

## THOMAS HURMAN, MALTSTER

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### Introduction

The Somerset Heritage Centre has amongst its collections, a book described as the ‘Ledger of Thomas Hurman, maltster, of Chedzoy 1827 - 1842’. (DD/UK/8) It includes a record of farm wages from 1902 - 1923, which is thought to concern a farm at North Curry. The book was an anonymous donation (hence the ‘UK’ reference), so nothing can be inferred from a known provenance. Inside the front cover is a recipe for making Rhubarb Wine, and some notes on the deaths of family members. Between the sales and the farm wages are several pages relating to moneys invested between 1841 and 1856 at the West of England and South Wales District Bank at a (then) new branch in Bridgwater, and their redemption. These were records made by Thomas Hurman of his investments and also, as a trustee for two of his brothers (James and Francis Hurman).

The aim of this article is to discover what can be ascertained about a small, rural maltster’s business at the time.

### The site

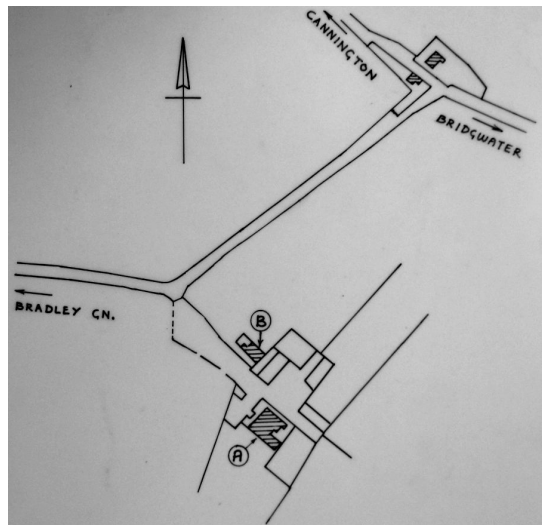
Apart from a reference to the death of his father (Thomas Hurman senior) at Chedzoy, there is no evidence that the malthouse was there. Thomas Hurman senior did farm at the village, some three miles to the east of Bridgwater, until his death in 1832 (so after the start of the ledger). His son then did own the Chedzoy farm, but he rented it out to someone else.<sup>1</sup> However, it was clear from the book that Thomas junior was already farming at Chilton Trivet (also sometimes rendered as Chilton Trivett) near Cannington, just to the west of

Bridgwater. In 1827 he had leased five acres in Chedzoy for a year, and was described as ‘Thomas Hurman the younger of Cannington, gent’, so was already living in the parish. In the book he gave his place of residence as Chilton Trivet, and mentions rent he owed to Charles Knight for the farm there. (Charles Knight had bought a life interest in the Chilton Trivet estate in 1830, which reverted to the children of Robert Pain in 1842. In 1848 the estate was sold to Henry Prince of the Agapemone in Spaxton (see below under ‘The Customers’, note 18 for further details of Prince).<sup>2</sup> It would seem that Thomas was already the tenant of Chilton Trivet when Charles Knight bought the life interest, and also there is evidence that he may have been given notice to leave when that reverted to the Pains (see below, under ‘Other Sales’). The farmhouse is now listed Grade 2.)

There is no evidence of a malting at Chedzoy (though the buildings on the opposite side of the road to the farm have disappeared), and the Tithe Apportionment of 1840 does not list one amongst the buildings. Although the 1839 Cannington Tithe Apportionment similarly does not mention a malthouse at the Chilton Trivet site, and the 1841 census for Cannington gives Thomas’ occupation as being a farmer, there was a malthouse on the farm at Chilton Trivet. The first evidence for this is a notice of the bankruptcy of R. Pain of Chilton Trivett, Cannington, Somerset, maltster, in January 1823.<sup>3</sup> This mention shows that a malthouse existed somewhere on the farm, if not among the buildings in the main complex itself. It also means that Thomas must have come to the farm after then. Secondly, the *Bridgwater Times* of 27 April 1848 carried an advertisement for the auction of ‘Chilton Trivett Farm’, which was said to consist of ‘a good Farm House or eligible country residence, with necessary and convenient outhouses ... and a large

malthouse, all in good repair ...'. The additional lands were measured at 163 acres, 1 rood and 4 perches. It was in then in the occupation of Mr John Vicary Williams as tenant, for which he paid rent of £425 p.a. The malthouse was not newly-built, or the advert would surely have mentioned it. So there was a malthouse on the farm in 1823 when R. Pain was made bankrupt, and in 1848 when it was sold some time after Thomas had left. The ledger itself is evidence too, since it gives Thomas' residence as Chilton Trivet. Unfortunately there is little indication which of the farm buildings it was, though the present owner (John Irish) remembers a structure which might have been it. Converted to cottages and subsequently demolished, it stood on the opposite side of the entrance track to the house, and nearest the road. Large metal joists were removed from one end when it was demolished; this may have been for the kiln floor - the weight of the malt tiles would have required a substantial structure to support them, and they are known in other kilns.

On the 1841 census for Cannington only one maltster is mentioned; John Headford is listed as a maltster at Bradley Green, which is a small cluster of houses only a very short distance from the farm. (The only site on the Tithe called a malthouse was at Combwich, some three miles to the north, and owned by the Leigh family.) Headford's name does not appear on the Tithe Apportionment and the most likely reason would be that tithe was not owed on the site at which he lived. There is a public house at Bradley Green called 'The Malt Shovel', the site of which did not pay tithe, and which appears, on the Tithe Map, to have been built on a wide part of the roadway (perhaps 'squatter's rights'). So, the most plausible explanation would seem to be that Thomas had a malthouse in the Chilton Trivet farm complex, at which he employed John Headford to work for him. Since this was seasonal work, John may well have set up his home as a beerhouse (taking advantage of the 1830 Beer Act which established the right of any householder paying poor rate to sell beer on purchase of a two guinea licence from the Excise), and as he was employed as a maltster, it became known as the Malt Shovel. (A malt shovel is on display in the public house today (2013), and reputedly belonged to the maltster who lived there. Local belief is that the malthouse was actually on this site, and whilst the site has grown so that today it would seem plausible (considerably extended into the field to the rear), the building shown on the



*Figure 1. Plan based on 1839 Tithe Map, showing Chilton Trivet farmhouse (A) surrounded by the farm buildings, including the possible site of the malthouse (B). The village of Cannington lies to the north. The site of the Malt Shovel is at Bradley Green, to the west.*

*Simplified drawing by Iain Miles.*

Tithe Map is very small and must have been only a cottage.) Another explanation might be that Thomas somehow had purchased a malthouse on this site and set John Headford up to malt for him there, but that would leave the problem of where Headford was living. Given the small building shown, and that Thomas only leased/rented other sites in the neighbourhood, this does not seem likely.

By the 1851 census things had changed considerably. Three of the millers by then described themselves as being also maltsters, one man is described as a maltster's labourer, and John Shepherd at Bradley Green is described as a maltster. Since Thomas Hurman was not at Cannington on this census, and the farm was occupied by the Scott family, it seems likely that the millers had expanded their business to fill a void left when Thomas vacated Chilton Trivet and the malthouse. The man then at the farm, Thomas Scott, was described as a farmer of 205 acres, employing eight people, so it could be that he was still using the malthouse, but perhaps he had other use for the bulk of his barley. (One of the miller/maltsters' mill was in close proximity to both the Chilton Trivet farm and the Malt Shovel.)<sup>4</sup>

An interesting side-note is that Maris Otter malting barley is today grown on the fields close to the Malt Shovel, so the land is evidently well-suited for producing malting barley.

### The Hurman family

Hurmans had lived in Chedzoy, near Bridgwater since at least 1560. Thomas was the eldest child of Thomas and Jenny/Jane (nee Rood) and was baptised there in 1785. All of his siblings were baptised at Chedzoy: - James (1786), Benjamin (1788), John (1790, and who must have died before 1802), William (1792), Mary Rood (1793), Francis (1798), John (1802), and Edward (also 1802, perhaps a twin of John's and who must have died before 1832).<sup>5</sup> Thomas senior's will of 1832<sup>6</sup> noted legacies to each of his seven (living) children by name. Benjamin, Francis and William all farmed at Bawdrip, while Mary had married James Rood who was also a farmer at Bawdrip. James Hurman had a farm at East

Bower, just to the west of Chedzoy and Bawdrip. (Mary's name is potentially confusing, since she had been baptised Mary Rood Hurman, to include her mother's maiden name. James Rood was described in the marriage register as a widower, and it looks as though Mary was marrying into her mother's family, perhaps a cousin or a more distant relation. She was already 38 years old when she married James.)

The farm at Chedzoy seems to have been fairly small, the 1840 tithe shows just over eleven acres; John Sibley who rented it then also rented other lands in Chedzoy from other landlords, so it is possible that the Hurmans originally did the same. However, Thomas senior clearly owned land elsewhere as legacies of land in Bridgwater, Cossington and Woolavington, amounting to over 78 acres (and purchased during his lifetime) were given to Benjamin and William. (This was a considerable size, and spread out over a wide area - too large for a 77 year-old to manage, his sons must have been assisting him.) He would have been quite well-off

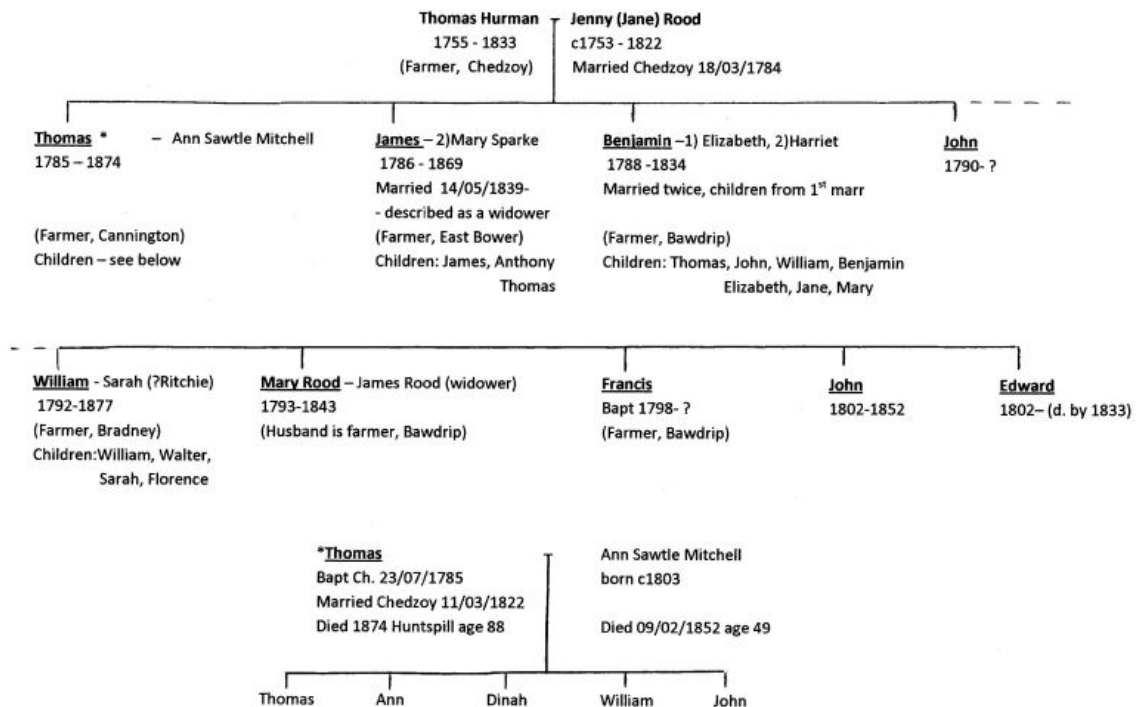


Figure 2. Hurman family tree.

to be able to purchase the extra lands. In addition he left over £11,000 in cash between his heirs. £4,900 of this was to be paid within a year of his death (split in various amounts between William, Benjamin, Thomas and James), and trusts were set up on £5,500 (between John, Francis and Mary) so that the interest could be paid to the beneficiaries for life and thereafter split between all the other siblings except John. (John's own trust amounted to £2,000.) The residue of the estate was also split between all the children except John. (The reasons for the exceptions made in the case of John are not clear. He was 31 when his father died, so not a young child. The fact that he was included in the monetary trusts, but excluded from bequests of lands and the residue of the estate is most likely to be because he had already had substantial help; other possibilities are that he had proved to be untrustworthy with finances, or even that he was ill. His father evidently held him in affection, as the individual trust for him shows.) The only grandchildren mentioned were the seven children of Benjamin (all by his first wife), who got the proceeds from a further £700 trust split between them, once they reached the age of twenty-one. (Both Thomas junior and James had children by the date of the will.) Benjamin died only a year after his father, so it may be that he was already ill and his father wished to ensure that his grandchildren got at least something since part of Benjamin's estate would be needed for his second wife. Thomas junior and James were the trustees in each trust. Francis and Mary do not seem to have had children. (Francis did not marry; William left it until he was in his 50s, marrying a woman half his age.) When Mary died in 1843, Francis' share of the trust money her father had left to her for life came to £400, and Thomas junior, as trustee, invested half of it in the bank, and lent the other half to James Hurman (his brother and fellow trustee) at 3% interest. This is noted in the bank section of the ledger, and is an improvement on the 2.5% Thomas was getting from the Bank on investments for both himself and the first half of the trust money; however it was also a saving for James, who would have had to pay 5% if he had borrowed it from the Bank.

Thomas junior received cash of £1,200, and a share in the residue of the estate. Since he was already living at Chilton Trivet, and was shown as the owner of the Chedzoy farm in 1840, he must have already been given the Chedzoy farm, or bought out his siblings soon after his father's death. (The farm was not mentioned in

Thomas senior's will, but may have been included in the residue of the estate to be shared between all the children except John.) The inference from the legacies of land to Benjamin and William is that Thomas had already had a share either in lands or cash - perhaps to help set him up at Cannington. It may also have been that these two were already farming the land for their father, so it was simply passing it over to them legally.

Of Benjamin's children, William, Benjamin and Jane became linen drapers in Bridgwater, John became a chemist and druggist in the same town, and only Thomas remained as a farmer in Bawdrip. These grandchildren seem to have taken the opportunity offered by the nearby busy port and town to move out of farming and into trade, maybe utilising the trust money when it became payable. Thomas senior had made a good living from his farming interests, but perhaps it was now obvious that times were changing.

Thomas married Ann Sawtle Mitchell at Chedzoy on 11 March 1822. His wife was some 19 years his junior, so she was just 18. Their eldest child Thomas was baptized at Chedzoy on 16 December 1822, and their other children were baptised in Cannington: - Ann (1827), Dinah (1829, born 1828), William (1834), and John (1838, and buried in Chedzoy aged just two months). Whilst it was common for a mother to want at least her eldest child baptised in her parish of origin, it is more likely that the move to Cannington took place after 1822 (when both Thomas and Ann had been described as 'of this parish' on their marriage at Chedzoy, and no note had been made on the baptism that they lived outside), and before 1827 (when the second baptism took place, and when Thomas was described as being of Cannington when he had leased the five acres in Chedzoy). It may be that the move took place soon after Robert Pain of Chilton Trivet was made bankrupt in early 1823.

Thomas must have felt that renting the Chilton Trivet farm with its lands of then over 136 acres, gave him a much better opportunity and scope for improvement. This proved to be the case, as after his father's death the Chedzoy farm was so much reduced in acreage that it would not produce a comfortable living. He was also very much branching out for himself, Cannington was the other side of the large town of Bridgwater, and some distance from his brothers and sister. Interestingly, there is evidence that he owned land in Bawdrip as well, as

the 1832 Electoral Register showed that Thomas Hurman of Cannington was qualified to vote by virtue of owning Denham Close in Bawdrip, rather than the significant farm he rented at Cannington.

The 1841 census for Cannington showed Thomas, described as a farmer, with his wife Ann and children. Thomas must have moved to West Huntspill, a parish north of Bridgwater and near the coast, perhaps directly after leaving Chilton Trivet, sometime between 1843 and 1850. He was mentioned in *Hunts 1850 Directory* as a private resident of Huntspill, and he lived there until his death. On the 1851 census he was described as a farmer of 65 acres, employing two men. Along with his wife and 4 children there was a house servant and a farm labourer. Ann died in 1852, aged only 49. By the 1861 census, he was described as a landed proprietor, living with his two daughters, son William and two servants. (His oldest son Thomas had moved to farm at Christow in Devon by this date.) He was still there in 1871, shown as a retired farmer, without his children but with a housekeeper and a general servant living in to help him. In a separate farm at Huntspill was his son Thomas, along with his second wife, two young sons (by his first wife) who were both born in Christow, and his younger brother (and Thomas's youngest living son) William. His son had initially moved to Christow, where he had farmed 46 acres, but had subsequently come back to Somerset (perhaps after the death of his first wife, and a desire to be near at hand to his elderly father). Thomas died on 16 February 1874, aged 88, outliving his son Thomas by some three years (he had died, aged 48, shortly after the 1871 census was taken).

The story of his life shows an independent person who grasped opportunities when they appeared, even if this meant moving away from a close-knit family. His initial move to Cannington must have been based on practicalities - he could no doubt see that once his father died the Chedzoy farm would have to be split and become uneconomic. His other brothers and sister stayed in the confines of the area just to the east of Bridgwater, but Thomas moved further away, firstly to Cannington and later to Huntspill. The move to Huntspill had come about after the loss of the Chilton Trivet Farm, but he could well have chosen to retire and live closer to his brothers and sister. Even in his late 60s the desire to farm was paramount. He had doubtless helped set his son up at the Christow farm - a move much further

away. (Perhaps he recognised the importance of standing on your own feet - something he had done, and making your own decisions without having a parent contributing, however experienced and wise that parent may be. Also, when his son came to farm at Huntspill, Thomas remained in his own home, independent to the last.) One thing that was common between the siblings though, was a strong farming instinct.

### The ledger

The pages concerning the sales are organised in double entry book-keeping. Each pair of page sides, as opened, is numbered consecutively as a pair, with debits on the left side and credits on the right. This is then organised within the book in two ways. Firstly there are groups of sales under individual's names, usually a pair per person, but in some instances two customers per pair. Sometimes the sales extended to more than a pair of pages, and so a pair further in the book was used. This was facilitated by the use of an index of names, along with the relevant page numbers. In the heading to the pages Thomas carefully recorded where his customer came from. In the text were the quantities sold and rates charged, along with a value total, and on the right hand side the dates when payments were made. These pages amount to some 2,879 entries (including both sales and payments made).

Secondly, various pairs are headed 'Sundries' and a date-order record is made of sales, along with the customer's name and place, with corresponding payments noted on the right hand side. The details of these sales are not given, making it difficult to ascertain how much malt and hops were sold. There were some exceptions to this - in a few instances he mentioned giving a discount (something he only seems to have done for quantity malt sales). Furthermore, in eight instances sales are recorded in both lists, for instance Ann Rood's 'Sundries' bill of £1:4:3 (£1.2125) for 25 October 1831 was paid by her son James on his named list and revealed to be for 2.5 bushels of malt and 1.5 lbs of hops. Others had their sundry accounts brought forward into a named list of their own, likewise disclosing that they were for malt and hops. So we can be sure that a fair proportion of these entries are for malt and hops. How he seems to have worked it, is that when he had a new customer the first few sales were recorded under

'Sundries'. However, when a customer seemed to be becoming a 'regular' they were then allotted a pair of pages of their own. This is backed up by the fact that in every case except one, the entries for a customer under 'Sundries' pre-dates their named list. These pages amount to 597 entries for both sales and payments, bringing the total entries to in the ledger to 3,476.

Of his 300 customers mentioned, 79 were not mentioned on the 'Sundries' lists at all, but were immediately accorded a named list of their own. These could be customers with whom he had previous contact through sales before this particular ledger was started (for instance, his own brothers), and it could be that Thomas knew that they would be regular customers. For some he may have had doubts about the customers' ability to pay, and wanted to keep a close eye on them - a few people had specific timescales in which to pay marked beside their purchase. 185 customers appeared on the 'Sundries' lists only. 115 people were accorded a named list; just 36 appeared on both lists together. While most of the 'Sundries' customers did not pay up immediately on purchase, since they had only one or two entries for the year it was relatively easy to keep tabs on what they owed. The named list would have facilitated the making up of accurate bills consisting of multiple purchases and occasional part-payments to be sent out for settlement at the end of the year, and by use of the index, keep a closer eye on those he felt he needed to.

There are references to other books, for instance a 'Day Book' ('Omitted in Day Book' Henry Lake 8 October 1830), another ledger ('Brot from the other ledger' Richard Brice 23 January 1833, and the same for Charles Knight 28 October 1840) and a white ledger ('Carried to White Ledger' in the Sundries for Mrs Bowerling 31 December 1836).

The book also recorded loans he made to others, as well as from others to himself, and when they had been repaid. (See below under 'Lifestyle' and 'Relationship with landlord'.) Also there are other items recorded, mainly farming-related, such as sales of cider, cheese, animals and crops. (For consideration of these see below, 'Other sales'.)

The earliest date in the book is 17 January 1827 (when he recorded sales to himself of both malt and hops). The latest date is 18 November 1847, though this is a record

of a payment received. The last sales recorded in the named lists are a malt sale on 12 January 1843, and the last hop sale on 21 September 1843. Since the last 'Sundries' sale entry is 27 September 1844 (five entries since 21 September 1843) it is possible that this represents the last of his sales of malt and hops, though it may equally be sales of farming items.

### **Malt and hop sales**

Thomas produced more than one type of malt. He made special reference on occasion to 'ale malt' (e.g. Absolom Steacey 20 February 1831, William Russell 16 November 1830, 18 December 1830, 5 January 1831 and 6 January 1831 - Steacey was a publican and Russell may have been). More puzzling are references to 'N' (e.g. James Legg 13 March 1833), though perhaps this refers to 'New' malt, since he mentions both 'old' and 'new' on several occasions (e.g. 'new' W. & T. Baker 4 January 1828 and 25 March 1828, (and charged at a rate of 7s 6d per bushel) while 'old' W. & T. Baker 8 February 1828 (charged at 8s 0d per bushel), Henry Hodges (six entries marked 'old' between 26 July 1830 and 20 November 1830), and Agur Powell ('old' charged at 8s 6d per bushel on 26 January and 15 April 1833, and 'new' charged at 7s 6d on the same dates in 1833. Powell seems to have been a publican-brewer in Bridgwater and must have been mixing these two)).

There are several instances of customers purchasing at two different rates on the same day, although these are not identified as with Agur Powell above. (e.g. William Hex (again a publican-brewer in Bridgwater) on 4 December 1830 rates of 7s 6d and 8s 0d, Martin Langdon (who ran the Enmore Inn) on 24 December 1830 at the same rates, Richard Brice (a farmer at Charlinch who made some medium sized purchases) 23 January 1833 rates of 8s 6d and 7s 6d).

The smallest known malt sale was just a quarter of a bushel (a peck), twice, in 1828 and 1829 to George Baker of Cannington (who described himself as gentry). These may have been 'top-ups' for other recent purchases he had made, though it is more likely that it was for a horse. His largest purchase was only 5 bushels. The largest known malt sale was 200 bushels in 1839 to Thomas May, the publican brewer of Bridgwater. However, the 'Sundries' lists have a couple of other pos-

Year	Highest rate for Malt	Lowest rate for Malt	Highest rate for Hops	Lowest rate for Hops
1827	8s 6d	8s 0d	2s 6d	2s 0d
1828	8s 6d	7s 0d	2s 6d*	2s 0d
1829	8s 6d	7s 6d**	4s 0d	2s 0d
1830	8s 6d	7s 6d	4s 6d	3s 0d***
1831	8s 6d	7s 6d	4s 6d	2s 0d
1832	8s 6d	8s 6d	3s 6d	2s 0d
1833	8s 6d	7s 0d	3s 6d	2s 0d
1834	7s 6d	7s 0d	3s 6d	2s 6d
1835	7s 6d^	7s 0d	3s 0d	2s 6d^^
1836	8s 6d	7s 0d	3s 0d	1s 9d
1837	8s 6d	8s 0d	3s 0d	1s 4d
1838	8s 0d^^^	7s 6d	2s 6d	2s 6d+
1839	10s 0d	8s 0d	2s 6d	2s 6d
1840	10s 0d	8s 6d	4s 0d	2s 6d
1841	8s 6d	7s 0d	4s 6d	2s 6d
1842	8s 0d	7s 0d	3s 0d	1s 6d
1843	7s 0d	6s 6d	2s 6d	2s 6d

Table 1. Highest and lowest rates for malt and hops charged.

\* one single instance of 4s 6d

\*\* only one instance, all the rest are 8s 6d

\*\*\* one instance of 2s 6d

^ one instance of 8s 0d

^^ one instance of 1s 6d

^^^ one instance 10s 0d, one of 8s 6d

+ one instance 1s 0d

sibilities. There is a purchase to the value of £110:17:11 (£110.8958) in March 1831 sold to Green-slade, Bartlett & Co. of Bristol. Greenslades were corn merchants, so it is possible that they were purchasing an excess of one of Thomas' corn crops, such as wheat or barley. However, it is known that they purchased malt from Samuel Burston of North Petherton,<sup>7</sup> so it is quite possible that this is a record of a malt sale. It is difficult to work out what the rate might have been (given that it is such an odd amount) and therefore the number of bushels, - it could well be that a discount had already been applied. In the end he allowed a further 9s 3d (£0.4625), though the bill was paid in the same year. If it was malt, it must have amounted to some 250 bushels.

The other large 'Sundry' sale was in 1830, to Joseph Cookin of London, and amounted to £97:10:0 (£97.50). No date was shown against the payment, so it is not pos-

sible to see how promptly it was paid. I have been unable to discover what line of business Joseph was in, but, again it seems likely that it was a purchase of malt by a corn factor. If so, this too would have been well over 200 bushels. Neither of these customers is mentioned again, leaving doubt as to the reason more was not subsequently purchased. Perhaps it did not come up to the expected quality, or perhaps Thomas had simply sold off some of an excess and did not want to repeat it regularly. (Unlike Samuel Burston, he may have given his regular customers priority.) Maybe he just had a good barley harvest when others had not had one.

The malt seems to have bagged up in half bushels. John Legg purchased 'one sack' on 30 January 1834, for which he was charged 3s 6d, half of the 7s 0d others were charged per bushel at the same date. (See below, 'Other Sales', for how he monitored his sacks - themselves a valuable asset.)

Year	Malt in bushels	Hops in pounds
1827	601.00	151.00
1828	1743.25	387.25
1829	751.02	228.00
1830	1194.25	263.25
1831	2203.75	352.50
1832	2816.00	345.75
1833	1423.75	240.50
1834	583.00	160.75
1835	1211.75	179.75
1836	1043.50	242.50
1837	922.25	201.50
1838	507.25	90.50
1839	890.75	118.50
1840	517.50	68.75
1841	224.50	53.25
1842	107.00	71.50
1843	20.50	11.50
Total	16761.02	3166.75

*Table 2. Sales of Malt and hops per annum, quantities.*

*N.B. This does not include the quantities which may be in 'Sundries', so the actual figure may be higher.*

Thomas was purchasing at least some of his hops from Bristol, most likely from a dealer there, or from further afield (coming via Bristol). The only evidence for this comes from a credit given to John Wippell of Bridgwater (listed in an 1822 directory as a carrier to Bristol, as well as a publican<sup>8</sup>) on 18 July 1831 when he 'allowed 3/3 Carriage for Pt Hops from Bristol'. This refers to a pocket of hops, the weight of which seems to have varied depending on how well they had been compressed into the sack, but figures between just over 1cwt and just over 2cwt were quoted by a dealer selling to maltster Samuel Burston at North Petherton in 1846 and 1848.<sup>9</sup> However, Thomas does not say how much he paid for the hops, what the actual quantity was, what the

variety was, or who supplied them. He must have bought them from a hop dealer in Bristol, or further beyond. What is interesting too, is that they were sent by carrier's cart rather than by sea (the port of Bridgwater was very busy at the time). He must have had a particular business relationship with John, (who purchased malt from Thomas for brewing in his pub), and perhaps it was also cheaper than sending it by ship (although he did have several customers in Bridgwater who owned ships).

The smallest amount of hops he sold was just a quarter of a pound (15 times between 1827 and 1838). These would seem to be either top-ups to amounts previously sold, or perhaps a form of dry-hopping? They were made along with small amounts of malt except in two cases when they were sold on their own. The largest amount he sold was 30lbs - to John Cridland, a retired member of the militia, in 1832. However, once again the Sundry lists may hide other, unobtainable details. (In comparison, Samuel Burston also had a smallest sale of a quarter of a pound - made 25 times between 1834 and 1849 (occasionally along with small amounts of malt, but often as stand-alone purchases), and a largest of 24lbs in 1845, so roughly similar.<sup>10</sup>)

Against some of the hop entries are the letters 'F', 'NF' 'S' and 'St'. It would seem likely that 'F' refers to Farnhams, so 'NF' might be new Farnhams. 'S' might be Sussex, but 'St' is intriguing, given that Somerset was still producing hops at that date. At Orchard Portman near Taunton there are various references to a hop crop between 1825 and 1845.<sup>11</sup> Examples of the numerous references are, 'F' - John Sibley 3 March 1832 (charged at 3s 0d per lb), 'NF' - Richard Taylor 19 December 1832 (charged at 3s 6d per lb), 'S' - John Street 17 December 1832 (charged at 2s 0d per lb), and 'St' - Henry Knight 5 December 1833 (charged at 2s 6d per lb, and followed by a purchase of 'F' hops on 16 December 1833 charged at 3s 6d per lb). Further, there are several examples of hops being sold to the same customer on the same day at different rates, though they are not usually defined (e.g. Charles Crane 18 February 1832 at 3s 0d and 2s 0d per pound). Crane's purchases were small amounts, (3.5 lbs and 2.5lbs) and they would appear to have been different varieties which he intended to mix when brewing the 8.5 bushels of malt he purchased at the same time. John Bellringer purchased two types on 9 June 1832, one of which was



marked 'F' for Farnhams and charged at 3s 0d per lb, a premium on the other variety which cost him only 2s 0d per lb. These totalled 5.5lbs and must have been mixed for use along with the 10 bushels of malt purchased.

The Farnham hops were sold to a variety of customers - farmers, a solicitor, grocer, butcher, boarding school owner, blacksmith and the gentry are amongst those represented.

### Other sales

Whilst the sales are mainly malt and hops, there are notes of other, farming-related items, for instance, a pair of fowl, a calf, pork, wheat, seed potatoes, reed, a hayknife and harness, cider, cheese, barrels, and lead. Some odd items were bell-metal, brass and copper which he sold to Richard Hiorns, an ironmonger in

Bridgwater (17 January 1843) and over 7cwt of iron to John Edney a blacksmith in Cannington on 18 January 1843 - perhaps clearing up his farmyard. A large number of farming items (such as a sheep rack on 3 March 1843 and a hayknife and harness on 3 April 1843) are sold towards the end of the period of the ledger, making it look possible that he was, indeed, selling off loose items to clear his farmyard - perhaps he already knew that his time at Chilton Trivet was coming to an end. The largest year for these sales was 1843, when he received £79:11:0 ½ (£79.5708). Whilst his next highest year had been 1832 (£31:17:10 ½ (£31.8936)), these had been for his produce, such as cider, bacon and beans.

He seemed to have kept a close eye on the hogshead sized barrels he sold his cider in, noting that they had been marked 'TH' on the brim (e.g. 10 July 1832, to publican Agur Powell), and carefully noting when they

Year	Total Malt	Total Hops	Extras	Sundries	Total
1827	251.8498	17.0436	0.0000	8.9375	277.8309
1828	682.9553	47.2373	0.0000	155.9617	886.1543
1829	319.9369	30.3306	0.0000	154.5625	504.8300
1830	505.1059	50.1999	18.3167	420.1937	993.8162
1831	933.3436	62.3619	1.0000	458.6394	1455.3449
1832	1195.7500	47.3437	31.8936	101.9125	1376.8998
1833	534.3937	37.4623	3.6979	107.3875	682.9414
1834	206.8000	24.3312	0.9500	26.7312	258.8124
1835	425.2375	25.1811	11.0853	33.1687	494.6726
1836	391.8500	32.0433	15.0406	66.3020	505.2359
1837	374.6312	28.8000	7.3750	17.3000	428.1062
1838	202.2937	10.8687	15.5041	14.3582	243.0247
1839	381.8687	14.8125	6.4000	47.6750	450.7562
1840	250.2375	9.2500	6.1375	60.6125	326.2375
1841	88.7125	9.2875	16.3825	4.3416	118.7241
1842	39.1000	9.2750	10.0353	14.5000	72.9103
1843	6.7625	1.3375	79.5708	11.7792	99.4500
1844	0.0000	0.0000	21.2604	7.1250	28.3854
1845	0.0000	0.0000	5.2667	0.0000	5.2667
Total	6790.8288	457.1661	249.9164	1711.4882	9209.3995

Table 3. Value of total sales in ledger (in £ decimal).

\* Extras were for non-malting items, such as farm produce.

+ The Sundries sales did not itemise exactly what they were for, so will include both malt and hops, and potentially a small element of other articles.

Year	Malt	Hops	Total known	Sundries	Grand Total
1827	251.8498	17.0436	268.8934	8.9375	277.8309
1828	682.9553	47.2373	730.1926	155.9617	886.1543
1829	319.9369	30.3306	350.2675	154.5625	504.8300
1830	505.1059	50.1999	555.3058	420.1937	975.4995
1831	933.3436	62.3619	955.7055	458.6394	1454.3449
1832	1195.7500	47.3437	1243.0937	101.9125	1345.0062
1833	534.3937	37.4623	571.8560	107.3875	679.2435
1834	206.8000	24.3312	231.1312	26.7312	257.8624
1835	425.2375	25.1811	450.4186	33.1687	483.5873
1836	391.8500	32.0433	423.8933	66.3020	490.1953
1837	374.6312	28.8000	403.4312	17.3000	420.7342
1838	202.2937	10.8687	213.1624	14.3582	227.5206
1839	38108687	14.8125	396.6812	47.6750	444.3562
1840	250.2375	9.2500	259.4875	60.6125	320.1000
1841	88.7125	9.2875	98.0000	4.3416	102.3416
1842	39.1000	9.2750	48.3750	14.5000	62.8750
1843	6.7625	1.3375	8.1000	11.7792	19.8792
1844	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	7.1250	7.1250
Total	6790.8288	457.1661	7247.9949	1711.4882	8959.4831

*Table 4. Value of sales, excluding items known not to be related to the malting business.*

had been returned. They were costly items which he could not afford to lose. In 1832 he noted the sale of a "large Cask" to one customer for £3:3:0 (£3.15). James Williams, a thatcher at Haygrove who made many purchases of malt and hops from Thomas, bought 2 barrels from him in 1836, valued at £1 each. Most of the cost of this was repaid by spars. Likewise, he seems to have monitored his sacks - he noted 'bag 100, 99, 38' (21 July 1834), 'sack no 10' (28 December 1833) where they were not returned, and charged for unreturned sacks on four occasions, at prices between £0:2:6 (£0.125) and £0:3:6 (£0.175) on top of the cost of the malt they contained. Given that his sacks contained a half bushel, they were worth just short of the same as the value of the malt they contained. Like the casks, sacks were a valuable commodity.

The other sales comprise mainly farming produce or implements. This included animals such as pigs, sheep and a calf, fowl and ducks, meat (so he must have been butchering his own animals), eels, crops such as excess

barley (mainly small amounts, the largest being 40 bushels), wheat, oats, peas, potatoes, seeds, hay and straw, dredge (a mix of oats, barley, wheat and peas), cheese and large amounts of cider (some 30 hogsheads between 1830 and 1845, but the vast majority from 1841 to 1843 and mainly to his publican customers). The implements included a pig's trough, a sheep rack (for hay), a hayknife, harness and breeching (the part which goes behind the horse to stop whatever is being pulled from catching the horse).

Something which was not mentioned was any sales of screenings/malt dust. Samuel Burston of North Petherton had noted sporadic sales of these to farmers, or those who had a farm in addition to their main occupation. It may be that Thomas did not have a sale for them, but more likely is that he was using them himself, to feed to his hens. Since they had no cost, there was no need to mention them in his ledger - unlike his sales to himself of malt and hops, which he needed to record for accounting/stocktaking purposes.

## The main credits

As someone who was making purchases from tradesmen and other farmers, it is to be expected that credits might be made for the bills of others. Sometimes these exceeded what they owed Thomas, but in the main they were less. Occasionally payments were made to recompense others, and charged against the debtors' bill. It is understandable that he occasionally did this for family, (for instance paying Henry Rowe's bill for keeping sheep for his brother Benjamin Hurman (14 April 1832)), but he also seems to have done this, perhaps as a favour, for his landlord, Charles Knight (seven times to various tradesmen between 1841 and 1843), and set against what Thomas owed Charles in rent for Chilton Trivet farm. (This also worked the opposite way round - in 1832 Thomas received £0:15:0 (£0.75) from William Gaze on behalf of Spaxton publican James Hext 'towards the sheep'.)

In many instances customers paid off part of their bills with Thomas in kind (e.g. 21 stamps from the postmaster Joseph Allen 30 March 1841 - he usually noted each stamp individually, such as 'a stamp to Bridgwater 1d'). Sometimes these were for his farming business, such as lime received from a lime-kiln owner and either used on the land, or perhaps for lime wash. At various times he purchased 'Grains' from publican brewers, and these would have been their spent grains which he would have used as pig feed. Sometimes people paid in labour (e.g. shearing 170 sheep, 14 October 1833). An interesting group of these credits went to John Chamberlain who kept the Plough public house in Bridgwater. Twice in December 1839 and once in May 1840, he is credited for a total of 3 days labour. It is difficult to see quite what sort of labour this might be, given that Thomas must have employed his own agricultural labourers, unless it was to brew for him - perhaps his usual brewer was unwell and unable to do it. One unusual reference comes in 1832 when he credits a neighbouring farmer, John Long for 'Damage done in potatoes by Pigs years since'. It was evidently something John Long was not going to let go!

All these credits might be seen as fairly understandable - give and take. However, there is another aspect. There are various references which point to a shortage of coin. '... left unpaid for want of silver ...' (on both 2 January 1829 and 29 June 1833, and subsequently reimbursed).

In 1845, '... Rec'd from H Rowe as he had it, 1/0' - Rowe was a tailor, but was paying on behalf of his local publican Henry May. One is left with an image of the three sat in May's public house in Combrich, while the latter desperately raided his till and pockets for the extra shilling he owed Thomas, until finally Henry Rowe offered to pay it (and was no doubt pleased to have the credit in the pub!).

The weather was always a crucial issue, affecting harvests and therefore the availability (or not) of certain goods. In 1825 there had been a crash in South American shares, and in 1826 things reached a low and a bank crisis ensued. There was a slow recovery up to 1834 when there was a new government. 1837 saw an American 'bubble', which proved to be bad for Britain as there had been considerable investment in America. When Thomas started investing in the West of England and South Wales District Bank at their new Bridgwater branch, he regularly carefully noted the name of the manager and sometimes the individual clerk he had seen, and was clearly not used to dealing with banks. He noted when he paid a cheque in on the 9 December 1841, 'I Thomas Hurman paid How the cashier at the new Bank £200 ... but still he holds the check and said it was their way of doing Bussiness'. The next time he paid in a cheque he wrote a similar comment, but deleted the last part afterwards, obviously feeling less suspicious about the safety of leaving the cheque with the bank. (I believe it was common at this time for the cheque to be returned, marked as having been paid.)

One substantial area of Thomas' expenditure was on coal. The earliest ref was on 26 July 1832, and the latest 15 November 1838. During this period he used just three coal merchants, all of them in Bridgwater; - William Thomas, a coal merchant and publican, Agur Powell, and Captain George Bryant, a coal merchant and ship owner. Whilst some of the coal may be for domestic use, it is clear that some was for malting, as the quantities are more than purely domestic. There is reference to 'stone' coal, a hard anthracite which was useful as it did not produce the normal amount of smoke and soot. 'Swansey' (i.e. Swansea in South Wales) coal was also likely to be anthracite. In the main the purchases were in 'chaldrons' a dry, capacity measure of coal which varied in weight, but is generally thought in London and the south to equate to somewhere around 25 - 28 cwt.<sup>12</sup> Part of this was that the tax was organised

on the chaldron, so it was in the interests of the coal merchant to make it as heavy as possible. There is evidence in Thomas' ledger that on one occasion at least, it may have equated to 30cwt, though it may be that it was cheaper to buy in chaldrons rather than cwt sacks. In 1835 the Weights and Measures Act sought to rectify this anomaly by ruling that coal should be sold by weight. Despite this there are few references to Thomas receiving coal in cwts until the last two purchases in 1838.

It is odd that there are no references to coal after 1838, since Thomas was still producing malt. However, it may well be that these records were kept elsewhere. The references in the ledger are credits to his customers who were purchasing from him. George Bryant did purchase a small amount of malt from him, Agur Powell seems to have bought some if not all of his brewing malt for his pub, and likewise William Thomas bought some malt, ranging up to 50 bushels at a time. Thomas seems to have changed his supplier partly on price, but it may also have been that he used different grades (two purchases on the same day of 1¼ chaldrons each, but charged at different rates - 8 November 1836) and also wished to try out other types (a purchase of 'Swansey' coal from William Thomas in June 1836, right in the middle of purchases from Capt George Bryant - perhaps he had been persuaded to try it out). 'Heath' coal was mentioned once (26 October 1835), but it has not been possible to identify this - perhaps it might have been from Coalpit Heath in South Gloucestershire?

As it is therefore possible that other purchases were made between 1832 and 1838, but not recorded here, the figures given per season must be considered with that proviso. Taking the malting season to be between October and May each year, and given the variation in the weight of a chaldron, it is possible to look at the comparative figures for the years from 1832 and 1838. In Table 5 I have given figures using a calculation of both 25cwt (the lowest likely) and 30cwt (the highest)

Given the low figures for the seasons '33-4, '34-5 and '38-9, there must have been other purchases. Even if some coal had been reserved from the '32-3 season, it would not have covered the following two seasons. The total recorded purchases for the six complete seasons amount to around 1,000cwt (50 tons or 50.8 tonnes). (Domestic use would have probably equated to 4-5 tons

Year	at 25 cwt	Tonnes	at 30 cwt	Tonnes
1832-3	310.25	15.76	371.50	18.87
1833-4	54.00	2.74	64.00	3.25
1834-5	31.25	1.58	37.50	1.90
1836-6	201.00	10.21	238.50	12.11
1836-7	175.00	8.89	210.00	10.67
1837-8	150.00	7.62	180.00	9.14
1838 (Nov only)	71.00	3.60	71.00	3.60

*Table 5. Amount of coal purchased between 1832 and 1838.*

per annum, given that he would be heating a large farmhouse, and firing for cooking, a brewing copper and washing copper - wood might also have been used to supplement this.)

The cost for the coal at various times is recorded as 11d a bag (8 April 1834), 11d per cwt (24 October 1835), and for a chaldron between £1:0:0 (£1.00) and £1:10:0 (£1.50) (several instances of both). The stone coal was charged at £1:8:0 (£1.40) per chaldron, while the 'Swansey' at £1:10:0 (£1.50) was amongst the dearest. The single mention of Heath coal was the cheapest at £0:19:0 (£0.95) for a chaldron.

### Other credits

Other large items included alcohol and meat. Whilst it seems that Thomas butchered animals on the farm, (see 'Other Sales' above), he seems to have purchased sometimes quite large quantities of meat, the vast majority from a butcher at Westonzoyland (near Chedzoy). He was not simply re-selling from a cheap source, as the dates and type of meat do not coincide. The purchases and sales cover 1835-43 (purchases) and 1832-45 (sales). The sale of mutton to John Edney in 1845 would seem to imply that he was still on the Chilton Trivet farm, or had one somewhere. By far his largest purchase of meat was 178 lbs of pork in 1843. Given that he would have kept some, if not the majority of his meat for his own use, and that at the time his household com-

prised 6 adults,<sup>13</sup> this seems a large quantity - perhaps some was to be preserved. His biggest purchases came from October to the run-up to Christmas and the New Year each year (e.g. 1836 when he purchased 222lbs of beef, pork, mutton and suet, followed by a further 82lbs of beef on 5 January 1837, perhaps for Twelfth Night).

The alcohol purchases show someone who enjoyed his drink and perhaps entertaining. As he was already producing his own beer and cider, these purchases added spirits to his range. Gin, rum, port, brandy and sherry were all represented by occasional purchases. Brandy was rare (three purchases in 1832, 1838 and 1843 and amounting to just five quarts overall). Gin was infrequent, but purchased in larger quantity (three purchases in 1833 totalling six quarts, three purchases in 1841 amounting to six quarts, and two purchases in 1843 totalling nine quarts). Rum was a little more 'regular' - two purchases in 1832 of a total of four quarts one pint, two in 1833 of over two quarts, one in each of 1838 and 1841 of two quarts, and finally one in 1843 of one quart. Sherry ('Sherie') was purchased in 1833, 1840, 1841 and 1843 (two, four, one, and two quarts respectively). Port was the biggest quantity, represented in 1833 by five gallons, three quarts and one pint in two purchases, and one quart in 1843. The timings of these purchases varied throughout the year, so were no doubt made according to availability. Many of the purchases were made from Thomas May, a publican-brewer and Exciseman in Bridgwater - an interesting combination! No doubt Thomas felt that these would be legal, the genuine article and less likely to have been adulterated.

One item was the purchase of one pair of "Small Clothes" and "To trimings and makeing the same" from Nathaniel Lovering on 27 February 1838. He was charged 19s 5d (£0.97). Nathaniel owned a cottage and garden in Cannington on the 1839 Tithe, and was shown on the Alehouse Recognizances as a tailor when he stood surety for one of the Cannington publicans.

### **The customers**

Since Thomas identified the place his customers lived, it has been relatively easier to track down the occupations of most of his customers. 300 separate customers were noted, and of these it has been possible to identify the occupations of 277. The 'unknown' are generally

those who must have died before the 1841 census, had no children baptised in the place they were living, or an occupation recorded on marriage. In some cases there are tantalising details such as being recorded on the electoral register as being able to vote by virtue of owning or renting a cottage, but without any idea of what work they did. For others there is almost too much information - for example, the record simply marked 'Gould, Bridgwater'. A local directory for the year following the sales showed there were three Goulds in Bridgwater who were variously a butcher, a blacksmith and a fruiterer, there was also a Mary Gold who ran a pub. The butcher or blacksmith would seem to fit the bill for the quantities he sold them, but which was correct? A few are recorded with possible occupations. One example of the problems here is Iset Dowdle of Spaxton. She was the widow of George, a blacksmith and farrier who died in 1825. Her sizable purchases were made after his death. It seems unlikely that she was continuing as a blacksmith, though she may have employed others, and may have had sons continuing father's business. Far more likely, given the quantity of her purchases, was that she was running a small beerhouse, but it is not certain. Richard How of Broomfield could not be traced, but as he was credited for shearing a sizable number of sheep and lambs, he would seem to have been either an agricultural labourer or a farmer. A farmer should have been easier to trace, and given that he made 15 purchases of malt this must have been his occupation, but it cannot be proved.

Of Thomas's customers, 70 lived in the large parish of Cannington, while a further 78 came from the town of Bridgwater (as it was then). (See below, 'Area covered', for further discussion.)

The known occupations of the customers can be split into four distinct groups. These are: - farmers and agricultural labourers, tradesmen, professionals and gentry/landowners. The largest group is the tradesmen/women, with 120 definite identifications and 12 possibles (including those in associated trades such as publicans, and other maltsters). Those included range from the humblest shoemaker through butchers and bakers to coal merchants, ship owners and iron-founders. Those at the top end were undoubtedly very well-off, and in later years were able to retire and call themselves 'Independant'. Examples of people in this class follow. Frederick Axford of Bridgwater came from

Main occupation	Positive	Possible	Total
Agriculture/farming	101	11	112
Associated trades	37	5	42
Independent/gentry	12	1	13
Professional	20	0	20
Tradesmen	83	7	90
Total	253	24	277
Unknown			23

*Table 6. Occupations.*

a family which owned the London & Bridgwater Shipping Co between 1825 & 1847 and were coastal traders with fast schooners.<sup>14</sup> In 1822 he was described, (with Charles Axford) as an ironmonger and general merchant at the Cornhill, and also a timber merchant on the Quay.<sup>15</sup> By 1830, he was a brickmaker, as well as a merchant and timber dealer, and in 1839, a merchant and Lloyds agent at the Quay.<sup>16</sup> William Elson of Cannington occupied the Blackmore Mills quite close to Chilton Trivet. He was a miller and probably came from a milling family, as a William Elson had inherited a mill at Stogursey from an uncle (also a William Elson) which he sold in 1822.<sup>17</sup> Although always described as a miller, he may well have later ventured into selling malt as well, as the 1851 census showed a maltster visitor staying with him. Over a period of 11 years (1835-1846) he made a total of 15 purchases from Thomas, and was credited by Thomas for carrying 500 bushels of malt to Bridgwater for him. In turn, he purchased from Thomas barley, wheat, mutton, beef, cider, potatoes, straw and lead. His malt purchases were fairly small, of a size consistent with brewing for himself.

The next largest group were the farmers, and those connected with agriculture. The size of the farms varied from those with just a few acres, to those who must have made quite a comfortable life for themselves. They included Thomas' own father, and four of his brothers. Richard Brice of Charlinch made 45 purchases of malt and hops, and 6 purchases of hops only between 1827 and 1842. His average purchase was 5 bushels of malt, but twice he purchased 16 bushels. He made 32 pur-

chases of hops in total. As there was a gap in hop purchases in 1832, though during that time he bought 113 bushels of malt (- the largest amount in a single year), he evidently had another source for that year. He and Thomas sold each other various items during the time, all of a farming nature. (See below under 'Lifestyle' for discussion of loans.) George Bryant, also of Charlinch started off well - ordering a total of 56 bushels of malt and a quantity of cider during 6 months in 1832. Thomas calculated his bill at the end of the year and it came to £29:16:3 (£29.81). When no payment was forthcoming after six months, Thomas must have started to ask questions, and received in part payment just under 20 bushels of barley valued at £2:19:0 (£2.95). After another year passed with nothing forthcoming, Thomas got the Sherriff's Officer (who just happened to be his landlord) to chase it for him. This resulted in George being arrested and 'brushed off'. A cash amount of £26:17:0 (£26.85) was handed over to Thomas, who noted he was still 3d short, but decided he was unlikely to get it, and reluctantly put 'all right T H' against the entry.

At the other end of the farming scale, Tryphena Pounsford of Westonzoyland made her purchases between 1831 and 1832. She was recorded on the 1841 census as a farmer, with three children, but was already a widow when she became his customer (he noted it beside her name). Her purchases were small, just one or two pounds worth at a time, and as they were recorded on the Sundries list, may not have been for malt.

The professional classes made up only 20 customers. They included a vicar, surgeon, solicitor, and a banker. The latter may have been a cousin or more distant relative - Richard Hurman (the son of Richard and Sarah Hurman) was only two years older than Thomas, and was born in Chedzoy. In 1851 he was described as a retired banker, and his (visiting) son as a tea dealer and commercial traveller. The vicar was the Rev Samuel Starkey of Charlinch, the son of John Starkey.<sup>18</sup> His purchases of malt and hops started at the end of 1834 and went up to the end of 1837. He made 47 separate purchases of between two and four bushels per month; the final year saw his largest total purchase. The ratio of malt to hops was 2:1. He paid his previous year's bill in the first four months of the following year, with the exception of his last bill, which waited until the end of 1840 for payment.

Finally, the smallest class was the gentry/land-owners/those of independent means, with a total of 13 customers. An example of this group was John Cridland of Milverton. He was a retired lieutenant, whose company had been disbanded in 1808.<sup>19</sup> He had evidently died by the 1841 census which only recorded his 80 year-old widow. He made just one purchase of malt and hops from Thomas, in April 1832, but it was substantial - 30 bushels of malt and 30 lbs of hops. This must have been for more than domestic use, and one is left wondering if he was running a pub in his retirement, though there is no evidence for this. (Using the 1841 census, his household would have consisted of his wife and three other females.) In contrast, George Bailey of Cannington was a landowner renting out to others. He made eight known purchases of malt and hops from 1832 to 1834 (as well as being recorded in the Sundries list for eleven undefined purchases between 1828 and 1831 - some of which must have been malt as discount was given). His purchases were small - usually three bushels of malt to 1.5lbs of hops.

Included in the tradesmen category were publicans, maltsters, and others connected in some way with his own trade. Publicans and beerhouse keepers amounted to 38 and were the largest single group of tradesmen/women. Other maltsters, cornfactors and brewers numbered only four. Looking firstly at the latter group, John Gibbs had a malthouse in Wembdon (then just outside Bridgwater), and had extended it by adding a brewery. The date of the building of the brewery is uncertain, but as he was described as a maltster and brewer in 1839 it must have been built between 1830 and then.<sup>20</sup> The date of his three purchases is therefore interesting (1830/31). They are recorded in the Sundries lists, but as discount is given were almost certainly for malt. The first amount was fairly modest, at a value of £5:2:0 (£5.10), which would amount to exactly 12 bushels of malt at the then going rate of 8s 6d (£0.42). In July 1831 Gibbs made two purchases amounting to £21:5:0 (£21.25) each. This would equate to 50 bushels a time. Why would a maltster be making these purchases? They are too small to be fulfilling some sort of extra demand, and they were regular, spaced out at a fortnight apart. What is intriguing is the payment note against the last entry. It seems that the final amount of £21:5:0 was repaid in kind by 30 bushels of malt and 20 bushels of wheat. Perhaps Gibbs was already experimenting with brews and took malt from Thomas to make up a shortfall to his regular

customers, or took a different kind of malt from him to that which he himself produced to use in his experiments. If this is true, then it would seem that he had already built his brewhouse. By the 1841 census Gibbs was described as a farmer, and his son as a maltster (-the mention of wheat shows that evidently he had been farming in addition to his other activities). John Govier of Kingston St Mary was also a maltster and brewer. He made only one purchase, which was recorded in the Sundries list. This was made in 1842 and was worth £12. Given that this date coincides with Thomas selling off items prior to moving out, it is possible that it was not malt. However, although Thomas brewed his own beer, it would seem unlikely that he would be selling what must have been domestic scale brewing equipment to a commercial brewer. Furthermore, Thomas purchased additional supplies of his own malt and hops after the Govier sale, so was clearly still brewing himself.

The publicans generally did not purchase hops from Thomas, suggesting they had an alternative supplier. An example of these customers is William Hex, who ran the Bull and Butcher in Bridgwater. Between 1827 and 1841 he made 44 purchases, averaging over 30 bushels a time (a total of 1,340 bushels). His largest purchases were of 60 bushels, and his smallest 10 bushels at a time. There was a gap in purchases between the end of 1834 and the beginning of 1838. The answer for this lies in that he was also a customer of maltster Samuel Burston of North Petherton, and it was precisely in these years that he purchased from Burston. Burston's charge per bushel was cheaper than Thomas's, but when it rose to the same rate, Hex switched back to Thomas. Thomas evidently sometimes used Hex's pub when in Bridgwater - he twice paid Hex for 'faring' (food, and perhaps drink) and bartered with him for gin. Thomas May of the Lamb, and an Excise Officer, has been mentioned above ('Other Credits'). His purchases were made between 1831 and 1843. He made 72 purchases, amounting to a total of 3,395.5 bushels of malt, averaging at over 47 bushels at a time. His largest purchases were of 200 bushels (once), 170 (once), 120 (also once) and 100 bushels (16 times), and his smallest just eight bushels (four times). May purchased no hops from Thomas, and must have had a good supply as he was credited five times for small amounts of hops from 1840 (e.g. '3lbs of hops at 4/-', '16lbs of hops at 4/-'). Although this is not noted, perhaps he was supplying

Thomas with a particular variety for his own use? Another publican of note was James Bussell who combined running the Swan in Friarn St, Bridgwater with being the keeper of the Borough Goal. His four malt purchases in 1828 amounted to 190 bushels, with the largest at 100 bushels, and the smallest at ten. Thomas was evidently in awe of his secondary occupation - Bussell was a poor payer and Thomas noted sadly beside his final payment 'Loosed by Bussell, £24:19:0'. One wonders if Bussell was chosen for his secondary occupation because he was physically intimidating? He would have been known to Thomas's usual ally, the Sherriff's Officer, - perhaps this made it difficult for Thomas? Whatever the reason, he did not pursue the debt.

### **Bad debts v extended credit**

Poor payment on the part of his customers was not generally a problem for Thomas. However, as the example of Bussell showed, there were the occasional difficulties. With George Bryant of Charlinch he had felt able to pursue the debt, and relatively soon after it had been run up (some tradesmen let him wait some time for his money, but he evidently trusted them). A further example of the difficulties he had was Thomas Cullen of Bridgwater. Unfortunately it has not been possible to identify his occupation, though he may have been a publican from the size of his purchase. He made just the one purchase of 80 bushels of malt in 1831, and Thomas must have been suspicious as he noted beside it '6 months' (perhaps Cullen already had reputation in the town). At first things did not seem too bad, as he paid £25 in the seventh month (out of a now total bill of £34). After 10 months, Thomas took £3:5:0 (£3.25) in cash and 'A Watch, A Chain, 2 seals 2 Keys & A Guard untill the Ballance be Paid £5:15'. At the end of the year the watch must have broken down, and Thomas paid 3s 6d (£0.17) in having it repaired. A further repair was necessary, and both these amounts and the cost of posting a letter to Cullen were added to the outstanding bill. However, no further money was ever forthcoming. He does not appear to have pursued this bill. William Russell of Bridgwater may have been a publican as his purchases were in multiples of 10 bushels at a time, and he only once purchased hops ('F' hops) from Thomas. He also specified ale malt on several occasions. His first purchases in 1830 were paid very promptly, but then he

seems to have slipped. His final unpaid bill by the end of May 1831 was over £23 and seems to have remained unpaid. There is no note to say whether or not Thomas pursued the bill, and no note to himself that he had accepted that it would not be paid. He must have been aware of some obvious circumstance, so did not need to remind himself. Possible reasons for this might be that either Russell had died, or his business had failed and he had moved away. (He did have one customer die on him - William House, a grocer and wine and spirit merchant of Bridgwater. He waited for the estate to be disbursed from the will, and noted the received payment in goods.)

Thomas Willmitt of Enmore was a publican (though not apparently at the Enmore Inn). He made 45 purchases of malt only between 1828 and 1836, averaging 31 bushels a time. Again, Thomas seems to have had suspicions and noted 'two months' beside his first purchases - but these were quickly paid, well within the time limit. Things went swimmingly and Thomas even loaned him £20 - witnessed by two others (including the landlord of the Enmore Inn), and seemingly repaid promptly. This was followed the next year by a £16 loan. By 1833 he seems to have been just like any other customer, with credits being given for port, sherry and keep of cattle. In 1835 Thomas noted that Willmitt's loan had now reached £100 on a bond, and this seems to have been the start of the slippery slope. (Perhaps the loan itself shows that Willmitt was having cash-flow problems, yet he had gained Thomas's trust.) Thomas continued to sell him malt, but the payments were not so prompt, stretching out over 6 months or more. By the end of 1836 he still owed Thomas £11:5:0 for malt, which does not appear to have been paid off. The final entry for that year shows that he had to get Charles Knight, (his landlord and the Sherriff's Officer) to recover the £100 and interest of £7:17:6 (£7.87), and pay another of his customers, Thomas Symes (a solicitor in Bridgwater), a bill 'for the above Suit' of £4:13:0 (£4.65). It had been an expensive lesson.

The reasons for his trust can be seen from some of his customers who did pay up, but after some time. The Rev. Samuel Starkey's three year credit was noted above. He would have been seen as honourable and creditworthy due to his profession and standing in the community. John Baker, of Cokers Farm, Wembdon, ran up a bill of almost £6 over 1832, but did not pay it until the beginning of 1835. William Elson, the miller at Cannington mentioned above, did quite a bit of business



with Thomas over several years, purchasing some extra items from him and transporting some of Thomas's malt. His last recorded purchase was in 1843 (perhaps at the end of Thomas's time at Chilton Trivet), but it was almost two years (1845) before he finally paid up, meaning that he had had some credit stretching back as far as 1838. Thomas must have been confident that he would pay him eventually. Richard Hiorns, an ironmonger in Bridgwater, had credit starting from 1835 until he settled a bill of over £32 in 1844. Hiorns did business with Thomas, and the first few of his purchases in 1834 had been repaid from what Thomas owed him.

Thomas clearly extended considerable credit to some customers, and was suspicious of certain others. Being born and brought up in the area he would have been aware of the reputation of many of his customers. In addition, at the market and in pubs he must have heard talk which helped him form an opinion on how trustworthy some other customers were. The likes of Thomas Willmitt and James Bussell were the exception, rather than the rule.

### **1830 Beer Act**

A study of the total value of sales (Table 3) show the best years to have been 1831 and 1832. This coincided with a national upsurge of beershops following the 1830 Beer Act. On the face of it, only one customer has been identified as being a beershop owner - James Cavill (who is discussed below). Iset Dowdle may have been one, her sizable purchases were made in 1836, well after the Act. A study of the named list customers at the end of 1830 and in 1831, (so once the Act began to make an impression), and eliminating those who appeared also on the Sundry lists before 1830, shows that Thomas had 17 'new' ones who do not appear to have purchased from him before. Of these four were farmers, one was a miller, two were gentry, two had unknown occupations, one was his new landlord Charles Knight, and seven were publicans. Only half of these made purchases after 1833. In addition, a total of 59 'new' customers started on the Sundries list, but since we do not know if these were malt and hop purchases, it is difficult to come to any hard conclusions. Four can be ignored because they were a brewer or corn merchant, as can a publican who had been active since 1822. James Cavill of Cannington did give his occupation as owner of a beershop on the

1841 census, but he only purchased from Thomas in 1831 and 1832. His five purchases were small, costing no more than £1:6:0 (£1.30) at most, and usually under £1. Cavill must have either bought malt from someone else after 1832, or bought in beer. One was a publican in Bridgwater, who ran the Kings Arms Tavern in 1839. This was a sizable house, so had he started small in a beershop and been so successful he could afford larger premises, or was he already a publican in the town? Those left had a variety of occupations, ranging from gentry, attorney and lawyers, though farmers, to the general tradesmen such as nurseryman, miller, baker and tanner. It is tantalising, since some of these did get discount, and did spend enough money to be buying in larger than domestic amounts. Excluding those mentioned above, eight customers did get discount; - five farmers, a labourer, a tanner and one of independent means. In addition, 21 made sizable purchases, large enough to have been for more than domestic use. These comprised nine farmers, an accountant, an attorney, a butcher, a cabinet maker, a coal merchant, two millers, a ship's master, a solicitor's clerk, one of independent means, and two whose occupations are unknown. Some of these seem to be unlikely candidates for running a beershop. Only four of those making a sizable purchase or attracting discount made any purchases after 1832, although the case of James Cavill above shows that some of these beershops were only making small purchases. It would all seem to support a theory that the Act did not have any long-term effect on malt sales, even if it did boost them for a short while afterwards. With the odd possible exception such as Iset Dowdle, any local beershop owners that had survived after 1832 would seem to have been purchasing beer direct from brewers, rather than brewing themselves.

### **Area covered**

The vast majority of Thomas' customers lived within a close 15 mile radius of Cannington. From Stolford and Kilton on the coast immediately to the north, the main area swept round to Monksilver and Clatworthy in the west, through Milverton, skirting Taunton (where there were plenty of other maltsters) to Broomfield and North Curry in the south, through Langport to Street and Godney in the east, circling round to Wedmore and ending at Highbridge, back on the coast, to the north. The physical centre of this area is Bridgwater itself. Since he

was a farmer and would have gone to the markets in the town, it seems likely that much of his business, including that of his malting trade, would have been done there. This is lent some credence by the number of references to him crediting landlords in the town for food and drink - the market and pubs must have been buzzing with local news and gossip, and farmers generally doing business between themselves on market days. 78 of his customers came from the town itself (excluding areas such as Wembdon, Durleigh and East Bower which have now become swallowed up by the town, but which were then separate), while 70 came from Cannington parish. Chedzoy, a much smaller and less-populated parish, still contributed 14 customers, and doubtless he was well-known in the area, as a further 37 came from nearby parishes such as Sutton Mallet, Westonzoyland and Bawdrip.

Outside of this immediate area were just six customers, all recorded in the Sundries pages. One of these, Nicholas Lukey of Monmouthshire, was, in fact, the master of the Somersetshire, a vessel which plied between Bristol and Bridgwater, so the contact with him was through the port of Bridgwater. His purchase was, unusually, paid for on the same day. One customer was at Ubley on the Mendip Hills, three were in Bristol, and one in London. The Bristol customers only purchased from him once each. One of these was the corn factors Greenslade Bartlett & Co. and the cost of their purchase (over £110) would seem to indicate that they were, indeed, purchasing malt. Another marked simply 'Paris Bristol', was worth over £38 and no credit for payment of the bill was recorded. Although it is not known for certain, it is likely to be another malt purchase by either a corn factor or brewer. The third was William Venn, who it has not been possible to identify. He purchased a quite small amount so was evidently not a corn factor or brewer. Joseph Cookin of London is also a mystery. At a value of over £97, he was also likely to be purchasing a large quantity of malt, and may also have been a corn factor. Both the Paris and William Venn entries have the letters 'R H' beside them. Although he had several customers whose initials these could have been, none have been credited for carriage. Also, it does not appear to relate to any known family member (other than the banker Richard Hurman) who might have arranged the sale or transport, so their significance remains unknown.

The percentage of his customers who were outside the (old) county of Somerset amounted to just over 1% of his

total customers. Unfortunately, because they were all in the Sundries pages, it is not possible to calculate the percentage of malt and hop sales which went outside the county. The only comparison which might be made is the value of these sales compared to the totals for malt, hops and sundries (and which therefore may contain elements of items other than malt and hops). On this basis, under 3% went outside the county, reflecting the size of the purchases from the Bristol corn factors and London. The sale to Wales was negligible. All this serves to show that the vast majority of Thomas's sales were within a local area.

A comparison with Samuel Burston of North Petherton shows that Burston had a much higher reliance on a few, large customers outside of the county. He sold to six customers outside the county (Bath was then included with Somerset), amounting to 2% of his customers, so fairly similar to Thomas. However, they purchased 47% of his malt, amounting to 44% of the value of his malt sales, and 43% of his total business sales. The reason for the difference in percentage between malt and value was that he was discounting for the large quantities that these customers were buying. With almost half his malt production going outside the county, Burston was relying heavily on non-local sales, and so was open to problems when the railway improved transport and allowed these customers to be choosier about quality and economics. 23% of his malt sales went to Liverpool and 18% to Wales. Thomas's sale to Wales was tiny and there were no sales to Liverpool. Burston's malt production generally was higher than Thomas's. The former was malting as his main occupation, whereas Thomas was primarily a farmer whose malting business was a useful add-on. So Thomas had a good local customer base and was selling perhaps excess in a good year further afield, but was not reliant on these sales. Burston may have been forced by local competition in North Petherton to go further afield, or perhaps was attracted by the 'quick buck' approach - fast bulk sales compensating for slightly less revenue. However, he did not have the strength in his local customer base which Thomas had.

### **Lifestyle**

The credits show something of the lifestyle Thomas and his family would have had. He would have had income from the rent of his farm in Chedzoy, as well as that raised through the Chilton Trivet farm, and land he

owned elsewhere. He made his own beer; the farm provided milk, cheese, meat, potatoes, cider and other necessary foodstuffs, and he was able to use some of his malt sales to subsidize the purchase of extra supplies if these were not sufficient, as well as luxury goods such as spirits. He employed two female servants (no doubt essential to help his wife with the running of the farmhouse and perhaps making the cheese and the other traditionally female tasks on a farm), and a young agricultural labourer who lived-in. He may have employed other men to work for him (the 1851 census shows his successor as employing eight men), and most probably employed John Headford seasonally to malt for him.

The amounts invested and borrowed at the bank show someone who kept a close eye on finances. From 1841 he invested amounts of money, sometimes for well over a year at a time. (However, some of this was trust money for his brothers - one amount of £2,000 falls into this category.) The bulk of his investments seem to come in 1843 and 1844 and may tie in with receipts from the sale of some of his farming items. For instance, over 1844 he invested a total of £2,050 of his own money in nine tranches. The more substantial single amounts (e.g. £1,600 - recorded in 1848) came after 1843, by which time he would appear to have left the farm. When he did borrow from the bank it tended to be only for a short period of time - only two months maximum whilst he was at the farm (five occasions between 1841 and the end of 1842). In addition, he was clearly seen as someone who had spare cash to lend (as the case of Thomas Willmitt showed). One person he did borrow from was farmer Richard Brice of Charlinch. In 1835 he borrowed £300 for just one month, in 1841 £200 for five months (for which he paid 4% interest), and in 1842 £50. In return Richard borrowed much smaller amounts from Thomas - £45 at the end of 1835, and £5 in 1842. Whilst the short-term borrowings show something of the problems encountered when there was a shortfall in cash, his investments far outweigh this and give the impression of a comfortable existence where there is generally an excess of cash, or goods which can be bartered against bills.

### **Relationship with landlord**

There has already been some sight of Thomas' relationship with Charles Knight, his landlord from 1830.<sup>21</sup> Knight was the same age as Thomas, and was an auc-

tioneer in Bridgwater, as well as being Sherriff's Officer and having considerable investment in land in the area. He first appeared in Thomas's ledger in 1831 when he purchased both malt and hops. Interestingly, he did not appear on the 'Sundry' lists, so it appears that Thomas knew he would be making several sales to him and accorded him a list of his own immediately. Thomas had got Knight to act on his behalf as Sherriff's Officer in order to reclaim money owed him. (See the cases of Thomas Willmitt and George Bryant mentioned above under 'Bad Debts v extended credit' and 'The Customers' respectively.) However he sometimes did not pursue debts. Between 1841 and 1843 Knight had got him to pay various tradesmen's bills for him, and set these against what Thomas owed him in rent. At the end of April 1843 Thomas noted that he had received £47 from Knight in sorting out the rent for the farm up to the previous Christmas. He had clearly 'lent' more than he owed. In 1840 he had lent Knight £500 at 4% interest for 16 days, and shortly afterwards borrowed £250 at 4.5% which he repaid via Knight's account with his own bank. Knight purchased many items from him besides malt and hops, including cider, fowl, potatoes, oats and mutton. Thomas evidently kept on good terms with him after he left the farm, as he received loads of dung for his new farm after he left Chilton Trivet. Their relationship was clearly one of mutual trust and respect.

### **Thomas as a brewer**

Over the years 1827 to 1842 Thomas recorded 133 purchases of malt and hops from himself. These vary in ratio between 1 bushel of malt to ½ lb hops, (i.e. 2:1) to 1:1, though usually somewhere between the two. His first purchase of the year was often 1st January, or very shortly afterwards, making him his own first customer of the year. (As might be expected, he was also his most prompt payer!) His purchases varied between just 12 bushels (1838) and 84.75 (1827) pa, with an average that was just short of 41 bushels pa. These purchases might have been affected by the availability of cider which he also made. It may well be that in years of a good apple crop he did not need to brew so much beer. His average malt purchase works out to 4.9 bushels, while hops averaged 3.85lbs.

On five occasions he referred to 'NF' hops, so was using these sometimes, but did not mention the other three

types he seems to have sold. He noted on several occasions 'spent hops' and 'with spent hops', along with purchases of his own malt (e.g. 11 April 1828, 23 April 1841 and several after). No charge was set against these hops, and no weight given, simply a note in the margin. It would seem unlikely that he was re-using his spent hops, but perhaps, rather like people drying out and re-using tea-bags, he was, and made these notes so that he could refer back to them! Since he occasionally purchased spent grains from publican brewer customers of his (1832 and 1837), it would seem likely that he usually fed his pigs with his own. Unusually, there was a reference to yeast. Thomas credited one of his regular customers, Thomas May of Bridgwater (the publican-brewer and Exciseman) for barm received in 1841.

## Conclusions

The book has some shortcomings, in that the Sundries lists do not allow a complete picture of the sales of malt and hops. His best years for sales were 1831 and 1832 (Table 2) which coincided with a national upsurge of beerhouses following the 1830 Beer Act. However, it is fair to say that very few of Thomas's customers have been identified as beerhouses. (See above, '1830 Beer Act' for discussion.) While a few may have been masked by other primary occupations, there must have been other factors. His income (and the known quantities sold) slumped in 1834, and again in 1838. Was this perhaps due to a failure in the barley crop? The rate he charged varied (Table 1), and did drop in 1834 compared to 1833. This points to an over-supply of malt generally (hence the drop in rate) and perhaps a poor crop for Thomas (or that he had converted less of his barley crop to malt, given the lower likely income). The rate rose sharply in 1839 and 1840, while the quantity sold rose slightly, and this is reflected in an increase in income for those years (Table 4). The higher sales figures with a higher rate imply that Thomas' crop had been reasonable when others had failed. (There had been showers of snow, sleet and hail on 14 and 15 May 1839 and the summer was wet generally.) He was able to charge a higher rate, yet still increase his sales.

William Hex was one publican who is known to have changed his allegiance in 1834 (see 'The Customers' above). He had changed supplier to Samuel Burston in North Petherton, who charged less per bushel. Given the

number of small, rural maltsters in the area, this must have been a common occurrence. Some might charge a little less and attract certain customers to whom cost was paramount, whilst other customers may have valued a quality product/reliable source/good relationship over other considerations. The rate charged per bushel (and, perhaps to a lesser extent, per pound of hops) was an important issue. Thomas's rate per bushel remained fairly static at first - his most common charge was 8s 6d (£0.42). Whilst it dropped in 1834 and 1835, and went well over in 1839 and 1840, this was reflected in common with Samuel Burston. The fluctuations of the weather and resulting barley crop (and perhaps the cider apple crop), along with the need to remain competitive were big considerations.

Thomas did not rely on the cornfactors, as had Samuel Burston. His sales to them were large (over 200 bushels) when they happened, but were not repeated. They date from 1830 and 1831, and perhaps were due to a need to sell off an excess, or that the customers in question made an offer too good to miss. He is known to have sold quantities of between 200 and 100 bushels to other, regular, local customers, such as Thomas May, and other the publicans. These sales range in date between 1828 and 1840. He did not become caught in the problem other maltsters had. As malt duty rose, (the maltster had to pay it up-front before sale), corn factors were in the habit of offering to pay the duty on the maltsters' behalf and so gain a credit hold over the maltster.<sup>22</sup> Thomas must have had sufficient capital and ready cash to ensure that he could pay the duty. (Perhaps he had problems sometimes though, for instance in February 1835 he had borrowed £300, a substantial sum, from Richard Brice. He was able to repay it within 4 weeks, and it is by no means certain why he needed the ready cash.) It has been said that small, rural maltsters could evade the duty<sup>23</sup> and witnesses to a Parliamentary Enquiry in 1835 claimed evasion was widespread (the West Country was a particularly suspect area). Although the duty is not mentioned in the ledger, Thomas's connections with the Excise Officer in Bridgwater would have meant he would have found it difficult to evade (unless, of course, May was turning a blind eye!). May would have been aware of when Thomas was malting - a simple question in his pub would have been enough, and their relationship does seem to be one of mutual trust.

The arrival of the railway in Bridgwater in 1840 can have had little impact on his sales. He had to move out in 1843, and seems to have been running down from 1841 (perhaps already aware that he was to be given notice). If there was any impact, it was unimportant in the scheme of things - he had to move anyway. He does not seem to have used ships much, there are the two sales to the corn factors, and to a credit to William Thomas for freight to Newport in 1836. (A puzzling reference - 'by freight paid for 200 Bls of Malt delivered to Newport £1:0:0', yet there is no note of who he sold this too, or a charge for it against a customer. Worryingly, one is left wondering if anything else is missing. William was a publican and one of his coal merchants - he must have offered to arrange the transport of the malt as part of a cargo on the way out to Newport, with coal on the return journey.) The ship's masters and ship owners who did purchase from him were purchasing only enough for their own use, not as a cargo. Whilst thinking of transport, it is clear that he did arrange transport for some of his sales - the credit to William Elson for taking 500 bushels of malt to Bridgwater shows this. It would have been built up over some time, perhaps as long as a year. Yet he does not appear to have charged his customers for this carriage, apart from the odd charge for turnpike. He must have absorbed it into his reckoning for rate charges. (Perhaps this may explain some of the highest and lowest rates he charged - was he charging a dearer price for delivered and a cheaper for not?) This all points to just how local his customers were.

The ledger does give an insight into Thomas's lifestyle, which seems to have been one of a well-to-do, if not 'gentleman' farmer. His relationship with other farmers and tradesmen meant that he was able to get 'luxury' goods such as spirits, and to call on his landlord to help him in pursuit of bad debts. He had bartering power, and also seems to have been wealthy enough for the up-front payment of the malt tax to affect him relatively little and to ride out those bad debts he could not successfully pursue. Indeed, he seems to have been happier with this bartering than in dealings with his bank. With the former he could see exactly what he was getting in exchange, the latter he seems to have viewed with some suspicion. His comfortable lifestyle, on a rented farm, shows that he made good overall profits and was a shrewd businessman.

There is a feeling of the closeness of his immediate family - all of whom were customers of his, and who

sometimes helped him as he helped them (e.g. labouring for his brother James, paying a bill for Benjamin, swapping cider with William). In 1830 he had made a gift of some malt and hops to his father. He was scrupulously fair over the inheritances of his brothers, sister and nieces and nephews - having to administer the trusts for some years after his retirement.

A question mark lies over whether or not he was the maltster. However, it is clear that he was running the malthouse on his farm, and even if he was employing a maltster as a labourer, he was keeping the ledger and a close eye on the actual product and sacks. Customers came to him, not his employee, and indeed, it would seem, he often came to them, perhaps at Bridgwater Market and meetings in the pubs. (He was evidently out one day in 1834 when his wife took payment from Robert Norman a publican from Crowcombe. He noted beside the payment that it was 'Recvd by A H'.) He seems to have viewed himself as primarily a farmer (1841 and 1851 census occupation), so his malthouse must have been seen as a part of that. (In Somerset, and West Somerset in particular, there are several farms on which malthouses were built - doubtless filling gaps in the market in certain areas, and giving the farmer another source of income when crops were particularly good.) Perhaps the example of Thomas typifies the way a farm malting had been run locally up to then. Changes were afoot that would make it much more of an 'industry', and ally it more closely to the brewers and their breweries.

## Acknowledgements

Thanks go to Tom Maybery for drawing my attention to the references to hops at Orchard Portman, and Sandy Buchanan for advice regarding the shortage of coin. I am also grateful to John and Alison Irish for information about the malthouse on their farm.

## References and notes

1. SHC Tithe Apportionments Chedzoy (1840), Cannington (1839)
2. VCH v vi p81
3. *The Brighton Gleaner, or General Repository of Literary Selections*, No. 7, Vol. II February 1823, p.324.

4. Cannington Census 1841 and 1851
5. SHC Chedzoy Parish Registers
6. Public Records Office PROB 11/1819/1
7. SHC, DD\X\BRS4; and Miles, M. (2013) 'Samuel Burston and His Maltings at North Petherton, Somerset', *Brewery History*. No. 152, Spring pp.43-61.
8. *London and Provincial Commercial Directory*, 1822
9. Miles, M. (2013) op. cit.
10. *ibid*.
11. *Taunton Courier* 29/06/1825 and 17/09/1845. There are good descriptions in 1826 ('can rival Kent, Sussex and Hampshire ...'), 1830 and 1831. PRO IR 18/8703 refers to 20 acres of hop gardens at Orchard Portman, said in 1837 to be of '17 years growth'. However, in Parliamentary Papers (1846) vi (2), pp.65-70, the return of land growing hops in Britain makes no reference to hops in Somerset, making it likely that the gardens at Orchard Portman were given up after the harvest of 1845. Tithe maps and apportionments in the county refer to 'hop garden' and 'hopyard' at dates between 1838 (Cross, Durston and Pilton, the latter marked as disused) and 1846 (Yeovil), though it is equally possible that these were simply the name of the field rather than productive hop gardens, as in the Pilton case.
12. Jones, W. (1996) *Dictionary of Industrial Archaeology*. Sutton: Stroud. p.66.
13. Cannington Census 1841.
14. VCH v vi p.220.
15. *London and Provincial Commercial Directory*, 1822.
16. *Pigot & Co Directory*, 1830; *Robsons Commercial Directory*, 1839.
17. VCH v vi p.149.
18. Samuel took over the rectory of Charlinch from his father John in 1834 and continued there until 1846. At first he was non-resident and said to be ill - he employed Henry Prince as a curate. Prince later became notorious and had his licence revoked in 1842. He had set up the Agapemone (meaning 'The Abode of Love') in Spaxton, where his converts lived. These tended to be wealthy unmarried women

who became his spiritual brides. This seems to have extended to become a physical relationship and illegitimate children were said to have been the result. Prince was known as 'The Beloved' and 'The Lamb' by his converts. He upset local people by trying to infer that he was a prince, and should be treated as such. Starkey was said to have read one of his curate's sermons, and became cured of his illness, resulting in him adopting his curate's beliefs and joining him in 1846. Starkey was then deprived of his living. (Prince's licence had already been revoked by this time. His second wife was said to be Starkey's sister, Julia.) Starkey took the 'gospel' to Weymouth, where he was successful and Prince followed him to the resort. Things were somewhat too 'hot' locally - when some excess furniture was to be auctioned, it was taken to the King Alfred at Burrowbridge, rather than the much nearer town of Bridgwater. It still attracted attention though, and resulted in a near-riot. The Agapemone itself continued an enclosed existence, until the last member died in 1956.

19. Farley, F. and Ekless, D. (1986) *A History of Milverton*. Milverton and Fitzhead Society. pp.68-9.

20. *Pigot & Co Directory*, 1830; *Robsons Commercial Directory*, 1839.

21. There is no clue as to who exactly his previous landlord had been; if it was the Pain family the few references to them are on the "Sundry" lists. Solomon Pain may have been a relation of the owner (since he had the same Christian name as the Pain who originally purchased the farm in 1801), but he only made purchases from Thomas in 1830 and 1831. Two other Pains are mentioned; - William Pain, a labourer, who made a single purchase before Knight took on the life interest, and John who was a butcher in Cannington and made a single purchase at the end of 1830. Robert Pain was not mentioned at all, or his children Robert, George Betty, Christian and Alfred.

22. Mathias, P. (2012) 'The Anchor Brewery', *Brewery History*. No. 145, p.34.

23. Clark, C. *The British Malting Industry since 1830*. London: Hambleton Press. p.27.

