

Glossary

abjure	to renounce on oath; to recant
administrator	person appointed by the court to handle the estate of someone who dies without leaving a will or carry out the wishes of a testator if no executor is named, is under twenty-one, dead or otherwise incapable of acting
andirons	fire dogs used for supporting logs in a wood fire.
apparitor	an officer of the ecclesiastical court
appurtenances	anything which goes with house and land (for example, outbuildings, water ways, grazing rights, rights of way)
arquebus	an old-fashioned handgun

bailiwick	the jurisdiction of a bailiff
baldachin, bawdkin	silk brocade, a canopy over a throne, pulpit or altar
borsholder	an official of the local courts
brakes	bracken and ferns
breviary	a religious book, a prayer book
brother	can be step-brother or brother-in-law
bushel	a dry measure of 8 gallons capacity
buttery	room used for brewing
caliver	a light musket
cambric	a fine white linen
cassock	a long robe or outer coat, formerly in common wear

cattle	can refer to any beasts of pasture, particularly oxen and bulls as well as cows which may be referred to as kine/kyne
ceorl	the name used for a free tenant by the Jutes
chafer	a vessel for heating water, meat, etc.,
chafing dish	held the burning charcoal or wood embers
chantry	an endowment or chapel for the chanting of masses
chrisom (child)	a baptised infant who died and was buried before the mother was churched, that is attended a particular religious ceremony after the birth of her child
close	a small enclosed field
cobirons/coberds	supports for a spit
coif/quaives	a covering for the head
conventicle	a secret or forbidden religious meeting, generally in a private house

copyhold	a type of land tenure usually held for a term covering a number of lives, normally three. The heirs had to pay an entry fine and were liable to heriot with nothing in the copy showing that the tenant was free. The rent, however, was fixed and the tenant could sell his copyhold without the landlord being able to change the terms until the lease came to its end. The copy was of the entry in the rolls of the court-baron.
cord	a measure of cut wood (128 cubic feet) originally determined by the use of a cord or string
cordwain	a light leather originally made from goat skins
corslet	a protective body covering of leather, or steel, etc.
court-baron	the civil court of the lord of the manor
court-leet	a local court connected principally with public peace and order; it was the king's court
cousin	any relative other than parent, child or sibling

coverture	the condition of a married woman whereby she is deemed to be under his protection; she had no separate legal identity under civil law and in some criminal cases. One effect of this was that she could not hold property in her own right.
crosscloth	a linen cloth worn across the forehead
curry	to dress leather; to rub down and dress a horse
currier	one who curries, dresses tanned leather
curtilage	the courtyard of a house
demesne land	lands of the manor not let out to tenants
dirige (masses)	"dirige" was the first word of an antiphon sung in the office for the dead; in its contracted form of "dirge" it now means a funeral song or hymn
dissenter	a nonconformist
dole	something given in charity

dower	a widow's entitlement which, by common law, was a third of her husband's estate for the duration of her life or until she remarried
dowry	a marriage portion; the property or money a bride takes into marriage
ell	a measurement of length - 45 inches; 1.25 yards
empark	enclose an area of land by building a continuous fence around it
enfeoff	to make a person a feoffee - <i>see feoffment</i>
entail	freehold held for life but the possessor may not dispose of the estate which has to pass to named (usually male) heirs
escheat	property that falls to the feudal lord or the state for want of an heir or by forfeiture
executor/trix	man/woman appointed in the will to carry out its provisions

father-in-law	can be stepfather
fathom	fathom, six feet, was originally the space reached by the extended arms
fee simple	freehold, can be sold, not entailed or subject to reversions ¹
fell, sheep	a sheepskin
felloe	outer circle of a wheel, attached to the hub by the spokes
feoffment	a type of trust, often called a "use", created for purposes of tax evasion; before he died a man would make his land over to a number of trustees, known as feoffees, who held the land in trust "to the use of" the original owner and his heirs.

fines	fictitious legal actions used from the twelfth century until 1833 as a method of evading conveyancing restrictions when transferring land from one person to another. The intended purchaser, as plaintiff, claimed the property from the vendor which was transferred by a legally sanctioned agreement. ² It was an agreement between the parties and could be a friendly suit but, once put before the court it was no longer a private matter and thus an agreement could be made only with the licence of the court ³
fireboot	a tenant's right to cut wood for fuel
flannel	a soft woollen cloth
flock	wool unsuitable for spinning
fustian	a coarse, twilled cotton fabric often incorporating other materials

2 Tracing Your Ancestors in the PRO; PRO Handbook No. 19

3 Kent Archeological Society; Record Barnch, Vol. XV 1956, p.xiii

garderobe	a privy
gault	a blue-to-grey clay of great value in brick-making
gavel	tax, originally levied in the form of services to the lord
gavelerthe	the service of ploughing for the lord instead of money rent
gavelkind	on inheritance the property was divided equally between all the sons unless the will directed otherwise; if he had no sons, it was to be divided between his daughters. In both cases, the widow was to receive as her dower half her husband's gavelkind land which she held for her lifetime. Lands so held could be freely sold, bought or leased and a lord who had tenants in gavelkind could throw them out for not paying the rent only after a long legal process. Another advantage attached to gavelkind was that execution for felony did not disinherit a man's wife and children.
gavelrip	the service of reaping for the lord instead of money rent
gorget	a piece of armour for the throat; a wimple; a neck ornament
groat	4d, that is 1.67p

halberd	an axe-like weapon with a long shaft
hedgboot	a tenant's right to cut wood for hedging and fencing
heriot	payment on a death of the best beast to the lord of the manor; a type of death duty
holland	a coarse linen fabric
horn-book	a sheet of paper mounted on a wooden tablet and protected by a thin sheet of transparent horn; this method was used to provide an early learning book for children
intestate	dying without making a will
jointure	property settled on a woman at marriage to be enjoyed after her husband's death for life or during her widowhood
joistment	the feeding of cattle on common pasture for a stipulated fee
kine/kyne	just refers to cows - <i>see cattle</i>
kirtle	a kind of gown or outer petticoat
latten/laten	a metal alloy similar to brass

leasehold	land rented for a term of years or lives
Lower Greensand	marine strata from the Lower Cretaceous age forming the inner ring of hills in the Weald

manor

a quantity of land, large or small (often very small) held from the tenant-in-chief by some mesne (intermediate) lord or managed or farmed on his behalf. Usually each group of holdings which had been the subject of a particular royal grant became a separate manor; but by the eleventh century there was a tendency for the larger manors to be divided or for dependent manors to be formed from them. The tendency was greater in the case of the lay than of the ecclesiastical manors.⁴

manor house	by the sixteenth century Kentish manors were of little significance other than for the payment of rent to the "lord of the manor" and there was often no distinction between manor houses and farm houses. Often, especially on what had been ecclesiastical estates, the manor house had originally been built as a farm-house for the bailiff or a tenant farmer ⁵
mark (money)	13s 4d; £0.67
marl	a mixture of clay and lime often used as a fertiliser
mercier	a dealer in textiles, especially the more costly ones
messuage	a house larger than a cottage usually with outbuildings and some land
metalled	as used for early roads - surface with broken stones
month's mind	commemorative masses one month after death or burial

mortuary	a payment made to the parish priest on the death of a parishioner
noble	6s 8d (£0.33)
obit	the religious office for a dead person
overseer	person appointed by the will to check on the executor; sometimes called a supervisor
pannage	the right to pasture swine in a forest or on the common for acorns and beechmast
parcel gilt	partially gilded
peck	a quantity measure equal to 2 gallons
petronell	a large horse pistol
pillowbar/ pillowbeer	a pillowcase or pillow slip

pig (of iron)	a mass of iron cast in a simple shape for transport and subsequently remelted for reshaping, etc. as required for the final product; the blacksmith's "raw material"; also sometimes called a sow
pin (pinne)	a cask holding 4½ gallons
pioneer	a military artisan employed in war in preparing the way for an army and minor engineering works such as trenching
pressing	as a severe punishment, usually for someone charged with a felony who refused to plead; the body was pressed with heavy weights until he pleaded or died
proving of a will	the registering of a will so that it had the power of law for its enforcement
purveyance	the supplying of victuals, etc. to the royal household
quarter	28 lbs (a quarter of a hundredweight, 112 lbs); or 8 gallons
quern	a stone handmill

quit rent	a rent, in money or kind, paid to the lord of the manor in lieu of services
remainder /reversion	a legacy which takes effect after some other event, for example, death of a previous holder of property or his male heirs) or in certain circumstances (such as failure to pay a legacy, lapse of time, remarriage of widow) ⁶ .
recusant	a person who refused to attend the Church of England when it was legally compulsory; usually applied to Catholics but also used for dissenters
sarcenet, sarsenet	a thin tissue of fine silk
saucer	a shallow dish used to hold for sauces and condiments
say	a material similar to serge

seisin	possession of property as distinct from ownership
shaw	small group of trees
shide	as a quantity, was a block of timber 12 by 12 by 6 inches or half a cubic foot
skillet	a long handled metal pan with legs
skimmer	a large wooden spoon with holes in it
socage tenure	tenure of lands by service
sow (of iron)	<i>see pig iron</i>
steer	a young or castrated ox
stover	winter feed for cattle

tapet	a piece of tapestry
tellow	the word tellow was used in Sussex as meaning a young sapling
tenement	a holding or residence (not a flat); land or real property held of another by any tenure
tiffany	a cheap muslin
tithes	a tenth of the produce of the land payable to the church; originally payable only in kind and later the producer came to an agreement with the rector or vicar as to the appropriate payment
tithing	a body of men each of which were responsible for the behaviour of the rest; originally ten men, it could be up to thirty
tithing-man	the chief man of a tithing
testator	person making the will

trendle light	a length of small wax taper formed into a round or coil for greater convenience; it was often used in connection with shrines
trental	a series of thirty requiem masses
tussham	"tusosome" - hemp or flax (used in West Kent) ⁷
usher	a second master at a school
venetians	hose or breeches of a particular fashion introduced from Venice
vestry	a room attached to the chancel of the church where parish meetings were held; the members of the vestry were the vicar and churchwardens, other officials and leading parishioners.

wether sheep	a castrated ram
writ	a document under seal, issued in the name of the Crown or a court, commanding the person to whom it is addressed to do, or refrain from doing, some specified act ⁸ .
wrought	fashioned, ornamented, embroidered