted in the capture of numerous prisoners. For example, Thomas Holland received £13,333 for the capture of the Raoul de Brienne, Count of Eu and Gaines and the Constable of France, after the siege of Calais in 1347. Edward III paid a total of £44,000 to the men who captured thirteen different French noblemen, including the Counts of Vendôme, Tancarville, Eu, Joigny, Nassau, Longueville, Auxerre, Ventadour, and Saarbrücken, Marshal d'Audrehem, and Lords Derval and Daubigny. Louis de Chalon was forced to pay 60,000 gold francs for his ransom. The ransom of Charles of Blois stood at around £110,000. And the most famous was the ransom of £500,000 demanded for King John II of France after he was captured at Poitiers.[45] It is important to acknowledge that many of the ransoms demanded were not paid in full, such as the above-mentioned Charles of Blois, who only paid £17,000 of his ransom, or the ransom of King John II, who only paid half of his ransom.[46] Ransoms, of course, were paid to France when they captured English nobles, but scholars largely agree that the balance rested significantly in favour of the English over the period of the Hundred Years War.

Ransoms were not received uniformly by men of all status groups, but there were cases of smaller ransoms being demanded and received by archers and other men of humbler status for French prisoners.[47] During the chaos on the field of Agincourt, after the French forces turned to flee, there are accounts of all

[45] These are summarized in several places including M. Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, p. 104; and C. Given-Wilson and F. Beriac, "Edward III's Prisoners of War", p. 814-817.
[46] M. Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, p. 104-107 as cited from the *Camden Miscellany*, vol. xiv, and the *Register of the Black Prince*, IV, pp. 339, 379, and 381.
[47] Prestwich cites several examples of English squires ransoming French nobles, including the Count of Denia who was taken at the Battle of Najera in 1367. M. Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, p. 104-107. Other, including the ransoming of non-noble soldiers or townspeople, are discussed by N. Wright, *The Hundred Years War in the French Countryside*, p. 69-72.



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members of the English army scrambling to try to claim prisoners in the hopes that they might make a profit.[48] These are similar to accounts of Poitiers, from the Chandos Herald, where archers, knights and squires all ran in every direction to try to take prisoners. Froissart adds that the captured French outnumbered the English by two to one, while "even the meanest archer had as many as six French captives."[49] There is no doubt that ransoms gathered from prisoners on the battlefield were one of the primary motivations for service in the English armies that fought in France.[50]

Wright recently demonstrated another form of ransoming that the men of lower status in the English military forces were more likely to undertake and benefit from. Rather than the ransoming of nobles fighting in the war, there were often cases where the English would ransom the sons, daughters, and wives of the French townspeople or villagers, and, more commonly, the members of the French clergy. An example of the capture and ransom of a clergyman was the Priest Berthelemi Gernet had been captured by the 'soldiery' of the Beseram garrison and the ransom was set at 1300 francs.[51] An example of the ransoming of non-combatants is in the 'catalogue of acts of war' committed by members of the garrisons surrounding the town of Bergerac,1379-1382, in which 168 non-combatants were taken prisoner and forced to pay ransoms in gold coin and goods, including iron nails, wine, salt, wheat, hens, wax, pepper, cloth, boots,

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[48] M. Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, p. 108.
[49] J. Barnie, *War in Medieval English Society*, p. 37.
[50] D. Hays, "Division of Spoils of War", p. 91.
[51] N. Wright, *The Hundred Years War in the French Countryside*, p. 65.



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shoes, jackets, shirts, saddles, axes, rope and ginger.[52] Their average value was quite insignificant in comparison to the ransoms of many French nobles, often in the range of 5 gold francs and rarely exceeded 12 gold francs. But this added up, particularly for soldiers coming from backgrounds where £5 was a reasonable yearly income, and made for a decent increase in wealth. Another example is from the *Chronique du Mont-Saint-Michel*, which states that "the aid Flourison, archer to the said Richard Harper, men-at-arms, took a prisoner ransomed for 12 golden salus."[53]

Connected with the ransoming of townspeople and clergy was the fact that prisoners of the lower classes were not held for long periods of time before they were released. The ransoms needed to be paid quickly or the prisoner's life would be forfeit.[54] For example, there is a chronicle by Thomas Basin that described how the peasants of lower Normandy who were captured by either the French or the English soldiers in the aftermath of the 1435 rebellion either paid their ransoms on the spot or were strangled and drowned.[55] Finally, Wright also discusses the ransoming of cattle, horses, and other goods of value, which appears to be common during the entire Hundred Years War period. If the peasants could not immediately afford to pay the ransom, the animals were taken to the market and sold, often back to their former owners. For example, the men-

[52] N. Wright, *The Hundred Years War in the French Countryside*, p. 75.
[53] C. Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, p. 85.
[54] N. Wright, *The Hundred Years War in the French Countryside*, p. 70.
[55] Originally from T. Basin, *Histoire de Charles VII*, p. 220-21, but cited from N. Wright, *The Hundred Years War in the French Countryside*, p. 70.



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at-arms and archers who pillaged Aizier and Vatteville in 1368 took 30 or more horses and demanded 50 gold francs for their return.[56]

Related to the ransoming of individuals, the English were also very good at securing a *patis* or *appatis* from French towns and villages throughout the Hundred Years War. A *patis* is a payment of protection money to a garrison or army in exchange for not sacking the town, or actively protecting the town against raids from other armies or private mercenary companies that were common in France during years of relative peace between France and England. In both respects it may be seen as a reward for the English forces, sometimes for doing little or nothing.[57] Wright calls the patis the "collective ransoms of whole parishes", which was treated as a valuable property right.[58] The scale of these payments of protection money can be seen in the English occupation of Brittany in the mid-fourteenth century. During this period the three primary English fortresses at Vannes, Becherel, and Ploermel shared the *patis* of 124 different parishes, which provided 85% of the operating costs of maintaining those garrisons. In 1352, the English lieutenant in the duchy, Walter Bentley, complained that the English garrisons "make gross profits in divers ways, namely by pillaging poor people and others on their borders ... rapidly destroying the poor people and the Holy Church, to the great detriment of our lord the King."[59] Wright argues further that men in these types of garrisons did not expect to receive their wage payments, and often did not, but expected to rely on the

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[56] Ibid., p. 76.
[57] C. Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, p. 85.
[58] N. Wright, *The Hundred Years War in the French* Countryside, p. 76.
[59] This quote is from a memorandum by Walter Bentley, English lieutenant of the duchy. Originally from W. Bentley, "Memoire", p. 330 cited by N. Wright, *The Hundred Years War in the French Countryside*, p. 77.



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protection money from those non-combatants within their territory. Even during the fifteenth century regency of Bedford, when the English were well-regulated, the garrisons on the Maine frontier were deriving an annual income of £25,000 from *patis*, which was enforced by expeditions to punish recalcitrant villages.[60]

The English took the payment of ransoms very seriously as well. There are numerous cases of the French prisoners, whether nobility or from the lower classes, who were tortured or beaten in order to get the ransom paid in full. One example of this is from a story told to the judges of the Paris parliament in 1440 in which the nobleman Henriet Gentian described his suffering as a prisoner of Francois de la Palu. In order to secure payment of his ransom of 6000 crowns, all his teeth were knocked out with a hammer and sent to his lord, the Duke of Bourbon.[61] Failure to pay a ransom could easily result in the loss of life or almost indefinite imprisonment. This also was also true of the failure to pay the ransom for cattle, which would then be taken as plunder and sold (or much rarer slaughtered), and for a failure to pay the *patis*, which could result in the sacking of the town or the abandonment of protection from other undesirables.

It is possible to try to estimate roughly how much money might be reasonably expected from ransoms for an average man in the English army. Taking the situation of the Bergerac castellany between 1379 and 1382 as an example, in each year the garrison received 280 gold francs from the average of 56 ransoms that they took each year. Each of these ransoms averaged between 5 and 6 gold francs each. The garrison at Bergerac, which was first captured by

[60] Ibid., p. 77-78.
[61] Ibid., p. 79.



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the English in early August 1345, was originally a force of 1500 men to secure the town, castle, and the surrounding countryside. By the period in question, however, it was likely not held by a force much larger than those discussed by Newhall in Normandy during the early fifteenth century, which would total a minimum of 3 men-at-arms and 9 archers for most small garrisons and 12 men-at-arms and 36 archers in a reasonably large garrison.[62] For the purpose of this example the latter size is used, which would be a conservative estimate (i.e. on the high side). If the ransoms were divided proportionally to their wages, that meant that each of the men-at-arms would receive a double share in comparison to the archers. This means that in this case that each of the 12 men-at-arms would receive around 9 golden francs with each of the 36 archers receiving half that amount. Using Spufford's currency exchange tables, which state that in 1380 one gold franc is the equivalent of approximately 2s. 8d., each of the men-at-arms received £1 4s. each while the archers received 12s. each from the ransoms.[63]

With the understanding that this would be a very conservative average of ransoms for English forces throughout the Hundred Years War period (particularly in light of the substantial ransoms received even by archers in the campaigns of Crécy, Poitiers, and Agincourt), it is possible to revisit the hypothetical budget of the archer discussed above. By adding to the income of the archer what might reasonably be expected, the overall situation of the archer improves even more (as can be seen in Table 5 below). In the case of the archer

[62] R. A. Newhall, *The English Conquest of Normandy*, p. 214-216.
[63] P. Spufford, *Money and Its Use in Medieval Europe*, p. 291-293.



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in 1340 this would represent a 20.9% increase in their revenue, while in the case of the archer in 1450 this would represent a 10.4% increase in their annual revenue.

**Table 5: Budget of Archer vs. Peasant (Revised for Ransoms)**

| | Peasant Budget (18 acres) | Peasant Budget (24 acres) | Archer in 1340 (3d./day) | Archer in 1450 (6d./day) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Income:** | 57s. 7d. | 82s. 4½d. | 69s. 6d. | 127s. |
| **Expenditures:** | | | | |
| Duties to Lord | 16s. 4½d. | 25s. 2d. | 16s. 4½d. | 16s. 4½d. |
| Duties to Church | (paid out of food) | 10s. 7½d. | 5s. 9d. | 11s. 6d. |
| Duties to Crown | 1s. | 10½d. | Deferred | Deferred |
| Other Duties | 2s. 2d. | 6d. | Deferred | Deferred |
| Food | 12 s. 10d. | 28s. 5½d. | 7s. 1½d. (rest provided) | 7s. 1½d. (rest provided) |
| Other Costs | 17s. 7¼d. | 13s. 4¾d. | 17s. 7¼d. | 17s. 7¼d. |
| **TOTAL** | 49s. 11¾d. | 79s. 1½d. | 48s. 3¼d. | 51s. 4¼d. |
| Difference (+/-) | +7s. 7¼d. | +3s. 4d. | +21s. 2¾d. | +75s. 7¾d. |

*Spoils of War and Other Rewards*

A large amount of extra wealth was also obtained in France through the spoils of war in the form of the booty that was received on campaign, from sieges, or during garrison placements. This was especially true during the phase of chevauchées that dominated the reign of Edward III. As well, there were other rewards, including monetary payments for exceptional conduct or appointments to an office in recognition of someone's service, which would also have a substantial impact on the economic situation of participants in the English armies. It is clear from the sources that the profits of war, or at least the perceived profits



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of war, were a substantial motivation in war, and could have profound effects on contemporary chroniclers, as in the case of the quote that opens this chapter.

The spoils of war collected throughout the Hundred Years War were shared throughout the English army from the lowest ranked soldier to the crown. Up until 1360 the crown demanded half of all of the spoils of war collected while on campaign. Members of the English expeditionary force reported all of their spoils, which were then valued and distributed. When the *restor* mentioned above was eliminated as an aspect of the remuneration for the English army the crown set up a fairer and more beneficial system of distribution for the spoils of war.[64] Ayton has examined this move away from the reimbursement of horses lost on expeditions as evidence that the men participating in the war were receiving other benefits to make up for the crown's old system of the payment of a restor or '*restauro equorum*'. The widespread adoption of the 'system of thirds', which only took place in the 1370's, formed an integral part of a general reform that included the abandonment of the reimbursement for lost horses. This was meant to ensure that the men who potentially lost horses had the extra wealth to cover what used to be paid by the crown (from the revenue they would gain from a greater proportion of the spoils of war gathered).

Though this started to be written into indentures for service in the 1360s and 1370s the crown officially established in 1385, through their Ordinances of War prior to a campaign in Scotland, that every member of the English army could collect spoils of war provided that they give a third of those spoils to their immediate superior (usually the captain of their force who had been indentured

[64] A. Ayton, *Knights and Warhorses*, p. 136.



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by the king to create a retinue), who then passed on a third of their spoils to the crown.[65] This allowed the members of a retinue to retain a fair portion of their spoils, while ensuring that the superiors collected substantial sums of money. For example, if every man-at-arms and archer in a force of 50 men-at-arms and 150 archers collected 9s. worth of goods from the sacking of a town, they would each get to keep 6s. of that total. The captain of the retinue would then receive £30 (or 3s. from each of his men) in addition to the spoils that he claimed for himself. Then the crown would receive, if there were ten such captains, £100 total plus any additional spoils that were claimed by the crown at the time.

It is difficult to place a monetary value on the goods taken from the populace of France because the booty was rarely recorded (at least in the sources that survive), but there are a few examples. Even when exaggeration is taken into consideration, the amount of goods brought back to England from France was substantial. In 1354, Robert Knollys collected a silver basin and ewer (weighing 7 pounds), 4 silver chargers, 18 silver saucers and other pieces of plate, 2 goatskins, and two new pairs of boots.[66] The *Chronique du Mont-Saint-Michel,* written in 1443-1444, gives the following description of the profits of war from a garrison in the town of Tombelaine:

> The Profits of War:
> John Flourison, archer to Richard Harper, a mounted lance, took a horse, sold for 6 golden salus. ...
> Roger Mill, archer to Makin of Longworth, won a sword, sold for 37 shillings and 6 pence tournois. ...
> The total of said profits of war made by the archers in service of the Lances: 18 salus, being worth 27 pounds, 37 shillings, and six pence tournois in money. Of these ... a third belongs to the lances,

[65] D. Hays, "Division of Spoils of War", p. 95-96.
[66] M. Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, p. 103.



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> totalling 9 pounds 12 shillings and 6 pence tournois; of which third, a third belongs to the captain, namely 64 shillings and 2 pence tournois; and of this third, a further third belongs to the king, equal to 21 shillings and 5 pence tournois.[67]

Hewitt described the furs, finery, gold and silver articles, and beautiful leatherwork brought back to England. It was reported that wine was so plentiful that they destroyed the vats and let the wine, which was quite valuable and highly sought after, drain away.[68] Hewitt also described a group of Cheshire archers, who picked up a silver ship belonging to King of France after the Battle of Poitiers, for which the Black Prince paid them a substantial sum of money.[69] The importance of the spoils of war even goes beyond men serving in the armies of England. Henry V's ordinances of war in 1419 state that:

> All maner of captaynes, knyghtes, squyers, men of Armes, Archers, what so euer they be, shall be bounde to paye the iii$^{de}$ parte of all theyr gaynes in warre faithfully and wyth owte fraude ... Also we woll that all maner of men, ryding or taryeng wyth us in oure hoste or vnder our baner, thoughe they receue no wages or vs or our Realme, as physiciens, surgens, barbors, marchauntes, and suche lyke, we charge that they paye of all theyr goods dewly and lawfully begoten by war, to vs or our cheffe captayne, the iii$^{de}$ parte therof.[70]

There are numerous sources that demonstrate that the English were rather ruthless in their quest for spoils of war. These sources discuss the sacking of towns and pillaging of churches of their wealth. They include examples of the English knight Sir John Harleston sitting with a group of fellow captains drinking from silver chalices which had been looted from churches. Froissart reported that an English squire entered a church during high mass and

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[67] *Chronique de Mont-Saint-Michel*, (1343-1468), II, p. 165-67 presented in C. Allmand, *Society of War*, p. 82-3.
[68] H. J. Hewitt, *Organization of War Under Edward III*, p. 32.
[69] Ibid., p. 32.
[70] *The Essential Portions of Nicholas Upton's De Studio Militari, before 1446*, p. 45-46 as presented in C. Allmand, *Society of War*, p. 82.



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seized a chalice from the priest at the moment of consecration, knocking the priest to the ground.[71] Christine de Pisan weighed in on the argument in her famous treatise on war, saying:

> "Now, good master, here me a lytel yf thou be so pleased. I aske of the [thee], yf whan men of were are taken in to wages, and that of theyre payement be noo faulte made, whethere it behoueth them wyth theyre wages truly payed to take vytailles upon the countrey, and to dyspoylle and take dyuerse other thynges as they comonly doo thys day in the realme of Fraunce. I ansuere the certeynly that nay, and that suche a thynge is noo poynt of the ryght of were, but it is an evylle extorcyon and a grete vyolence, made wrongfully and wyth grete synne upon the people."[72]

She goes on to discuss the role of the captain in ensuring that the men in their retinue not continue in this manner.

The gathering of spoils of war continued throughout the Hundred Years War, but there were times when the English attempted to ensure a level of discipline against this kind of action. The Duke of Bedford, the regent following the death of Henry V, put his concerns in a letter written in January 1423. He stated that even though the men in the garrisons have been "well and duly paid" they:

> "who call themselves our officers, ..., captains, etc., have committed and are committing great wrongs, excesses and abuses, under color of exercising their offices – to the prejudice of the public welfare – such as breaking into churches and carrying off goods contained therein, seizing and violating women, married and otherwise, cruelly beating the poor people, carrying off their horses and other beasts of burden, and their seed of corn, occupying the residences of churchmen, nobles, and others against their will, demanding heavy tolls and quantities of merchandise at city gates which they ought to guard, making levies of food on towns and parishes of obedient subjects, forcing men to perform guard duty at towns and fortresses more than was due and extorting from them

[71] H. J. Hewitt, *Organization of War Under Edward III*, p. 32.
[72] Christine de Pisan, *The Book of Fayttes of Amres and of Chyualrye*, p. 217-220.



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> huge sums for their default, seizing our poor subjects, beating them, judging them arbitrarily, and confining them in prisons or in their homes, pillaging them of their goods or seizing the same and either paying nothing or else fixing their own price."[73]

This lack of discipline served the English well when they were engaging in chevauchées across France in the fourteenth century, when they were explicitly trying to intimidate the local populace to draw the French into battle, but it was not very effective in attempting to conquer Normandy and to get the people of Normandy to feel loyal to their English lords.

An illuminated manuscript has survived which also provides a glimpse at a scene depicting the looting of a house.[74] The soldiers doing the looting, as evidenced by their clothing, armour and weapons, are the rank-and-file of the English forces. They are taking or destroying everything, from a small rug or cloth to plates, vases, furniture, and kegs of beer or wine. This is probably a typical scene that would have occurred throughout the entire Hundred Years War.

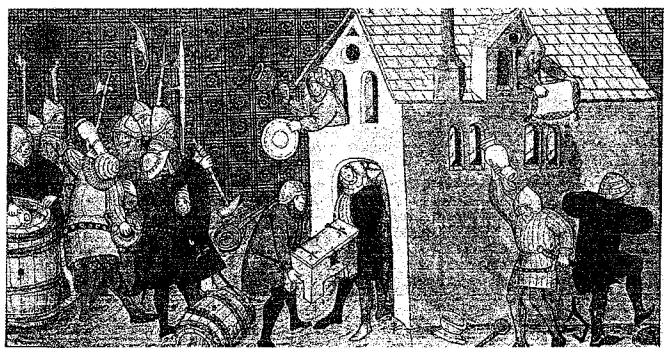

**Image 2:** Looting a Building (from Royal MS 20)

In addition to the spoils of war described here, there are a number of other rewards that must also be considered. One of the other significant rewards received throughout the Hundred Years War was patents and pensions paid by the crown, or other lords, for exceptional service. For example, the 1362-63

[73] R. A. Newhall, *The English Conquest of Normandy*, p. 233.
[74] Royal Ms 20, taken from M. Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, p. 261.



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exchequer records indicate that the total income of the crown for the fiscal year in question is £42,254 13s. 4d. and the crown spent £6450 5s. 5.5d. on the "fees and wages granted by patents to various persons for the term of their lives."[75] This implies that the ongoing support of men who were granted pension rewards for exceptional service in France was a substantial part of the crown's expenditures.

Not all Englishmen serving would have been successful in receiving spoils of war and other rewards, though there are some who are known to have made a substantial fortune. The most famous case, and one of the most examined, was that of John Fastolf, who served in Normandy in the 1420s and 1430s. He established a system to send profits made in France back to England. His inheritance was worth only about £46 per year, but by the end of his service he was able to purchase manors worth £775 per year from the profits of war.[76] When Fastolf returned to England he is on record building a castle at Caistor, and spending large sums of money on jewelry, plate and books. Prestwich argued that what was more important was that he was so financially successful in years when the English were not very successful in their campaigns.[77] Fastolf's contemporary John Talbot, the Earl of Shrewsbury, provides another interesting case as he was forced to pay a ransom for himself and two sons, when they were captured by the French. Yet he still acquired substantial spoils of war in Le Mans and Laval in 1428, gaining riches and prisoners on campaign in 1434, and

[75] T. F. Tout and D. Broome, "A national balance sheet for 1362-63", PRO Exchequer Accounts various, E101/394/17, m. 1, printed in A. R. Myers, *English Historical Documents*, p. 513.
[76] M. Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, p. 111.
[77] Ibid., p. 111.



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receiving profits from land he was given in Normandy as well as from his appointment as the Marshal of France. When he died in November 1459 he left his family a substantial amount of wealth.[78]

But the question remains, how much did the lower class English soldiers benefit from these types of practices? If we extrapolated on the example above of the archers serving in the garrison of the town of Tombelaine, which was under the Earl of Somerset, we can make a conservative estimate from a period of the war when the spoils of war would be minimal, compared to high points of Crécy, Poitiers, and Agincourt. In this case the garrison managed to secure profits totaling £27 37s. and 6d. tournois in one year. Again using Spufford's currency conversion tables, this equals a total of approximately 76s. 11d. for the entire garrison.[79] Again, using the garrison levels that are detailed by Newhall of 36 archers serving in a garrison the size of the Tombelaine, that would total 2s. 1½d. per archer. Of this a third would go to the lances, and proceed up to the captain and eventually the crown, leaving the archer with 1s. 5d. for his own profit.

Again with this estimate of the spoils of war received by archers, which is very conservative with respect the value we could expect them to receive at other points in the war, it is possible to revisit the hypothetical budget of the archer discussed above. This would be an increase of 2% and 1.1% each for the archers of 1340 and 1450. In the campaigns of Crécy, Calais, Poitiers, and

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[78] Ibid., p. 111.
[79] P. Spufford, *Money and Its Use in Medieval Europe*, p. 291-293.



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Agincourt this number would exponentially much greater. Overall the picture of the budget of the archer compared to the peasant estimates of Kitsikopolous and Langdon paints a very profitable picture for archers in the English army, particularly since these estimates do not include any income from lands or other revenue sources they may still receive in England while they serve overseas.

**Table 6: Budget of Archer vs. Peasant (Revised for Spoils of War)**

| | Peasant Budget (18 acres) | Peasant Budget (24 acres) | Archer in 1340 (3d./day) | Archer in 1450 (6d./day) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Income:** | 57s. 7d. | 82s. 4½d. | 70s. 11d. | 128s. 5d. |
| **Expenditures:** | | | | |
| Duties to Lord | 16s. 4½d. | 25s. 2d. | 16s. 4½d. | 16s. 4½d. |
| Duties to Church | (paid out of food) | 10s. 7½d. | 5s. 9d. | 11s. 6d. |
| Duties to Crown | 1s. | 10½d. | Deferred | Deferred |
| Other Duties | 2s. 2d. | 6d. | Deferred | Deferred |
| Food | 12 s. 10d. | 28s. 5½d. | 7s. 1½d. (rest provided) | 7s. 1½d. (rest provided) |
| Other Costs | 17s. 7¼d. | 13s. 4¾d. | 17s. 7¼d. | 17s. 7¼d. |
| **TOTAL** | 49s. 11¾d. | 79s. 1½d. | 48s. 3¼d. | 51s. 4¼d. |
| Difference (+/-) | +7s. 7¼d. | +3s. 4d. | +22s. 7¾d. | +77s. 0¾d. |

A year end profit of over 22s., in comparison to 3s. or 7s., would be a definite incentive to serve in England's expeditionary forces. In fact, it might only be the significant risk factor (of death or capture, which could be financially ruinous) and the uncertainty factor (of the unknown world beyond the immediate community) that might have mitigated the incentive so that everyone in England was not clamouring to serve. The question remains whether or not the men serving overseas were in fact landowners as the model assumes to this point. If those serving overseas were the younger sons of landowners or craftsmen or



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other landless men then the model would again be substantially different. If the men serving overseas did not own land then they would not have duties to the lord or other costs resulting from owning land. This is supported by some limited evidence from the 1346 expeditionary force where an obscure landholder John Humden sent his son Robert to Portsmouth for the expedition.[80] This would result in positive difference of +58s 1½d. for an archer in 1340 and 109s. 9½d. in 1450. This is an increase of over 157% for the 1340 example, and over 42% for 1450. In this model, however, there would be less of a connection back to England and those serving overseas may be more likely to remain in France (or elsewhere in Europe) rather than return to England with the excess income.

**Table 7: Budget of Archer vs. Peasant (Revised for Duties to Lord and Other Costs)**

| | **Peasant Budget (18 acres)** | **Peasant Budget (24 acres)** | **Archer in 1340 (3d./day)** | **Archer in 1450 (6d./day)** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Income:** | 57s. 7d. | 82s. 4½d. | 70s. 11d. | 128s. 5d. |
| **Expenditures:** | | | | |
| Duties to Lord | 16s. 4½d. | 25s. 2d. | 0s | 0s |
| Duties to Church | (paid out of food) | 10s. 7½d. | 5s. 9d. | 11s. 6d. |
| Duties to Crown | 1s. | 10½d. | Deferred | Deferred |
| Other Duties | 2s. 2d. | 6d. | Deferred | Deferred |
| Food | 12 s. 10d. | 28s. 5½d. | 7s. 1½d. (rest provided) | 7s. 1½d. (rest provided) |
| Other Costs | 17s. 7¼d. | 13s. 4¾d. | 0s. | 0s. |
| **TOTAL** | 49s. 11¾d. | 79s. 1½d. | 12s. 10½d. | 18s. 7½d. |
| Difference (+/-) | +7s. 7¼d. | +3s. 4d. | +58s. 1½d. | +109s. 9½d. |

[80] A. Ayton, *The English Army at Crécy*, p. 169.



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*What impact did these have on the English economy and society?*

For war to impact the economy and society of England positively the wealth received from wages, ransoms, rewards, and other spoils of war would need to return to England. Though it is almost impossible to determine how much of the wealth returned to England, there are a number of sources that seem to indicate that wealth did indeed travel back to England with the returning forces from the Continent. Sources definitely discuss the increased goods brought into English homes, and many discuss the fortunes made by certain members of the expeditionary forces as a result of the wages, ransoms, and spoils of war gathered. Powicke argues that the increased building and expenditure on luxury goods by the aristocracy during a period (for at least a part of the war) where their domestic income declined lends support to the argument that the source of the increased expenditures was from the war in France.[81] There may also be some relation between the material gains entering England from France and the frequent confirmation of the Sumptuary Laws as the English populace benefited from the profits of war.[82] It is also essential to acknowledge that the sources indicate that large amounts of wealth were 'wasted' in France in frivolous spending and 'debauchery', enjoyed by the soldiery during their 'off-times' from battle and during their long and arduous terms as members of garrisons.

Trying to determine the impact of the increased wealth on the rural economy is an exercise that has not, to date, been attempted in a systematic

[81] M. Powicke, "The English Aristocracy and the War", p. 131-132.
[82] J. Barnie, *War in Medieval English Society*, p. 37.



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manner. There are several different ways that this analysis can be attempted. First, do the written sources indicate that there was any indication of an increase in wealth among the rural populace as a result of the war? There are a number of sources that discuss the Hundred Years War and the increased wealth collected by the English during this period. A great example of this increased distribution of wealth is the quote that starts this chapter, where women throughout England enjoyed the spoils returned to them from the matrons of France.[83] Other examples include Froissart's *Les Chroniques*, which records that in 1356 the Black Prince's army brought back to Bordeaux much gold, silver and prisoners. It also records that, in 1346, large quantities of goods, including clothes, jewels, vessels of gold and silver, and prisoners, were in the possession of returning soldiers.[84] These sources, however, have their obvious shortfalls in attempting to quantify the impact of the increased wealth from spoils of war and ransoms during the Hundred Years War.

Second, was there an increase in expenditures in England during the years when we know sizable ransoms, rewards, and other spoils of war were gathered? There are a number of sources that allow us to begin looking at the increase in expenditures by those who might potentially have gained the most increased wealth. An obvious indicator of the increased wealth could be a corresponding increase in the purchase of land or other capital items. Another would be the expansion of existing buildings on the land of those bringing substantial amounts of wealth into England. Tied to this would be an increased

[83] T. Walsingham, *Chronica Monasterii S. Albani*, p. 292.
[84] J. Froissart, *Chroniques*, V, p. 346-7.



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investment in new buildings. This will be explored further in the following chapter to determine whether or not there is a visible investment that can be traced back to the profits of war.

*Conclusion*

Few men made a large fortune from war, but there was a very real possibility to further one's financial position. From the evidence that survives from this period, it is clear that members of the nobility could actually increase their wealth substantially as a result of the wages, ransoms, spoils of war, and other rewards they receive during the Hundred Years War. As well, there is a distinct possibility, as demonstrated by the models presented above, that the lower classes serving as archers in the English expeditionary forces could indeed have been very successful in comparison to what a rural landowner might expect.



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## Chapter 4: The Impact of War on the Economy of England

"One industry that flourished throughout this period [of the Hundred Years War] irrespective of market loss and market disruption was that of meeting the needs of the military."[1] So proclaimed Hunt and Murray in their examination of business in the later Middle Ages. This view, however, is largely unsupported in the vast amount of scholarly literature on the late medieval English economy. Most treatises on this period, including those by Dyer, Bridbury, Postan, Miller, and Hatcher, make little or no mention of the impact of war on the economy of the time.[2] Those historians who have examined war's impact have largely focused on negative consequences, predominantly because of taxation and purveyance. As previously mentioned above, there is reason to take a more balanced approach with respect to the impact of those two areas. As well, as first argued by McFarlane, there is also the balancing impact on the English economy from increased wages, ransoms, rewards, and other spoils of war. So what then was the true impact of wages, ransoms, rewards, and other spoils of war on the economy of England? Does this impact explain the more optimistic view espoused by Hunt and Murray? Are there other beneficial impacts on the industries in England from the protracted involvement of the English in the Hundred Years War? These are critical questions to answer if a more accurate

[1] E. Hunt and J. Murray, *A History of Business in Medieval Europe*, p. 170.
[2] C. Dyer, *Making a Living in the Middle Ages*; C. Dyer, *Standards of Living in the Later Middle Ages*; A. R. Bridbury, *The English Economy from Bede to the Reformation*; M. Postan, *The Medieval Economy and Society*; E. Miller and J. Hatcher, *Medieval England: Towns, Commerce and Crafts*.



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assessment of fluctuations in the English economy in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries is to be achieved.

*The Impact of Spoils of War on the Economy of England*

Though it is almost impossible to determine exactly how much of the wealth gathered by English forces in France actually returned to England from increased wages, rewards, ransoms, and other spoils of war, there are a number of sources that seem to indicate that wealth did indeed travel back to England with the returning forces from the continent. Trying to determine the impact of the increased wealth on the rural economy is an exercise that has not, to date, been attempted in a systematic manner. There are several different ways that this analysis can be attempted. Do the written sources indicate that there was any indication of an increase in wealth among the rural populace? As discussed above, there are a number of sources that discuss the Hundred Years War and the increased wealth collected by the English during this period, particularly that of Walsingham and Froissart.[3] These sources have obvious deficiencies in attempting to quantify the impact of the increased wealth from spoils of war and ransoms during the Hundred Years War.

Was there an increase in expenditures in England during the years that we know sizable ransoms and spoils of war were gathered? There are a number of sources that allow us to look at the increase in expenditures by those who might have potentially gained the most from the increased wealth. An indicator of the increased wealth could be a corresponding increase in the investment in

[3] T. Walsingham, *Chronica Monasterii S. Albani*, p. 292; J. Froissart, *Chroniques*, p. 346-7.



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renovation or repairing of existing buildings, and a possible increase in investment for new buildings. There has been research into various aspects of the construction industry, if it can be called such, during the period of the Hundred Years War. Previous work has not, however, attempted to examine the economic impact of the war on the trends in the construction industry.

In Langdon and Masschaele's discussion of Schumpeterian growth, they stressed that the increase in material infrastructure was a major component of the great economic expansion in the twelfth and thirteenth century.[4] Though the overall economy of England was undoubtedly in decline in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, there was tremendous buoyancy in the construction industry throughout the Hundred Years War period, particularly during the reign of Edward III, that rivals the height of expansion under Henry II and Henry III. This buoyancy can arguably be attributed to the spill over effects of the war on the economy of England during this period. Langdon and Masschaele argued that "the only thing that might maintain continued population rise was a rather artificial forcing of the economy through war" and that the economic benefits of these war-related activities tend to be episodic, depending on the successes of the English forces in their military enterprises.[5]

Using existing sources we can track the different periods of the Hundred Years War when increased revenue could have been available from the various spoils of war to see if there is a corresponding expenditure on capital projects. In Morris' examination of the construction in the major religious cathedrals and

[4] J. Langdon and J. Masschaele, "Commercial Activity and Population Growth", p. 17.
[5] Ibid., p. 41.



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abbeys in England and Wales it was possible see trends in the amount of major construction between 1330 and 1460, as evident in figure 1. This figure includes only major building projects, such as naves, towers, transepts, or eastern limbs.

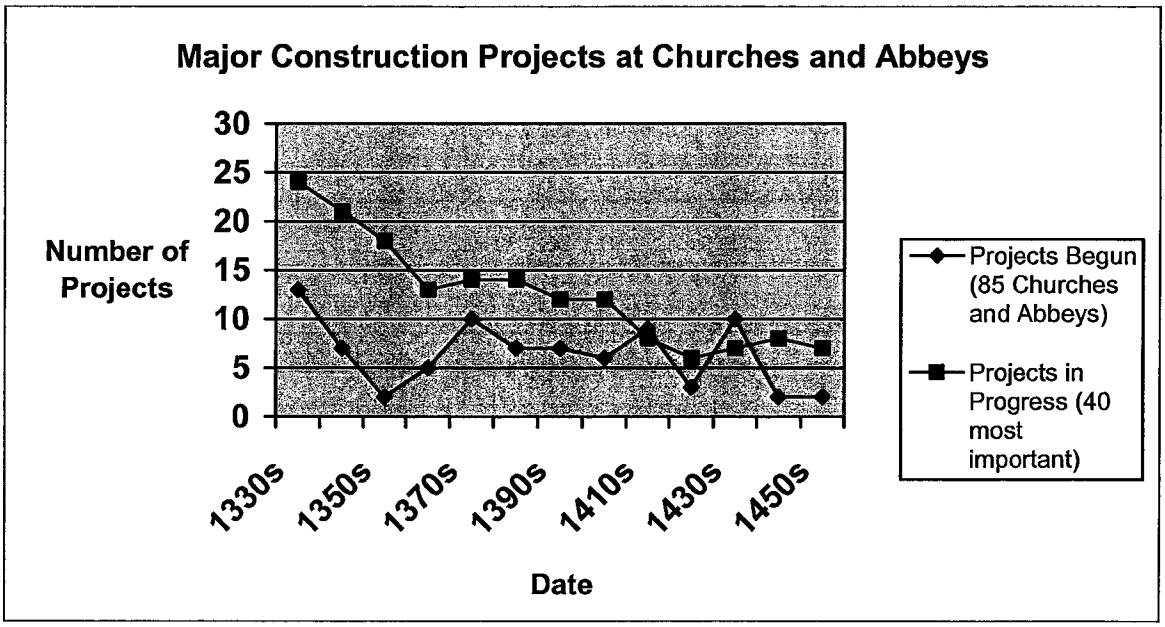


**Figure 1** - from R. Morris, *Cathedrals and Abbeys of England and Wales.*

Figure 1 demonstrates that there is a significant downward trend in the number of ongoing projects, while there is significant instability in the number of new projects being undertaken, which would indicate a significant decrease in the ongoing investment in construction projects at the major religious centres in England. Morris argued, however, that the downward trend is not a direct expression of the levels of investment.[6] The later Middle Ages saw increased building activity at the local level rather than major construction projects.[7] He argued:

> Probably every other parish church in England was rebuilt or in some way modified between c.1350 and 1500, but we have no

[6] R. Morris, *Cathedrals and Abbeys in England and Wales*, p. 180.
[7] Ibid., p. 227.



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> Perpendicular cathedrals and few Perpendicular monastic churches. Only Great Malvern and Sherbourne were visited by the idiom from end to end.[8]

There are two significant issues that Morris' examination raises. First, when compared to the significant drops in the population of England over the same time period, there was still significant expenditure on new projects. The spike in the 1360s and 1370s and 1430s, for example, could be reflective of the significant returns to England in the decades previous. The 1340s and 1350s and 1410s and 1420s witnessed two of the most successful periods in terms of ransoms and other rewards being collected by the English following very successful campaigns of conquest in France. This increased wealth was arguably an impetus for significant investment in new, major building projects. As well, though there was still a significant reduction in ongoing building projects in the 1340s and 1350s, the decreases were not as proportionally severe as one might expect in comparison with the population decreases in England over the same time period. This is demonstrated in figure 2, which super-imposes an estimate of England's population from 1330 to 1460 over the previous figure.

[8] Ibid., p. 219.



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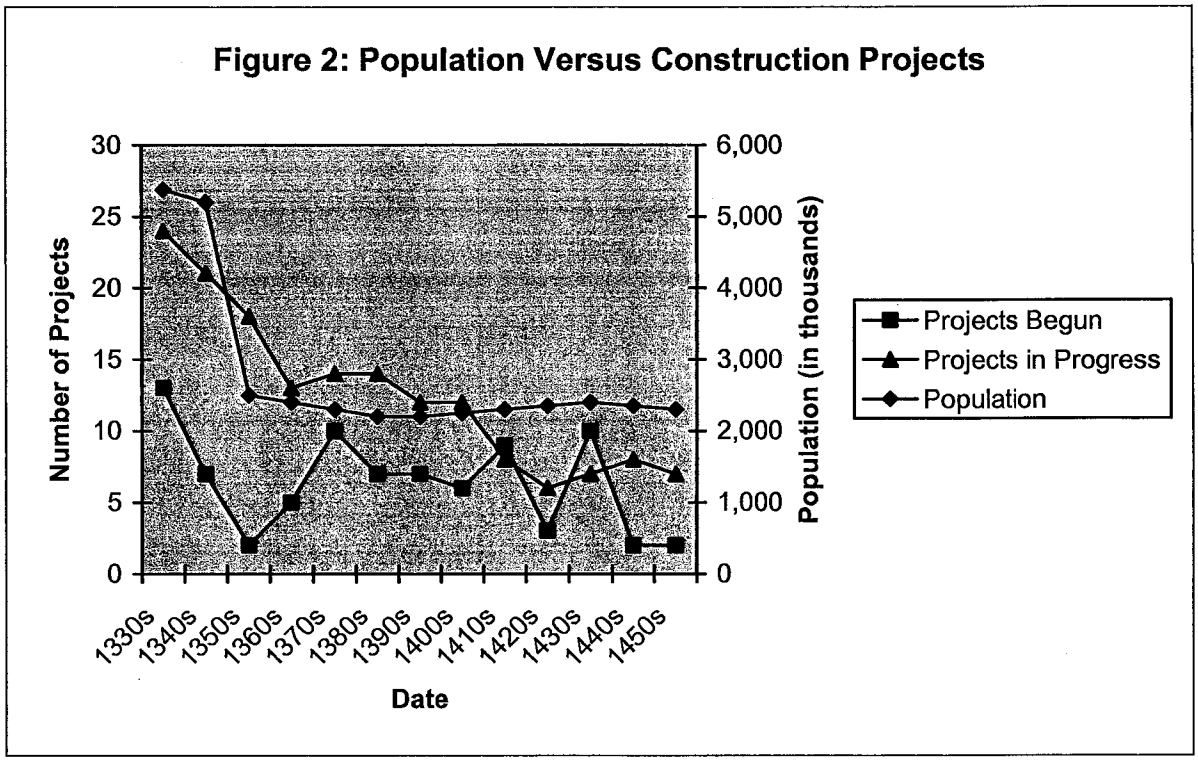


**Figure 2** - The population figures are from Dyer, *Making a Living in the Middle Ages* and have been averaged for the decades explored (which provides a much smoother population distribution than actually occurred). The construction projects are from Morris, *Cathedrals and Abbeys of England and Wales.*

If the same decline occurred in the expenditure on major projects at churches as proportionally occurred with the population, there would have been a much sharper decline in major projects immediately following the Black Death followed by a leveling out of the projects over the remainder of the Hundred Years War period. The ability of the English economy to support the construction projects at a level disproportionate to their population perhaps signifies a buoyancy in the economy of England through the second half of the fourteenth century that is reflective of the increased wealth entering the country from France. If this is the case, however, why would there not be as significant an effect in the economy during the fifteenth century, particularly during the reign of



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Henry V and the early years of Henry VI when the English were as, if not more, successful in France? This can be explained by the switch in policy as Henry V began a significant investment of resources into the conquest of Normandy during this period.

The buoyancy in England throughout much of the Hundred Years War is underlined by the fact that ecclesiastical income plummeted throughout the same period, as one would expect due to the loss of tithes and manorial income from the drastically reduced population of England after the Black Death, while construction continued at a reasonable rate. For example, at Canterbury from 1400-1435 the chapter house, pulpitum, south-west tower, south transept vault, and cloisters were all renovated or built, while over the same period the ecclesiastical income fell by half.[9] This indicates that the balance of the costs for these major construction projects was made up through gifts. In fact, Morris argued that much of the construction work during this period was enabled by gifts to the church.[10] This signifies a significant amount of wealth within England during a period described by Postan and others as overtaxed and increasingly burdened by the crown's wars overseas, and where incomes from lands owned by the nobility were declining. It is highly likely that the increased wealth entering England from France was a primary source of that expendable wealth.

Second, Figure 1 does not reflect the type of investment that would be expected from an individual who may have invested smaller amounts for small projects, such as monuments or decorations, within these and other religious or

[9] Ibid., p. 274.
[10] Ibid., p. 274.



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secular sites as it only includes major construction at abbeys and cathedrals. As well, it does not include the significant number of smaller parish churches scattered across England, many of which were built or renovated during this same period. While an examination of the construction in parish churches throughout England would require a significant amount of new research, there are indications that many new parish churches appeared over the course of the Hundred Years War, and many parish churches saw an increased amount of ornamentation and renovation at the same time. Much of this wealth came to the church in the form of gifts or bequests from royal or aristocratic patrons. The wealth of English parish churches is reinforced in the 1497 description by a Venetian visitor to England of the current situation. While mentioning the fertility of the soils, the rain, and the thinly populated countryside, he focused on the ecclesiastical wealth:

> ... for there is not a parish church in the kingdom so mean as not to possess crucifixes, candlesticks, censers, patens and cups of silver; nor is there a convent of mendicant friars so poor as not to have all these same articles of silver, besides many other ornaments worthy of a cathedral in the same metal. Your Magnificence may therefore imagine what the decorations of those enormously rich Benedictine, Carthusian, and Cistercian monasteries must be. These are, indeed, more like baronial palaces than religious houses ...[11]

Morris argued that over the second half of the 14th and the 15th centuries the gifts and bequests "were channeled more into works particular to individual donors: highly-wrought chapels, stalls, windows, screens, intricate vaults."[12] These types of resources are much more indicative of the type of wealth being

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[11] From R. Morris, *Cathedrals and Abbeys*, p. 228-230.
[12] Ibid., p. 230.



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brought from France to England throughout the Hundred Years War. This static, one-time, wealth would not allow for increased large-scale projects in the same manner as commonly witnessed in the 13th and early 14th centuries, yet it still signified a substantial amount of wealth moving from royal and aristocratic hands to local religious houses and parish churches.

Using *The History of the King's Works*, it is possible to undertake a similar examination of the economy of England, as reflected by the construction industry, through secular projects funded under the king's works.[13] Colvin et al., through their analysis of the exchequer records relating to the king's works, demonstrated that there was a substantial investment in construction directly from the crown throughout the Hundred Years War period. Between 1327 and 1485 the crown spent over £200,000 in various works across England, Wales, Scotland, and English possessions on the continent. This expenditure, however, depended largely on the individual king and their ability to commit resources. For example, Edward III's average expenditure was £3000 per year, while those of Richard II, Henry IV, Henry V, and Henry VI were £900 per year, £700 per year, £1400 per year, and £400 per year respectively.[14]

**Table 8 - Construction Expenditure By English Kings in the Later Middle Ages (per year)**

| | |
|---|---|
| Edward III | £3000 |
| Richard II | £900 |
| Henry IV | £700 |
| Henry V | £1400 |
| Henry VI | £400 |

As demonstrated by the average expenditure of £3000 per year during his reign, Edward III's tenure was a period of great building, rivalling that of his forefathers Edward I and Henry III. This investment

[13] H. M. Colvin (ed), *The History of the King's Works*.
[14] For Edward III see Ibid., p. 162. For the rest see Ibid., p. 199.



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included spending £50,000 on the construction of Windsor Castle (the largest single construction project in medieval England), £29,000 on the Palace of Westminster, £25,000 on Queensborough, between £750 - £2000 on each of Eltham, Sheen, Hadleigh, Leeds, Rotherhithe, Gravesend, Moor End, and Henley-on-the-Heath, and finally about £1000 per year total on Clarendon, Woodstock, Havering, Gloucester, Nottingham, York, upon Berwick, royal castles in Scotland, and fortifications at Calais.[15] This exceeds, for example, the £100,000 spent by Edward I on his ambitious castle building campaign in Wales. What becomes apparent, as one examines the pattern of investment in major secular construction projects during the reign of Edward III, is that the vast majority of the expenditures take place in the 1350s and 1360s. Colvin et al. argued that Edward embarked on his great building program after 1350 with the commencement of work at Eltham and Windsor.[16] It was not a coincidence this period also saw the greatest amount of wealth captured in France, and arguably brought back to England, following the succession of victories over the French starting at Crécy in 1346.

We can explore this investment during Edward III's reign by examining the royal balance sheets that are preserved in the exchequer accounts from this period. For example, in 1362-63 the exchequer records indicate that the total income of the crown for the fiscal year in question is £42,254 13s 4d, of which £38,000 came from export customs (particularly on wool). Yet in the same year the crown's total expenditures totalled £98,929 10s 10d. The balance sheet

[15] Ibid., p. 162.
[16] Ibid., p. 166.



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stated "and so the expenses exceed the revenues in the aforesaid year by which are received and paid from the ransoms of France and Burgundy and the revenues of Poitou and Calais."[17] Postan argued that the revenue gained by the crown through war was reinvested in war rather than the economy of England. Of these expenditures in 1362-63, however, £14,312 19s 0d was spent on the king's works, along with £4023 6s 8d "for Calais, Dover, Berwick, Roxburgh, and other castles of the king", compared to £5594 10s 3d on the "wages of war, victuals, wages, and robes", and £11,595 15s 2d on wages of war in Ireland.[18] This demonstrates that while the crown was reinvesting significant sums of money in waging war, there was also a substantial amount being invested in the economy of England through the king's works. While this is one individual example of the kind of investment possible through the rewards and spoils of war taken during one of the high points of the English war effort, it is undeniable that substantial investment in the English economy was possible through war activities. Though not at the level of Edward III, it is not surprising that the second highest investment in major projects by the crown took place under Henry V, also a high point of the English campaigns of the Hundred Years War.

In addition to the buoyancy demonstrated in the construction industry due to the increased wealth in England in the form of rewards and spoils of war, the Hundred Years War period witnessed substantial expenditure on building or repairing defenses (both town walls and castles), apart from the types of

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[17] T. F. Tout and D. Broome, "A national balance sheet for 1362-3", PRO Exchequer Accounts various, E101/394/17, m. 1., printed in R. A. Myers, *English Historical Documents*, p. 514.
[18] It would perhaps be possible to argue that investments in the King's Works were indeed investments in war, because much of it was invested in castles. Ibid., p. 512-514.



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investment detailed above. There have been a few attempts to examine the investment in town and castle defenses in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.[19] Many historians have argued that the last major phase of medieval castle building in England was during the reign of Edward I, but as demonstrated above there was still a significant amount of money invested during the Hundred Years War period. This is particularly true for the construction of defenses to deal with the potential threat of French raids or invasion. "There is a clear connection between periods of disturbance (during the war) and the construction of (town) walls."[20] While not connected to the wealth entering England from France, there were three primary phases of defensive construction in the war, all connected to the periods where the French were most actively engaged in raiding English ports or when the threat of French invasion was at its highest. These were at the beginning of the war (1337-1345), the end of the Edward III's reign and the early years of Henry III (1370-1385), and finally in the last years of the war under Henry VI (1430-1453).

Each of these phases saw significant investment in the defenses of castles and towns throughout England, but particularly along the Southeast coast. During the first phase, for example, the French attacked, burned, or raided Portsmouth (1338 and 1339), Southampton (1338), the Isle of Wight (1338 and 1339), Swanage (1338), Sandwich (1339), Dover (1339), Folkestone (1339), Rye (1339), Hastings (1339), Plymouth (1339), and Teignmouth (1340).[21]

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[19] H. J. Hewitt, *Organization of War Under Edward III*; T. H. Turner, *Town Defenses in England and Wales.*
[20] T. H. Turner, *Town Defenses in England and Wales*, p. 15.
[21] H. J. Hewitt, *Organization of War*, p. 1-2.



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According to the accounts from that period Southampton was arguably the hardest hit in these attacks. It was unwalled prior to this point, but was a thriving port serving trade between England and the continent. Baker and Froissart both recorded the sack of Southampton, describing a substantial amount of goods carried off to Normandy.[22] The official records for this period mention the destruction of houses, the flight of inhabitants (and their reluctance to return), the loss of wool and wine, the order to move the king's horses to a safer location, and the looting of foreign merchants' trade goods.[23] Hewitt demonstrates that the English crown's response to all of these attacks was the restoration of the towns, including walling and garrisoning Southampton, followed by the garrisoning, arming, victualling, and strengthening the fortifications and defensive works of London, Dover, Hastings, Porchester, Portsmouth, Winchester, Carisbrooke, Corfe, Exeter, Old Sarum, Gloucester, Bishop's Lynn, the castles of North Wales, and even Ireland.[24] This refortification of England represented a significant investment of resources in these communities, all of which were at risk of future French attacks. This investment was repeated during the other phases of high French raiding activity throughout the Hundred Years War.

A significant portion of the money needed to engage in the refortification of England was gathered through the murage toll, which first appeared in England in the 13th century.[25] This tax, however, was insufficient to meet the needs of many of the towns that were ordered to build or repair their defenses, and for this

[22] G. Baker, *Chronicon Angliae temporibus Edwardi II et Edwardi III*, p. 62 and 64; J. Froissart, *Chroniques*, p. 48.
[23] *Calendar of Close Rolls*, 1339-1341, p. 40, 143, 236, and 375; *Calendar of Patent Rolls*, 1338-1340, p. 190.
[24] H. J. Hewitt, *Organization of War*, p. 6.
[25] T. H. Turner, *Town Defences in England and Wales*, p. 15.



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reason Parliament granted significant amounts of money to the towns through the remission of taxes, directing proceeds of the customs to the towns' finances, or remission of the payment of fines. As well, the Exchequer would provide grants to towns to enable them to carry out the necessary construction. For example, between 1369 and 1386 the Exchequer provided grants to Canterbury, Southampton, Winchester, and Sandwich, and would also allow towns to impress labour under royal license.[26]

Building town walls was predominantly a locally-driven initiative. The labour was recruited and materials purchased locally, and the projects were usually entrusted to local masons.[29] Figure 4 provides a few examples of the amount of money invested in these various endeavours across England. The total expenditure of £8616 11s 1.5d on town defenses is not significant in terms of overall construction, particularly in comparison to the £50,000 spent on the construction of Windsor Castle alone, but it still reflects a significant investment in the local economies by these communities.

**Table 9 - Expenditures on Town Defenses**

| Selected Towns | Year | Expenditure |
|---|---|---|
| Yarmouth | 1337-1345 | £313 3s 1.75d |
| Carlisle | 1344 | £300[27] |
| York | 1345 | £840 |
| Winchester | 1355-1433 | £238 3s 7d |
| Canterbury | 1391-92 | £192 |
| Conventry | 1430 | £77 13s 4d |
| **Total[28]** | **1337-1453** | **£8616 11s 1.5d** |

[26] Ibid., p. 49.
[27] Estimated to be necessary for repairs at Carlisle. Ibid., p. 48.
[28] This total is arrived at by totaling all expenditures on town defenses between 1337 and 1453 identified by Turner in her "Appendix B - Tables of Receipts from Murage and Monies Spent" plus the £840 for the repairs to walls at York not recorded in the table but mentioned in the text. Ibid., p. 48, 231-237.
[29] Ibid., p. 47.



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To give an indication of how much money would be invested in the economy through these types of major construction projects we can examine an existing detailed account of a project that survives in the records from the latter part of the Hundred Years War. The building expenses of Tattershall Castle, built for Ralph Cromwell, Lord Treasurer of England in 1434-35, shows that a total of £376 15s 7.5d was spent on construction during that fiscal year, as shown in Table 10.[30] Those items marked with an asterisk are those where the record specified an individual (or individuals) being paid the money. Using wage data that is available for the period, most craftsmen would have been making between 5d and 7d per day (depending on their profession) and labourers would be close to 4d per day. This allows us to estimate the full-time labour equivalency of this one project by determining how many individuals, if employed

| Table 10 - Expenses at Tattershall Castle, 1434-35 | |
|---|---|
| Purchase of Stones | £5 6s 10d |
| Carriage of Stones | £8 13s 9d |
| Wages of Masons * | £14 1s 5d |
| Purchase of Bricks | £121 8s 10d |
| Wages of Masons - Brekemasons * | £50 13s 10.5d |
| Wages of Masons - Rughmasons * | £15 15s 3d |
| Cost of Quicklime | £19 18s 7d |
| Timber | £23 13s 5d |
| Chimney | £5 1s 2d |
| Carpenters' Wages * | £14 18s 4d |
| Joiners' wages * | £2 14s 3d |
| Carriage of Boards * | 19s 11d |
| Castle ditch * | £2 0s 6d |
| Purchase of Boards * | £8 14s 11d |
| Unwrought Iron | £3 17s 9d |
| Wrought Iron | 18s 0d |
| Iron Tools * | £4 0s 6d |
| Nails * | £2 1s 6d |
| Plumber's Work * | £2 7s 5d |
| Prepared Glass * | £5 4s 0d |
| Purchase and Carriage of Plaster | £10 2s 11d |
| Carriage of Bricks, Sand, Stone, and Such Like * | £10 7s 0d |
| Labourers' Wages * | £5 3s 3d |
| Scouring and Emptying Ditches * | £3 16s 3d |
| Boats and Boatmen * | £11 5s 5d |
| Pulling Down Houses * | 10s 4d |
| Sundries | £4 15s 7d |
| Board of Workers | £18 3s 8d |
| **TOTAL** | **£376 15s 7.5d** |

[30] W. D. Simpson, "The Building Accounts of Tattershall Castle", p. 44-50.



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full-time, could be supported by the investment of £152 12s 7.5d on just those expenditures that have a specified recipient. Assuming a 180 day work year at 5.5d per day per worker (a balance between the labourer and craftsmen wages at that time) this one project would support 37 full-time workers for the entire year.[31] Considering that the workers involved in this project would all likely be involved in other activities there would be a multiplier effect that would push the actual number of people supported substantially higher than 37, signifying a large investment in the local economy around Tattershall Castle.

Are there any other industries that demonstrate buoyancy in relation to the increased wealth entering England? The money invested in the construction industry, described above, has predominantly been for projects that have a military or religious focus. Is it possible to see a similar example in an industry not so closely tied to the ongoing military endeavours that would support the premise of increased wealth entering England? A recent study by Langdon on the milling industry in England also provides an interesting case study in the buoyancy of the English economy during the period of the Hundred Years War. Using the number of mills in 1300 as a baseline of 100, Langdon tracked the mill number index from 1300 to 1540, indicating the number of active mills in the records each year over the period.[32] There is a steady downward trend throughout the 14th and 15th centuries, similar to the ongoing major projects at cathedrals and abbeys described above. Yet, as is demonstrated in Figure 3, if

[31] The number of days worked per year has been explored by a number of scholars. For example Ritchie estimated a casual labourer worked 120 days per year, which assumes a 12-hour day. N. Ritchie, "Labour conditions in Essex in the reign of Richard II." Blanchard estimated 180 days per year, which assumes an 11-hour day. I. Blanchard, "Labour productivity and work psychology in the English mining industry, 1400-1600."
[32] J. Langdon, *Mills in the Medieval Economy*.



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compared to the population decrease experienced following the Black Death there is a similar buoyancy to that seen in the construction industry above in Figure 2.

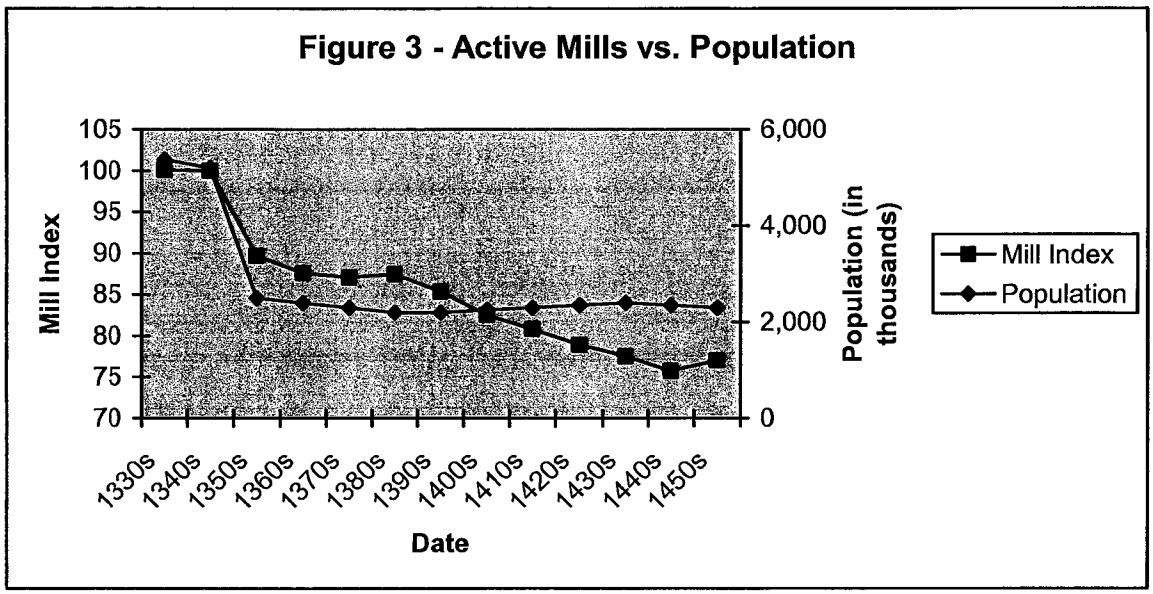


**Figure 3** - Population figures from Dyer, *Making a Living in the Middle Ages*, and the mill index from Langdon, *Mills in the Medieval Economy*.

This buoyancy in the economy carries the milling industry through the second half of the 14th century at a level that is disproportionately higher than the population changes in England would justify. The significant wealth returning to England from France during the early part of the Hundred Years War at least is possibly one of the contributing factors to this increased buoyancy. There is also a similar low point in the early 15th century, during the reigns of Henry V and Henry VI, in both the major construction projects and milling figures. This again reinforces the shift in policy under Henry V to invest in the conquest of France discussed above, rather than bring the wealth gained in France back to England.



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There are two other industries that deserve specific examination in relation to the Hundred Years War to help demonstrate a potentially positive impact on the English economy - the cloth industry and the industries of war.

*The Cloth Industries*

The wool and cloth industry has been one of the most explored industries within the late medieval English economy.[33] As discussed above, the indirect taxation of wool and the collapse of wool exports has been held up as an example of the negative impact of the Hundred Years War. Postan argued that had the tax only been as high as foreign markets were prepared or able to pay then the total exports of wool would have remained constant over the period of the Hundred Years War, rather than decline to less than one-third of their previous levels. He posited that the charges levied by the taxation of wool were higher than the traffic would bear. Postan also argued that the general trend of the price of wool fell over the roughly one hundred and twenty year period in question, which meant that producers were receiving less

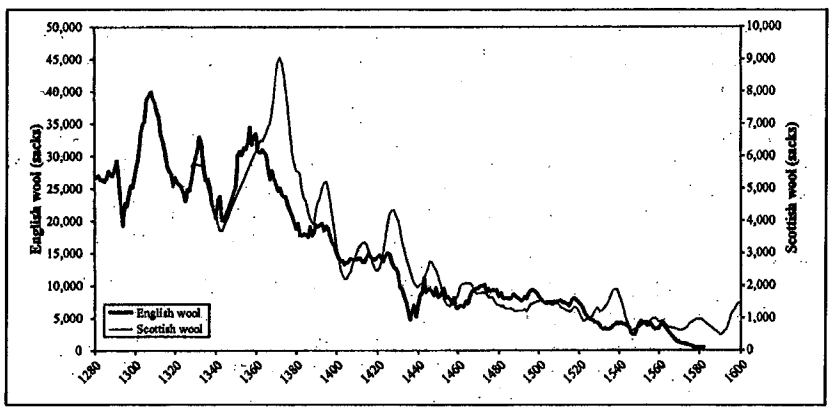


**Figure 4** - English and Scottish Wool Exports from Rorke, "English and Scottish Overseas Trade, 1300-1600".

[33] A. R. Bridbury, *Medieval English Clothmaking*; W. Childs, "The English export trade in cloth in the fourteenth century"; T. H. Lloyd, *The English Wool Trade in the Middle Ages*; T. H. Lloyd, *The Movement of Wool Prices in Medieval England*; E. Power, *The Wool Trade*; J. Munro, *Textiles, Towns and Trade.*



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for their produce.[34] There can be no doubt that the level of wool exports declined dramatically. This downward trend, however, is consistent across both England and Scotland, as demonstrated in Figure 4.[35] It is also true that there was a slight downward trend in wool prices throughout this period, though, as demonstrated in Figure 5, the price was more volatile than that implies.[36]

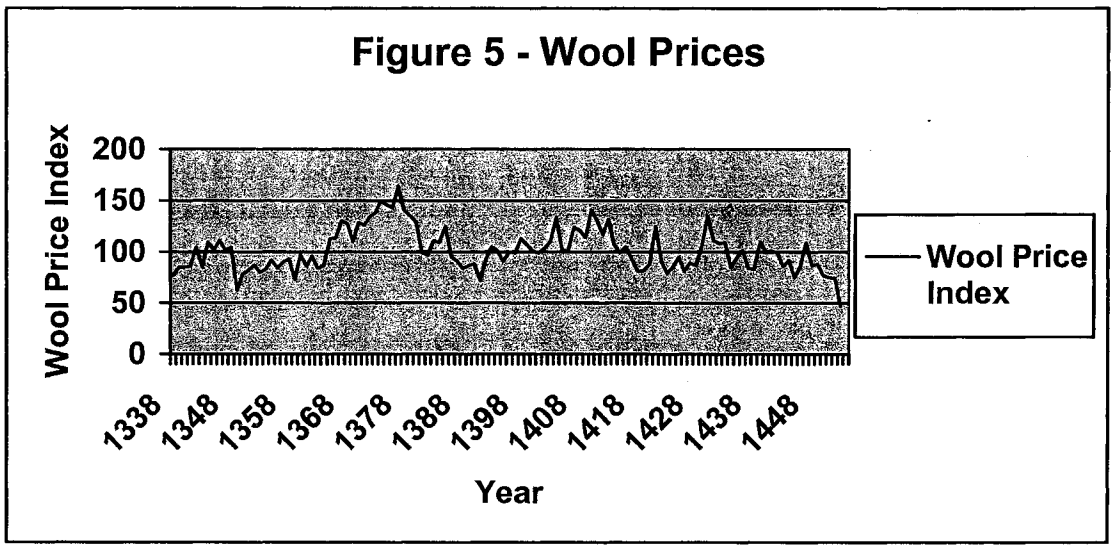


**Figure 5** - Wool Price Index drawn from Farmer, "Prices and Wages" and Farmer, "Prices and Wages, 1350-1500".

Both of these trends, however, cannot be attributed solely to the taxation of wool, as implied by Postan. As Rorke's comparison study of English and Scottish exports in this period demonstrated, both countries witnessed the same downward trend in raw wool exports though Scotland only charged a fraction of the export tax of that charged in England.[37] As well, the price of goods tended to deflate slightly throughout this period, particularly in real terms.[38] The prices of

[34] M. Postan, "The Costs of the Hundred Years War."
[35] M. Rorke, "English and Scottish Overseas Trade, 1300-1600", p. 269.
[36] In the index, drawn from D. Farmer, "Prices and Wages" and D. Farmer, "Prices and Wages, 1350-1500". 100 = 3.56s per stone of wool.
[37] M. Rorke, "English and Scottish Overseas Trade, 1300-1600", p. 269.
[38] J. Munro, "Postan, Population and Prices in Late-Medieval England and Flanders", p. 50-51.



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wool actually remain more stable and consistent than wheat, as demonstrated in Figure 6. These prices must also be put into the context of the rising wages experienced throughout this period.[39] It can be argued that being involved in the wool industry as a producer was a more stable endeavour than perhaps other agricultural industries, which on the whole witnessed greater instability throughout the period.

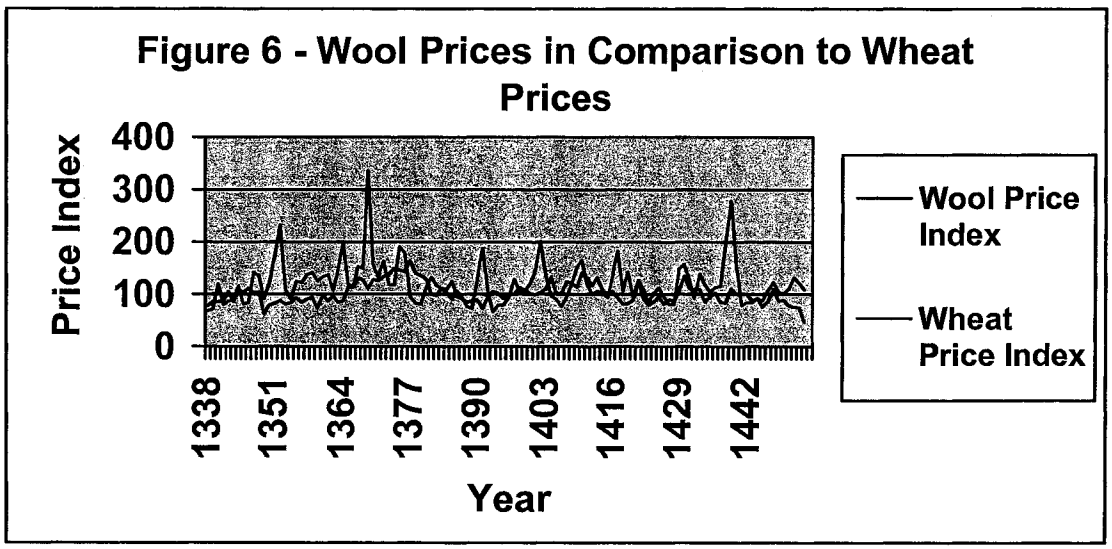


**Figure 6** - Wool Price Index vs. Wheat Price Index for the period of the Hundred Years War (from Farmer, "Prices and Wages" and Farmer, "Prices and Wages, 1350 - 1500").

The fact that indirect taxation received from the taxation of wool exports continued to remain such a critical part of the revenues for expeditionary forces throughout the reigns of Henry V and Henry VI in the fifteenth century stresses the continued importance of the export of wool to the financing of England's war efforts. More importantly, however, this same period witnessed the incredible growth of a domestic cloth industry. As demonstrated in Figure 7, the development of a local cloth production industry, and the corresponding increases in cloth exports to the continent, shared an inverse relationship to the

[39] D. Farmer, "Prices and Wages" and D. Farmer, "Prices and Wages, 1350 – 1500."



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decline in wool exports.[40] The development of a sizable and competitive cloth production and export industry over the course of the Hundred Years War can be attributed to the fact that it became more cost effective for consumers across the continent to purchase finished cloth from England rather than to purchase raw English wool. Over the same period, the cost of raw wool to the English cloth producer fluctuated in accordance with the market (see Figure 6 above), but they

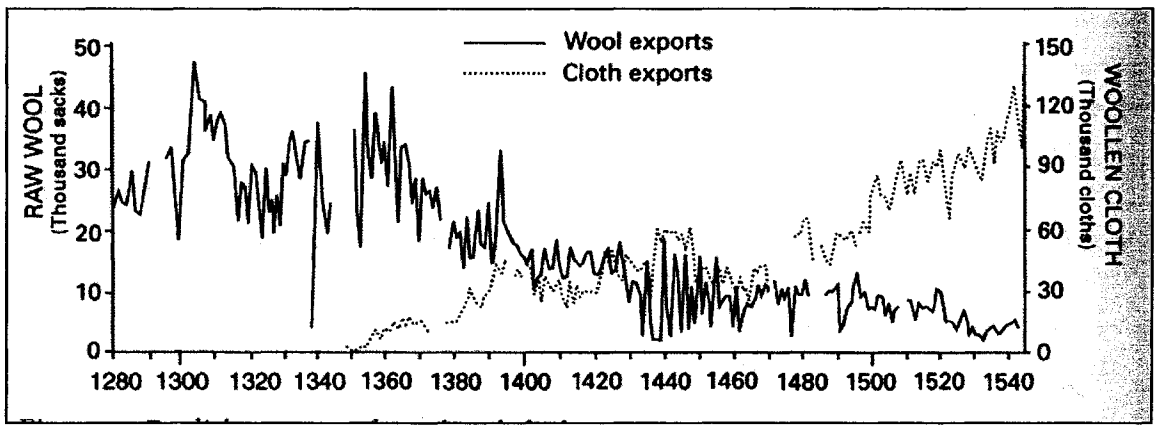


**Figure 7** - The decline of English wool exports in comparison to the increase in English cloth exports. From Dyer, *Making a Living in the Middle Ages*, p. 244.

did not have the additional export tax attached to the sale price. McFarlane argued that the growth of the English cloth industry, while the Flemish and other continental cloth industries were in crisis because of increasingly expensive English wool, demonstrated that it was the foreign market that bore the burden of indirect taxation rather than the local wool producers or merchants.

Was the development of this industry a direct consequence of the taxation policy of the English crown, or more broadly the Hundred Years War between England and France? Childs argued that there were three reasons for the development of the cloth industry in the fourteenth century – fashion,

[40] C. Dyer, *Making a Living in the Middle Ages*, p. 244.



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technological innovations being widely implemented, and economic pressures. She further argued that whatever the mixture of these three factors, it was clear that the cloth used in and exported from England changed by 1400.[41] She argued that:

> English historians tend to emphasize the general rise in the standard of living after the Black Death, with more people of middling income able to buy more goods including cloth of middling sort. Continental historians tend to emphasize the increasing gap between rich and poor, which boosted the move to luxury products.[42]

Childs missed, however, one of the most important economic pressures to influence the development of the cloth industry – the Hundred Years War.

Following on the principles of Schumpeterian economics discussed in the first chapter, it can be argued that the production of cloth in the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries witnessed a tremendous boost in entrepreneurial activity consistent with the start of a period of Schumpeterian growth.[43] The cloth industry was able to grow from this period into one of the most important industries in the ongoing development of England through the early modern period and even later. As discussed in the first chapter, Schumpeter argued that economic growth depended upon the recognition of strong profits.[44] In the case of the cloth industry the specific economic opportunity came from the fact that the cloth producing regions on the continent were struggling under an increasingly costly raw material that pushed their final product cost to the consumer higher.

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[41] W. Childs, p. 147.
[42] Ibid., p. 147.
[43] J. Langdon and J. Masschaele, "Commercial Activity and Population Growth in Medieval England".
[44] Ibid., p. 4.



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Since the crown was charging indirect taxes on the export of raw wool, rather than the finished product, it made for a competitive advantage.[45] The cloth producers in England were able to purchase their raw materials for a fraction of the price of those on the continent, and in turn were able to market their product across Europe at very competitive prices and a higher profit margin.

The resentment of this competitive advantage among other cloth-producing regions is apparent through some of the protectionist policies implemented at various places across the continent, particularly in the fifteenth centuries. Munro argued that one of the best examples of this protectionism was in Flanders, where a continuously applied, state-wide prohibition of imports of English woolen cloths was in place from the mid-fourteenth to the mid-sixteenth centuries.[46] The increased raw material costs for the cloth-producing regions of Europe was an external factor that created the necessary environment for the cloth industry in England to revitalize itself from the slump it was in during the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries.

Hatcher reinforced this argument, stating that "just as the expanding cloth industry, based primarily upon the production of cloth suitable for the mass market, provided the foundation for the prosperity of most of the older towns that resisted the general decline of the period, it also encouraged the spectacular development of many villages into thriving towns," including Totnes, Tiverton, Hadleigh, Maldon, Lavenham, Mayland, Sudbury, Leeds, Halifax, and Castle

[45] It is unclear why the crown did not adjust their export customs to the new reality as cloth exports outstripped wool exports, particularly in the fifteenth century.
[46] J. Munro, "Industrial Protectionism in Medieval Flanders: Urban or National?," p. 229.



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Coombe, among others.[47] He argued that the concentrations of cloth workers provided an important stimulus to the economies of English hinterlands as the stable demand of the cloth industry, both at home and across the continent, employed an estimated 23,000 to 26,000 more people at the end of the century than at the beginning. This was the equivalent of an additional 2% of the population finding employment from the cloth industry.[48]

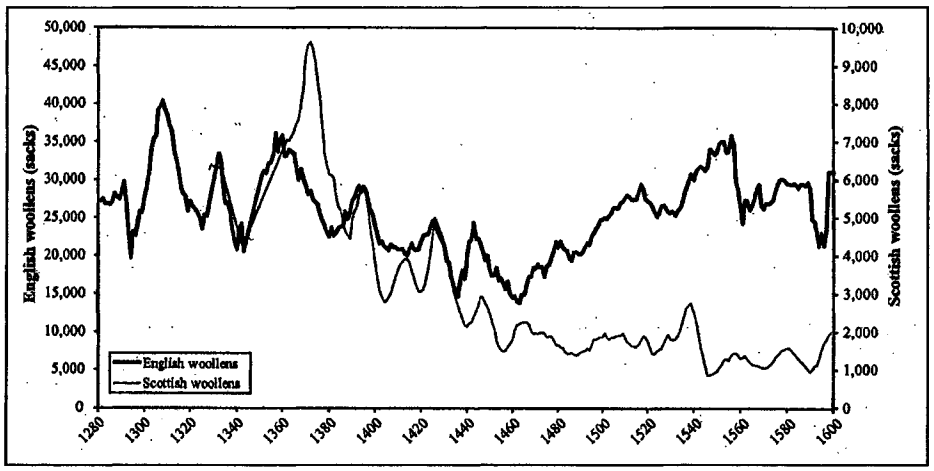


**Figure 8** - A seven year moving average of English woolen (raw wool and cloth) exports in comparison with Scottish woolen exports. From Rorke, "English and Scottish overseas trade", p. 275.

The growth of the English cloth industry is even more remarkable in light of the fact that the Scottish cloth industry did not experience the same growth in exports, while Scottish wool exports experienced an almost identical decrease to English wool exports. The resulting situation in England is a reasonably consistent level of woolen exports (including both cloth and raw wool), as demonstrated in Figure 8.[49] Kaeuper argued that the "war stimulated trade in certain goods ... English clothworkers found their fortunes improved by the contrast between the heavy taxation on exported raw wool and extremely light

[47] J. Hatcher, *Plague, Population and the English Economy*, p. 45-46.
[48] Ibid., p. 47.
[49] M. Rorke, "English and Scottish overseas trade", p. 275.



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taxation of exported cloth."[50] It is clear that the Hundred Years War provided an external stimulus that must be considered as a significant part of the overall explanation for the development of the English cloth industry.

*The Industries of War*

The industries of war were, not surprisingly, buoyant throughout the Hundred Years War. The 'industries of war' are defined for the purpose of this study as the industries that produce the arms and equipment necessary for undertaking warfare, such as armor, weapons, siege equipment and naval ship-building. The importance of the arms industry ought to be easily apparent, particularly during a long and drawn out conflict such as the Hundred Years War. The need for the provision of armor, swords, pikes, cannons, siege engines, bows and arrows at a sustained level for over one hundred years of warfare must have had a noticeable impact on the economy of England. There have been a number of studies that have explored the types of and uses of different arms and armour as part of the Hundred Years War, particularly investigating the role of the longbow in the English success as well as the increasing importance of gunpowder weapons over the course of the war.[51] There has been, however, hardly any exploration of the economic impact of the industries of war throughout this period.

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[50] R. Kaeuper, *War, Justice and Public Order*, p. 97.
[51] Though this is far from exhaustive some examples include: K. Devries, *Medieval Military Technology*; A. V. B. Norman and D. Pottinger, *English Weapons and Warfare, 449-1660*; R. Hardy, "The Longbow"; J. Bradbury, *The Medieval Archer*; P. Contamine, *War in the Middle Ages*; B. Hall, *Weapons and Warfare in Renaissance Europe*; R. E. Oakeshot, *The Archaeology of Weapons*..



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The supplying of equipment, as well as the recruitment of soldiers, for the armies of the Hundred Years War was included in the discussion of the burdens imposed on the economy of England by Postan and Maddicott. Postan argued that "the most obvious real costs (of the Hundred Years War) was that of manpower diverted to war-making and in the first place of soldiers in the field and garrisons."[52] In addition to Postan's argument about the proportion of men assigned to combatant and logistical tasks throughout the Hundred Years War taking away from the other "more legitimate" needs, Maddicott expanded the argument that there was an increased burden on the population to take on the arming and equipping of the foot soldiers and archers sent to war. Maddicott argued that "although the commissioners of array were given general supervision of the raising of troops within each county, the selection and arming of men for service, and the levying of money for their wages and equipment were normally left to the local community."[53] The negative impact of these can be questioned on the basis that war was an integral part of the society of the Middle Ages, and that to call the use of manpower and resources for war-making a waste is to ignore its inherent place in medieval society.

The cost of the equipment for men-at-arms seemed to average at least £5, though that could be substantially higher for the upper gentry and the nobility. For example, in 1359 Edward III spent £113 with one armourer and £50 with another, while a single war helmet for Edward III cost £2 earlier in the war.[54] Hobelars seem to have received between £2 and £3 from their community to

[52] M. Postan, "The Costs of the Hundred Years War," p. 34.
[53] J. R. Maddicott, "The English Peasantry and the Crown", p. 321.
[54] M. Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, p. 25.



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purchase equipment and a horse, and to pay for expenses until the king's pay began. For the communities involved, this was the equivalent of four oxen or eleven quarters of wheat.[55] It was not uncommon for the community to pay £1 to equip and arm a single infantryman or archer. In addition, as the English armies slowly came to rely on mounted archers, the cost for a horse would have to be added, usually totaling another £1.[56] Standard equipment for an archer was an aketon and bacinet, together with a sword, knife, bow and one sheaf of arrows, although not necessarily all of these items at all times or in all cases.[57] Counties, towns, and even villages, began to pay money for relief from having to provide soldiers. Examples, include Kent, which in 1335 paid £220 for relief from 120 hobelars, and Berkshire which paid 200 marks for forty hobelars that same year.[58] Once a soldier was outside of his county, he was paid by the crown and the crown was responsible for replacing broken or lost equipment. What impact would these requirements have on the communities in question?

The initial labour force required to put these expeditions together would likely have been substantially larger than the forces themselves, though they would not necessarily have been engaged in full-time work having to do with the military. Many labourers involved in preparing the forces for any given expedition, especially those involved in agriculture and other key industries,

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[55] J. R. Maddicott, "English Peasantry and the Crown", p. 325.
[56] M. Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, p. 124 – 135.
[57] Military expenses paid by a village averaged out to 36.5% of their overall tax assessment. *Select Cases in the Exchequer of Pleas,* 194–195. PRO E 401/1656. J. R. Maddicott, "The English Peasantry and the Crown," p. 324-235.
[58] *Calendar of Patent Rolls, 1334-38*, p. 131–132. J. R. Maddicott, "The English Peasantry and the Crown," p. 324-325.



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would return to their own endeavours after a short period of service.[59] Moreover, because the war was continuous over a long period, the men serving overseas may have been the same in some of the subsequent campaigns. Even when they were not, villages would not necessarily need to repurchase swords and armour each time someone from their community was sent on an expedition. This would decrease the burden imposed on a community to supply equipment and recruits. Finally, there would be growing proportion of the English populace employed full-time in the growing English arms industry.

When Hunt and Murray, whose quote opened this chapter, discussed the flourishing industry supplying the needs of the military, they argue that "war had become not only endemic throughout this period, but more importantly for business, it was being waged by larger and larger polities that had the means to acquire more and more of what Cicero once described as war's sinews – money."[60] While they discuss the construction (particularly shipbuilding), mining, and metal working industries as three examples of areas that grew as a result of the war, Hunt and Murray do not provide much information about the scale of these industries and the overall impact that the war had on them. In the first chapter it was mentioned that the two areas that witnessed a sustained period of Schumpeterian growth in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were the iron and coal industries, though Langdon and Masschaele argue that it was not until

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[59] This can be further demonstrated by the vast number of books written by historians of late medieval England that ignore the impact of the Hundred Years War partially or even completely. See J. Hatcher, *Rural Economy and Society in the Duchy of Cornwall*; C. Dyer, *Standards of Living in the Later Middle Ages*; and E. Miller and J. Hatcher, *Medieval England: Towns, Commerce and Crafts*. All of these are thorough examinations of the economy and society of England yet make at most a passing mention of the Hundred Years War.

[60] E. Hunt and J. Murray, *A History of Business in Medieval Europe*, p. 170.



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gunpowder weapons were developed that opportunities became clear to entrepreneurs in this area.[61] There can be no doubt that the need to develop better iron-working techniques to improve the feasibility of gunpowder weapons had a lasting impact on the development of the iron industry in general. It could also be argued that a century earlier the development in the iron industry resulted from the development of better swords and other weapons, as well as better armour. Is it possible to see a meaningful impact on the English society and economy during the Hundred Years War?

The need for the provision of armour, swords, pikes, bows, arrows, cannons, and siege engines increased dramatically because of the war. Considering the costs for equipment that we know communities were responsible for, it is possible to estimate the overall investment in the economy for the equipment required for the overall war effort. This is particularly true as the crown, by 1338, began to make greater efforts to ensure that their forces were more adequately supplied.[62] From the extreme of the siege of Calais, with over 30,000 men serving in the English forces, to one thousand serving in some of the chevauchées forces at other times during the Hundred Years war, substantial amounts of equipment were required by the English armies. For example, during four campaigns of the years 1342, 1346-47, 1356, and 1360, there were English armies of 3600, 32,000, 6000 and 10,000 respectively. There was a ratio of approximately 1:1 men-at-arms to archers in the case of the 1342 force. That changed to 1:7 men-at-arms to archers/infantry at the siege of Calais in 1346-7.

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[61] J. Langdon and J. Masschaele, "Commercial Activity and Population Growth", p. 41.
[62] M. Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, p. 140.



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That ratio dropped back to 1:1 for the Battle of Poitiers in 1356, and then almost 1:2 in the campaign of 1360. By using the reasonable estimates of £5 for equipment per man-at-arms and £1 for equipment per archer, it is possible to estimate the cost for arming the forces in each of these cases, all of which went into the increasing war industry in England. In the case of 1342 this could have resulted in an investment of as much as £10,800.[63] In the case of the siege of Calais, the investment could have been as high as £48,000.[64] The English force at the Battle of Poitiers may have required an investment of as much as £18,000.[65] And finally, as much as £22,000 was invested in the campaign of 1360.[66] These are potentially very sizeable amounts invested in the arms industry.

It is easier to track the true impact over an extended period of time in the fifteenth century, from 1415 to 1453, thanks to the work of Curry in detailing the size of the English forces and garrisons in France.

| Date | Size of the Expeditionary Forces | Ratio (Men-at-arms to archers) | Size of Garrisons | Estimated Investment for Equipment |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1415 | 10 435 | 1:3 | N/A | £20,870 |
| 1417 | 10 809 | 1:3.5 | N/A | £20,417 |
| 1418 | 2000 | 1:3 | N/A | £4000 |
| 1420 | 1275 | 1:3.5 | N/A | £2408 |

[63] This is calculated at £5 for each of 1800 men-at-arms and £1 for each of 1800 archers. This would indicate an upper limit as some of the forces, particularly the men-at-arms, would already own equipment, while the £5 average is a conservative estimate considering the potential amounts spent by the upper gentry and the nobility on their equipment. The proportion of men-at-arms versus archers in each of these cases is from A. Ayton, "English Armies in the Fourteenth Century", p. 32.
[64] Calculated for 4000 men-at-arms and 28 000 archers/infantry.
[65] Calculated for 3000 men-at-arms and 3000 archers.
[66] Calculated for 3000 men-at-arms and 7000 archers.



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| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1421 | 4100 | 1:3 | N/A | £8200 |
| 1422 | 1079 | 1:3 | 4000-4500 | £10,158 |
| 1423 | 1520 | 1:3 | 4500 | £12,040 |
| 1424 | 2209 | 1:3 | 3000-3200 | £10,418 |
| 1425 | 1396 | 1:3 | N/A | £2792 |
| 1426 | 800 | 1:3 | N/A | £1600 |
| 1427 | 1200 | 1:3 | N/A | £2400 |
| 1428 | 2694 | 1:5 | 1600-2000 | £7690 |
| 1429 | 1800 | 1:7/1:19 | 3500 | £9160 |
| 1430 | 7991 | 1:3/1:12 | 3500-4000 | £17,450 |
| 1431 | 3488 | 1:3/1:4 | 3600 | £13,478 |
| 1432 | 1220 | 1:5 | 3600 | £9230 |
| 1433 | 1110 | 1:4 | 3400-3500 | £8788 |
| 1434 | 2088 | 1:5.6/1:4 | 3000-4400 | £9353 |
| 1435 | 1987 | 1:6 | 4500-5000 | £12,125 |
| 1436 | 7926 | 1:4/1:5.5 | 5300-5900 | £23,406 |
| 1437 | 2076 | 1:6 | 4000-4200 | £11,262 |
| 1438 | 1646 | 1:3.8 | 4200 | £11,418 |
| 1439 | 963 | 1:3 | 3700-3900 | £9326 |
| 1440 | 2081 | 1:20 | 3500-3700 | £9477 |
| 1441 | 3798 | 1:3.7 | 3500 | £14030 |
| 1442 | 2500 | 1:11.5 | 3000-3300 | £9300 |
| 1443 | 4549 | 1:6.6 | N/A | £6943 |
| 1444 | 400 | 1:3 | 2500 | £5800 |
| 1445 | N/A | N/A | 2500 | £5000 |
| 1446 | N/A | N/A | 2400 | £4800 |
| 1447 | N/A | N/A | 2100 | £4200 |
| 1448 | 1000 (?) | ? | N/A | £2000 |
| 1449 | 963 | 1:9/1:3 | N/A | £1348 |
| 1450 | 3035 | 1:3/1:9 | N/A | £4249 |

**Table 11** – English Expeditionary Forces and Garrisons, 1415 to 1450
(From Curry, "English Armies in the Fifteenth Century", in Curry and Hughes (ed), *Arms, Armies and Fortifications in the Hundred Years War.*)



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Table 11 demonstrates that there were requirements placed on the industries of war throughout the active period of war during the fifteenth century. Throughout this period the English averaged approximately 3500 men serving in garrisons in France.[67] As well, they averaged 453 men-at-arms and 1842 archers on each of the expeditionary forces. While there are peaks, such as in 1415 during the Agincourt campaign, this averaged an overall total of approximately 1328 men-at-arms and 4467 archers every year throughout this period of the Hundred Years War. At the same equipment costs referred to above, this would be an average of £11,107 each year throughout this period. While the actual cost would be lower because not all participants in the expeditionary forces would need to be equipped annually, there is the potential for substantial investment in the industries of war, which could sustain a substantial number of full-time equivalent labour. Using the same wage data above (of an average of 5.5d per day wages for craftsmen/labourers with an 180 day work year) this sustained investment would support the full-time equivalent labour of approximately 2,700 men in supplying the equipment required by the garrisons and expeditionary forces.

In addition to the equipment of the expeditionary forces and the garrisons serving on the continent, there were also substantial investments in the increasing naval warfare, through shipbuilding and retrofitting merchant vessel for war, and the increasingly important investment in gunpowder siege

[67] The proportion of men-at-arms to archers in garrisons is unclear, though there are indications that garrisons would be proportionally more archers than men-at-arms. For the purpose of this estimate, I have weighted the ratio of garrisons at 1:3 men-at-arms to archers as per R. A. Newhall, *The English Conquest*, p. 214-216.



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weapons.[68] To put the cost of naval vessels into perspective, galleys ordered by Edward I at the end of the thirteenth century cost between £205 and £355 each. In 1336, as the size of the ships increased, the building of *Phillippe* cost the exchequer £666 13s 4d and involved 50 men over 15 weeks of construction, with a single mast costing £10.[69] Between 1344 and 1352 over 50 royal ships have been identified, though in the last years of Edward III's reign this number drops below 40 ships. In the 1370s an eighty-oar barge cost £621. Henry V ordered a number of ships and by 1418 owned 30 naval vessels, though some came from naval victories in France.[70] It also cost a significant amount to retrofit the numerous merchant vessels pressed into service throughout the Hundred Years War. For example, in 1349 Nicholas Pike received £8 to add a 'hindercastle' on one ship. For every major expedition overseas a large number of merchant vessels were used (and retrofitted) in this manor, particularly during the campaign as large as the siege of Calais.[71] Naval shipbuilding and the retrofitting of ships for expeditions had the potential to provide a significant amount of work for the English populace.

The production of gunpowder artillery and other gunpowder weaponry, already identified by Langdon and Masschaele as a factor in a Schumpeterian

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[68] Possibly the best source for the transition to the use of gunpowder is B. Hall, *Weapons and Warfare in Renaissance Europe.* DeVries also has a good description of the transition from nongunpowder to gunpowder artillery, as well as the development of ships into the fifteenth century in K. Devries, *Medieval Military Technology.*

[69] Ibid., p. 267.

[70] Ibid., p. 268.

[71] An overall valuation per year of the investment for shipping during the Hundred Years War would require a substantial amount of additional investigation. In particular, it would be important to estimate how many men could be accommodated on dedicated royal ships, in order to determine at what point other ships needed to be pressed into and adapted for active military service.



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innovation cycle, also provided a substantial boost to the English economy. By the time of the Battle of Crécy and Poitiers, and the siege of Calais, there were gunpowder pieces in the English armoury. In the defense of the Castle of Bioule, in 1347, twenty-two cannons were used.[72] There are numerous examples surviving from the Hundred Years War that indicate the value of these artillery pieces. In the 1350s the English crown purchased a cannon for 13s 4d, while a springald cost as much as £3 6s. 8d.[73] In 1421 the Dauphin ordered Jean Thibaut to construct two siege engines for 120 l.t.[74] Over this period the cannons themselves became larger and larger. Whereas a 1379 cannon may weigh only 400 lbs., by the early 1400s cannons could weigh as much as 4480 lbs.[75] This represents a significant shift in the manufacturing techniques during this period, from bronze or simple iron cannons to more complicated and much larger siege engines. The period of the Hundred Years War was a period of transformation in the understanding of iron and its use in gunpowder artillery. There were other aspects of gunpowder artillery that must also be considered. For example, in 1370-1380 a pound of gunpowder cost 10 s.t., though this dropped to 5 s.t. by the 1410s and 1420s and eventually to 2 s.t. or less in the last quarter of the fifteenth century. As well, there are examples of stones costing 2.5 d.t. to 5 d.t. each for smaller stones in 1415 to as much as 8 s.t. per stone in 1420-21. In the

[72] P. Contamine, *War in the Middle Ages*, p. 202.
[73] M. Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, p. 288.
[74] 1 l.t. in one pound Tournois, one of the principle French currencies in this period. The Tournois currency also uses shillings (1 s.t.) and pence (1 d.t.), much as the English currency of the period, but does not have the same equivalent exchange value. The example is from P. Contamine, *War in the Middle Ages*, p. 195.
[75] M. Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, p. 288.



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later fifteenth century they were consistently in the 2.5 s.t. to 3 s.t. per stone.[76] Considering that at the siege of Maatsrich in the late 1407/early 1408 an average of 30 stones were used per day (a total of 1514 large bombard stones over the two month siege), the production of ammunition, in the form of stones, could be a substantial investment.[77]

*Archery Industry: A Case Study*

One aspect of the industries of war that it is possible to study more in depth, thanks to the numerous sources available, is the archery industry. This industry represents the substantial work of bowyers and fletchers to supply bows and arrows (respectively) for the expeditionary forces of England throughout the Hundred Years War. Several scholars, including Newhall, Hewitt, and Prestwich, have looked at the importance of the 'archery industry' in relation to the organization of war, but none of them have attempted to place it within the broader context of the economy of England at the time.[78] In order for this industry to make an important impact it would require a very substantial number of bows and arrows being produced in a sustained manner throughout the Hundred Years War. By examining the records throughout the Hundred Years War, it is possible to have an idea of how many arrows were requested by the

[76] P. Contamine, *War in the Middle Ages*, p. 198.
[77] Ibid., p. 200.
[78] R. A. Newhall, *The English Conquest*; H. J. Hewitt, *Organization of War*; M. Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*.



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crown for military expeditions, even though the records are not complete.[79] Some examples are:

1338 – 4000 sheaves of arrows[80]

1341 – 13,000 sheaves of arrows

1353-60 – 24,000 sheaves (at the Tower of London alone)

1359 – 20,400 sheaves

1371 – 16,500 sheaves

1419-1421 – 50,000 sheaves[81]

Just over the few years mentioned above this equals 3,069,600 arrows. There are also a number of examples in the records of single orders of bows placed by the crown. For example:

1338 – 1000 bows

1341 – 7700 bows

1353-60 – 15,300 bows and 4000 bow staves (at the Tower of London alone)

1356 – 4300 bows

1359 – 4100 bows

As far as other aspects of this industry are concerned, there is an example in February 1417 when orders went out to collect six wing feathers from every goose, and again in January 1418 and July 1420 when two separate orders went

[79] Some of these records include the *Calendar of Close Rolls*; the *Calendar of Patent Rolls*; the *Register of the Black Prince*; the *Register of John of Gaunt*; Rymer, *Feodera*; and PRO E372/191/m. 9.
[80] There are 24 arrows per sheaf.
[81] H. J. Hewitt, *Organization of War*, p. 64.



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out for 1,190,000 goose feathers, for the production of arrows.[82] Also between 1416-1422, we can identify three separate orders for a total of 1,000,000 arrowheads to be produced.[83] There were also examples of large number of bowstrings being produced. In addition, in 1416, Henry V decreed that it was forbidden to use ash for clogs and shoes so wood could be reserved for making arrows.[84] In the five years from 1418-1422 the Exchequer accounts show the expenditure of £446 18s. 3d. for bows and arrows, £318 6s. for bows alone, £325 13s. 4d. for bow-staves, £755 1s. 5d. for arrows alone, £343 3s. 2d. for arrowheads, £2 for eight gross bowstrings, and £266 4d. for the manufacture of bows and arrows, which totaled £2457 2s. 6d. over this time period. Considering these individual examples, it is easy to see the importance of the archery industry throughout the Hundred Years War.

In addition to these examples, it is important to emphasize that every archer, when mustered in his community, was also to be provided with a bow and a sheaf of arrows from his community. As well, there were a number of individual captains who provided their retinue with equipment that has not been included as we have limited access to records that allow us to examine this. There is also evidence throughout this period that

**Image 3:** English Archer (from the *Luttrell Psalter*).

[82] From Rymer, *Feodera*, IX, p. 436; *Calendar of Patent Rolls*, *Henry V*, II, p. 178; and PRO, *Chancellors Enroll 271*, m. 16. All of these are summarized in R. A. Newhall, *The English Conquest*, p. 259-261.
[83] From *Calendar of Patent Rolls, Henry V*, II, p. 82, 384, and 391. They are summarized in R. A. Newhall, *The English Conquest*, p. 259-261.
[84] Taken originally from *Rotuli Parliamentorum*, IV, p. 103 and summarized in R. A. Newhall, *The English Conquest*, p. 259.



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archery was practiced regularly in the communities (including the well-known illustrations in the Luttrell Psalter, see images 3 above and 4 below) and that supply of bows and arrows for training is not included in these totals.[85] Reeves explored the issue of the practice of archery, or even archery as a sport. She argued that archery practice and competition was undertaken at the butts, which were often set up in churchyards.[86] A popular form of competition was to shoot from a distance of up to 200 yards at a wooden stick fixed in a target or staked in the ground, with the object being to split the peg with an arrow.[87] Edward III went so far as to encourage the practice of archery on Sundays under pain of fine or imprisonment. Heath pointed to a proclamation in 1369 that read:

> ... cause public proclamation to be made that everyone of the said city London, strong in body, at leisure times on holidays, use in the recreations of bows and arrows ... and learn and exercise the art of shooting; forbidding all and singular on our behalf, that they do not after any manner apply themselves to the throwing of stones, wood, iron, hand-ball, foot-ball, bandy-ball, cambuck or cockfighting, nor such other like vain plays, which have no profit in them or concern themselves therein, upon pain of imprisonment.[88]

Over the Hundred Years War period the number of bows produced can be counted in the tens (if not the hundreds) of thousands, and the arrows produced can be counted in the millions. Prestwich argued that


**Image 4:** The Practice of Archery (from the *Luttrell Psalter*).

[85] These images are taken from J. Backhouse, *Medieval Rural Life in the Luttrell Psalter*, p. 42-43.
[86] N. Reeves, *Pleasures and Pastimes in Medieval England*, p. 99.
[87] Ibid., p. 100.
[88] E. G. Heath, *Archery: A Military History*, p. 128-129.



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"if one accepts the idea of 6000 archers shooting off half a million arrows in one of the rare major engagements, then the production of a million arrows per year would seem to low a figure, but it should be remembered that, from a million arrows shot off, some proportion would be recovered."[89]

What was the economic impact of the archery industry? There are two different aspects of archery industry that help to provide a more complete picture of the impact – the revenues put into the industry by the crown and the amount of labour used to keep the industry going. In 1347 the Tower of London purchased 120 bows at 1s. 3d. for each bow and 456 sheaves of arrows at 1s. 4d. for each sheaf.[90] Other estimates of the cost of a bow ranged as high as 2s for a painted bow and 1s. 6d. for unpainted bows.[91] These numbers are supported by Newhall's work on the years 1418-1422.[92] If we take 1s 3d for bows and 1s 4d for a sheaf of arrows on average we can develop an estimate for the amount of money invested in the archery industry throughout the Hundred Years War.

Thus, in 1341 the crown would have spent £1347 18s. 4d. in a single year for the 7700 bows and 13,000 sheaves of arrows they requested. In 1371 the crown spent roughly £1100 on arrows alone. These are substantial amounts of money, especially considering that these estimates do not include money spent by the communities or individual captains (to equip or train men). Newhall demonstrates that at least £2457 2s. 6d. were spent on the archery industry from surviving crown records during the conquest of Normandy from 1418-1422,

[89] M. Prestwich, *Armies and* Warfare, p. 169.
[90] Ibid., p. 140.
[91] Painted bows are thoroughly seasoned staves, treated with some sort of paint or varnish, to inhabit the drying out of the wood to prevent it from becoming too brittle. Unpainted bows are fairly raw and untreated. R. Hardy, "The Longbow."
[92] R. A. Newhall, *The English Conquest of* Normandy, p. 261.



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which equals 36,856 sheaves of arrows.[93] If one takes Prestwich's estimate of one million arrows each year on average (the equivalent of 41 666 sheaves of arrows) throughout the Hundred Years War, which seems very realistic, this would mean a total expenditure of approximately £2777 14s. 8d. each year.[94] If you add an additional expenditure of another 5000 bows each year, which is a conservative average from the existing records that we have, this would add an additional investment of £312 10s. This would bring the overall yearly expenditure on the archery industry to over £3000.

What did these numbers mean for the local labour force? There is some indication in the records of bowyers and fletchers existing as a full-time occupation (particularly at the Tower of London, or in the baggage train of English expeditionary forces).[95] Men who worked in the archery industry were also employed as farmers, carpenters, woodcutters, or wood workers in general. All the same, if we take the numbers given above, we can estimate a full-time labour equivalency. If those employed in the archery industry made the equivalent of the average of the craftsmen and labourers combined (mentioned above as 5.5d per day over a 180 day work year), the investment made in this industry would have meant that a labour equivalency of approximately 750 full-time workers would have been employed by the industry each year of the Hundred Years War. Embedded in these 'full-time' numbers there would have been a large indirect workforce also employed. For example, if a man was

[93] Ibid., p. 261.
[94] Were the number of arrows produced actually closer to 500 000, due to the recovery of arrows and the fact that some arrows would be produced in France, the investment would be closer to £1400. That number, however, would seem particularly low because of the arrows used in practice and how many arrows an archer could fire in a short period of time.
[95] H. J. Hewitt, *Organization of War*, p. 61; M. Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, p. 131.



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employed as a bowyer/fletcher, his wife and children would often be involved in working as part of his wages. There can be no doubt that this does, in fact, equal a significant amount of labor expended on the archery industry.

*Conclusion*

If one explores the various industries affected by the Hundred Years War, including the construction industry, wool/cloth industry, and the arms industry, there can be no doubt that the warfare played a significant role in the economy and society of England in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. In Schumpeterian terms, the period of the Hundred Years War witnessed the (perhaps superficial) perpetuation of a beneficial economic cycle, realized through substantial profits in certain industries related to the war. The increased investment and wealth in England, from the Crown, merchants, and other spoils of war, helps to explain the buoyancy experienced in the English economy even in a period of striking population decline and relative stagnation in other industries.



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## Chapter 5: Conclusion

The economic impact of war is difficult to quantify for the later Middle Ages. There were definitely aspects of the Hundred Years War that negatively impacted the English economy in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. These impacts, emphasized by scholars such as Postan and Maddicott, included high levels of direct and indirect taxation forced upon the populace of England, as well as the effects of the purveyance of goods. In each of these cases, however, the actual degree of the negative impact can be called into question or at least offset by the often overlooked positive impacts of the increased wealth entering England from wages, ransoms, and spoils of war, as well as the increased investment in industries in the English economy.

The primary negative impact that was argued by Postan regarding direct taxation was that the increased cost placed on the lower classes provided an additional burden that severely impacted the peasants' well-being. Chapter Two, conversely, has demonstrated that the actual levels of taxation consisted of minor payments that were largely insignificant to the English populace. At worst, direct taxation would have been the proverbial 'straw that broke the camel's back', though the regular payments in rent and the less certain payments of fines created a far greater burden than the crown's direct taxation.

Indirect taxation, on the other hand, provided a much more impressive and regular income for the crown. The amount collected, were it actually paid by the English populace as argued by Postan, would have been incredibly burdensome



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and negatively impacted the economy. It is, however, unlikely that such a burden would have been carried by English wool producers and merchants entirely. In fact, a significant proportion of the merchants carrying English wool to the continent, and thus paying the export custom on the wool, would have been foreign merchants. As well, there is evidence that the cost of the wool custom was passed on to the Flemish and other continental cloth industries. As demonstrated by the literature exploring the development of the wool and cloth industries in England during the later Middle Ages the actual level of woollen exports (both wool and cloth) remained reasonably consistent throughout the Hundred Years War period. As wool exports declined, the local cloth production and the export of English cloth to the continent increased. The excessive levels of indirect taxation may have been one of the primary contributing factors in the development of cloth exports. Indirect taxation in this instance may not then have been as negative as previously believed.

The well-entrenched view of the negative impact that the purveyance of goods had on the English populace during the Hundred Years War has been influenced greatly by the work of Maddicott.[1] He argued that purveyance drastically impacted the standard of living of the English peasantry because of the assumption that the Crown did not pay (or paid below market rates or unreasonably late) for the goods that they purveyed, and that the English populace was primarily a subsistence economy. The amount of goods purveyed by the crown, however, represented a very small proportion of the agricultural

[1] J. R. Maddicott, "The English Peasantry and the Crown."



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output possible at the time, and may have actually provided an outlet for excess goods produced by the most productive regions of England. As well, Maddicott relied largely upon William of Pagula's account to paint the picture of purveyance as a severe drain on the English peasantry. This reliance has recently been called into question by Neville and Nederman.[2] While there were likely some purveyors who acted maliciously to seize goods illegally, it ceased to be a major issue between the peasantry and the Crown after the Crown made changes to the practice of purveyance by the middle of the *fourteenth* century.

To understand the full impact of the Hundred Years War on the English economy and society it is necessary to examine the often overlooked positive impact of increased wages, ransoms, rewards and other spoils of war, as argued by McFarlane. While some high profile ransoms of members of the French nobility were bound to impact the incomes of those individuals lucky enough to benefit from them, there is a growing body of evidence to demonstrate that all members of the English expeditionary forces would have benefited from the spoils of war. The model of a peasant archer, presented in Chapter Three, demonstrates that the full remuneration available to members of the English peasantry for serving overseas was arguably more beneficial than the standard of living demonstrated by the work of Kitsikopolous and Langdon.[3] A peasant archer, who was also a landholder in England, might possibly have increased his positive net income, after all expenses, by as much as 200% over what he might reasonably expect to make in England (+7s. 7¼d. vs. +22s. 7¾d.). If the archer

[2] C. Neville and C. Nederman, "The Origins of *De Speculo Regis*."
[3] H. Kitskiopolous, "Standards of Living" and J. Langdon, "Unpublished Course Notes."



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was a younger son or a peasant labourer without costs associated with landholding, that increased profit could be as much as 800% (+7s. 7¼d. vs. +58s. 1½d.). This potential profit must have been a significant attraction for men serving in the English expeditionary forces.

That soldiers stood to benefit greatly from service in the military did not, on its own, benefit the English economy and society. Did wealth return to England as a result of English expeditions? There are certainly chronicles that attest to the wealth of France being returned to England.[4] By examining the development of industries, such as the construction industry, there is some evidence that the English economy retained a level of buoyancy following the Black Death that could be directly or indirectly related to the increased wealth returning to England. As well, the development of the cloth industry, which played an important role in England's commercial success after the Middle Ages, might have been at least indirectly influenced by the impact of indirect taxation.

Perhaps the most understudied industry in relation to the impact of the Hundred Years War on England's economy is the development of a flourishing industry of war. England mobilized to produce a significant amount of weaponry, including siege weapons, and armour, which became an increasingly significant part of the English economy. For example, the size of English expeditionary forces and garrisons in France during the fifteenth century alone may have resulted in an investment of as much as £11,000 per year, which may have provided a full-time labour force of as many as 2700 people based on an

[4] T. Walsingham, *Chronica Monasterii*, p. 292.



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estimate of the full-time labour equivalency. This number had the potential of being much higher during the high points of the fourteenth century, when the expeditionary forces could be much larger than those of the fifteenth century. There were also significant advances in metallurgy and metalworking industries that may have been tied to the ongoing advances in armour and gunpowder weapons, which would have had a significant impact on all areas of English society.

There are a number of areas that this examination has demonstrated require a substantial amount of further investigation. Possibly the most useful next step would be to examine the peasant versus archer budget model by exploring the existing court and other manor records before and after English expeditions to France, in conjunction with an analysis of the expeditionary forces, to determine who was recruited into the English armies of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Combined with this analysis it would be possible to explore whether or not they returned to England with increased wealth that translated into, possibly, increased landholdings or other possessions. Another possible next step would be to develop a better understanding of the scale of the industries of war and how they impacted local economies by conducting an analysis of names and other indicators of occupations to see if it is possible to witness an increased presence of those industries locally (for example, through an increase in names related to bowyer, fletcher, armourer, etc.). As well, it may be very interesting to see how the development of the industries of war, and particularly the advances made in the understanding of metallurgy and



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metalworking, influenced other industries in England.

This thesis has attempted to demonstrate that the impact of the Hundred Years War is more positive on the English economy, or at least is far more complex, than has been conceived previously. The longstanding debate between Postan and McFarlane attempts to paint a black and white picture, negative versus positive, of how war impacts the economy and society of England in the later Middle Ages. The shades of grey, cast by the complexity explored in this thesis, provides a much more holistic (and more realistic?) picture of the impact of the Hundred Years War on the English economy. Keeping in mind Bridbury's warning about the inherent nature of warfare as a part of medieval society, when the Hundred Years War is examined from a more holistic, though admittedly still incomplete, lens, I believe that this conflict proved to be more positive than negative for the economy of England in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.[5]

[5] A. R. Bridbury, "The Hundred Years War," p. 81-82.



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