

Title	Place, community and organisation on the Courtown Estates, 1649-1977
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The thesis examines the significance of place in transnational estate studies. It proposes that the landed estate is simultaneously a place, a community and an organisation, and that the interaction of these three elements shapes the events that occur there. It takes the Courtown estate as a case study which, in the nineteenth century, consisted of 23,000 acres in Carlow, Cheshire and Wexford, arranged into seven estates. The thesis is a comparative study of four of the estates, drawing on estate papers, valuation records and census returns and reports. Information has been analysed using traditional and digital research techniques. The thesis commences with a discussion of the evolution of the Courtown estate from 1649 to 1858, examining the ways in which land was acquired. The following three chapters focus on place, community and organisation respectively during the period 1858-1914 when the estate was under fifth earl of Courtown's stewardship. Analysis shows that each estate had a distinct character in terms of place and community, and that estate administration was often adapted accordingly. There follows a detailed comparison of key themes, such as evictions and landlord-tenant relationships, across the four estates. This highlights variances between the individual estates, even when located in close proximity. The thesis shows that a more nuanced understanding of a landed estate can be achieved by analysing all locations within it, their relation to each other, and to the estate as a whole. It also demonstrates that the characteristics of the core estate are not necessarily reflected in the subsidiary estates. Finally, it shows that place, in combination with community and organisation, plays a role in shaping historical events.