

SOCIETY

<p>Gentry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Houses – surrounded by gardens, had glazed windows, tall decorated chimneys & tens of rooms Land – they earned rent from their estates Land = power as Justices of Peace and MPs Food = got plenty from their orchards and estate farms, had rich and varied diets, ate lots of different meats and fish, had ceremonial feasts with servants carrying food on silver platters in procession and fine French and Italian wines → they could last for two hours, after feasts there were banquets with sugar and marzipan confections 	<p>Middling Sort</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Houses – became more comfortable during Elizabeth’s reign → could have two floors, big chimneys allowing smoke to escape, fireplaces downstairs, windows made of glass, 5-10 rooms Food – could afford to eat well, didn’t have ceremony, served their own food, servants ate with them, reared basic meat, made bread from wheat flour with some bran left in, best wheat for used for cakes & pastries for guests, had a variety of fruit and veg from their gardens & orchards, drank beer and mead but couldn’t afford fine wine Work – independent traders/craftsmen in towns, husbandmen & yeomen in the countryside with their own farmland, rented 5 to 50 acres and employed labourers, could work as churchwardens or overseers of the poor 	<p>Labouring Poor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Houses – small & badly built, no upper floor, no chimney, small windows with no glass, often only 2 rooms with bare floors. Food – main food = bread made from cheap rye or barley, ate thick vegetable soup (‘pottage’) with veg from the garden, sometimes had eggs/cheese/fish/bacon/beer, poor harvest meant expensive bread and starvation (e.g. wet summer of 1594 ruined grain making it too expensive so some labourers starved to death) Work - most worked on yeoman/husbandmen farms, worked from first light ‘til dusk, most only employed part of the year & struggled to pay rent/buy fuel/eat at other times
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FAMILY

<p>Marriage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Age – men: late 20s, women: mid-20s → they married after saving up for their own home, gentry married younger because they didn’t need to save Sex – forbidden outside marriage by the church, illegitimate babies uncommon, up to 30% of brides married while pregnant (either they had sex once they knew they were marrying or got married when they got pregnant) Choice – gentry families influenced their children’s marriages to keep status and property but didn’t usually arrange marriage, middling parents gave land/money/furniture to their children when they married as long as they approved but most middling & labouring children were free to marry whoever, but same-sex marriage was unknown Equality – wives obeyed husbands, husbands were advised to respect wives, middling women might help run farms or workshops, violent husbands were frowned upon as were domineering wives Separation – divorce very unlikely & required a private Act of Parliament, marriage breakdowns could lead to informal separation, early deaths commonly broke down families, people remarried quickly, many children had step-parents 	<p>Families</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Size – usually only nobility/gentry had large families, many children were born but many also died due to bad hygiene & medicine → about ¼ of children died at younger than 10 Young children – some gentry had ‘wet nurses’, most women looked after their own children, parents had strong emotional bonds with children even though many died young, parents were concerned when children were ill, sad when they died, and proud when they achieved Older children – parents with enough money sent children of 7+ to school, poor parents put them to work at home/on the farm/gathering wood/scaring birds/minding babies/helping with harvest, boys age 12 or 13 left home for apprenticeships or to work as farm servants, girls left to be servants for other families → up to 1/3 of families had young servants, young people lived with another family gaining skills for adult life until their early 20s Parenting – children were expected to obey parents but were not always respectful, arguments between father and son were common, physical punishment was relatively widespread & beatings in grammar schools was common, cruelty towards children seems to have been no different than today Wider family – most households were just parents and children, some big gentry houses had wider family, elderly parents/orphaned children might move in to be cared for, wider families rarely lived in the same village, most young teens left to work, people married and settled in different places, most people’s relatives were in nearby villages, few people moved abroad, the gentry had interest in wider family, middling families had some close connections with wider family, wider family mattered more in northern England where communities were scattered, wills focused on immediate family, neighbours mattered more than distant family → these they went to church with/played football with/went to the alehouse with/borrowed money from
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POVERTY

<p>CATEGORIES</p> <p>Settled Poor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> People living in towns who were living in poverty. In some towns = 30% of population. <p>The Vagrant poor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wandered from place to place looking for work. Sometimes found seasonal work but were often moved on by suspicious villagers. <p>The Elizabethans divided the unemployed poor into three categories: 1. The impotent poor were physically unable to work due to age or illness. 2. The able-bodied poor wanted work but couldn’t find it. 3. Vagabonds chose to avoid work</p>	<p>CAUSES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growth in population = pressure on food supplies Rise in food prices Harvest failures in 1586, 1595, 1596 & 1597. Decline in woollen industry More outbreaks of plague caused disruption to local economies. 	<p>Poor Laws:</p> <p>1572 Act for Punishment of Vagabonds and Relief of the Poor All vagabonds above age 14 whipped & burned through right ear to create a hole as big as a penny. Imprisonment the punishment for a 2nd offence. Persistent offenders over 18 could be hanged. Children of convicted beggars put in domestic service.</p> <p>1589 addition: fines for sheltering vagrants in homes</p> <p>1601 Poor Law Act Justices of the Peace to appoint 4 overseers of the poor in each parish responsible for the poor alongside churchwardens. Overseers of the poor to collect a ‘poor rate’ from the parish households. Begging forbidden – vagrants whipped & sent back to their birth parish. Almshouses to protect impotent poor. Work provided for able-bodied poor. Anyone refusing to work placed in gaol (jail) or house of correction to do hard labour.</p>	<p>York, 1588: Actions</p> <p>In 1588, authorities in York acted to deal with the problem of poverty:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wealth of York’s gentry and middling sort to pay a ‘poor-rate’ based on wealth. ‘viewers’ to be appointed to list and categorise the poor in the city according to need. Those aged, lame, impotent and ‘past their work’ to be given at least three halfpence a day to prevent begging. Able-bodied poor to be given wool and hemp and paid a small wage to spin at home. Rogues, vagabonds, ‘strange’ beggars from outside the city who will not work to be put to work in houses of correction or banished from the city.
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