

The Development and Influence of Agricultural Periodicals and Newspapers, 1780–1880¹

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‘Agriculture was not royal then — there was no “Society’s Journal”, . . . no dear little weekly *bonne bouche* of a *Gazette*.’

— Chandos Wren Hoskyns, 1847²

I

HOSKYNs, who was acknowledged by his contemporaries as one of the few nineteenth-century writers able to redeem farming literature from the ‘dryness’³ with which it was usually associated was not alone in contrasting the variety of periodicals and newspapers produced specifically for the Victorian farmer with their relative paucity earlier in the century and in associating this with an increased rate of agricultural change; a number of commentators identified the emergence of the agricultural press as a significant factor in hastening farming advances in the 1840s and 1850s, together with such stimuli as the loss of protection, rising demand, the improvement in communications, and the development of agricultural science.⁴

Such contemporary comment invites some assessment of the influence of agricultural periodicals and newspapers in the

late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, especially in the context of the current interest in the means by which farmers of the period acquired and evaluated agricultural information and which has directed our attention to the intelligent working farmer as an important ‘change-agent’ in the late eighteenth century and to an impressive number of local farming associations in the nineteenth.⁵ Apart from G E Fussell’s review of eighteenth-century farming journals and Scott Watson and Hobbs’s interesting but incomplete survey of ‘The Press and the Pilgrims’, English agricultural newspapers and periodicals have been given scant attention by agricultural historians in contrast to the much fuller treatment which has been accorded to the early North American agricultural press.⁶ The present article is an attempt to fill this lacuna and its purpose is threefold: to examine the nature and development of the agricultural periodical and newspaper between 1780 and 1880; to make

¹A version of this paper was read to the British Agricultural History Society and Historical Geography Research Group Joint Winter Conference on 6 December 1980. I am grateful to Dr P G Hoare for his valuable comments.

²*Gardener’s Chronicle and Agricultural Gazette* (hereafter AG) 6 February 1847. This was the first of a series of articles by Hoskyns published as *Talpa, or the Chronicles of a Clay Farm: An Agricultural Fragment*, 1852.

³A tribute from *Livestock Journal and Fancier’s Gazette*, 8 December 1876.

⁴Examples of such comment include C W Hoskyns, ‘The Progress of English Agriculture during the last fifteen Years’, *Journal of the Society of Arts*, IV, 1855–56, pp 280–1; ‘A Manufacturer’, *The Manufacture of Agricultural Machinery considered as a Branch of National Industry*, 1857, p 7; William Day, *Mechanical Science and the Prize System in Relation to Agriculture*, London, 1857, p 17; R Smith, ‘Agricultural Progress’, paper given to London Farmer’s Club, 4 April 1859, and reported in *Farmer’s Magazine*, 3rd ser, XV, 1859, p 391.

⁵Stuart Macdonald, ‘The Role of the Individual in Agricultural Change: the Example of George Culley of Fenton, Northumberland’, in H S A Fox and R A Butlin, eds, *Change in the Countryside: Essays on Rural England 1500–1900*, IBG Special Publication no 10, 1979, pp 1–22; H S A Fox, ‘Local Farmers’ Associations and the Circulation of Agricultural Information in Nineteenth Century England’, *ibid*, pp 43–64.

⁶G E Fussell, ‘Early Farming Journals’, *Econ Hist Rev*, III, 1932, pp 417–22; J A Scott Watson and M E Hobbs, *Great Farmers*, 1937, pp 246–62. On the North American press see particularly A L Demaree, *The American Agricultural Press 1819–1860*, New York, 1941; Paul W Gates’s survey of ‘Agricultural Periodicals and Journals’ in *The Farmer’s Age: Agriculture 1815–1860*, New York, 1960, pp 338–57; Richard T Farrell, ‘Advice to Farmers: the Content of Agricultural Newspaper, 1860–1910’, *Ag Hist*, 51, 1977, pp 209–17; Donald B Marti ‘Agricultural Journalism and the Diffusion of Knowledge — the first Half-Century in America’, *ibid*, 54, 1980, pp 28–37.

an assessment of the readership of the varied titles; and to suggest some of the ways in which they influenced the course of agricultural development.

II

Figure 1 lists some of the most important titles in circulation during the period in chronological sequence together with their duration of publication; it is based upon Buttress's invaluable 1950 survey.⁷ The two most important titles that have been added are the *Veterinarian*, because its first editor, William Youatt, had close links with the agricultural community, and *Johnson and Shaw's Farmer's Almanac*, which had a particularly wide circulation. Some of Buttress's titles have been omitted because they were local rather than national in character or had agriculture as only a small part of their total content, and the titles are often difficult to categorize. The construction of a definitive list therefore presents problems, but only a small proportion of the total had importance and these are readily identifiable.

The list given here indicates three main phases of interest in agricultural periodicals and newspapers by the establishment of new titles: the period between 1780 and 1815, the 1830s and 1840s, and the 1870s. The first of these is associated with the general interest in agricultural 'improvement' during the late eighteenth century; the second is a reflection of a wave of interest in what may be loosely termed 'scientific' farming and also of the increasingly strong 'political' aspect of agricultural matters; the third is characterized by the growth of specialist publications to cater for particular aspects of farming activity such as dairying, stock-breeding, poultry, and agricultural machinery. Notes on the most important titles are given in an Appendix to the present article. From this, and Fig 1, it can be seen that the periodicals fall into two main

groups according to whether they were associated with an institution or were independent publications. The early development of the newspapers was hindered by problems that were common to all of the newspaper press, such as printing difficulties, post office restrictions, the hostile attitude of government, and heavy taxation.⁸ Though a later development than the periodicals, they came to reach far more readers as they carried market and general news as well as specifically farming material. The newspapers frequently abstracted some of the technical information available in periodicals such as the Royal Agricultural Society's *Journal*, providing an important 'relay' function. They were generators of information through their publication of readers' letters and comments which created a two-way flow of information, while the extensive agricultural advertising that they contained is also worthy of note. The newspapers also published agricultural almanacs which appear to have had a particularly large sale by the standards of the time.

III

We may now turn to the question of readership. A basic theme throughout the period was the reluctance of farmers to consult printed matter. Lord Somerville, President of the 'old' Board of Agriculture between 1798 and 1800, complained that farmers were 'not a reading class', while it was admitted that the Board's *Communications* had had but very limited circulation. The third Earl Spencer lamented that the *Farmer's Series* of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge was little taken by the ordinary farmer for whom it was especially intended, while a reviewer of the second edition of Stephens's *Book of the Farm* complained that there was less demand for works on agriculture than for any other class

⁷F A Buttress, *Agricultural Periodicals of the British Isles 1661-1900 and their Location*, Cambridge, 1950.

⁸A Aspinal, 'The Circulation of Newspapers in the early Nineteenth Century', *Review of English Studies*, XXII, 1946, p 29.

DURATION OF PUBLICATION

TITLE



Title	Start Year	End Year
Memoirs of Agriculture	1768	1768
Farmer's Magazine	1776	1776
J Bath and West'	1780	1780
Annals of Agriculture	1784	1784
Bell's Weekly Messenger ²	1796	1796
Comms Board of Agriculture	1797	1797
Recreations in Agriculture	1799	1799
Agricultural Magazine ³	1799	1799
Trans Highland & Ag Soc	1800	1800
Farmer's Magazine (Edinburgh)	1807	1807
Farmers' Journal ⁴	1823	1823
Fleming's Weekly Express ⁵	1823	1823
Corn Trade Circular	1826	1826
British Farmer's Magazine ⁶	1828	1828
Quar J Agriculture ⁷	1828	1828
Veterinarian	1828	1828
Mark Lane Express	1832	1832
Farmer's Magazine	1832	1832
New Farmer's Journal	1833	1833
Farmer's Magazine	1834	1834
Ag & Industrial Mag	1835	1835
Baxter's Ag Annual	1836	1836
Agriculturist	1836	1836
Trans York Ag Soc	1838	1838
Farmer's Journal	1839	1839
J Royal Ag Soc England	1840	1840
Johnson & Shaw's Almanac	1841	1841
Agricultural Advocate	1842	1842
Farmer's Herald (Chester)	1843	1843
London Corn Circular	1843	1843
Ann Reg Ag Implements	1843	1843
Scientific & Practical Ag list	1844	1844
British Cultivator & Ag Rev	1844	1844
Agricultural Gazette ⁸	1844	1844
Agricultural Magazine	1845	1845
Farmer's Chronicle	1845	1845
Agricultural Statist	1846	1846
Agricultural Advertiser	1846	1846
Farmer's Gazette	1846	1846
Gardeners' and Farmers' J	1847	1847
Rothamsted Memoirs	1847	1847
Farmer's Friend	1847	1847
Agriculturist	1848	1848
Crosskill's Supplement Newspaper	1848	1848
Poultry	1850	1850
Field	1853	1853
Poultry Chronicle	1854	1854
Farmers' Club	1854	1854

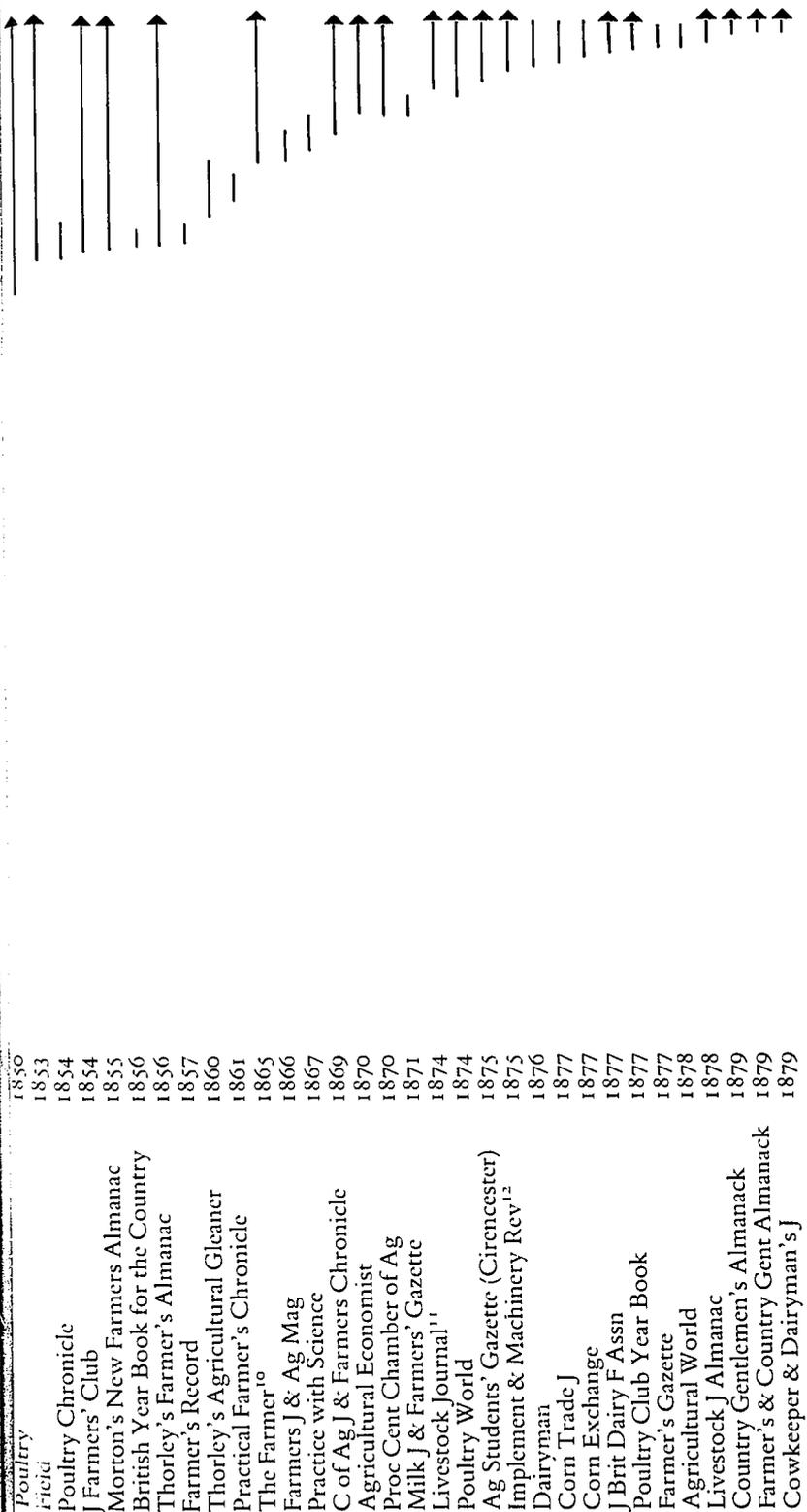


FIGURE I
Agricultural Periodicals and Newspapers 1768-1880

¹ Letters and Papers . . . 1780-1816.
² Little agricultural content before 1832.
³ *Commercial and Agriculture Magazine* 1799-1802.
⁴ Evans and Ruffy's *Farmers' Journal and Agricultural Advertiser*.
⁵ *British Farmers' Chronicle* 1826-29.
⁶ Contents identical with *Farmer's Magazine* after 1846.
⁷ Quarterly' dropped 1843; *Country Gentleman's Magazine* 1868.
⁸ *With Gardener's Chronicle* until 1874.
⁹ Continuation of *Ayrshire Agriculturist*.
¹⁰ Continuation of *Scottish Farmer and Horticulturist*; published in London 1865.
¹¹ *Fancier's Gazette* 1874-75.
¹² *Implement Manufacturer's Review* 1875-78.

of professional book, a view repeated by J C Morton.⁹

Comment of this nature, together with Young's exasperation with the limited sales of his *Annals of Agriculture*, the often rather contradictory advice given in some of the early titles and the apparent difficulty that the editor experienced in eliciting articles of the right quality for the *Edinburgh Farmer's Magazine*, had led to doubt as to whether the early agricultural periodicals had much importance or impact.¹⁰ Against this, Fussell noted that the 1805 issue of the *Farmer's Magazine* went through six editions while by 1810 it was claimed that the farming publications were instrumental in overcoming the isolation of agriculturists which was seen as an obstacle to progress. Clark Hillyard, a prominent Northamptonshire tenant-farmer during the early nineteenth century who wrote his own book on farming because of his disillusionment with the standard works, considered that in its early years, *Evans and Ruffy's Farmers' Journal* was 'so well conducted, and contained so many original letters on agricultural subjects as to make it a very interesting paper to those engaged in agricultural pursuits'.¹¹

The early agricultural periodicals need to be seen in the context of attempts to improve, however imperfectly, the flow of agricultural information; the inadequacy of

formal information channels was keenly felt by observers such as Young and Coke, and apart from the interest in periodicals, the growth of agricultural associations can also be seen as attempts to remedy this perceived deficiency. In contrast to the usual stress on the limited circulation of the *Annals*, Claudio Veliz has drawn attention to the support of Young's *Annals* by what he has termed the 'farming interest' of the late eighteenth century, a progressive group of agriculturists of substantial means who were interested in improved farm practice and agricultural experimentation. Veliz maintains that members of this group were articulate, gregarious, and had mild literary pretensions, and thus wrote on agriculture and formed themselves into agricultural societies. His analysis of the articles in the first 25 volumes of the *Annals* identified 316 different authors and 53 who contributed more than 5 articles each, the majority of which were on practical farm subjects and agricultural experiments. Allowing for multiple readership — and many local societies subscribed to the *Annals* — Veliz suggests that the *Annals* reached some 3000 regular readers. While this was a miniscule proportion of the farming community, and Veliz concludes that the agricultural writing of the time and the local societies had little *direct* influence on the ordinary farmer or farm practice, the early periodicals did at least provide a forum where ideas could be exchanged and opinions articulated among the progressive minority.¹²

Some tentative estimates of readership of the agricultural newspapers can be made from government stamp returns. Newspaper stamps were compulsory until 1855, but necessary thereafter only for those papers that were distributed by direct mailing which was an important mode of distribu-

⁹ Lord Somerville, *The System followed during the last Two Years by the Board of Agriculture*, 1800, p 16; *Communications to the Board of Agriculture*, new ser I, 1819, p iii; Monica C Grobel, 'The Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge', unpublished MA thesis, Univ London, 1933, p 368, cited by Ellis A Wasson, 'The third Earl Spencer and Agriculture 1818-1845', *Agric Hist Rev*, 26, 1978, p 98; *Journal of Agriculture*, new ser, 1853, p 117; J C Morton 'Agricultural Education', *JRASE* 2nd ser, I, 1865, pp 455-7.

¹⁰ Stuart Macdonald, 'The Role of George Culley of Fenton in the Development of Northumberland Agriculture', *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 5th ser, III, 1975, p 138; and *idem*, 'The Diffusion of Knowledge among Northumberland Farmers 1780-1815', *Agric Hist Rev*, 27, 1979, pp 31-2. The annual sale of the *Annals of Agriculture* was only 350 in 1791 (*Annals*, XV, 1791, pp 170-1).

¹¹ G E Fussell, *op cit*, p 422; 'Agriculture' in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, I, 1810, p 327; Clark Hillyard, *Practical Farming and Grazing*, 2nd ed Northampton 1837, p 59. Hillyard is briefly considered by G E Fussell, 'A famous Northamptonshire Farmer — Clark Hillyard Esq. of Thorpelds, Northampton', *Jour Land Agents' Society*, 50, 1951, pp 162-4.

¹² Claudio Veliz, 'Arthur Young and the English Landed Interest 1784-1813', unpublished PhD thesis, Univ London, 1959, esp pp 19-27, 279-87.

Source: Newspaper Stamp Returns in BPP, 1852, XXVIII; 1854, XXXIX; 1854-55 XXX; 1856 XXXVIII; 1857-58 XXXIV; 1859 (Sess 2) XV; 1860 XL; 1861 XXXIV; 1862 XXX; 1864 XXXIV; 1865 XXXI; 1866 XL; 1867-68 LV; 1870 XLI.

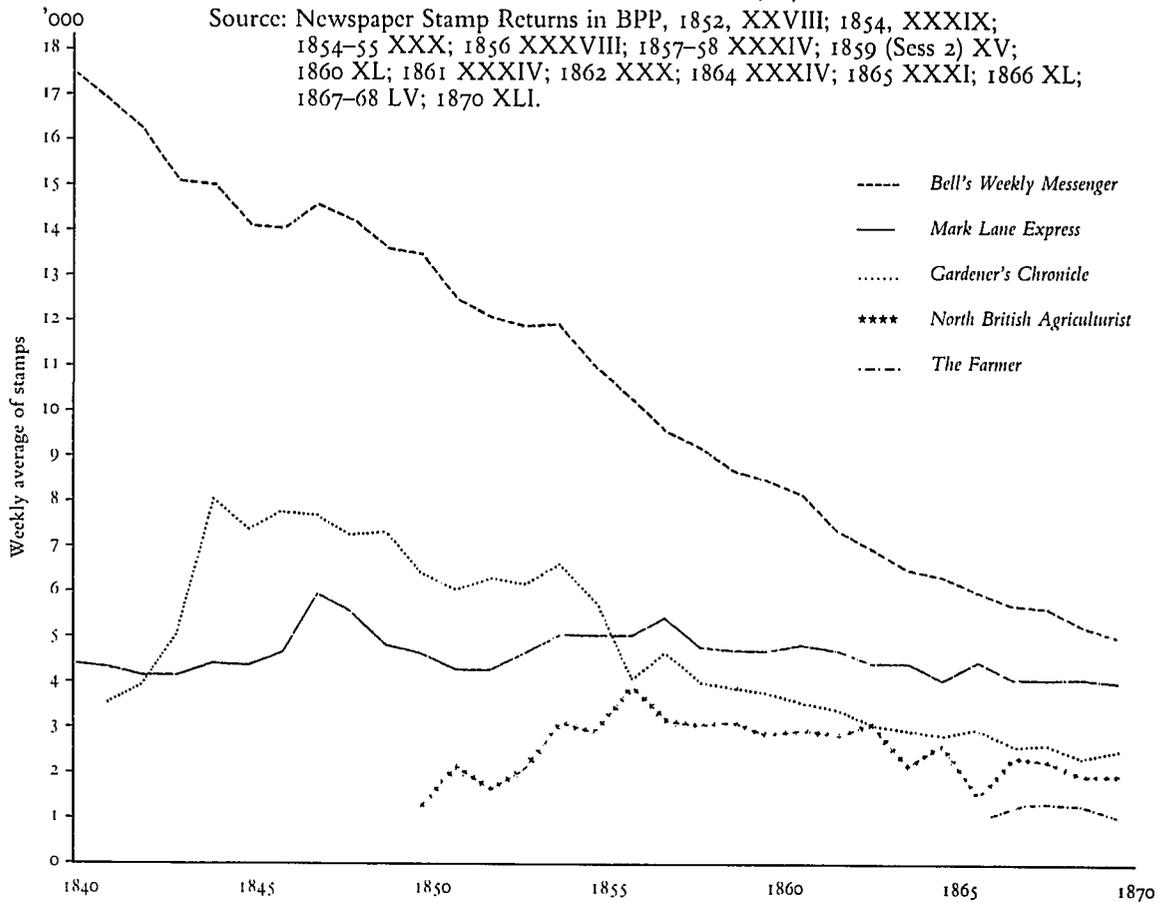


FIGURE 2
Stamps issued to leading Agricultural Newspapers 1840-70
(Weekly averages)

tion for country papers.¹³ The returns of stamps issued to specific papers were published until 1870, and they indicate that the weekly sale of the *Mark Lane Express* was of the order of 3750 in the late 1830s, and about 1500 for the *New Farmer's Journal* between 1841 and 1846.¹⁴ Weekly averages of stamp returns for the leading papers between 1840 and 1870 are plotted in Fig 2.

These graphs show a number of interesting features but need much qualification.

¹³ On the use of this source see Joel H Wiener, 'Circulation and the Stamp Tax', in J Dan Vann and Rosemary T Van Arsdell, *Victorian Periodicals*, New York, 1978, pp 149-73. The problem of the interpretation of the pre- and post-1855 statistics is considered by Alvar Ellegard, 'The Readership of the Periodical Press in mid-Victorian Britain', *Göteborgs Universitets Arsskrift*, LXIII, 1957, pp 4-40.

¹⁴ Estimates from BPP, XXVIII, 1852: 'Number of newspaper stamps at one penny issued to newspapers in England, Ireland, and Scotland from 1837 to 1850'.

Bell's Weekly Messenger exhibits a continuous decline which had started earlier in the century as competitors took some of its market.¹⁵ The distinct dip in 1853 may be related to the launch of *The Field*, which quickly established a reputation as a rural affairs paper and outsold *Bell's* by 1870.¹⁶ A difficulty in interpreting the *Bell's* statistics is that it was only the Monday issue which had a significant agricultural content and the separate editions are not differentiated in the returns. It is also probable that the Monday paper would also be taken by country readers who were not specifically 'agricultural'

¹⁵ For a comparison of the circulation of *Bell's* with other leading London papers, see A P Wadsworth, 'Newspaper Circulations 1800-1954', *Manchester Stat Soc*, 9 March 1955, p 13.

¹⁶ For a history of *The Field* see Robert Norman Rose, *The Field, 1853-1953; a Centenary Volume*, 1953.

readers. Thus the stamp totals need to be much reduced to establish the agricultural readership but the issue is further confused by the fact that it seems likely that the farming reputation of *Bell's* became steadily more important, so that as the total readership declined the agricultural readership became a much larger proportion of the lower circulation. Interpretation of the *Agricultural Gazette* returns is complicated because it was sold in conjunction with the *Gardener's Chronicle* until 1874, and it is difficult to know how many purchasers were buying it for the 'gardening' or 'agricultural' sections; there is, however, a distinct rise in sales shown at the time of the addition of the *Gazette* (1844). Morton claimed that the *Gazette* had an initial sale of 2000, a level of circulation that is indicated by the stamp returns.¹⁷ The *Chronicle* shows the most marked decline at the time of the repeal of the compulsory stamp in 1855, and it may be that the 'gardener' readers were more urban-based and did not receive their papers by direct mailing, leaving the majority of the *Chronicle* stamps after that year as relating to *Gazette* sales. Unstamped issues of the agricultural newspapers after 1855 are an unknown quantity and may explain the apparent tendency of static or declining sales.

With these qualifications, some estimates of the basic circulations may be made. In 1850, a time of low readership attributed by the *Gardeners' and Farmers' Journal* to the agricultural depression,¹⁸ the sales appear to have been as follows:

Sales of Leading Agricultural Newspapers, 1850

Title	Annual Stamps	Weekly Sales*
<i>Bell's Weekly Messenger</i>	703,500 =	13,530
<i>Gardener's Chronicle</i>	338,000 =	6,500
<i>Mark Lane Express</i>	246,000 =	4,730
<i>North British Agriculturist</i>	70,300 =	1,350
<i>Gardeners' and Farmers' Journal</i>	60,500 =	1,160

* to nearest 10. Source: BPP 1852, XXVIII.

¹⁷ AG, 26 December 1881.

¹⁸ *Gardeners' and Farmers' Journal*, 30 December 1848.

The *Bell's* figures have to be reduced to take account of the large non-agricultural readership, and in the early part of the century the Monday edition comprised less than one-third of weekly sales.¹⁹ By 1850 *Bell's* had strengthened its position as an agricultural paper, but many of the Monday subscribers would still be 'country' rather than specifically 'agricultural' readers, and thus the *Bell's* sales need to be reduced, possibly by as much as 50 per cent. If this is accepted, and the *Chronicle* sales are similarly reduced to allow for the 'gardening' readers, the figure indicated for the basic agricultural subscribers of the varied titles in 1850 is 17,255. By 1870 it may be that the majority of the stamped issues of *Bell's* and the *Chronicle* were for agricultural readers; the stamp totals for year ending 30 June 1870 are as follows:

Sales of Leading Agricultural Newspapers, 1869-1870

Title	Annual Stamps	Weekly Sales*
<i>Bell's Weekly Messenger</i>	272,000	5,230
<i>Mark Lane Express</i>	216,000	4,150
<i>Gardener's Chronicle</i>	140,000	2,690
<i>North British Agriculturist</i>	114,000	2,190
<i>Farmer</i>	66,000	1,270
<i>Chamber of Agriculture Journal</i>	43,000	830

* to nearest 10. Source: 1870, XLI.

which indicates a basic readership of 16,360. If the sale of unstamped copies was significant then this figure will be an underestimate, and there are indications that this is the case. The 1870s seem to have been a decade of steady but unspectacular increase in readership of all the agricultural titles, and the *Farmer* and *Chamber of Agriculture Journal*, as the most recent additions, may have gained new readers. Toward the end of 1873 Morton considered that the most 'liberal valuation of the united subscription lists' of

¹⁹ The issue of 4 August 1811 claimed 9100 sales for the Saturday edition and 4200 for the Monday edition. I am grateful to Dr L. Adrian for this reference.

all the weekly agricultural papers was 25,000.²⁰ The fact that Morton stressed that this was a maximum figure, and that the papers were gaining readers in the early part of the decade, suggests that a figure some way between the sales estimate revealed by the stamp issue and Morton's figure would be correct — perhaps a little in excess of 20,000 in 1870.

Basic sales are not directly equivalent to readership levels and it is clearly necessary to consider the extent of multiple readership if we are to estimate how many agriculturists came into direct contact with the papers. It is likely that the multiple readership would have been considerable, for the numerous local farmers' clubs and agricultural societies put stress on the maintenance of libraries and reading rooms where the papers could be consulted, and they would also be available at market hostleries; the difficulty is to find an appropriate multiplier.

That proposed here is a three-fold one, justified as follows. A discussion of the 'Farmers' Newspaper' in 1854 stated that modest tenant farmers would contribute 5s towards the average annual subscription of £1.10s for an agricultural paper and then share it between a local group; thus one of the characteristics of the farmers' paper was its 'itinerant character, carrying the news of the week from farmhouse to farmhouse' and this indicates a six-fold multiplier, a level of readership that has been postulated for the popular press of the time generally and has been noted for a local newspaper in an agricultural context, while the editor of *Bell's Weekly Messenger* thought that each issue was read by five different readers earlier in the nineteenth century.²¹ However, it is considered here that a five- or six-fold multiplier cannot be properly applied to the basic sales as many copies — those which went to

substantial landowners or farm bailiffs — would not be likely to enter into multiple readership, and there is the additional complication that some of the agricultural readers probably subscribed to more than one title. Thus the five- or six-fold level of multiple readership indicated needs to be reduced, and if a three-fold multiplier is applied to the basic sales that have been discussed then an estimate of readership of from 50,000 to over 60,000 between 1840 and 1870 may be taken as realistic.

This leads us to the question as to the proportion of all agriculturists that came in contact with an agricultural paper in the mid-nineteenth century. The census return enumerated 249,431 'farmers and graziers' in 1851 and 233,943 in 1881.²² In addition, there were 'landowners' and 'farm bailiffs' to be counted among potential subscribers. J C Morton thought that only those occupiers of holdings in excess of 100 acres could be reckoned as likely purchasers of agricultural newspapers.²³ The census of 1861 and 1871 looked at farm size in a sample of counties which indicated that a little over 20 per cent of farms were in excess of Morton's threshold figure.²⁴ (The 'average' farm was slightly larger than 100 acres, but the frequency distribution of nineteenth-century farm size is positively skewed.) From an examination of the census returns of 1861, Morton estimated the market for agricultural newspapers as 50,000 farmers occupying farms over 100 acres, 30,000 landowners, 10,000 farm bailiffs from England and Wales, and with some addition for Scotland and Ireland arrived at a total of 120,000 in 1865. Eight years later his estimate was similar at 125,000.²⁵ Morton's estimates of the potential readership raise certain doubts, such as the justification of the 100-acre threshold, yet they are useful as a working figure. If we accept them, the

²⁰ AG, 15 November 1873.

²¹ 'The Farmer's Newspaper', *Farmer's Magazine*, 3rd ser. VI, 1854, p 486; Alan J Lee, *The Origins of the Popular Press 1855-1914*, 1976, p 35; Stuart Macdonald, 'The Diffusion of Knowledge among Northumberland Farmers 1780-1815', *Agric Hist Rev*, 27, 1979, pp 31-2; *Bell's Weekly Messenger*, 4 August 1811.

²² J H Clapham, *An Economic History of Modern Britain*, II, Cambridge, 1932, p 263.

²³ J C Morton, 'Agricultural Education', p 456.

²⁴ Clapham, *op cit*, p 265.

²⁵ Morton, *loc cit*; AG, 15 November 1873.

conclusion is that the majority of agriculturists never came in contact with an agricultural paper at all, a finding that is fully in line with contemporary observations, but that as many as one-half of substantial tenant farmers or landowners — the critical 'opinion-leaders' or 'change-agents' — did read agricultural newspapers in Victorian times, and the view taken here is that this proportion is not unimpressive.

Morton thought otherwise, for he constantly deplored the indifference of agriculturists to agricultural publications. A crucial point here is that it is probable that at the level of sales discussed the agricultural newspapers were at the margin of financial viability. The *Gazette* seems to have been not far from collapse by the end of the 1870s despite the universal respect with which Morton was held; he complained that, because of lack of support, the *Gazette* had been an 'uphill game for the conductors' and a 'constant drain on the funds of the proprietors'.²⁶ Paradoxically, if proprietors were prepared to sustain losses on account of a wider concern for agricultural progress then this may have made it more difficult to achieve the mass readership that Morton so earnestly desired.

For, as J R Fisher has pointed out, the various publications were not made very attractive or readable, being ill set-out with dense columns of fine print.²⁷ In Morton's writing one can detect a continuation of that austere spirit which has been identified as a characteristic of the agricultural 'improvers' of the late eighteenth century but which became out of accord with the spirit of mid-Victorian times when, during the relative prosperity of the 1860s in particular, quite modest agriculturists had social pretensions.²⁸ Morton could not understand

why agricultural newspapers failed to pay while those which dealt with 'country sport' or catered for 'those interested in the colour of a canary, the swiftness of a pigeon, or the length of a rabbit's ears' (referring to *The Field, Land and Water* and the *Livestock Journal and Fancier's Gazette*) built up profitable circulations, though he admitted that such titles might well bring to agriculturists the small amount of agricultural information contained between the other more entertaining items. Morton was saddened by the fact that an intelligent working-farmer friend of his preferred the equivalent of an agricultural 'gossip column' to all the more important items in the *Gazette*, yet it is perhaps not difficult for us to appreciate that the ordinary farmer may have preferred to absorb agricultural information in conjunction with lighter material with a sporting or social flavour, and would soon become tired with too many 'dreary dissertations on the excess of non-nitrogenous constituents'.²⁹ As Chandos Wren Hoskyns replied to the old complaint that farmers were not 'a reading class': 'What did they have to make them so?'³⁰ The relative success of the *Mark Lane Express* was attributed in part to the inclusion of articles on such topics as the 'Herds of Great Britain' contributed by that quaint but entertaining writer, Henry Hall Dixon, who acquired something of a following in the 1860s, and was directly encouraged by George Parker Tuxford (who took an interest in the *Express* on the death of Joseph Rogerson in 1851), as is acknowledged in the preface to 'The Druid's' *Saddle and Sirloin* (1869).

There is little information available on the circulation of the periodicals but it seems safe to assume that they were mostly lower than that of the newspapers. The *Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society* was sent *gratis* to a membership which fluctuated from about 5000 to 7500 between 1840 and 1880. There

²⁶ AG, 26 December 1881. I am grateful to Dr J R Fisher for this reference.

²⁷ J R Fisher, 'Public Opinion and Agriculture 1875-1900', unpublished PhD thesis, Univ Hull, 1972, p 23.

²⁸ Claudio Veliz identified 'austerity' as characteristic of his 'farming interest' group; on the mid-Victorian 'social pretensions' see C S Orwin and E H Whetham, *History of British Agriculture 1846-1914*, 1964, pp 318-19.

²⁹ AG, 26 December 1881, cited by Fisher loc cit; AG, 22 August 1872.

³⁰ J S Arkwright, 'Introductory Note' to *Talpa*, 1903 edn, p vi.

were also direct sales, and by 1878 some 500 copies were printed in addition to those distributed to members. The Society's *Journal* underwent three main phases during the period considered here. Under the direction of Philip Pusey it contained many short communications — reports of experiments and agricultural observations — as well as more substantial essays. It went through a rather dull period between the time of Pusey's death in 1855 and the appointment of H M Jenkins as joint secretary-editor at the end of 1868, J C Morton having been very controversially passed over for the editorship in 1860. During this time there is comment to the effect that many members who received the *Journal* never even cut its pages, though it seems to have become more widely consulted in the 1870s when the Society took up such questions as the adulteration of fertilizers which was of direct practical concern to the agriculturist. In general the *Journal* was not so important for direct readership but as the vehicle for the publication of original agricultural research, which in time found its way into more widely read media.³¹ The agricultural almanacs were a popular source of this technical information and their relatively large sales are worthy of note. The average annual sale of *Johnson and Shaw's* was 15,570 between 1841 and 1865 and was thus probably among the most widely read of all agricultural publications of the nineteenth century.³²

IV

From this discussion of the readership of the newspapers and periodicals we may now turn to a brief consideration of their 'influence', of which three broad categories may be identified: the dissemination of

agricultural price and commercial information, the articulation of agricultural opinion, and the spread of technical and scientific information on agriculture.

Most of the agricultural newspapers and periodicals made a point of relaying information on the market prices of agricultural commodities. It was this feature that contributed to the early reputation of *Bell's Weekly Messenger* as a rural affairs paper, and it was part of the original rationale of the *Mark Lane Express* (as its title suggests), for John Rogerson (one of its original founders) worked on the *Mercantile Journal* and was impressed by the imperfect way in which the corn markets were then reported.³³ Thus the *Mark Lane Express* always prided itself on its comprehensive coverage of the national and regional markets, and the *Agricultural Gazette* extended its market coverage in 1853. Extensive market coverage was costly to assemble, and it is for this reason that the *Express*, at 7d, was the most expensive of the London weekly newspapers in the early 1870s.³⁴ In addition to reports of national and regional markets there were also agricultural surveys on the state of the crops at various times of the year, and extensive advertisements for fertilizers and agricultural machinery (particularly in the almanacs) which contemporaries thought significant in aiding the diffusion of improved practice.

The newspapers and the more popular periodicals were forums where agriculturists' opinion could be expressed, and they were also sometimes linked with 'farmers' movements' of various types. An early example was the prominence given to local protection societies (under the leadership of George Webb Hall) between 1816 and 1819 in the *Farmers' Journal*, and Hall contributed lengthy epistles to that paper under the *nom de plume* of 'Alpha'. Issues of the *Farmers' Journal* were sometimes sent *gratis* to rural

³¹ For a discussion of the *Journal* of the Royal Agricultural Society see N P W Goddard, 'The Royal Agricultural Society of England and Agricultural Progress 1838-1880', unpublished PhD thesis, Univ Kent, 1981, esp pp 134-75, 271-80.

³² The figures are from Morton's paper on 'Agricultural Education', pp 456-7.

³³ For a memoir of Joseph Rogerson see *Farmer's Magazine*, third ser., XVI, 1859, pp 87-8.

³⁴ J Grant, *The Newspaper Press*, III, 1872, p 127.

hostelries to secure full attention to particularly topical matters.³⁵ The *Agriculturist* was the organ of the Central Agricultural Society founded late in 1835, which agitated particularly on the currency question. As there was considerable internal dissension over the aims of this association and disagreement over the editorial policy of the *Agriculturist*, *Bell's Weekly Messenger* was for a time used to give publicity to the Central Society's proceedings.³⁶ Between 1844 and 1846 local protection societies were given a good deal of coverage in the *Mark Lane Express*; later, the Farmer's Alliance, a body formed in 1879 to articulate the grievances of tenant farmers, was closely associated with the *Express* as William Bear, then editor, was also the Secretary of the Alliance.³⁷ The Chambers of Agriculture had their own journals to give publicity to their proceedings. Henry Corbet criticised the Chambers in his *Express* editorials as being dominated by landlords and thus too concerned with issues such as local taxation at the expense of the Malt Tax (against which the *Express* unflaggingly campaigned without success), the Game Laws, and Tenant Right, and was particularly scathing about J A Clarke, the editor of the *Chamber of Agriculture Journal*.³⁸ Charles Clay, the founder of the Central Chamber, later recalled that Corbet's opposition had done much to hinder the early progress of the Chambers.³⁹

Agricultural protest movements are sometimes viewed as being rather narrow in outlook, particularly with regard to calls for protection and opposition to the extension of free trade. It is thus interesting to consider the role of some of the leading agricultural papers in bringing about a gradual accept-

ance of free trade opinion among agriculturists. This has been noted by Scott Watson and Hobbs in their discussion of the *North British Agriculturist*, but their contention that free trade principles did not extend to the English titles is incorrect.⁴⁰ Certainly *Bell's Weekly Messenger* and the *New Farmers' Journal* took a staunchly protectionist line, but the view of the *Gazette* and *Express* was somewhat different.

When the *Gazette* was launched in 1844 the young Morton clearly specified that the paper was to be independent of all party viewpoints.⁴¹ Though Morton took this neutral stance, his close friend Chandos Wren Hoskyns wrote frequent leaders which were thinly disguised free trade statements. The Corn Law debate which raged early in 1846 was hardly given a mention in the *Gazette* (though Hoskyns had to admit that it was an 'affectation' to ignore it), while Morton expressed disinterest in what he then saw as essentially an argument between 'landlords and manufacturers'. Hoskyns argued that agriculturists should be more concerned with obtaining maximum yield per unit area rather than maximum price, views which aroused the hostility of the *Gazette* readers.⁴² Morton later recalled Hoskyns as a leader in the growth of free-trade opinion among agriculturists.⁴³ The influences on Morton's thought can be identified, for his father was agent to the Earl of Ducie and kept the Earl's Whitfield example-farm, and with the geologist Joshua Trimmer wrote a pamphlet advocating the repeal of the Corn Laws from an agricultural point of view (in that stock-feeding would then be cheaper), while Ducie (who J C Morton acknowledged as having done much to advance his career) caused no little sensation when in 1844 he appeared on the platform of the Anti-Corn Law League and declared that under free trade in corn not

³⁵ Travis L Crosby, *English Farmers and the Politics of Protection 1815-1852*, Hassocks, 1977, p 36.

³⁶ *Bell's Weekly Messenger*, 5 June 1837.

³⁷ On the Alliance see J R Fisher, 'The Farmers' Alliance: An Agricultural Protest Movement of the 1880s', *Agric Hist Rev*, 26, 1978, pp 15-25.

³⁸ *Mark Lane Express* 18 January, 19 April, 15 and 29 November 1869. See also W W Good, *Where are we Now? A Politico-Agricultural Letter to the Chairman of the Central Chamber of Agriculture*, Clare Sewell Read Esq., MP, 1869.

³⁹ *Journal of the Farmer's Club*, 1882-86, pp 18-19.

⁴⁰ *Great Farmers*, pp 247-8.

⁴¹ *Gardener's Chronicle*, 2 December 1843; *AG*, 6 January 1844.

⁴² *AG*, 3 January, 7, 14 February 1846.

⁴³ *Ibid*, 7 January 1871.

one acre of the Cotswolds would go out of cultivation.⁴⁴

To include the *Mark Lane Express* as being less than faithful to protectionism in the early 1840s may seem to be inconsistent with that paper's support of the local protection societies, but while William Shaw (its editor between 1832 and 1852) wrote strongly-worded leaders to the effect that the rural community had been slow to organize itself against the League and that Peel was prepared to betray the agricultural interest, his support for the Corn Laws was heavily qualified — enough to lead to the accusation that he edited a free trade paper.⁴⁵ Shaw certainly eschewed the more polemical aspects of the debate, and upheld the unity of interest, as he saw it, between manufacturers and agriculturists, but he viewed protection as necessary to compensate agriculture for the various financial burdens with which farmers had to contend. He thought that agricultural technique was insufficiently developed to stand unfettered competition in 1846, but his implication was that the Corn Laws were disposable in the longer term. After repeal Shaw was quick to pose the question as to whether agriculturists may have been mistaken in upholding the principle of protection, though he was unable to endorse Caird's pamphlet in 1849 which was enthusiastically reviewed in the *Gazette*.⁴⁶

Shaw gave particular attention to working for a better system of tenant-right, which he saw as essential for general agricultural advance, and he seems to have been largely instrumental in interesting Philip Pusey in the issue.⁴⁷ The leaders pages of the *Express* were embellished with an engraving of a plough and the slogans 'Live and Let Live'

and 'Property brings its Duties as well as its Rights'.⁴⁸ Shaw's extensive influence in agricultural affairs — aided by his position as an agricultural editor — is worthy of note. He was largely responsible for the establishment of the Royal Agricultural Society as he continually argued for a non-political body devoted to the technical and scientific aspects of agriculture in the *Express* and *Farmer's Magazine*. Shaw acted as the Secretary of the new body until 1840, and there was a proposal from his co-proprietors that the Society's *Journal* should be published in conjunction with the *Farmer's Magazine* after the model of the Highland Society's *Transactions* and the *Quarterly Journal of Agriculture*, though this offer was not taken up. Shaw also founded the London Farmer's Club in 1842 and promoted local farmers' clubs of which he was a 'zealous advocate'; the *Express* and *Farmer's Magazine* made a particular point of covering the activities of these bodies and were thus instrumental in encouraging their phenomenal expansion in early Victorian England.⁴⁹

Henry Corbet, who succeeded Shaw at the *Express* in 1853, had earlier collaborated with him in their joint *Digest of Evidence on Agricultural Customs*, and it is thus Corbet and Morton who were the leading agricultural editors during the most prosperous period of Victorian 'high farming' of the 1850s and 1860s. They exhibited a fascinating contrast of styles. Morton was independent, sober-minded, yet tremendously optimistic as to what could be achieved by the adoption of the best practice in agriculture, and passionately believed in the need to raise the general intelligence of the farmer through improved agricultural education. Corbet was also interested in agricultural progress

⁴⁴ John Morton and Joshua Trimmer, *An Attempt to Estimate the Effects of Protecting Duties on the Profits of Agriculture*, 1844; *Mark Lane Express* 3 June, 22 July 1844. See also J C Morton's tributes to Ducie, *A G*, 4 June, 31 December 1853.

⁴⁵ *Mark Lane Express*, 19, 26 February 1844, 20 April 1846.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, 1 June 1846, 28 May 1849; *AG*, 5 May 1849.

⁴⁷ On tenant right see J R Fisher, *Tenurial Deficiencies in the English Land System: The Mid-Nineteenth Century Debate*, Univ Newcastle, NSW, Australia, Department of Economics, Research Report, 58, 1980.

⁴⁸ Noted by Julian R McQuiston, 'Tenant Right: Farmer against Landlord in Victorian England', *Ag Hist*, XLVII, 1973, p 100, n 9.

⁴⁹ On Shaw see Nicholas Goddard, 'William Shaw "of the Strand" and the Foundation of the Royal Agricultural Society of England', *JRASE* (in press 1982). His connection with local agricultural societies has been noted in *idem*, 'Agricultural Societies', in G E Mingay, ed, *The Victorian Countryside*, I, 1981, pp 246, 252.

but was much more sceptical of the potentialities of some of the techniques and methods that were urged by the enthusiasts of the day: the use of sewage as a manure, for which much was claimed by Morton and others, but which proved to be virtually useless, is a case in point.⁵⁰ Corbet was much more interested in agricultural shows, cattle exhibitions, and country sport than was Morton, and wrote extensively for the *New Sporting Magazine*, also published by the *Express* firm of Rogerson and Tuxford. Corbet had great writing talent and deserves recognition as an incisive commentator on mid-Victorian agricultural affairs.⁵¹

All the Victorian agricultural periodicals and newspapers gave considerable attention to the technical and scientific aspects of agriculture, and the generation and diffusion of such information was the third area of their influence. Space does not permit a detailed examination of this very important aspect of their role, which I have attempted, in part, elsewhere, but information on such matters as drainage, fertilizers, theories of plant and animal nutrition, and the nature of pests and diseases, which often first appeared in articles in the less popular titles, were frequently abstracted or reported in the more widely-read publications which have been given particular attention in this survey.⁵² In addition, the numerous agricultural shows — where advanced machinery and improved stock were exhibited — received extensive coverage as did local lectures and discussions at agricultural clubs and societies. Readers' letters, which reported experiences or experiments, also generated knowledge and further comment and thus added to the totality of agricultural information available. What the ordinary agriculturist lacked was succinct summaries (rather than cumbersome encyclopaedic works) of the

best established farm-practice and agricultural knowledge. It was not until the 1870s that much progress was made in this direction when, for example, the Agricultural Co-operative Association published charts in the *Agricultural Economist* which gave advice on the action and application of different fertilizers and which drew upon the work of such pioneers as Lawes, Gilbert and Voelcker whose findings had been published during the preceding thirty years.⁵³ Morton tried to pull the scattered information together in his *Book of the Farm* series, the first volume of which, Robert Warington's *Chemistry of the Farm* (1879), enjoyed a particularly high level of popularity.

V

Between 1780 and 1880 the agricultural press had a sometimes precarious existence, a reflection of the agriculturists' distaste for reading and an increasing public indifference to agricultural affairs as the country became more urbanized.⁵⁴ While hard estimates of readership levels are, as we have seen, difficult to establish with precision, the figures that have been discussed do at least indicate that the agricultural periodicals and newspapers were read by a substantial proportion of larger farmers even if they lacked the mass readership among the agricultural community rather unrealistically hoped for by Morton. Thus while in the 1870s there were clearly still many prominent agriculturists like 'Billy' Torr of Aylesbury who despised 'paper farming', it is probable that they read an agricultural newspaper, and while of Torr it was said to be 'against his nature' to write on agricultural topics, he was very willing to speak at farmers' clubs with telling effect, and such discourses were invariably reported; for the farmer who did not read one of the

⁵⁰ Nicholas Goddard, 'Nineteenth Century Recycling: the Victorians and the Agricultural Utilisation of Sewage', *History Today*, 31 June 1981, pp 32-6.

⁵¹ Some of his writings were gathered together as Henry Corbet, *Tales and Traits of Sporting Life*, 1864.

⁵² For an examination of these 'information linkages' see Goddard, thesis, pp 280-305.

⁵³ Augustus Voelcker *et al*, *Agricultural Economy*, 1874.

⁵⁴ This was complained about by W E Bear, Corbet's successor at the *Mark Lane Express*. See W E Bear, 'The Public Interest in Agricultural Reform', *The Nineteenth Century*, V, 1879, pp 1079-80.

specifically agricultural titles, matter contained in them was frequently abstracted by the provincial press which often gave coverage to farming topics.⁵⁵

It has been no part of the purpose of this article to make elaborate claims for the status of the nineteenth-century agricultural periodical and newspaper. However, while the agricultural press was not successful in giving an influential 'voice' to the farming interest, and as H H Dixon stressed, the ordinary working-farmer was much more prepared to go to a technical lecture than read an article on the same subject, the not inconsiderable number of agriculturists who did take an agricultural paper were much better qualified for the conduct of their affairs

through the market information, reports of discoveries, inventions, experience, and rural news that it contained.⁵⁶ Further, it is doubtful if the local farmers' clubs and associations would have achieved the same degree of prominence and importance had they not been actively supported by the agricultural press. The newspapers and periodicals therefore need to be viewed in conjunction with these parallel and integrated channels as part of a complex web of information linkages. Thus by mid-Victorian times there was no shortage of agricultural information for those who wanted to avail themselves of it; whether the knowledge would 'pay' however, was quite another matter.

⁵⁵ 'The Business of a Farmers' Club', *Farmer's Magazine*, XLVIII, 1875, p 317; anon, 'The Late William Torr: a compilation from many Sources', *JRASE*, 2nd ser, XI, 1875, p 306.

⁵⁶ H H Dixon, 'The Royal Agricultural Society', *Gentleman's Magazine*, new ser, III, 1869, p 302.

APPENDIX

Notes on leading agricultural Periodicals and Newspapers 1780-1880 in chronological sequence (Year in parentheses indicates first publication)

Memoirs of Agriculture and other Oeconomical Arts (1768). Published selected communications from the Society of Arts. Edited until 1782 by Robert Dossie when the Society began a regular series of *Transactions* which continued until 1848; the *Journal of the Society of Arts* was begun in 1852. In the nineteenth century agriculture was not a major concern of the Society, but in Victorian times its *Journal* contained some important discussions on agricultural topics, generally on broad themes such as sewage farming or food supply.

Letters and Papers on Agriculture, Planting etc . . . (1780) of the Bath and West Society. (The Society was founded in 1777; see Kenneth Hudson, *The Bath and West: a Bicentennial History*, Bradford-on-Avon, 1976). Published until 1816, revived in 1853 by Thomas Dyke Acland as the Society's *Journal* which carried a number of original articles and reports as well as papers that had first appeared elsewhere. Acland was succeeded as editor in 1859 by Josiah Goodwin.

Annals of Agriculture (1784). Edited by Arthur Young, the *Annals* were the most significant of the late eighteenth-century agricultural periodicals. Continued until 1808 when Young's failing eyesight caused him to curtail some of his activities. A wide variety of

mostly short comment and articles on agricultural topics which have been analysed by Claudio Veliz, 'Arthur Young and the English Landed Interest 1784-1813', unpublished PhD thesis, University of London, 1959.

Bell's Weekly Messenger (1796). Sometimes mistakenly taken as the oldest agricultural newspaper, it must be stressed that the agricultural content was small until 1832. Its reputation as a rural affairs paper derived from its Monday edition, begun in 1799, which was sent out to supply country readers with market information, including agricultural prices (Stanley Morison, *John Bell 1745-1831*, Cambridge, 1930, p 54).

Communications to the Board of Agriculture (1797), continued until 1811 (there was a single volume of a new series published in 1819). Contained long essays, often in response to topics specified by the Board and for which prizes were given.

Recreations in Agriculture, Natural History, Arts, and Miscellaneous Literature (1799). Edited by J Anderson; ran for only three years and contained little agricultural material. Interestingly, there was a complaint about the lack of agricultural representation (volume I, 1799, p 287).

Prize Essays and Transactions of the Highland and Agricultural Society (1799). The Highland Society was founded in 1784; between 1828 and 1866 the *Prize Essays* (styled *Transactions* after 1843) were published in conjunction with the *Quarterly Journal of Agriculture* after which they reverted to independent annual publication. This journal was notable in the 1840s for carrying a large amount of original communications, particularly experiments in agricultural chemistry.

Agricultural Magazine (1799). This was much more structured than the *Annals* and had separate sections for original communications, reviews of agricultural publications, and farming reports. Ceased publication in 1811.

Farmer's Magazine (1800). Published by Constable in Edinburgh, it had a bias towards Scottish agricultural affairs but contained extensive reports from England. Edited until 1815 by Robert Brown of Markle. Ceased publication in 1825 when the publishers failed.

Evans and Ruffly's Farmers' Journal (1807). The first agricultural newspaper, although the contents were not exclusively agricultural. Extensive communications on agricultural subjects, reports and market information; after 1815 it became, for a time, the mouthpiece of the local protection society movement. Edited until 1825 by Benjamin Holditch, after which date the paper entered a decline. It ceased publication in 1832 on account of the financial difficulties of William Ruffly, and it was from this year that the Monday edition of *Bell's Weekly Messenger* had a column headed 'Farmers' Journal'.

British Farmer's Magazine (1826). Founded by H Fleming, dedicated to Coke, and edited (until 1836) by the Rev Henry Berry, a shorthorn authority. The title continued until 1881 but it is important to note that it was taken over by the *Farmer's Magazine* in 1846, after which the contents of these two periodicals were identical.

British Farmer's Chronicle (1826). Published for only three years and little on agriculture apart from price information. A continuation of *Fleming's Weekly Express* (1823-26).

Quarterly Journal of Agriculture (1828). Published from Edinburgh and edited for many years by Henry Stephens. The 'Quarterly' was dropped from the title in 1843. Substantial agricultural articles were published, although the content was quite diverse. In 1868 the title was changed to the *Country Gentleman's Magazine*, and from then on agriculture occupied a smaller proportion of the total content.

Mark Lane Express and Agricultural Journal (1832). The leading agricultural newspaper of the nineteenth century, it initially had five joint proprietors: John and Joseph Rogerson, brothers from a Lincolnshire farming family who worked in the printing industry in London (for memoirs see *Farmer's Magazine*, second series, XXIV, 1851, pp 1-3 (Joseph) and *ibid*, third series, XVI, 1859, pp 87-8 (John)); Cuthbert W Johnson, the writer on fertilizers; Dr J Blackstone; and William Shaw who edited the paper until late in 1852 when he was succeeded by Henry Corbet. Whiggish in tone, the paper staunchly reported the interest of the tenant farmer. For a history, see issue of 31 March 1902 ('70th Birthday Supplement').

Farmer's Magazine (1834). Under the same editorship and ownership as the *Mark Lane Express*, from which some of the material that it contained was taken. Published monthly until 1881 (the *British Farmers' Magazine* changed to monthly from quarterly publication on its takeover), the *Farmer's Magazine* was the leading independent agricultural periodical of the nineteenth century.

Agriculturist (1836-37). The short-lived organ of the Central Agricultural Society, edited by Robert Montgomery Martin.

Transactions of the Yorkshire Society (1838). Initially this had quite extensive essays and reports, but it underwent a decline after about 1860.

Farmers' Journal (1839). Dedicated to the maintenance of agricultural protection and ceased publication on 28 December 1846. 'New' was added to the title on 22 March 1841.

Johnson & Shaw's Farmer's Almanac (1840). Issued each year until 1872. Particularly important because of its large scale, it provided a full review of the leading events and debates of the previous agricultural year, and it was thus an important means by which the farmer could keep up to date on matters of agricultural progress. J C Morton began his own *New Farmer's Almanac* in 1855, and this followed a similar style. By the 1870s most of the agricultural newspapers issued an almanac; for a review see *Agricultural Gazette* 29 December 1879.

Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society of England (1840). Carried substantial essays on the technical and scientific aspects of agriculture, although there were more short communications during the 1840s. 'Political' topics were excluded by the terms of the Society's Charter. Editors: Philip Pusey 1840-55; C W Hoskyns, H S Thompson, T D Acland (jointly) 1855-58; H S Thompson (with assistance from J C Morton)

1858-59; P H Frere 1860-68; H M Jenkins 1869-87. The Editorship was a matter of some controversy in the 1850s and 1860s, particularly when Morton was passed over for the editorship in 1859. For a full discussion of the *JRASE* see N P W Goddard, 'The Royal Agricultural Society of England and Agricultural Progress 1838-1880', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Kent at Canterbury, 1981, esp pp 134-305.

Farmer's Herald (1843). This was distinctive in that it was a monthly newspaper. It was published from Chester but seems to have had a national circulation.

Agricultural Gazette (1844). An addition to the *Gardener's Chronicle*, founded by Charles Wentworth Dilke in 1841, published separately after 1873. Its first editor, J C Morton, continued in the post until 1888. C W Hoskyns wrote many leaders in its early years, and H F Moore was appointed sub-editor in 1873. A leading agricultural newspaper of the nineteenth century; Morton enjoyed widespread respect in the agricultural community.

Agricultural Magazine (1845). This underwent several changes of title: *Agricultural Magazine and Journal of Scientific Farming* 1845-46; *Agricultural Magazine and Plough*, 1847-51; *Agricultural Magazine, Plough and Farmer's Journal* 1851-59. Reports of lectures, discussions, lettings, the corn trade, shows, and abstracted articles.

Gardeners' and Farmers' Journal (1847). Edited by M M Milburn, land agent and secretary to the Yorkshire Society. The first issue stated that profits were to be distributed for the relief of 'aged and indigent gardeners and farm bailiffs, their widows and orphans'. It carried numerous reports of experimental agriculture but seems to have become insignificant after Milburn's death in 1854 (see *Farmer's Magazine*, third series, VI, 1854, p 16), and the title was incorporated with the *Mark Lane Express* in 1880.

North British Agriculturist (1849). This was a continuation of the *Ayrshire Agriculturist* (1843-48) and was published from Edinburgh. Full attention was given to the proceedings of the Highland Society and technical matter on farming had a central place in the content.

Journal of the Farmer's Club (1854). Intermittent publication; the content was limited to the reports of the monthly lectures and discussions which were also published in the *Farmer's Magazine* and the weekly newspapers.

Farmer (1865). A continuation of the *Scottish Farmer and Horticulturist* (1861-65), this gained importance during the 1870s and was the forerunner of the *Farmer and Stockbreeder* (1889). Edited by H Kains Jackson.

Chamber of Agriculture Journal and Farmers' Chronicle (1869). Edited by J A Clarke who had written extensively for the Royal Agricultural Society and *The Times*. Concerned not only with the legislative topics pursued by the chambers but also with general farmer topics. Amalgamated with the *Farmer* in 1881 when Clarke moved to *Bell's Weekly Messenger*.

Agricultural Economist and Horticultural Review (1870). This was the organ of the Agricultural and Horticultural Co-operative Association, founded by E O Greening; it campaigned on such matters as adulterated fertilizers and feedstuffs and urged the merits of agricultural co-operation.

Proceedings of the Central Chamber of Agriculture (1870). Reported the affairs of the Central Chamber.

Livestock Journal and Fancier's Gazette (1875). Reflected the increased importance of livestock in English farming in the 1870s.

Implement Manufacturers Review and Agricultural Record (1875) (changed to *Implement and Machinery Review* in 1878). Reflected the increased interest in agricultural machinery in the 1870s as agriculturists became more concerned with the reduction of labour costs. Supported the Agricultural Engineers' Association.