

THE 1801 CROP RETURNS FOR BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

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Prior to the systematic collection of agricultural data in 1866 no other detailed statistical evidence exists concerning crop distributions except the semi-official statistics provided by the 1801 Crop Returns.¹ Other information can be found in miscellaneous documents in local and private archives but not usually for any large geographical area. In addition there are the county reports to the *Board of Agriculture* of 1793-1814, the "Prize Essays" presented to the *Royal Agricultural Society* in the mid-nineteenth century and any miscellaneous entries found in contemporary journals and local newspapers.² Other information can be found in the question/answer columns of the *Select Committees on Agricultural Distress*.³ For a single cross-section in time for a large geographical area none can compare with the 1801 Crop Returns.

There was late eighteenth-century agitation for the collection of statistics of agricultural output for various motives but none more so than fears about the relative self-sufficiency of our home grain supplies. During the second half of the eighteenth century Britain ceased to be self-sufficient in grain. Such fears were reinforced by the series of bad harvests in the 1790s, and the new corn law of 1791 which exacerbated the problem by raising the price at which the free import of corn was permitted. The wars with France were another reason for the need to assess home food production.

The first direct government action came in 1795 with a Home Office enquiry to the lords lieutenant of the counties to procure evidence of grain and other agricultural production for 1795, and an estimate for 1794 for comparative purposes. The subsequent steps taken by the government up to 1801 are related in sufficient detail by W. E. Minchinton.⁴ By 1801 the casual collection of data had reached a sufficient degree of subtlety for printed forms to be issued by the Home Office; first to the bishops and by them to the incumbents of all the

¹ For details of the 1866 Returns see *House of Commons Sessional Papers, Accounts and Papers LX* (1).

² For Buckinghamshire see W. James and J. Malcolm, *General View of the Agriculture of the County of Buckingham* (London 1794); The Reverend St. John Priest, *General View of the Agriculture of the County of Buckingham* (London 1810); C. Sewell Read, "Prize Essay Report on the Farming of Buckinghamshire", *Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society of England*, Vol. XVI (1856), pp. 269-322. Other information can sometimes be found in such contemporary journals as *The Gentlemen Magazine*, *The Annual Register*, *The Edinburgh Review* and Arthur Young (ed.), *The Annals of Agriculture*, and others.

³ For example "Report from the Select Committee to whom the several Petitions which have been presented to the House in this Session of Parliament, complaining of the depressed state of the Agriculture of the United Kingdom were referred", *British Parliamentary Papers*, Vol. IX of 1821; see also *Idem.*, Vol. I of 1822, Vol. IX of 1822 and Vol. V of 1833.

⁴ See W. E. Minchinton, "Agricultural Returns and the Government during the Napoleonic Wars," *Agricultural History Review*, Vol. I (1953), pp. 29-43 and reprinted in W. E. Minchinton (ed.), *Essays in Agrarian History*, Vol. II (Newton Abbot, 1968), pp. 103-119.

parishes of England and Wales. The parish clergy were thus asked to enquire of the acreage sown since the previous year's harvest of wheat, barley, oats, potatoes, beans, peas (or pease), turnips or rape, with rye, vetches or dill sometimes entered also. In addition there was space provided for any general remarks to be added. The Returns, which were collected on a diocesan basis and sent to the Home Secretary, now form part of the Home Office Papers on deposit in the Public Record Office.⁵ Apart from a few "peculiar" parishes, Buckinghamshire formed part of the diocese of Lincoln and it is with these Returns that the Buckinghamshire material can be found.⁶

The value of the Returns should not be over-estimated. On receipt by the Board of Agriculture they received much criticism,⁷ though recently they have commanded considerable attention from researchers.⁸ The Buckinghamshire Returns are printed below in the Appendix, subdivided into the 8 county hundreds for convenience.⁹

One of the main limitations of the Returns is that they are far from complete. They exist for 131 parishes, which is about 60% of the county. This compares with a 77% cover in South Lincolnshire, 80% in Worcestershire and 80% in Leicestershire but an almost nil return for Devon and Dorset.¹⁰

The accuracy of the Returns is in much doubt and this is made very clear from some of the remarks made by the incumbents. At Ickford, "The farmers [were] very unwilling to give in the number of acres of each sort of grain", and at Fenny Stratford they were "very unwilling and very slow to give the information required. Suspicion and reserve are discernible in every agriculturist." At Amersham the incumbent reports, "I have used my utmost endeavours to obtain the information your Lordship wished, but am sorry to be under the necessity of adding that I find the farmers so universally averse to the measure, though wholly without reason, that I cannot, with any degree of accuracy at least, get at it", thus a nil Return was given similarly at Bledlow. A nil Return was given for Pitchcott also though this time without any explanation. For Chicheley the incumbent reports, "The above statement is delivered by the representative land-holders on whose Accuracy or Integrity, I myself have

⁵ With Public Record Office, Home Office Papers, HO/67.

⁶ *Ibid.*, HO/67/15 The Diocese of Lincoln, though the Halton and Radclive cum Chackmore Returns are to be found with HO/67/18 the Diocese of Oxford, Monks Risborough and Wotton Underwood with HO/67/4 the Archdeaconry of Canterbury and Aston Abbots, Little Horwood and Winslow with HO/67/16 the Diocese of London.

⁷ W. E. Minchinton, *op. cit.* (1968), p. 116.

⁸ A list of all the items of published work which refer to the 1801 Returns would be very long; only those which are further referred to in the present essay are here included. W. G. Hoskins, "The Leicestershire Crop Returns of 1801", in W. G. Hoskins (ed.), *Studies in Leicestershire Agrarian History* (Leicestershire Archaeological Society, 1949); K. G. Davies and G. E. Fussell, "Worcestershire in the Acreage Returns for 1801", in two parts in *Transactions of the Worcestershire Archaeological Society*, Vol. 27 (1950), pp. 15-23 and Vol. 28 (1951), pp. 48-60; H. C. K. Henderson, "Agriculture in England and Wales in 1801", *Geographical Journal*, Vol. 118 (1952), pp. 338-345; D. Thomas, "The Statistical and Cartographic Treatment of the Acreage Returns of 1801", *Geographical Studies*, Vol. 5 (1958), pp. 15-25; D. Grigg, "The 1801 Crop Returns for South Lincolnshire", *East Midlands Geographer*, Vol. 2 (No. 16, 1961), pp. 43-48; D. Hey, "The 1801 Crop Returns for South Yorkshire", *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal*, Vol. XLII (Part 168, 1970), pp. 455-64; M. Williams, "The 1801 Crop Returns for Somerset", *Proceedings of the Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society*, Vol. 113 (1970), pp. 69-85.

⁹ As far as possible modern spellings for place names are used as given in Bartholomew's *Gazetteer of the British Isles* (1966 ed.).

¹⁰ See D. Grigg, *loc. cit.*, p. 43; K. G. Davies and G. E. Fussell, *loc. cit.*, p. 19; H. C. K. Henderson, *loc. cit.*, p. 339

little Dependence." Similar reports for Princes Risborough, Horsenden, Little Kimble and Great Woolstone also cast doubt on the accuracy of the Returns.¹¹ In complete contrast the incumbent at Cheddington reported that his Returns were accurate, and from the remarks attached to many of the other Returns it is quite clear that many of them were very full and very accurate. In fact the Penn, Langley and Wraysbury Returns give details to the precise acre, rood and perch.¹² One reason for non-cooperation by the land holders is given in the High Wycombe Return, "An application of this nature from the clergy will, I fear, never be attended with success, as the farmers will always suspect that it may in some measure affect their Tythes." A similar note is attached to the Hughenden Return. Presumably therefore, if the land holders feared a re-assessment of tithes, the Returns are, if anything, underestimates.¹³

Another reason for suspecting inaccuracy is because of the actual measurements taken. They are all given in acres and parts of an acre but there may be confusion as to how large an acre was in 1801¹⁴. At Ellesborough "two-thirds of the corn land in the common field measure about 3 roods to the acre" and at Slapton the measure was by computation "which is not more than three-fourths of a statute acre". A further inaccuracy is in the acreage returned under potatoes. This crop was almost certainly more widespread but was mainly grown in small plots and gardens and therefore not counted. The Beaconsfield Return gives nine acres under potatoes but the incumbent also says that the potatoes "are plentiful beyond all remembrance".

One thing that most of the incumbents were agreed upon was that 1801 was an excellent year for corn crops. The Returns are dated late October and early November and are therefore assessments of the recent harvest. According to some it was the best harvest for a very long time. Comments from Swanbourne, Drayton Beauchamp and Fleet Marston refer to it variously as a "very productive crop" "above an average crop" and "a most abundant harvest". At Horley and Horton "the crops of corn . . . were" . . . superabundant". At Stewkley the corn crop was "remarkably fine this year" while at Grandborough "The crops [were] very abundant, especially the wheat, which averages full as much as the two preceding years", and similarly at Winslow. At Hedgerley "The crop on the whole [was] more productive than any known within the last seven years", and at Aston Abbots it was such a fine crop that the occupiers could "at no time recollect finer crops—nor more productive—the ground richly loaden and the number of bushels proportionate". These examples cover the length and breadth of the county; clearly the good harvest was widespread.¹⁵

The prevailing high prices for corn would seem to be the reason for such considerable attention to these crops.¹⁶ At Hanslope "There has perhaps been about one-fourth more ground cropped last harvest than the average of former years, owing to the encouragement given to the farmers to plough from the high

¹¹ W. G. Hoskins, *op. cit.*, pp. 129-30, found only six cases out of 180 Returns of non-cooperation.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 130, also found that many Returns were measured accurately, in some cases to the nearest $\frac{1}{4}$ acre.

¹³ See also K. G. Davies and G. E. Fussell, *loc. cit.*, p. 19.

¹⁴ See also H. C. K. Henderson, *loc. cit.*, p. 341.

¹⁵ See also *Ibid.*, p. 343; W. G. Hoskins, *op. cit.*, p. 132; D. Hey, *loc. cit.*, p. 456.

¹⁶ See K. G. Davies and G. E. Fussell, *loc. cit.*, p. 16.

prices of all kinds of grain", and at Wendover "From the high price of wheat for the two years last past, a larger proportion than usual of the arable land was last year sown with wheat". The incumbent at Dorney found that the quantity of land devoted to arable had not fluctuated very much over the previous 20-30 years except in the present year [1801] and in 1796 "which two years exceeded the average a good deal". It would appear in consequence that there had been a widespread conversion to arable production at the turn of the century and in particular to corn. At Stoke Goldington there was "a greater number of acres sown with wheat than in ten preceding years by about a third."

W. F. Galpin points to the famine levels of 1800 as an indicator for the increased acreage under wheat.¹⁷ Times of famine bring about a system of rationing through market forces and the price mechanism—in this case the very high prices for wheat. Two explanations for the situation in 1801 can be given. Initially there was an increased wheat acreage in order to forestall a further bad harvest, because the record of the 1790s would indicate a greater likelihood of a bad harvest than what actually occurred—the best crop for many years. Secondly there was the opportunity for occupiers to benefit from the very high prices and exercise comparative advantage from wheat rather than from other uses for their land. It would be interesting to discover how much marginal land, such as common and waste, was brought into cultivation at such times, not so much in Buckinghamshire where there were comparatively few acres of this type of land, but perhaps in Fenland and Upland England.¹⁸

In spite of a conversion to arable, the percentage of land under arable, as shown in the final column of the Appendix, was only about one-quarter to one-third of most parishes, and this of course is a higher proportion than for the preceding years.¹⁹ Buckinghamshire was predominantly a pastoral county as the Returns for Hillesden, Preston Bisset, Hartwell, Fleet Marston, Fenny Stratford, Lillingstone Dayrell, Ilmer, Dinton, Stoke Hammond, Worminghall, Beachampton, Great Woolstone, Ravenstone and Hoggston clearly indicate. At least this is a generalisation that can be applied to that part of the county that lies north and west of the Chilterns. The notable exceptions were the parishes on the lighter soils which were more easily adaptable and suited to the plough in the period before underdrainage was a widespread practice—parishes such as Turville, Horley and Horton, Radnage, Dorney, Hitcham, Wexham, Upton cum Chalvey, Datchet and Wraysbury which are situated on the soils of the Thames river terrace gravels. "From the nature of the country and soil [light and stoney] the parish of Hambleton must always be corn country". Similarly at Great Missenden, Bradenham, Wendover (in part) and Slapton (in parts), which are parishes associated with the Chilterns and dominated by the lighter chalky soils. The parish of Bierton with 77% under crops is quite exceptional and in startling contrast with many neighbouring parishes such as Aston Abbots (14%), Wingrave (17%) and Hulcott (14%).

¹⁷ W. F. Galpin, *The Grain Supply of England during the Napoleonic Period* (University of Michigan Publications, History and Political Science, Vol. VI, New York, 1925), pp. 10-16, 27.

¹⁸ W. James and J. Malcolm, *op. cit.*, p. 35, say there were above 6,000 acres of waste in the county in the early 1790's; this is almost certainly an overestimate. See also D. Grigg, *loc. cit.*, p. 44.

¹⁹ The percentages were calculated by reference to the parish acreages given in W. Page (ed.), *The Victoria County History of the County of Buckingham*, Vol. I (London, 1908), pp. 96-101, which purportedly uses the acreages at the time of the 1801 Census.

That any of the figures, at least for parishes north of the Chilterns in what was formerly open-field Buckinghamshire, are as high as they are is indicative of a conversion to wheat and other grains towards the turn of the century. The Returns provide ample evidence of this. In addition, it may not be correct to assume that land not entered as under crops was devoted to grazing and dairying. Some of the parishes in 1801 were still in open fields. Parishes like Maids Moreton, Cheddington, Mursley, Great Kimble, Little Kimble, Slapton, Wingrave, Marsh Gibbon, Stewkley, Whaddon, Chearsley and Monks Risborough are very conspicuously dominated by two crops, wheat and beans or wheat with beans and peas grown together. This is very representative of the two crops and a fallow so characteristic of open-field agriculture; usually a grain crop, one or both of the pulses and a third year in fallow. All of these parishes were enclosed by act of parliament after 1800 and at the time of the 1801 enquiry were predominantly in open fields, that is, they had few old enclosures. For example, about 96% of Cheddington was in open fields, 88% of Wingrave and 93% of Marsh Gibbon.²⁰ For such parishes the smaller acreages returned as oats, barley and other crops were almost certainly in the old enclosed fields. The incumbent at Marsh Gibbon states specifically that the parish was under two crops and a fallow. At Quainton (enclosed in 1840-2) in 1801 there were "960 acres of Arable land in the Common Fields . . . whereof one-third is Wheat, one-third Beans or Peas, or Beans and Peas sown together, and one-third fallow annually, besides which there are a few acres of Inclosure arable, perhaps 120". The Return actually shows that there were 118 acres of oats and barley, and the remainder of the parish was old enclosed pasture. For other parishes enclosed after 1800 such as parts of Newport Pagnell (enclosed by two acts of 1794 and 1807), Ellesborough, Saunderton, Pitstone, Princes Risborough, Dinton and Ivinghoe the traditional system of two crops and a fallow is less obvious though probably the presence of other crops represents the acreage of old enclosure devoted to tillage. This is especially so in light soiled areas such as Stoke Poges, Wexham and Datchet. In other words, for those parishes that are clearly in open fields and dominated by two crops perhaps as much as half again should be counted as potential arable as it was probably lying fallow at the time the Returns were made.²¹ Both the Quainton and Bledlow Returns suggest this, "The parish [Bledlow] is supposed to contain about 3,000 acres of arable land, of which one-third is annually fallow".

Even in those parishes that were enclosed by 1801 there is evidence to suggest that some land was not returned as arable but should be considered as future or potential arable. At Chetwode there were 20 acres of fallow. At Wendover there were an additional 1,105 acres of fallow and clover, and at West Wycombe "the clover leys [which] will produce wheat the ensuing year are as near as can be guessed equal in quantity to the wheat lands of the present year". At Stoke Hammond "the land not under corn is pasture and clover ley" and at Eton there were 71 acres of clover. In other words, the total acreage devoted to arable was probably larger than the Returns suggest because a certain pro-

²⁰ Calculated with reference to the respective enclosure awards, Buckinghamshire County Record Office, Aylesbury, IR/78, IR/104a and IR/88, respectively.

²¹ On two crops and a fallow in 1794, see W. James and J. Malcolm, *op. cit.*, pp. 21, 22, 26 and 45.

portion was lying as bare fallow or sown with a temporary grass at the time.

Most of the parishes were either of ancient enclosure or enclosed in the preceding forty years. The old enclosed parishes were dominated by pasture. These include Fleet Marston, the Claydon parishes (except Steeple Claydon), Hillesden, Beachampton and Broughton. In the more recently enclosed parishes (enclosed after 1760) there was almost certainly a conversion to pasture at or shortly after enclosure. At Tingewick the incumbent states "After forty years Residence and Upwards . . . I am sorry to have observed that since the Inclosure of the parish 1773-4 the number of acres of wheat sown are diminished one-third", while at Hoggeston, enclosed privately in 1766, the whole of the arable land except the few acres recorded "was laid down to grass and employed for the purposes of dairying and feeding of cattle", though in this case the parish was entirely in the hands of one man. It was Arthur Young's desire to see such lands as were adjacent to the Aylesbury to Buckingham road one day laid down to grass. While on his *Eastern Tour* (published in 1771) he observed, "the whole country [from Aylesbury to Buckingham] is open fields . . . the soil [of the Vale] among the richest I ever saw, black putrid clay . . . As for the landlords, what in the name of wonder is the reason for their not enclosing? All this vale would make as fine meadows as any in the world."²² As if authorised by Young himself those very same parishes through which he passed were enclosed by a succession of acts in the 1770s.²³

An interesting question is whether the conversion to arable, as shown by the Returns, continued after 1801 or whether there was a reversion to former uses. If the Board of Agriculture *General View of the County* by the Reverend St. John Priest (published 1810 but based on earlier visitations) is at all reliable then the change in husbandry practice continued after 1801. The *General View* indicates that there were very large changes in the number of acres devoted to arable compared with 1801. Compare the Appendix below with Appendix I "Extent of the County" in Priest.²⁴ For about 80% of the parishes returned in 1801 there was an increase in the arable acreage, and in some cases the increases were very large. For example, in Hanslope the increase was from 1,281 acres to 2,458 acres, in Drayton Parslow from 410 acres to 1,300 acres and in Hambleton from 2,086 acres to 5,500 acres. The problem remains as to how far these figures can be trusted. The difficulties relating to the 1801 Returns have already been outlined above. If anything they might underestimate the extent of the arable if for no other reason than that the returning occupiers suspected some sort of re-assessment of tithes. The figures in Priest do not give a residual acreage for unused land (except waste) and this is particularly important when the question of fallow land is considered. It must therefore be assumed that fallow is included under one of the categories in Priest's appendix. On examination this could only rightly be pasture or arable. If the former, then the real

²² A. Young, *The Farmer's Tour through the East of England*, popularly known as *The Eastern Tour* (London, 1771), pp. 18-24.

²³ Aylesbury in 1770, Whitchurch 1771, Dunton 1774, Waddesdon 1774, Hartwell and Stone 1776, Hardwick 1778, North Marston 1778 and Bierton 1779.

²⁴ The Reverend St. John Priest, *op. cit.*, pp. 367-72. This is apparently an *undated* survey delivered to the Board of Agriculture by a Mr. Parkinson. There is a further appendix, number VI, conducted by the same person and based on the poor rates of 1806.

changes in arable acreage for many parishes were extremely large. Fallow is probably counted as arable. In the old enclosures of West Wycombe in 1801 the incumbent reported "The clover leys which will produce wheat the ensuing year are as near as can be guessed equal in quantity to the wheat lands of the present year". In Maids Moreton, enclosed in 1801-2, there were, in 1801, 488½ acres of arable, mainly wheat with peas and beans. By the time the appendix for Priest had been prepared there were 1,200 acres of arable. The comparable figures for Moulsoe, enclosed in 1802, were 528 and 914 acres respectively. Under the open-field system of two crops and a fallow suppose that one-third is always fallow. Thus the 1801 figure for Maids Moreton might be 488½ acres arable plus c.163 acres fallow, giving c.652 acres for total arable. This figure had doubled by the time the appendix in Priest was prepared. Applying the reverse procedure. In Priest there were 1,200 acres of arable. Suppose one-third or c.400 acres was annual fallow. Crops in the ground would therefore be c.800 acres, quite a considerable increase from 1801.²⁵ Whichever way the figures are manipulated the suggestion is an overall increase in arable acreage after 1801.

The following table summarises the distribution of crops for the eight Buckinghamshire Hundreds. It requires very little further explanation. Quite clearly wheat was the dominant crop and in particular in the five northern hundreds. Oats were the second crop in the north-west of the county with barley marginally the second crop elsewhere in the north. The two crops were almost equally distributed in the Chilterns, and in Desborough rivalled the wheat closely. Barley was a close second crop on the light sandy soils and gravels of the Thames valley. Of the other crops peas and beans were the more important, in particular beans in what was formerly, and still was for many parishes, open-field Buckinghamshire. In Cottesloe the two crops and a fallow was very pronounced. Other crops were of negligible importance.

TABLE A: THE 1801 CROP RETURNS FOR BUCKINGHAMSHIRE: THE PERCENTAGE OF ARABLE LAND DEVOTED TO THE FOLLOWING CROPS IN THE EIGHT HUNDREDS OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

Hundred	Wheat	Barley	Oats	Potatoes	Peas*	Beans*	Turnips & Rape	Rye	Others
Ashendon	38.7	10.6	20.4	0.2	4.9	20.2	0.5		negligible
Aylesbury	40.5	13.9	14.5	0.2	7.3	15.4	5.3		negligible
Buckingham	38.5	12.5	18.8	0.4	2.4	19.0	1.6	0.4	0.5
Burnham	36.7	22.2	21.0	0.4	6.2	2.9	10.1	0.5	0.1
Cottesloe	37.4	13.9	11.9	0.2	3.8	19.2	4.2	0.0	0.8
Desborough	30.8	27.2	26.5	0.1	6.0	1.2	8.2		negligible
Newport	37.1	18.3	17.9	0.6	3.7	16.8	3.6	0.4	0.2
Stoke	38.4	28.7	11.3	0.3	7.3	9.5	4.4	0.1	0.0
Buckingham County	37.6	17.6	17.1	0.3	5.3	13.9	4.7	0.2	0.2

* Bracketed figures indicate where peas and beans were grown together.

Source: Public Record Office, HO.67 No. 15, *The 1801 Acreage Returns for the Diocese of Lincoln*.

²⁵ It is probably unrealistic to deduct as much as 400 acres for fallow in enclosed circumstances because one of the motives for enclosure was to reduce fallowing by rotating land in more than three units.

A final reference should be made about the distribution of turnips, so much considered the vanguard in the agricultural development of the period. The truth is that turnips have been overemphasised in the past. They favoured lighter-soiled areas or at least well drained soils and much the greater part of Buckinghamshire lies to the north of the Chilterns, an area dominated by claylands. Also, turnips were not readily adaptable to the existing open-field system of two crops and a fallow: usually a grain, beans and/or peas and a fallow year. The greatest concentration of turnips would therefore be expected in the Chilterns and on the lighter, gravel soils of the Thames valley. Indeed, the greatest concentration seems to be in Burnham in such parishes as Penn, Hitcham and Beaconsfield, and in other Chiltern parishes such as Turville, West Wycombe and Great Missenden. In addition there was a minor concentration in those parishes which transact the Chiltern/Vale boundary, such as Wendover, Ivinghoe and Pitstone. Almost certainly in these cases the turnips were found on the old enclosed parts of the Chilterns rather than in the open-field Vale of Aylesbury. The parishes of Stoke hundred, in the Thames valley, had little land under turnips but then Stoke Poges, Wexham, Datchet, Wraysbury and Langley were still largely in open fields. Priest cites the land north of Watling Street as good turnip land, but, as the figures for Newport hundred show, there were not many acres devoted to turnips in 1801. In Leicestershire as much as 11.5% of the land was under turnips, but then this is not surprising considering that only three of the parishes returned in 1801 were still in open fields.²⁶ It was of course much easier to break with the two crops and a fallow tradition after enclosure.

The following table compares the distribution of crops in 1801 in Buckinghamshire with the distribution of the same crops in South Lincolnshire, South Yorkshire and Leicestershire.

TABLE B: THE 1801 CROP RETURNS FOR BUCKINGHAMSHIRE: A COMPARISON WITH OTHER COUNTIES

County	Wheat	Barley	Oats	Potatoes	(Peas & Beans)	Turnips & Rape	Rye
	(expressed as acres and in brackets as percentages)						
Buckinghamshire	26,503 (37.6)	12,440 (17.6)	12,093 (17.1)	210 (0.3)	15,697 (22.3)	3,306 (4.7)	117 (0.2)
South Lincolnshire	24,566 (21.2)	24,507 (21.2)	35,549 (31.8)	1,407 (1.3)	9,419 (8.1)	18,697 (16.1)	347 (0.3)
South Yorkshire	(41.5)	(13.0)	(26.5)	(1.0)	(7.7)	(10.0)	(0.3)
Leicestershire	15,832 (28.0)	15,057 (26.0)	14,105 (25.0)	746	4,882 (8.5)	6,564 (11.5)	73

Sources, in county order:

Public Record Office, HO.67 No. 15 *The 1801 Acreage Returns for the Diocese of Lincoln*.

D. Grigg, "The 1801 Crop Returns for S. Lincolnshire", *East Midlands Geographer*, Vol. 2 (No. 16), 1961, p. 45.

D. Hey, "The 1801 Crop Returns for S. Yorkshire", *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal*, Vol. XLII (Part 168), 1970, p. 462.

Ibid., quoted p. 462. See also the original source, W. G. Hoskins, "The Leicestershire Crop Returns of 1801", in W. G. Hoskins (ed.), *Studies in Leicestershire Agrarian History* (Leicestershire Archaeological Society, 1949), p. 142.

In Buckinghamshire, the fact that there were more parishes in open fields with the dominance of a white crop, usually wheat, and one other crop, beans and/or

²⁶ W. G. Hoskins, *op. cit.*, p. 134.

peas, and the limited distribution of turnips shows the relative backwardness of Buckinghamshire agriculture at the time.

Many of the researchers of the 1801 Returns seem to consider them as invaluable aids to an understanding of agricultural practice in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. However, because they came at the time they did in terms of the French wars, prices and previous harvests, they should be treated with caution and not presented as indicative of the general agricultural/crop situation for any particular county, as M. Williams tries to do.²⁷ It is for this reason that no more refined statistical assessment of crop combinations as suggested by D. Thomas and used by M. Williams has been attempted here.²⁸

The Returns do provide a cross-section of crop distributions for one particular year, but in all probability 1801 was an unusual year.

²⁷ M. Williams, *loc. cit.*, pp. 69-85.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, D. Thomas, *loc. cit.*, pp. 15-25.

APPENDIX: THE 1801 CROP RETURNS FOR BUCKINGHAMSHIRE (expressed in acres).

Parish	Wheat	Barley	Oats	Potatoes	Peas	Beans	Turnips	Rape	Rye	Others	Percentage
											of Parish Devoted to Arable
1. Ashendon Hundred											
Ashendon	122	57½	92½		26½	73					17·5
Chearsley	144	31½	21	¼	20	149					38·8
Chilton	183	58	64	2	32	108		(2)			21·7
East Claydon	26½	14	23		6	25					3·6
Middle Claydon	39	7½	44½		5	17					4·6
Dorton	13½		30	2	3	7½					3·8
Fleet Marston	39	19	19		8	26				Vetches 1	12·0
Grandborough	133	9	65	2	13	48					17·1
Grendon Underwood	140		135			121					15·6
Ickford	90	3	57		23	72					24·0
Ilmer	78	22				46					21·3
Ludgershall	203	1	117½			127½					15·9
North Marston	114½	12½	76		24	62					14·6
Oakley	72	13	60		5	53					8·9
Oving	30	12½	11	3	16½	25½		(3)			10·3
Pitchcott	0	0	0	0	0	0		(no explanation given in the Return)			
Quanton	409	24	94		(312)						15·7
Shabbington	53	25½	34		1	42½					7·2
Waddesdon	470	330	330		120	240		(24)			43·3
Upper Winchendon	87	63	28			40		(4)			18·5
Wotton Underwood	61	12	27	4	4	43		(4)	4		6·4
Worminghall	171	31½	85		31½	72½					25·9
Total 6,933½ acres	2,678½	737½	1,413½	13½	338½	1,398½	(37)		4	1	
					(312)						

Parish	Wheat	Barley	Oats	Potatoes	Peas	Beans	Turnips	Rape	Rye	Others	Percentage
											of Parish Devoted to Arable
2. Aylesbury Hundred											
Aston Clinton	280½	181	219½	3½	64			(94)			22·1
Bierton	734	198	243	4	140	554½	17½				77·4
Bledlow			unobtained by the incumbent								
Dinton	350	149	61		42	230	20				21·9
Ellesborough	504	146	151		115	222	50				33·0
Halton	170	24	58			120					25·5
Hartwell	28	33	8	½	6	1		(1)			8·5
Horsenden	54	43	26		12	24	12				32·0
Hulcott	41	7	20		2	31					14·1
Great Kimble	295	85	39		39½	234		(26)			28·7
Little Kimble	80	11	12		10	55					19·8
Lee	65	18½	62	2	8½			(12)			33·2
Great Missenden	807½	274	771½	5	137½			(156½)		4½	55·7
Monks Risborough	430	60	60		(440)						34·5
Princes Risborough	473	270	187½		68	290½	63				28·8
Stone	328	220½	28½		87½	224½		(89)			38·1
Wendover	1,298	340	257	20	370	220		(280)			47·8
Weston Turville	298	82	30		25	255					29·7
Total 15,411½ acres	6,235½	2,142½	2,234	34½	1,127	2,371½	(821)		4½		
					(440)						

Parish	Wheat	Barley	Oats	Potatoes	Peas	Beans	Turnips	Rape	Rye	Others	Per-centage Arable
3. Buckingham Hundred											
Akeley cum Stockholt	78	19	20		9	12	(10)				11.2
Beachampton	30	21	25		5	17					6.4
Buckingham	327	110	106		23	152					14.3
Chetwode	30	9	8		(32)						6.7
Edgcott	104		5			100					18.3
Foscott	36	23	6			32				Vetches 6	14.3
Hillesden	38	6	24	3		18	(6)		6		3.9
Lillingstone Dayrell	20	6½	20	½	7	2					2.5
Maids Moreton	167½	72	23½		(225½)						35.8
Marsh Gibbon	320					320					22.3
Padbury	150	80	40		24	110				Vetches 20	21.1
Preston Bisset	74	32½	75½	2	7	39					15.1
Radclive cum Chackmore	181	80	56		10	71				Vetches 7	34.1
Shalstone	113	40	67	1	5	50	1				19.7
Steeple Claydon	141½	16½	180			95			8		13.2
Stowe	95½	31½	86½	5	20½	32½	25				9.6
Tingewick	175½	108½	157	1	(104)		(8)				25.4
Twyford	126	1	126	2	10	50	1		10		20.8
Westbury	144½	106	125	10	24	58	(42)		4		20.3
Total 6,113 acres	2,351½	762½	1,150½	24½	144½	1,158½	(98)		28	33	
						(361½)					

Parish	Wheat	Barley	Oats	Potatoes	Peas	Beans	Turnips	Rape	Rye	Others	Per-centage Arable
4. Burnham Hundred											
Amersham	unobtained by the incumbent										
Beaconsfield	482	385	184	9	114	8	168		15		30.3
Chalfont St. Peter	626	269	510	7	107	15	(150)		3		35.5
Dorney	229½	132½	185½	3½	32	52½	(38)			Tares 3	43.4
Hitcham	205½	174½	69½	4½	26	47½	(122½)				75.3
Penn	426½	170½	278		53½	8½	(90½)		9½		26.0
Taplow	225½	192½	29½		38½	42½	34½			Tares 2	32.2
Total 5,979½ acres	2,195	1,323½	1,256½	24	371	173½	(603½)		27½	5	

Parish	Wheat	Barley	Oats	Potatoes	Peas	Beans	Turnips	Rape	Rye	Others	Per-centage Arable
5. Cottesloe Hundred											
Aston Abbots	84	60	39		45	39	47				14.3
Cheddington	227½	30½	12		9	240½					36.4
Cholesbury	27	1½	20	½			5				30.3
Cublington	100	60	10	1	(150)						26.2
Drayton Beauchamp	300	200	60		59	40	(10)				35.4
Drayton Parslow	188	35	127		14	41	(5)				23.4
Hawridge	83	17	52		19		(7)				25.5
Hoggeston	52½	20½	16		22½	25½					8.7
Little Horwood	124½	37	23	1½	35½	86½	6½				16.1
Ivinghoe	507	201	243		47	231	159				24.7
Mursley	108	34	28			112					27.6
Pitstone	232	140	143		32	96	118				31.0
Slapton	257	28	8			258					45.5
Stewkley	333	113	45		(363)						21.4
Swanbourne	110	70	35	1	22	50					11.3
Whaddon	283	43	9½	2		474½					21.5
Whitchurch	144½	77	33		38	84	(12)				22.6
Wing	448	193	235	4	(381)		(60)			Vetches 82	24.6
Wingrave	158	39	37		27	157					16.8
Winslow	92	40	51	6	17	43	(4)				13.2
Total 10,316½ acres	3,858½	1,439½	1,226½	16	387	1,978½	(434½)			82	
						(894)					

Parish	Wheat	Barley	Oats	Potatoes	Peas	Beans	Turnips	Rape	Rye	Others	Per-
											centage
6. Desborough Hundred											
Bradenham	99½	104½	106		37		(54½)			Vetches 3	41-1
Hambleden	627	618	596		193	12	40				31-6
Hedsor	10½	34½	20½	1½	4	5½	(31)				19-5
Hughenden				unobtained by the incumbent							
Radnage	206	168	162		5	24	(54)				45-2
Saunderton	241	154	73	2		74					29-7
Turville	272	223	301		57		(114)				41-5
High Wycombe				unobtained by the incumbent							
West Wycombe	799	690	673	1½	121		304				38-1
Total 7,315½ acres	2,255	1,991½	1,931½	10	436	91½	(597½)			3	

Parish	Wheat	Barley	Oats	Potatoes	Peas	Beans	Turnips	Rape	Rye	Others	Per-
											centage
7. Newport Hundred											
Bradwell	132	38	49	½	4	39	(16)				30-4
Bow Brickhill	107	41	129		17	55	(4)		18		20-1
						(see also Fenny Stratford below)					
Broughton	43	8½	46	9	(13½)		(15)			Vetches 13½	14-4
Calverton	253½	95	182		30½	100½	(41)				35-6
Castlethorpe	147	104	58	4		86	41				32-1
Chicheley	170	64	73		14	67					18-7
Fenny Stratford	52	17	25	4	3	6	(as a part of Bow Brickhill				6-0)
Gayhurst	45	27	26			25	7				12-8
Hanslope	549	264	37	12	45	364	10				22-1
Lathbury	61	70	36	1	30		30				16-4
Lavendon and Cold Brayfield	446	172	217	3	19	147	(50)		13		31-8
Great Linford	30½	52	42	1½	10	33	24				10-5
Loughton	170	32	135	2	40	71					29-3
Moulsoe	200	70	6	2	50	180					31-9
Newton Blossomville	82	58	41		33	74			11		29-5
Newport Pagnell	237	249	123	8		198	12				24-0
Olney and Warrington	315	180	157	6	(155)		(9)				25-2
Ravenstone	200	124	101½	8	57½	42½	(51½)				30-5
Sherington	320	160	150		80	170	10				35-5
Stoke Goldington	205	119	89		13	93	(34)		2		23-6
Stoke Hammond	179	47	121		5	51	(16)				26-8
Wavendon	224	85	137	4	37	97	16				21-5
Weston Underwood	122	59	44	3	15	30	(38)			Cabbages 5	16-9
Great Woolstone	63	21	43			36	(6)				32-9
Little Woolstone	66	27	56		1	25					27-7
Willen	32	8	25			26					13-4
Total 11,983 acres	4,451½	2,191½	2,148½	67½	446½	2,016	(430½)		44	18½	
						(168½)					

Parish	Wheat	Barley	Oats	Potatoes	Peas	Beans	Turnips	Rape	Rye	Others	Per-
											centage
8. Stoke Hundred											
Datchet	256	188	26		50	102	7				45-4
Eton	120	108	10		27	14					35-5
Fulmer	70	42	62½	3	26	3½	38½				13-1
Hedgerley	74½	57	73½		16	8	(73)				27-5
Horley and Horton	307½	196	105½	7½	44½	16	80		5		55-8
Langley	496½	387½	115½	2½	107½	128	36½		3		32-5
Stoke Poges	414	296½	153½	1½	69½	131½	(13)		1		31-2
Upton cum Chalvey	349½	293½	85	4	24½	143	(10)				46-8
Wexham	125½	71	46½	½	30½	31	9				42-0
Wraysbury	263½	210½	54½		74½	34½	17½				39-0
Total 6,454½ acres	2,477½	1,850½	732½	19½	470½	611½	(284½)		9		

Total for the County
70,507 26,502½ 12,439½ 12,093 209½ 3,721½ 9,799½ (3,306½) 116½ 142
(2,176)