

Contents

1	The coming of the New Squirearchy	1
1.1.	The rebirth of rural Britain and the emergence of a New Squirearchy	2
1.2.	Beyond the gravelled driveway	9
1.3.	At play; beyond play?	15
1.4.	From squirearchy to New Squirearchy; a reflection of changing class politics	25
1.5.	Research goals	33
2	Class, identity and gentryfication	37
2.1.	The New Squirearchy and the new middle class	37
2.2.	A third way; through cultural capital to performing identity	43
2.3.	Embodied rural geographies	48
2.4.	Everyday performances and rural competencies	61
2.5.	Tracking rural identity and accounting for experience	66
3	As I rode out ...	75
3.1.	Ethnography and rural geography	75
3.2.	Eamesworth and the irony of a New Squirearchy	80
3.3.	The coming of the commuter	84
3.4.	On being a local lad	88
3.5.	Gathering and interpreting evidence	91
3.6.	The mechanics of data collection	94
3.7.	The ethics of squire chasing	97
4	Out of the Alehouse	105
4.1.	The pub, the squirearchy and the rural idyll	105
4.2.	The Six Tuns	107
4.3.	Office politics	110
4.4.	Pass the port; the role of alcohol	113
4.5.	Masculinity	115
4.6.	New Squires; or archetypal middle class pub dwellers	119
4.7.	(New) money and squirely props	124
4.8.	Acknowledgement	131
5	At the farm gate	134
5.1.	From seeing to being	135
5.2.	Rural chic	138

Contents

5.3.	Paddocks, ponies and country piles	144
5.4.	Plastic farmers	150
5.5.	An agricultural (non) identity	154
5.6.	A landed elite, or elite with land?	161
5.7.	Death and the landscape	164
5.8.	Prestige ... and conviction?	167
6	Patronage and the 'theatre of hospitality'	169
6.1.	The weight of expectation	170
6.2.	Afterimage	175
6.3.	Spiritual leadership	180
6.4.	Ennui	185
6.5.	Playing formal rural politics	189
7	Elite rural networks and recreational associations	197
7.1.	The passing of the hunt	198
7.2.	A breach of conduct	201
7.3.	Classic pretensions	206
7.4.	Golf	210
7.5.	Rugby	213
7.6.	Public schools	218
7.7.	Lords, ladies and the role of gender	221
7.8.	Middle class marker posts	224
8	Closing the stable door ... after the horse has bolted	232
8.1.	Addressing 'common knowledge'	232
8.2.	Performing the middle class; performing the gentry	236
8.3.	Appropriating a discourse	239
8.4.	Other spaces; other identities	241
8.5.	On a collaborative, ethnographic methodology	244
8.6.	The New Squirearchy and the future	247
8.7.	To pastures new – an epilogue	251
	Bibliography	253

Contents