

### 3. The Informal Social Control of Marriage in Seventeenth-Century England; Some Preliminary Notes<sup>1</sup>

by Alan Macfarlane

It is obvious that a detailed study of the control of marital and sexual relations can only be made after a more general study of marriage patterns in a particular society. No such general study exists for pre-industrial England.\* (New York, 1977). All that can be attempted here is a very general sketch which blocks in some of the few known facts and leaves blank the vast areas of unexplored problems. The major topics in the ensuing discussion will be age at marriage; proportion ever married; courting, betrothal and the degree of contact between future husband and wife; the extent to which marriages were arranged by parents; exchange of wealth at marriage; patterns of residence after marriage and the actual patterns of marriage choice measured by geographical and social distance. The major aims of this study will be to discover firstly the general extent to which marriage was controlled in Tudor and Stuart England, and secondly, whether there were any important endogamous groups.

On the basis of analyses of the occasional census and of work on parish registers, we now know that the age at marriage in Tudor and Stuart England was, compared to that in modern pre-industrial societies, extremely high. Without going into too much detail, the (mean) average age of brides at first marriage was usually between 20 and 30, of grooms between 25 and 30.<sup>2</sup> Wrigley has shown that ages at marriage fluctuated quite considerably during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but they remained within these general limits. For example, the (mean) average age at first marriage for brides at Colyton in Devon fluctuated between 25.1 and 29.6 years.<sup>3</sup> This delay for a number of years after puberty is so unusual in human societies as a whole that it has earned the title of the "European marriage pattern" and has been described as "unique or almost unique in the world."<sup>4</sup> Little is known about when it originated, nor have the possible reasons for its existence been ascertained. The fact that it entailed a gap of some ten years between puberty and marriage is obviously of considerable significance for the historian of sexual and marital practices. The other feature of this "European marriage pattern" is also very important. This was a considerable rate of never-married persons.

In the majority of pre-industrial societies almost 100% of those aged over 35 have been, or are, married.<sup>5</sup> Those who do not marry are often derided and scorned unless they are deformed and hence unable to marry.<sup>6</sup>

\*Editor's note: Since this article was written, Lawrence Stone has written a general study of pre-industrial England. *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800*, (New York), 1977.

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This may have been the case in medieval England if Pollock and Maitland are right in saying that "early Medieval law never seems to have contemplated the existence of an unmarried woman of full age."<sup>7</sup> Even in the later period it has been said that "Elizabethans who wished to remain single felt bound to defend themselves,"<sup>8</sup> and there were not a few who believed that the unmarried life would automatically lead to "sin and iniquity."<sup>9</sup> Another writer warned people not to marry because of social pressure: "let not a fond conceit, that it is a reproach to thee to continue so ancient a Maid or Batchelor" force one into marriage.<sup>10</sup> Yet, in the cases where we have any statistics, it appears that, as in modern Italy,<sup>11</sup> only a certain proportion of the population could expect to marry. From the very crude figures so far available it appears that up to 25% of men and women might remain unmarried.<sup>12</sup> Among the questions this poses are: in what way did the marriage market function in order to ensure that certain people married and others remained unmarried; did the existence of a considerable body of unmarried men and women at all ages have any repercussions on the attitudes to, or rate of, sexual offences?

Although historians have made some general descriptions of courting customs,<sup>13</sup> there is still much to be learnt about the process by which a bride was chosen. A short extract from the most famous account of such customs will indicate the nature of the general descriptions, upon which investigators have based most of their conclusions.

Usually the young man's father, or he himself writes to the father of the maid to know if he shall be welcome to the house, if he shall have futherance if he come in such a way or how he liketh of the notion . . . If the motion be thought well of, and embraced, then the young man goeth perhaps twice to see how the maid standeth affected. Then if he see that she be tractable and that her inclination is towards him, then the third time that he visiteth, he perhaps giveth her a ten-shilling piece of gold, or a ring of that price; . . . then the next time, or the next after that, a pair of gloves of 6s.8d. a pair . . . They visit usually every three weeks or a month and are usually half a year, or very near, from the first going to the conclusion.<sup>14</sup>

This description of formal, spaced, visits accords with the descriptions we have of actual wedding negotiations among the English nobility.<sup>15</sup> The exchange of gifts also seems to have been widespread. For instance we find in the ecclesiastical court records of the county of Essex for 1639 that a man gave a woman "a peece of money and a paire of gloves with silver fringe as tokens of love and affection." When the engagement was broken off such gifts were demanded back: thus a man asked back for his ring, silver whistle and handkerchief.<sup>16</sup> The events leading up to marriage clearly passed through a series of demarcated stages, each with its own ritual and legal

significance and each bringing the future partners together and severing them from their previous relationships. Such a process can be studied, for example, in the courtship of Ralph Josselin, an Essex clergyman of the mid-seventeenth century who left behind a detailed Diary.<sup>17</sup> On October 6th he saw his future bride in Church and was immediately physically attracted to her. By December 13th he was so much enamoured that he rejected his uncle's offer of a living in Norfolk on account of her. On January 1st they first proposed to match "one to another" and some three weeks later on the 23rd undertook their "mutual promise." This was their private contract, and to make it completely binding they made a public contract on September 29th. Then the banns were called and a month later on October 28th they were wed. The usual interval between meeting and marriage seems to have been about six months.<sup>18</sup> Among the stated reasons for this delay were the necessity for the bride's father to gather together her marriage "portion" and because, as contemporaries pointed out, it was important for future bride and groom to gain an intimate knowledge of each other's habits; how they ate, walked, worked.<sup>19</sup> There is some evidence to show that the engaged couple were allowed to meet alone and, in certain areas and in certain periods, to have sexual intercourse.<sup>20</sup>

The final culmination of the creation of a new social unit was the wedding. The cost of weddings and their importance as a form of conspicuous consumption;<sup>21</sup> the rituals at the actual wedding; the range of people present at the wedding, showing the effective range of bride and groom's social ties, all these problems need further study. Why, for example, were there sometimes two wedding feasts, one at the bride's father's house, and then another at the bridegroom's home a month later?<sup>22</sup> How common was the custom of taking a large-scale collection from the wedding guests which, for example, raised £56 at one of the weddings attended by Josselin?<sup>23</sup> These and many other questions need answering before we have a reasonable picture of the nature of Tudor and Stuart weddings.

It was a saying of the seventeenth century that a father should marry his children betimes lest they marry themselves.<sup>24</sup> This brings us to the general problem of the degree to which marriages were controlled by people other than the married couple. Since marriage drew together two hitherto unrelated sets of kinsmen and friends, and since these kinsmen and friends were invited, so to speak, to invest in the new family in the form of dowries, gifts and general goodwill, it is not surprising that they should expect to have some say in the timing and choice of marriage partners. Moreover it was through the opinions and acts of such kinsmen and neighbours that wider economic pressures were mediated. Little study has been made so far of the degree to which marriages were affected in England by harvest fluctuations and epidemics. We need to know, for example, the extent to which poor harvests would mean that families would have too little capital to found a new unit. In theory the degree of control might vary

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between completely arranged marriages, as in many parts of the modern world, or as described by Thomas Becon who wrote that "many there be of that order which make open sale of their children, as the butcher doth of his calves"<sup>25</sup> and those in which the future marriage partners chose their own mates.<sup>26</sup>

The ideal in this period was clear. Parents, friends and the young couple should all give their consent to the union, none of them should be forced. Becon, Perkins, and the ecclesiastical injunctions all stressed that parental consent was absolutely necessary before a wedding took place.<sup>27</sup> But the same authorities also warned that parents should not force their children to marry against their wishes.<sup>28</sup> In practice, however, the slight evidence so far unearthed suggests that parental consent, though useful, was not absolutely necessary. The idea that all marriages were arranged and based mainly on economic motives seems to be a myth created by historians. There is certainly evidence for the arrangement of marriage among the gentry and upper classes<sup>29</sup> and it may be true, as sociologists have suggested, that the control of marriage becomes tighter and more extended as one ascends the social hierarchy.<sup>30</sup> Yet contemporaries were well aware that children often married without their parents' consent. Becon noted this<sup>31</sup> and John Stockwood deplored the tendency of the younger generation "making matches according to their own fickle fantasies, and choosing unto themselves, yoke-fellowes after the outward deceivable directions of the eie."<sup>32</sup>

There is the problem of whether, in fact, the degree of parental control was changing—for instance with the change in age of marriage, growing possibility of earning a living outside the family holding. In a later period it would be possible to investigate the effects of industrialization on the control of marriage.<sup>33</sup>

There is considerable evidence, for example, in the ecclesiastical court records, to show that the "goodwill" of friends was thought very important in a marriage; for instance a man argued that it was necessary for him to "obtain his friends and her friends goodwill" before he could marry a girl in 1592.<sup>34</sup> Yet there is also contrary evidence that such goodwill was often not obtained, yet the marriage occurred.<sup>35</sup> The same is true of parental consent. On the one hand we have depositions such as the following in 1578 when a man said to his prospective wife,

Ellen, I pray you be careful what you do and thinke that it is no iesting or triflinge match (i.e. to plight troth and then to break it because) for fear of yo(u)r parentes you be forced to denie that wh(i)ch you have promised (as I ensure you I feare they will doe what they can to keepe us asonder if there good wills be not first requested.<sup>36</sup>

On the other hand we know that, for example, many of the Martindale

family married against their parents' wishes.<sup>37</sup> The essence of the difficulty lay in the fact that it was extremely difficult, since many children seem to have left home before the age of 15 and to have spent the ten years before marriage elsewhere, for the parents to exert complete control.<sup>38</sup> Parents' main lever, however, was a strong one: it was the withholding or transferring of wealth in the form of a dowry to girls, or a house and property to a son.

When two people married they were, in effect, setting up a small corporation, a property-owning and productive unit large enough to support future children. For this, capital was needed. The question was, who would finance this venture? Various societies have suggested a number of methods: the partners themselves contribute by saving in the form of a trousseau woven by the girl or property accumulated by the man; or the girl's parents may pay a dowry to the husband or his family as an advance on the girl's inheritance and to be held in trust for the children;<sup>39</sup> or the man's kin may pay a "brideprice" to the girl's kin. In English society, as far as can be seen in an area where so little research has been carried out below the level of the gentry,<sup>40</sup> it seems that each family contributed one member and an equal amount of property.<sup>41</sup> The wife's family might contribute cash and husband's land, or *vice versa*. It is usually easier to assess the size of the girl's dowry for it is often carefully stipulated in the negotiations which occur before a wedding. We know that such portions were often very large among the upper classes: Evelyn, for example, mentions sums of £3,000 or £4,000 being paid.<sup>42</sup> Yet we know practically nothing about their size, over how long a period they were paid, how they varied over time, or anything else about them at the village or artisan level.<sup>43</sup> The way in which the marriage is financed will clearly influence the degree of parental control, the age of marriage, inheritance systems and much else.

Another fact it influences, and influencing it, is residence after marriage. Broadly speaking the young couple may either live with one set of parents or the other or by themselves. If they live with either set of parents this means living in the same house or the same village. What actually happens in a society is extremely important: for instance if the young married couple live with their parents this may mean that they remain under parental control for years after marriage and that the whole family acts as one economic unit. Behind all the arrangements there is a tension between the two founding families who may both wish to retain their offspring. The logical result of this, as among some Irish islanders at the present time, is that husband and wife live apart, visiting each other occasionally at night.<sup>44</sup> Little research has been done on this problem so far in its seventeenth-century context, but it seems likely that new households were set up immediately after the wedding and that these tended to be either in the bridegroom's village or in a town or village foreign to both sets of parents. Contemporaries thought that if two married couples lived in the same house there

would be friction—for example William Whately wrote that “the mixing of governors in an household, or subordinating or uniting of two Masters, or two Dames under one roofe, doth fall out most times, to be a matter of much unquietness to all parties.”<sup>45</sup>

The analysis of household sizes has shown that this ideal was followed.<sup>46</sup> The slight evidence so far analysed suggests that the newly married couple moved more often into the husband's village than into that of the wife.<sup>47</sup>

The problem of residence after marriage is clearly related to that of the geographical distance which separated the engaged couple before marriage. This is also relevant to the question of incest since it is likely that a high rate of village endogamy will lead to technically incestuous marriages. In many of the societies studied by anthropologists where kinship is a basic organizing principle, there is also a very limited geographical range within which marriage partners may be found. The situation may vary from hamlet endogamy as in some Balinese villages,<sup>48</sup> or matched pairs of villages who exchange marriage partners,<sup>49</sup> to groups of 25 or so villages which form an endogamous unit, as in Ceylon.<sup>50</sup> It would be possible to parallel the maps and diagrams analysing this topic produced by anthropologists, in a study of Tudor and Stuart England, but, so far, little work has been published on this subject.<sup>51</sup> Studies of French communities in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries have shown that between 60 and 95% of the marriages involved people from the same parish.<sup>52</sup> It seems likely that this high rate of village endogamy was also characteristic of pre-industrial Ireland.<sup>53</sup> Historians have tended to assume that people married within the village or into neighbouring villages in pre-industrial England.<sup>54</sup> This seems to be true for at least certain regions in the medieval period,<sup>55</sup> and it may have continued to be true in certain areas of England during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. There is some evidence to show that, in certain areas, marriage partners were usually found within 15 miles.<sup>56</sup> Yet there was probably considerable variation both by region and by social status. In the village of Wrangle, Lincolnshire, for example, the evidence for marriages in the late seventeenth century which shows that only a small proportion of the marriages were between two partners from the same village, has been summarized as follows. “It is clear that the idea once held that there was persistent in-breeding in the villages is not borne out by the facts as far as Wrangle is concerned.”<sup>57</sup> It also seems likely that the geographical range might increase with social level. Again as in Bali, or the Vendée, distance of marriage would be related to social status,<sup>58</sup> Certainly we know that the geographical range of marriages involving the nobility was very wide and, it has been argued, increasing, throughout the period.<sup>59</sup> Another problem needing analysis is the “social distance” between marriage partners, that is the degree to which different occupational and status groups intermarried. We know practically nothing about intermarriage between different social groups below the level of the gentry in Tudor and Stuart England. William

Perkins probably spoke for the majority of his contemporaries when he argued that husband and wife should come from the same social level,<sup>60</sup> but whether they did or not, we do not yet know. There is plenty of evidence that each occupational group *had* its level, and that it should marry within this level. For instance, the Earl of Clarendon argued that it was a sign of the confusion of ranks caused by the Civil War that some noblemen's daughters had married clergymen: waiting-women were supposed to be about the social level to make good cleric's wives.<sup>61</sup> The most detailed work on people at the lower social levels has been undertaken for the Vendée (in the eighteenth century) by Charles Tilly. He has shown that certain occupational groups were linked, commercial bourgeois and winegrowers for example, while others, like farmers and industrial artisans, were not. But the figures need breaking down even further, into male and female for example.<sup>62</sup>

Although the English gentry have been studied assiduously their inter-marriage rates have been little investigated. This is not for lack of evidence. Marriage licences of the period give the occupation and rank of both husband and wife and it would be possible to do a study of intermarriage on a large scale. The sort of analysis that might emerge is shown by preliminary work by Peter Laslett. Taking a sample of some fifty bridegrooms and sixty brides described as "gentry" in Lincolnshire between 1612 and 1617 he shows that

almost a third of the men and over two-fifth of the women married outside their social order. When clergy and the obviously bourgeois occupations are taken into account the indication of social mobility is rather less; only about 20 per cent in the case of men though still over a third of the women married outside . . . the ruling segment. Nearly a quarter of the women and over 15 per cent of the men married into yeomen's families.<sup>63</sup>

One of the facts that emerges most strikingly from the historical material is that in a system where wealth and blood flowed predominantly through the eldest male, the other males tended to marry downwards, if they married at all. Lawrence Stone said of younger sons that "Almost always poorly endowed, they either did not marry at all, or married late and relatively humbly."<sup>64</sup> Stone also supplied diagrams and statistics on the inter-marriage of the peerage class. His conclusion is that "Between 1485 and 1569 over half the marriages of titular peers and their heirs male were within the peerage class, but between 1570 and 1599 the proportion fell to a third."<sup>65</sup> The reason suggested for changes in rates, by Stone, is that the aristocracy needed new money: changes in the financial and economic structure of Tudor England forced a widening of perspectives in the marriage market.

The same process of aristocratic marriage into the moneyed classes has been studied in eighteenth-century France by Elinor Barber.<sup>66</sup> She shows a fluid situation where husbands with wealth could buy themselves into the old nobility. There was a similar process in fifteenth-century England, according to J.H. Hexter, and this may have meant that merchant capital was drained off into land-purchases rather than being re-invested in trade and industry.<sup>67</sup> The methods used to control the marriage market, especially at the village level, need further research. It seems likely that there was already a great amount of marital mobility, centering on the London marriage sorting house.

As far as can be discovered, no historical studies have been made to show to what extent marriage linked families that were already linked by ties and kinship. We cannot tell, for example, whether that was any parallel to the situation among modern Greek shepherds where, of 121 marriages, 52 were contracted between families already linked by kinship ties.<sup>68</sup> Although no indications have been given by contemporary literature that there were preferential rules of marriage based on kinship, until analyses of a number of villages have actually been made we will not know whether, in practice, people married, for example, their cross-cousins. All that can be said at this stage is that the reconstruction of the kinship ties and marriages in the parish of Earls Colne in Essex for the period 1560-1660 has not shown any significant rate of intermarriage between families already linked by marriage or blood.

One final problem in the general field of marriage also needs more research. This is the degree of emotion generated before and after the wedding: the presence or absence of the "romantic love complex." This emotion will be interlinked with all the other phenomena already discussed. For instance, its absence may help to account for the late age of marriage; if it was generally true that people did not become attracted into marriage but took a conscious decision at a certain point that they ought to marry,<sup>69</sup> this would fit the necessity to delay marriage. It is extremely important to know whether the seventeenth-century situation was closer to that of a modern bilateral system where there is a complete lack of emotion before marriage,<sup>70</sup> or that of some other pre-industrial societies where the choice of marriage partners is based on spontaneous physical attraction.<sup>71</sup> The situation in our period is complicated by the fact that there were probably enormous shifts occurring, both in ideology and practice. For example, it has been suggested that the Puritan ethic fostered "romantic love" and helped to break down the tight control of marriage choice by parents and kin.<sup>72</sup> Certainly there is enough evidence in contemporary records for an investigation of this important topic. Ecclesiastical court cases provide some evidence. Two servants in Essex were described as "falling in love together," and a woman refused to marry a suitor because "she could not find in her to love him."<sup>73</sup> The wider problems of how far such an ideology



is a necessary part of a nuclear-family system<sup>74</sup> and of its part in mate selection, cannot be discussed here. Future historical researchers, however, will find these sociological and anthropological discussions cited above a constant stimulus to further research in the records.

## FOOTNOTES

1. This essay is an almost unchanged version of chapter 3 of my dissertation on "The Regulation of Marital and Sexual Relationships in Seventeenth Century England, with Special Reference to the County of Essex" (London School of Economics, M.Phil., 1968). A future work on *Sex, Marriage and the Family in Tudor and Stuart England* will incorporate results of studies published since 1968, and of extensive further research on local sources along the lines sketched in this short paper. Place of publication of books cited in the notes is London, unless otherwise specified.
2. Figures are given in P. Laslett, *The World We Have Lost* (1965), p.83; J. Hajnal, "European Marriage Patterns in Perspective" in D.V. Glass and D.E.C. Eversley (eds.), *Population in History* (1965), p.110; E.A. Wrigley, "Family Limitation in Pre-Industrial England," *Economic History Review*, 2nd ser., xix, no. 1 (1966), pp.86-8.
3. Wrigley, *Family Limitation*, p.86. Figures for aristocratic marriages are given in L. Stone, *Crisis of the Aristocracy, 1558-1641* (Oxford, 1965), pp.652ff.
4. J. Hajnal in Glass and D.E.C. Eversley (eds.), *Population in History*, p.101.
5. European patterns are summarized by Hajnal in Glass and Eversley (eds.), *Population in History*, pp.101ff. M. Nag, *Factors Affecting Human Fertility in Nonindustrial Societies* (Yale University Publications in Anthropology, 66, New Haven, 1962), p.182, indicates ages in percentages in pre-industrial societies. Tikopia, with a high age at marriage, seems to be an exception (R. Firth, *Essays on Social Organization and Values* (1964), p.91).
6. Examples of social pressure are J.K. Campbell, *Honour, Family and Patronage* (Oxford, 1964), pp.128, 150; P. Stirling, *Turkish Village* (New York, 1965), p.42.
7. Quoted in G.G. Coulton, *Medieval Panorama* (Fontana, 1961), ii.281.
8. L.E. Pearson, *Elizabethans at Home* (Stanford, 1957), p.289.
9. E.S. Morgan, *The Puritan Family* (Harper Torchbook, 1966), p.145.
10. William Whately, *A Care-cloth or a Treatise of the Cumbers and Troubles of Marriage* (1624), p.64.
11. J.W. Cole, Economic Alternatives in the Upper Nonsberg, unpublished paper, Canterbury Conference, 1966. Similarly in Ireland (K.H. Connell, "Peasant Marriage in Ireland: its Structure and Development since the Famine," *Econ. Hist. Rev.*, xiv no. 3 (1962), p. 502).
12. Figures are given in Glass and Eversley (eds.), *Population in History*, pp.102, 113, 114. One contemporary in the late seventeenth century commented "I believe there are more bachelors now in England by many thousands than there were a few years ago" (quoted in H.J. Habakkuk, "Marriage Settlements in the Eighteenth Century," *Trans. Roy. Hist. Soc.*, xxxii (1950), p. 24 note 1).
13. For example Laslett, *Lost World*, p. 142; G.C. Homans, *English Villages of the Thirteenth Century* (New York, 1960), ch.xxi.
14. The whole account is quoted in Laslett, *Lost World*, p.96.
15. Stone, *Crisis of the Aristocracy*, pp.649ff.
16. Essex Record Office, Chelmsford, Essex (hereafter E.R.O.), D/ACD/5 (in a separate folder); D/AED/1 fol.11.
17. A fuller description of Josselin's courtship and marriage appears in A. Macfarlane, *The*

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- Family Life of Ralph Josselin* (Cambridge, 1970), pp.95-7.
18. For instance M. Campbell, *The English Yeoman under Elizabeth and the Early Stuarts* (New Haven, 1942), p.402.
  19. As stressed by John Dod and Robert Clever, *A Godlie Forme of Household Government* (1612), p.109.
  20. Samuel Pepys, *The Diary of Samuel Pepys, from 1659 to 1669*, ed. Lord Braybrooke (no date), p.248, stated that it was suggested that an engaged couple be left alone together. Further evidence for this is contained in Percival Moore, *Marriage Contracts or Espousals in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth* (Associated Architectural Societies' Reports and Papers, xxx part 1 (1909)), p.275.
  21. The huge expenses at noble weddings are discussed and analysed in Stone, *Crisis of the Aristocracy*, pp.633, 651.
  22. Henry Best, "Concerninge our Fashions at Our Country Weddinges" in *Rural Economy in Yorkshire in 1641*, ed. C.B. Robinson (Surtees Soc., xxxiii, 1857), p.117. A similar phenomenon was described and analysed in Campbell, *Honour, Family and Patronage*, pp.52,60, 136.
  23. Josselin, *Diary*, 8 July 1647.
  24. W. Notestein, *English People on the Eve of Colonization* (Harper Torchbook edn., 1962), p.57, cites this saying.
  25. Thomas Becon, *The Worckes of T. Becon* (1560), i.sig.DCXXXI<sup>v</sup> (the foliation is erratic; the passage comes after sig.DCL).
  26. Many illustrations of the wide range of degree of control of marriage by kin or other groups, from arranged marriage to 'romantic love,' are summarized in E. Westermarck, *The History of Human Marriage* (5th edn., 1921), ii.ch.xxii.
  27. Becon, *The Worckes of T. Becon*, i.sig.DCXX<sup>v</sup>; William Perkins, *Christian Oeconomie* (1609), p.76; W.P.M. Kennedy and W.H. Frere (eds.), *Visitation Articles and Injunctions of the Period of the Reformation* (Alcuin Club Collections, xv, 1910), ii.275.
  28. Miles Coverdale, *Christian State of Matrimony*, p.23<sup>v</sup>; Kennedy and Frere (eds.), *Visitation Articles and Injunctions*, ii.50.
  29. For example *The Diary and Correspondence of John Evelyn, F.R.S.*, ed. William Bray (no date), pp.374-5; *The Apologia of Robert Keayne*, ed. Bernard Bailyn (New York, Harper Torchbook edn., 1964), p.33.
  31. Becon, *The Worckes of T. Becon*, i.sig.DXXXii (foliation out of order, just before DCX-Lii).
  32. Quoted in Campbell, *English Yeoman*, pp.283-4.
  33. Margaret Mead, *Male and Female* (Pelican edn., 1962), p.15, for example, briefly discusses this subject.
  34. E.R.O., D/AEA/16 fol.70<sup>v</sup>. Other similar cases are cited in W.J. Pressey, "Essex Affairs Matrimonial," *Essex Review*, xlix (1940), p.89.
  35. An instance is described in Moore, *Marriage Contracts or Espousals in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth*, p.296.
  36. Consistory Court Depositions, 1578, fol. 56 (Guildhall Library, London). Another example of the necessity of parental consent is quoted in Moore, *Marriage Contracts*, p.270.
  37. Described in Campbell, *English Yeoman*, p.286.
  38. There is a discussion of this phenomenon in Macfarlane, *Family Life of Ralph Josselin*, Appendix B.
  39. Discussions of the dowry and its functions may be found in Goode, *The Family*, pp.41-2; Jack Goody and S.J. Tambiah, *Bridewealth and Dowry* (Cambridge, 1973); Westermarck, *History of Human Marriage*, ii. ch.xxiii.
  40. On gentry dowries and those of the nobility there is Stone, *Crisis of the Aristocracy*, pp.632ff and H.J. Habakkuk, "Marriage Settlements in the Eighteenth Century," p.21.
  41. This appears to be the principle in the bilateral kinship system of Greek shepherds, (Campbell, *Honour, Family and Patronage*, p.45).

42. *Diary and Correspondence of John Evelyn*, pp.375, 499. The size and increases in aristocratic dowries are discussed in L. Stone, "Marriage Among the English Nobility in the 16th and 17th Centuries", *Comp. Stud. in Soc. and Hist.*, iii no. 2 (1961), pp.184, 189.
43. W.G. Hoskins, *The Midland Peasant* (1957), pp.123-4, cites two instances from bonds. Cases before the ecclesiastical courts are quoted in Moore, *Marriage Contracts*, pp.294-5.
44. As described in R. Fox, "Tory Island" in B. Benedict (ed.), *Problems of Smaller Territories* (1967), pp. 129-130.
45. Whately, *A Care-Cloth or a Treatise of the Cumbers and Troubles of Marriage*, sig. A6<sup>v</sup>. Other quotations on the same subject are cited in Pearson, *Elizabethans at Home*, pp.296-7.
46. Much of the evidence showing little change in household size between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries in England, is summarized in P. Laslett and R. Wall (eds.) *Household and Family in Past Time* (Cambridge, 1972), ch.4. For the medieval period some of the evidence is summarized in J. Krause, "The Medieval Household: Large or Small?" *Econ. Hist. Rev.*, 2nd ser., ix no. 3 (1957), pp.420-432.
47. A few figures are given in H.E. Hallman, "Some Thirteenth-Century Censuses," *Ec. Hist. Rev.*, 2nd ser., x no. 3 (1958), p.356; P.E.H. Hair, "Bridal Pregnancy in Rural England in Earlier Centuries," *Population Studies*, xx no. 2 (1966), p.238.
48. C. Geertz, "Form and Variation in Balinese Village Structure," *American Anthrop.*, 61 (1959), p. 997.
49. As among the Garos of Assam (R. Burling, *Rengsanggri* (Philadelphia, 1963), p.217).
50. E.R. Leach, *Pul Eliya - A Village in Ceylon* (Cambridge, 1961), p.23.
51. Useful model maps and diagrams are provided by Leach, *ibid.*, pp.81-3 and Stirling, *Turkish Village*, pp.201-7.
52. P. Goubert, *Beauvais et le Beauvaisis de 1600 a 1730* (S.E.V.E.P.E.N., 1960), i. 66; C. Tilly, *The Vendée* (1964), p.89.
53. Connell, "Peasant Marriage in Ireland," p.519.
54. For instance Campbell, *English Yeoman*, p.283, and Hoskins, *The Midland Peasant*, p.196.
55. Hallam, "Some Thirteenth-Century Censuses," p.356, shows that all but one of 53 women married within 11 miles of their natal home.
56. E.A. Wrigley (ed.), *An introduction to English Historical Demography* (1966), pp.22, 41 (note 22), 64. Hair, "Bridal Pregnancy in Rural England," p.238, gives figures which imply a limited geographical range.
57. F. West, "The Social and Economic History of the East Fen Village of Wrangle, 1603-1837," p.65.
58. Geertz, "Form and Variation in Balinese Village Structure," p.997; Tilly, *The Vendee*, p.90.
59. Stone, *Crisis of the Aristocracy*, p.623.
60. Perkins, *Oeconomy*, p.64.
61. Clarendon, cited in T.B. Macaulay, *History of England* (Everyman edn., 1957), i.246-7
62. Tilly, *The Vendee*, p.97.
63. Laslett, *Lost World*, p.191.
64. Stone, *Crisis of the Aristocracy*, p.599.
65. Stone, *ibid.*, p.627. Statistics are presented on p.789.
66. Barber in William J. Goode (ed.), *Readings on the Family and Society* (New Jersey, 1964), pp.66-7.
67. J.H. Hexter, *Reappraisals in History* (1961), p.95.
68. Campbell, *Honour, Family and Patronage*, p.132.
69. A situation described for seventeenth-century New England (Morgan, *Puritan Family*, p.54). Hajnal in Glass and Eversley, *Population in History*, p.132, also draws a connection between emotion at, and age at, marriage.
70. Campbell, *Honour, Family and Patronage*, p.66.

## COURTSHIP TO MARRIAGE FORMATION

71. E.G., C. Fürer-Haimendorf, *Morals and Merit* (1967), p. 19. Other examples of physical attraction and personal choice are given in Westermarck, *History of Human Marriage*, ch.xxii.
72. Argued, for instance, by M. Walzer, *Revolution of the Saints* (1966), p.194 and Stone, *Crisis of the Aristocracy*, p.615.
73. E.R.O., D/AED/1 fols.7<sup>v</sup>, 10.
74. For an argument concerning the 'necessity' of romantic love see Goode, *The Family*, p.39.

### 4. Marriage Settlements In The 18th Century

by H.J. Habbakuk

There were important changes of substances in the eighteenth century in marriage settlements which originated independently of changes in form. The most significant of these was the change in the relation between the size of the portion or dowry which the wife brought with her from her father, and the size of the jointure, the annual income which her husband settled on her to provide for her in case she survived him. The size of the provision which a man made for his wife's possible widowhood was naturally dependent on the amount of money she brought into the family, but the degree of the dependence differed at different times. In marriage settlements made in the early eighteenth century the portions are normally substantially larger, in relation to the jointures, than in settlements made a century earlier.

In the early part of the century the general average of portions, in relation to jointures, is somewhat lower; when Sir Edmund Verney married the daughter of Sir Thomas Denton in 1612, a portion of £2,300 was matched against a jointure of £400 a year, and when, about the same time, Sir John Farmer married a daughter of Sir Henry Compton, a portion of £4,000 matched a jointure of £800 a year. These were typical of the proportions among substantial squirarchical families. The most popular book of precedents at the opening of the sixteenth century gives, in the case of a marriage to a widow—and widows were able to command favourable terms—a portion of £620 for a jointure of £100.

What is the significance of this change? Does it mean that the terms on which marriages between landowning families were made were becoming progressively more favourable to the husband, that a larger share of the burden of maintaining the wife was being borne by her father?

Contemporaries were apt to attribute the rising scale of portions to the greater competition in the marriage market of the daughters, especially the heiresses, of merchant families. Thus, towards the end of the century, Sir William Temple, whose own marriage negotiation had been difficult, wrote