

The AGRICULTURAL HISTORY REVIEW



VOLUME III 1955

PART I

*

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS

The Content and Sources of English Agrarian History before 1500
by R. H. HILTON

*

The Untilled Field
by T. D. DAVIDSON

*

A Reconsideration of Some Former Husbandry Practices
by ERIC KERRIDGE

*

PUBLISHED BY
THE BRITISH AGRICULTURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

The British Agricultural History Society

PRESIDENT: SIR JAMES SCOTT WATSON, C.B.E.

TREASURER: PROFESSOR EDGAR THOMAS. SECRETARY: J. W. Y. HIGGS

EDITOR: H. P. R. FINBERG

Executive Committee: Alexander Hay (*Chairman*), Miss W. M. Dullforce, G. E. Fussell, Captain E. N. Griffith, W. G. Hoskins, Richard Lamb, Stuart Maxwell, W. E. Minchinton, George Ordish, F. G. Payne, Mrs Joan Thirsk, R. Trow-Smith.

The Society aims at encouraging the study of the history of every aspect of the countryside by holding conferences and courses and by publishing *The Agricultural History Review*. Its constitution is printed in Vol. I of this *Review*, p. 53.

Membership is open to all who are interested in the subject and the subscription is ONE GUINEA due on 1 February in each year.

Details may be obtained from the Secretary, c/o Museum of English Rural Life, 7 Shinfield Road, Reading.

The Agricultural History Review

Editorial Board

G. E. FUSSELL JOAN THIRSK

J. W. Y. HIGGS R. TROW-SMITH

H. P. R. FINBERG

The Review is published by the British Agricultural History Society and issued to all members. Articles and letters offered for publication should be sent to the Editor, 34 Sheffield Terrace, London, W.8, accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope for return if necessary. The Society does not accept responsibility for the opinions expressed by contributors, or for the accidental loss of manuscripts.

THE Agricultural History Review

Vol. III Part I

Edited by H. P. R. FINBERG

1955

CONTENTS

The British Agricultural History Society		page 2
The Content and Sources of English Agrarian History before 1500	<i>R. H. Hilton</i>	3
Notes and Comments		19, 25
The Untilled Field	<i>T. D. Davidson</i>	20
A Reconsideration of Some Former Husbandry Practices	<i>Eric Kerridge</i>	26
List of Books and Articles on Agrarian History issued since September 1953	<i>Joan Thirsk</i>	41
Reviews:		
<i>The Domesday Geography of Midland England</i> , by H. C. Darby and I. B. Terrett (eds.)	<i>R. H. Hilton</i>	48
<i>The Victoria History of the County of Leicester</i> , Vol. II, ed. W. G. Hoskins and R. A. McKinley	<i>M. W. Beresford</i>	49
<i>English Cottages and Farmhouses</i> , by Olive Cook and Edwin Smith	<i>W. G. Hoskins</i>	50
<i>The Lost Villages of England</i> , by M. W. Beresford	<i>Joan Thirsk</i>	52
<i>The Open Fields</i> , by C. S. and C. S. Orwin	<i>H. P. R. Finberg</i>	54
<i>The English Windmill</i> , by Rex Wailes	<i>J. W. Y. Higgs</i>	55
<i>The Crofting Problem</i> , by Adam Collier	<i>J. F. Duncan</i>	56
<i>A History of the Fens</i> , by J. Wentworth Day	<i>R. Trow-Smith</i>	56
<i>Humberstone, the Story of a Village</i> , by A. E. Kirkby	<i>Joan Thirsk</i>	57
Members of the British Agricultural History Society		58
Notes on Contributors		40

The British Agricultural History Society

MEMBERSHIP

The fortunes of the Society continue to flourish, but in order to make two issues of the Review a year a secure financial proposition more members are required. In this issue for the first time a complete list of the members is given. The Executive Committee very much hope that members will make a point of encouraging friends and colleagues who do not already belong to join the Society. With this in view a membership application form is being sent out with this issue. There must be many who, although interested in the history of agriculture, do not belong to the Society and even perhaps do not know of its existence. The cost of one issue of the Review is approximately £180. At the present time we have about 330 members; with 400 we should be in a comfortable position. A determined effort on the part of everybody to increase our membership would be a very great help. It may be of interest to point out that new members may, if they wish, purchase Volumes I and II of the Review for ten shillings and sixpence each.

THE REVIEW

It will be noticed that this issue is described as Vol. III, Part I. In the hope that the appeal in the foregoing paragraph will bear fruit, the Editorial Board is already contemplating publication of a second issue in six months' time. One suggestion that has been put forward is that we might usefully publish a list giving particulars of research in progress, so that members with kindred interests may establish contact with each other if they wish. The Board would like to do this, and will be grateful if members will co-operate by furnishing details of any research in agrarian history on which they or their friends are engaged. A postcard to Dr J. Thirsk, University College, Leicester, headed Research in Progress, giving name and address, and specifying the subject of the research, will greatly assist the compilation of a really useful list.

The Editor, who is already receiving offers of more contributions than can be accommodated in these pages, will nevertheless be glad to reserve space for letters raising queries or discussing controversial points.

STUDIES IN REGIONAL HISTORY

Another very successful one-day conference on Studies in Regional History was held jointly with the Association of Agriculture at the University of London Institute of Education on the 11th of December 1954. It was attended by about seventy people. The Chair was taken by the President, Sir James Scott Watson. The papers were as follows:

Dr Joyce Youings (University College of the South-West), 'Devonshire Monastic Lands in the Sixteenth Century'.

W. Harwood Long (Provincial Agricultural Economist, University of Leeds), 'The Development of Farming in the Yorkshire Dales'.

Dr D. C. Coleman (London School of Economics), 'Kentish Farming in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries'.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting and Conference will be held this year on 15 April at Somerville College, Oxford. Accommodation has been reserved at the College for the nights of 15 and 16 April.

SIR JAMES SCOTT WATSON

At the end of 1954 the President of the Society, Sir James Scott Watson, retired from his position as Chief Scientific Adviser to the Ministry of Agriculture and Director-General of the National Agricultural Advisory Service. Before this appointment, which he has held with great distinction for some years, he had been Professor of Agriculture at Oxford University and Agricultural Attaché at the British Embassy in Washington. It is to be hoped that he will now have time to contribute more to the published works on the history of agriculture. The Society wishes him well in his retirement.

The Content and Sources of English Agrarian History before 1500

By R. H. HILTON

THE PRESENT STATE OF KNOWLEDGE

THE picture we have now of medieval English agriculture and rural social conditions is the product of many investigations conducted from varying standpoints, using different sources and ranging in scope from the detailed monograph to the general treatise. This great variety may be illustrated on the one hand by James Thorold Rogers's monumental work of collection and synthesis, *A History of Agriculture and Prices* (volumes I-IV covering the medieval period) and on the other by close analytical studies of particular estates, of which an early example was Miss N. Neilson's work on the estates of Ramsey Abbey, and the latest, Mr Finberg's study of the estates of Tavistock Abbey.¹ In addition, in the form of article or larger monograph, all sorts of special aspects of medieval rural life have been explored—field systems, organization of labour, accounting systems, estate management, special products, variations in manorial structure, marketing. It might seem, from the bulk and variety of the work of historians, that our picture, if not quite finished, is at any rate firm both in outline and in the principal details; and that all we need to do now is to add a touch here and there to give extra depth and variety to an almost complete representation of the reality of the past.

It is to be hoped, however, that historians do not accept our present picture as anywhere near final, or even necessarily correct in broad outline. Without being mere image-breakers, we must still always be prepared for radical upsets to old ideas. But it is also important that historians should convey to the general reader some sense of the lack of finality about our investigations, and consequently the conception that there is always something new and exciting to find out. That is the purpose of this article.

If we consider carefully the sources on which the greater number of medieval agrarian studies are based, it will soon be apparent that for the most part they derive from the second half of the thirteenth century and the first three-quarters of the fourteenth. I say "for the most part," and hasten to add that this statement excludes Domesday Book, some very important twelfth-century estate surveys, and the charters of the Anglo-Saxon and Norman

¹ N. Neilson, *Economic Conditions on the manors of Ramsey Abbey*, Philadelphia, 1899; H. P. R. Finberg, *Tavistock Abbey*, Cambridge, 1951.

periods, all of which have been used a good deal by agrarian historians. Even so, it would be difficult to deny that the centre of gravity of our medieval agrarian documentation lies very definitely somewhere between 1250 and 1350, and that the pattern of rural life which we assume to have been characteristically medieval is only certainly characteristic of the period to which I refer.

Furthermore, to this chronological limitation of our picture of medieval England we should add that the greater number of the documents of this period derive from the estates for the most part of the ecclesiastical nobility and to a lesser extent of the lay nobility. This is also the case with the estate surveys of the twelfth century. The writings of such pioneers in agrarian history as Frederic Seebohm and P. Vinogradoff,¹ in spite of their interest in and skill in interpreting Domesday Book, were much influenced by the vivid insight into the social and economic conditions of peasants which was given by the great monastic cartularies in the Public Record Office and the British Museum, some of which were in their day being published for the first time.

The earlier historians were interested in establishing sound generalizations about medieval agrarian conditions, a very necessary stage in the development of the subject. They tended therefore to give a composite picture of the village, the manor, and the estate, which, while not ignoring regional differences, tended to minimize them. In addition, their model of rural life tended to leave out factors making for change, although it would be untrue to say that they had a static conception of medieval rural life. However they did tend to present a picture of the state of affairs on the medieval manor at two or three points in time without examining at all closely the intermediate processes which made the successive pictures different. This was due to their concentration on the evidence of surveys such as Domesday Book, and the twelfth- and thirteenth-century estate surveys such as those contained in the cartularies of Ramsey or Gloucester Abbey.

An important step forward was made when in addition to the careful analysis of estate surveys and similar material, such as Vinogradoff had used for his work on villeinage, historians began to use a body of material which had already been extensively (rather than intensively) exploited by Thorold Rogers. I refer to the annual accounts submitted by manorial reeves and bailiffs to the estate auditors and to the records of manorial and other private courts which supplemented the accounts in many ways, for example in recording land transactions. This sort of evidence could be used to show the economic organization in movement, and it was very necessary if the history

¹ For example, F. Seebohm, *The English Village Community*, London, 1883; P. Vinogradoff, *Villainage in England*, Oxford, 1892, and *The Growth of the Manor*, London, 1905.

of demesne farming and of the rise and fall of the labour service system was to be written. But this new evidence suffered the same chronological and social limitations as the evidence of surveys. Most of the ministers' accounts and court rolls were derived from large church and secular estates and they are most abundant and informative between about 1250 and 1350.

Consequently there are still considerable gaps in our knowledge. It has been said that we know much about peasants and not enough about landlords. This however is to put the problem too crudely. We certainly know a lot about the labour services and other customary dues owed by peasants on big estates to their lords, and we certainly know too little about lesser landlords whose estate documents (if any) have not survived. But we know much less about the way in which the peasant on the big estate farmed his holding than we do about the way the demesne was organized, and we know practically nothing about the peasants whose landlords were mere knights of the shire or franklins of the village. As for the peasant who had little or no land and whose main resource was the sale of his power to work, our knowledge again is distorted. There is quite a lot of information about the estate labourer whose wages are recorded in the manorial accounts or whose duties are outlined in manorial surveys. But there is practically no obvious evidence for the condition and numbers of the men who worked for wages on the demesnes of lesser lords or on the holdings of wealthier peasants.

Hence, while we may take for granted that the big estates, their owners, and their administrative bureaucracy, would be very influential in determining the tone of rural life wherever they were established, we still need to know more about the geographical extent, social and economic structure, farming practice, and customs of areas where the big estate was not predominant. This knowledge would in turn probably lead to greater emphasis on regional variations of farming practice. For the big estates tended to create homogeneous conditions. The remarkable similarities between surveys and accounts of big estates in different parts of the country are not due only to the use of similar forms by professional surveyors and administrators but to a real similarity of conditions, often the product of a similar historical evolution dating back (in the case of monastic estates) to the tenth century and beyond.

It is only to be expected, in view of comparatively primitive conditions, that the agriculturalists of Anglo-Saxon and early Norman times should not leave many documents behind them. The machinery of the estates, like the machinery of state, together with their documentary by-products, took time to elaborate. But difficult though the reconstruction of early agrarian conditions has been, worthy attempts have been made. On the other hand, the

agrarian history of England between the rising of 1381 and the Dissolution of the Monasteries is much more obscure than it ought to be. The fact seems to be that historians have been nurtured in the manorial documentation of the great estates, and when these sources fail, as a result of the almost universal leasing of manors to farmers, they have found nothing to replace them. Consequently bibliographies of English history of the fifteenth century¹ contain little more than a sprinkling of inadequate and out-of-date material on agrarian conditions. Here, then, is one of the most formidable gaps in our knowledge of English rural life in the past.

The practical farming activities of small landowners and peasants; their relations with the market; the agricultural techniques at their disposal; their employment of labour; and the internal structure of their properties from the tenurial point of view: these are some of the problems that need to be solved in order to add to our much greater knowledge of these features on the big estates. There are other matters as well. We need to know more about crop rotations and the varying relationships between the arable and pastoral sides of medieval farming. A more theoretical analysis than is usually attempted by medievalists of profit and investment on estates of all sizes is needed. This would link up with a much needed assessment of the validity of modern concepts of economic fluctuation in the medieval economy. How profoundly did changes in the market conditions, in the price of commodities and of land, affect agricultural production? To what extent was the level of rent determined by market factors? Answers to these questions would need to be based on a study of economic conditions at national and international levels. And yet the fact that there was undoubtedly a great element of natural economy in even late medieval agriculture should make us realize the great importance of local or regional factors. Probably the most fruitful step beyond the present stage of reliance on the estate as the area of study would be to attempt to define the regional economies of the country, and on this basis to study the distribution of large, medium-sized, and small estates, the variations of social status, the growth of local markets and specialization of production, the changing relationships of social classes. These aspects of rural life are difficult to study in their inter-relationships on a national scale, at any rate until regional studies have laid the basis.²

¹ For example those in the final volume (VIII) of the *Cambridge Medieval History*, Cambridge, 1936.

² Apart from such works as H. J. Hewitt's *Medieval Cheshire*, Manchester, 1929, and G. H. Tupling's *Economic History of Rossendale*, Manchester, 1927 (only in part medieval), published studies of medieval agrarian life on a regional basis are rare. The excellent works of F. M. Stenton and D. C. Douglas mentioned below (p. 11 n. 1) are more concerned with the legal and social than with the economic aspects of rural life in the regions to which they are devoted.

SOURCES FOR THE ANGLO-SAXON PERIOD

The study of the early agrarian history of this country depends to a considerable extent on archaeological evidence, which the present writer is not competent to discuss. It might however be mentioned that this lack of competence is perhaps a reflection of the inadequate use of archaeological methods in medieval historical research in this country. It is true that there is a solid tradition of archaeology for the period of the Anglo-Saxon settlements, and that the excavation of burial sites and to a lesser extent inhabited sites has elucidated the complex chronology of the Anglo-Saxon settlement.¹ However, apart from the study of castles, archaeology has not contributed greatly to our knowledge of later than Saxon times. Yet the agrarian historian cannot afford to ignore what the archaeologists have done. For in addition to the chronology and distribution of prehistoric, Roman, and Saxon settlements, archaeologists have something to say about agrarian technique and field systems. The examination of the material remains of the earliest inhabitants of this country shows what crops were sown, shows the development of tools such as the digging stick, the plough, the sickle, and the quern, as well as what were the principal domesticated animals living with, or eaten by, early man.

Particularly interesting to the medievalist is the investigation of field systems with the aid of air photography. Was the intermixed open-field strip agriculture of medieval England known in Roman times and before? Some pre-historians have led us to believe that there is a correlation between the square "Celtic" fields of the downs and the light plough or *aratrum* of the ancient world; and between the heavy plough or *caruca* and the supposedly Teutonic open fields. But this apparently logical connection has been disturbed by discoveries of plough remains that would by no means fit in with their associated field pattern—according to this theory. And if air photography has made us familiar with the pattern of square plots of Celtic or Romano-British date, it has also revealed the possibility of a pre-Roman strip cultivation.²

¹ The pioneer work on this subject is E. T. Leeds, *Archaeology of the Anglo-Saxon Settlements*, Oxford, 1913. Amongst later contributions may be mentioned Professor S. W. Wooldridge's chapter in *An Historical Geography of England before 1800*, ed. H. C. Darby, Cambridge, 1936.

² A popular summary of the older view is by E. C. Curwen, *Plough and Pasture*, London, 1946. Compare O. G. S. Crawford, *Air Survey and Archaeology*, London, 1928; E. Barger, 'The Present Position of Studies in English Field Systems', *English Historical Review*, LIII, 1938, pp. 385-411; F. G. Payne, 'The Plough in Ancient Britain', *Archaeological Journal*, CIV, 1948, pp. 82-111. For later field systems, see H. L. Gray, *English Field Systems*, Cambridge (U.S.), 1915, and C. S. and C. S. Orwin, *The Open Fields*, Oxford, 1938.

But the first indisputable written evidence of common open fields with intermixed holding appears in the laws of Ine. In general the laws of the Anglo-Saxon kings are very important as evidence in agrarian history, for the simple reason that any legal system governing the conduct of an almost exclusively agrarian society is bound to deal with agricultural matters, however indirectly.¹ Amongst the most important of these laws are those of the sixth century which show the spread of the area of cultivation as a result of the efforts of colonizing nobles, and at the same time the growth already of a dependent peasantry. The evidence of place names supplements this legal evidence. Perhaps the work of linguists on place names, their period of origin, and their significance, has contributed even more than the work of archaeologists to our knowledge of the growth of early occupation.²

The later agrarian history of Anglo-Saxon England is mainly known from the land-books and other documents which testified to grants of land or of rights over land made by kings or other landowners. These are not easy to interpret and vary a good deal in amount of detail. Many of them are important rather from the point of view of constitutional history in that they show the extent to which public rights were granted to private persons. But they also often show in detail what food tributes were payable from peasant holdings to their lords; how land was distributed (references to intermixed strips are frequent in midland documents); what prices and rents were paid for land; and sometimes what labour services were owed by tenants.³ The investigation of land-books also shows the process by which the big estates were built up. The accumulation of land by Benedictine monks, for example, in the Severn valley and in eastern England, in the tenth century, was to give such regions a special imprint which lasted throughout the middle ages.

The other major source for the agrarian history of the Anglo-Saxons is the Domesday survey.⁴ Although this survey was made twenty years after the Norman Conquest, the royal commissioners had to collect information

¹ The Anglo-Saxon Laws are translated into English by F. L. Attenborough, *The Laws of the Earliest English Kings*, Cambridge, 1922, and by A. J. Robertson, *The Laws of the Kings of England from Edmund to Henry I*, Cambridge, 1925.

² See the Introductory and County volumes of the English Place-Name Society.

³ A useful collection of translated landbooks, leases, and other documents is that of A. J. Robertson, *Anglo-Saxon Charters*, Cambridge, 1939.

⁴ Printed in 'record type' and published in four vols., London, 1783-1816. The best texts for the general reader are the translations for each county in appropriate volumes of the *Victoria History of the Counties of England*. A. Ballard's *The Domesday Inquest*, London, 1906, is a good popular survey, but the most outstanding, though more difficult, work on it is by F. W. Maitland, *Domesday Book and Beyond*, Cambridge, 1897.

going back to the period of conquest itself. Furthermore much of the social structure of late Anglo-Saxon England must have survived even the political upheavals of William I's reign, so that, as F. W. Maitland pointed out so effectively, Domesday Book is as much a point from which to look backward as one from which to scan the future. The outstanding feature of the survey is that it covers most of England, using a uniform principle of inquiry, and records indifferently facts about both large and small estates, and about great and humble landlords. William I was interested mainly in two things: the taxable capacity of the country he had taken; and the distribution of landed power. Consequently a lot of questions which an agrarian historian would have liked to put to the local jurors of 1086 were not put by the king's commissioners. Even so, to know the estimated net value of manors in 1066 and 1086; their assessment for taxation; the numbers of persons of various social grades; the number of demesne and tenant plough-teams; the number and value of mills, woods, meadows, and fisheries, is to be in possession of basic information for an understanding of the social and economic life of eleventh-century England.

Even if we admit that the Norman clerks who compiled the survey sprinkled the country with "manors" that did not exist (and we should not exaggerate either their ignorance or their lack of understanding of England), we nevertheless cannot but recognize that by now this was a highly feudalized land with a peasantry well on the way to serfdom. The land-books already suggested this, and the customs of an English estate round about A.D. 1000, known as the *Rectitudines Singularum Personarum*,¹ make it clear that the majority of Domesday Book villeins and smallholders (about 70 per cent of the recorded population) owed labour services and produce rents to the landlords. On the other hand Domesday Book also shows that one manor was not necessarily like another. An analysis of the data shows that while there were manors coincident with the village, containing both lord's demesne and peasant holdings of varying size, there were also little manors, several to a village, consisting of demesne without tenants or tenants without demesne; as well as huge manorial federations enveloping several village and hamlet settlements.

THE TWELFTH CENTURY

Domesday Book looks forward as well as backwards. It is the stepping stone from which we pass to the twelfth-century estate surveys. These careful and detailed documents reflect in general the elaboration and stabilization

¹ Translated in Bland, Brown, and Tawney's *English Economic History, Select Documents*, London, 1937.

of the big estates (for the most part ecclesiastical). The detailed statement of the demesne resources and peasant rents and services which they contain, suggests that already some system of estate accounting was in existence, for a reliable survey in the hands of the administrator is the natural means of checking returns from the local possessions described in the survey. In particular each survey was occasioned by a special situation, such as the taking of the Peterborough Abbey lands into the king's hands in 1125. A number of other surveys may have been made in an attempt to take stock of the situation after the feudal anarchy of Stephen's reign, when many of them suffered serious depredations. On some estates more than one survey was taken during the century, and in these cases slight but significant changes, in the direction of the leasing out of portions of demesne and an increase in the amount of money rent, are to be observed. This tendency is but a faint reflection in England of what had been happening at a catastrophic rate on French, German, and Italian estates since as early as the tenth century.¹

Although there are no private estate accounts before the thirteenth century, the sheriff's accounts enrolled on the Pipe Rolls contain information about the crown estates in the various counties as well as about some estates temporarily in the king's hands. The earliest which survives is that of 1130, the only one for Henry I's reign. In addition to the information they contain (e.g. about the stocking of royal manors), they suggest that such a system of accounts may well have existed on private estates, some of which had exchequers, institutions which presuppose a system of account.²

But the agrarian history of this period would be much less well known than it is, were it not for the existence of large numbers of royal and private charters which attested the transfer of land. Some of these have survived in the original, the majority as copies in estate registers or cartularies. Most of these were compiled by religious landowners, although there are a few lay cartularies. The charter is, of course, useful for many different purposes connected with political and administrative rather than agrarian history. The interpretation of these documents for agrarian history is not easy, but they are nevertheless a very important source. A charter attesting, shall we say, a grant or sale of a dozen acres of land in a village, is a minute fragment

¹ Besides the Peterborough Survey, there are surveys of the Burton, Worcester, Evesham, Ramsey, Durham, Glastonbury, and Templar estates. There is an interesting discussion of this twelfth-century evidence by M. M. Postan, 'The Chronology of Labour Services', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 4th Series, xx, 1937, pp. 169-93. The continental developments are summarized in an article by F. L. Ganshof, *Cambridge Economic History*, I, Cambridge, 1941.

² The Pipe Rolls are being published by the Pipe Roll Society. See A. L. Poole, *From Domesday Book to Magna Carta*, Oxford, 1951, Chapter II, for evidence from this source.

of the total reality of English agricultural life at the time the land was granted. But there are hundreds of these fragments, and if they are read together they often tell us much about the process of disintegration or growth of estates, as well as about agricultural practice. The land itself is often described in detail, each strip of land allotted to a named furlong in the village fields. And so it may be possible to reconstruct the village field system. Sometimes a complete holding is granted, and, in being granted, is described—not only its arable lands, but its meadow and its common rights, including the stinted right of pasture on the commons.

Professor Stenton and Professor Douglas have both shown how it is possible to reconstruct much of the agrarian structure of English regions from charter evidence, even though the practical details of farming practice still remain obscure.¹ But charter evidence is important not only when, as in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, it is the most abundant type of evidence available. It is also a type of evidence which reflects the agrarian economy of peasants and lesser landowners whose activities are otherwise undocumented. For although most charters are known to us from the cartularies of the great landowners, they are often evidences of title going back to times when the owner was not the powerful grantee or purchaser but the humble donor or seller.

THE THIRTEENTH AND FOURTEENTH CENTURIES

The materials for agrarian history become very abundant in the thirteenth century, and if hitherto we have been obliged to omit minor sources, we shall be obliged to do so to an even greater extent from now onwards. It has been emphasized above that the outstanding feature of our evidence in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries is that it is to a great extent the by-product of the activity of the baronial estate. Unlike their continental opposite numbers, the English bishops, abbots, and barons in this period had maintained more or less intact the traditional structure of their estates and still cultivated, in many of their manors, an extensive demesne farm, part of whose product they may have consumed directly, but much of which they sold on the market. Their need for a money income also expressed itself in a general increase of money rents and labour rents alike. The general tightening up of the organization of the estate brought about an elaboration of the system of financial checks and controls. This is shown in the careful auditing

¹ See F. M. Stenton, *Documents Illustrative of the Social and Economic History of the Danelaw*, London, 1920, Introduction, for a demonstration of the use of charter evidence. Also the same author's *Types of Manorial Structure in the Northern Danelaw*, Oxford, 1910, and D. C. Douglas, *The Social Structure of Medieval East Anglia*, Oxford, 1927.

of the accounts of all types of officials. It is also shown in the careful keeping of court records, for manorial justice, apart from keeping tenants in order, was a considerable source of financial profit.

The historian of the thirteenth-century estate, therefore, in addition to charters and descriptive surveys which were already available for the twelfth century, has manorial bailiffs' accounts, accounts of other officials (from General Receivers to shepherds and dairymaids), and records of manorial and central estate courts. The accounts show money income and expenditure: rents, sales of produce, money from commuted labour services, wage payments, purchase of seed, stock, and equipment, building expenses. They also often show in detail the receipts and outgoings of grain and live-stock, usually accounted for on the back of the parchment roll containing the money account. Some bailiffs even tell us in detail how much and what kind of seed was sown on each named portion of demesne, and this enables us to calculate yields when we have the next year's accounts to tell us what the harvest was. Another consequence of this more stringent estate organization was not only that a class of professional bailiffs began to appear, but that bailiffs and landlords generalized their experience and wrote treatises on estate management, the most famous being that of Walter of Henley, not superseded until Fitzherbert wrote his *Boke of Husbandry* in the sixteenth century.¹

We are often told that the records of disputes in law courts only reflect the exceptional and the pathological aspects of society. This view can hardly be accepted, especially for the middle ages, when private courts combined administrative, arbitrational, and punitive functions, and when all men were likely to be suitors by compulsion at some court or other. Hence the manor court records tell us more than most other records about the day-to-day life of the village: local breaches of the peace, peasant resistance to the performance of labour services, and the like. In addition all surrenders and re-issues of land were recorded. This tells us about official changes in the occupancy of peasant land. Since peasants usually also ran an unofficial land market among themselves and often got fined for it, the court rolls also con-

¹ The outstanding work on estate administration is N. Denholm-Young, *Seignorial Administration in England*, Oxford, 1937. Walter of Henley's *Husbandry* and analogous treatises are edited by E. Lamond, London, 1890. There are many good histories of individual estates, of which only a few need be mentioned: F. M. Page, *The Estates of Crowland Abbey*, Cambridge, 1934; R. A. L. Smith, *Canterbury Cathedral Priory*, Cambridge, 1943; M. Morgan, *The English Lands of the Abbey of Bec*, Oxford, 1946. A useful study of the documentary evidence for the big estate is by H. W. Saunders, *An Introduction to the Rolls of Norwich Cathedral Priory*, Norwich, 1930.

tain a reflection of this unofficial activity.¹ But other court records besides those of the manor and estate contain evidence of importance for agrarian history. The royal courts, especially those held by the justices of King's Bench and Common Pleas, contain innumerable cases of significance. Disputes about ownership and tenure are abundant, but usually not very informative as far as agricultural practice is concerned. Disputes between freemen and manorial lords about common rights, and between peasants and lords about increased rents and villein status are often much more revealing. Here again, the records of the public courts, though containing less intimate detail than those of private estates, record indifferently the litigation of social groups whose affairs would otherwise be unrecorded.²

Similarly the elaborate royal survey known as the *Rotuli Hundredorum* tells us about landowners and occupiers who otherwise would leave behind no record. The Hundred Rolls of 1274 give answers by local juries about local encroachments on royal rights and contain only scanty references to agrarian matters. But the returns of 1279 for the counties of Cambridge, Bedford, Huntingdon, Buckingham, Oxford, Warwick, and Leicester are in fact a fragment of what must have been intended as an elaborate survey of all landholders great and small, from bishops and earls to petty smallholding sub-tenants. Such as they are, these fragmentary returns give a very different picture of midland England from that which would be assumed from the study of the great estates alone. Not only does it show the estates of the smaller landowners, consisting often of demesne worked by wage labour with few, if any, dependent tenants. It also shows what a great development of sub-leases there was amongst the peasants. It suggests to us that the regular and comparatively equal holdings described in the estate surveys could not have reflected agricultural reality. Some tenants of a yardland of say twenty-five acres might have been sub-letting more than half of their official holding to other tenants, and at the same time taking on lease land which from the point of view of the manorial officials should have been occupied by some one else. In this way scattered holdings could be consolidated, poor peasants could get rid of land in order to earn their living

¹ G. C. Homans, *English Villagers of the Thirteenth Century*, Cambridge, (U.S.), 1942; and A. E. Levett, *Studies in Manorial History*, Oxford, 1938, especially those sections devoted to the St Albans estates, are based to a considerable extent on manor court records. See also F. W. Maitland, *Select Pleas in Manorial Courts*, London, 1889.

² Few assize rolls are published, but there are interesting extracts in the *Placitorum Abbreviatio*, London, 1811. Cf. R. H. Hilton, 'Peasant Movements in England before 1381', in *Economic History Review*, 2nd Series II, ii, 1949, pp. 117-36.

mainly by wages, and wealthy peasants could accumulate holdings which would bring them economically to the level of many a small squire.¹

The evidence of charters, royal court records, and royal enquiries is essential in order to redress the balance against the large, and for the most part ecclesiastical, estates, which have left such an abundance of private records. Here another public source should be mentioned, the *inquisitiones post mortem*. These enquiries were made into the estates of all persons holding land in chief from the crown, as questions of escheat, wardship, or marriage might arise. When detailed surveys were made, they were on the same model as private surveys: descriptions of demesne resources and peasant rents and tenures. In many cases the local juries gave information and the escheators sent in returns to Chancery and Exchequer which minimized the income and resources of the estate. Hence they are not as reliable as private surveys. But they often include surveys of the lands of quite humble tenants in chief, and thus supplement our knowledge of the holdings of smaller landlords.² As they cover all counties we may also, through them, get to know a good deal about areas where there is a dearth of estate material. They have been used, sometimes too uncritically, in order to estimate the relative progress of the commutation of labour services in different parts of the country in the fourteenth century. More reliable, however, for this purpose are the manorial accounts, which show not only the progress of permanent commutation of peasant labour services for money rent, but the fluctuating annual releases of service for money payment according to the varying labour requirements of the demesne.

THE LATE FOURTEENTH AND FIFTEENTH CENTURIES

The commutation of peasant labour services has for a long time been the outstanding subject of discussion among agrarian historians of the later middle ages.³ It must remain one of the central issues of the agrarian history of the period. For it involved more than a change in the character of peasant

¹ For the 1274 Hundred Rolls see H. M. Cam, *Studies in the Hundred Rolls*, Oxford, 1921; and for the 1279 Hundred Rolls see E. A. Kosminsky, 'The Hundred Rolls of 1279-80 as a source for English Agrarian History', *Economic History Review*, III, 1931, pp. 16-44. E. A. Kosminsky's *Studies in English Agrarian History in the Thirteenth Century*, which contains a fuller analysis of the Hundred Rolls, will appear in an English edition this year.

² The Worcestershire Historical Society has published thirteenth- and fourteenth-century inquisitions post mortem which include surveys of the possessions of small landowners: *Worcestershire Inquisitions Post Mortem*, Oxford, 1894 and 1909.

³ See E. Lipson, *The Economic History of England*, I, London, 1937, Chapter III. This work also includes a very full bibliography. See also M. M. Postan, *art. cit.*, and A. E. Levett, *The Black Death on the Estates of the See of Winchester*, Oxford, 1916.

obligations to the landlord. It was part of the process of withdrawal by the bigger landlords from agricultural practice. It involved the relaxation of disciplinary pressure by the lords and their bailiffs over the village community. This freed forces which were already making themselves felt. Most important was the social stratification of the peasants under conditions of competitive production for the market. England, from the point of view of agricultural practice, was becoming a land of peasant occupiers of varying economic status, many of whom, whatever the legal character of their tenure, enjoyed for a time the security of proprietors. What was the consequence of this release of peasant energy, once devoted directly or indirectly to the lord and his demesne, and now, through commutation and comparatively low rents, applicable to the peasant holding? Can we now discover as much about the agricultural practice of the peasant and the demesne lessee as we know about the practice of the estate in its palmy days? Did these developments mean that large-scale planned management gave way to backward peasant methods in agriculture? Or is the conception of the progressive character of large-scale estate management in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries an illusion based on modern assumptions that the big unit is necessarily the most efficient? Did improvements in peasant farming more than make up for any loss of efficiency when the central direction of demesne farming was abandoned? Was there in fact any appreciable decline in the size of the unit of production when rich peasants and lessees assumed responsibility for the supply of the market? Finally, what were the available supplies of labour for peasant farming? If (and this is disputed by some historians)¹ there was a relative increase in the employment of wage labour, was not the productivity of this labour likely to be greater than the semi-free and servile labour used on the baronial estate?

It is because the active producers (that is, the peasants, and particularly the demesne lessees), did not for the most part keep records that we are so ignorant of agriculture in the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Estate records are of course by no means useless. Bailiffs by this time are often very little more than rent-collectors and in many cases they account for a fixed rent charge which changes very little over a century. However, this is not invariably the case. Some accounts give details of rents received as well as of "Decay of Rents" (that is amounts of rent which either cannot be collected or whose loss has been accepted by the estate administration). These details may include something about the forms of tenure. Accounts also sometimes give the terms on which the lessee or lessees hold various portions of the

¹ M. M. Postan, 'Some Economic Evidence of Declining Population in the Later Middle Ages', *Economic History Review*, 2nd Series, II, iii, 1950, pp. 221-46.

demesne.¹ Other estate materials also give information about holdings, rents, and tenures. Rentals and surveys often reflect more accurately the actual agricultural holdings of fifteenth-century tenants than they did in the thirteenth century, for the simple reason that the peasant land market becomes legalized and lords of manors no longer need to insist on the integrity of the traditional holding as they did when it was responsible for a given quota of services. Such surveys show the fragmentation and reconstitution of holdings and the accumulation in fewer hands of considerable quantities of land, one rich peasant often holding by a variety of tenures, free, customary, and leasehold.² Other estate records which are still valuable for fifteenth-century agrarian history include the records of manorial courts, important especially for the registration of land transfers, and cartularies or registers which often contain details of the leases by which lessees held demesne arable, meadow, woodland, and livestock.

But if estate records continue to be important, it is in so far as one can draw inferences about the activities of the producers. They contain practically no direct evidence about agricultural practice as they did when the lord had the demesne in hand. Even the middling-sized landlords seem to have been dependent on rent rather than production for their income. The Pastons, the Stonors, and the Plumpton who have left such a lively record of their activities in their private correspondence, only very occasionally refer to farming practice.³ It is clear from the Paston correspondence that they and other East Anglian gentlemen (like Sir John Fastolf) were supplying the London and perhaps even the continental market with barley, malt, and other grains. They are constantly preoccupied with fluctuations in grain prices, just as they are equally preoccupied with the difficulties of keeping rents up. But there is little indication that they actually grew the bulk of the grain which they sold. References to "farm barley" suggest that much of it must have been produce rent from lessees. Nor was Fastolf any more active as an agriculturalist in Wiltshire on the Scrope manor of Castle Combe which he was managing.⁴ He had let out all the demesne resources and probably got most of his profits from acting as a middleman between the Castle Combe clothiers (some of whom were also servile tenants of agricultural holdings) and the London and foreign market.

¹ The value of fifteenth-century estate accounts is discussed in the introduction to *Ministers' Accounts of the Warwickshire Estates of the Duke of Clarence* by R. H. Hilton, Oxford, 1952.

² An example of a fifteenth-century survey will be found in the publications of the Thoresby Society for 1915-18 (Leeds and Rothwell). It is translated into English.

³ *The Paston Letters*, ed. J. Gairdner, London, 1895; *The Stonor Letters and Papers*, ed. C. L. Kingsford, London, 1919; *The Plumpton Correspondence*, London, 1839.

⁴ G. Poulett Scrope, *Manor and Barony of Castle Combe*, London, 1852.

Legal records contain some of the best evidence about trends in agricultural production in the later middle ages. The records of courts of equitable jurisdiction, including petitions and counter-petitions of plaintiffs and defendants, have long been known as sources for fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century social history. Chancery, Star Chamber, and the Court of Requests all dealt with disputes which had an agrarian basis.¹ It is from these that we derive a lot of our knowledge about the enclosure for sheep pasture which was not only a cause of social discontent but also an important technical development in the period. Most of the evidence known relates to the later part of the fifteenth century and afterwards, but the assize rolls which record pleas in the principal courts of common law should not be ignored. These are such voluminous records that they might well daunt the investigator, but such county records as have been published suggest that enclosure disputes may have been a major feature of rural conflict at the beginning of the fifteenth century if not earlier.² It is from the Star Chamber and Court of Requests records, however, that we get most of our evidence about what we may regard as the landlords' counter-attack on the peasants, after the brief period of peasant gain in the century after 1381. I refer to the attempts to undermine the security of copyhold, that is, customary tenure.³

Of course, not all sections of the peasants fared equally well during the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. We know something about the rich peasant lessees but we know less about those with smaller holdings, or with none. The figures suggest that those for whom wages constituted the principal source of income lost little of the improvement they had gained after the plagues and the social discontent which culminated in the rising of 1381. Subsistence farmers working fifteen to twenty acres may have gained less than the well-off lessees, or than the workers these bigger men employed. The difficulty is that we are not sure of the relative numbers of these groups.

¹ Chancery, Star Chamber, and Court of Requests evidence has most recently been discussed by Maurice Beresford, *The Lost Villages of England*, London, 1954. See also I. S. Leadam, 'The Inquisitions of 1517', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, n.s., vi., 1892, pp. 167-314. The Selden Society has published Select Cases from Chancery, Star Chamber, and Court of Requests proceedings, and a number of local record societies have also published Star Chamber proceedings relevant to their county.

² Cases are printed by G. Farnham, *Leicestershire Medieval Village Notes* I-VI, Leicester, 1929-33, and by G. Wrottesley in *Historical Collections for Staffordshire*, vol. xvii, 1896, pp. 1-153, and New Series, vols. III, 1900, pp. 121-299; IV, 1901, pp. 93-212; VI (i), 1903, pp. 89-164.

³ Cf. I. S. Leadam, 'Security of Copyholders', *English Historical Review*, viii, 1893, pp. 684-96, and A. Savine 'Copyhold Cases in the Early Chancery Proceedings', *ibid.* xvii, 1902, pp. 296-313, and 'English Customary Tenure,' *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, xix, 1905, pp. 33-80.

There would be little room for wage labour when peasants farmed comparatively equal holdings for subsistence; but with big farms producing for the market, and great inequality of holdings, the need for such labour would be considerable. The fact is that there were probably great variations from region to region and even from village to village. The Suffolk Poll Tax returns of 1381, which give the occupations of those taxed, suggest a very large number of wage workers both in agriculture and in rural industry over the whole region. Other returns, such as those from Staffordshire and Leicestershire, show considerable variation in social structure within comparatively small regions. These are the most interesting tax returns, because they designate occupations. Other returns, of which there are a fair number from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries, are useful mainly because they record comparative populations of villages and the relative taxable capacity of individuals. Conclusions on both these topics have to be made with considerable reservations.¹

OTHER SOURCES

This survey of the principal sources of English medieval agrarian history has omitted many which readers may reckon to be of more importance than those considered. For instance, one could undoubtedly lay great stress, for the whole period, on literary evidence. Anglo-Saxon literature contains references to agrarian practices, social relations, food-grains, and so on. The monastic chronicles at all dates show a greater or lesser concern with the history of the monastic estate, and in some cases this far outweighs the chronicler's concern with ecclesiastical or political affairs. Middle English poetry and prose, whether touching directly on social or political matters or not, reveals, by many a direct description and many an image, facets of rural life which would not reach us through the unimaginative administrative records. One has only to think of the social criticism of the great fourteenth-century preachers,² of poets like Langland with his sharply satirical remarks about all social classes, including the rural wage labourers, employees, one imagines, of middling peasants like Piers Plowman. Then again, I have not dealt with the body of ecclesiastical evidence in its narrow sense, that which was the by-product of the church in its spiritual functions. There are many matters of agrarian interest scattered throughout the bishops' registers, such

¹ Suffolk Poll Tax returns are printed by E. Powell, *The Rising in East Anglia*, Cambridge, 1896, Leicestershire returns in G. Farnham, *op. cit.*, Staffordshire returns in *Historical Collections for Staffordshire*, xvii, 1896, pp. 155-206. See R. H. Hilton, 'Medieval Agrarian History' in *Victoria County History of Leicestershire*, II, London, 1954, p. 187.

² See G. W. Owst, *Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England*, Cambridge, 1933.

as the bishop of Worcester's excommunication of rival shepherds on top of Bredon Hill where he kept his flocks.¹ In the records of the religious houses, settlements between the appropriating house and its vicars with regard to the division of the parochial tithes often yield information about village field systems. And where we have information about total receipts of tithe grain in a parish, there we have information about the proportions of crops sown by peasants as well as by lords.

But the fact is that medieval England was so closely bound to the tilling of the soil and the grazing of flocks that one can hardly read any writing or look at any work of art of the period without coming across some evidence, great or small, of rural life. It is almost impossible to study medieval agriculture without studying the whole of medieval life.

¹ *Register of Walter Reynolds*, Worcestershire Historical Society, London, 1927, p. 40. Many local societies have published bishops' registers.

Notes and Comments

SALE OF THE BEAUMONT COLLECTION

Last November, at an auction sale held in Holborn, twenty-two Lordships of Manors in Essex, Norfolk, and Suffolk were disposed of for just under £10,000. They were part of a collection begun during the last century by Joseph Beaumont, an Essex solicitor, and continued, after his death in 1889, by his son. In addition to those auctioned another twenty-six were offered for sale by private treaty.

The lots sold at an average price of £440, a figure which was to some extent accounted for by the manorial records which went with each lot. The price, indeed, might have been higher if the Master of the Rolls had not made it quite clear that he could not permit any of the records to go out of the country. This announcement, made by the auctioneers, was greeted with restrained applause from the four hundred people present.

It is doubtful if many people in the room had a very clear idea of what was for sale. Many of the titles carried with them rights, rights of common or waste, rights of turbary or minerals, and occasionally the right to let grazing. A few were in fact at the time of the

sale revenue-producing as the result of way-leave agreements with electric companies or water boards. Some of the bidders were quite clearly anxious to obtain the documents, but a high proportion were obviously bent on purchasing a title and, at that, a title which they would never use, at any rate in public. At least one purchaser was prepared to pay a very considerable sum to obtain a lordship because his brother owned one already and he was anxious not to be outdone. Another, from his questions to the auctioneer, was clearly under the impression that he had purchased an area of land.

The archivists of at least two of the counties involved in the sale made public offers to take into custody any of the records purchased and to provide the purchaser with a transcript free of charge. This was a wise step for it is most important that such manorial documents (many of the lots were extremely complete and some dated back to the fourteenth century) should find a safe resting place where they may be consulted by scholars.

It was certainly an interesting occasion and

(continued on page 25)

The Untilled Field

By T. D. DAVIDSON

AMONG the earliest records of the reformed Church of Scotland occurs the following entry. "In the district of Garioch the Kirk resolved to apply to Parliament for an Act—Anent the horrible superstitioun used in Garioch and diverse parts of the countrey, in not labouring ane parcell of ground dedicate to the Devill, under the name of the Goodmans Craft: The Kirk, for remedie therof, hes found meitt that ane article be formed to the Parliament, that ane act may proceid from the Estates therof, ordaining all persons, possessours of the saids lands, to cause labour the samein betuixt and ane certane day appointit therto; utherwayes, the cace of dissobedience, the saids lands to fall in the Kings hands, to be disponsit to such persons as pleases his Majestie, quho will labour the samein."¹

In many parts of Britain, but particularly in the north-eastern counties of Scotland, there were to be found pieces of ground in many farms kept apart and uncultivated. Known variously as the Goodman's Croft, Halyman's Croft, Goodman's Fauld, Gi'en Rig, Deevil's Craft, Clooties Craft, and the Black Faulie, these untilled acres were considered uncanny and none dared touch them with a spade or plough.

At Forgue, on the 3rd of March 1650, Norman Leslie and James Tuicks were delated "for having given away a fold to the goodman as they call him to make their cattle 'stand' (thrive) and confessed they went to a fauld and promised to let it lie unlaboured as long as they possessed their tacks, and in testification thereof, they did cast some stones in over the dyke of the field." The Session judged this to be a most impious and superstitious act, referred them to the Presbytery, and ordered the land to be laboured. At the meeting of the Presbytery on the 21st of March in the same year, Tuicks appeared and confessed that because the "guids were falling away they resolved once more to lay out a piece of land unlaboured, to essay if that might be a means of making their cattle thrive."²

On the 25th of November 1646 William Seifvright and George Stronath, of Glas, being "accused of sorcerie in allotting and giving over some land to the old goodman (as they call it) denyed the same; but because it was so

¹ *The Booke of the Universall Kirk of Scotland: Acts and Proceedings of the General Assemblies of the Kirk of Scotland from the year MDLX*, Edinburgh, 1845, pt. 3, p. 834.

² J. M. McPherson, *Primitive Beliefs in the North East of Scotland*, Edinburgh, 1929, p. 138.

alledgit they promised to manure said land. The brethren, taking the matter to their consideration, continued their censure till the performance of their promise."¹ As the result of a visitation of the Kirk of Rhynie in 1651, it was admitted by Sir William Gordon of Lesmore that a part of his *mains* or home farm was given away (as is commonly said) to the Goodman, and used not to be laboured, "but that he had a mynd, by the assistance of God, to cause labour the same."² The Presbytery of Strathbogie, in 1631, ordered land in Rothiemay dedicated to the goodman to be manured, and sixty years later in the same place, John Clark was delated for giving a piece of his land as "helly man's ley."³ A witness at the time said the reason for Clark's action was that his predecessor in the farm had thirteen head of cattle and horse that died. In the Presbytery Book of Garioch we find records of similar crofts at Oyne and Inverurie; in Oyne in 1650 there were three pieces of ground called Goodman Folds, and in 1655 notice was taken of some land in the parish of Inverurie, "dedicated to the devill commonly called the Gudeman's Fold."⁴

On the farms of Belscamphie and Brogan in Slains pieces of land separated by a ditch from the rest of the farm were known as the Goodman's land or Goodman's Fauld, and in 1649 the tenant was severely reprimanded by the church, and ordered to labour the land.⁵ Two parishes in the Presbytery of Fordyce also provide evidence of such dedication, and the visitation of Boyndie in 1649 brought to light a piece of ground unlaboured called "the halie man's ley dedicated to superstitious uses."⁶ In the following year a small piece of land near Nether Buckie was reserved and "man used to cast faills⁷ and deavets on it." This too was ordered to be tilled.⁸ In 1602 some men from Clachmarras in the parish of Elgin were brought before the Sessions to give a reason "quhy they reserved a peise of land to the devill callit the Gudmanis." A year later an elder reported a tenant for labouring "a piece land to the gudeman (devill) for the noltis cause."⁹

One of the charges against Andro Man of Aberdeen, who was convicted of witchcraft in 1597, was: "Thow hes mett and messurit dyvers peces of land callit wardis, to the hynd knight quhom thow confessis to be a spreit, and

¹ S. Stuart, *Presbytery Book of Strathbogie*, Aberdeen, 1843, p. 71.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 208-9.

³ J. M. McPherson, *op. cit.*, p. 138.

⁴ J. Davidson, *Inverurie and the Earldom of the Garioch*, Edinburgh, 1878, pp. 308, 311.

⁵ J. B. Pratt, *Buchan*, Aberdeen, 1858, p. 452.

⁶ W. Crammond, *The Church and Churchyard of Boyndie*, Banff, 1866, p. 12.

⁷ Faill, large and thick turf used for roofing, or when mixed with dung as manure.—*Scottish National Dictionary*.

⁸ W. Crammond, *The Church and Churchyard of Rathven*, Banff, 1885, p. 20.

⁹ W. Crammond, *The Records of Elgin*, Aberdeen, 1903-7, II, p. 105.

puttis four stanis in the four nokis of the ward, and charmes the samen, and theirby haillis and guidis, and preservis thame fra the lunsaucht, and all vther diseasis, and thou forbiddis to cast fail or divett thereon, or put plewis therein; and this thow did in the Manis of Innes."¹

At Killiesmont, in the parish of Keith, there was a croft which measured about two hundred yards by twelve. The farmer, James Scott, resolved to bring it under cultivation, but the moment the plough touched the soil one of the oxen fell dead, killed by a fairy dart, or as the folk put it, the animal was "shot a dead." A century later Robert Watt decided to cultivate the dreaded plot. Three women, Maggie Barber, Jane Turner, and Janet McConnachie, sat by and watched the foolhardy farmer, expecting any moment to see him shot by the fatal bolt. But nothing untoward occurred.² Early in the nineteenth century there was a "deevil's faulie" or "black faulie" of about four acres on a farm near Huntly. The farmer decided "that the deil had lang eneuch o't and he wad hae a turn o't neist." He took his turn, cultivated it, and no evil befell him.³ A field on the farm of Dullarg, in the parish of Parton, lay unploughed until late in the nineteenth century. There was a local saying, "The man that ploughed the ley would never cut the crop." Eventually a farmer, Peter McCutcheon, ploughed the field and sowed it. He died before the crop was reaped.⁴ In Corgarff, two such plots, one on the side of Tornashaltic (Fire-hillock), and the other on Tornahaish (Cheese-Hillock), were sprinkled yearly with milk on the first day of April. This libation was to keep "the evil one out of the hoose, the milk-hoose, the byre, an' the barn."⁵ Finally from Edinburgh comes what is probably the last record of laying off a croft. According to Sir James Simpson, writing in 1861, a relative of his had bought a farm within twenty miles of Edinburgh not many years before. Amongst his first acts was the enclosure of a small triangular corner with a stone wall. This was the Goodman's croft, an offering to the devil that he might abstain from blighting or damaging the rest of the farm.⁶

So much for examples. The most interesting is unquestionably the Forgue

¹ *Miscellany of the Spalding Club*, Aberdeen, 1841, I, p. 120.

² W. Gregor, *Trans. Banff Field Club*, Banff, 1884, p. 97. This account is authenticated in a letter communicated by Mr Henry Simpson, Aberdeen, and dated 2 June 1943, who stated that his father was born on the farm in question and that his uncle was well aware of the situation of "The Gudeman's Craft" within its borders. He never buried any dead cattle within the confines of the croft, for had he done so, other beasts were certain to die.—L. Spence, *The Fairy Tradition in Britain*, London, 1948, p. 328.

³ J. M. McPherson, *op. cit.*, pp. 136–7.

⁴ *Ethnological Survey of the United Kingdom*, London, 1897, Report No. 5, pp. 494–5.

⁵ *British Calendar Customs, Scotland*, London, 1939, II, p. 196.

⁶ E. B. Simpson, *Folk Lore in Lowland Scotland*, London, 1908, p. 27.

case, for here we obtain evidence of the reason for, and the ritual employed in, dedicating a corner of a field. Disease had overtaken the cattle on a farm, many were dying, and the reason was unknown. Therefore it must come from some supernatural source, an unseen evil spirit whose rights had been violated or neglected. By way of propitiation a portion of good land was dedicated to him, and the ritual of dedication was probably as follows. The farmer went to the field, and repeating some words, probably in the form of a degenerate prayer, promised the land should lie uncultivated. In token of this promise he cast stones in over the dyke of the fold, thereby indicating that he renounced his right to the land.

There would appear to have been two kinds of dedicated croft. There was the croft known from time immemorial as sacrosanct to the spirit of the Goodman or the Halyman, as in the case of the Killiesmont rig, at one end of which there was found, among a heap of stones, a rude cist containing ashes, and scattered around many loose irregular stones bearing marks of fire. A similar croft was found on the farm of Strathairy of King-Edward.¹ These are obviously remains of some ancient religious place of worship where sacrifice was offered and blessing was invoked upon the cattle and produce of the fields. Sir Walter Scott was very near to the point when he suggested that these crofts correspond to the Temenos of the pagan temples: a piece of ground kept apart from common uses and dedicated to the god.² The other type was one which was dedicated to the same spirit when new ground came under tillage, as we have shown in the Edinburgh example. In all such dedication the intention was evil in the eyes of the church, and the custom became so general, and the fields dedicated so numerous, that the church resolved to apply to Parliament for an act to deal with the owners of these unlaboured fields. The act, the terms of which are given in the opening paragraph, does not seem to have been granted, but the church embarked on a crusade to have the crofts broken up and an end made of this superstitious usage. The crusade, however, appears to have had very little effect.

In Scotland numerous patches of ground were formerly regarded either as the dwelling-place of the fairies or of the dead, and were considered sacred to these spirits. To cultivate this ground or permit livestock to damage or pollute it in any way was to ensure their vengeance. There are many examples to illustrate this belief. Murrain among beasts—the fifth of the dreaded plagues of Egypt in the day of Moses—befell the cattle of a farmer in Caithness who interfered with a fairy plot, and so serious was the plague that the

¹ *Statistical Account of Scotland*, Edinburgh, 1793, xi, p. 408.

² W. Scott, *Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft*, London, 1884, p. 78.

need-fire¹ had to be employed to stay it.² Many attempts were made to build the first castle of Glamis on the hill of Denom in that neighbourhood because it was associated with traditions of the fairy race, and its foundations were nightly overthrown by the outraged fairies.³ Substantially the same tale is told of the castle of Melgund in the parish of Aberlemno.⁴ Sir Walter Scott tells us that a certain Mary Campbell of Aberdeen was abducted by the fairies, but was restored to her husband on the understanding that the ground in the neighbourhood of the fairy demesne remained untilld.⁵ Fairy arrows (neolithic flints) were discharged at those who endeavoured to cultivate such patches, as was shown in the Killiesmont tale; and to remain on these plots after sunset was to risk abduction by the devil.

Furthermore the association of fairies with the soil, and the sacrosanct nature of the fairy soil, indicates clearly the terrene or chthonic character of the ancestral fairy spirit. It was firmly believed by the Highlanders of Scotland that the souls of their predecessors dwelt in fairy hills, and according to Kirk, in his *Secret Commonwealth*, "A Mount was dedicate beside every churchyard, to receive the Souls till their adjacent Bodies arise, and so became as a Fairie-Hill."⁶ At Burrafield in Unst there was a piece of ground known as the Field of the Dead. The ground was uncultivated and the tradition was that no one must put spade in it or misfortune would certainly befall him. Once a woman dared, and dug up a portion. Shortly afterwards her best cow died. Nothing daunted, she delved again and actually sowed corn on the spot. "Then her husband died, and after that she left the rig alone."⁷ Throughout the Scottish witchcraft records there are numerous instances to prove the association of fairyland with the pre-Christian Hades or home of the dead. Alison Peirson of Byrehill, who was convicted and burnt in 1588 for the crime of witchcraft, paid several visits to Fairyland where she met Maitland of Lethington;⁸ Bessie Dunlop of Dalry, in 1576,

¹ Need fire, Gaelic *teine eiginn*, "churned" or "forced" fire was made on the outbreak of cattle plague, and as a charm against murrain. The fire was produced by the friction of two pieces of wood. In Mull, for example, it was kindled by "turning an oaken wheel over nine oaken spindles from east to west."—G. Henderson, *Survivals in Belief among the Celts*, Glasgow, 1911, p. 213. The cattle were then driven over the fire, in the belief that the purifying action of the smoke would purge the disease. In some cases, in immediate connection with the need fire, cattle have been known, even as late as the nineteenth century, to be sacrificed. See *Folk Lore*, London, 1891, II, p. 300; 1899, x, pp. 101, 353; Simpson, *op. cit.*, p. 208.

² A. A. MacGregor, *The Peat Fire Flame*, Edinburgh, 1947, p. 2.

³ J. C. Guthrie, *The Vale of Strathmore*, Edinburgh, 1875, p. 33.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 316.

⁵ W. Scott, *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Borders*, Edinburgh, 1932, II, p. 329.

⁶ R. Kirk, *Secret Commonwealth of Elves, Fauns, and Fairies*, London, 1893, p. 23.

⁷ J. M. McPherson, *op. cit.*, p. 327.

⁸ R. Pitcairn, *Criminal Trials of Scotland*, Edinburgh, 1833, I, p. 161.

obtained her salves from a "fairy man," Thomas Reid, who was slain several years before at Pinkie Battle (1547), and in her confession claimed to have seen him walking along the High Street in Edinburgh.¹ Dalyell reports that the Orkney witch, Catherine Jonesdochter, "saw the Trowis ryse out of the kirkyard of Hildiswick, and Haliecross kirk of Eschenes and on the hill called Greinfall."² Somewhat similar to this is the tale of Adam Donald, the prophet of Bethelnie who used regularly to visit the churchyard and hold converse with the departed spirits, from whom he gained much hidden knowledge.³

As a tailpiece one example of the superstition known as "lowsin a gaun plough" may be cited. A tenant of Honey-nook, New Deer, in the latter half of the eighteenth century, was evicted from his farm. In revenge, he drove his twelve-ox plough, with all the earth it would carry, off the farm, and unyoked it on the neighbouring farm of West Affleck on a part called the "Goodman's Faul."⁴ In this way he took away the luck from the farm and transferred it to the "Goodman."

¹ *Ibid.*, I, p. 49.

² J. C. Dalyell, *The Darker Superstitions of Scotland*, Glasgow, 1835, p. 533.

³ W. Alexander, *Northern Rural Life*, Edinburgh, 1888, p. 193.

⁴ J. Milne, *Myths and Superstitions of Buchan District*, Aberdeen, 1881, p. 31.

NOTES AND COMMENTS (continued from page 19)

one that is unlikely to be repeated. One could not but be impressed by the interest and anticipation that the whole occasion aroused. The sense of drama was heightened by the glare of the floodlights of several television companies and the continual discharge of photographers' flashbulbs. If the ghosts of all the lords of the twenty-two manors had been lingering in Holborn on that November afternoon they could hardly have restrained a smile at the nature of the last rites which the progressive society of the twentieth century was according to the Honour of Beaumont.

MUSEUM OF ENGLISH RURAL LIFE

The Reading University Museum of English Rural Life will be opened to the public at a ceremony to be held on the 27th of April 1955. Four years after it was founded it is at last possible for some of the collections to be

displayed. From 27 April onwards the times of opening will be as follows:

- 1 May—31 October. Tuesday-Saturday, 10.30-5.00; Sunday, 2.30-5.00.
- 1 November—30 April. Wednesday and Saturday only, 2.30-5.00.

SUMMER SCHOOL IN LOCAL HISTORY

The University College of Leicester held a Summer School in English Local History at Beaumont Hall, Leicester, from August 4th to 14th, 1954. Some two dozen history teachers, archivists, and research students attended. Two concurrent courses were offered, one on the history of the English town, the other, conducted by Dr Thirsk, on the agrarian history of England from the Roman period to the present day. The school was much appreciated by all who took part in it.

A Reconsideration of Some Former Husbandry Practices

By ERIC KERRIDGE

THE purpose of this article is to reconsider certain points of former husbandry practice, namely, ridge and furrow, and boundary balks, and to continue the discussion of them which was originated respectively by Mr M. W. Beresford and by Dr and Mrs C. S. Orwin.

I

In a series of articles¹ Mr Beresford sought to prove "that the single strip of the medieval fields is represented exactly by the ridge and furrow of the modern English landscape."² Against this I ventured to argue that "Ridge and furrow was not always for arable cultivation; when for arable, not always for cereal crops; when for cereal crops, not always for permanent cultivation; when for permanent cultivation, not always for continuous tillage; when for continuous tillage, not always for open field tillage; when for open field tillage, not always for common field husbandry." I also entered a plea that agricultural history should be studied primarily not by archaeological but by historical method.³

No one could be more acutely aware than I am of the many imperfections embodied in my article, some of which arose from the necessary, but not always well-considered, compression of the original paper, and others from insufficient attention to detail. Nevertheless, I learn from a charitable source that the argument and conclusions of my article were favoured with a certain measure of acceptance, tempered by a feeling that I had not dealt sufficiently with the particular instances that Mr Beresford adduced in support of his argument. Of this it will here suffice to say that his argument can now be checked by comparison with other studies. Dr Mead has shown cartographically that surviving ridge and furrow in Buckinghamshire coincided with the cold soils and was absent from warm soils, and he concludes: "The only indisputable fact is that all ridge and furrow land has at some time been

¹ M. W. Beresford, 'Ridge and Furrow and the Open Fields', *Econ. Hist. Rev.*, 2nd ser., I, 1948; 'Maps and the Medieval Landscape', *Antiquity*, xxiv, 1950; 'Glebe Terriers and Open Field Leicestershire', in *Studies in Leicestershire Agrarian History*, Leicester, 1949, p. 98.

² 'Maps and the Medieval Landscape', p. 115.

³ 'Ridge and Furrow and Agrarian History', *Econ. Hist. Rev.*, 2nd ser., IV, 1951.

under the plough.”¹ This is agreeable with my remark that “All that the evidence of ridge and furrow proves by itself is that the land was at one time thrown into ridge and furrow.”²

Between the publication of Mr Beresford’s articles and mine, Mrs Chapman, studying open fields in Cheshire, discovered that ridge and furrow showed most strongly in the cold soils, where open field was least to be found, and was “absent on sandy soils, just where the strongest survivals of open field were to be found” in the early modern period.³ This serves at least to show the impossibility of tracing the former extent of common fields from surviving ridge and furrow. Finally, there had already been some discussion that Mr Beresford and I both overlooked, for Mr Slack had long before argued that ridge and furrow was for surface-drainage and that the old system of ploughing, together with the S-bend, which he attributes to plough-twist, was sometimes continued in enclosures.⁴ There is, then, little doubt that the gathering up of high ridge and furrow was practised in both open and enclosed fields.

It might still be argued, however, that the extent of former open field in certain areas could be judged from the ridge and furrow antecedent to hedgerows. To Mr Beresford it appeared that the weakest link in my argument was the bald assertion that “it would take more than ‘a glance at any air-photograph’ showing ridge and furrow ‘sailing blithely’ under hedges to prove former continuity.”⁵ Most people would agree, I believe, that it is not always easy to decide if the ridge and furrow seen in aerial photographs was originally continuous or not, but my remark seems also to have been taken to apply with equal force to ground observation, as indeed it does. Mr Beresford, clinging to the kernel of his original argument to help him in his task of finding lost villages, said that I appeared to “overestimate the ability or knowledge of the ploughmen of the last two centuries to etch an open-field pattern between and through the modern hedges.”⁶

But even where ridge and furrow was set up for the sake of surface-drainage, this surface-draining could not often have been confined to ridge and furrow, for in that case the surface water would only have been taken from the centre to drown the margins. Where water-furrows are used today

¹ W. R. Mead, ‘Ridge and Furrow in Buckinghamshire’, *Geog. Jnl.*, CXX, 1954, pp. 37, 41–2.

² *Art. cit.*, p. 32.

³ V. Chapman, ‘Open Fields in West Cheshire’, *Trans. Hist. Soc. Lancs. and Cheshire*, CIV, 1953, pp. 58–9.

⁴ W. J. Slack, ‘The Open Field System of Agriculture’, *Trans. Caradoc and Severn Valley Field Club*, x, 1938, pp. 147 ff.

⁵ ‘Ridge and Furrow and Agrarian History’, p. 14, n.5.

⁶ *The Lost Villages of England*, London, 1954, p. 53.

for surface-drainage, the water is usually carried from the furrows and over the headland by means of gutters, and is often also drawn off to the side of the field by means of cross-gutters. Former practice in enclosed fields was hardly different, though perhaps superior in execution.¹ It is therefore not surprising to find that the common-field cultivators also engaged in guttering, cross-guttering, and trenching.² Orders for guttering, gripping, and trenching in common fields are frequent.³ It is agreed, for instance, "that every man shall drayne his arrable lande where neede is as deepe as the furrowes," in the wheat field by Martinmas and in the other fields by Christmas,⁴ that lands in the common field be trenched two days after sowing,⁵ that every man shall gripe his Land where any water crosses over it, his neighbour having done his" and given one day's warning,⁶ and that every man is to let the water from his grounds in the field before 11 November and to keep the outfalls clear throughout the year.⁷ Sometimes the occupiers of common-field land had to trench their portions where the jury of the manor decided.⁸ Sometimes orders are made for the ditching and trenching of lands' ends

¹ H. Holland, *General View of the Agriculture of Cheshire*, London, 1808, p. 128.

² W. Marshall, *A Review of the Reports to the Board of Agriculture from the Eastern Department of England*, York, 1811, p. 237; J. Middleton, *View of the Agriculture of Middlesex*, London, 1798, p. 140; C. Vancouver, *General View of the Agriculture in the County of Cambridge*, London, 1794, p. 108.

³ E.g., T. L. Tancred, 'Three Seventeenth Century Court Rolls of the Manor of Aldborough', *Yorks. Arch. Jnl.*, xxxv, 1943, pp. 205, 212; M. W. Barley, 'East Yorks. Manorial Bye-Laws', *ibid.*, pp. 47-8; Birmingham Ref. Lib. MS. 168006; Berks RO (Rec. Off.) D/EPb/M3, Ct. Bk. (Court Book) Coleshill, p. 66; Soms. RO, DD/MI, Acc. C.186, box 6, Ct. Bk. Queen Camel 1600-11; Ct. R. (Roll) Queen Camel 25 Oct. 1692; Northants RO, Daventry Coll. 540, Ct. R. Hellidon 16 Oct. 14 Chas. II; Cambs. RO, L.64, Ct. R. Foxton Bury, Wimbish & Chatteris 23 Mar. 4 Jas. I; 7 Dec. 1665; L.19/17, Ct. R. Haslingfield c. 1598; L.1/8, Ct. R. Bassingbourne Richmond 19 Apr. 7 Chas. I; PRO, DL (D. of Lanc.), Ct. R., bdle. 81, no. 1119, m. 20v.; BM, Egerton MS. 3002, ff. 58, 65; Add. MS. 36585, ff. 164, 304v.; Add. R. 9284; N. Riding RO, ZBQ, Ct. R. Hustwaite cum Carlton 20 Oct. 1 Chas. I; ZCF, Ct. Bk. Thirsk 1622-38, 14 Oct. 4 Chas. I; 8 Oct. 1630; 1739-90, entry 1741; Beds. RO, X.69/5-6; Middx. RO, Acc. 248/1a, Ct. R. Colkennington als. Kenton, 1678; 249/69, Ct. R. Ruislip 23 Oct. 18 Eliz.; 446/M102, Ct. R. Harmondsworth 6 Apr. 10 Chas. I; 2 Oct. 11 Chas. I; 5 Feb. 1639; Wm. Salt Lib. (WSL), Ct. R. Madeley Holme 6 Apr. 1652; Shakespeare's Birthplace Trust Lib. (SOA), Hood Coll., Ct. R. Stivichall 23 Oct. 1710; Manorial Docs., Ct. Bk. Alveston and Tiddington 23 Oct. 7 Jas. I; 22 Oct. 8 Jas. I; Ct. R. 11 Apr. 18 Chas. II.

⁴ Northants RO, Westmorland Coll., box 5, parcel v, no. 1, Ct. R. Stanground 17 Sept. 19 Jas. I; 13 Sept. 20 Jas. I.

⁵ PRO, Exch., Q.R, Sp. Comm. 5553, 2nd file, m. 1; Northants RO, Westmorland Coll., box 5, parcel v, no. 5, Ct. R. Farcet 25 Oct. 1660; SOA, Throckmorton Coll., Ct. R. Oversley 19 Oct. 1654.

⁶ Cambs. RO, L.1/112, Ct. R. Long Stanton 3 Oct. 1654.

⁷ Northants RO, Westmorland Coll., box 5, parcel v, no. 1, Ct. R. Farcet 15 Sept. 13 Jas. I.

⁸ R. W. Jefferey, 'The Manors and Advowson of Great Rollright', *Oxfords. Rec. Soc. Trans.*, ix, 1927, p. 24; BM, Add. MS. 36585, f. 164.

and headlands.¹ Often gutters and drains were made by individuals, while the trenching was a public service.² Thus at Caxton it is ordered that all the land sown is to be water-furrowed and that every man is to "cross furrow by drawing theire plowes over theire respective lands soone after they are sowne soe as the Hayward may make the water trenches accordingly."³ Sometimes again both guttering and trenching were a public service provided on payment of a rate assessed by the yardland.⁴ That gutters crossed over headlands is not to be doubted. Fitzherbert advises the husbandman to "se that no water stande at the landes endes butting on the hedde landes, and yf it so do, than with a plough cast a forow toward the hedlandes and than the water wyll folowe that forow and make the landes drye."⁵ Laurence says that drains must be made to carry away the water, if need be by opening a trench across the headland.⁶ Similar remarks by Worlidge and Tull I have already cited elsewhere.⁷ Sometimes the orders made in manorial courts are more general, but they often allude specifically to the guttering of headlands.⁸ A defendant is accused of guttering his headland to the damage of his neighbour's meadow.⁹ Many grasslands, both in common and in severalty, were similarly furrow-drained.¹⁰ Gipping could be effected simply with a trenching

¹ *Yorks. Deeds* (vol. I, ed. W. Brown, *Yorks. Arch. Soc. Rec. Ser.* XXXIX, 1909), 149; Northants RO, Higham Ferrers Burgess R. field orders 1696-1725; Cambs. RO, L.64, Ct. R. Foxton etc. 16 Sept. 42 Eliz.

² PRO, Ct. R., Gen. Ser., bdle. 207, no. 42, Ct. R. Leamington and Lillington, 18 Jan. 38 H. VIII; Northants RO, Montagu Coll., Misc. Ledger 145, Luddington 13 Oct. 1713; Westmorland Coll., box 5, parcel v, no. 1, Ct. R. Woodnewton 15 Sept. 18 Jas. I.

³ Cambs. RO, L.88/4, Ct. Files Whitsun 1659 presentments.

⁴ Berks RO, D/EPb/M3, p. 66; Northants RO, XYZ. Coll. 988, Ct. R. Greatworth 12 Jan. 4 Chas. I; Aynho Ct. R. 20 Oct. 1 Jas. II.

⁵ *The Boke of Surveyinge and Improuementes*, London, 1534, f. 44.

⁶ J. Laurence, *A New System of Agriculture*, London, 1726, p. 62.

⁷ 'Ridge and Furrow and Agrarian History', p. 21.

⁸ WSL, Ct. R. Shentone 20 Oct. 6 Chas. I; Northants. RO, Montagu Coll., Misc. Ledger 129, Luddington 12 Oct. 1728; box 1378, box 25, no. 51, Ct. R. Luddington 23 Apr. 15 Eliz.

⁹ Wm. Salt Arch. Soc., *Coll. for a Hist. of Staffs.*, new ser., 1910, p. 70.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* 1926, pp. 67-8; W. Marshall, *Minutes on Agriculture in the Southern Counties*, London, 2 vols. 1799, I, p. 82; G. Atwell, *The Faithfull Surveyour*, Cambridge, 1662, p. 89; *The House and Farm Accounts of the Shuttleworths*, ed. J. Harland, Chetham Soc. xxxv, xli, xliii, xlvi, 1856-8, xxv, p. 114; PRO, Exch. Q.R., Sp. Comm. 5553, 2nd file, m. 1; BM, Add. MS. 36904, ff. 33, 74; 36908, ff. 12v., 36, 55; Glos RO, D.247, Ct. R. Longborough, no. 36; Wilts RO, Hobhouse Papers, Class A, bdle. 25, no. 5 (FL); Cambs. RO, L.1/112, Ct. R. Long Stanton 3 Oct. 1654; SOA, Throckmorton Coll., Ct. R. Coughton 1 Nov. 1708; Man. Docs., Ct. R. Adlestrop 24 Apr. 1762; Stoneleigh 6 Oct. 1692; Northants RO, Montagu Coll., box 1336, box 7, no. 66/2, verdict 13 Apr. 34 H. VIII; box 1352, box 18, no. 160, Ct. R. Barnwell 9 Dec. 5 Chas. I; Westmorland Coll., box 5, parcel v, no. 1, Ct. R. Farcet 13 Sept. 21 Jas. I; XYZ. Coll. 988, Ct. R. Greatworth 12 Jan. 4 Chas. I; WSL, Chetwynd MSS., file N, Ct. R. Church Eaton 4 Oct. 24 Eliz.

spade or hand trenching plough, of which there were several wheeled and unwheeled types, and these were well within the reach of most cultivators' purses.¹ Often the guttering and draining of common fields was done with a public or common draining plough frequently called the town plough, provided by a rate levied for the purpose and drawn by a great team of eight or nine yoke of oxen led by one or two pairs of horses or by a team of a score or so horses. While the labourers followed with shovels and trenching spades to perfect the work, the husbandmen drove the team to which they had contributed and the boys rode on the guide horses at the front.² To drain their fields and pastures in the stiff, miry clays, the common-field farmers of Caxton used a trenching plough, provided and maintained at the public charge with a mouldboard three times the usual length, two coulter to cut the sides, and a flat share to cut the bottom of a trench drain that was one foot wide at the base and eighteen inches at the top, with a depth of about one foot.³ At Naseby the town plough had likewise two coulters and cut a drain one foot deep and wide, throwing out the earth in a great ridge-like slice. This plough was drawn by a composite team of only ten or twelve horses.⁴

Guttering continued the water-furrow to the very limit of furlong and field. The drains had to be as deep as the water-furrows and to continue in much the same direction. All headlands did not need to be guttered, but where the field or furlong sloped there had to be gutters at the lower end, and where it was more or less flat or sloped in both directions, guttering could hardly have been avoided at either end. To distinguish this guttering and trenching from elevated ridge and furrow, either by aerial photograph or by ground observation, is never easy and sometimes virtually impossible. Consequently, it is virtually impossible to isolate the ridge and furrow that was aboriginally continuous and only later cut across by hedges.

Moreover, the legibility of what has been well called the erased, smeared,

¹ W. Blith, *The English Improver Improved*, London, 1652, opp. p. 69; J. O. Halliwell (ed.) *Ancient Inventories*. . . , London, 1854, p. 40.

² Blith, *op. cit.*, p. 28; Atwell, *op. cit.*, pp. 88-9; W. G. D. Fletcher, *Hist. of Loughborough*, Loughborough, 1887, p. 46; J. Mortimer, *The Whole Art of Husbandry*, London, 1707, p. 41; PRO, DL, Ct. R., bdle. 106, no. 1535, mm. 5-6; Cambs. RO, L.1/112, Ct. R. Long Stanton 3 Oct. 1654; Beds. RO, HA. 5/1, f. 22v.; Northants RO, Montagu Coll., Misc. Ledger 129, Caldecot 20 Oct. 1721; box 1352, box 18, no. 160, Ct. R. Barnwell 1 Dec. 1614; 9 Dec. 5 Chas. I; box 28, no. 28, Ct. R. Caldecot 11 Dec. 5 Chas. I; Westmorland Coll., box 5, parcel v, no. 1, Ct. R. Stanground 3 Sept. 7 Jas. I; 16 Sept. 22 Jas. I; Woodston 16 Sept. 12 Jas. I; 12 Sept. 21 Jas. I; 16 Sept. 22 Jas. I; Farcet 25 Oct. 1660. Cf. W. G. Hoskins, *Essays in Leics. Hist.*, Liverpool, 1950, p. 149.

³ Mortimer, *loc. cit.*; Cambs. RO, L.88/4, Ct. Files Caxton, presentments Whitsun 1659; 4 Oct. 1666.

⁴ J. Mastin, *Hist. and Antiquities of Naseby*, Cambridge, 1792, p. 18. Cf. Hoskins, *loc. cit.*

and over-written parchment of the landscape¹ is still further decreased by other husbandry practices, such as that of digging up the headlands and casting their mould on the fields to enrich the soil.² Furthermore, the enclosed fields were usually, as now, grouped and divided into shifts for the purpose of field courses, and while sometimes several fields fell into one shift, sometimes two or more shifts shared the same field.³ In laying down to grass "pastures" that had been "corned", Blith advises that water-furrows be made to run into a master trench, perhaps spaded out, and that the "pasture" be cast into several furlongs if necessitated by the exigencies of surface-drainage.⁴ This created in the midst of an enclosed field all the appearance of the juncture of open-field furlongs. A similar visual effect also resulted, as now, from the throwing of several closes into one.⁵ Therefore even when ridge and furrow changes direction in an enclosed field, and even when there is a headland in the middle of a close, this, by itself, is a long way from proof that common rights were exercised there at any time.

Clearly the aboriginal pattern of open fields cannot be read from present-day ridge and furrow with anything like the facility or certainty that has sometimes been supposed; and it was to this fact I made a passing allusion. The allusion, however, was made in passing precisely because it did not constitute a step in my argument, which was designed to stand without it. The weakest point of the argument was also its most crucial step, namely, the assertion that the division of fields was not confined to the division of common fields into enclosures in severalty. I pointed out that the subdivision of enclosures was a practice not infrequently obtaining in the nineteenth century.⁶ I offered no support for this crucial link because I had no evidence at my elbow to adduce, and still have none, so that if the proposition is not taken

¹ Slack, *art. cit.*, p. 142.

² J. Norden, *The Surveyors Dialogue*, London, 1618, p. 228; BM, Harl. MS. 5827, f. 7 (5)v.; Northants RO, Montagu Coll., Misc. Ledger 145, p. 184.

³ E.g., *Coll. Hist. Staffs.* ix, 1906, pp. 198-9; new ser. 1912, pp. 23-4; BM, Harl. MS. 3749, ff. 13-14; Essex RO, D/DP.E25, f. 59v.; Herts RO, Gorhambury Coll., xi. 2; Moulton Coll. 46325; Leics. RO, Linden Hall MS. 93; Museum MS. 32, D.31/2; PRO, Chanc. Proc. ser. 1, Jas. I, bdl. Y.1, no. 25; Exch., Land Rev. (LR), Misc. Bks. (MB), vol. 185, f. 32; 210, f. 40; 228, ff. 149 (1) ff.; Augmentation Off. (AO), MB, vol. 380, ff. 13, 18; 419, f. 53; Plty Survs. (PS) (Warks.) no. 4; no. 12, ff. 5-6, 19, 21, 30, 32; no. 16, ff. 1 ff.; no. 17, ff. 1 ff.; no. 20, ff. 4-5, 8, 10; no. 21, ff. 1 ff.; no. 22, ff. 1 ff.; no. 32, ff. 7-9, 12-14, 17, 21, 26; (Worcs.) no. 4, ff. 3-4, 6, 11-12, 15, 22, 27; no. 6, ff. 3-4, 8, 10-11, 16, 22.

⁴ Blith, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

⁵ E.g., W. Marshall, *Rural Econ. Norfolk*, London, 2 vols. 1787, 1, p. 130; BM, Add. MS. 34162, f. 40 (p. 181); Northants RO, Montagu Coll., box 1322, Beaulieu particular 1832, pp. 29, 121.

⁶ 'Ridge and Furrow and Agrarian History', p. 35.

as self-evident, then it need not be followed. Nevertheless, that the subdivision of enclosures was frequently carried out in the Midland Plain and elsewhere in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, is attested by a considerable volume of unimpeachable evidence drawn from contemporary surveys and similar sources, so that this step of my argument does not lack support.¹ To prove that a field has been divided does not prove that a common field has been divided into enclosures, as the reader may see for himself by studying the plan of ridge and furrow in Soulbury made by Dr Mead. Here he will see that there is a certain coincidence between the pattern of ridge and furrow and the furlongs of the former common fields, from which he may draw the comforting conclusion that the lie of the land has not yet at least been materially altered; but he will also see, in the former enclosures, some apparent examples of closes being cast into furlongs and of changes in the direction of ploughing in 'pastures'. None of this could, of course, be deduced from ground observation or without the assistance of an old map, from which the extent of former common field may be determined precisely without recourse to the hazards of archaeological method.²

For all the reasons advanced previously and above, it is impossible to prove the former existence of common fields merely from ground observation, far less from the reading of aerial photographs, and it would therefore appear that Mr Beresford is incorrect in clinging to the kernel of his former argument.

II

Some early writers, notably Seebohm and Slater,³ asserted that the dispersed and intermingled holdings in common fields were bounded by balks

¹ *The Parliamentary Survey of the Lands and Possessions of the Dean and Chapter of Worcester*, ed. T. Cave and R. A. Wilson, Worcs. Hist. Soc., 1924, pp. 60, 129, 160; *The Survey of the Manor of Rochdale 1626*, ed. H. Fishwick, Chetham Soc. new. ser. LXXI, 1913, pp. 38-40, 42, 74; E. M. Hartshorne, *Memorials of Holdenby*, London, 1868, pp. xxi-ii; WSL, D/1765/27; Staffs RO, Hatherton MSS., box 16, bdle. b, Penkridge Ct. of Surv. ff. 1 ff.; Oxfords. RO, J. vii. 2; Northants RO, Finch-Hatton Coll. 119. f. 20; 272, ff. 8, 24-6; 298, pp. 2, 6; Brudenell Coll. ASR. 562, p. 7; O.x.14; Soms. RO, DD/CN, Acc. C.168, box 2, no. 26, p. 95; DD/X/GB, Acc. W.9, Combe Surv. Bk. pp. 175, 228; Herts RO, Gorhambury Coll. xi. 11, f. 60; MB, Add. MS. 34683, f. 4v.; Add. Ch. 53392, mm. 7, 11-12, 15-18; PRO, Rentals and Survs. (RS), Gen. Ser. (GS), file 26, no. 166, f. 10; Exch. QR, Deps. by Comm. 15 Chas. I, East. 6, esp. m. 74; LR, MB, vol. 185, ff. 15 (14), 36, 100v., 102, 134 (34) v., 156 (50); 222, f. 21; AO, MB, vol. 419, f. 53; PS (Hunts) no. 3, f. 10; (Northants) no. 3; no. 20, f. 18; (Ruts.) no. 13, f. 1; (Warks.) no. 10, f. 5; no. 15; no. 16, f. 7; no. 17, ff. 1 ff.; (Yorks.) no. 28, f. 14. Many other instances could be adduced.

² Mead, *art. cit.*, pp. 40-1.

³ F. Seebohm, *The Engl. Village Community*, London, 1883, p. 3; G. Slater, *The Engl. Peasantry and the Enclosure of Common Fields*, London, 1907, p. 63.

of greensward. This was sharply contradicted by Dr and Mrs Orwin. The document Seebohm referred to was found to mention only a few balks. Where sward balks did occur they were only temporary and confined to the fallow year.¹ Dr Orwin could not accept Seebohm's view because "to an agriculturalist this seemed so highly improbable." Moreover, there were no signs of boundary balks in surviving ridge and furrow, which was assumed to be largely that ploughed in former common fields. To clinch the matter, "the Laxton farmers laughed at the bare suggestion."² From this time boundary balks of greensward became regarded as one of the common errors in history and the invention of prejudiced ignorance.³ Nevertheless, Mr Drew found evidence of boundary balks in the common fields of the Isle of Portland and inferred their use in other warm-soiled common fields.⁴ Mr Finberg pointed to the boundary balks of Braunton and of other places in Devon,⁵ I myself to those of the Chalk Country. Mr Drew and I, confronted with apparently conflicting evidence from different farming regions, tried to reconcile these conflicts by suggesting that where the land was gathered into elevated ridge and furrow, Dr and Mrs Orwin were correct in banishing boundary balks from the common fields, but that where the land was ploughed flat, the parcels lying dispersedly in the fields were bounded by grass balks.⁶ This compromise, however, proved unacceptable to Dr and Mrs Orwin. To every example of boundary balks produced, they responded with the 'theory of exceptions', that is, everything in disagreement with their argument was assumed to be an exception to prove the rule, even when the 'exceptions' outnumbered the 'normal'. Owing partly perhaps to the improvident contraction of one of my footnotes, Dr and Mrs Orwin brushed aside my arguments, declaring that I did not understand the distinction between water-furrows and open-furrows and had failed to realize that even when the land was ploughed flat, it was usually by the ridge-and-furrow method.⁷

One piece of evidence still remained to be disposed of, namely, the linchets

¹ C. S. and C. S. Orwin, *The Open Fields*, Oxford, 1938, pp. 46-7.

² C. S. Orwin, 'Observations on the Open Fields', *Econ. Hist. Rev.* VIII, 1938, pp. 128-9.

³ R. F. Treharne, *Common Errors in History*, Hist. Assoc. 1947, p. 6, cited in C. D. Drew, 'Open Arable Fields at Portland and elsewhere', *Antiquity*, XXII, 1948. See also A. L. Poole, *From Domesday to Magna Carta*, Oxford, 1951, p. 50, n.1.

⁴ Drew, *art. cit.*, pp. 79-81.

⁵ H. P. R. Finberg, 'The Open Field in Devonshire', *Antiquity*, XXIII, 1949, pp. 180, 182; W. G. Hoskins and H. P. R. Finberg, *Devonshire Studies*, London, 1952, pp. 266, 276-8. See also J. A. Venn, *The Foundations of Agricultural Economics*, Cambridge, 1923, p. 14.

⁶ Drew, *loc. cit.*; Kerridge, *art. cit.*, p. 19.

⁷ *The Open Fields*, 2nd ed., Oxford, 1954, pp. 46 ff.

on the slopes of certain hilly regions. Individual archaeologists and the Congress of Archaeological Societies came to the conclusion that these terrace lynchets were associated with and caused by cultivation in open fields, the grassy balks or lynchets serving as brakes against the soil-creep caused by one-way downhill ploughing. This conclusion is, however, unacceptable to Dr and Mrs Orwin. They say it is topographically inconceivable that the terraces should have been associated with open-field cultivation. First, there is very little soil or subsoil there. Secondly, the theory of the archaeologists depends on the unwarranted assumption that the parcels in open fields were divided by balks. Moreover, no land-hunger can be imagined that would have driven people to cultivate these slopes, even if their ploughs had been able to cultivate them, which they were not. Dr and Mrs Orwin also bring forward archaeological evidence to the effect that the solid nature of the chalk rock in one place made any theory of ploughing incredible, for the terraces could only have been formed with pick and shovel. They are willing to concede that the terraces were man-made, but not that they were connected with cultivation, still less with open-field cultivation and boundary balks.¹ Boundary balks were therefore nowhere used in the common fields, not even in the hill countries.

The recent discovery of the Piltdown hoax shows that archaeological methods have greatly improved, but it nevertheless emphasizes their fundamental weaknesses and the great difficulty that historians labour under in assessing archaeological evidence. Suffice it to say, therefore, that the dissident archaeological report cited by Dr and Mrs Orwin contented itself with declaring that the purpose of the terracing must be left an open question. Dr and Mrs Orwin have therefore no archaeological justification for closing it.² Those who think that the terraces must, some of them, have been excavated with pick and shovel perhaps underestimate the ability of the plough, for hill roads were sometimes formed simply by ploughing the land level.³ In any event the suggestion is certainly not new. Seebohm suggested that some of the terraces were artificially cut.⁴ So did Cobbett, as I had already shown.⁵ The most comprehensive discussion of linchet terracing is contained in the passage quoted from Marshall by Dr and Mrs Orwin. "The ARTIFICIAL SURFACE which meets the eye," he says, "in different parts of these hills, forcibly arrests the attention. It occurs on the steeper slopes; which are formed into stages, or platforms, with grassy steeps, provincially 'LINCHETS', between them. This form of surface must have been produced, at great expence, in the first instance, or by great length of time, in constantly turning

¹ *The Open Fields*, pp. 177-9.

² *Ibid.*, p. 178.

³ Atwell, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

⁴ Seebohm, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

⁵ 'Ridge and Furrow and Agrarian History', p. 23.

the furrows, downward of the slope. But as the turnwrest plough has never, perhaps, had a footing, on this division of the Chalk Hills, it is probable, that the stages under notice were formed, by hand; at some period, when manual labour, either through an excess of population, or through the means of feudal services, was easily obtained. And the advantages, arising from the operation, have no doubt repaid the first cost, with ample interest. The stages, or platforms, are equally commodious for implements of tillage, as for carriages; beside retaining moisture, better than sloping surfaces; while the grassy steeps, between the arable stages, afford no inconsiderable supply of herbage; on which horses are teddered, or tended, while corn is in the ground; and which gives pasturage to sheep at other seasons. This sort of artificial surface is common, in different parts of the Island; and the antiquary might be less profitably employed, than in tracing its origin."¹

Whether or not the terraces and steeps were cut or resulted from cultivation—and the two explanations are reconcilable—does not matter for this discussion. What is clear is that Marshall was not simply mystified by the linchets. Although he thought their origin should be investigated, he was perfectly clear that the terraces were tilled for corn and that they were divided by grassy balks. Marshall's accuracy as an observer of English husbandry means that further evidence of the cultivation of terraces is not needed. But if it were needed, plenty could be adduced. Cobbett saw hundreds of acres in the down countries ploughed in shelves, where the side of the steep hill had been made into stairs. The horizontal parts were generally ploughed and sown.² Jethro Tull also makes clear reference to terraced cultivation.³ The rising parts, as already pointed out, were called *linchets*, *linchards*, *balks*, or *walls*.⁴ That the common field upon the 'walls' at Amesbury in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was such terraced cultivation can hardly be doubted.⁵ At Kensworth there were "iij rodas iacentes super lez lynches super Stokynghill."⁶ At Clothall some of the linchet terraces were cultivated until recently.⁷ Similar terracing is to be found on the sides of some of the hills in northern England and is well described in Dr Raistrick's book on Malham.⁸ We can believe Mr Douch when he tells us that "the transformation of the balk into a linchet where the

¹ *Rural Econ. of the Southern Counties*, London, 2 vols. 1798, II, pp. 301-2.

² *Rural Rides*, Everyman, II, p. 81.

³ *Horse-Hoeing Husbandry*, London, 1762, pp. 242-5, 253.

⁴ Kerridge, *art. cit.* p. 23.

⁵ *Devizes Mus.*, Lib. Super. maneriorum de Amisburie etc., f. 25v.; Amesbury Surv. Bk. 1574; Surv. of Amesbury 1635, ff. 43-4, 55-7, 59.

⁶ H. L. Gray, *Engl. Field Systems*, Harvard Hist. Studies, xxII, Camb., Mass. 1915, p. 377, n.4.

⁷ Venn, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

⁸ A. Raistrick, *Malham and Malham Moor*, Clapham via Lancaster, 1947, pp. 54-5, 68.

soil is turned downhill" can be seen at the Isle of Portland, and that "the theory that some lynchets, at least, are intimately connected with Open-Field agriculture is thus proved."¹

It might be argued that the hillside terraces should be excluded from consideration in discussing the question of boundary balks because of their exceptional character. But the truth is that Laxton, on the study of which *The Open Fields* is based, is every whit as exceptional as the Isle of Portland. Nor are the authors justified in suggesting that quarrying differs from other rural industries in its effect on boundary balks. The balks of the Isle of Portland cannot be so easily dismissed, while to exclude the slopes of the hill countries from consideration is to exclude a large part of England. Moreover, the 'landsheds' of Branton Great Field and of many other places in Devon are not exceptional. Dr and Mrs Orwin attribute large parcels in open fields solely to consolidation, because their theory of the origin of open fields demands this; but even if the large parcels were the result of consolidation, this consolidation, as we shall see, would have lessened the number of boundary balks, not increased it. Therefore the 'landsheds', another variant of the provincial name for boundary balks, may be taken in evidence. Formerly, I contented myself with observing that the terms *linch*, *linchet*, *linchard*, *landshere*, *mere*, *balk*, and *wall* all had, in the Chalk Country, the same general meaning of boundary balks in common fields, this being the meaning attached to some of them by John Worlidge.² Since, however, Dr and Mrs Orwin regard this evidence as insufficient and since my previous footnote was too contracted, I venture to give below the references appended to the original draft of that article,³ some of which may be worth further comment. At Elcombe in 1655 there were twelve acres of linchards.⁴ A glebe terrier of Norton Bavent clearly describes many parcels linched on either side.⁵ A survey of Alvediston shows sixteen and a half acres dispersed in the common field and bounded on every side by "lanchards."⁶ There is thus sufficient evidence of boundary balks in the Chalk Country.

At first sight it is not easy to see why Dr and Mrs Orwin should have laboured under the misapprehension that I did not know the distinction between a water-furrow proper and an open-furrow, for I defined this

¹ R. Douch, 'Customs and Traditions of the Isle of Portland', *Antiquity*, xxiii, 1949, p. 152.

² *Art. cit.*, pp. 19, 23.

³ *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manorial Rolls belonging to Sir H. F. Burke*, Manorial Soc. Pubs. xii, 1923, Pt. 2, p. 22; PRO, Ct. R., GS, bdle. 209, no. 19, Mere Hallmote 16 Apr. 9 Eliz.; Wilton MSS., Ct. Bk. Various Parishes 1633-4, f. 36v.; Ct. Bk. Bemerton and Quidhampton 1595-1639, 15 Apr. 16 Jas. ⁴ Devizes Mus., Deed Room Wr./lb, f. 65.

⁵ R. C. Hoare, *Hist. of Mod. Wilts.*, London 1822-43, Hundred of Warminster, pp. 81-2.

⁶ Wilton MSS., Survs. of Manors 1632-3, Surv. of Alvediston, f. 3.

precisely in my article.¹ Nor did I fail to realize that warm soils were usually ploughed by the ridge-and-furrow method even when not gathered into highbacks. If my use of the word 'land' did not signify this awareness, then a glance at my edition of the Wilton surveys would have dispelled any doubts on that score.² My original draft contained an even fuller explanation of the various methods of ploughing, later jettisoned only from exigencies of space.³ Moreover, my use of the term 'ridge and furrow' in its narrower sense of highbacks is justified not only by common sense and usage but also by precedent.⁴ It is certainly odd that Dr and Mrs Orwin should object so persistently to the presence of boundary balks in the common fields. The only possible explanation of this would seem to be that they regard the balks as incompatible with their theory of the origin of open fields. Against that theory, Professor Postan urged some powerful objections.⁵ However, it is only by finding and weighing the admissible evidence that the issue can be decided one way or the other.

Let us reconsider the suggestion already advanced, that is, that there were boundary balks in the common fields on warm, dry soils but not on cold, wet soils, in the chalk-down countries but not in the Midland Plain. On further examination it becomes clear that this position of compromise is untenable, and that both Mr Drew and myself were mistaken in giving credence to the conclusions of Dr and Mrs Orwin even within the limits of the Midlands. There were in fact boundary balks in the common fields here as elsewhere, and I was wrong to agree that "ridge and furrow bears out the erasure of balks." In Northamptonshire, "Most of the Lordships" had "Lays of Greensod which are left betwixt the Furlongs, and in several Places betwixt each of the Lands. . ."⁶ Near Market Deeping the arable common fields were ploughed up into broad arched lands, but furrows three, four, or five yards wide were laid to grass and mown for hay.⁷ In Buckinghamshire the open-field ridges were two feet high and the sheep commoned on the balks between them.⁸ The green furrows of Warwickshire were similar⁹ and can-

¹ *Art. cit.*, p. 17. See also pp. 19, 22.

² *Surv. of the Manors of Philip First Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery*, Wilts. Arch. Soc. Rec. Brch. IX, 1953, s.v. ridges.

³ For advice on this I am indebted to Professor R. H. Tawney.

⁴ J. Morton, *Natural Hist. of Northants.*, London, 1712, p. 340; R. Plot, *Nat. Hist. of Staffs.*, Oxford, 1688, p. 55; *The Book of Husbandry*, ed. W. W. Skeat, Engl. Dialect Soc., 1882, p. 132; Kerridge, *art. cit.*, p. 24; Marshall, *Rural Econ. Norfolk*, I, p. 147; Blith, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

⁵ M. M. Postan in *Econ. Hist. Rev.* IX, 1939, pp. 194-5.

⁶ Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

⁷ Marshall, *Eastern Dept.*, p. 135.

⁸ St J. Priest, *Gen. View of the Agric. of Buckinghamshire*, London, 1813, p. 131.

⁹ Kerridge, *art. cit.*, pp. 20, 24.

not be regarded as exceptional. References to greensward balks dividing and bounding the properties and occupations lying dispersedly in the common fields of the plain countries are superabundant. Sometimes the grass boundary balks are distinguished from the ridgeways and slades by the designation 'narrow' or 'foot', alluding to their width. Frequently the balks, green meres, or green furrows are described as lying between neighbour and neighbour. In some townships these balks were one foot wide, in some eighteen inches, in some two feet, in some three or four. Sometimes they were wider between acres than between roods.¹

Whether these boundary balks were an essential part of common fields is a point that cannot yet be determined, but there can be no doubt that they were highly advantageous to common-field husbandry as practised in the early modern period. The balks were not made solely as boundaries but partly to be used as meadow and pasture, to which the wet furrows and ridge flanks were well suited. Nevertheless to divide the dispersed lands and parcels was one of the main objects of boundary balks. For this reason an occupier of contiguous lands might plough up the greensward balks between them, but not those on their two outsides.² Thus when a land had been a middle land, it did not have to be balked on each side, but after it was exchanged and became an end land, it had to be balked on the one side to provide a boundary between neighbour and neighbour.³ Dr and Mrs Orwin make the unsupported assertion that the boundary balks they treated as exceptional

¹ Tancred, *art. cit.*, p. 202; F. S. Colman, *A Hist. of Barwick-in-Elmet*, Thoresby Soc., xvii, 1908, p. 127; BM, Add. MS. 36875, f. 25; 36908, ff. 8, 15v.; Add. R. 54166; PRO, DL, RS, bdle. 8, no. 6a, p. 3; Ct. R., bdle. 82, no. 1133, m. 29; bdle. 106, no. 1534, m. 6; 1535, mm. 1, 5-6; Ct. R., GS, bdle. 207, no. 42, Lillington 5 Apr. 2 Ed. VI; Exch., Q.R., Deps. by Comm., 26 Eliz., Trin. 8; Chanc. Proc. ser. 1, Jas. I, bdle. S.29, no. 7, m. 1; Leics. RO, Linden Hall MS. 343; SOA, Man. Docs., Ct. R. Alveston and Tiddington 21 Oct. 9 Jas. I, 11 Apr. 18 Chas. II; Ct. R. Whitchurch 12 Oct. 1711; Willoughby de Broke Coll. 703a, Extracts Ct. R. Barford 30 Sept. 1 Jas. I; 1194, Ct. R. 6 Apr. 11 Chas. I; 1393a, Ct. Bk. Sowe 6 Apr. 8 Geo. I; Throckmorton Coll., Ct. R. Throckmorton 13 Oct. 1725; Ct. Bk. Stoneleigh, p. 23; Leigh Coll., Ct. R. Ratley 20 Oct. 1602; Trevelyan Coll., Ct. R. Snitterfield 20 Oct. 1660; Northants RO, Montagu Coll., Misc. Ledger 129, Weekley 12 Oct. 1721, Polebroke 7 Oct. 1727, Luddington 12 Oct. 1728; 145, pp. 71, 157-8, 469, 503; box 1352, box 26, no. 28, Ct. R. Caldecote 11 Dec. 5 Chas. I; box 1346, box 20, no. 32, m. 16; box 1336, box 7, no. 72, Ct. Bk. Weekley 4 Oct. 1707; no. 66/10 Ct. R. 12 Oct. 1721; box 1342, box P, pt. 2, Ct. Files Dondon in Quainton 10 Sept. 1700, field orders; Daventry Coll. 533, Hellidon orders 20 Oct. 29 Chas. II; 20 Oct. 36 Chas. II; 540, Hellidon orders 16 Oct. 14 Chas. II; 573a, Ravensthorpe agreement 1721; Isham of Lamport Coll. 128, Ct. R. Lamport 30 Apr. 18 Eliz.; Cambs. RO, L.64, Ct. R. Foxton Bury etc. 7 Dec. 1665; Warks. RO, MR. 14, copy Ct. R. Leamington Hastings 25 Aug. 1630; MR. 16/9; WSL, Ct. R. Shenstone 12 Oct. 18 Chas. I.

² Slater, *op. cit.*, p. 331; Northants RO, Aynho Ct. R. 9 Apr. 1680.

³ PRO, Exch. Q.R., Deps. by Comm. 26 Eliz., Trin. 8, dep. by Wm. Harrowden.

were also merely temporary and left unploughed only during fallowing.¹ There is, however, abundant evidence that it was forbidden by customary law to plough up the boundary balks during any year of the field-course, especially and specifically where the lands were not middle but end lands and the balks were boundaries between neighbour and neighbour.²

The general use of boundary balks in the lands dispersed in common fields in the early modern period is therefore established beyond doubt. Dr and Mrs Orwin have denied their existence; but they are to be found at all hands, at least in the early modern period, and the onus of disproof lies upon those who would deny their existence in the common fields of earlier times. Confronted with a few instances of balks in common fields, Dr and Mrs Orwin argued that these instances were exceptional and that the boundary balks themselves were produced by the consolidation of dispersed parcels. Since, however, it was often permitted to plough out the balks between middle lands but not usually those between neighbour and neighbour, it is clear that the consolidation of dispersed parcels into fewer and larger units of occupation and ownership would not increase but decrease the number of boundary balks.

Nevertheless, it would be wrong to assert that all common fields everywhere and at all times had boundary balks. Although the presence of such balks, as a general rule, may be taken to be established, there are some instances of common fields, especially in comparatively modern times, which had none.³ Laxton is a case in point. Here, however, there remains only a truncated remnant and almost empty shell of common-field husbandry, and it would be dangerous to argue far from such exceptional survival. How

¹ *The Open Fields*, 1954, pp. 46-7.

² E.g., Coleman, *op. cit.*, p. 127; PRO, DL, Ct. R., bdle. 106, no. 1534, m. 6; BM, Add. MS. 36908 f. 3v.; Add. R. 44654, Ct. R. Whitchurch 7 May 1740; Warks. RO, MR. 14 as in n.1, p. 38; MR. 16/9; Worcs. RO, Acc. 54, Ct. R. Kempsey 31 Mar. 1656; Leics. RO, box 311, Leire arts. of agreement 1689; WSL, Ct. R. Shenstone 1 May 9 Chas. I; Beds. RO, DD/TW 10/2/9, Ct. R. Clapham 14 Apr. 8 Chas. I; BS. 1276, Ct. R. Tempsford 1617; L.26/563, Ct. R. Harrold 2 May 9 Chas. I; Northants RO, Westmorland Coll., box 7, no. 71, Yarwell presentmt. bk., f. 5; Finch-Hatton Coll. 834, Gretton bye-laws 24 Oct. 1695; 991, Ct. R. Weldon Magna 1728; Ecton Coll. 20, Ct. R. 9 Oct. 1713; 7a, Ct. R. 1 May 1701; 9, Ct. R. 14 Oct. 1743; Daventry Coll. 532, Hellidon orders 13 Nov. 1714; 533, do. 20 Oct. 29 Chas. II; 573c, Ravensthorpe agreement 1760; Montagu Coll., Misc. Ledger 145, pp. 236, 451; box 1342, box P, Pt. 2, Ct. Files Dondon in Quainton 10 Sept. 1700; box 1352, box 18, no. 160, Barnwell orders 1 Dec. 1614; Higham Ferrers Burgess R. 1696-1725 field orders, 23 Apr. 1719; SOA, Man. Docs., Ct. Files Whitchurch, pains and orders, 24 Apr. 1588, 12 Oct. 1711; Ct. Bk. Stoneleigh, p. 23; Ct. R. Alveston and Tiddington 11 Apr. 18 Chas. II; Ct. Bk. 20 Apr. 2 Jas. I; Willoughby de Broke Coll. 1393a, Ct. Bk. Sowe 6 Apr. 8 Geo. I; Hood Coll., Ct. R. Stivichall 3 Oct. 1724.

³ Slater, *op. cit.*, p. 15; Venn, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-14.

some common fields lost their boundary balks in modern times can be seen from the example of Wendon. When the common field here was consolidated and redistributed, the balks, so far from being newly laid down, were ploughed up and replaced by clover crops.¹ From about the turn of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries clover and turnip crops were widely introduced into the field-courses employed in common fields, and in the plain countries in particular the introduction of clover and 'seeds' greatly reduced the incidence of bare fallows in many common fields. Often the resultant change in field-courses was accompanied by consolidation and redistribution. For these and other similar reasons the few surviving remnants of common fields shed only a dim light upon former common-field husbandry.

Boundary balks, like ridge and furrow, are amongst the *minutiae* of former husbandry practice, and no purpose would be served in expatiating on them unless the opportunity were taken to draw the general conclusion that the common fields are best studied from the records that their husbandry produced, namely, the pains and penalties, the orders and agreements recorded in the rolls and books of proceedings in courts baron, and that to take one township and generalize from it for the whole of England is an undertaking fraught with hidden dangers.

¹ W. James and J. Malcolm, *Gen. View of the Agric. of the Co. of Buckingham*, London, 1794, p. 29.

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

R. H. Hilton, B.A., D.Phil., is a Lecturer in History in the University of Birmingham. He has published *The Economic Development of some Leicestershire Estates in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries*, *The Social Structure of Rural Warwickshire in the Middle Ages*, and a number of articles on agrarian history.

T. D. Davidson, F.S.A.(Scot.), is a research physicist. He has published *Rowan*

Tree and Red Thread (a study in Scottish witchcraft), and many papers on folk-lore.

Eric Kerridge, B.A., Ph.D., holds a Leverhulme Research Fellowship in the University of Liverpool. He has edited the Survey of the Earl of Pembroke's manors (1631-2) and published a number of articles on economic and agricultural history.

List of Books and Articles on Agrarian History issued since September 1953¹

Compiled by JOAN THIRSK

(a) BIBLIOGRAPHIES

ISLE OF ELY. COUNTY LIBRARY. *Books on the Fenland*. 2nd ed.

LIBRARY ASSN. COUNTY LIBRARIES SECTION. *Reader's Guide to Books on Rural Life*.

(b) ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS

BARKER, ERIC E. (ed.). *Talbot Deeds, 1200-1682*. Lancs. & Cheshire Rec. Soc., vol. CIII for the year 1948. 1953.

DAVIS, R. H. C. (ed.). *The Kalendar of Abbot Samson of Bury St Edmunds and Related Documents*. Camden Soc., 3rd Ser., vol. LXXXIV.

DOUCH, H. L. *Household Accounts at Lanherne (for the year 1466-7)*. Jour. of the Royal Institution of Cornwall, N.S. vol. II. 1953.

EVANS, ELWYN (ed.). *The Tithe Schedule for the Parish of Garn Dolbenmaen*. Trans. Caernarvonshire Hist. Soc., vol. XIII. 1952.

KING, P. I. (ed.). *The Book of William Morton, Almoner of Peterborough Monastery, 1448-67*. Northants. Rec. Soc. Publ., vol XVI for the year 1952-3.

KIRK, G. E. *Some Documents of Barnoldswick Manor Court of Probate*. Miscellanea, vol. VI, Yorks. Arch. Soc. Rec. Ser., vol CXVIII for the year 1951. 1953.

LEWIS, E. A. and DAVIES, J. CONWAY. *Records of the Court of Augmentations relating to South Wales and Monmouthshire*. Univ. of Wales, Board of Celtic Studies, History and Law Ser., vol. XIII, Univ. of Wales Press.

LEWIS, RICE. *A Breviat of Glamorgan, 1596-1600. Bute MSS. Box 99D National Library of Wales (transcribed with notes)*.

South Wales and Mon. Rec. Soc. Publ., no. 3.

MANNING, F. J. (ed.). *The Williamson Letters, 1748-65*. Beds. Hist. Rec. Soc. Publ., vol. XXXIV.

OAKLEY, R. H. *Atlow Court Rolls, 19 Edw. III-4 Ric. II*. Jour. of the Derby. Arch. and Nat. Hist. Soc., vol. LXXIII. 1953.

REES, WILLIAM (ed.). *A Survey of the Duchy of Lancaster Lordships in Wales, 1609-13*. Public Record Office, Duchy of Lancaster, Misc. Books nos. 120-3. Univ. of Wales, Board of Celtic Studies, History and Law Ser., vol. XII, Univ. of Wales Press. 1953.

RODERICK, A. J. and REES, WILLIAM. *The Ministers' Accounts for the Lordships of Abergavenny, Grosmont, and White Castle for the year A.D. 1256-7*. Public Record Office, Ministers' Accounts Bundle 1094, no. 11 (transcribed with translation), part ii. *The Lordships of Grosmont and White Castle*. South Wales and Mon. Rec. Soc. Publ., no. 3.

TOMS, ELSIE (ed.). *Chertsey Abbey Court Rolls Abstract, being a Calendar of Lansdowne MS. no. 434 in the British Museum, part ii*. Surrey Rec. Soc., vol. XLVIII.

WALKER, MARGARET S. (ed.). *Feet of Fines for the County of Lincoln for the Reign of King John, 1199-1216*. Pipe Roll Soc. Publ., vol. LXVII (N.S. XXIX).

¹ The date of publication is 1954 unless otherwise stated. The compiler wishes to thank Mr G. E. Fussell, Mr George Green, and Miss M. M. Raymer for help with this bibliography.

(c) BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS

- ADDISON, WILLIAM. *English Fairs and Markets*. Batsford. 1953.
- AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE. SECTION ON CHEMISTRY AND SECTION ON AGRICULTURE. *Liebig and after Liebig: a Century of Progress in Agricultural Chemistry* (a symposium of papers presented at a meeting at Philadelphia, 1940), ed. F. R. Moulton. Bailey Bros. & Swinfen, London. 1953.
- BAKER, FRANK. *The Story of Cleethorpes and the Contribution of Methodism Through Two Hundred Years*. Trinity Methodist Church, Cleethorpes. 1953.
- BARTON, CHARLES ALFRED. *Historical Notes and Records of the Parish of Terling, Essex*. Barton, Terling, Essex.
- BEDDOWS, A. R. *The Ryegrasses in British Agriculture. A Survey*. Bulletin Ser., H, no. 17, Univ. Coll. of Wales.
- BERESFORD, MAURICE. *The Lost Villages of England*. Lutterworth Press.
- BLOOM, ALAN H. *The Fens*. Hale. 1953.
- BOSTON, ERIC J. (ed.). *Jersey Cattle*. Faber.
- BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE. OXFORD LOCAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. *The Oxford Region: a Scientific and Historical Survey*, ed. A. F. Martin and R. W. Steel. O.U.P.
- CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY. SCHOOL OF AGRICULTURE. FARM ECONOMICS BRANCH. *A Record of Agricultural Policy, 1947-52*, by Edith Whetham. Occ. Papers Ser., no. 1. 1953.
- COLLIER, ADAM. *The Crofting Problem*. C.U.P. 1953.
- COLLINS, HERBERT C. *Lancashire Plain and Seaboard*. Dent. 1953.
- COOK, OLIVE and SMITH, EDWIN. *English Cottages and Farmhouses*. Thames and Hudson.
- COYSH, ARTHUR W., and others. *The Mendips*. Hale.
- DARBY, H. C., and TERRETT, I. B. *The Domesday Geography of Midland England*. C.U.P.
- DAY, JAMES WENTWORTH. *A History of the Fens*. Harrap.
- DONE, WILLIAM E. P. *Looking Back in Sussex: the Story of the Manhood and West Wittering down to Domesday*. Faber. 1953.
- FOX, SIR CYRIL, and RAGLAN, LORD. *Monmouthshire Houses: a Study of Building Techniques and Smaller House-plans in the Fifteenth to Seventeenth Centuries. Part 2: Sub-medieval Houses, c. 1550-1610*. National Museum of Wales, Welsh Folk Museum, Cardiff. 1953.
- FROST, ARTHUR HARRY. *Kelvedon Through Two Centuries, 1700-1900*. W.E.A. Kelvedon, Essex.
- FUSSELL, G. E. and K. R. *The English Countrywoman: a Farmhouse Social History, A.D. 1500-1900*. Melrose. 1953.
- GARDNER, H. W., and GARNER, H. V. *The Use of Lime in British Agriculture*. Spon. 1953.
- GELLING, MARGARET. *The Place-Names of Oxfordshire*. English Place-Name Society, vol. XXIII. 1953, and vol. XXIV.
- GOODALL, ARMITAGE. *Spenlandia: Notes on the History of Spen Valley to the End of the Eighteenth Century*. Stanley Press, Dewsbury. 1953.
- GRAY, HAROLD ST GEORGE, and BULLEID, ARTHUR. *The Meare Lake Village: a Full Description of the Excavations and the Relics from the Eastern Half of the West Village, 1910-33*. Vol. 2. Privately printed, Taunton Castle, Taunton, Somerset.
- HALLAM, HERBERT. *The New Lands of Elloe: a Study of Early Reclamation in Lincolnshire*. Univ. Coll. of Leicester, Dept. of English Local History, Occ. Paper No. 6.
- HARTLEY, MARIE, and INGILBY, JOAN. *Yorkshire Village* (Askrigg in Wensleydale). Dent. 1953.
- HAWKINS, DESMOND. *Sedgemoor and Avalon: a Portrait of Lowland Somerset*. Hale.
- Herefordshire, its Natural History, Archaeology, and History. Chapters written to celebrate the Centenary of the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club, founded in 1851*. British Publishing Co., Gloucester.
- HOSKINS, WILLIAM G. *Devon* (New Survey of England Series). Collins.

- KEITH, JAMES. *Fifty Years of Farming*. Faber.
- KIRKBY, ARTHUR E. *Humberstone: the Story of a Village*. Lincolnshire Chronicle, Waterside North, Lincoln. 1953.
- LECONFIELD, Lord. *Petworth Manor in the Seventeenth Century*. O.U.P.
- MALENBAUM, WILFRED. *The World Wheat Economy, 1885-1934*. Harvard U.P., Cambridge, U.S.A. 1953.
- MARTIN, ERNEST W. *The Secret People: English Village Life after 1750*. Phoenix House.
- ORWIN, C. S. and C. S. *The Open Fields*. 2nd ed. Clarendon Press.
- PEVSNER, NIKOLAUS. *Essex. Buildings of England Ser., no. 11*. Pelican Books.
- PIGGOTT, STUART. *The Neolithic Cultures of the British Isles: a Study of the Stone-using Agricultural Communities of Britain in the Second Millennium B.C.* C.U.P.
- PLUCKNETT, T. F. T. *The Medieval Bailiff*. Athlone Press.
- POSTAN, M. M. *The Famulus. The Estate Labourer in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries*. Ec. Hist. Rev. Suppl. no. 2.
- PUGH, RALPH B. *How to Write a Parish History*. Allen & Unwin.
- ROBINS, FREDERICK W. *The Smith: the Traditions and Lore of an Ancient Craft*. Rider. 1953.
- SHARP, THOMAS. *Northumberland*. Faber.
- SHEPHARD, MICHAEL. *Happy Valley*. Museum Press.
- SINCLAIR, COLIN. *The Thatched Cottages of the Old Highlands*. Oliver & Boyd. 1953.
- STORCK, JOHN and TEAGUE, WALTER D. *Flour for Man's Bread: a History of Milling*. Univ. of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, U.S.A. 1952.
- TAYLOR, GLADYS. *Old London Gardens*. Batsford. 1953.
- TROW-SMITH, ROBERT. *Society and the Land*. Cresset Press. 1953.
- TURNER, T. W. *Memoirs of a Gamekeeper*. Bles.
- Victoria History of the County of Leicester*. Vol. 2. ed. W. G. Hoskins, assisted by R. A. McKinley. O.U.P. for Univ. of London Inst. of Hist. Research.
- Victoria History of the County of Wiltshire*. Vol. 7. ed. R. B. Pugh, assisted by Elizabeth Crittall. O.U.P. for Univ. of London Inst. of Hist. Research. 1953.
- WAKE, JOAN. *The Brudenells of Deene*. Cassell. 1953.
- WARD, W. R. *The English Land Tax in the Eighteenth Century*. O.U.P. 1953.
- WORKERS' EDUCATION ASSOCIATION. KNEBWORTH BRANCH. *Knebworth: the Story of Our Village*. Brendon, Knebworth, Herts. 1953.
- WORKERS' EDUCATION ASSOCIATION, MANNINGTREE BRANCH. *Our Story: the History of Three Parishes, Lawford, Manningtree, Mistley*. Manningtree (Essex) Branch, W.E.A.
- WHITEHEAD, G. K. *Ancient White Cattle of Britain and their Descendants*. Faber. 1953.

(d) ARTICLES

- ANDREWS, J. H. *The Port of Chichester and the Grain Trade, 1650-1750*. Sussex Arch. Coll., vol. xcii.
- ANON. *Village Scrap Books*. Northants Past and Present, vol. II.
- APPLEBAUM, S. *The Distribution of the Romano-British Population in the Basingstoke Area*. Papers and Proc. of the Hants Field Club and Arch. Soc., vol. xviii, 1953.
- ARTHUR, J. R. B. *Prehistoric Wheats in Sussex*. Sussex Arch. Coll., vol. xcii.
- AULT, WARREN O. *Village By-Laws by Common Consent. (Medieval Representation in Theory and Practice)*. Speculum, vol. xxix, no. 2, part 2.
- BAGENAL, N. B. *History and Development of the Cultivated Fruits*. Assoc. of Agric. Rev., parts I-III.
- BARKER, B. T. P., and others. *I remember. A Miscellany of Recollections by Some of the Older Generation*. Agriculture, vol. LXI, no. 6.
- BARLEY, M. W. *Cast of Plough Monday Play at Donington, Lincolnshire, c. 1563-5. Notes and Observations: Review of English Studies*, n.s., vol. v, no. 18.

- BARLEY, M. W. *Plough Plays in the East Midlands*. Jour. of the Engl. Folk Dance and Song Soc., vol. VII. 1953.
- BARLEY, M. W., and ROSSELL, P. E. *Notes on the Agrarian History of Owersby and Burghle-Marsh (concluded)*. Lincolnshire Historian, vol. XII. 1953.
- BAUER, HARRY C. *Annals of Agriculture or Arthur Young, Completer of Sets*. Bulletin of Bibliography, Jan.-Apr., 1953.
- BERESFORD, MAURICE W. *The Poll Tax and Census of Sheep, 1549 (cont.)*. Agric. Hist. Rev., vol. II.
- BERESFORD, MAURICE W. *The Lost Villages of Yorkshire, Pt IV*. Yorks. Arch. Jour., vol. XXXVIII.
- BERESFORD, TRISTRAM. *Agriculture and the Man in the Street*. Agriculture, vol. LXI, no. 6.
- BRIDGE, JOHN W. *Kent Hop-tokens*. Arch. Cantiana, vol. LXVI, 1953.
- BRISCOE, GRACE. *A Windmill Hill Site at Hurst Fen, Mildenhall*. Proc. of Cambridge Antiq. Soc., vol. XLVII.
- BRUNSKILL, R. W. *The Development of the Small House in the Eden Valley from 1650 to 1840*. Trans. Cumb. and Westm. Antiq. and Arch. Soc., N.S. vol. LIII.
- CHAPMAN, VERA. *Open Fields in West Cheshire*. Trans. Hist. Soc. of Lancs. and Cheshire, vol. CIV for 1952. 1953.
- CHURLEY, P. A. *The Yorkshire Crop Returns of 1801*. Yorks. Bull. of Econ. and Social Research, vol. V. 1953.
- CLARK, GRAHAME. *The Economic Approach to Prehistory*. Proc. of Brit. Acad. for 1953.
- COLVIN, H. M. *A Medieval Drawing of a Plough*. Antiquity, no. 107. 1953.
- CORNWALL, JULIAN. *Farming in Sussex, 1540-1640*. Sussex Arch. Coll., vol. XCII.
- COUPAR, J. ROBERTSON. *Farming in the News*. Agriculture, vol. LXI, no. 6.
- CRAWFORD, O. G. S. *Celtic Fields on the Long Mynd*. Antiquity, no. 111.
- DALLING, SIR THOMAS. *Progress in Animal Health and Practice*. Agriculture, vol. LXI, no. 6.
- DARBY, H. C. *Some Early Ideas on the Agricultural Regions of England*. Agric. Hist. Rev., vol. II.
- DEWAR, H. S. L. *An Iron Age Farmstead at Podimore*. Somerset. Arch. and Nat. Hist. Soc. Proc., vol. XCVII for 1952. 1953.
- DU BOULAY, F. R. H. *The Pagham Estates of the Archbishop of Canterbury during the Fifteenth Century*. History, vol. XXXVIII. 1953.
- DUKES, G. R. *Social Life in North Worcestershire during the Eighteenth Century*. Trans. Worcs. Arch. Soc., N.S., vol. XXX.
- EAST, F. W. *The Heighington Terrier, Part 2*. Lincs. Archit. and Arch. Soc. Rep. and Papers, N.S., vol. V. 1953.
- ENRIGHT, B. J. *Rawlinson's Proposed History of Oxfordshire*. Oxoniensia, vol. XVI for 1951. 1953.
- EVANS, F. *A Remnant of the Primeval Forest*. Antiquity, no. 107. 1953.
- FARRAR, R. A. H. *Archaeological Fieldwork in Dorset in 1952*. Proc. of Dorset Nat. Hist. and Arch. Soc., vol. LXXIV for 1952. 1953.
- FINBERG, H. P. R. *An Early Reference to the Welsh Cattle Trade*. Agric. Hist. Rev., vol. II.
- FISHER, F. N. *Notes on the Manorial History of Horsley*. Jour. of Derby. Arch. and Nat. Hist. Soc., vol. LXXIII. 1953.
- FORDHAM, P. *The Acre-books of Algarkirk cum Fosdike*. Lincolnshire Historian, vol. II.
- FRANKLIN, T. BEDFORD. *Domesday- I, II, and III*. Amateur Historian, vol. I, nos. 9-11. 1953-4.
- FUSSELL, G. E. *The Elizabethan Farmer*. History Today. Nov. 1953.
- FUSSELL, G. E. *Poor Times and Good Farming (Bedfordshire)*. Beds. Mag., vol. IV, no. 28.
- FUSSELL, G. E. *The Reclamation of the Wolds. An Achievement of the Gentry*. Jour. Land Agents' Soc. April, 1954.
- FUSSELL, G. E. *A Suffolk Surgeon's Farming in the 1780's*. Ibid. Sept., 1954.
- FUSSELL, G. E. *A Water Cure for Hill Grazing*. Ibid. June, 1954.
- GELLING, MARGARET. *Pre-conquest Local History: Evidence from Anglo-Saxon Charters*. Amateur Historian, vol. I, no. 8. 1953.

- GILES, PHYLLIS M. *The Enclosure of Common Lands in Stockport*. Trans. Lancs. and Cheshire Antiq. Soc., vol. LXII for 1950-1. 1953.
- GOOCH, E. G. *Farm Labour since 1894*. Agriculture, vol. LXI, no. 6.
- GUTTERY, D. R. *Stourbridge Market in Tudor Times*. Trans. Worcs. Arch. Soc., N.S. vol. XXX.
- HABAKKUK, H. J. *English Population in the Eighteenth Century*. Econ. Hist. Rev., 2nd Ser., vol. VI. 1953.
- HALCROW, ELIZABETH M. *The Town Moor of Newcastle upon Tyne*. Arch. Aeliana, 4th Ser., vol. XXXI. 1953.
- HALLAM, HERBERT. *Goll Grange, a Grange of Spalding Priory*. Lincs. Archit. and Arch. Soc. Rep. and Papers, N.S., vol. V. 1953.
- HARVEY, NIGEL. *Sir James Caird and the Landed Interest*. Agriculture, vol. LX, no. 12.
- HEWISON, W. S. *Holm Farm Diary, 1849-68*. Orkney Miscellany, vol. II.
- HEYMER, EDWARD. *Village History: a Photographic Record*. Amateur Historian, vol. II, no. 2.
- HIGGS-COULTHARD, ALFRED J. *Windmills in Somerset. (4) Distribution and Design*. Somerset and Dorset N. and Q., vol. XXIV, part CCLV. 1953.
- HILL, MARY C. *The Wealdmoors, 1560-1660*. Trans. Shropshire Arch. Soc., vol. LIV for the years 1951-3. 1953.
- HILTON, R. H. *Gloucester Abbey Leases of the Late Thirteenth Century*. Univ. of Birmingham Hist. Jour., vol. IV. 1953.
- HODGSON, K. S., and BOUCH, C. M. L., and BULMAN, C. G. *Lamonby Farm: a Clay House at Burgh-by-Sands*. Trans. Cumb. and Westm. Antiq. and Arch. Soc., N.S., vol. LIII.
- HOMANS, G. C. *The Rural Sociology of Medieval England*. Past and Present, no. 4. 1953.
- HOPKINS, D. P. *The Fertilizer Industry*. Assoc. of Agric. Rev. April, 1954.
- HOSKINS, W. G. *The Rebuilding of Rural England*. Past and Present, no. 4. 1953.
- HOSKINS, W. G. *Regional Farming in England*. Agric. Hist. Rev., vol. II.
- HOYT, R. S. *The Terrae Occupatae of Cornwall and the Exon Domesday*. Traditio, vol. IX. 1953.
- HUGHES, J. D. *The Drainage Disputes in the Isle of Axholme*. Lincolnshire Historian, vol. II.
- JEFFERS, R. H. *The Horticultural Trade, 1804-54*. Jour. of Royal Hort. Soc., vol. LXXIX, part II.
- JELlicoe, G. A. *Garden Design in England, 1804-54*. Ibid., part IO.
- JONES, J. MORGAN. *Welsh Agriculture in Transition*. Agriculture, vol. LXI, no. 6.
- KEITH, ALEXANDER, and others. *The Cattle of Britain*. Ibid., nos. 1-7.
- KENNEDY, P. A. *A Gentleman's Home in the Reign of Henry VII*. Northants Past and Present, vol. II.
- KENYON, G. H. *Livestock in Icklesham, 1798, and Comparative Livestock Figures for Sussex and Essex, 1798 and 1801*. Sussex N. and Q., vol. XIV, nos. 3 and 4.
- KENYON, KATHLEEN M. *Excavations at Sutton Walls, Herefordshire, 1948-51*. Arch. Jour., vol. CX for 1953.
- KERRIDGE, ERIC. *The Sheepfold in Wiltshire and the Floating of the Water Meadows*. Econ. Hist. Rev., 2nd Ser., vol. VI.
- KERRIDGE, ERIC. *The Floating of the Wiltshire Water Meadows*. Wilts. Arch. and Nat. Hist. Mag., vol. LV, no. CXCIX. 1953.
- KNEISEL, ERNST. *The Evolution of the English Cornmarket*. Research Notes. Jour. of Econ. Hist., vol. XIV.
- LAWRENCE, ELWOOD P. George, *Chamberlain and the Land Tax*. Amer. Jour. of Econ. and Sociology.
- LEA, JOHN. *Bedfordshire Biographies*. LVII. *A Bicycling Pioneer*. Beds. Mag., vol. IV, no. 28.
- LE HURAY, C. P. *Some Notes on the Open Field System and the Enclosure Movement in Guernsey*. Société Guernesiaise. Rep. and Trans., vol. XV for the year 1952. 1953.
- LENNARD, R. *The Hidation of 'Demesne' in some Domesday Entries*. Econ. Hist. Rev., 2nd Ser., vol. VII.

- LEWIS, T. *The Tribal System in Wales*. Econ. Hist. Rev., 2nd Ser., vol. vi.
- MACKIE, MAITLAND. *Power at the Farmer's Elbow*. Agriculture, vol. LXI, no. 6.
- MARSHALL, J. L. *Fairs, Markets and Shows. Their Origins and History*. Agriculture, vol. LXI, no. 4.
- MEAD, W. R. *Ridge and Furrow in Buckinghamshire*. Geographical Journal, vol. CXX, part 1.
- MERCER, E. *The Houses of the Gentry*. Past and Present, no. 5.
- MERLEN, R. H. A. *Carlo Ruini (1530-98)*. M. and B. Veterinary Review, vol. vi, no. 1.
- MIDDLETON, ELIZABETH. *Essex Records as Material for the Study of the English Language*. Essex Review, vol. LXIII, no. 252.
- MILLER, EDWARD. *Early Remains on Allerhope Burn*. Proc. of Soc. of Antiq. of Newcastle upon Tyne, 5th Ser., vol. 1, no. 6.
- MINCHINTON, WALTER. *Bristol—Metropolis of the West in the Eighteenth Century*. Trans. Royal Hist. Soc., 5th Ser., vol. iv.
- ORWIN, C. S. *Rural Revolution*. Agriculture, vol. LXI, no. 6.
- OWEN, T. J. *The Records of the Parish of Aber*. Trans. Caernarvon. Hist. Soc., vol. xiv. 1953.
- PALCA, L. *An Experiment in the Sampling of Agricultural Returns*. Applied Statistics, vol. II. 1953.
- PELHAM, R. A. *The Agricultural Revolution in Hampshire. with Special Reference to the Acreage Returns of 1801*. Papers and Proc. of Hants Field Club and Arch. Soc., vol. XVIII. 1953.
- PELHAM, R. A. *The 1801 Crop Returns for Staffordshire in their Geographical Setting*. Coll. for Hist. of Staffs., for the years 1950 and 1951. 1954.
- POSTAN, M. M. *The Maps of Domesday. Essay in Bibliography and Criticism*. Econ. Hist. Rev., 2nd Ser., vol. VII.
- PRICHARD, M. F. LLOYD. *The Vicar of Mattishall and his Tithes, 1781-1803*. Agric. Hist., vol. XXVII. 1953.
- RATCLIFFE-DENSHAM, H. B. A., and M. M. *A Celtic Farm on Blackpatch*. Sussex Arch. Coll., vol. XCI. 1953.
- ROBERTS, MARGERY. *Old Cottages: their Building and Decorating*. Amateur Historian, vol. 1, no. 12.
- ROBERTSON, A. B. *The Foundation of the Mark Lane Corn Exchange*. Guildhall Miscellany, vol. II. 1953.
- ST ALDWYN, Earl. *Rural Landownership—Yesterday and Today*. Agriculture, vol. LXI, no. 6.
- SALT, A. E. W. *Weobley: a Herefordshire Village in History*. History Today, vol. iv, no. 6.
- SALZMAN, L. F. *The Property of the Earl of Arundel, 1397*. Sussex Arch. Coll., vol. XCI. 1953.
- SAYCE, R. U. *Milking and Dairying. Ethnological Notes about some Everyday Things*. Trans. Powys-land Club, vol. LII for the year 1952. 1953.
- SCOTT, J. F. *The Parish of Morvern*. Scottish Geographical Mag., vol. LXX.
- SECRETT, F. A. *Horticulture in the Half-Century*. Agriculture, vol. LXI, no. 6.
- SIMONDS, A. *The History of the Royal Horticultural Society, 1804-54*. Jour. Royal Hortic. Soc., vol. LXXIX, part 10.
- SINGLETON, WILLIAM A. *Traditional House-types in Rural Lancashire and Cheshire*. Trans. Hist. Soc. of Lancs. and Cheshire, vol. CIV for the year 1952. 1953.
- SMITH, W. J. *Three Salisbury Mansions in 1601*. Bulletin of Board of Celtic Studies, vol. xv, part 4.
- STEER, F. W. *The Ashburnham Estate Archives*. Soc. of Local Archivists Bull., no. 14.
- STEVEN, H. M. *The History of Forestry in Scotland*. Assoc. of Agric. Rev., July, 1954.
- TAVENER, L. E. *Whither Sheep? A Review of the Decline in Sheep Farming in Dorset*. Som. and Dorset N. and Q., vol. XXVI, part 255. 1953.
- TAWNEY, R. H. *The Rise of the Gentry: a Postscript*. Econ. Hist. Rev., 2nd Ser., vol. VII.
- THOMAS, EDGAR. *On the History of the Society*. Jour. of the Proc. of Agric. Econ. Soc., vol. x, no. 4.
- TUPLING, G. H. *Terriers and Tithe and*

- Enclosure Awards*. Amateur Historian, vol. I, no. 12.
- VIDLER, L. A. *Rye Foreign*. Sussex Arch. Coll., vol. XCII.
- WAINWRIGHT, F. T. *Souterrains in Scotland*. Antiquity, no. 108. 1953.
- WALTON, JAMES. *Hogback Tombstones and the Anglo-Danish House*. Antiquity, no. 110.
- WARREN, J. P. *Partage des Communes de la Forêt*. Société Guernesiaise Rep. and Trans., vol. xv for the year 1952. 1953.
- WATSON, SIR JAMES A. SCOTT. *Sixty Years of Science*. Agriculture, vol. LXI, no. 6.
- WATSON, STEPHEN J. *Agricultural Research in Great Britain*. Agriculture, vol. LXI, no. 6.
- WILLIAMSON, J. Q. *The History of Trees in Great Britain*. Assoc. of Agric. Rev., July, 1954.
- YOUNGS, JOYCE A. *The Terms of the Disposal of the Devon Monastic Lands, 1536-58*. Eng. Hist. Rev., vol. LXIX, no. 270.

ENGLAND AND THE SALT TRADE IN THE LATER MIDDLE AGES

by A. R. Bridbury

The importance of the salt trade in the economic life of Europe in the Middle Ages is comparable with the importance of the coal trade today. Salt was used then for a variety of purposes—from the curing of food to the destruction of fleas. In the mid-fourteenth century there was a commercial revolution when north Europe, instead of drawing its salt from indigenous sources, began to depend on supplies from France and Portugal. As well as a full chronicle of these events, this book gives a detailed account of the trade in salt imported into England and its passage from the ports to the consumer.

21s. net

THE OPEN FIELDS by C. S. and C. S. Orwin

A new edition 30s. net

ENGLISH MONASTERIES AND THEIR PATRONS
IN THE XIIIth CENTURY by Susan M. Wood

21s. net

Ready 7 April

WEST HIGHLAND SURVEY

An Essay in Human Ecology

Edited by F. Fraser Darling

30s. net

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

Book Reviews

H. C. DARBY and I. B. TERRETT (eds.), *The Domesday Geography of Midland England*. Cambridge University Press, 1954. xvi + 482 pp. 55s.

The second volume of *The Domesday Geography of England* covers a group of nine midland counties (Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Worcestershire, Warwickshire, Leicestershire, Rutland, and Northamptonshire), which in 1086 were already very different from each other in physical features, social structure, and historical development. The uniformity of procedure of the Domesday commissioners tended to disguise regional peculiarities, but the comparative methods used by Professor Darby and his team of geographers bring out these contrasts as far as it is possible. Since this work must be primarily one of reference, the editor has rightly caused the author of each county chapter to repeat the analysis of the data under the various headings dictated by the form of the return: hidage assessment, plough-teams, population, woodland, meadow, and so on.

The most interesting general conclusions, as the editor shows in his final chapter, concern the way in which population and wealth are distributed in the region. The south-eastern portion stands out as the most populous and productive (judged mainly by the evidence of plough-team density). In particular the Vale of Evesham and the Avon valley below Warwick appear even in 1086 to have been exceptionally prosperous areas. But it is interesting to note too that while there is often a correlation between high population and high plough-team density, this is not invariable. East and central Herefordshire, with a lower population density than central Leicestershire, appear to have had a higher plough-team density. This should warn us against assuming that a high population density in an area indicates general prosperity. In such areas there might be many peasant families without plough-teams or with only very small shares in teams.

A consideration of this problem suggests that more might have been said, under the heading 'Prosperity and Population', about economic conditions in the different counties. We cannot know from Domesday Book what was the average equipment, in plough-teams, of the different classes of peasants. But we can calculate the ratio, on a village or manor basis, between peasants and plough-teams, disregarding classes. Since we do know what were the numbers in each village of sokemen, villeins, and bordars, it could be seen how the ratio of peasants to ploughs varied according to variations in village social structure. Another factor which should be taken into account when considering the relation between population and plough-team density is the proportion between the number of demesne and peasant plough-teams. Where there was a higher than average plough-team density and a normal or lower than average population density, this might be explained by the existence of extensive, well-equipped demesnes.

These points raise again the question of the boundary between historical geography and social and economic history. This is probably a question that will never be solved, except temporarily, and for special purposes. We must, however, continue to discuss it. In the work under review, the scope of the geographer seems to have been defined too widely in some respects and not widely enough in others. The discussion of taxation assessments, that is, of 'hidage', is a traditional and highly respectable element in Domesday studies, much pursued by legal and constitutional historians. In view of the admitted artificiality of Domesday hidage, at any rate in relation to agrarian reality, it seems that elaborations on this theme could be considerably shortened in a geographical survey. Similarly, the discussion of 'ploughlands' as distinct from 'plough-teams' could well be less elaborate than, for instance, in the Leicestershire chapter, for the editor himself

tells us that "we cannot use (these figures) in any attempt at reconstructing the economic geography of the Domesday Midlands." Are not the problems of the social distribution of plough-team wealth, as posed above, more relevant to the task of the geographer than the minutiae of the incidence of taxation?

Any reader of this book who has an interest in Domesday problems is bound to have his own views as to what could have been more fully treated. Perhaps the waste villages of Staffordshire could have been analysed with Mr T. A. M. Bishop's treatment of the Yorkshire waste villages in mind. Perhaps the important discussion of the Droitwich salt industry and its ramifications would have benefited from attention to Mr Houghton's work on the midland salt ways. One has the impression that the contributors have had to conform to rather a rigid framework, and that this has prevented them from deviating along paths that might have been irrelevant, but might also have been fruitful.

However, whatever has been left out, there is a good deal in. The production of the book is magnificent. The 159 maps are finely done. There are useful lists and tables summarizing the Domesday data at the end of the book. And each chapter provides very important lists of village entries illustrating various points. To find these for oneself in the mass of Domesday data is no simple task. These things will make the book an indispensable handbook, not only for the Domesday scholar, but for all English local and regional historians.

R. H. HILTON

W. G. HOSKINS and R. A. MCKINLEY (eds.),
The Victoria History of the County of Leicester, Vol. II. Geoffrey Cumberlege, O.U.P.
270 pp. 63s.

Leicestershire is one of the first beneficiaries from the *V. C. H.*'s new emphasis on agrarian history, and in all respects the volume is of more than local interest. The quality of the 125 pages here devoted to agrarian history will be found to rest on three other gifts of Fortune: the first, the arrival of a stranger from Devonshire who has repaid his adopted

county manifold in model papers, and now with the general editorship of this volume. The second happy chance is a long tradition of writing of high quality, from Burton's *Description* (1622), through Nichols's *History* (1795-1815) to the papers which for a century the *Transactions* of the Archaeological Society have housed; rarely can scholars have had the satisfaction of seeing their small and various contributions brought to a synthesis so soon. County volumes of this quality do not grow on trees, and there are counties—alas—where even the appointment of Dr Hoskins would not produce a *V. C. H.* in a decade: where few have sown, reaping is a slow business. The third piece of good fortune is that in the authors of the two agrarian sections the *V. C. H.* was able to profit by skills already sharpened in other service. Dr Hilton had already studied many aspects of local medieval agriculture, and from this firm ground could the more easily pass to colonizing some of the untilled wastes which still abound. Dr Joan Thirsk had not previously written specifically of this county, but her intimacy with seventeenth-century sources put her in a unique position for bringing together the course of agrarian change between 1540 and 1760 into a continuous, reasoned, and balanced narrative. For the first time one can see these two centuries as a whole: too often the textbooks have had to slide hastily—for want of local monographs—from the agrarian troubles of 1607 to the beginning of parliamentary enclosure. Historians in other counties will be grateful.

The two authors' achievements both in original work and synthesis enable them to be frank about what still remains. To take one example, Dr Thirsk's figures of the 2,200 acres added to an arable acreage of 8,000 in forty parishes between 1793 and 1801 will whet appetites for a good local, quantitative, study of a ploughing-up campaign which must surely have left its mark in estate records if it were on this scale. It is also clear—reading between the lines—that local enclosure awards, tithe awards, and the working papers of the enclosure commissions are still unexhausted.

Leicestershire's agrarian history derives much of its interest from the terrain. Set, as one fifteenth-century writer put it, *in umbilico regni*, it has displayed variety and pliability. The existence of Charnwood and Leicester Forests kept it from a tame plough-going uniformity in the earlier Middle Ages, while its variety of uses made it the storm centre of agrarian politics in 1517, 1548, and 1607. It produced corn or grass with almost equal ease: "a great delight and profit either way," as Burton put it; a fickle jade who followed either of two masters at the jingle of a coin. The hunger for wool (1450-1550) extended its pastures, while the hunger for cattle in the next century preserved them even against renewed competition from a corn-hunger deriving from a rising and an urbanizing population. Thus here, even in the late seventeenth century when the lords were all but converted to the idea of general enclosure, the war against the progress of the hedged field flared up again in the Moore-Lee pamphlets. The fickle balance between corn and grass shows not only in the immunity of some open fields until parliamentary enclosure (detailed in App. 1), but also in the long-drawn-out retreat of the open fields (detailed parish by parish in App. II). A fine, full-page plate (p. 159) shows the village of Kilby from the air: the houses and crofts of husbandmen who experienced the fortunes sketched in Dr Hilton's narrative; the plough-marks of their furlongs and strips in the fields beyond; and, set over their corrugations, the diverse shape of hedges created piecemeal by the enclosures from 1609 to 1771.

Other counties may regard this volume properly as a model. With an eye on the future, a few minor comments may be raised unquerulously. Dr Thirsk sees the geographical distribution of "early" and "late" enclosure as an "untidy pattern." She passes to students of soil and climate the task of detecting a neater logic than the accidents of ownership. Geographical determinism may be a good tool by which to separate chalk from cheese in Wiltshire, but it seems doubtful whether a county of more homogeneity such as Leices-

tershire would respond to a more particular examination. And as to climate, did not the Leicester rain fall equally on the just and the unjust landlord? the only difference, the song tells us, was that the unjust had the just's umbrella. Again, there are dangers that a reader will take too literally some of the figures and percentages in that part of Dr Thirsk's study which rests on Dr Hoskins's work in inventories and the 1524 tax-lists. These are samples, as the original examination made plain. But it is a far step from a sample to (p. 212) a statement that in 1588 peas took 45.9 per cent of the sown area.

It is also a pity that the unified editorship did not permit a brief note in the Religious Houses section (pp. 1-54) indicating to whom the principal possessions passed at the Dissolution, a matter highly relevant to agrarian history. Some overall figures (p. 210) suggest that Mr McKinley has in fact extracted the data for which we must now wait until the distant village-history volumes. Readers of this volume who have not possession of Vol. I (1907) are warned that a good atlas will be necessary to follow the earlier part of Dr Hilton's argument, but his Domesday pages may now be aligned with the maps in Mr Holly's chapter of the *Domesday Geography*, Vol. II (1954).

Two final matters, on which one would like to examine the authors viva voce, would make good examination questions anywhere. Dr Hilton speaks of medieval England as "under-populated" without a gloss on this relative term; and Dr Thirsk sums up the latter-day agrarian history of the county thus: "Since 1860 it has reproduced in brighter tones the picture of English agriculture as a whole." Does local variation from a national story end in 1860?

M. W. BERESFORD

OLIVE COOK and EDWIN SMITH, *English Cottages and Farmhouses*. Thames & Hudson, 1954. 53 pp. of text and 273 photographs. 42s.

One picks up a new book on cottages and farmhouses with some misgiving, especially

when it is lavishly illustrated, but for once the serious reader is not disappointed. Edwin Smith's photographs are superb and are brilliantly reproduced in photogravure, showing among other things the texture of the building materials in a way that makes them as valuable as the text. There is no cheating over the subject: no manor houses and country houses creep in to enhance the pictorial quality of the book. We are given genuine farmhouses, barns and sheds, granaries and cow-stalls—even a remarkable pig-sty from Coln St Aldwyn with a Roman colonnade taken from the remains of a nearby Roman villa—and a number of farmhouse interiors. There are also cottages of all dates and types, again with some delightful interiors. The photographs are not only beautiful but are valuable as records of English rural habitations, and English interior arrangements, in the mid-twentieth century. One can imagine some of these interiors, especially, being seized upon a hundred years hence to illustrate the domestic history of our time.

Miss Olive Cook contributes a careful introduction to the book, with particular emphasis on the building materials used in this vernacular architecture, and some scattered remarks on structure and plan. She rightly draws attention (p. 12) to the general wave of rebuilding among all classes but the poorest, beginning about 1570 and lasting until the outbreak of the Civil War. In the four most northerly counties this wave of rebuilding appears to have been delayed until the last generation of the seventeenth century. But she is in error when she attributes this remarkable revolution in English housing to a doubling of the population since 1500: there is not the slightest evidence for this belief. The true causes are much more interesting. They were the high level of money-savings among farmers of all degrees, accumulated as a result of two generations of rising prices and relatively fixed costs; and the growth of a desire for privacy of living which by the latter part of Elizabeth I's reign had percolated down to the yeomen and by the 1630's to all but the labouring class.

It is hardly true to suggest (p. 13) that the "plans of yeomen farmers' houses . . . defy classification." There are indeed many regional variations of plan, and few regions have yet been studied intensively from this standpoint; but we shall eventually be able to define, one feels confident, certain basic plans for these houses in the different regions, and perhaps to some extent for cottages also, though here there is naturally less scope for variety. We shall also discover how these plans evolved in subsequent generations down to the present day. The study of peasant building in England has hardly begun, though Miss Cook would have found the work of James Walton in Yorkshire, of M. W. Barley in the East Midlands, and of Sir Cyril Fox and Lord Raglan in Monmouthshire, very much to her purpose. As it is, she tells us very little about farmhouse plans, and no plans are drawn in the text.

One must be careful, too, to define the cottage type unequivocally. The beautiful example of a medieval "cottage" at Didbrook, Glos. (plate 5) was undoubtedly the house of a peasant-farmer originally, and a substantial peasant at that. Nor is it permissible to call the elaborate timbered fifteenth-century houses at Lavenham and Hildersham (plates 9 and 10) "cottages," as they are called in the introductory notes. This criticism applies to a number of other plates (e.g. nos. 1, 15, 16, 17, 21, 28, 38, and possibly one or two others). These houses may well be cottages today, but in origin they were unquestionably the houses of yeomen and husbandmen, and even perhaps of wealthy clothiers at Lavenham. It is, indeed, doubtful whether a genuine cottage (i.e. the house of a labouring family) survives in this country from a date anterior to about 1660. One does not know of a single certain example of this type, though it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that a few—but only a very few—may yet be discovered by patient fieldwork. The reason for this is simple. The true cottages were built by the labourers' landlords, who were not disposed to spend more money than was absolutely necessary upon their housing. There were plenty of

jerry-builders in medieval England and later (as Mr Salzman has shown in his recent book *Building in England*) and they met the landlords' requirements for economy. Various records tell us that there was a great deal of cottage-building in Elizabethan England, and if all this has disappeared it is because it lasted at the most three or four or five generations and was being largely replaced in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, from which time we find considerable numbers of true cottages standing in our villages.

Miss Cook's notes upon the photographs, these criticisms apart, are excellently done, full of sensibility for the buildings and their varied settings, whether in the Somerset marshes or among the Lakeland fells, or anywhere between; and they are precisely informative about building materials (her strong point) and constructional details. A black and white geological map of England and Wales is provided to guide the reader through unfamiliar territory. This is not entirely easy to read, but one can see that the printing problem was a difficult one. Another map shows the location of all the photographs in the book. One notices with personal regret that a great block of central England, comprising Staffordshire, Warwickshire, and Worcestershire, Leicestershire, Rutland, and Northamptonshire, is not represented by a single photograph, and the large county of Lincolnshire by only one. Yet this region of England has a number of distinct types of farmhouse and cottage building, of which one need only cite the eighteenth-century framework-knitters' cottages with their long windows of tiny panes in the upper floors. But the subject of farmhouses and cottages is a vast one. With all the destruction that has taken place, England is still rich in this kind of agricultural record. The next step is surely a series of regional surveys by this admirable and knowledgeable partnership (assisted by some local advice here and there) getting down to closer detail, while still covering an area that is a unity in itself and is sufficiently large to encourage sales.

If one has been critical of certain aspects of

this book, it is because it makes a real contribution to our understanding of vernacular building in England and is therefore worthy of close attention. Readers of the AGRICULTURAL HISTORY REVIEW should not fail to study it, even if they cannot persuade a friend to make them a present of the book, for it may well stimulate them to do fieldwork in their own regions. Though so much is left to us, from every century since the fifteenth, much perishes every year or is altered beyond recognition as farmers become more opulent, and with this destruction and change some unique detail of farming history may well be lost for ever. If this book stimulates only fifty readers to go and do likewise (though Edwin Smith's photographs are admittedly discouraging by their very excellence) one would be delighted. Half a dozen of us cannot do much in so rich and difficult a field.

W. G. HOSKINS

MAURICE BERESFORD, *The Lost Villages of England*. Lutterworth Press, 1954. 446 pp. 45s.

Until this book appeared, the literature on deserted villages was limited to a few essays on single counties, all too localized in their scope to receive much publicity. Yet the subject offers the historian the golden opportunity of sharing with others his delight in fieldwork and fresh discovery. It is a pleasure, therefore, to welcome a book which is designed to bring the subject to the attention of a wider public. Mr Beresford has perceived the popular appeal of his subject, and has shaped his book to meet the needs of the general reader. He takes nothing for granted: the layout of the open-field village, for example, is explained simply and clearly. Nor does he assume at the outset that the subject will be of absorbing interest to his readers. To draw them on, he employs the devices of the novelist, whetting the appetite in the early chapters, and postponing satisfaction by a non-chronological treatment of his story for some 170 pages. Then, having enticed his readers into the fields to identify old, and perhaps even discover new, sites, he coaxes them

on still further into the libraries and record offices to seek out the documents that will supplement the evidence on the ground. A description of the principal sources of documentary information follows. Lay subsidy rolls, he says, are easily read, and we might have been persuaded had he chosen a less daunting example than the illustration on page 286. Altogether, this is a fascinating book, excellently illustrated, and written in a lively and colourful way. The personal descriptions of visits to deserted sites are particularly successful in conveying to the reader the author's sense of adventure in the field. Yet the student of the subject may justly feel aggrieved that his needs should have been sacrificed to the tastes of the general reader. The non-chronological treatment is exasperating if one wants to return to the book for reference. Even the author must have had doubts about an arrangement which constantly obliged him to warn the reader of matters discussed earlier or postponed till later in the book. And inevitably the book is full of repetition. John Hales's statement in the *Discourse of the Commonweal* that the worst enclosures occurred before the beginning of the reign of Henry VII is printed four times, twice briefly on pages 148 and 241 (where the quotations are inaccurate), and twice in a longer form on pages 120 and 149. The over-generous treatment accorded to certain topics, moreover, involves considerable sacrifice in the detail necessary to make this book a complete survey of present knowledge on deserted villages. Lists of known sites are printed county by county in an appendix. But the lists for Leicestershire, Yorkshire, and Warwickshire, dealt with by Dr Hoskins and Mr Beresford elsewhere, are represented by samples only. This means that the reader has to refer to other books and periodicals for the three lists which are the most complete and reliable of all.

To those who are already familiar with some of the sites of deserted villages, much the most interesting part of Mr Beresford's book is that in which he analyses the causes of their disappearance. The compass of the book,

it should be pointed out, is narrower than the title would suggest. The author has no more than a paragraph about villages swallowed up by the sea or consumed by fire. His main concern is with the villages which disappeared in the fifteenth to sixteenth centuries, and those mainly in the Inner Midlands, whence the loudest complaints of enclosure were heard in the Tudor period. Of the many entangled causes of depopulation, he makes a thoroughly balanced and fair appraisal. Depopulation did not happen overnight. It was usually a long drawn-out process to which it is impossible to assign one single cause. But most cases which Mr Beresford examines in detail had two common factors. The villages were already small, and the freeholders were few. The plagues of the fourteenth century weakened them further, but the immediate and most decisive cause of their decay was the superior profits of wool over corn. This was the hard economic fact, which held true until towards the end of the sixteenth century, and which dictated the policy of those ruthless manorial lords who enclosed their land for sheep. Not every farmer everywhere was lured by the golden fleece to change his husbandry. But in the counties of the Inner Midlands, on the claylands that were equally suited to corn and grass, the temptations were strongest. Here it was that the enclosure movement achieved the greatest destruction of villages.

There remains one further cause of depopulation about which there is little certain evidence, though much speculation. How many villages disappeared as a result of a retreat of settlement from marginal land taken into cultivation during the years of high farming in the thirteenth century? Discussion of this question and also of regional differences in land use is the weakest part of the book. This is not entirely Mr Beresford's fault. There are so few studies of regional farming to equip us with even the rudimentary information about land use and social structure before the eighteenth century that no one is in a position to argue effectively. Yet Mr Beresford is incautious. On what evidence, for example, does he base his state-

ment that in the marginal counties of the west and south (referring apparently to the Worcestershire to Somerset area) "the area under corn was initially small, but it does not seem to have contracted in the period 1450-1550" (p. 247). Lincolnshire is the victim of some broad and unhappy generalizations. Arthur Young's description of "the rich grazing lands . . . the glory of Lincolnshire" referred to the fenlands of Holland, not the convertible claylands of Lindsey and Kesteven. They are inappropriate as an example of land that was adaptable to both corn and grass. They were unfit for anything but pasture until after the drainage operations of the eighteenth century.

The same fenlands, cited on page 245 as an example of convertible land, are swept into a generalization on page 246, to the effect that the fen was so excellent for corn in the sixteenth century that there was no economic incentive to convert it to pasture. It is true that the fenland of Lincolnshire escaped the distress of enclosure, but this was not because the land was first-class arable, but because it was already mostly in grass. The villages avoided depopulation because the sites suitable for habitation in the fen were limited, and the villages though few were large. The parishes also were extensive, and it was not unusual to have as many as six manors in one parish. It would have been difficult to destroy a community of some seventy to a hundred families, in which no one manorial lord held sway, and where also the number of freeholders was high.

It is a mistake to attribute the depopulations at the southern end of the Lincolnshire wolds to the infertility of the soil (p. 202). Over most of the district the soil is a good loam or clay. Moreover, until the Parliamentary enclosures of the nineteenth century, most of the villages had valuable common rights in East, West, and Wildmore Fens. It was evidently attractive country in the early days of settlement, for it was among the most densely settled in all Lincolnshire by the time of Domesday, and it continued so in the sixteenth century. The depopulations which oc-

curred here seem to have been the result of over-population rather than under-population. There were too many villages for the amount of land.

Finally, some minor errors may be mentioned for correction in another edition. Sennington in Gloucestershire (p. 415) is a misnomer for Sevenhampton. Howardshoe wapentake is an old and unfamiliar form for Haverstoe wapentake in Lincolnshire (p. 171). The 583 cases of depopulation heard in the Exchequer are given a covering date of 1518-68 on p. 114, 1517-65 on p. 218, and 1518-65 on p. 115. The reader would like to know where Mr Beresford published the modern Ordnance map of Wotton Underwood, Bucks. (p. 333), and where, or if, all the excavations listed on p. 415 were reported in print.

JOAN THIRSK

C. S. and C. S. ORWIN, *The Open Fields*.

Second edition. Oxford University Press, 1954. xiv + 190 pp. 30s.

In preparing a new edition of this well-known work for press, the authors have made a laudable effort to secure economy of production and thus to keep the price down. One way of doing this would have been to omit Part I, the general discussion of open-field agriculture and its history, which to many critics has always appeared the weakest part of the book, and to leave Part II intact as a monograph on the interesting survival of open fields at Laxton. But this course has not commended itself to Dr and Mrs Orwin. Instead they have chosen to omit the Laxton Terrier, and to retain Part I with a certain amount of revision, taking account—but hardly sufficient account—of research carried out by other scholars since 1938.

A discussion of some of the points arising from the revision will be found elsewhere in this issue. Here it is only necessary to mention that the chapter on the former extent of the open fields is no longer illustrated by an inaccurate map and its text has been considerably modified. Even so, it is ambiguous to say that farming in open fields was practised "in

various parts" of Devon "where the topography permitted" (p. 65), for this obscures the fact that traces of such agriculture are found on steep hillsides and on the tops of downs, as well as on comparatively level sites.

The date of the report cited on p. 169 is surely 1952, not 1852. An article in *Antiquity* is quoted with the wrong date on p. 50 and with the correct one on p. 65. Dr J. D. Chambers is not a professor (pp. v, ix), and Miss Audrey Beecham may be a little surprised to find her name spelt Beauchamp (p. v).

H. P. R. FINBERG

REX WAILES, *The English Windmill*, with sixty-four drawings by Vincent Lines. Routledge and Kegan Paul. 246 pp. + 32 plates. 35s. Life in rural England would have been the duller if there had been no miller to bear the brunt of country humour. To the old question, "What is the most honest thing in the world?" the answer "A miller's shirt, for it clasps a thief by the throat daily" immediately establishes the miller's position in society. Mr Rex Wailes has much to say about millers good and bad. One of his most delightful stories is from the late sixteenth century; it relates how Long Meg of Westminster plagued "the sawcie Miller of Epping." With little provocation she put the miller in a sack and left him hanging in mid-air on the sack lift, "where the poore miller cried out for helpe, and if his wife had not been coming, himselfe had been almost kill'd and the Mill for want of corne set on fire." However much millers deserved their reputation, rustic humour, if humour it can be called, saw to it that they paid dearly for their sins.

Today few windmills (or water-mills for that matter) remain in use. It is only a few years since the landscape of at least the eastern part of England presented a very different sight from that which it presents today. Mr Wailes illustrates this vividly with a passage from Cobbett. "The windmills on the hills in the vicinage are so numerous that I counted, whilst standing in one place, no less than seventeen. They are all painted or washed white, the sails are black; it was a fair morn-

ing, the wind was brisk, and their twirling altogether added greatly to the beauty of the scene . . ." Even in more recent times, at any rate up to the early part of this century, the windmill was a common feature of the landscape, and it is a matter for universal regret that something which has for many centuries been a part of the English scene is in danger of disappearing completely.

Mr Wailes has produced an excellent book which, without indulging in over-much nostalgia, blends his unique knowledge of the mechanism of mills with lucid powers of description. In fact the main strength of the book lies in its very clear exposition of the construction and working of mills. With the aid of Mr Vincent Lines's excellent drawings the reader is able to gain a very clear impression of mills and their operation. The book sets out to provide something both for the expert and the merely interested. It has done this without either becoming too technical or writing down, and the result is very satisfying. Its weakness is perhaps its lack of historical background prior to about 1800. Mr Wailes has relied in the main on the wealth of material, both documentary and spoken, with which millwrights and others have provided him. It would have given a more balanced picture if there had been more historical detail and a little more definite attempt to relate the rise and fall of the windmill to the economic background.

There is one other minor point of criticism, and that is that the publishers might have fitted Mr Lines's excellent drawings more comfortably into the format; spreading in a sprawling fashion, as many of them do, over the edges of the type area, they give a clumsy appearance in a book which is otherwise very pleasingly produced. But these are small points in a book which is likely to remain a standard work of reference.

Mr Wailes makes a right and proper plea for the collection of more material about mills before it is too late. He is anxious, too, that sufficient examples of the various types shall be preserved. It is a pity that other things of utility which are passing from the twentieth-

century scene cannot in like manner find their chroniclers; one might mention the traction engine or the farm horse. But to Mr Wailes the windmill is clearly more than a thing of utility, it is also a thing of beauty. More is the pity that economic circumstances will not permit it to be a joy for ever.

J. W. Y. HIGGS

ADAM COLLIER, *The Crofting Problem*.
Cambridge University Press, 1954. 190 pp.
25s.

Given an area nearly half the land area of Scotland, containing one-twentieth of its inhabitants and one in ten of its arable acres with practically no coal or other workable mineral, and few industries, all sorts of problems are bound to arise. Add to that a romantic history, and the legacy of bitter remembrance of brutal clearances from the glens, and you have the Highland problem, which is seldom discussed without emotion and usually with passion. And although there are only seven constituencies in the Highlands and Islands, politicians help to distort the facts and darken counsel. Adam Collier's book is to be welcomed because, although the Highlands and Islands cast their spell over him, as over other city-bred lads, he made a serious effort to produce a comprehensive study before death cut him off untimely leaving an uncompleted manuscript, which has now been prepared for publication by Professor Cairncross.

The crofter problem is the toughest problem of the Highlands, and more particularly of the Islands. The recent report of the Crofting Commission (Cmd. 9091) declares that the crofting system, as now organized, "is fighting a losing battle against the social and economic forces of the day." Collier set out to explain how the crofting system came about, the efforts to keep it going by statutory and other means, and how it was faring before the last war when he made his survey. Professor Cairncross has edited and annotated Collier's work to take account of more recent changes. Collier found that on "many fundamental points it is difficult to speak with

any pretension to actual knowledge". There is no register of crofters, and we have no reliable means of measuring their output. We have only a general idea of what other sources of income are open to them, or what part these sources play in the standard of living. There are plenty of opinions, assertions, and contradictions, but a lack of reliable data. What there are Collier sifted and analysed objectively and where he had to rely on estimates, he tested them as far as that could be done. He gave enough of the history, geography, and topography of the area to show how the problems of administration and communication condition the social and economic life of the people. His chapter on natural limitations brings out the soil and climatic conditions which handicap cultivation. He makes a careful study of the depopulation of the area and relates it to the general depopulation of rural districts, and he discusses the standard of living of the crofter in comparison with that of the industrial worker. He concludes with a chapter in which he discusses what might be done to stem the rot. This is the weakest chapter of the book, for he was not equipped to evaluate projects of land use and agricultural development. But there he is in line with most advocates of Highland development. The value of his book is that it brings together the facts, as far as they can be ascertained, submits them to analysis, and sets them in relation to the general problems of the area; and it does so without any effort, or distortion, to make a case. It sets a new and much needed standard for the endless discussions of the Highlands and Islands.

J. F. DUNCAN

J. WENTWORTH DAY, *A History of the Fens*.
Harrap, 1954. 272 pp. 15s.

If one accepts Carlyle's definition of history as the biography of great men, and Mr Wentworth Day's implied inclusion of bibulous squires and fenland "sportsmen" in this class, then the author of this book may perhaps be allowed its title, *A History of the Fens*.

The genesis of this "history" was a sugges-

tion made to Mr Day at a shooting party at which "ambassadors and cabinet ministers" were among the guests, that he should write of the Fen as it was "in our great-granddad's time." He has, he says, tried to make it human, which intention has led him to avoid "tedious excursions into geology, botany, entomology, prehistory, ecclesiastical history, and drainage." (What, it may be asked, can then remain of fenland history?) True to his word, Mr Day dismisses prehistory in a few ingenuous paragraphs: the ancient Britons were the slaves who dug the Roman Banks, and the ancestors of some old Fen character "like enough came over with the raiding Jutes when the Vikings sailed . . . their galleys up the slow Fenland rivers." He then skips forward from several pages on Guthlac to a brief account of Vermuyden (whom he praises for draining some thousands of acres, while he damns the bureaucrats of the Second World War for draining a few hundreds). There is little or nothing here of the work of the Fenland Research Committee, of Miller on Ely or Page on Crowland or Thirsk on the sixteenth-century fen; and the name of Darby does not even appear in the bibliography.

Thereafter the quiddities of fenland lore—some of them new and many of them entertaining—are sandwiched between reminiscences of lethal bird-lovers. Mr Day quotes proudly the achievement of a friend who killed 68 green plover with three shots.

The agricultural history is largely contained in the four pages of the chapter on "Fen Farming of Old."

This book, Mr Day says in his preface, does not pretend to be a complete history of the fens. That seems a fair enough assessment of it.

R. TROW-SMITH

ARTHUR E. KIRKBY, *Humberstone . . . the Story of a Village*. A. E. Kirkby, 1953. 196 pp. 17s. 6d.

This village history is compiled from printed, manuscript, and oral sources by a geography teacher living in Humberstone, Lincolnshire. The author attributes his interest in local history to the youthful fascination which he felt for secret passages, monkish ghosts, and haunted churchyards. Fortunately, the book is made of more substantial stuff. It contains a good description of the village as it is today, an account of its geographical and geological situation, the history of the manor, the fields, the church, abbey, and school, and some notable families. But an opportunity has been missed of investigating the changes in the coastline in this parish. The author makes a brief reference to the marshland reclaimed in recent years, but fails to realize that this is part of a much older story that could be traced among the documents of the Public Record Office.

JOAN THIRSK

Members of the British Agricultural History Society

Adams, R. H., Poplars, Midford Road, Bath, Somerset.
 Agriculture & Fisheries, Ministry of (Library), 3 Whitehall Place, S.W.1.
 Archbell, Mrs J. E., Meadowcroft, Westerham Hill, Biggin Hill, Kent.
 Arnold, B. J., 20 Stanborough Green, Welwyn Garden City, Herts.
 Arthur, J. R. B., Cydwell, Court Wick, Littlehampton, Sussex.
 Ashby, A. W., Institute of Agrarian Affairs, 3 Magpie Lane, Oxford.
 Ashby, Miss M. K., Home Farm House, Bledington, Oxford.
 Baggs, Miss B. M., 26b Ely Street, Stratford upon Avon, Warks.
 Bagshawe, T. W., Angmering House, Angmering-on-Sea, East Preston, Sussex.
 Baker, W. P., Cliff House, Ebberston, Scarborough, Yorks.
 Balls, I. J., 11 Homelands Copse, Fernhurst, nr Haslemere, Surrey.
 Barker, E. J., 92 Castlevew Gardens, Ilford, Essex.
 Barnett, Mrs H. A. Lake, Glenburn, 5 Coolhurst Avenue, N.8.
 Batchelor, Miss J. I., Gaydon, Terrick, Aylesbury, Bucks.
 Bates, D. N., West Oxfordshire Technical College, Witney, Oxon.
 Bath, D. R., Coed Bedw, Horsley Road, Gresford, nr Wrexham.
 Baulkwill, W. J., Lordswood, Marlow Common, Marlow, Bucks.
 Beauchamp, Commander L. K., R. N. (ret.), Elmhurst, Manor Way, Lee on the Solent, Hants.
 Bedford College for Women (University of London), Regent's Park, N.W.1.
 Beecham, Miss A., Florence Nightingale Hall, University Park, Nottingham.
 Belfast, The Queen's University.
 Belfast Museum and Art Gallery, Stranmillis.
 Beresford, M. W., Dept. of Economics and Commerce, The University, Leeds.
 Binnall, Rev. P. B. G., Barkwith Rectory, Wragby, Lincoln.
 Birmingham Reference Library.
 Birmingham University, Edgbaston.
 Bisset, G. B., Agricultural Economics Dept., 7 Redlands Road, Reading.
 Blagburn, C. H., Agricultural Economics Dept., 7 Redlands Road, Reading.
 Bledisloe, Rt Hon. Lord, P.C., K.B.E., Redhill, Lydney, Glos.
 Boatfield, G. S., Oak Cottage, Little Wenham, Colchester, Essex.
 Bomford, D. R., Pitchill, Evesham, Worcs.
 Bone, W. R., 16 Claremont Gardens, Edinburgh 6.
 Bonham-Carter, V., Langaller Farm, Brushford, nr Dulverton, Somerset.
 Bowen, M. C., 7 Manor Way, Onslow Village, Guildford, Surrey.
 Boycott, W. S., Ewen Farm House, nr Cirencester, Glos.
 Brewin, J. M., Wye College (University of London), Ashford, Kent.
 Bristol City Library.
 Bristol University, Bristol 8.
 Bristol University, Agricultural Economics Dept., 79 Woodland Road, Bristol 8.
 British Council, 65 Davies Street, W.1.
 Buchanan, R. H., Dept. of Geography, The Queen's University, Belfast.
 Cambridge University, Dept. of Estate Management, 74 Trumpington Street, Cambridge.
 Cambridge University, School of Agriculture, Downing Street, Cambridge.
 Campbell, C. H., Slagshaw, Castle-Douglas, Kirkcudbright.
 Carstairs, A. M., Melville Grove, Largo Road, St Andrews, Fife.
 Cave, W. E., Lower House, Everleigh, Marlborough, Wilts.
 Chambers, J. D., Sub-Dept. of Economic History, The University, Nottingham.
 Chapman, D. H., 8 Church Street, Wye, Ashford, Kent.
 Chevely, S. W., Dunorlan Farm, Tunbridge Wells, Kent.
 Christie, Mrs M. E., The Pound House, Croftsthorpe, Pershore, Worcs.
 Clark, F. C., Ceylon House, The Common, Cranbrook, Kent.
 Clark, Miss K. M., 10 Harley Place, W.1.
 Clark, H. E., 6 Grange Park, Ealing, W.5.
 Clayton, Miss J., Hollies, Beech Grove, Greenmount, Bury, Lancs.
 Cooper, J. P., Trinity College, Oxford.
 Coppock, J. T., Dept. of Geography, University College, Gower Street, W.C.1.
 Cripps, J., The Countryman, Burford, Oxford.
 Crowther, C., 79 Cheam Road, Ewell, Surrey.
 Currow, P. W., Daliburgh, Isle of South Uist, Inverness.

- Curtis, W. H., Curtis Museum, Alton, Hants.
 Daniel, P. R., c/o Lloyds Bank, Old Bank, Blackburn, Lancs.
 Darby, H. C., Dept. of Geography, University College, Gower Street, W.C.1.
 Davidson, T. D., Wedgwood, 44 Fairdene Road, Couldson, Surrey.
 Davies, A., 9 Laura Place, Aberystwyth.
 Davies, J. D. G., Burgh Fields, Bourton-on-the-Water, Glos.
 Daw, R., Houghton Park, Ampthill, Bedford.
 de la Mare, R. A., 93 Cumnor Hill, Oxford.
 Dinwiddie, J. S., Robert Dinwiddie and Co. Ltd, Dumfries.
 Dixey, R. N., Institute of Agrarian Affairs, 3 Magpie Lane, Oxford.
 Dodson, C. W., Valley House, Bishop's Castle, Salop.
 Doncaster West End Secondary School, Kirkby Avenue, Doncaster.
 Dorrington, J. B., J. H. Dorrington and Son, Dunsby, Bourne, Lincs.
 Dullforce, Miss W. M., School of Agriculture, University of Nottingham, Sutton Bonington, nr Loughborough, Leics.
 Dyott, Major R. A., The Manor of Freeford, Lichfield, Staffs.
 Eagle, J. W., Devereux Farm, Kirby-le-Soken, Essex.
 Edgar, C. D., 61 Main Road, Radcliffe-on-Trent, Notts.
 Edinburgh University and Edinburgh & E. of Scotland College of Agriculture Combined Library, 13 George Square, Edinburgh 8.
 Edinburgh University Library.
 Edmunds, H. E., Cilsanws, Camden Road, Brecon.
 Elmhirst, L. K., Dartington Hall, Totnes, Devon.
 English, O., Manor Farm, Wateringbury, Kent.
 Evans, G. E., School House, Blaxhall, Woodbridge, Suffolk.
 Ewing, G. R., Pittentian Farm, Crieff, Perthshire.
 Exeter City Library.
 Farmers Weekly, 43 Shoe Lane, E.C.4.
 Finberg, H. P. R., 34 Sheffield Terrace, W.8.
 Fleck, A., Imperial Chemical Industries, Millbank, S.W.1.
 Fletcher, T. W., 2 Beaconsfield Derby Road, Fallowfield, Manchester.
 Ford, C. P., 46 Culvers, South Harting, Petersfield, Hants.
 Forster, G. C. F., Dept. of Economics, University of Sheffield.
 Fox, R. J., Agricultural Offices, The Grove, Mount Tavy, Tavistock, Devon.
 Franklin, T. B., 23 Orchard Road South, Edinburgh 4.
 Fussell, G. E., 55 York Road, Sudbury, Suffolk.
 Gallichan, Mrs N. K., D.17 Sloane Avenue Mansions, Sloane Avenue, S.W.3.
 Gardner, Miss E. M., The Bothy, Borden Village, Liphook, Hants.
 Gibson, H. S., The Manor Farm, Halam, nr Newark, Notts.
 Gill, R., 27 Prospect Road, New Barnet, Barnet, Herts.
 Gloucester City Museum.
 Goldsmiths' Librarian (University of London), Senate House, W.C.1.
 Grant, Mrs B. F., 78 Twyford Avenue, Acton, W.3.
 Grassland Research Institute, Hurley, Berks.
 Green, Miss A., Rest Harrow, Great Waltham, nr Chelmsford, Essex.
 Green, G. H., School of Agriculture, University of Nottingham, Sutton Bonington, nr Loughborough, Leics.
 Green, P. A., Grimscote, Coleshill, Warks.
 Griffith, Capt. E. N., Little Hallingbury Park, nr Bishop's Stortford, Herts.
 Grimsby Public Library.
 Guildhall Library, E.C.2.
 Gwyther, J., Beloms, Upper Farringdon, nr Alton, Hants.
 Habakkuk, H. J., All Souls College, Oxford.
 Halifax Museums, Bankfield Museum.
 Hallam, H. E., Holywood House, Churchgate, Spalding, Lincs.
 Halliday, D. J., 12 Murdoch Road, Wokingham, Berks.
 Hampson, Miss E. M., Dept. of Economics, Kings College, Aberdeen.
 Handlen, Miss E. V., 37 Ann Street, Edinburgh.
 Handley, J. E., St Mungo's Academy, 48 Parson Street, Glasgow C4.
 Harper Adams Agricultural College, Newport, Salop.
 Harris, A., 55 Sharples Park, Bolton, Lancs.
 Harris, F. L., Lambourne, Mount Ambrose, Redruth, Cornwall.
 Hartley, W. M., Edward Webb and Son Ltd, Wordsley, Stourbridge, Worcs.
 Harvey, N., 70 Windermere Avenue, N.3.
 Hatfield, F. B., Church House, Little Shelford, Cambridge.
 Hay, A., Association of Agriculture, 53 Victoria Street, S.W.1.
 Hayes, A. B., 35 Russell Drive, Wollaton, Nottingham.

- Hellier, Miss R., Cranesden, North Street, Midhurst, Surrey.
 Henderson, H. C. K., 557 Uxbridge Road, Hatch End, Pinner, Middx.
 Henriques, Colonel R. D. A., Winson Mill Farm, Bibury, nr Cirencester, Glos.
 Hereford County Library.
 Hewitt, G. E., Heapham Mill, nr Gainsborough, Lincs.
 Higgs, C., Hatton Rock, Stratford upon Avon, Warks.
 Higgs, J. W. Y., Museum of English Rural Life, 7 Shinfield Road, Reading.
 Hill, W. L., World Crops, Stratford House, 9 Eden Street, N.W.1.
 Hilton, N., 54 Bayswater Road, W.2.
 Hilton, R. H., Firs, Newland Road, Droitwich, Worcs.
 Hookham, R. E., 40 St John Street, Oxford.
 Hoskins, W. G., Steeple Barton Vicarage, Steeple Aston, Oxford.
 Houston, G., 71 Victoria Park Drive South, Glasgow, W.4.
 Hudleston, N. A., Rectory Farm, Rillington, Malton, Yorks.
 Hull University.
 Hurd, S., Winterbourne Holt, Newbury, Berks.
 Ingham, A. P., Yewfield Farm, Holton-le-Moor, Lincoln.
 Institute of Historical Research (University of London), Senate House, W.C.1.
 Jackson, Mrs E. M., The Rhennie Farm, Manghold, Isle of Man.
 James, Mrs R., Engew Farm, Gwithian, Hayle, Cornwall.
 Jenkins, D., 11 Alexandra Road, Aberystwyth.
 Jenkins, J. G., Museum of English Rural Life, 7 Shinfield Road, Reading.
 Jenks, J. E. F., West View, Horseshoe Road, Pangbourne, Berks.
 Jervoise, Major F. H. T., Herriard Park, Basingstoke, Hants.
 Jones, J. O., Agricultural Economics Research Institute, Parks Road, Oxford.
 Kennedy, R. A., 10 Beccleuch Place, Edinburgh 8.
 Kenyon, G. H., Iron Pear Tree Farm, Kirdford, nr Billingshurst, Sussex.
 Kerridge, E., Dept. of Economics, University of Liverpool.
 Ketton-Cremer, R. W., Felbrigg Hall, Roughton, Norwich.
 King, L. J., Puncknowle Manor, Dorchester, Dorset.
 Lackham School of Agriculture, Lacock, nr Chippenham, Wilts.
 Laird, Sir Patrick, K.B.E., C.B., 18 Highfield Road, Hertford, Herts.
 Lake, S. E., 8 Gay Street, Bath.
 Lamb, R., Knighton Manor Farm, Broadchalke, Salisbury, Wilts.
 Lancashire Record Office, County Hall, Preston, Lancs.
 Langdon, A. J., Oakleigh, Redhouse Road, Tettenhall, Wolverhampton.
 Langton, Miss O., 78 Redcliffe Gardens, S.W.10.
 Laws, G. C., Estate Office, Barton Abbey, Steeple Aston, Oxon.
 Leadbetter, H. R. C., Horton Court, Monks Horton, nr Ashford, Kent.
 Leeds Public Libraries.
 Leeds University, Dept. of Agriculture.
 Leicester Museums, New Walk.
 Leicester, University College of.
 Lincoln City Library and Museum.
 Liverpool University.
 Lloyd, Lt.-Col. Sir John, Abercynrig, Brecon.
 Lloyd-Johnes, Major H. J., Summerleas, Monmouth.
 Long, W. H., Dept. of Agriculture, University of Leeds.
 MacMillan, W. E. F., Botton Hall, Danby-in-Cleveland, Yorks.
 MacTaggart, Sir Andrew, Ockhams, Edenbridge, Kent.
 Marsden, A. W., Commonwealth Bureau of Dairy Science, Shinfield, nr Reading.
 Marsh, R. T., Felton Farm, Ludlow, Salop.
 Marshall, J. T., Beech Cottage, Ixworth, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk.
 Mason, T. A., Reynard Ing, Ilkley, Yorks.
 Massey-Harris Ferguson Ltd, Coventry.
 Maxwell, S., National Museum of Antiquities, Queen Street, Edinburgh 2.
 McHardy, D. N., Farmers Club, 3 Whitehall Court, S.W.1.
 McKergow, P. R. W., Park House, Twineham, nr Haywards Heath, Sussex.
 McKerral, A., Morton, Mid Calder, Scotland.
 Mead, W. R., Dept. of Geography, University College, Gower Street, W.C.1.
 Meiklejohn, A. K. M., Edinburgh and East of Scotland College of Agriculture, 5 Duke Street, Edinburgh.
 Miles, B., 43a Acacia Road, St John's Wood, N.W.8.
 Miller, T. E., 19 Yorkersgate, Malton, Yorks.
 Millington, A. G. E., The Training College, Bognor Regis, Sussex.
 Mills, F. D., 35 Albert Road, Caversham, Reading.
 Minchinton, W. E., University College, Swansea.
 Mingay, G. E., 4 Hamilton Drive, The Park, Nottingham.

- Moore, D. C., 6 Adams Road, Cambridge.
 Morohundiya, S. O., 61 Brackenbury Road, Hammersmith, W.6.
 Morris, S. T., 1 Courtney Park, Newton Abbot, Devon.
 Morten, I. H., The Plex Farm, Burbage, Buxton, Derbys.
 Nash, E. F., Dept. of Agricultural Economics, Cambrian Chambers, Aberystwyth.
 National Farmers' Union, 45 Bedford Square, W.C.1.
 National Institute for Research in Dairying, Shinfield, Reading.
 National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland, Queen Street, Edinburgh 2.
 Neame, T., Macknade, Faversham, Kent.
 North of Scotland College of Agriculture, 41 Union Street, Aberdeen.
 North Wales, University College of, Bangor.
 Norwich City Museums, Castle Museum.
 Nottingham University.
 Nottingham University, School of Agriculture, Sutton Bonington, Loughborough, Leics.
 Nottinghamshire County Training College, Eaton Hall, Retford, Notts.
 O'Loan, J., Dept. of Agriculture, Land Project Office, Government Buildings, Dublin.
 Ordish, F. G., Vine House, Yalding, Maidstone, Kent.
 Orwin, C. S., The Red House, Blewbury, Didcot, Berks.
 Oschinsky, Miss D., Liverpool University.
 Owen, A. E. B., 2 Fellows Road, Hampstead, N.W.3.
 Panther, I. P., Gales Farm, Peasenhall, Saxmundham, Suffolk.
 Partridge, E. A., Kersey, Hadleigh, Suffolk.
 Pattison, W. D., Dept. of Geography, University College, Gower Street, W.C.1.
 Pawson, H. C., 56 Dunholme Road, Newcastle-upon-Tyne 4.
 Payne, F. G., Welsh Folk Museum, St Fagans Castle, Cardiff.
 Perry, P. J., The Grotto, Main Street, Snarestone, nr Burton-upon-Trent, Staffs.
 Phillips, J. H., 61 Fordwich Rise, Hertford.
 Phillips, R., Kilrie, Caradoc Road, Aberystwyth.
 Pledge, H. T., 30 Woodlands Road, Redhill, Surrey.
 Price, P. A., Glenhyng School, Dodderhill, Droitwich Spa, Worcs.
 Prince, H. C., Dept. of Geography, University College, Gower Street, W.C.1.
 Proudfoot, V. B., Dept. of Geography, The Queen's University, Belfast.
 Public Record Office, Chancery Lane, W.C.2.
 Queen Mary College (University of London), Mile End Road, E.1.
 Rankin, Sir Hugh Rhys, Bart., Green Lane, Bryngwyn, via Kington, Herefordshire.
 Ransomes, Sims and Jefferies Ltd, Orwell Works, Ipswich, Suffolk.
 Rea, E., Windrush, Rotherfield Greys, Henley-on-Thames, Oxon.
 Reading University.
 Reid, J. A., 28 Anderson Street, Airdrie, Lanark.
 Renold, Miss P., 18 Ashburn Place, S.W.7.
 Richmond, A. C., C.B.E., 70 Beaufort Mansions, Chelsea, S.W.3.
 Ridler, J. K., Blackford, Minehead, Somerset.
 Roberson, L. H., The Grammar School, Fowey, Cornwall.
 Roberts, R. A., University College of N. Wales, Bangor.
 Ross, H., Leighton Villa, Wellhead Lane, Westbury, Wilts.
 Rothamsted Experimental Station, Harpenden, Herts.
 Rowe, W. J., Dept. of Modern History, University of Liverpool.
 Rowsell, J., West Stoke Farm, Stoke Charity, nr Winchester.
 Royal Agricultural Society of England, 16 Bedford Square, W.C.1.
 Royal Dublin Society, Balls Bridge, Dublin.
 Royal Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland, 8 Eglinton Crescent, Edinburgh 12.
 Rural Industries Bureau, 35 Camp Road, Wimbledon, S.W.19.
 Rye Grammar School, Sussex.
 Salaman, R. A., 8 Holly Bush Lane, Harpenden, Herts.
 Salaman, R. N., Homestall, Barley, Royston, Herts.
 Saltmarsh, J., King's College, Cambridge.
 Salzman, L. F., 53 The Avenue, Lewes, Sussex.
 Sandilands, Miss M. M., School of Agriculture, University of Nottingham, Sutton Bonington, nr Loughborough, Leics.
 Sayce, R. U., 7 Broadway, Withington, Manchester 20.
 Science Museum, S.W.7.
 Science Museum Library, S.W.7.
 Scott, Mrs R., Llanidan Hall, Brynsiencyn, Anglesey.
 Seale-Hayne Agricultural College, Newton Abbot, Devon.
 Sephton, C. C., Summerseat, Broad Lane, Moss Bank, nr St Helens, Lancs.
 Shakespeare's Birthplace Trust, Stratford upon Avon, Warks.
 Sinnhuber, K. A., Dept. of Geography, University College, Gower Street, W.C.1.

- Skillington, Mrs F. E., 20 Victoria Park Road, Leicester.
 Slack, W. J., 8 Woodlands Park, Wenlock Road, Shrewsbury.
 Smillie, D. M., Agricultural College, Auchincruive, Ayr.
 Smith, A. H., 28 Fellows Road, N.W.3.
 Smith, J. H., 10 King's Cross Terrace, Aberdeen.
 Smith, Miss M. E., 2 Temple Road, Windsor, Berks.
 Smith, W., Dept. of Geography, 12 Abercromby Square, Liverpool 7.
 South Wales, University College of, Cardiff.
 Statham, M.P., 21 Barton Hill, Farnham St Martin, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk.
 Stamp, L. Dudley, Ebbingford Manor, Bude, Cornwall.
 Stirling-Lee, O., Sainsfoins, Little Shelford, Cambs.
 Stone, L., 231 Woodstock Road, Oxford.
 Stoughton, R. H., Chesters, Eversley, Hants.
 Stratton, J. M., East Farm, Codford St Mary, nr Warminster, Wilts.
 Street, F., Heathermead Nursery, West End, nr Wolcing, Surrey.
 Swansea, University College of.
 Symon, J. A., 38 Fountainhall Road, Edinburgh 9.
 Tawney, R. H., 21a Mecklenburgh Square, W.C.1.
 Teulon-Porter, N., High Land, Great Lane, Shaftesbury, Dorset.
 Thirsk, Mrs J., 36a Oppidans Road, Hampstead, N.W.3.
 Thomas, B. C., 34 North Street, Tywardreath, Par, Cornwall.
 Thomas, E., Agricultural Economics Dept., 7 Redlands Road, Reading.
 Thomas, W. L., Yateley Cottage, Blackwell, nr Shipston-on-Stour, Warks.
 Thornton, D. S., Hill Rise, Upper Basildon, Berks.
 Trow-Smith, R., White Cottage, Datchworth Green, Knebworth, Herts.
 University College (University of London), Gower Street, W.C.1.
 Vallis, J. L. H., Heywood Cottage, Mount Street, Diss, Norfolk.
 Voysey, A., National Federation of Young Farmers Clubs, 55 Gower Street, W.C.1.
 Wales, University College of, Dept. of Agriculture, Aberystwyth.
 Wales, University College of, Dept. of Agricultural Economics, Aberystwyth.
 Wales, University College of, Aberystwyth.
 Walker, T. E. C., Spring Grove, Water Lane, Cobham, Surrey.
 Walrond, L., Glebe Farm, Pitney, nr Langport, Somerset.
 Wannop, A. R., Hill Farming Research Organization, Broomhouse Drive, Edinburgh 11.
 Ward, C. T., Valewood Farm, Haslemere, Surrey.
 Warwick County Museum.
 Watson, Sir James Scott, C.B.E., 4 Sheldon Avenue, N.6.
 Welbourne, E., The Master's Lodge, Emmanuel College, Cambridge.
 Welsh Folk Museum, St Fagans Castle, Cardiff.
 West of Scotland Agricultural College, Agricultural Economics Dept., 6 Blythswood Square, Glasgow C.2.
 Westminster Central Reference Library, St Martins Street, W.C.2.
 Whicher, D. S., Searles, The Hill, Bridford, nr Exeter, Devon.
 Whitchurch, M., 113 Paramount Court, University Street, W.C.1.
 Wilding, J. R., 17 Highgate Lane, Dronfield, nr Sheffield.
 Wilkerson, J. C., Sells Close, Barley, nr Royston, Herts.
 Wilson, C. P. H., Peddar's Way, East Wretham, Thetford, Norfolk.
 Winder, G. H., Springhead Farm, Harlequin Lane, Crowborough, Sussex.
 Woods, A. M. A., The Ashes, Welford-on-Avon, nr Stratford upon Avon, Warks.

OVERSEAS

AUSTRALIA

- Australian National University Library, Canberra.
 Commonwealth National Library, Canberra.
 Ewer, T. K., The Veterinary School, University of Queensland, Yeerongpilly, Brisbane, Queensland.

CANADA

- British Columbia University, Vancouver 8, British Columbia.

CEYLON

- Ringrose-Voase, J. R., Robgill Estate, Bogawantalawa, Ceylon.

DENMARK

- Uldall, K., Frilandsmuseet, Lyngby.
 Hansen, C. R., Tøjhusgade 5, Copenhagen K.
 Royal Veterinary and Agricultural College, Bulowsvej 13, Copenhagen V.

FINLAND

- Akateeminen Kirjakauppa, 2 Keskuskatu, Helsinki.

FRANCE

Meuvret, J., 39 Quai de l'Horloge, Paris VI.
Sorbonne, Bibliothèque de l'Université à la Sorbonne, 47 Rue des Ecoles, Paris 5c.

GERMANY

Hantzschel, L., Weender Strasse 66, Göttingen.
Westdeutsche Bibliothek, Universitätsstr. 25, Marlburgh/Lahn.

NETHERLANDS

Hoffen, Ir. M. M. Van, De Halve Houtsnip, Bennekom.
Nilsson and Lamm, Herengracht 617, Amsterdam C.
Slicher Van Bath, B. H., Kamp Laan 24, Groningen.
Van der Poel, J. M. G., Gorechtkade 89, Groningen.

NEW ZEALAND

Wellington General Assembly Library.

N. RHODESIA

Rees, A. M. A., c/o Dept. of Agriculture, P.O. Box 660, Lusaka.

RUSSIA

Moskovskoje Otdelenije, Biblioteki Akad. Nauk 2, Donskoj Proezd 9, Moscow 71.

SWEDEN

Fritze, C. E., Kungl. Houbokhandel, Stockholm 16.
Frykholm, L., Kungl. Lantbrukshögskolan, Uppsala 7.

UGANDA

Langlands, B. W., Makerere College, P.O. Box 262, Kampala.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Albert R. Mann Library, Ithaca, New York State.
California University, Berkeley 4, California.
Cleveland Public Library, Cleveland, Ohio.
Illinois University Library, Urbana, Illinois.
Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore 18 Md.
Loehr, R. C., History Dept., University of Minnesota, Minneapolis 14, Minnesota.
McCann, N. F., 9603 Parkwood Drive, Washington 14, D.C.
Rasmussen, W. D., 913 Ridge Road, Columbia Pines, Falls Church, Virginia.
U.S. Department of Agriculture Library, Washington 25, D.C.
Washington Square Library, 100 Washington Square East, New York 3, New York State.

3

COMPANION VOLUMES

THE FARMER'S TOOLS

G. E. Fussell

The history of British farm implements, tools, and machinery before the advent of the tractor. "Should be accepted as an authoritative work."—*Farm Implement and Machinery Review*.

117 photographs

42s.

THE ENGLISH COUNTRYWOMAN

A FARMHOUSE SOCIAL HISTORY

G. E. and K. R. Fussell

An engrossing chronicle covering food, clothes, cooking, furnishings, manners, Fairs and Festivals, wages, servants, entertainment, and social usages. "Highly entertaining (and valuable) book."—*John O'London*.

72 photographs

30s.

THE ENGLISH COUNTRYMAN

HIS LIFE AND WORK

G. E. and K. R. Fussell

Continues the fascinating story of the above books. All three books consider and chronicle in detail the daily life of the English people from A.D. 1500 to 1900. Just Published.

68 photographs and 6 line chapter headings,

30s.

ANDREW MELROSE

11 Stratford Place, W.1



REX WAILES

THE ENGLISH WINDMILL

"Here and there the sails of an English windmill still turn. Among the many illustrations in Mr Wailes's book, about a score show windmills that are still at work: the relics of a great army which ground English grain for seven hundred years at least. It was time their story should be told while facts yet remain for the gathering.

"Mr Wailes knows his windmills inside and out, as few people can know them, except the millers themselves, a dwindling race. He has written, in effect, two books in one, for the two earlier parts describe the different types of structure and the actual working of the mill, while the later is a miscellany of facts and stories about the windmills.

"... several appendices, a glossary, map, and list of mills go to complete what is probably the most complete survey of its subject yet undertaken."—THE TIMES.

"The best book there is about windmills."—*Geoffrey Grigson*, TIME AND TIDE.

"Several books have been written on windmills but none with greater authority or greater interest than one that has just appeared by Rex Wailes."—MILLING.

With drawings by Vincent Lines, and 32 pages of plates

35s. net

published by

ROUTLEDGE & KEGAN PAUL

NELSON BOOKS ON Agriculture

EVERY FARMER and every agricultural student will gain invaluable knowledge from these authoritative and up-to-date handbooks. Each volume is written by an acknowledged expert and covers the whole subject from the fundamental principles to the smallest practical details.

A History of English Farming

by C. S. ORWIN

An account of English farm history beginning with the primitive settlements and describing the progress brought about by inclosures, rotation of crops, and the introduction of new crops up to the time of Agricultural Colleges and Research Institutes.

8s 6d

A History of Scottish Farming

by T. BEDFORD FRANKLIN

A short history of Scottish farming through the ages, showing how Scotland's farmers copied and finally surpassed English farming methods. Scotland's monks, landowners, and farmers, craftsmen and farm workers have served her well, and this book is based on the records of how they met the needs of the time.

12s 6d

British Farming 1939-49

by E. H. WHETHAM

A brief history of British farming during the Second World War and the years that followed. This account of the steps taken to meet the national needs gives an insight into the economic structure of farming; it shows how the country has awakened to the fundamental position of agriculture, and with what wisdom the nation was guided during these critical years.

12s 6d

* *A prospectus giving details of all the NELSON BOOKS
ON AGRICULTURE is available from the publisher*

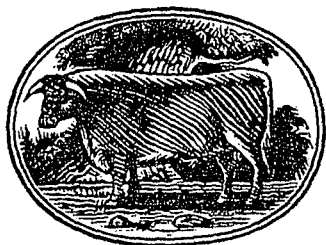
Parkside Works
Edinburgh 9

NELSON

36 Park Street
London W1

Printed at The Broadwater Press, Welwyn Garden City, Herts

The **AGRICULTURAL HISTORY REVIEW**



VOLUME III 1955

PART II

*

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS

The Content and Sources of English Agrarian History after 1500
by JOAN THIRSK

*

The Curving Plough-strip and its Historical Implications
by S. R. EYRE

*

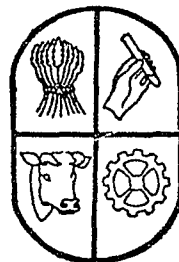
Crop Nutrition in Tudor and Early Stuart England
by G. E. FUSSELL

*

Mr Beresford and the Lost Villages
by J. D. GOULD

PUBLISHED BY
THE BRITISH AGRICULTURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

NELSON BOOKS ON Agriculture



General Editors

SIR WILLIAM OGG and G. V. JACKS

THESE are a series of authoritative and up-to-date handbooks, each volume by an acknowledged expert, which cover their respective subjects from the fundamental principles to the smallest practical details.

Soil	12s 6d	G. V. Jacks
Beef Production	12s 6d	M. M. Cooper
Sheep Production	8s 6d	Allan Fraser
Vegetable Culture	8s 6d	K. H. Johnstone
Farm Book-Keeping	15s	C. V. Dawe
A History of English Farming	8s 6d	C. S. Orwin
Introduction to Agricultural Economics	10s 6d	Edgar Thomas
Science & Practice of Grassland Farming	8s 6d	H. I. Moore
A History of Scottish Farming	12s 6d	T. Bedford Franklin
British Farming 1939-49	12s 6d	E. H. Whetham
Feeding of Livestock	12s 6d	Stephen J. Watson
Field Machinery	15s	Cornelius Davies
Plant Diseases	8s 6d	F. C. Bawden
Fruit Culture	12s 6d	A. H. Hoare

A prospectus on all the NELSON BOOKS ON AGRICULTURE is available from the publisher

Parkside Works
Edinburgh 9

NELSON

36 Park Street
London W1

THE Agricultural History Review

Vol. III Part II

Edited by H. P. R. FINBERG

1955

CONTENTS

The Content and Sources of English Agrarian History after 1500	<i>Joan Thirsk</i>	page 66
The Curving Plough-strip and its Historical Implications	<i>S. R. Eyre</i>	80
Crop Nutrition in Tudor and Early Stuart England	<i>G. E. Fussell</i>	95
Mr Beresford and the Lost Villages: a Comment	<i>J. D. Gould</i>	107
The Cattle Trade of Aberdeenshire in the Nineteenth Century	<i>J. H. Smith</i>	114
Work in Progress	<i>Joan Thirsk</i>	119
Reviews:		
<i>Yr Aradr Gymreig</i> , by F. Payne	<i>J. G. Jenkins</i>	123
<i>The Farming Kingdom</i> , by Nigel Harvey	<i>R. Trow-Smith</i>	124
<i>Roman and Saxon Withington</i> , by H. P. R. Finberg	<i>T. H. Aston</i>	125
<i>The Rôle of the Yorkshire Cistercian Monasteries in the History of the Wool Trade</i> , by Arthur Raistrick	<i>E. A. L. Moir</i>	127
<i>Sheep Husbandry and Wool Growing in Britain</i> , by Allan Fraser	<i>E. A. L. Moir</i>	127
<i>Monmouthshire Houses</i> , by Sir Cyril Fox and Lord Raglan	<i>L. F. Salzman</i>	127
Notes and Comments		94, 106, 113, 118
Notes on Contributors		79
Letter to the Editor		122

The Content and Sources of English Agrarian History after 1500

By JOAN THIRSK

PRESENT knowledge concerning the agrarian history of England after 1500 owes most to a group of historians who published books on the subject in the period 1907-15. An earlier generation of scholars, including Seebohm, Vinogradoff, and Maitland, had devoted their attention to the origins of the manor and its development in the Middle Ages. The next generation broadened its interests to cover later periods and other aspects of agrarian life: agricultural techniques, and the economics of farming, as well as tenurial relationships. The history of farming from the earliest times was surveyed by W. H. R. Curtler in *A Short History of English Agriculture* (1909), and by R. E. Prothero (later Lord Ernle) in *English Farming Past and Present* (1912). Enclosure, and particularly the effects of Parliamentary enclosure, were discussed by Gilbert Slater in *The English Peasantry and the Enclosure of the Common Fields* (1907), by A. H. Johnson in *The Disappearance of the Small Landowner* (1909), and by E. C. K. Gonner in *Common Land and Inclosure* (1912). The economics of peasant versus capitalist agriculture were examined by the German scholar Hermann Levy in *Large and Small Holdings*, first published in 1904 and enlarged in an English translation in 1911. *A History of the English Agricultural Labourer* by the German political economist W. Hasbach appeared in an English translation in 1908, with a preface by Sidney Webb. It was followed in 1911 by *The Village Labourer*, a more concentrated study of the effects of Parliamentary enclosure on the same class by J. L. and Barbara Hammond. Professor R. H. Tawney pushed the investigation back in time, and in *The Agrarian Problem in the Sixteenth Century* (1912) analysed the impact of the price revolution on the rural classes. Finally, the American historian H. L. Gray made a study of English field systems in a book of that name, published in 1915.

These were landmarks in the writing of modern agrarian history, and since all appeared within a few years of each other, it looked as though a strong school of agrarian historians had been established. In fact, however, the subject languished for the next twenty years. This may have been due in part to the authoritative nature and seeming finality of the works then published—they are still the standard text-books on their subjects, and are likely to remain so for years to come—but the more likely explanation is that

they were a by-product of hot political debate, which lost energy and urgency when war brought prosperity to the farmer in 1914. The writings of these historians made their appearance during an agricultural depression, in the midst of earnest, anxious discussion about the future of agriculture, which taxed the historian with questions about the past. What had happened to the stout English peasantry of the golden Tudor age? Had the Parliamentary enclosure of the open fields, so long acclaimed as a wholly progressive measure, benefited society as much as it had benefited the land? Had peasant proprietorship possessed some virtue, unseen till now when disaster befell? Did the past, in short, hold the lost key to agricultural prosperity?

Writing in an atmosphere charged with "anticipations, whether true or false, of coming change,"¹ none of these scholars could fail to be aware of the topical nature of their researches. Some, having reached their conclusions, threw their opinions into the political debate. Lord Ernle wrote in the conviction that "a considerable increase in the number of peasant owner-ships, in suitable hands, on suitable land, and in suitable localities, was socially, economically, and agriculturally advantageous." Hasbach held that an increase in peasant proprietorship was not only desirable, but inevitable, a view which was not shared by the writer of the preface to his book, Sidney Webb. Gilbert Slater summed up his opinion in the sentence "British agriculture must be democratised," which allowed for the increase of small holdings and allotments, together with some form of agricultural co-operation "suitable to modern conditions," which he did not further define.²

These views read oddly nowadays, but in the circumstances of the time they were not illogical. The tide of opinion, among historians at least, was running in favour of small holdings, because these had withstood the rigours of economic depression better than the large farms.³ With the outbreak of war in 1914, however, the discussion was postponed because the problems of agriculture were temporarily solved. After the war, the controversy did not again engage the historians.

The significance of the meagre harvest of writing on agrarian history after 1915 is easily misunderstood, however. After a lull of some twenty years, fresh advances in understanding of the subject began to be made in the 'thirties through more modest local studies, many of which were prepared as university theses and never published. Their scope was narrow, geographi-

¹ R. E. Prothero, *English Farming Past and Present* (2nd ed., 1919), p. 393.

² *Ibid.*, p. vii; W. Hasbach, *A History of the English Agricultural Labourer*, p. x; Gilbert Slater, *The English Peasantry and the Enclosure of the Common Fields*, p. vii.

³ See Hermann Levy's explanation in *Large and Small Holdings*, pp. 1-2, 211.

cally speaking—the history of a county or smaller unit, covering no more than a century or two—but they immensely enriched the content of agrarian history by underlining the great diversity of farming practice and social structure between regions. In consequence, scholars turned away from the writing of general works on a national scale and concentrated instead on regional studies, mostly written up into articles for local historical societies. Even so, the harvest of writing between 1918 and 1945 could not be called abundant. The more remarkable growth of interest in the subject has taken place since 1945, and has been coincident with the development of local history. Under its influence, agrarian historians have been drawn from the study of single aspects of the rural economy such as field systems, rents, tenures, or social classes towards the study of the local community in all its aspects.¹ At the same time, monographs on medieval estates have demonstrated the wisdom of this approach by showing the complex circumstances in which regional variations emerge. They have shown that the current facts of landownership, land distribution, tenure, and agricultural prices do not alone account for regional eccentricity, that some of its causes lie deeper, in soil and physical environment, the history of early settlement, size of population, and local customs of inheritance.²

The scope of agrarian history has broadened, therefore, but so also have the sources of information. New classes of documents have been discovered, and more assiduous use is being made of evidence on the ground. Fresh paths have been opened up, and more pitfalls dug for the unwary.

Study of the ground evidence is as yet in its infancy. Our present meagre apparatus of knowledge does not allow us to interpret the landscape without much preliminary information from documents. Perhaps this will always be so. On the other hand, it is conceivable that new methods will be devised, at least for dating features in the landscape, which will relieve some of the pressure on documents. As things are at present, the history of fen reclamation, or of sheep farming on the Cistercian granges of Yorkshire, can be placed in their exact topographical setting by reference to the fendikes, the sheephouses, and sheepwalk boundary marks which survive on the ground.

¹ A pioneer study was J. D. Chambers, *Nottinghamshire in the Eighteenth Century*, 1932. It was not concerned with agrarian history alone, but was the study of a community from all points of view, inspired by the belief that local history could enlarge our understanding of national history.

² See, in particular, R. H. Hilton, *Social Structure of Rural Warwickshire in the Middle Ages*, Dugdale Society Occasional Papers, No. 9, 1950; G. R. J. Jones, 'Some Medieval Rural Settlements in North Wales', *Institute of British Geographers: Transactions and Papers*, No. 19, 1953, pp. 51–72; G. C. Homans, 'The Rural Sociology of Medieval England', *Past and Present*, No. 4, 1953, pp. 32–43.

But without documents—and this is the problem which obstructs the interpretation of ridge and furrow—the evidence of the landscape is unusable.¹

This is not to say that the general survey of a region as it is today will not help the historian to reconstruct in imagination the condition of the land in the sixteenth century. The disposition of most villages, rivers, and meadows, for example, remains the same. The principal changes that must be allowed for in the appearance of the countryside are those brought about by enclosure, land drainage, and the use of artificial fertilizers. Sixteenth- and seventeenth-century writers on husbandry have made us familiar with contemporary techniques and tools of husbandry.² Knowing their limitations, and with a rough mental picture of the countryside before the improvements of the nineteenth century, we shall be prepared for some of the more obvious regional differences. On grounds of common sense, it is likely, for example, that farmers in coastal villages with wide stretches of saltmarsh will favour sheep fattening rather than crop growing; that farmers in the ill-drained fenland will specialize in cattle rather than corn, since seasonal flooding exposes their fields to continuous risk. Farmers on the clays may concentrate on corn or stock, or give equal attention to both according to the state of the market and their personal preferences, but a farmer in the chalk country will have less choice. His arable is restricted by the amount of manure he can get from the cattle and sheep which he feeds on the downland commons. If no stint of animals is in operation, a convention, not always strictly adhered to, required him to limit them to the number he could winter on his arable land.

If physical conditions prepare us for certain conclusions about sixteenth-century husbandry in a particular district, we may look for confirmatory evidence in the manorial surveys, which show the proportion of cultivated land on the manor which was devoted to arable, meadow, and pasture. Manorial surveys were intended to inform the manorial lord of the way in which his land was tenanted and rented. The fullest survey, though rare to find, will give the size of each tenant's holding, the acreage of each man's arable, meadow, pasture, and closes, the type and conditions of tenure, the rents and dues, the area of common pasture, and the stint of animals allowed to each tenant according to the size of his arable holding. The most detailed

¹ For an excellent combination of documentary and ground evidence, see H. E. Hallam, *The New Lands of Elloe*, Department of English Local History, Occasional Paper No. 6, University College of Leicester, 1954.

² For a bibliographical discussion of these writings, see G. E. Fussell, *The Old English Farming Books from Fitzherbert to Tull*, 1947; *More Old English Farming Books from Tull to the Board of Agriculture*, 1950.

and informative manorial surveys belong to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In the eighteenth century their place was taken by valuations, which contain equivalent information, or by rentals, but these omit descriptions of the use and disposition of the land.¹

An examination of some manorial surveys of the Midlands suggests that in districts of mixed husbandry it was usual for somewhere between 60 and 80 per cent of the cultivated land (i.e. excluding the common pastures and waste) to be devoted to crops. In a pastoral region the proportion of ploughland was not likely to exceed 45 per cent, and might fall as low as 10 per cent. To measure the full significance of these variations, however, it is necessary to know what proportion of the arable land was sown each year. Some land was sufficiently fertile to be fallowed every fourth year, other land was fallowed every third or even every second year. Unfortunately, the number of fields is not a reliable guide to the rotation. It is frequently true that a village possessing fields with two or three clear directional names, such as North and South Fields, or East, West, and South Fields, will have two- or three-course rotations respectively. But since villages might modify the rotation when there were more mouths to be fed, or because of an increase or diminution in the supply of manure, or as a result of piecemeal enclosure, guesswork by the sixteenth century is dangerous. A statement about the rotations will sometimes be found in a manorial survey, or in a manorial court roll. It may occur incidentally in the bills and replies of plaintiff and defendant in a lawsuit, or it may not be mentioned anywhere.²

In both arable and pastoral farming regions it is usual, in the sixteenth century, to find some 8 to 15 per cent of the cultivated land in meadow, while the rest of the land, apart from the open arable, is taken up with temporary ley,³ or with pasture closes. These may lie at the back of the farmhouse, or they may consist of consolidated strips taken out of the open fields and held in severalty. By the sixteenth century, in the Midlands at least, the area of commons and waste in districts of mixed husbandry was small, while in pastoral areas it was extensive. The chief reason for this was that pastoral areas had their husbandry thrust upon them by the physical conditions, and if the land was not suited to crops, not only was there less incentive to engage in assarting, but there were often positive advantages to the majority in

¹ A number of surveys have been printed by local societies. See, for example, *Surveys of the Manors of Philip, First Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery, 1631-2*, ed. E. Kerridge, Wilts Archaeolog. and Nat. Hist. Soc., Records Branch, IX, 1953.

² See also below, page 73.

³ For the use of leys in open fields, see W. G. Hoskins, *Essays in Leicestershire History*, 1951, pp. 140-4.

keeping their grazing in common.¹ In districts of mixed farming where the waste was potential arable land, gradual encroachments in the course of the centuries had brought much of it into cultivation, and by the sixteenth century there was only a limited quantity of common pasture left.

Manorial surveys indicate broad differences in land-use, but it is on the probate inventories, which record the crops and stock on individual farms, that the more detailed picture of husbandry depends. Inventories are lists drawn up by neighbours of the possessions of a deceased person who has left a will. They list his furniture and household possessions room by room, the animals and implements in the yard, the animals and crops in the fields, and the quantity of grain, hemp, flax, wool, wood, and hay in store. The animals are usually counted and classified with great care. Less often, the exact acreages of the crops growing in the fields are given.²

The inventories available to the historian at present are those of wills proved in local probate courts, and housed either in the local probate registries or in local record offices. Inventories of wills proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, which include those of the more substantial gentry, are at Somerset House, London, but are not available for inspection. The inventories begin in the 1530's, and are most informative in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. They become less detailed in the course of the eighteenth century, and cease about 1830.

Since the inventories have only recently been explored by economic historians, certain problems are as yet unsolved concerning their reliability for use in comparative studies between different periods and different districts. The question is of fundamental importance for agrarian history, since the character of farming regions will not be fully uncovered without the aid of comparative statistical material from different districts. Yet the answer must wait upon further use of the inventories, and the comparison of results with information derived from other sources. It is a case of having to use the tools in order to learn how to use them.

¹ See the preamble of the Inclosure Prevention Act, 1684, repealing certain clauses of an act of 15 Chas. II (an Act for settling the draining of the Great Level) which had allowed manorial lords to enclose a part of the commons for themselves. "... such taking and cutting of the said commons and wastes into small pieces is since found to be very prejudicial to the owners and country, being a great waste of ground in division, which are hard to be kept as fences between party and party, the roadways and passages through such commons as set forth being very low, and generally in bad ground, not passable or well to be amended, whereby such divisions are of little value."—Samuel Wells, *The History of the Drainage of the Great Level*, 1830, II, pp. 519–20.

² A sample of Essex inventories has been printed in *Farm and Cottage Inventories of Mid-Essex*, ed. F. W. Steer, Essex County Council, 1950.

The main question is whether the inventories fairly represent all classes of the community. A recent study of this question showed that in one Nottinghamshire village hardly more than a quarter of the population which died between 1572 and 1600 left wills, while in the period 1660-1725 the proportion was just over a fifth. Yet the most cursory examination of inventories will show a wide variety of social classes represented: not only gentry and yeomen, but husbandmen, craftsmen, labourers, and widows. The first question then can be reduced to this: how poor and how numerous were the very poor who were omitted? The second question is whether the inventories of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were equally representative of the same classes. Can a comparison be safely made between standards of wealth at two different periods, or did the habit of leaving wills gradually lose its hold on the poorer classes? Did more and more of the gentry and even the yeomen apply for probate to the Prerogative Court of Canterbury? In this connection, it is prudent to notice conclusions drawn from the inventories of four Nottinghamshire parishes, even though the sample is a small one. They showed that the proportion of craftsmen and labourers represented in them fell considerably as between the period 1575-1639 and 1660-99. This may reflect similar changes in the class structure of the four parishes. But if so, it is the reverse of the class changes which we have been taught to expect.¹ So far as our experience extends at the moment, it would seem to be safer to make comparisons between regions than between centuries.

Of greatest value to the agrarian historian is the information in the inventories concerning the numbers of stock, the acreage of crops, the quantity of grain and other farm produce in store, and the implements and tools of husbandry and of the dairy. Judging from the inventories of Leicestershire and Lincolnshire in the sixteenth century, the two most important crops grown by the Midland peasant were barley and pulses. Wheat ranked third in importance, rye fourth, and oats fifth. But although this order of precedence was widely observed, the average area of sown land, and the pro-

¹ Class representation in the inventories is considered in Maurice Barley, 'Farmhouses and Cottages, 1550-1725', *Economic History Review*, 2nd Series, VII, 1955, pp. 291-306. A sample of inventories from four Nottinghamshire parishes, 1575-1639, showed the classes represented in the following proportions: gentry 5 per cent; yeomen 11.4 per cent; husbandmen 15.7 per cent; craftsmen 11 per cent; labourers 21.5 per cent; widows 11.6 per cent; not stated 23.7 per cent. If the last two groups are omitted from the figures, the proportions are as follows: gentry 7.7 per cent; yeomen 17.6 per cent; husbandmen 24.3 per cent; craftsmen 16.9 per cent; labourers 33.2 per cent. These figures seem to give generous weight to the lower classes. The proportion of labourers agrees with the evidence of the 1524 subsidy that one-third of the population of most villages depended at least in part on wages for a living.

portion of land devoted to each crop, varied significantly between regions. In Lincolnshire, for example, barley occupied 58 per cent of a sown area of twenty-six acres on the wolds and heath; 54 per cent of a sown area of eight acres in the fens, 42 per cent of a sown area of sixteen acres in the clay vales, and 30 per cent of a sown area of seventeen acres in the marshland. In the Leicestershire claylands the figures were much the same as for the Lincolnshire clays. The average sown area was about twenty acres, of which some 38 per cent was sown with barley.¹

Experience so far suggests that single inventories are of little use for indicating the crop rotations of the open fields. More often than not, there is an awkward disproportion in the amount of land which the peasant had under spring and winter crops.² This was probably due to the disproportions in the amount of land he held in each field—the result of much buying and selling of land over the centuries. It meant that the peasant whose land lay wholly in the open fields did not reap the same harvest every year. Alternative explanations of the disproportion are that parts of his arable land were enclosed, and not subject to the same rotations as the land in the open fields, or that not all the arable lay in one village and subject to the same field course.

The study of single inventories is necessary to explain individual idiosyncrasies in stock keeping, but average figures for a whole region are the vital clue to regional specialization. Nearly all Midland peasants who left wills at death kept a cow or two, fewer people kept sheep and pigs, and fewer still horses, while goats were almost, if not entirely, unknown. These generalizations mask striking regional differences. For example, in sixteenth-century Lincolnshire the average flock of sheep in the claylands was twenty-six, whereas in the marshland, the centre of sheep fattening, it was forty. The average farmer in the more wooded claylands kept six pigs, where the fenland peasant with meagre resources of wood and scrub kept only four. Cattle of all kinds were more numerous on the farms of the fen and marsh than on the wolds and heath. It is from these and other comparative observations that regional variations in Lincolnshire finally emerge, and lay bare the contrast between the dairying and sheep husbandry of the fenland, the sheep and cattle fattening of the marshland, the sheep and barley farming of the wolds and heath, and the mixed husbandry of the clay vales.³

¹ W. G. Hoskins, *op. cit.*, pp. 137, 160, 168, 171.

² See the attempt to deduce rotations from inventories in Julian Cornwall, 'Farming in Sussex, 1540-1640', *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, xcii, 1954, pp. 71-2.

³ The regions of Lincolnshire are analysed in greater detail in a book I have in preparation on Lincolnshire agrarian history, 1540-1914.

Having obtained some idea of land use and the specialized husbandry of a region, the historian must consider the size and social structure of its villages, for changes in population and land distribution in the next two centuries exerted a profound influence on the organization and techniques of farming. The size of village communities can be gauged from ecclesiastical returns giving the number of families or communicants in the parish. In 1563 the archdeacons of the dioceses throughout the kingdom were asked to submit a return of the number of families in each parish, and although the order was not everywhere complied with, the returns for many dioceses have survived.¹ In some, the enquiry was followed by others, which, so long as the figures are directly comparable, allow changes in population to be observed at different dates in the course of the next two hundred years. In the diocese of Lincoln,² for example, the number of communicants was returned in 1603, the number of communicants and non-conformists in 1676, the number of families in 1705-23, and the number of families in 1788-92. In districts where no such returns exist, the hearth tax returns, which are tax assessments covering various years between 1662 and 1674, and which give the names of all householders paying the tax, together with those who were exempt on grounds of poverty, can be used to give a rough idea of the number of houses per village in the mid-seventeenth century.³

For a picture of the social structure of a village or district, information has to be drawn from two imperfect sources. The manorial survey gives the size of farm holdings rented directly from the lord, but it tells us nothing about the sub-letting and exchange-letting which went on among tenants, and which is known to have been considerable. This is a serious shortcoming, but it does not empty the survey of all useful content. It may not tell the exact truth concerning the distribution of land among the tillers of the soil, but at the same time it is unlikely to distort the picture out of all recognition. In the fenland of Holland, for example, where there were frequently three, four, or five manors per village, the manorial survey shows a large proportion of very small allotment-like holdings. Since it is probable that many peasants held land of more than one manor, a single manorial survey undoubtedly exaggerates the smallness of the holdings. Yet at the same time,

¹ These returns are in British Museum, Harleian MSS 594, 595, and 618.

² The diocese of Lincoln included the counties of Lincolnshire, Leicestershire, Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire, and Huntingdonshire.

³ The Hearth Tax Returns are discussed in C. A. F. Meekings, *Surrey Hearth Tax, 1664*, Surrey Record Society, xvii, parts 41-2, 1940.

it serves to illustrate reliably enough the contrast between the small holdings of the fen and the large farms of the neighbouring wolds.¹

The second source of information on the class composition of the village is the subsidy assessment of 1524, which was a completely new assessment in that year, village by village, of all persons possessing goods or lands, or earning wages, worth at least twenty shillings a year. In the country districts, though not in the town, this assessment seems to have included the great majority of householders, and although the meaning of the valuations placed on goods and land is not yet fully understood, they seem to offer a rough and ready guide to the relative distribution of wealth in the village. They emphasize the contrast, for example, between the social structure of the small wold villages of Lincolnshire, which possessed a rich squire, one or two yeomen and husbandmen, and a group of wage labourers, and the large fen villages with every grade of wealth represented in a gradually descending scale.²

The broad picture of a region, showing the size of the average village community, its class structure, and predominant system of husbandry in the sixteenth century, lays the foundation for the third and most important task of all, to trace the process of change in the course of the next three and a half centuries, and if possible analyse its causes. To do this, account must be taken of the many aspects of social and economic development which, by their interaction, brought about alterations in farming practice: changes in market demand, for example; changes in food habits and standards of living; changes in the distribution of land between classes, and changes in the size of classes; and finally, more important than any of these as the agent of agricultural revolution, the changing relationship between the supply of land and the size of the population. Any community which earns its living almost exclusively from agriculture will be most profoundly affected in its husbandry by alterations in its resources of land or people.

Many of these changes can be traced for the seventeenth century in the same classes of documents as were used to compile the account of the Tudor period, particularly manorial surveys, probate inventories, and ecclesiastical

¹ In fact, however, the fenland yields another type of record, peculiar to the district, the acre book, which is an assessment for sewer tax compiled on a *parish* basis, and listing every acre of land in the parish and the tenants' names. For evidence of land distribution based on surveys, see, for example, Joan Thirsk, *Fenland Farming in the Sixteenth Century*, Occasional Paper No. 3, University College of Leicester, 1953, pp. 39-40.

² For examples of the use of the subsidy assessment, see W. G. Hoskins, *op. cit.*, pp. 127-30; Joan Thirsk, *op. cit.*, pp. 43-4.

returns of population. The progress of enclosure may be judged from the returns of the enclosure commissioners of 1517, 1548, 1565, and 1607,¹ from lawsuits concerning land, from surveys, and terriers (including glebe terriers),² and for the second half of the seventeenth century onwards from formal enclosure agreements, found among family papers or among Chancery Decrees in the Public Record Office.³

A great wealth of material on agrarian matters will be found in lawsuits: in the bills and answers of plaintiff and defendant, and sometimes in enquiries carried out locally by specially appointed commissioners in an effort to reach a settlement. They may describe and account for changes in crop rotations and fallowing, enclosure disputes and agreements, the engrossing of farms, gains of land by reclamation along the coast, losses through erosion, and the improvement of waste, commons, and fen inland. Disputes about broken sales contracts may disclose the most important markets for agricultural produce, and the principal channels of trade with neighbouring counties and London. Areas where the pasture shortage was becoming acute will be disclosed in lawsuits concerning the unauthorized use of commons by outsiders, or the overcharging of the commons by the inhabitants. Since many changes in farming techniques in the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were due fundamentally to the shortage of land, brought about by the increase of population and the growing commercial incentive to use the land more productively, it is essential to ascertain the urgency of this problem in a region. In some pastoral areas, a grazing shortage was unknown in the Tudor period and the commoners' animals were still unstinted. In others, stints were in operation, but they were generous. In the clay Midlands, however, there were many signs of increasing economy in the use of both arable and pasture. The insufficiency of arable in some townships led to a reduction in the number of fallows in the open fields. Pasture scarcity led sometimes to the introduction of a stint, limiting the numbers of cattle, horses, and sheep which each commoner might keep on the common, or a reduction in the number previously permitted. Sometimes the crisis precipitated the partial or complete enclosure of a village, since enclosure enabled each farmer to use his land as he pleased. Short of this, it might

¹ These records were used extensively in Maurice Beresford, *The Lost Villages of England*, 1954, *passim*, but see in particular pp. 106, 142, and footnotes 1, 2, and 3, p. 423.

² For a description of glebe terriers, see M. W. Beresford, 'Glebe Terriers and Open-Field Leicestershire', *Studies in Leicestershire Agrarian History*, Trans. Leics. Archaeol. Soc. for 1948, 1949, pp. 77-125.

³ For examples of enclosure agreements enrolled in Chancery, and their resemblance to later Parliamentary enclosure awards, see *Victoria County History of Leicestershire*, II, 1954, pp. 218, 225.

persuade individuals to lay more and more of their arable strips under temporary grass or ley. They were then obliged to tether their animals for grazing immediately their neighbours sowed corn in the remaining strips in the furlong, but neither lost any common rights by the change in land-use, for after harvest both the leys and the grain stubble were thrown open to the stock of the whole town.

For the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the evidence of agrarian change is to be found in Parliamentary enclosure awards, land tax assessments, rentals, tithe awards, and crop returns, and in officially printed population censuses, Parliamentary papers on the state of agriculture, agricultural statistics from 1866 onwards, and newspapers.¹

Parliamentary enclosure awards, which may be found in parish chests, among private muniments, or among the records of the Clerk of the Peace, set out all the new allotments of land and the new roads to be made. They have been much studied of late, mainly as a check upon the opinion held by earlier historians such as J. L. and Barbara Hammond that enclosure "broke the back of the peasant community."² The execution of enclosures, their cost, and social consequences have all come under scrutiny. The approach to the last problem has been made by comparing the distribution of land at the time of the enclosure award with that which can be inferred from the apportionment of land tax between 1780 and 1832. The tendency nowadays is to praise the fairness of the enclosure commissioners (Dr J. D. Chambers has gone so far as to call Parliamentary enclosure "a milestone in the recognition of the *legal* rights of humble men"), to treat sceptically the complaints of contemporaries about the high cost of enclosure, and to play down the contribution of enclosure towards the decline of the peasantry. Apart from the fact that enclosure often tended at first to increase, rather than reduce, the number of land-owning peasants, it is now recognized that their decline was already under way in the late seventeenth century. At the same time, it is important to remember that all recent studies of this subject have been of a statistical nature, and have traced the fortunes of classes, not of individuals. They have ignored the personal tragedies of enclosure, with which contemporaries were much concerned, because the administrative documents, while illustrating the transfer of land from one class to another, do not readily disclose, and certainly do not explain, transfers of land within a single class. The peasant, ruined by enclosure, who gave up his holding to another of his class, does not proclaim his tragedy loudly enough to be heard in the pages of

¹ The list of sources described below is of manuscript, not printed sources, which are too numerous to be dealt with adequately here.

² J. L. & Barbara Hammond, *The Village Labourer*, Guild Book edition, 1948, 1, p. 101.

the land tax. His story is more likely to be found in the pamphlet literature of the time.¹

Tithe awards, which were nineteenth-century agreements for the commutation of tithes in kind, give the amount of tithable land in the parish, its current use as arable, meadow, or pasture, and the money charge to be borne by each landowner after commutation. When the whole of the parish is tithable, the award gives a complete picture of land use and the size of farms.

During the French wars when the grain shortage and consequent high prices threatened to cause serious social disturbance, crop returns were collected by the Home Office covering the years 1793, 1794, 1795, 1800, and 1801. A full account has been given recently of the origin of the returns, and of contemporary opinions on their reliability,² but although some of the returns have been printed and commented upon, no attempt has been made so far by modern historians to investigate their accuracy. It is known that the total acreage returned for each parish was rarely a complete record of the total land under crops. It is likely, however, that the returns indicate reliably the proportionate importance of each crop.

It is impossible in a short article to give due consideration to all the diverse aspects of change which fall within the province of agrarian history. Some of the problems enumerated here will be found amplified in accounts of regional economies already published. But the study of a fresh district will always prompt new questions or suggest fresh answers to old problems of explaining the seeming eccentricity of local farming practice and social organization. At the same time, the student will encounter problems of interpretation which defy solution until more regional surveys are available for comparison. He will notice more acutely than before the lamentable gaps in our knowledge of even general agricultural trends. Writing on the sixteenth century has so far been almost exclusively concerned with enclosure and rent. The seventeenth century has received hardly any attention: the first forty years have been treated as a tailpiece to the boom of the sixteenth century, the next twenty years as a bleak and barren interlude, and the last forty years as a

¹ J. D. Chambers, 'Enclosure and Labour Supply in the Industrial Revolution', *Econ. Hist. Rev.*, 2nd Series, v, 1953, pp. 319-43, and the works cited in the footnotes. The phrase quoted is on p. 327; W. E. Tate, 'The Cost of Parliamentary Enclosure in England', *ibid.*, 1952, pp. 258-65.

² W. E. Minchinton, 'Agricultural Returns and the Government during the Napoleonic Wars', *Agricultural History Review*, 1, 1953, pp. 29-43. This article lists all the returns in print at that time, to which the following should now be added: R. A. Pelham, 'The 1801 Crop Returns for Staffordshire in their Geographical Setting', *Coll. for History of Staffs.*, 1950-51, pp. 231-42.

period of preparation for the so-called eighteenth-century agricultural revolution. This revolution has been seen only through the eyes of four exceptional farmers, Lord Townshend, Coke of Holkham, Jethro Tull, and Robert Bakewell, and is therefore hopelessly out of focus. Later eighteenth- and nineteenth-century writing has dwelt mainly on the changes in land-ownership effected by Parliamentary enclosure, and on nineteenth-century depressions affecting the corn-growing districts. In a sense, however, local studies have postponed immediate consideration of problems of general development by showing that England has not one agrarian history but many, that the old corn-growing areas of the Midlands are not the whole of England. No new survey of English agrarian society and agriculture will be entitled to the name which does not take full account of the diversified character and fortunes of its many regions.

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Mrs Joan Thirsk, B.A., Ph.D., is Research Fellow in Agrarian History at University College, Leicester. She has published *Fenland Farming in the Sixteenth Century*, and a chapter on the modern agrarian history of Leicestershire in the *Victoria County History*.

S. R. Eyre, B.Sc. (London), Ph.D. (Sheffield), is a Lecturer in Geography in the University of Leeds. As a climatologist and bio-geographer he is particularly interested in agricultural problems.

G. E. Fussell, formerly on the staff of the Ministry of Agriculture, took an active part in the formation of the British Agricultural History Society. He has published a number of books, the most recent of which are *The Farmers' Tools*, and *The English Country-woman*.

J. D. Gould, B.A. (London), M.A. (Bristol), is an administrative officer in the Department of Adult Education at University College, Leicester, and author of several studies on economic history published in the

English Historical Review, the *Economic History Review*, and other journals.

J. H. Smith, M.Sc., is Lecturer in Economics at King's College, Aberdeen.

R. Trow-Smith is on the editorial staff of *The Farmer and Stock-Breeder*. He has published *English Husbandry*, *Society and the Land*, and several novels of rural life, of which the latest is *Clay Village*.

T. H. Aston, M.A., is a Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Oxford.

J. G. Jenkins, who graduated in geography and anthropology at the University of Wales, is now Assistant Keeper of the Museum of English Rural Life, Reading.

Miss E. A. L. Moir, B.A., is a senior research scholar in the Department of English Local History, University College, Leicester.

L. F. Salzman, M.A., F.S.A., formerly editor-in-chief of the *Victoria County Histories*, has published *A History of Building in England down to 1540*, and other works.

The Curving Plough-strip and its Historical Implications

By S. R. EYRE

TO all those who find delight in the changing face of the countryside the problem of locating and delimiting the areas of medieval ploughland is a fascinating one. In spite of all the investigations that have been carried out during the past hundred years, however, the problem remains, in the main, unsolved. In some localities a high degree of certainty may have been reached, but the exact boundaries on the medieval land-use map have yet to be drawn for most of Britain. There is still far too much basic disagreement over the interpretation of evidence for even tentative conclusions to be reached.

Contemporary documentary evidence must, of course, remain the chief source of information, but for two reasons documentary evidence in itself usually fails to provide the required answers. In the first place, it is usually fragmentary and scanty, and secondly the places named in documents often cannot be identified on the present landscape. For this reason archaeological evidence and the evidence of place-names and field-names have all to be taken into consideration. The writer emphasizes that he is fully aware of the necessity for using all available evidence in the study of any one small area and that there can be no easy answers or valid short-cuts in historical geography. This paper merely attempts to examine one approach to the problem which has frequently been overlooked.

The occurrence of ridge-and-furrow on the present landscape has frequently been invoked as evidence of former open-field cultivation, and since there is little evidence of the extension of the open fields after the Black Death,¹ the limits of ridge-and-furrow can thus be held to be the same as the limits of late-medieval cultivation.² Unfortunately, it has been demonstrated quite conclusively that the practice of throwing land into ridge-and-furrow persisted right up to the end of the nineteenth century and even beyond.³ In upland Derbyshire considerable areas of land which were, without doubt, common grazing land until after 1800 are today in ridge-and-furrow.

¹ G. C. Homans, *English Villagers of the Thirteenth Century* (Cambridge, Mass., 1942), p. 85; M. Postan in *Economic History Review*, 2nd Series, II, 1950, p. 221.

² M. W. Beresford, 'Ridge-and-furrow and the Open Fields', *Economic History Review*, 2nd Series, I, 1948, pp. 34-45.

³ E. Kerridge, 'Ridge-and-furrow and Agrarian History', *Economic History Review*, 2nd Series, IV, 1951, pp. 14-36.

Furthermore, huge areas of former arable land in this country, particularly the chalklands and other free-draining soils, have always been cultivated in flat lands, no attempt having ever been made to raise ridges.¹ Finally, there is the obvious point that large areas which were in ridge-and-furrow until

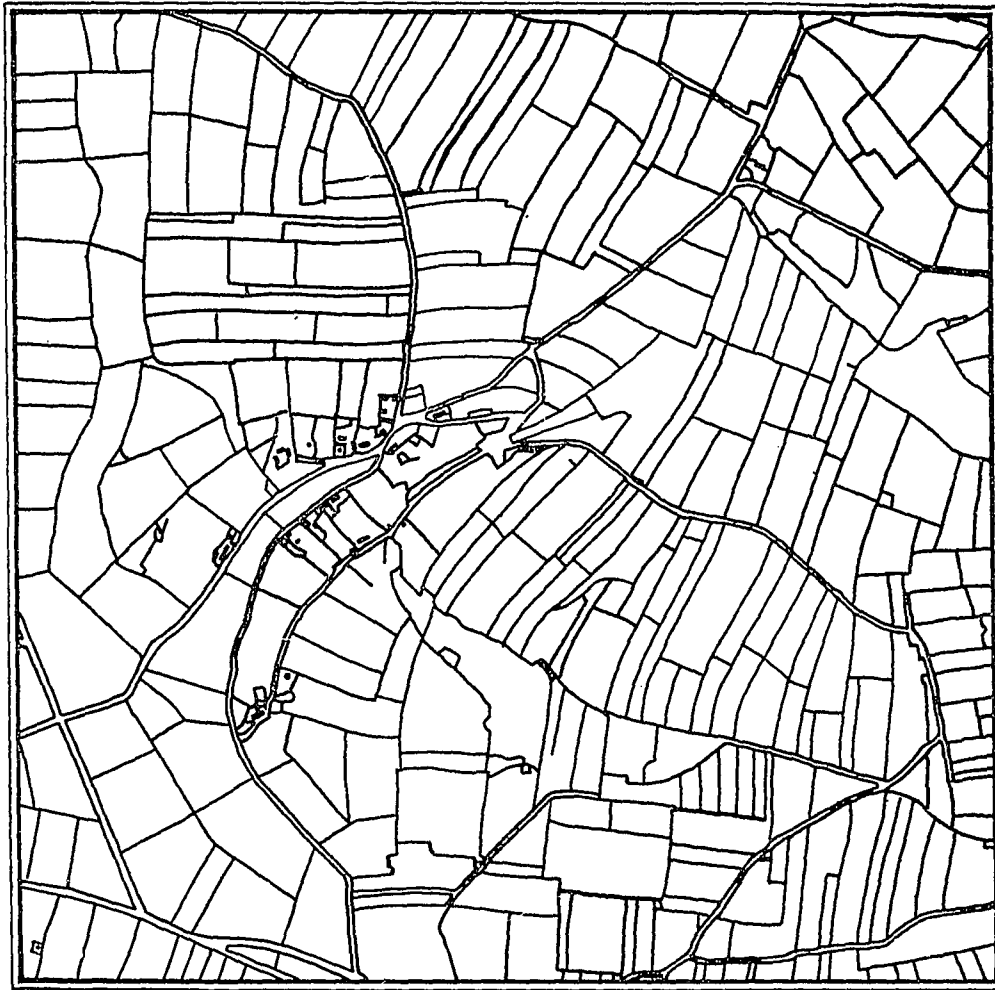


FIG. I

Present-day field patterns near Taddington in north Derbyshire.

the beginning of this century have been levelled since the beginning of the first German war in order to facilitate the cultivation of the land with modern implements. It is clear therefore that an uncritical use of the present distribution of ridge-and-furrow must inevitably lead to most erroneous conclusions.

¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 17-8.

A closer inspection of the form of ridge-and-furrow reveals differences which may be of great historical significance. Some ridge-and-furrow is perfectly straight, but much of it is curved or serpentine in form. Furthermore, wherever the curved ridges have persisted, unmodified, through the cen-



FIG. II

Present field patterns around Wadshelf in the parish of Brampton near Chesterfield.

turies, they have exactly the same form when viewed in plan. They are not in simple curves, nor are they S-shaped; they are always in the form of an elongated and reversed letter S. Not a single example of a complete furlong composed entirely of well-formed S-shaped ridges has been seen by the writer in this country, whereas hundreds of blocks of reversed-S ridges have been examined. Locally in Germany attention has been drawn to abnormal S-shaped furlongs, but here again the vast majority are of the orthodox form. The anomalies are thus so few in number that they can be ignored in the present study, though, as will be seen below, their significance in a study of the evolution of farming technology must not be underestimated.

An examination of the open fields shown on manorial plans of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries reveals that in most cases large numbers of the strips had exactly the same form as the curved ridge-and-furrow. Indeed, even in those fragments of the open fields which have per-

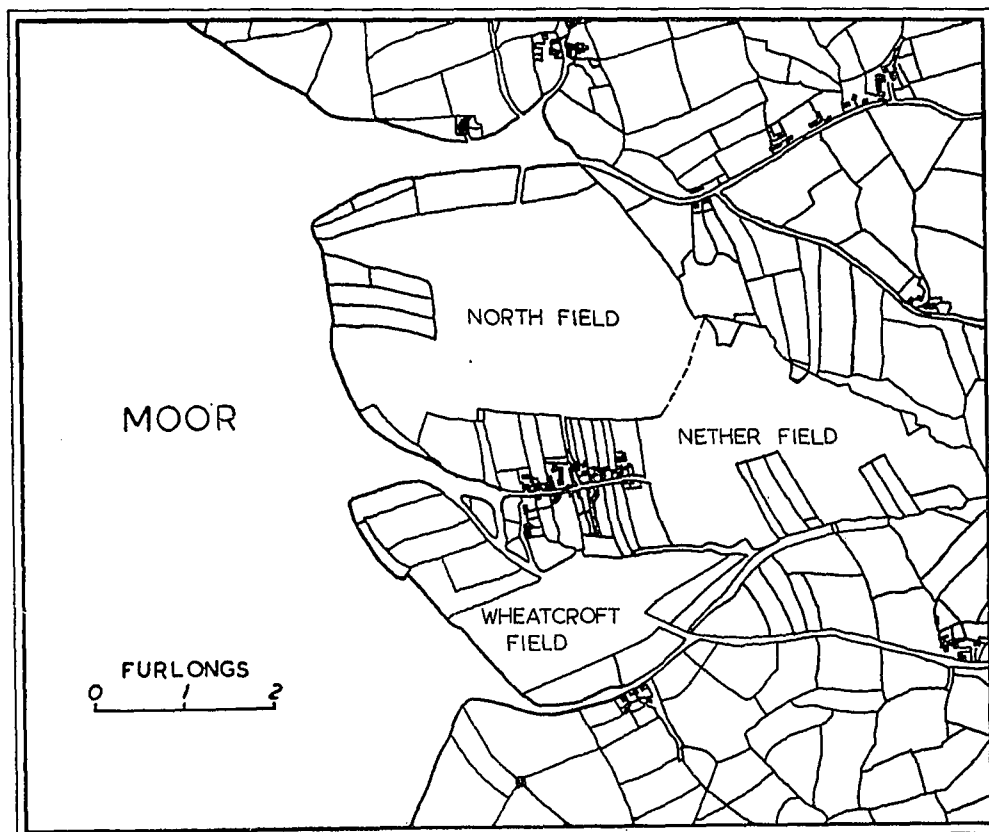


FIG. III.

Plan of Wadshelf and the surrounding area immediately prior to the Parliamentary Enclosure Award of 1827.

sisted into the twentieth century, as at Laxton and Epworth, strips of this form can still be observed.

Finally, in many parts of northern England, particularly in upland areas, exactly the same form is seen, repeated many thousands of times, in the field boundaries. It is particularly frequent in north Derbyshire, where many hundreds have been investigated¹ (Figure I), but it is also found occurring

¹ S. R. Eyre, 'A consideration of the factors limiting land-improvement and settlement on the upland east of the Derbyshire Derwent', Ph.D. thesis, University of Sheffield, 1954 (unpublished).

in greater or lesser numbers in Yorkshire, Durham, and north Nottinghamshire. Indeed, isolated groups of such field boundaries can be found in most counties in England, Wales, and southern Scotland.

It seems logical to suppose that so widespread and constant a form must be evidence of a pattern of activity which was, at one time, at least as widely distributed. The occurrence of the reversed-S pattern may thus be of much greater historical significance than that of mere ridge-and-furrow. The first obvious deduction is that since many open-field strips and much extant ridge-and-furrow have this form, the ploughman, at one time, must have found it convenient to plough furrows of reversed-S shape. The reason why some field boundaries possess the same form is not so immediately obvious, but ultimately has even deeper implications. It has been shown that many fields in north Derbyshire which have such boundaries have names which have usually been accepted as evidence of former open-field cultivation.¹ These fields have such name suffixes as "—furlong," "—flatt," "—town-field," and "—dole." On the other hand, there are, in the same locality, fields called "—intakes" which were all situated around the fringes of the commons at the time of the parliamentary enclosure awards. These fields had obviously been assarted from the waste at a relatively late stage prior to parliamentary enclosure, and the complete absence of the reversed-S form in their boundaries is quite striking. The inference that the fields with such distinctive boundaries were once parts of open fields is thus almost inescapable.

Wherever such field boundaries occur it would appear therefore that they are evidence of the piecemeal enclosure of former open fields. Strips were enclosed as they lay in the open fields, probably in most cases after a certain amount of exchange and consolidation. No recasting of the former pattern of strips and furlongs occurred, so that today this pattern lies fossilized in the field boundaries. In the township of Brampton, near Chesterfield, this process was arrested, almost at the half-way stage, by the parliamentary enclosure award of 1827 (Figures II and III). Here the contrast between the curved boundaries of the islands of ancient enclosure and the straight-sided pattern of the parliamentary enclosures is apparent.

A careful examination of ancient tracts on agriculture from the time of Walter of Henley onwards has yielded no direct explanation for the form of the ancient ploughlands. Just as, in all probability, no modern farming journal would ever feel it necessary to provide space for explaining why modern farmers prefer to plough in a straight line, so no medieval writer ever seems to have felt impelled to explain a practice for which the reasons

¹ S. R. Eyre, *op. cit.*

must have seemed equally obvious. Because of this, writers during the past half-century have been forced into speculation, but only two hypotheses have ever achieved any degree of popularity. It was held by some that the lands were curved so that water draining into the furrows should not flow off so rapidly as to cause serious soil erosion. This hypothesis never achieved a great following, however, and it is obvious that if it were the true reason, an S-shaped curvature would have been just as efficient as a curvature of reversed-S form. Apart from this, the way in which the curved strips ran sometimes up and down, sometimes directly across and sometimes obliquely to the slope of the ground indicates that the curvature of the ridges can have had nothing to do with drainage.

The second hypothesis has come to be held by a number of eminent social historians. It is pointed out that the long medieval plough-team of eight or more oxen yoked in pairs must have been a most cumbersome one to turn at the end of the furrow, and because of this the ridge had to be curved. Even this, however, is not a complete explanation of the characteristic form of the plough-strips. Homans maintained that with a long plough-team, it was "... only natural ..." that the ploughman should begin to turn the team before the plough reached the end of the furrow, and consequently the land gradually became curved at its ends.¹ This explanation assumes two points: first that the land, as initially laid out, was perfectly straight, and secondly that the plough-team was turned right round to the LEFT at the end of the furrow. As will be seen below, neither of these points can be conceded.

The reason given by the Orwins for the curvature of the land is now the one which is almost universally accepted.² They point out that a long plough-team ploughing a straight furrow would need a very wide headland on which to turn. This would have entailed a large amount of waste land, or at least it would have involved the inconvenience of a great deal of badly poached land which could not be cultivated until the ploughing of the main furlongs was completed. This was obviated by having the lands curved at their ends so that the whole team of oxen could continue to pull its weight until the plough itself reached the end of the furrow. At the same time all the oxen could walk out on to a narrow headland at right angles to the general alignment of the strip. When this was completed the front oxen could be led round to re-enter the land. The headland thus needed to be no wider than the width of four oxen.

Unfortunately the above explanation attempts no step-by-step explanation of the processes involved. In particular, it does not explain why the

¹ G. C. Homans, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

² C. S. & C. S. Orwin, *The Open Fields*, Oxford, 1938, p. 34.

curvature of the end of the furrow was almost invariably to the left and not to the right. Bearing in mind the construction of the plough and the form of the ridge, however, one can see why curvature to the left was a necessity. In the first place, throughout the past thousand years of farming in this country, and possibly long before that, the mouldboard has always been on the right-hand side of the plough: the furrow slice has thus been turned over towards the right.¹ It is true that the turn-wrest plough with its transferable share is of great antiquity, but as far as is known at present, down to the last two hundred years it was of purely local occurrence in south-eastern England. There can thus be little doubt that, in spite of the immense number of local variations in plough construction, the vast majority had a fixed share and mouldboard on the right-hand side.

In the second place, we know that medieval plough-lands commonly took the form of high-backed ridges, this being the method by which cultivated land in this country was effectively drained before sub-surface drainage became a common practice in the nineteenth century. There is certainly incontrovertible evidence that the lands were left flat on many areas of good free drainage, such as the chalklands of the south and the Lincolnshire and Yorkshire Wolds,² but though extensive, such areas appear to have been in the minority in Britain. The only method of ploughing a land in order to produce a ridge was to turn all the furrows inwards. This process was called "filling" or "gathering."

If the above facts are considered together, it becomes obvious that the only way to "fill" a land was to plough round it in a clockwise direction beginning near the centre and working outwards. This means that the turning about at the end of the furrow was ultimately to the RIGHT and not to the left as the curve of the strip might suggest. It might be objected that there is no proof that one ridge was completed at a time; is it not possible that the ploughman would plough up the side of one 'rigg' and back down the side of another as is frequently done at the present time? There are two reasons for believing that this was not a common practice. First, Walter of Henley stated quite clearly that the way to plough a land "forty perches by four" was to "go round it thirty-six times." Secondly, many strips shown on manorial plans of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are so narrow that they cannot have consisted of more than one ridge, and it seems reasonable to suppose that in most cases, at least, each man's strip would be ploughed as a unit.

¹ F. G. Payne, 'The Plough in Ancient Britain', *Archaeological Journal*, CIV, 1948, p. 82.

² W. Mavor, *General View of the Agriculture of the County of Berkshire*, 1813, p. 160; J. Tuke, *General View of the Agriculture of the County of York, North Riding*, 1800, p. 103.

Bearing in mind the above points, there appear to be very good reasons why the ploughman should have required curvature to the left at the end of the furrow. It must be remembered that the ridges were frequently very high and steep-sided; they were in fact referred to as "high-backs" in many counties. It was said, for instance, that in Gloucestershire "... a person six feet high may stand in some of the furrows and not be able to see the top of the second ridge from him."¹ These were probably higher than the average, but observations from other counties show that they were not unique. Height differences of three or four feet between the crests of the ridges and the bottoms of the furrows were commonplace. Such heights were necessary on heavy soils, particularly for the growing of wheat.² A ploughman in the last stages of 'filling' a land would thus be turning a furrow uphill on a quite considerable slope, encountering all the difficulties that that implies. Any one who has ever attempted to plough across a steep slope will be aware that when the furrow slice is being turned uphill the greatest difficulty is experienced in preventing it from falling back into its original position. Indeed, it is almost certainly because of this difficulty that the lynchets of our upland areas were made. The problem is aggravated if, for any reason, the direction of the plough deviates sharply to the right. If this is allowed to happen, the rear end of the mouldboard draws away from the slice which it is in process of turning over and the latter almost certainly falls back. With a swing to the left at the end of the open-field ridge, the ploughman was able to keep the mouldboard pressed against the furrow slice during the period when the plough-team was performing its sharpest turn out on to the headland. The inevitable swing to the right when the land was re-entered was not so difficult to negotiate since the oxen had all entered the land and were pulling steadily before the plough was set in the new furrow. No sharp twist to the right would thus be experienced.

The task of manœuvring the plough-team on the headland would also have been a much longer and more difficult operation had the ridge been curved to the right instead of to the left. As it was, the ploughman, when 'filling' a land, was able to halt his plough immediately it reached the end of the furrow and still allow plenty of room for the front oxen to be led back, unhindered, into the required position for ploughing the next furrow (Figure IVA). If the ridge had been S-shaped, the plough would have obstructed the returning oxen, which would have been forced to pass between it and the ends of the ridges, a most cramped and awkward procedure (Figure IVB). The only method of circumventing this difficulty would have

¹ T. Rudge, *General View of the Agriculture of the County of Gloucester*, 1813, p. 103.

² W. Marshall, *The Rural Economy of Gloucestershire*, 1776, II, p. 42.

been to take the plough a considerable distance along the headland and thus leave the end of the ridge open for the returning oxen.

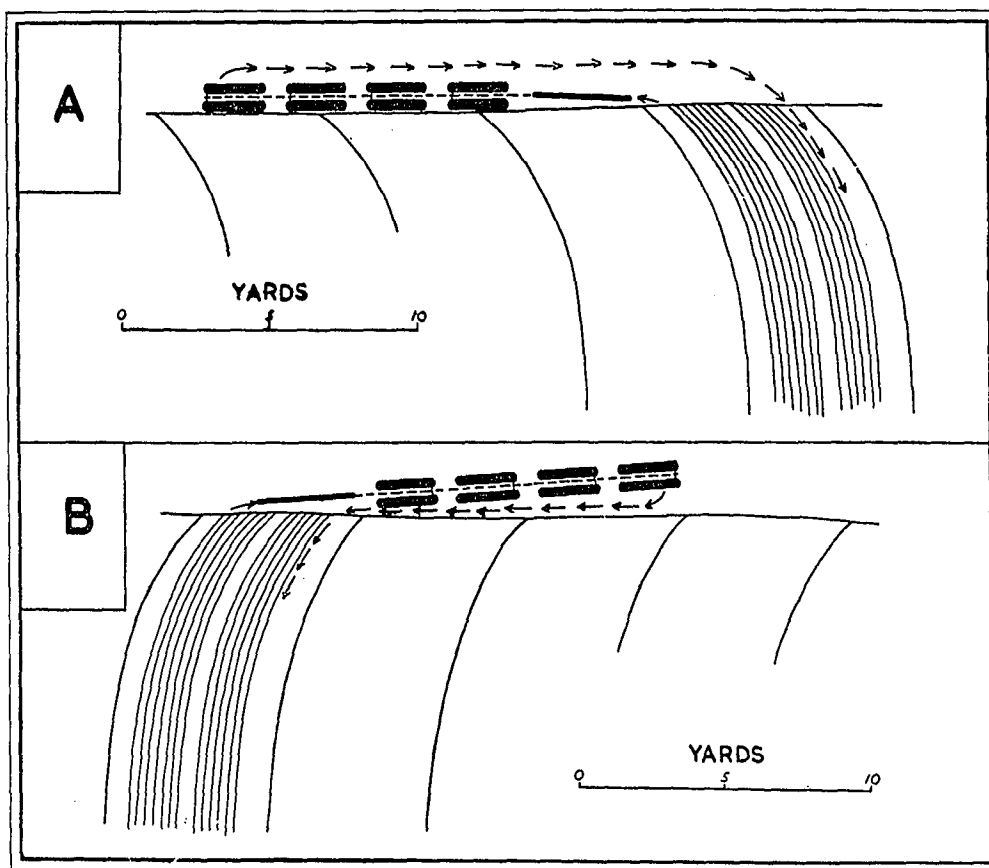


FIG. IV

A. Diagram to show the position of a plough-team of eight oxen immediately after completing a furrow. B. Diagram to illustrate the difficulties that would be encountered in turning at the end of an imaginary ridge with S-shaped curvature.

The above reasons seem sufficient to account for the characteristic form of the plough-strips. The assumption has been made, however, that 'filling' the land was the dominant ploughing operation in the open fields. To what extent would the above arguments be affected if 'splitting', 'cleaving', or 'shedding' was equally important? Quite obviously, in order to 'shed' a ridge, ploughing would have to begin on its flanks and the team would have to move in an anti-clockwise direction. Even if this occurred frequently, however, it does not invalidate the first reason given above. No difficulty would ever be experienced in making the furrow slices fall outwards whichever way the 'tail of the plough' was swinging. If 'shedding' was just as

frequent an operation as 'filling', however, the second reason is invalidated; all the difficulties in turning which were obviated by the reversed-S form when ploughing clockwise, would accrue when ploughing anti-clockwise. In spite of what has been said to the contrary, however, the writer is of the opinion that 'shedding' was of much less frequent occurrence in the open fields than 'filling'. Statements made in the County Agricultural Reports and in other writings of the same period have been cited as evidence that the ridges in the open fields were completely lowered in the fallow year.¹ These same sources can be used to demonstrate that the exact opposite was the case.

Time and time again in the County Agricultural Reports references are made to the hazards of levelling the "old-fashioned" curved ridges in order to straighten them, lower them, or make them narrower. In Buckinghamshire, for instance, even good farmers who recognized the necessity for lowering the old ridges gradually, sometimes carried through the process too rapidly, with resulting infertility.² The cores of these old ridges were obviously very infertile, and there can be but one reason for this: the soil there must have been buried for a very long period. It is thus impossible that these ridges should have been completely lowered and remade every third or fourth year, as has been suggested by Kerridge and others.³ It is known that a certain amount of 'cleaving' went on during the fallow year, since among others Marshall refers to it in the Midlands and Rudge in Gloucestershire,⁴ but the evidence here cited would suggest that the ridges never lost their identity.

Apart from the above argument, it is difficult to see how "serpentine" strips could possibly have survived in that form if they were being completely obliterated at regular intervals. It is particularly difficult to see how complete obliteration could have occurred in those areas where no balks separated the strips. During the eighteenth century, when all farmers seemed to desire straight ridges, it seems obvious that they would soon have altered the ancient curved pattern had they been completely lowering the ridges at frequent intervals. Nevertheless the curved strips persisted.

The process of 'shedding' must therefore have been of much less frequent occurrence in the open field than that of 'filling'. The action of rain-wash

¹ E. Kerridge, *op. cit.*, pp. 16-7.

² St J. Priest, *General View of the Agriculture of Buckinghamshire*, 1810, p. 140.

³ Robert Aitken, 'Ridge-and-furrow', correspondence in *Geographical Journal*, cxx, June 1954, p. 260.

⁴ W. Marshall, *Rural Economy of the Midland Counties*, II, 1796, p. 227; T. Rudge, *General View of the Agriculture of the County of Gloucester*, 1813, pp. 106-7.

and the trampling of animals must have caused a considerable movement of soil down the steep sides of the ridges, so that much more 'filling' than 'splitting' was necessary to maintain them at a constant height. Because of this, it was more convenient to have curvature to the left at the end of the ridge than curvature to the right.

The important problem now arises: how can this distinctive pattern be used in historical geography? Can it be shown that plough-lands with this form could have arisen only in open-field cultivation, and, furthermore, can the origin of such plough-lands be assigned to a particular period in history?

The first part of this question is easily answered. New enclosures were assarted from the waste in late medieval times and farmed in severalty from the outset. There is no conceivable reason why these should have been constructed with their long boundaries in the form of a reversed-S. A brief consideration of the movements of a large plough-team on the headlands shows quite clearly that the surrounding walls of a close would have inhibited the very movements which the form was designed to permit. Closes which today are found to have the fences on opposite sides parallel with one another and with the reversed-S curvature must therefore have arisen by the enclosure of open-field strips.

The problem of the age of the reversed-S forms is a more difficult one, but a study of literary and documentary evidence leads one to almost inescapable conclusions. In the first place, the attitudes of agricultural writers in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries are instructive. Thomas Batchelor remarked that "... all the clay land in the county is in the state of high ridge and furrow bent at the ends into a serpentine form, by some uniform cause, which, in the course of many centuries, has removed the ends of the lands out of their original places."¹ Bailey and Culley noted that "... on the deep-soiled lands, that were used for arable some centuries since, the ridges are mostly very high, broad, and crooked; upon lands that have recently been brought into cultivation, they are straight. . ."² Arthur Young saw that near Skipwith the "old highlands" were being ploughed down because "... they were of bad form, too high for the breadth . . . crooked, and wider at one end than the other."³ Finally the writer of *British Husbandry* referred to ridges in many old enclosures as being "... ploughed time out of mind in a variety of uncouth shapes."⁴ Similar reports, all in the same tone, were made for counties in all parts of England and southern

¹ *General View of the Agriculture of Bedfordshire*, 1808, p. 279.

² J. Bailey and C. Culley, *General View of the Agriculture of Northumberland*, 1805, p. 66.

³ Arthur Young, *General View of the Agriculture of the County of Lincoln*, 1799, p. 94.

⁴ *British Husbandry*, 1837, p. 47.

Scotland, and several clear inferences can be drawn from them. First, there was a distinct correlation between the distribution of crooked lands and the distribution of the better, deep-soiled lands which had long been in open-field cultivation. Secondly, the enlightened farmers had a complete contempt for the curved lands and were anxious to get rid of them wherever possible. The curvature of the ridges by this time performed no useful function and the form was thus completely obsolete. Finally, not only was the "old-fashioned" ridge obsolete, but the farmers were at a loss to understand why men should ever have created such lands. Knowledge of the former function of the curvature of the ridges was lost in the mists of antiquity.

It is therefore apparent that long before the end of the eighteenth century men had ceased to make new curved ridges. When new ridges were made in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries they would be straight unless the long boundaries of the close containing them had the characteristic curvature of the ancient plough-strips, in which case the new ridges might be made parallel to the fences. In the latter case, however, the curvature of the field boundaries is clear evidence that the land within the close was initially part of an open field.

The origin of the curvature must therefore be assigned to an earlier period, for which manorial plans provide valuable evidence. Documents such as the 1635 plan of Laxton¹ show that many strips were curved but that a considerable proportion were perfectly straight. It seems possible therefore that as early as the beginning of the seventeenth century the curved form had long been obsolete and that new straight strips had, in places, replaced the old curved ones.

The above hypothesis is however open to an obvious objection. How can one be sure that the straight strips were not just as old as the curved? Is it not possible that, at the outset, there were some curved ridges and some straight ones? A further study of early manorial plans provides the probable answer to this objection. The straight strips are found to be, on the average, much shorter than the curved ones. Furthermore, in many of the furlongs of straight strips the alignment of the strips was parallel to the SHORT axis of the furlong. This suggests that the straight strips had arisen as a result of complete reorientation; the land had been levelled and new strips created at right angles to the old. This view is strengthened by the fact that many of the headlands of these reorientated furlongs were curved in the characteristic form. An admirable example of this is found on the manorial plan of Lower Heyford in Oxfordshire,² dated 1606, where, in the East Field, two of the

¹ Orwin, *op. cit.*, at the end, Diagrams I to V.

² J. A. Venn, *The Foundations of Agricultural Economics*, Cambridge, 1933, Plate II, p. 34.

original strips had been left as headlands or access strips but the original central strips had been erased and new shorter ones created at right angles to them (Figure V). There is thus very strong evidence indeed to suggest that the straight strips post-date the curved ones.

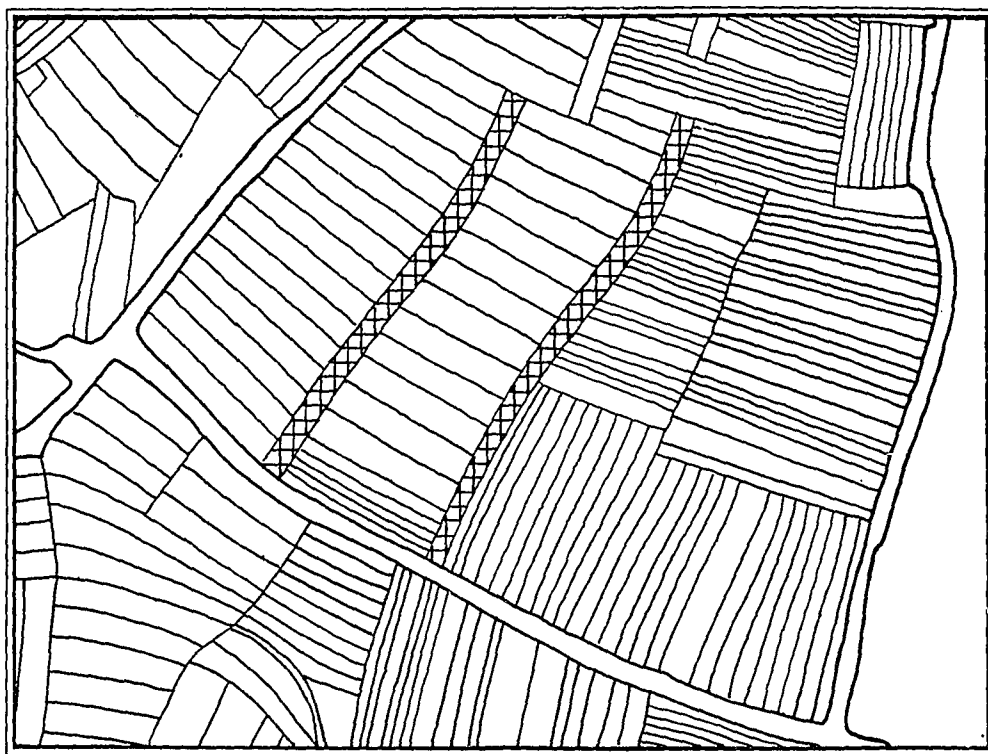


FIG. V

Part of the East Field of Lower Heyford, Oxfordshire, in 1606. The old curved strips which now served as access strips and headlands are cross-hatched.

Since manorial maps of the first half of the seventeenth century covering areas in many parts of the country show the presence of these short, straight strips, there is every reason to suppose that the reversed-S shape was obsolete even by 1600. Since it is, in the main, agreed that there was no enlargement of the open fields in most parts of the country after the great plagues of the mid-fourteenth century, it can be argued that the incidence of curvature be it in ridge-and-furrow and field boundaries on the present landscape or in the form of the strips shown on manorial plans, is evidence of medieval ploughing.

No indication has yet been given to explain why the reversed-S form should have become obsolete at the end of the medieval period. Improvements in farming technique certainly occurred in early Tudor times, how-

ever, and if it can be shown that this made the long plough-team unnecessary, then one can be certain that curvature of the strip was no longer required.

The shortage of winter fodder was one of the main problems of the medieval farmer. The extremely high value of stinted meadow land as compared with that of arable land is evidenced in many medieval surveys and proves beyond doubt how precious were supplies of hay. With the throwing down to grass of much former arable land in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries it seems reasonable to suppose that this situation would be greatly improved. It is most unlikely that summer pasturage and numbers of livestock could have been greatly increased without a concurrent increase in the hay harvest. This almost certainly happened with the large-scale early-Tudor enclosures in the Midlands, and recent research into Derbyshire court rolls has revealed that many pieces of land which were arable in the fourteenth century were referred to as "pastures" in the fifteenth.¹

Because of the shortage of fodder, the medieval plough oxen must have been extremely weak when they left the stall at the end of the winter. In the nineteenth century this time of year was still known as "the lifting" in some parts of Britain, and it is thought that this term arose because the oxen had actually to be lifted from their stalls and dragged out on to the pastures.² Only a week or so after this operation these same oxen had to begin the spring ploughing. It is small wonder that a large team was required for the task. In his study of the history of the manors of Ramsey Abbey Homans found that "... more men joined together in partnership in spring and summer than in winter, that is, the medieval winter, before Christmas."³ It seems possible, therefore, that a long plough-team may never have been absolutely necessary for the autumn ploughing. If, therefore, the winter nourishment of the oxen was greatly improved at the end of the medieval period, there is reason to suppose that the average plough-team may have been much reduced even for the spring ploughing.

In any case, great changes in the actual breed of oxen are known to have taken place in early Tudor times. Medieval cattle appear to have been relatively small. Thus all the cattle skeletons found in the medieval ditches in Cambridge appeared to be of the *longifrons* breed, representatives of which are today found locally in Ireland and western Britain.⁴ According

¹ S. R. Eyre, *op. cit.*

² Nigel Harvey, *The Story of Farm Buildings*, Young Farmers Club Booklets, No. 27, 1953, p. 11. ³ G. C. Homans, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

⁴ T. McKenny Hughes, 'On the more important breeds of cattle which have been recognized in the British Isles', *Archaeologia*, 2nd Series, v, 1896, pp. 153-8. T. McKenny Hughes, 'Medieval Ditches of Cambridge', *Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society*, 1892 and 1893, p. 52.

to data collected by some historians "... oxen, cows, and steers of the fifteenth century were no more than a third of their present bulk."¹ Since there is evidence that much heavier cattle from the Low Countries were imported in early Tudor times, here is another possible reason why the long plough-team may have ceased to be an absolute necessity.

Though the presence of the reversed-S pattern on the landscape can be used as evidence of medieval ploughing, the absence of such a pattern demonstrates absolutely nothing. Both ridge-and-furrow and field boundaries may have been straightened or completely obliterated by various processes, and furthermore, it is still quite possible that in some areas no such form was ever used. In any case no significance should ever be attached to an isolated field boundary of reversed-S form. By sheer chance many of the assarts made in late medieval times must have had single boundaries of this form. It is only when a group of such forms are found *en échelon* that they should be regarded as useful evidence.

Finally, even when all the above provisos have been observed, an uncritical application of this technique is still to be deprecated. No conclusions about the distribution of medieval ploughlands should ever be reached without full reference to all other possible sources of evidence, documentary, archaeological, and philological.

¹ W. Denton, *England in the Fifteenth Century*, London, 1888, pp. 171 and 309.

Notes and Comments

THE JOHN NICHOLS PRIZE

The University College of Leicester offers an annual prize, open to graduates of any university, and also to candidates who are not members of a university, for an essay on some topic of English local history. Candidates may write on a subject of their own choice, provided that such subject has been previously submitted to and approved by the Head of the Department of English Local History. Compositions which have already been published, or which have been awarded any other prize, are not eligible.

The value of the prize is £25. The College

reserves the right to make no award if no essay of sufficient merit is submitted. The College also reserves the right, but does not bind itself, to publish the winning essay in printed form.

The essay must be an original contribution to knowledge, based on genuine research. It must be typewritten, and must not exceed 20,000 words in length. It must be submitted, with a stamped, addressed envelope for return, on or before the 31st of March 1956. Communications, marked "John Nichols Prize," should be addressed to The Reader, Department of English Local History, University College, Leicester.

Crop Nutrition in Tudor and Early Stuart England

By G. E. FUSSELL

RECORDS of actual farming practice in Tudor and Stuart England are scanty. A few farm accounts and diaries describe the day-to-day activities of their writers. The number of such writings as yet printed or recorded is small, though there is every promise that many more may be found by local archivists. Their evidence can only be indications of what may have been done more widely than on the particular farm, or in the locality where the farmer lived. Something, too, can be indirectly gained from the inventories attached to contemporary wills or from court rolls that sometimes lay down rules for the management of the manorial lands, but necessarily little about the use of manure.¹ Contemporary didactic textbooks on farming are at present the most direct source of information. These make little or no reference to theory. If there can be said to have been any theory, it is confined to authoritative assertions, unsupported by any experimental evidence until the beginning of the seventeenth century, when Sir Hugh Plat, Francis Bacon, and Gabriel Plattes made the earliest attempts to combine science with practice.

Textbook evidence must be used with caution. It is now difficult, if not impossible, to decide whether the systems the books recommend were actually practised, and, if so, by what proportion of the farmers. Often the teaching is derived from classical sources, as might be expected, and serves to indicate the continuity of farming ideas during many centuries. They may not have been the actual practice at all, or only in limited areas and on particular farms. Only when a writer states that some practice was customary in a named place is it certain that some farmers actually worked in that way.

The fertilizing resources of the Tudor husbandman were strictly limited. Animal excrement, vegetable waste, and the mixing of soils made up the complete list of his manures. The use of these materials had been common practice for centuries. The Greeks believed that the use of dung as a fertilizer originated in the labours of Hercules when cleansing the Augean stables.

¹ G. E. Fussell and V. G. Atwater, 'Farmers' Goods and Chattels', *History*, N.S. xx, 1935, pp. 117-23; W. G. Hoskins, *Essays in Leicestershire History*, Liverpool, 1950, pp. 123-83.

Later Columella expressed the opinion that manure was the thing of greatest value to the farmer and ought to be studied with the utmost care. The ancient authors on whom he relied had not altogether neglected it, but had discussed the subject with little elaboration.¹ As much or as little could be said for the intervening centuries.

Supplies of dung were very scanty in the early sixteenth century. The livestock were poorly fed and spent much of their time at open range on the common waste, where a good deal of the excrement was voided and so lost to the individual farmer. A small supply was accumulated when the beasts and horses were stabled for the night, or kept in houses or stalls during the winter. This was so exiguous that it was considered good practice to mix it with fresh earth. The crop nutrients did not then get buried so deeply in the soil as to be wasted. It would lie close to the seed as it ought. The sheepcote, too, must be cleaned out every fourteen days and the muck mixed with earth, clay, or ditch mud. Straw or chaff should also be mixed in the heap, and if any could be spared from animal feeding, it should be put in the sheepcote where it could be trodden and mixed with droppings and urine and rot down. Both cowstall dung and this material should be gathered in a heap for future use.²

It was ordinary usage for the sheep to be grazed on the common waste during the day and confined in the cote or fold for the night. A careful farmer would not let them out at once in the morning. He let them stand till they had voided, and thus conserved the manure in a place where it was to his hand, not dropped all over the common grazing. If he had an enclosed fallow field he was advised not to fold the sheep, but to put them into the enclosure. A few stakes driven into the ground here and there encouraged them to rub themselves, and the shepherd drove them about so that their droppings were scattered over the area.³

Every one agreed that this manure ought to be spread on the second ploughing. It was usual to give the corn land three ploughings during the fallow year, both for wheat and barley. If put on before the first stirring the manure would be buried too deep to do any good. After the first was the best time. The second ploughing would then bury the muck, and the third would mix it well with the top soil so that it would lie close to the seed after it was

¹ *De Re Rustica*, ii, 13.

² *Boke of Husbandry*, attrib. to Bishop Grossetete, printed by Wynken de Worde, 1510, reprinted in Francis Cripps-Day, *The Manor Farm*, 1931, chap. ix. Cf. I.B. (James Bellot), *The Book of Thrift*, 1589, *ibid.*

³ *Boke of Husbandry*, 1523, in *Certain ancient tracts concerning the management of landed property* reprinted, 1767, pp. 19, 20.

sown. The importance of placing the manure close to the seed was already recognized.¹

Fitzherbert realized that the ordinary farmer was often unable to accumulate sufficient dung to treat all his arable generously. If a man found himself in these circumstances the best thing to do was to plough down his ridges and make them where the draining furrow had been. Alternately he could make two ridges into one, or three into two. "And so shall he find new mould that was not seen in an hundred years before, the which must needs give more corne than the other did before."² He was a little optimistic. It was not improbable, as some discovered later, that this process would turn up the sterile subsoil, and reduce yields rather than increase them.

A more certain supplement to a farmer's supply of animal manure was vegetable waste compost. This had been recommended by the classical authors and the recommendation was repeated by contemporary writers. Whether it was at all generally followed is difficult to determine.

Cato informed his readers that it was possible to make manure of litter, lupine, straw, chaff, bean stalks, husks, and the leaves of ilex and oak. Columella advised farmers who could not keep livestock to collect leaves and rubbish from the hedgerows and droppings from the highways, and to cut fern from their neighbours' land. This material, with the sweepings of the courtyard, ashes, sewage from the house, and straw, was to be hoarded in a pit. Every waste thing ought to be swept into it. In the midst a piece of oak must be buried to prevent snakes lurking.³ This was good advice. Richard Surfleet recognized it and repeated it in 1600, even unto the piece of oak driven into the midst.⁴

The practice of mixing soil with animal excrement took special form in some areas. In Essex it was usual to plough up the headland, or to dig it up with spades, and throw it up in hillocks before the winter. Layers of dung were put upon each layer of earth, and the rain, snow, and frost rotted the whole down into a useful compost. The horseman was exhorted not to forget the heap. This material was thought very suitable for the barley crop which was extensively grown in East Anglia. If it was not done the headland was so much waste space.⁵ This system was known as windrowing, and was still used in the middle of the nineteenth century.

¹ Fitzherbert, *ibid.*, p. 18; *Surveying*, 1523, *ibid.*, p. 77; Thomas Tusser, *Five Hundred Points of Good Husbandry*, 1577, ed. by William Mavor, 1812, pp. 106, 155, 174, 180; James Bellot, *op. cit.*, 1589; Anon, *God speed the plough*, 1601, ed. with an introduction by J. Christian Bay, 1953. ² *Surveying*, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

³ Cato, *De Agricultura*, xxxvii; Columella, ii, 14; Varro, trans. by Lloyd Starr-Best, 1912, p. 82. ⁴ Richard Surfleet, *Maison Rustique or the Country Ferme*, 1600, p. 67.

⁵ Tusser, *op. cit.*, pp. 51, 52, 101.

On the opposite side of the country Cornish farmers made the mixture with sand from the seashore. This was doubtless more profitable because the sand, mixed with shells, was highly calcareous. They called the process making their sand ridge. William Carnsew of Bokelly did it in June. He built up a large pile of sand, and towards the end of the month added thirty loads of dung a day.¹ It is probable that he added sand in layers as the Essex men did in windrowing, although he does not specifically say so.

Farmers who lived within a dozen miles or so of the coast, particularly in the south-west, habitually collected sea sand for use as a fertilizer. Often it was used unmixed, but no doubt some dung was also spread so that the two were added to the soil, though not in such a well mingled condition as if made into a sand ridge. Pure sea sand was spread on the soil by Cornish farmers at the rate of sixty sacks an acre, two of which made a horse load. Many doubled that number. Those who lived further inland on better soil were content to sow sand almost as thin as their corn.²

In the south-western counties and in other parts of the country where convertible husbandry was practised, the matted grass was cut off in turves when the ley was broken up. The turf was pared off with a mattock or with a breast plough, and piled on the edge in heaps to dry. When thoroughly dry the turves were burned into ash. This practice, being very common in Devonshire, was known as 'denshiring'.

In Cornwall the heaps of ash were mixed with sand heaps and the whole ploughed into the land,³ but the farmers of more inland counties, like Surrey and Shropshire, simply spread the ash and ploughed it in before sowing a crop of rye or oats.⁴

Earth dug out from the ditches and ponds, road scrapings—on the dirt tracks of the day these were a mixture of soil and animal droppings—household dirt, and the ashes of wood fires were all materials that the careful farmer added to his manure heap. Much of this material, especially the calcareous 'creech' derived from the shelly river beds of East Anglia, contained valuable plant nutrients, though the farmers who used them would have been at a loss to say what they were.

All this, coupled with the advice handed down from classical times, suggests that it may have been usual to add leaves and other vegetable waste to

¹ A. L. Rowse, *The Age of Elizabeth*, 1950, p. 103.

² Hugh Plat, *The Jewel House of Art and Nature*, 1594, p. 42; Richard Carew of Antony, *The Survey of Cornwall*, 1602, ed. by F. E. Halliday, 1953, p. 102.

³ Carew, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

⁴ John Norden, *The Surveyor's Dialogue*, 1607, pp. 202, 227; Ernle, *English Farming Past and Present*, 1932, p. 107.

the dung or compost hills in the manner of which Sir Albert Howard was so strong a modern protagonist. At least one gentleman was in the habit of doing this. Barnaby Googe, a Lincolnshire squire, customarily threw twigs, boughs, and straw on the manure heap to help it out.¹ He can hardly have been the only farmer to do so.

Fitzherbert mournfully remarked that he had observed many disused marl pits in open fields. None of the open-field farmers bothered to dig marl and spread it in the early years of the sixteenth century, so far as he could judge. There was a very good and sufficient reason for this. The tenants would not improve their land by this process because they feared that their landlords would demand higher rents. They were not lazy or ignorant, merely prudent. Fitzherbert was convinced that marling well done would keep the soil fertile for twenty years.²

The practice was certainly resumed, if it had ever been completely interrupted, by the end of the sixteenth century, though it may not have been done on the old arable of the open fields. It was probably done more readily on land ploughed out for a few years' cropping and returned to ley, in those counties where the convertible husbandry was usual. Farmers in such widely separated places as Lancashire, Cheshire, Salop, Somerset, Middlesex, Sussex, and Surrey marled their land.³

Gervase Markham was a real enthusiast for using marl. He recalled Pliny's statement that the Britons used marl and that it was mentioned in books of gainage or husbandry written in the days of Edward II, as well as by Walter of Henley. Markham himself describes how it was used by Kentish farmers when bringing areas of Wealden land into cultivation. The quantity of marl used varied widely on different soils—as was wise. Marl was not, he said, good upon clay land. Since the purpose of marling was to improve the texture of light land, this is readily comprehensible. On sandy or hazelly land five hundred cartloads, containing from ten to twelve bushels each, could be usefully spread. The Kentish acre was 160 rods of 16 feet. After applying the marl, this land might be ploughed and wheat sown, but some farmers broke up the grassland and took a crop of oats. After this they spread the marl and sowed wheat. Land treated in this way must not be harrowed down fine. Only one or two crops were taken, and then it was let fall down to grass for five or six years. Markham rather optimistically said that "all this time it will beare a very good and sweet Pasture, well set with a white Clover, or three leaved grasse, most fatning and profitable, both for Sheepe and Bullocks." When the appropriate time had passed the ley was broken up again

¹ Barnaby Googe, *The whole art and trade of husbandry*, 1614, p. 12.

² *Surveying*, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

³ John Norden, *op. cit.*, p. 227.

for two or three years' crops. Under this system the effects of marling could be enjoyed for some thirty years, but if too many successive crops were sown it would be exhausted in five years.

Four sorts of marl were found in the Weald, distinguished by their colours, grey, blue, yellow, and red. Their order of merit was blue, yellow, grey, and red. All were good material if as slippery as soap.¹

Little definite can be learned about the use of chalk, but it was probably used in the compost heaps, if not otherwise. In chalky soils the material dug to mix with dung doubtless contained a mixture of chalk. It may, too, have been used by itself as a fertilizer. Barnaby Googe warned his readers about it. "In some countries," he wrote, "they make their land very fruitful with laying on of a Chalke. . . But long use of it in the end, brings the ground to be starke nought, whereby the common people have a speech, that ground enriched with Chalke makes a rich Father and a beggerly Sonne."²

It is clear that by the end of the sixteenth century lime was burned in some parts of the country and used much in the same way as marl. Markham held the opinion that sandy soil marled, limed, chalked, and manured would yield good crops of wheat or rye for three years, barley for one year, and oats for the following three years. After that it would grow excellent lupines for a season and then good meadow or pasture.³ Walter Blith, at a little later date, supported him. Lime could be applied at twelve to fourteen quarters an acre, or a mixture of lime, soil, and manure applied. From three to five crops could then be taken. The last crop must be well dunged and laid down to grass on the wheat or rye stubble. This dressing was only good for light and sandy lands, and should not be applied to cold wet gravel or hungry clay.⁴

This was no doubt a well established method by 1600. Norden is quite explicit and names the counties where it was the practice. "In *Shropshire*, *Denbighshire*, *Flintshire* and now lately in some parts of *Sussex* they fetch limestone, erect kilns, and burn it on their own farms. . . On the south-east coast from *Rye* to *Suffolk* they burn pebbles for the same purpose."⁵

The use of fertilizers other than dung, dung and soil mixed, or household waste and vegetable waste in a compost heap, was largely confined to places outside the open-field area. All round the coast calcareous sand and seashells and seaweed were collected. In the *Marcher* counties of the west midlands, and in *Sussex*, lime was burned. Along the coast calcareous pebbles were

¹ Gervase Markham, *Inrichment of the Weald of Kent*, 1625, *passim*; cf. *Markham's Farewell to Husbandry*, 1638.

² Googe, *op. cit.*, p. 19 v.

³ *Farewell to Husbandry*, 1638, p. 36.

⁴ Walter Blith, *The English Improver Improved*, 3rd ed., 1653, pp. 134, 135.

⁵ Norden, *op. cit.*, p. 227.

used in the same way by the end of the sixteenth century. Marl was used in bringing the forest land of the Weald and elsewhere into cultivation. It may perhaps be said that the most advanced systems of fertilization were practised away from the open fields, where farming was restricted by common regulation, although Robert Loder of Harwell, Berks, experimented with the use of malt dust and black ashes on his open-field farm there between 1610 and 1620.¹ Farmers working on the convertible system, now known as the ley husbandry, cultivated the land under more elastic conditions, and could therefore adopt new ideas with a certainty of reaping the advantage themselves. Knowing this, they were more ready to try novelties, and it was they who returned to the use of marl and lime most quickly—that is, if the use of these materials had ever been intermitted.

Orchards were part of many farms, but it was not thought possible to lay up sufficient manure to treat the whole area upon which fruit trees were grown. If a stubborn man was determined to do it all, then he must have a larger supply of dung. A trench was dug in the lower end of the orchard and filled with good, short, hot, and tender muck. Similar trenches were dug and filled all across the area, but few farmers could have enough dung to do all this. A better method was to dig circular pits and fill each with fat, pure, and mellow earth. In these pits the trees were planted.²

Hops were a comparatively new crop in England though cultivated in widely dispersed parts of the country, Yorkshire, Essex, Kent, and Cornwall for example. Rotten stall dung was considered the best dung for this crop. The hop grower was strongly advised to use none at all rather than new horse dung which was very pernicious. All the available dung must be kept until it was rotten before use.³ Dove dung from the pigeon cote was another good fertilizer for hops and ought to be carefully preserved.⁴ Some growers laid fern on the hills, and malt dust was used if the grower's farm was near a malting town.⁵

Besides being used for hops, pigeon's dung was valued for other purposes. It was a useful addition to other supplies of animal excreta, but supplies must always have been small. The largest dovecote can hardly have produced enough of this material to fertilize more than an acre or two. Its scarcity made it precious. Gabriel Plattes roundly declared that he had known a load of

¹ Robert Loder's *Farm Accounts*, 1610–1620, Camden Soc., 3rd Series, III, 1936, pp. 43, 59, 135, 136.

² William Lawson, *A New Orchard and Garden*, 1618, ed. Eleanour Sinclair Rohde, 1927, pp. 3, 4.

³ Leonard Mascall, *A booke of the Arte and Maner how to Plant and Graffe all sorts of Trees...* 1572; Reginald Scott, *A Perfite Platforme of a Hoppe Garden*, 1574, p. 33.

⁴ Tusser, *op. cit.*, p. 87. ⁵ Hugh Plat, *op. cit.*, pp. 48, 49.

pigeon dung fetched sixteen miles, and a load of coal given for it, a story that sounds too good to be true. He estimated that the effect on the land was worth double the charges.¹

Most farmers collected fertilizer and made compost heaps in order to enrich their arable land. Some small portion may have been saved for spreading on enclosed meadows or pasture, but there was little to spare for this purpose. Hay meadows were usually the low-lying land on the banks of some river, stream, or brook. Farmers would have been foolish indeed if they had not observed the richness of riparian grassland that was occasionally flooded when the rivers overflowed their banks. Towards the end of the sixteenth century some English farmers set out to regulate the floodings. They constructed water meadows, some of which are still used.²

The process was to cut channels across the land and stop the river or stream so that the water could be diverted. When it had filled the channels, stops in them caused it to flood the land. The flood water was retained for a suitable time until whatever solid material it carried was deposited and then it was drained off, the hatch in the river being opened so that the whole of the river waters resumed their ordinary course. Besides the good meadow that was improved by this means, marshy and boggy land adjacent to streams could be treated. The channels drained it and the aquatic grasses, rushes, and so on, gave place to a more nutritious herbage. Some few farmers used grass seed from the haymow to sow in these meadows, but it was not really necessary to seed down. The flooding induced the growth of grass most suited to the meadow, to the exclusion of other types.

Fitzherbert recommended the process if there was any stream that could be diverted to flood the meadows from after haysel until early May. The water must flow over the ground. It should not be allowed to lie stagnant. Of course it drowned the moles. If the stream came out of a town and was consequently polluted with sewage, and drained middens and dunghills, so much the better. From May onwards the water must be kept off the land.³ This is a clear anticipation of the process later elaborated, if it is not a description, of what Fitzherbert had seen in practice.

It is generally accepted, despite Fitzherbert, that the earliest water meadows in England were made in the Golden Vale of Hereford and in the

¹ Gabriel Plattes, *A Discovery of Infinite Treasure*, 1639, p. 26.

² See E. H. Carrier, *The Pastoral Heritage of Britain*, 1936: "such irrigated or water meadows are found on the hill slopes of East Yorkshire, in the Dove Valley in Derbyshire, and along the rivers Kennet, Churn, Severn, Avon, Itchen, and Test." Some of these may now be derelict.

³ *Surveying*, 1523, f. 42v. Cf. W. Folkingham. *Feudigraphia*, 1610, p. 33; Norden, *op. cit.*, pp. 199, 200, 205-6; Surfleet, *op. cit.*, p. 670.

Wylde Valley in Wiltshire. They were constructed in the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century. Rowland Vaughan was the pioneer in Hereford; the name of the Wiltshire innovator is lost to us.¹ Norden had seen many water meadows in Somerset, Devon, and Cornwall when he wrote his book in 1607.² He regretted that the system was not generally used elsewhere, though it could be equally advantageous. The water is said to add fatness to the land.

Fatness was the essential principle of fertility. Vergil had extolled it. If a soil was naturally fat it was naturally fertile, if it was not then it must be made fat by the addition of manure. A naturally fat soil could be recognized by one or two simple tests or by its ecology. One method was to sprinkle a clod with water and rub it through the fingers. If it was clammy and stuck to the fingers like pitch, it was a fat fertile earth. Another method was to dig a furrow and fill it up again. If it then gaped and was open, the soil was lean and slender. If it reached out it was fat ground. What this precisely means is difficult to decide. If the natural ecology consisted of elm, sloe, bullace, or crab apple, the soil was fruitful, and where bulrushes, thistles, three-leaved grass, brambles, and blackthorn grew, corn could be grown.³

The relative value of the dung of the different species of livestock in crop nutrition was not precisely agreed upon by the different teachers, though so much of what they said was taken direct from classical sources. Hyll thought asses' dung was the best because it contained the least weed seeds. Other kinds should be used when not more than a year old. If kept long they lost some of their strength, an accurate observation. He disliked swine's dung. It was "most oyle." Ashes were good on the garden.⁴

Other people believed that pigeons' or poultry's dung was the richest in plant food. Next was human ordure, though that ought to be mixed with other rubbish of the house. Last was cattle droppings. This advice was that of Varro and Columella.⁵

Tudor and early Stuart scientists and those of much later days looked for one general principle that was the stimulant of plant growth. Much of their thinking was confused by the theories of the alchemists, and because their

¹ Rowland Vaughan. *His Boke published* 1610, ed. Ellen Beatrice Wood, 1897, *passim*. John Aubrey, *The Natural History of Wiltshire*, 1635, ed. J. Britton, 1847, p. 104.

² Norden, *op. cit.*, p. 198. The subject has been discussed in some detail by Eric Kerridge, 'The Floating of the Wiltshire Water Meadows', *Wiltshire Archaeological and Nat. Hist. Magazine*, LV, 1953, pp. 105-18.

³ Thomas Hyll, *A most high and pleasant Treatyse teachyng how to garden . . .* 1563, ed. Violet and Hal Trovillion, 1946, p. 15; B. Googe, *Foure Bookes of Husbandry*, 1577, p. 18.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 26; cf. Googe, *Foure Bookes . . .*, p. 190.

⁵ Googe, *ibid.*; Surfleet, *op. cit.*, p. 671.

enquiries lacked direction. The farmers were quite unable to formulate the problems that confronted them, and could not describe to the scientists the nature of the questions that required answers. Even had they been able to do so the scientists' belief that there was only one principle to be considered, a miraculous salt that would do all things, would have clouded the issue. Bacon himself subscribed to this theory.

All excrements contained this vegetable salt and served to fatten and enrich the soil. It made all seeds flourish and grow. It was the result of the putrefaction of the hay and straw in the dung, and if the dunghill was left uncovered that valuable nutrient leached out. The fallow gathered saltiness from the clouds and rain. It was not common salt but vegetable salt. Few men understood that this was the true reason why dung was good in arable ground, said Sir Hugh Plat.¹

This salt was the nitre that then played so large a part in the chemist's laboratory. No mineral plant or animal could subsist without it. "The whole scientific world extolled in extravagant terms the virtues of a compound the true nature of which it had yet failed to grasp."²

Bacon set out many theories, some quite fantastic, others very near the mark. If vegetation were allowed to die into ground it would, he believed, fatten it, i.e. make it more fertile. He therefore suggested that peas' haulm should be ploughed in. It would, of course, increase the humus in the surface soil. Like others, he was aware that the plant nutrients would leach out of manure if exposed too long to the weather. He thought earth containing saltpetre the finest possible manure. It could be bred by covering in a piece of earth with a hovel or merely laying out some planks. Saltpetre was the same thing as nitre. Marl was high in the list of valuable manures because it contained so much fatness.

Bacon made many experiments to test his theories. He made a hot bed of old well-rotted horse dung and tested the germination of various seeds in it. The seed had previously been steeped all night in water mixed with cow dung. He made various other steeps with other kinds of dung, with ashes, salt, and wine. He watered strawberries with these diluents at intervals of three days, and found they came early.³

Only a few years later three gentlemen took out a patent for a process of steeping seed in rape oil, at the rate of a quart to a Winchester bushel, to promote germination. The soaked seed was treated with a powder consisting

¹ Sir Hugh Plat, *Diverse new sorts of soyle not yet brought into any public use for manuring* . . . 1594, pp. 11, 14, 15.

² Russell M. Garnier, *History of the English Landed Interest*, 1893, II, pp. 287, 288.

³ Francis Bacon, *Sylva Sylvarum, or a Natural History in Ten Centuries*, 1627, pp. 109-51.

of one quart of beans malted, one quart of powdered rape seed cake, and one quart of new lime fresh from the kiln, quenched with urine, and sifted as much as would cover the seed. The powder could also be used as manure on poor ground at about two bushels an acre. Alternative constituents were given in case these things were not available. The idea seems to have been based upon the recent spread of rape culture in many districts, but how widely it was ever adopted, if at all, is to seek.¹

Gabriel Plattes, at the end of the period, set out his theory that there was a double fatness in every compound body, one combustible, and one incombustible. The combustible fatness caused vegetation by its rarefying and vapouring quality when it felt the heat of the sun; the incombustible caused coagulation; of these two fatnesses all riches and treasures were engendered. This theory was stated as one version of the attempt to discover a 'principle' of vegetation that continued throughout the seventeenth and much of the eighteenth centuries. Plattes's fatness was similar to the *magma unguinosum* of Külbel. Plattes admitted that he knew very little, but felt that his glimmering light was better than none at all. The composition of the different kinds of dung varied according to the proportion of the incombustible astringent it contained. Experiment was necessary to determine what was best for the different soil types. Nothing would however increase unless the two fatnesses were mixed. He repeated the warning that the combustible fatness would grow soft, rarefy, and turn into vapour by the heat of the sun. On the practical side he followed the ancient ways, but made some suggestions for steeping seed and dusting it with powdered lime before sowing. He was convinced that the common way of husbandry led to nothing but poverty and barrenness.²

Farmers of this period, both high and low, had one main worry, manure. They could never neglect one source of supply however small, for every crop they grew depended upon the amount available. They were willing to undertake the labours of Hercules to build up a sufficient dunghill or compost heap.

Practical farmers were willing then, as now, to try novel ideas, though the majority were doubtless fond of the usual methods, and likely to stick to what was known to be safe. It is not too much to say that within the limits of the fertilizing material available practice was as effective as supplies would allow. The proof of this is that the national average yield of corn crops was steadily rising. It had been no more than from six to twelve bushels an acre on the best farms that Walter of Henley knew. The ordinary Elizabethan

¹ Anon, *A direction to the husbandman in a new cheepe and easy way of fertilizing and enriching arable ground*, 1634.

² Gabriel Plattes, *A Discovery of Infinite Treasure*, 1639, *passim*. Cf. Edward J. (now Sir John) Russell, *Soil Conditions and Plant Growth*, 3rd ed., 1917, pp. 1-4.

farmer would have been disappointed with less than sixteen bushels in a reasonably good year, and sometimes got much more.¹ This increment of yield had been obtained by following an intelligent empiricism. The time of theory supporting practice was not yet. Science was hampered by its nexus with alchemy, and its concern with the search for the philosopher's stone and other fantasies. Only when the didactic writers began to suggest that experiment should determine what was the best material to be used for a particular purpose did agricultural chemistry come to birth. The suggestions, rather fantastic, made by Sir Hugh Plat, Bacon, and Gabriel Plattes were the labour pains of modern bio-chemistry.

¹ *Walter of Henley's Husbandry*, ed. Lamond and Cunningham, 1890; *Robert Loder's Farm Accounts*, Table 10; Robert Trow-Smith, *English Husbandry*, 1951, pp. 105, 106.

Notes and Comments

THE BRITISH AGRICULTURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

The third Conference and Annual General Meeting of the Society was held at Somerville College, Oxford, from the evening of Thursday, 14, to the afternoon of Friday, 15 April. It was attended by about forty-four members of the Society. The Conference began on the Thursday evening with an illustrated lecture by Dr Arthur Raistrick, Reader in Economic Geology in the University of Durham, on his work on the Kilnsey Grange of Fountains Abbey. This was an open lecture and attracted a number of Oxford people who were not members of the Society. There were three papers on the Friday, the first by Dr Colin Cooke, Bursar of Magdalen College, who spoke on the college estates. The second was by Dr Rodney Hilton, of the School of History at Birmingham University, on Agrarian History in Medieval Warwickshire, and the third was by Dr Stella Davies on Cheshire Farming, 1750-1850.

The chair at the Annual General Meeting was taken by Mr Alexander Hay as the President, Sir James Scott Watson, was unfor-

tunately unable to be present. The retiring officers were re-elected, and Mr V. Bonham-Carter, Mr G. Houston, and Mr W. Harwood Long were elected to the Executive Committee in the place of Dr Joan Thirsk, Mr G. Ordish, and Mr Stuart Maxwell, who retired under Section 8 of the Constitution.

In presenting the report of the Executive Committee, the Chairman said that the Society had had an encouraging year. Membership had risen steadily and was still rising, and the Executive Committee had decided that it would in future be possible to publish two issues of the journal each year. Volume III Part II of the *Review* would therefore appear in the autumn. The Executive Committee had also decided that the time had come when the *Review* could be sold to non-members for the sum of twelve shillings and sixpence per copy. There would also in future be a Library Subscription of one guinea.

THE REVIEW

In accordance with the suggestion aired in our last issue, we publish in this second

(continued on page 113)

Mr Beresford and the Lost Villages: a Comment

By J. D. GOULD

MR BERESFORD's recent volume on the lost villages is an important achievement in agrarian historiography.¹ Its subject is one likely to appeal to a wide variety of reader, from erudite professional to the merest layman. The following comments are offered by one close to the latter end of that scale, for the present writer has no pretensions to more than a marginal acquaintance with Mr Beresford's subject. The criticism of one aspect of Mr Beresford's argument put forward in this paper is therefore submitted with the humility proper to a self-confessed amateur, and moreover it may be that the criticism—which is, however, a major one—has suggested itself to the present writer not so much as an objection to any view which Mr Beresford really holds but as a consequence of a form of presentation which entails the repetition of some points and the virtual omission of others. Even if this is so, however, it seems important that a work which will be read by many an enthusiast with something less than a complete grasp of the findings of modern research should be reliable in its implications as much as in what it explicitly states.

I

Mr Beresford argues that most of our lost villages died in the period 1450–1520. The mid-sixteenth century, which the opinion of contemporaries would have suggested to us as the years when the “black biting monster” was at its most voracious, and the reign of Elizabeth were by contrast times of relative quiescence. Within the period 1450–1520, again, the rate of mortality is said to have been higher in the first thirty-five years than in the remainder. The net cast by the investigation of 1517–8, therefore, which took cognizance only of cases of depopulation occurring after 1488, failed to catch the largest part of its potential haul. The cause of this depopulation is located without hesitation in the profits of sheep-farming. In the later fifteenth century, we learn, wool production became relatively more profitable than that of corn; in consequence, landowners converted land from arable to pasture, in the process enclosing the common fields, evicting their

¹ M. Beresford, *The Lost Villages of England*, Lutterworth Press, 1954. Subsequent page references in the text are to this work.

tillers, and not stopping short even of the destruction of whole villages.¹

Having given such an explanation of the rise of village mortality, it comes naturally to Mr Beresford to explain its subsequent decline in terms of the opposite situation. Cloth exports reached their highest point in the mid-sixteenth century, and in the reign of Elizabeth settled down to a level something like three-quarters of the peak figure. The growth of population, and particularly of towns dependent on the countryside for their food-supply, combined with this stabilization of demand for wool to cause a rise of corn prices compared with those of wool. "This must have been reflected in the fortunes and optimism of graziers. There was no longer that clear advantage in growing wool rather than corn. Indeed in some districts the movement began to be towards more ploughland" (p. 214). Mid-sixteenth century and Elizabethan pamphleteers and preachers continued to fulminate against depopulating enclosure. They did so in fear of a recurrence of a flood of village destruction which had already receded, but "perhaps only the increased profitability of corn in the second half of the sixteenth century prevented its second coming" (p. 146).

This seems all very well, but there is a snag. The careful reader will note that Mr Beresford does not actually tell him that less land was being enclosed and converted in the late Tudor and early Stuart periods, but he might well be forgiven if he inferred from Mr Beresford's presentation that this was the case. Later fifteenth century: wool profitable compared with corn, therefore much enclosure and conversion, therefore destruction of villages; these are the bare bones of Mr Beresford's argument. Later sixteenth century: corn profitable compared with wool . . . therefore much less destruction of villages. The second proposition seems to cry out for the interpolation of the middle term "therefore less enclosure and conversion." Nor does Mr Beresford help the unwary reader to avoid the trap by giving him any facts which would prove the interpolation incorrect. The reader learns, for example, that the findings of the 1607 Commission "deal with simple cases of enclosure on a small scale," and also reflect the enclosure of larger areas "by the assent of the proprietors and without the destruction of the village. This is the 'enclosure and depopulation' of 1607. It cannot rank with the huge enclosures and total depopulation of a century earlier" (p. 145).

¹ Mr Beresford's argument that grass became more profitable than corn in the later fifteenth century because of a rise in wool prices relative to those of corn, is not wholly convincing. It is not easy to accept his thesis that there was a very significant shift in demand for wool in the period, and Dr Bowden may be nearer the mark in suggesting that the special attractiveness of wool lay in lower costs of production at least as much as in relatively high selling prices.—P. J. Bowden, 'Movements in Wool Prices, 1490-1610', *Yorks. Bull. of Econ. and Soc. Res.*, IV, 1952, 109-24.

Our reader might after this be surprised to learn, and Mr Beresford does not tell him, that in the six counties investigated both in 1517-8 and 1607 the aggregate acreage shown as enclosed and converted was substantially greater in the second investigation than in the first.¹ Again, Dr Parker's thesis on Tudor enclosures in Leicestershire is drawn on for a case illustrating the point that even the larger enclosures of this later period generally brought only "hedged fields but not the empty village" (p. 145). Mr Beresford does not, however, draw the reader's attention to another finding of Dr Parker's researches, namely that the average annual rate of enclosure in Leicestershire in the period 1580-1607 was not far short of twice that in the period 1485-1520.²

Mr Beresford could of course retort that he was writing a history of deserted villages and not of the enclosure movement. There would be force in such a rejoinder, though one might still be justified in regretting that in a work which extends over 400 pages, and permits itself divagations in many directions, space could not have been found for a few sentences clearing up a side-issue as important as this. But one cannot entirely avoid the suspicion that Mr Beresford may have had another and less valid reason for not mentioning the continuance in the Midland shires of enclosure and conversion at a high rate. For had he quite explicitly stated the fact, he would then have had to account for two apparent difficulties. Why, in the first place, did the rate of village mortality decline while that of enclosure and conversion did not? And why, if the "balance of advantage," as he argues, tilted heavily towards corn from the late sixteenth century, did such enclosure and conversion continue to take place at all? Mr Beresford would

¹ E. F. Gay, 'The Midland Revolt and the Inquisitions of Depopulation of 1607', *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, New Series, XVIII, 1904, pp. 195-237; J. D. Gould, 'The Inquisition of Depopulation of 1607 in Lincolnshire', *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, LXVII, 1952, pp. 392-5.

² A comparison of acreages enclosed as reported by the official returns on the one hand, with the acreages worked out by Dr Parker from all types of evidence on the other, shows that for Leicestershire the 1517-8 commissioners reported 43 per cent of Dr Parker's total, and their 1607 successors 60 per cent. In both cases the lower totals of the commissioners were due less to the complete omission of villages where enclosure had taken place than to the underestimating of acreages in those places which were reported on. In considerable part, however, this 'underestimating' is only apparent, and reflects the fact that the commissioners were required to report only enclosures of arable for conversion, whereas Dr Parker's figures include a significant area already under pasture at the time of enclosure. Dr Parker records 11,100 acres enclosed in the first thirty-five years of the Tudor period, compared with nearly 15,000 in the shorter period 1580-1607. These figures are however subject to the qualification that Dr Parker had to omit a number of cases for which acreages could not be estimated.—L. A. Parker, *Enclosure in Leicestershire, 1485-1607*, London Ph.D. thesis, 1949, pp. 187-8.

have had little difficulty in solving the first of these problems, but there is no suggestion in his book that he knew the answer to the second, and if he did not, the consistency of his argument could only be maintained by tactfully avoiding any emphasis on the awkward fact that long after most of the lost villages had disappeared, the current of changing land-use over much of the Midlands continued to flow away from arable and towards pasture.

II

The answer to the first of our two problems is well enough known, and indeed is really given by Mr Beresford himself, albeit in a rather haphazard and incidental way. In the first place, there would be a natural tendency, as he several times points out, for the smaller places and the places where the tenurial structure was favourable to the would-be convertor to go first. As these riper villages disappeared, therefore, there would be an ever greater stimulus to proceed if possible by agreement, and if not, to enclose and convert something less than the whole area of a village.¹ Secondly, some weight must clearly be allowed to Tudor agrarian legislation and to the fact that Tudor prerogative courts and administration were more able and willing to give protection to tenants than their predecessors (p. 212 and chapter 4). Further, from the later sixteenth century a gradual change came over the enclosure movement in that the peasantry themselves took an increasing share in initiating the change of land-use—partly, no doubt, because for reasons already given the path of the big landowner was becoming more difficult, and partly because many smaller men had taken advantage of the opportunities offered by the conditions of the period to strengthen their economic position.²

III

Our second problem is more difficult. The paragraphs which follow suggest one possible solution, but a satisfactory answer will not be arrived at without further research which, if carried out with a clear understanding of the analytical problems involved, could make a contribution of major significance to our knowledge of economic growth in the early modern period.

We arrive at the core of the difficulty if we re-examine Mr Beresford's argument concerning regional variations in the rates of conversion and of village mortality. He explains these in terms of the suitability of different lands for different purposes. Land which was markedly more suited to corn would remain under the plough even when the "balance of advantage"

¹ Cf. W. G. Hoskins's remarks in 'The Deserted Villages of Leicestershire': *Essays in Leicestershire History*, Liverpool, 1950, pp. 106-7.

² Parker, *op. cit.*, pp. 190 ff.

was strongly in favour of grass. Land markedly more suited to grass, or with large areas of woodland, would be unable to spare greater acreages for pasture and would have achieved a balance between competing land-uses before the late fifteenth century. It was the marginal lands of the Inner Midlands, almost equally suited to corn and to grass, which responded most sensitively, so Mr Beresford tells us, to the increased margin of profit from pasture as demand for wool grew relatively to that for corn in the later fifteenth century.

Common sense is on the side of this theory. But if it were in itself an adequate explanation, why on these same lands—sensitive, as Mr Beresford himself recognizes they must have been, to swings of the “balance of advantage” *in either direction*—was there not a very substantial degree of reconversion to arable if, as we are told, the balance swung markedly back in favour of corn in the later sixteenth century?¹ Why, on the contrary, did the process of conversion to pasture continue, as the 1607 returns and other evidence agree in showing it to have done?

It may be that Mr Beresford has oversimplified the market situation. The market for wool was a very wide one; that is to say, the value of wool was sufficiently high in proportion to its weight for it to be economically worth while to carry wool for long distances by land. Therefore it is realistic to consider aggregate national demand for wool—and, for that matter, international demand too—as having some influence on land-use in every part of the country. The market for corn, however—and it is this which Mr Beresford overlooks—was more restricted, because, save in years of exceptional dearth, it was not profitable in sixteenth-century conditions to carry corn more than a relatively few miles *by land*. It could be, however, carried for long distances by water. The growth in London's demand for corn, therefore, which was certainly an important determinant of economic development in the late sixteenth century, did not act in so simple a way as might be imagined. The demand was of course partly met by imports, but so far as English corn served the need, it came from areas of good corn land relatively near the sea, or in the Upper Thames basin (whence it was transported down-current by river). In these areas, therefore, metropolitan demand exercised a significant influence; the level of corn prices was generally higher than the average for the country as a whole, and the differential of

¹ Mr Beresford is not unaware of this objection, but I find his reply to it—in terms of the difficulties of reconversion—unconvincing. Landowners who, when the profit motive had pulled towards grass, had braved the practical difficulties and unpopularity of the convertor, would surely not have been slow to reconvert with the whole weight of governmental policy and public opinion in their favour. In any case the reply does not explain the continuance of conversion to pasture.

profit in favour of the plough was maintained, as London grew, so as to keep the rate of conversion to a low level. In the Inner Midlands, however, the situation was different. The region was for the most part neither connected with London by water, nor near enough by land for metropolitan demand to exercise there a significant and regular influence. The area was, then, one of low corn prices,¹ and a small rise in the marginal rate of profit on pasture would exercise a maximum effect. When in February 1620 the Justices of the Peace for Leicestershire were invited to consider the provision of a storehouse for corn, they excused themselves on the ground that a storehouse was superfluous in their county, this being "remote from any means of exporting grain."² Towards the end of the Stuart period Andrew Yarranton, trying to persuade landowners that improvements of inland waterways were to their advantage, pointed out that the price of corn was low in Leicestershire, and in Warwickshire until the Avon was made navigable, these counties "having no Navigable River near to carry it away," and farmers being in consequence "lockt up in the Inlands."³ It was this remoteness which insulated most of the Inner Midlands from the growing corn demands of the capital, and allowed the region to continue as the classic area of enclosure for conversion even in the early Stuart period.

This picture is, of course, painted with a very broad brush indeed, and there were probably major regional variations even within the Midland area. For example, parts of Buckinghamshire (which returned a lower acreage of enclosure in 1607 than in 1517) came within the Upper Thames sector of the metropolitan grain market, as did much of Oxfordshire (which was not visited at all in 1607). Some parts of the South Midlands, notably of Bedfordshire, fattened cattle for the London market, and from an early date some of Bedfordshire's enclosures must have been for meat, not wool, production. As London grew, the meat demand of the capital probably influenced wider and wider areas; it was certainly to the satisfaction of that

¹ N. S. B. Gras, *The Evolution of the English Corn Market*, Harvard Economic Studies, XIII, 1926, p. 119. This evidence relates to the late seventeenth century, but there can be little doubt that price differentials as between regions would be similar a century earlier. Most of Rogers's prices for corn came from places more or less under the influence of London demand, and thus reflected the rise of metropolitan prices from the late sixteenth century onwards. Dr Bowden (*loc. cit.*) combined Rogers's corn prices with his own wool prices and thus naturally found relative prices moving decisively in favour of corn in the late Tudor and early Stuart periods. Mr Beresford, in turn, supported his explanation of the arrest of depopulation by Dr Bowden's tables, not realizing that as a measure of relative price movements as between wool and corn they might not be valid for areas unaffected by metropolitan demand for corn.

² *Cal. S. P. Dom.*, 1619-23, p. 124.

³ Quoted in T. S. Willan, *River Navigation in England*, O.U.P., 1936, p. 46.

demand that increasing areas of Leicestershire's rich pastures were devoted as the seventeenth century progressed.¹

IV

The above argument, if valid, would in part supplement and in part correct Mr Beresford's account of the chronology, causes, and geography of the conversion movement. It requires confirmation or refutation at many points, and it is for the local historian to undertake the research which will provide one or the other of these. More accurate knowledge of prices, particularly of regional variations in the prices of primary products, would carry us a long way. Detailed studies of crop and stock distributions, like those of Dr Hoskins for Leicestershire and Dr Thirsk for Lincolnshire, provide valuable clues, especially if we can have them for contrasted types of county and at different dates for the same county.² Our knowledge of local markets in the early modern period is conspicuous mainly by its absence. Until further research on these points, however, is forthcoming, the foregoing suggestions provide a perhaps plausible refinement to the argument, and smooth over some of the difficulties from which Mr Beresford's account does not seem entirely free.

¹ W. G. Hoskins, 'The Leicestershire Farmer in the Seventeenth Century', *Agricultural History*, xxv, 1951.

² For example, Dr Hoskins's work on Leicestershire inventories in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries confirms that the county was virtually immune from the influence of London's demand—or any growing demand—for corn. There is no evidence of such influence in what the inventories reveal about land-use.

NOTES AND COMMENTS (continued from page 106)

part of Vol. III a list giving particulars of research in progress. Now that the Review is appearing twice yearly, it is hoped to make such lists a regular feature, alternating with the bibliographies of recent books and articles on agrarian history. The editor and compiler wish to thank all those members of the British Agricultural History Society and others who have assisted by supplying details of their own work; and they will be glad at any time to receive further information enabling the list to be amplified and brought up to date.

DR C. S. ORWIN

Members will have heard with regret of the death of Dr C. S. Orwin. Dr Orwin was the first director of the Oxford University Agricultural Economics Research Institute, a post which he held from 1913 until his retirement in 1946. It was in the field of agricultural economics that most of his work lay, but he also played an extremely important part in furthering the study of agricultural history. Since the formation of the Society his health prevented him from attending any of the

(continued on page 118)

The Cattle Trade of Aberdeenshire in the Nineteenth Century

By J. H. SMITH

BEFORE the introduction of sea and rail transport only store animals surplus to local requirements were exported from Aberdeenshire and the north-east. They were driven south, many of them to be fattened in Norfolk for the London market. The journey was costly in time since the rate of travel rarely exceeded sixteen miles per day, and considerable loss in condition occurred even with the hardy type of beasts bred in the northern half of Scotland. Animals often suffered injuries or were stolen, and there was the added risk that drovers might abscond with the money realized by the animals when sold.

Farmers, and especially small farmers, were highly dependent upon dealers and drovers, and on occasions when the scarcity of fodder coincided with a severe winter they often had to sell at prices dictated by buyers.

Steam transport opened up new markets and in particular made the London fat stock market available to farmers in Aberdeenshire; it "opened Smithfield market and its prices to Aberdeenshire as well as to Norfolk. The drover's occupation was gone. It was no longer the raw material that left for the south but the finished article of commerce, carrying as is well known the highest price in the metropolis."¹

SEA AND RAIL TRANSPORT

Transport of cattle by boat from Aberdeen to London commenced in 1828. At first shipments were small, for there was a lack of ships fitted for this trade, and farmers dreaded losses at sea. The following summary shows the progress made during the twenty years prior to the opening of the Aberdeen Railway in 1850.

1828-32 Yearly shipments increased from 150 to 800.

1833-6 Yearly shipments increased from 1,250 to 8,049.

1836-41 Yearly shipments varied between 5,843 and 8,049.

1842-9 Except for one year the yearly shipments increased from 9,543 to 15,858.

After 1850 sea transport of cattle declined to about one-third of its previous size, but many farmers continued to use the sea route until well into the present century.

Sea transport suffered from a number of disadvantages and limitations. Storms at sea caused delays and losses. William McCombie, a foremost breeder of Aberdeenshire cattle in the nineteenth century, noted: "I have known them [the ships] a month at sea. I have seen the same cargo of cattle driven back to Aberdeen two or three times. Although the loss by deterioration of condition must have been great, it was astonishing how few deaths occurred in sailing vessels; the proportion was greater in steamers. A year seldom passes without the shippers having heavy losses. I was owner of part of the cattle when every beast aboard the *Duke of Wellington*, except three, was either thrown overboard or smothered in the hold."²

The sea route limited Aberdeenshire farmers to markets served by east coast ports, and although London was a large and growing market, butchers knew that farmers in the north-east had few other fat stock markets open to them.

In 1850, when the Aberdeen Railway was opened, 12,000 cattle were carried by rail to

¹ A. Harvey, *Agricultural Statistics of Aberdeenshire*. British Association, Aberdeen Meeting, 1859.

² W. McCombie, *Cattle and Cattle Breeders*.

Edinburgh, Glasgow, and London, and over the twenty years from 1850 to 1870 (years for which railway statistics on the movement of cattle from Aberdeen are available) the equivalent of between 27,000 and 44,000 cattle passed through Aberdeen each year on their way by rail to markets in the south. The yearly numbers varied more commonly between 34,000 and 44,000, and nearly 90 per cent of the trade was with London. As railway communications extended north and westwards from Aberdeen an increasing number of farmers changed over to the production of fat cattle. Each proposal for an extension of the railway system was studied with care, and when alternative routes were proposed for the same area the case for and against each was fought in the local press and on Parliamentary Committees. Naturally, every farmer, while reluctant to have his own farm severed by railway embankments and cuttings, was anxious that the railway should pass within easy reach of his stading.¹

The advantages of railways to cattle rearers and feeders are seen in the following extract, which compares conditions before and after the introduction of railways. A writer to the *Aberdeen Free Press* in 1860 noted: "Those who have a distinct recollection of the last twenty years will remember that when there was a season of scarcity of food for cattle coupled with a severe winter, the price of cattle generally went down 30 to 50 per cent. There was not only the necessity of selling off the extra stock to save the keep, which the buyers were but too well aware of, but the drove roads being blocked with snow, presented serious difficulty in removing the cattle after they were sold." He then dealt with the conditions during the winter of 1859-60. "For the last five months the farming interest has had to contend with all the difficulties of scarcity of feed and a severe winter, and how has he come out of them? Why, he could sell every fortnight through the winter to willing buyers at a good price, if he was inclined to do so, or if he would keep

them on he had oil-cake in unlimited quantity within three or four miles of his door along the line of the railway."²

One important advantage to farmers following the introduction of rail transport was the reduction in freightage rates. Steamship owners had previously been charging up to £3 per head for taking cattle to London, but after 1850 the rates were steadily reduced until in 1865 the journey by sea cost only 21s. and that by rail about 25s. per beast.

Only small quantities of meat, mainly salted pork, were dispatched by sea before 1850, but by 1855 butchers in Aberdeen had developed a substantial trade in beef carcasses and in that year 8,000 tons of beef—the equivalent of 28,000 carcasses—went by rail to London. This trade in meat reached a peak of just over 10,000 tons—about 35,000 carcasses—in 1865.

CHANGES IN OUTPUT

It is difficult to make any precise assessment of the increase in production of cattle in Aberdeenshire during the nineteenth century, largely because of changes in the character of the trade, the increased dependence upon imported store cattle, and the growth in the number of cattle produced outside the county which passed through Aberdeen on the way to markets in the south. At the beginning of the century the yearly output was about 22,000 cattle, of which 12,000 left the county as lean beasts to be fattened in England. In 1870, the last year for which estimates are available,³ 11,224 fat cattle and 8,040 tons of meat—rather more than 28,100 carcasses—left Aberdeen. In addition just over 26,000 beasts were slaughtered for consumption in the county. About one-half of this total of just over 65,300 cattle were bred and reared in the county, perhaps rather more than one-quarter were imported stores fattened in the county, and the remainder came into Aberdeen as fat beasts from other north-eastern counties. Bearing in mind all the circumstances, the production of beef within the

¹ *Aberdeen Free Press*, 2 May 1856.

² *Aberdeen Free Press*, 30 March 1860.

³ *Aberdeen Free Press*, 15 September 1871.

county, as distinct from the sale of fat cattle, doubled during the years 1800 to 1870. Expansion after 1870 was relatively small compared with the growth during the first sixty years of the century.

DEPENDENCE UPON IMPORTS

The expansion in the cattle trade was made possible by the imports of store cattle. Farmers in Orkney and Zetland began to export cattle to Aberdeen in 1868, and between that date and the end of the century they sent between 6,000 and 9,000 beasts each year. It is not known how many of these were fat and ready for slaughter on arrival at Aberdeen, but perhaps most of them came to the mainland for fattening.

Ireland sent large numbers of store cattle to Britain each year, and many came to Aberdeenshire. Unfortunately there are no figures showing the extent of the county's dependence upon stores from this source.

Canada had been sending live cattle to Britain for several years before 1890, when exporters began shipping animals direct to Aberdeen. Supplies from this source came to an end in 1893 when an embargo was placed upon imported store cattle¹ in an attempt to rid the country of pleuro-pneumonia and other contagious diseases of cattle. During the three years 1890 to 1892, however, nearly 39,000 Canadian cattle came to Aberdeen. Some of these may have been slaughtered on arrival, but most of them went to farms in the north-east to be fattened. In these three years the imports from Orkney and Zetland and from Canada averaged 20,000 per year and when to this is added supplies from Ireland it will be seen that the dependence upon imported store cattle was appreciable.

This dependence was so important that many farmers became greatly alarmed when the government imposed its embargo. They maintained that Canadian store cattle were particularly suited to their system of stall feeding. Breeders and rearers naturally

favoured the embargo because they hoped it would eradicate cattle diseases and also increase the profitableness of their farming enterprises. Low prices had caused store raising to be unprofitable, and this was said by some to be a good reason why store raisers should turn to cattle fattening and obtain their lean animals from outside the county.² Opponents of the embargo maintained that the restriction had benefited the Irish and not Scottish farmers. When supplies from Canada were terminated, many farmers turned to Ireland for their store beasts because the small Aberdeen type of cattle did not suit their requirements.

BREEDS OF CATTLE

By the 1880's farmers in Aberdeenshire had established three distinct types of cattle enterprises. In the remote areas store cattle were produced and sold to the lowlanders for fattening. Some farmers in the lowlands bred and fattened either Aberdeen cattle, short-horns, or crosses of these two breeds. Others either concentrated on fattening the larger type of imported store beast or fattened native-bred animals. Fatteners produced cattle for markets, catering for the varying needs of large and small families and with widely differing incomes. This tendency towards specialization was a distinct outcome of improved transport and demonstrates how farmers adapted their businesses to the needs of a wider and more variable market.

At the beginning of the century farmers produced cattle able to live hard on the meagre supplies of food from poor and exhausted soil; cattle which could withstand the rigours of the long journey by road to fattening farms in England. But after 1828 they rapidly turned their attention to fattening cattle for the London market. They soon became convinced of the importance of breeding and feeding for early maturity, and found it was more economical to "feed the

¹ The embargo did not apply to Ireland.

² Royal Commission on Agriculture: *Report of Assistant Commissioner for the counties of Perth, Fife, Forfar, and Aberdeen*, 1894. C.7342.

young cattle properly from the commencement and not *keep them alive* until three years old, and *then* feed them."¹ Early maturity meant lower costs of production, and "in the place of pure bred animals of the slow feeding Scotch breeds, beasts crossed with the shorthorn are brought to market one or two years earlier, and of greater bulk than could formerly be accomplished. Now, though the proportion of fat to lean meat may be somewhat greater than in the older pure Scots, it will be found that the consumable meat is also greater."²

The shorthorn had size and a more favourable rate of growth, but the quality of its flesh was inferior to that of the Aberdeen breed. It was claimed by some that the Aberdeen shorthorn cross-bred beast combined the best qualities of each of the parent stocks. One Aberdeenshire contributor to the Second Statistical Account noted, "The bullocks of this cross attain a greater weight in three years with good keep than the pure Aberdeenshire in four; and, from the facility with which they can be conveyed by steam, without loss of weight, to London markets, they yield a much greater remunerative price to the feeder."³ It was generally admitted, however, that the cross-bred animal was inferior to the pure native stock, but "as no preference seems to be given to the pure Aberdeenshire breed in the London market, an inferiority in the article exposed to him, so long as that inferiority does not affect its exchangeable value, cannot be supposed to have much influence with the Scottish farmer."⁴

Breeders feared that Aberdeen cattle would decline in numbers and "that the good name of Aberdeenshire will be lost in the London markets."⁵ The changed circumstances produced a conflict of interest between breeders and fatteners. The former, regretting the growing tendency of fatteners to buy the larger type of lean animal bred out-

side the county, failed to appreciate that the demand for high-priced top-quality joints from Aberdeen cattle was limited and that any substantial extension of demand for fresh meat was dependent on the production of larger and cheaper joints. The larger store cattle could be fattened cheaply and sold at prices attractive to butchers supplying the needs of lower middle and working-class people with large families.

Published information on the relative importance of breeds is limited to data collected under the Markets and Fairs (Weighing of Cattle) Act, 1891. Under this Act provision was made at the larger markets for weighing and grading cattle. Use of the facilities was voluntary, but at Aberdeen the proportion of all cattle entering the market which were weighed and graded increased from just under 30 per cent in 1893 to well over 40 per cent at the end of the century. The reports relating to the operation of the Act during the two years 1894 and 1895 showed that the native breed accounted for less than six, and cross-bred beasts for more than 86 per cent, of all cattle presented for weighing at Aberdeen market. These figures understate the importance of Aberdeen cattle, and it seems likely that weighing and grading found greater favour with the feeders of cross-bred beasts than with the owners of the smaller native stock. The former liked to advertise size while the latter preferred to direct buyers' attention to conformation, the more favourable relationship between live- and dead-weights, and quality.

Aberdeen cattle presented for grading at Aberdeen market in the two years 1894 and 1895 were of slightly lower quality than the cross-bred beasts; this is contrary to the known differences in quality of the two classes and supports the view that the better class Aberdeen cattle were sold without being weighed and graded.

¹ 'A Word for the Native Breed of Cattle', *Aberdeen Journal*, 25 January 1854.

² *Aberdeen Journal*, 19 September 1860.

³ Rev. Thomas Burnet, Parish of Daviot, Aberdeenshire. Second Statistical Account.

⁴ Rev. Robert Robertson, Parish of Ellon, Aberdeenshire. Second Statistical Account.

⁵ *Aberdeen Free Press*, 6 June 1862.

PRICES

During the first half of the century, when the cattle industry of the county was largely independent of outside supplies of store animals, there were few complaints about prices. Steam transport had proved such a boon that farmers' main concern was to expand the production of fat cattle. When, however, large numbers of farmers turned away from rearing and concentrated on fattening purchased store beasts, there were frequent complaints, mainly from feeders who suffered from adverse short seasonal fluctuations. Between 1850 and 1867 prices of fat cattle rose steadily; by the latter year they had increased by 50 per cent, and in the absence of short period fluctuations the improvement favoured both breeders and feeders.

Between 1869 and 1884 prices remained high, but short period fluctuation often caused feeders to suffer losses or at best to earn only small profits. During the winter of 1871-2 some farmers complained that the prices realized by fat cattle were 15s. per cwt below those previously paid for the same beasts as lean stores. Feeders felt fairly confident of being able to plan for normal long-

term trends; it was the unpredictable short period fluctuations which made cattle fattening a risky undertaking.

The steady decline in prices which began after 1884 caused greater difficulties for breeders than for feeders, since it was not so easy for the former to make adjustments in their cattle enterprises to meet falling prices. On many of the breeding and rearing farms the major items of farm expenses were fixed, and occupiers often felt themselves to be at the mercy of the feeders, who were able to pass back to producers of store cattle almost all the expected reductions in prices and stabilize their own 'feeders' margin'. Prices of animal feeding stuffs declined rather more sharply than those of fat cattle and since feeders were more dependent than rearers on purchased foods, the general movement in prices was more favourable to them.

Throughout the century, however, cattle rearing and fattening was, financially, more satisfactory than the production of grain crops for sale. And those farmers in Aberdeenshire who concentrated on the production of pedigree or of top-quality fat cattle had little cause for worry even in years when prices were generally low.

NOTES AND COMMENTS (*continued from page 113*)

meetings, but he took a keen interest in both the work of the Society and this *Review*. His first historical publication was *A History of Wye Church and Wye College* in 1913. There followed in 1928, perhaps his most important work, *The Reclamation of Exmoor Forest*. Together with his wife he wrote *The Open Fields*, which was first published in 1938. His last book, *A History of English Farming*, came out in 1949.

SURVEY OF ENGLISH FOLKLORE

Plans have recently been announced for a survey of English Folklore which is to be made by the English Department of University College, London, under the guidance of Pro-

fessor A. H. Smith with the assistance of Mr J. McN. Dodgson. The survey will aim at the study of the traditional elements in the life and customs of England and will include such topics as folk-tales, anecdotes, beliefs and superstitions, customs, traditional plays, games, pastimes, and so on. Information about the traditional material culture will be recorded, but primarily as a background against which folklore may be properly examined.

Members of the Society who feel they may be able to help in this important work are asked to get in touch with Mr J. McN. Dodgson at the Department of English, University College, Gower Street, London W.C.1.

Work in Progress

Compiled by JOAN THIRSK

The following list does not lay claim to completeness. It has been compiled from the particulars given in response to the appeal in the last issue of this Review. It is hoped to publish similar lists from time to time, and the compiler will therefore be glad to receive any information concerning changes of subject and omissions from this list.

- ADAMS, R. H., *The Poplars, Midford Road, Bath, Somerset.*
Bibliography of land drainage, irrigation, reclamation of marsh, fen, and tidal lands, and warping in Great Britain and Ireland.
- AGERSKOW, MARGARET, B.A., *Department of Geography, Leeds University.*
The reclamation of Knaresborough Forest (Leeds M.A. thesis).
- BARRETT, JOHN, M.A., LL.B., *Clarence Lodge, Hampton Court, Surrey.*
Food and its adulteration in the nineteenth century (London Ph.D. thesis).
- BATLEY, MRS L., *Department of Latin, Sheffield University.*
Eighteenth-century manorial history of Sheffield, Rotherham, and district.
- BEARINGTON, F., 39 *Snow Hill, Maulden, Bedford.*
A general study of market gardening in eastern and central Bedfordshire.
- BLANCE, THELMA, *Department of Geography, Aberdeen University.*
Agriculture in the Blair Athol district.
- CHAMBERS, J. D., Ph.D., *Sub-department of Economic History, Nottingham University.*
Agriculture and population changes in the Midlands.
- CLOUGH, Miss M., *Girton College, Cambridge.*
The Pelham estates before 1460, with special reference to the manor of Laughton, Sussex (Cambridge Ph.D. thesis).
- DAVIES, Mrs C. S., Ph.D., *Durness, Robin Lane, Sutton, Macclesfield, Cheshire.*
The agricultural history of Cheshire, 1750-1850.
- DAWSON, E., *Department of Agriculture (Agricultural Economics Section), Leeds University.*
The Yorkshire wolds: the pre-enclosure farming system and its transformation into the four-course system.
- DODD, J. PHILLIP, M.Sc.Econ., F.R.G.S., *Hampton Loade, Alveley, Bridgnorth, Salop.*
Agriculture of the West Midlands in the nineteenth century.
Agriculture during the Napoleonic Wars in Yorkshire, Lancashire, and the Midlands.
Shropshire agriculture in the nineteenth century.
- DURY, G., *Department of Geography, Birkbeck College, London.*
Agriculture and land use in the Channel Islands in the late eighteenth century.
- EMERY, FRANK, *Department of Geography, University College of Swansea.*
Agrarian change in Gower (S. Wales), 1500 onwards.
'Georgical' work in England, 1650-1750.
- EVANS, Professor E. ESTYN, *Department of Geography, The Queen's University, Belfast.*
The import of improved agricultural implements and techniques from England to Ireland.
- EYRE, S. R., B.Sc., Ph.D., *Department of Geography, Leeds University.*
The limits of improved land and common pasture in N. Derbyshire from medieval times.

- FINBERG, H. P. R., M.A., *Department of English Local History, University College, Leicester.*
The farming accounts of the Izod family of Westington, Glos.
- FLETCHER, T. W., *Agricultural Economics Department, Manchester University.*
The development of Lancashire agriculture.
- FORSTER, GORDON C. F., *Department of Economics, Sheffield University.*
The progress of enclosure in Yorkshire, 1500-1850.
- FOX, Mrs H. M., 13 *Park Road, Beckenham, Kent.*
Anglo-Saxon agriculture (Cambridge Ph.D. thesis).
- FUSSELL, G. E., F.R.Hist.S., 55 *York Road, Sudbury, Suffolk.*
Influence of the Low Countries on English farming.
The English Dairy-farmer, 1500-1900.
- GOLSON, J., *Peterhouse, Cambridge.*
Aspects of the medieval settlement of Lincolnshire (Cambridge Ph.D. thesis).
- GRANT, B. F., 78 *Twynford Avenue, London, W.3.*
History of Wensleydale, Yorkshire.
- HALLAM, H. E., M.A., *Holyrood House, Churchgate, Spalding, Lincs.*
The medieval fenland.
- HALLAM, Mrs S. J., M.A., *Holyrood House, Churchgate, Spalding, Lincs.*
The Romano-British fenland.
- HARRIS, A., *Department of Geography, Hull University.*
Agricultural history (with particular reference to changes in land use) of the East Riding of Yorkshire, 1550-1850.
A comparative study of the Vale of Pickering and the North Yorkshire moors.
- HARRISON, WINIFRED, *Department of History, Bedford College, London.*
Sir John Sinclair and the Board of Agriculture (London M.A. thesis).
- HENDERSON, H. C. K., Ph.D., *Department of Geography, Birkbeck College, London.*
The 1801 crop returns.
- HIGGS, JOHN W. Y., *Museum of English Rural Life, 7 Shinfield Road, Reading, Berks.*
Farm implements and equipment.
- HILTON, RODNEY H., D.Phil., *School of History, Birmingham University.*
English agrarian development in the fifteenth century.
- HINDLEY, D. J. B., *University College of the South-West, Exeter.*
The economy and administration of the estates of Exeter Cathedral in the fifteenth century (M.A. thesis).
- HOSKINS, W. G., M.A., Ph.D., *All Souls College, Oxford.*
The Midland peasant.
- HUNT, H. G., B.Sc.Econ., 108 *Perry Rise, Forest Hill, London, S.E.23.*
Parliamentary Enclosure of Leicestershire (London Ph.D. thesis).
- HUNT, T. J., *Orchard End, Pyrland, Taunton, Somerset.*
History of the manor of Taunton in the thirteenth century, chiefly from the Pipe Rolls of the Bishopric of Winchester.
- JENKINS, J. G., *Museum of English Rural Life, 7 Shinfield Road, Reading.*
Evolution and regional characteristics of the four-wheeled wagon.
- JOHN, A. H., B.Sc.Econ., Ph.D., *London School of Economics and Political Science, Houghton Street, Aldwych, London, W.C.2.*
The prices of animal products in England, 1700-1850.

- JONES, GLANVILLE, R. J., M.A., *Department of Geography, Leeds University*.
Land settlement, tenure, and utilization in the Conway-Clwyd district of North Wales. A study of the transition from feudo-tribal to modern forms of land tenure (Leeds Ph.D. thesis).
The agrarian history of North-West Yorkshire.
- KENYON, G. H., *Iron Pear Tree Farm, Kirdford, near Billingshurst, Sussex*.
Farming from c.1600 on the Weald Clay of Sussex.
- KERRIDGE, ERIC, *Department of Economics, Liverpool University*.
English agrarian history in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.
- LONG, W. HARWOOD, M.A., *Department of Agriculture, Leeds University*.
Yorkshire farming in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.
- MACPHERSON, ARCHIBALD, *Department of Geography, Aberdeen University*.
Afforestation and agriculture in the Dee valley.
- MCCORD, NORMAN, *Trinity College, Cambridge*.
History of the Anti-Corn Law League, 1838-47 (Cambridge Ph.D. thesis).
- MCGREGOR, O. R., *Department of Social Studies, Bedford College, London*.
History of modern British agriculture and rural society, 1800 to the present day.
English land tenure and agricultural progress, 1832-83.
Finance of land drainage in the nineteenth century.
- METCALFE, BRIAN, B.A., *Department of Geography, Leeds University*.
Geographical aspects of the reclamation and development of Hatfield Chase (Leeds M.A. thesis).
- MILLER, Professor A. AUSTIN and WOOD, P., *Department of Geography, Reading University*.
The mapping of strip lynchets.
- MILLS, DENNIS R., *Department of Geography, Nottingham University*.
Land use and agricultural changes in Kesteven in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.
- MINCHINTON, W. E., B.Sc.Econ., *Department of History, University College of Swansea*.
The 1795 and 1800 crop returns for Wales.
The 1797 livestock returns for Dorset.
- MOORE, D. C., *Trinity College, Cambridge*.
The position of the English farmer in its economic, social, and political aspects, c. 1850-75.
- NEWLYN, ANNE C., B.A., *Department of Agricultural Economics, Reading University*.
History of farming in Kent in the seventeenth century.
- OSCHINSKY, DOROTHEA, Ph.D., *Department of History, Liverpool University*.
The didactic literature on estate management and farming in the Middle Ages.
- PAWSON, Professor H. C., M.B.E., M.Sc., F.R.S.E., *University School of Agriculture, The Quadrangle, King's College, Newcastle-upon-Tyne*.
The life and work of Robert Bakewell of Dishley, 1726-95.
- PELHAM, R. A., *The Court House, West Meon, Hants*.
Agricultural geography of the fourteenth and eighteenth centuries.
- POSTAN, Professor M. M., *Peterhouse, Cambridge*.
The agrarian economy in the Middle Ages.
- RAEBURN, JOHN R., B.Sc., M.S., Ph.D., M.A., *London School of Economics*.
Responses of British agriculture to price and cost changes since 1870.
- REID, F. L., *St Catherine's Society, Oxford*.
A study of the economy of the English agricultural estate in the nineteenth century.

RHYS-RANKIN, Capt. Sir HUGH, F.S.A.(Scot), M.R.I., *Green Lane, Bryngwyn, via Kington, Herefordshire.*

Welsh cattle droving during the turnpike era from west and central Wales to England.

SHEPPARD, JUNE, M.A., *Department of Geography, Queen Mary College, London.*

Historico-geographical study of the draining of the marshlands of East Yorkshire.

SHORTER, A. H., *Department of Geography, University College of the South-West, Exeter.*

Field patterns in England.

THIRSK, JOAN, B.A., Ph.D., *Department of English Local History, University College, Leicester.*

Lincolnshire agrarian history, 1540-1914.

WALKER, Miss F. R., *Agricultural Economics Department, Manchester University.*

Home produced and imported supplies of food since 1820.

WATTS, D. G., *Department of English Local History, University College, Leicester.*

Agrarian life on the estates of Titchfield Abbey, Hants.

WILLIAMS, Professor DAVID, *University College of Wales, Aberystwyth.*

The Rebecca riots. A study in agrarian discontent.

Letter to the Editor

SIR,—Through an almost fortuitous event, in recent years I became possessed of twenty-five original, lengthy letters written by that great pioneer of livestock breeding in the eighteenth century, Robert Bakewell of Leicestershire, to his one-time pupil, George Culley of Northumberland. These are quite lengthy letters and throw considerable light upon the character and aims of Bakewell and the difficulties he encountered. They are now in the possession of King's College.

For very many years I have been greatly interested in the improvement in livestock breeding accomplished by Bakewell, and the discovery of these letters with certain other papers of the same period confirmed my desire to write a full account of his life and work. Professor Cooper has kindly undertaken to contribute a chapter in the proposed publication on the impact of Bakewell's work on our stockbreeding methods.

I have accumulated a number of references to earlier essays and memoirs on Bakewell's life, and other observations on his activities. No biography exists or original papers left by Bakewell, to my knowledge, other than the letters referred to above and six much shorter letters preserved in the British Museum. A copy (I think I possess the original) of the financial appeal he made is in the Rothamsted library.

I should greatly appreciate the help of my fellow members of the Society who could inform me of any documents or photographs relating to Bakewell's life and work, and the availability of such.

Yours, etc.

H. C. PAWSON

*University School of Agriculture,
King's College (University of Durham),
Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1.*

Book Reviews

FRANSIS PAYNE, *Yr Aradr Gymreig*. University of Wales Press, 1954. 206 pp. with 24 plates and 17 line drawings. 12s. 6d.

Mr Payne's book is the first important study of the plough in Britain since the publication of J. B. Passmore's *The English Plough* in 1930. It is a comprehensive study of great merit, for the author not only describes the development of the plough in Wales from prehistoric times to the end of the nineteenth century, but he also throws new light on the development of Welsh society. He clarifies some of the controversies that have raged for years among writers on agricultural history, and although one may not always agree with his theories, they are nevertheless supported by weighty arguments.

In the first chapter Mr Payne describes the ploughs of prehistoric Europe. Although the evidence from Wales is negligible, the author supposes that the continental types were used by primitive Welsh agriculturists. Many writers have described the ploughs of the Bronze Age as poor implements designed to scratch the surface of the soil. The narrowness of the share explains in part why the Celtic fields were square and small, while the fact that these light ploughs were drawn by two oxen contributed further to the shape of the fields. Mr Payne disagrees with this, and suggests that the dry nature of the climate made it necessary to plough and replough the land at frequent intervals. The best way to do this, he says, was by cross ploughing. The Celtic fields were therefore the result of an agricultural technique, and were not brought into existence either by a deficiency in plough design or by a deficiency in the draught power of the oxen. In the same way the author regards the change of climate in the Late Bronze Age as a turning-point in agricultural practice. Something more substantial than the light plough which scratched the surface of a dry land was now required, and so the heavy mouldboard plough was developed to deal with the new environmental

conditions. With the appearance of this heavier implement the Celtic fields were replaced by the elongated Belgic fields. In some ways this first chapter is the most enlightening in the whole book, for although the author has little direct evidence on which to draw, he throws a new light on old controversies, and propounds a number of plausible theories on the character of prehistoric agriculture.

Though evidence on plough design in prehistory is scanty, it is scantier still in the Dark Ages, which is the subject of the second chapter. At the beginning of the chapter Mr Payne makes it clear that neither the Romans nor the Anglo-Saxons influenced the methods or the implements of agriculture in Wales. Archaeological evidence is almost completely absent, and although the songs of Aneirin and Llywarch Hên throw some light on the agriculture of the period, the picture that emerges is by no means a clear one.

In the laws of Hywel Dda, the various parts of the plough are named, and although on the face of it the laws might be expected to provide vital information on plough design in the tenth century, the fact that the earliest copies of the laws are several centuries later, means that they do not provide contemporary information. The basis of this chapter is of course literary, but Mr Payne confesses that pathetically little is known about the ploughs of early medieval Wales. There is no conclusive evidence, he says, that the medieval plough was a heavy two-handled, two-wheeled implement; indeed he believes that both a wheeled and a swing plough were common in north-western Europe at the time.

Many fourteenth- and fifteenth-century bards described in detail the ploughs of their own districts, and Mr Payne uses for instance the descriptions of Lewis Glyn Cothi and Iolo Gôch. From such sources he provides a clear picture of the later medieval plough and its regional variations.

From the early eighteenth century to the end of the nineteenth century Mr Payne is on much surer ground, and speculation is far less necessary. There is a profusion of documentary evidence, in addition to actual ploughs that have been preserved. He describes in detail many varieties of plough made by local ploughwrights, and gives a very clear picture of the regional variations that existed. This is well supported by photographs and diagrams.

A final chapter is devoted to draught animals and harness, and here Mr Payne gives an interesting picture of the development of oxen and horses as plough beasts. The evidence ranges from the rock engravings of Liguria to the nineteenth century, and there is a special section of the chapter on mixed teams.

The book is well illustrated with photographs and drawings, and the author is to be congratulated on a significant contribution to our knowledge of the plough. The only serious criticism to be levelled at it is that it is written in a language that will be understood by less than a dozen members of the British Agricultural History Society and which is only spoken by three-quarters of a million people. There is certainly a case for the production of more books in the Welsh language, but it is seriously open to question whether such a medium is suitable for a scholarly work of this kind. Mr Payne's book is a study of international importance, and deserves a wider market than that provided by his and my fellow-countrymen. It is to be hoped that he will lose no time in preparing an edition or at least a summary in a language more widely understood.

J. GERAINT JENKINS

NIGEL HARVEY, *The Farming Kingdom*.

Turnstile Press, 1955. 178 pp. 15s.

Mr Harvey's book is an analysis of the "tools" of modern British farming, with a preliminary section contributing the perspective of history to the current agrarian scene and making the whole a survey in four dimensions. In it he describes the development and

modern uses of livestock, crops, fertilizers, machinery, and implements.

The historical prelude, which occupies 74 out of the 171 pages of text, is by far the less satisfactory of the two parts of the book. The author takes us on a saunter through the centuries hand in hand with those convenient but treacherous companions, Personification and Generalization. Peering first into the medieval thickets, he expounds the gospel according to St Ernle; and nearly every page cries aloud for qualification. When he emerges into the open, well-trodden country of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, however, he becomes a shrewder and more skilful guide, and enlivens his narrative with short détours along such less frequented paths as the improvement of grasses and the search for new fertilizers and feeding stuffs.

Arrived in the twentieth century, Mr Harvey reveals himself to be—as indeed he has long shown himself in his *New Statesman* articles on rural themes—a brilliant expounder of the contemporary agricultural scene. He marshals his facts comprehensively and accurately, and analyses them shrewdly. The result is, unfortunately, not always easy to read. Mr Harvey's prose is chromium-plated in the best Turnstile Street manner, and his sentences are tightly packed with relevant information. But his arguments are well worth the effort that is needed to keep pace with them. Here and there are statements with which one can quarrel. For instance, "rainfall is in all counties adequate for most crops" (p. 77): in about half of England and Wales there are crop droughts in at least five years out of ten. The emphasis upon a high yield from the national dairy herd (p. 133) is somewhat outdated: the need today is for more cheaply got yields, not necessarily large ones. The electric fence is an unreliable means of controlling sheep (p. 139): it can, in fact, be fully effective.

There are also a few, but important, omissions. For example, Mr Harvey dismisses kale in one non-committal sentence: its acreage, with some other minor green forage

crops, in England and Wales for stock-feed rose from 84,500 in 1938 to 297,000 in 1954, which indicates its current significance. But these are minor blemishes upon an otherwise brilliant exposition of modern farming.

It remains to ask what purpose *The Farming Kingdom* will serve. It is intended, as Sir James Scott Watson implies in his introduction, to inform the 94 per cent of British people who follow other walks of life, of the work and the problems of the 6 per cent who provide half their daily food. It has come, I think, a decade too late for that. Nearly all that 94 per cent now acquire their agricultural education Archer-wise, or not at all. And this book is a far thornier path to rural knowledge than that daily quarter-of-an-hour before seven o'clock. There remain the agricultural historians who, as Mr Maurice Beresford has said in another place, have not yet talked to a plowman—they will find the second part of *The Farming Kingdom* a convenient and reliable guide to the farming tools and techniques of 1955, but the first part will tell them nothing they do not know already, and a good deal they no longer accept. And there also remain the serious-minded inquirers from outside upon agricultural affairs—but they, heaven knows, will today hardly give Mr Harvey a worthwhile sale.

R. TROW-SMITH

H. P. R. FINBERG, *Roman and Saxon Withington: a Study in Continuity*. University College, Leicester (Dept of English Local History, Occasional Papers, No. 8), 1955. 40 pp., 2 maps, paper covers. 6s.

In their discussions of Old English society and landlordship, historians have not often descended from the general to the particular, from the laws, literature, and charters to actual villages and fields. To have done this, to have applied here the discipline and technique of local history, makes Mr Finberg's paper something of a landmark in Anglo-Saxon historiography. Merely to look at the two excellent maps is to realize how far one is from the almost abstract approach of, say, Vinogradoff's *Growth of the Manor*; how far,

too, from the more regional treatment of later writers. It is not the way of local history to yield general conclusions either easily or quickly; many villages and small groups of villages must be examined before we can distinguish the norm from the exception. But Mr Finberg's study firmly points the way. And it is not only for what it says, but for its invitation to a new and ultimately more conclusive method, that it appears as one of the most stimulating and original contributions to early English history for a long time.

The value of a local approach is evident throughout. In searching for the origins of this Gloucestershire village, Mr Finberg unearths much of later interest: for instance, the creation of new settlements (e.g. Pegglesworth, probably datable to 759-950; p. 17), and the steady expansion of the arable by piecemeal assarting in response to a growing population (pp. 19-20); the tenacity of local custom and organization, shown in the persistence of the separate identity of Withington east and west of the River Coln for centuries after their union under one landlord (§3, 4); the early nineteenth-century origin of the road north from Withington (p. 11) whose straightness has most recently deceived even Mr Margary in his book on *Roman Roads in Britain* (1, p. 134).

But all this is almost by the way. The crux of the paper is, having demonstrated the probable nature of early Saxon Withington, to pose the question of its relation to the Roman settlement there in detail. At its fullest extent, the bishop of Worcester's Withington estate included several villages once separate. But in the seventh century, before it came under episcopal lordship, Withington seems to have covered approximately the area of the modern parish, less certain lands beyond the River Coln to the east and the Hilcot Brook to the west. The only two settlements then existing in this area seem to have been the village itself with its two great fields just to the north, and the hamlet of Foxcote. Beyond the seventh century, when Withington appears as a prosperous estate, the Saxon evidence will not

take us. However, approaching it from the other, the Roman end, Mr Finberg suggests that this Saxon lordship was no new creation, but a direct continuation of a Roman and Romano-British estate of essentially similar layout and organization. The villa, about a quarter of a mile from the village, was the centre of an estate whose boundaries, to judge from the position of nearby villas, were very like the Saxon ones; like other villas, it had its dependent *coloni*, perhaps in the ancient site of Foxcote, but also in the village of Withington itself; and its economy, like that of the neighbourhood, was predominantly pastoral, with its arable in the best available place, just where the Saxon fields are later found. Such elements of physical continuity provide Mr Finberg with a starting-point for some most incisive and telling blows against the apostles of a free Anglo-Saxon society, and in favour of a fully developed manorialism at an early date over much of England. I am in no doubt that on the predominant servility of Old English society he is right, as I hope to show elsewhere; and if so, his other arguments in favour of continuity between Roman and Saxon Withington receive considerable support.

But it remains true, as Mr Finberg admits, that in this fundamental and ill recorded matter of continuity there can hardly be absolute proof, and the more sceptical will not have undue trouble in raising difficulties. Whereas it may be true that Roman and Saxon Withington betray great similarities, had the same fields and even many workers of the same race, does it follow that they represent significant continuity of settlement and social organization? Between the latest proved occupation of the Withington villa (admittedly never scientifically excavated) or its better excavated neighbours, and the Saxon conquest (577) or the final establishment of Mercian overlordship (628), there is a long, politically confused interval during which it is not easy to believe the Roman estate held together. If squatters took over the villa, as is

almost certain, how much of the villa-estate economy, with its oppressive and unpopular servility, can have long survived? In the end, must not estates follow country houses, then as now? So that the Saxons, finding only the bare remains of the villa-estate—men, fields, and so on—would fashion another estate which, however like its predecessor, was institutionally new; and rightly, they would call it by a new name. Again, although late Roman and perhaps early Saxon occupation of Foxcote is suggested by archaeology, there is no evidence for any settlement at Withington itself earlier than that under the Widia immortalized in the name; to postulate, and then to argue from a Roman colonate settlement there, however plausible by continental analogy, is injudicious when the place of the *coloni* in Britain is so dimly known. Or, thirdly, though it is possible that Christianity had a continuous history in Withington, the dedication of the village church to St Michael the Archangel is hardly a sign of native influence; for, according to the latest authority, "It is probable that the Roman missionaries in England introduced Michael into England as the patron of cemeteries."¹

How valid such scepticism is, it is impossible to say in the present state of knowledge. But the fact that it arises more readily over Mr Finberg's thesis of the continuity of Roman and Saxon Withington, than over his criticism of the accepted ideas on Anglo-Saxon society, at least emphasizes a point which, however obvious now, needs to be kept firmly in view. Mr Finberg is discussing two questions, not one. Early Anglo-Saxon England could easily have been manorial without the Roman villas having contributed anything very significantly or directly towards this. It is to be hoped that in the revaluations and discussions to which this admirable and searching paper must surely give rise, the separateness of these two points will not be forgotten, as they were in the arguments following Seebohm's *English Village Community*.

T. H. ASTON

¹ *Studies in Early British History*, ed. N. K. Chadwick, C.U.P., 1954, p. 183.

ARTHUR RAISTRICK, *The Role of the Yorkshire Cistercian Monasteries in the History of the Wool Trade in England*. International Wool Secretariat, 18-20 Regent Street, S.W.1. 1953. 24 pp. (No price stated.)

By the thirteenth century Kilnsey, a grange of Fountains Abbey, was fully organized as the administrative centre of an area of ninety square miles devoted to sheep-farming. Dr Raistrick has made a careful study of the running of the estate, based mainly on the accounts of Thomas Synton for 1446-58. As a geologist, however, he has not been content to leave the matter there. He reminds us that the picture can never be complete without tramping the countryside, considering rocks and soils, and tracing out the boundary crosses. This brings a vivid and refreshing quality to his work. He shows us something of the difficulties, and the possibilities, which faced the monks in these upland pastures, and reminds us that success was due not to organization alone but to "the shepherds and farmers who were native to the district, and who really understood it and felt the country in their bones." With only 6,000 words of text, supplemented by excellent maps and photographs, Dr Raistrick has given us a model of the way in which a short sketch of the history and organization of an estate may be presented to the best advantage.

E. A. L. MOIR

ALLAN FRASER, *Sheep Husbandry and Wool Growing in Britain*. International Wool Secretariat. 14 pp. (No price stated.)

In turning his attention to the sheep industry Dr Fraser is performing a most useful task. It is a pity however that since he is obviously competent to deal with the more technical sides of the subject, he should devote so much space in this short paper to a historical introduction that will leave the historian not only dissatisfied but disquieted. Is Cobbett to be taken as an authority on the effects of enclosure? Are we really to believe that the landowners after the Reformation "were apt to carry sheep-farming further than the monks, with the Fear of God upon them, had

ever dared to do"? The lack of diagrams and photographs is perhaps less serious than the absence of a single reference. Who was the "Elizabethan writer" who is quoted on p. 3? How is one to trace the fascinating Dr Parry who apparently knew as much about sheep as about the fashionable ailments of eighteenth-century Bath? Dr Fraser is more at home in discussing the contemporary situation, and his readers will join with him in deploring the official silence on the future of our good friend the sheep, giver "of red meat and white wool."

E. A. L. MOIR

SIR CYRIL FOX and LORD RAGLAN, *Monmouthshire Houses*. National Museum of Wales, Cardiff, 1951-4. Parts I and II, 17s. 6d. each; Part III, 21s.

The present time has sometimes been called "the era of the Little Man;" architecturally it might be termed the era of the discovery of the Little House. In the past the title 'Country Houses' has almost invariably referred to the dwellings of the nobility and gentry, ranging from such palaces as Haddon Hall and Blenheim down to the larger manor houses. This generation has discovered the interest and importance of the houses of the farmers and yeomen. But no study of that subject has hitherto appeared comparable in intensity to these three volumes, published by and for the National Museum of Wales.

The district selected for study is not the whole of the county of Monmouth, but the lowlands, below the 600-foot contour, and omitting the few towns. This area, one of intensive agricultural industry, is shown by the authors to possess a regional style of its own, influenced but not dictated by its neighbours, Herefordshire on the north and, later, Bristol and England generally. Part I, 'Medieval', treats of buildings dated from the fifteenth century to, roughly, 1560. None of these can safely be put earlier than 1450 and most of them are of timber, based on cruck construction, but often combining this with the sturdy walling usually associated with trussed-timber framing. Almost all

were originally of one storey, open to the roof, divided by a stud-and-panel partition into a hall and inner room—'parlour' or chamber. It is noteworthy that until well into the seventeenth century the kitchen seems almost always to have been a separate building detached from the house.

Part II covers the period from *c.* 1550 to *c.* 1610 and is therefore historically Tudor, though stylistically the title adopted, 'Sub-medieval', is justified. The main change, presumably due to the sudden great rise in wheat prices and agricultural prosperity, is the complete replacement of timber construction by stone (a phenomenon found in contemporary Yorkshire). Of the houses dealt with in this part a few link up with the 'long-house' of parts of Wales, where men and cattle are housed under the same roof; but here, instead of one common entrance passage for both, the byre, or cow-house, is separated from the dwelling by a solid wall and has its own door; and sometimes this end room was clearly used not for cattle but for storing wool or other dead stock.

In Part III, 'Renaissance', *c.* 1590-1714, the advance in comfort and aesthetic enrichment is notable. With the cheapening of glass, glazed windows replace the mullioned openings from which the wind was excluded only by shutters. It is possible, however, that some of the early examples with wider inter-

spaces (Part III, p. 17, n. 1) may have had unrebated casements, practically glazed shutters; for in the sixteenth century 'glass windows' were tenants' fixtures and removable. The porch, another protection from draughts, also makes its appearance. And an interesting local feature is due to the prevalence of cider-making and the need for cellarage at this time. This final period naturally provides the largest number of examples surviving, as there would always be a tendency to discard the less comfortable types of dwelling. This helps to explain the absence of ancient labourers' dwellings, which must have been hovels of flimsy construction, to be abandoned as soon as a rise in the standard of living permitted.

In addition to 480 houses, quite a number of barns and other farm buildings are dealt with in this great survey, in which the numerous ground plans and drawings of details, in addition to photographs, constitute its outstanding value as a model for others to follow. The one lack is documentary evidence; possibly the probate inventories, of which Mr F. W. Steer has made such good use in Essex, are lacking for Monmouthshire; but teams for similar local surveys—and team-work is essential—should include at least one member to undertake documentary research.

L. F. SALZMAN

The British Agricultural History Society

PRESIDENT: SIR JAMES SCOTT WATSON, C.B.E.

TREASURER: PROFESSOR EDGAR THOMAS. SECRETARY: J. W. Y. HIGGS

EDITOR: H. P. R. FINBERG

Executive Committee: Alexander Hay (*Chairman*), Victor Bonham-Carter, Miss W. M. Dullforce, G. E. Fussell, Captain E. N. Griffith, W. G. Hoskins, G. Houston, Richard Lamb, W. Harwood Long, W. E. Minchinton, F. G. Payne, R. Trow-Smith.

The Society aims at encouraging the study of the history of every aspect of the countryside by holding conferences and courses and by publishing *The Agricultural History Review*. Its constitution is printed in Vol. I of this *Review*, p. 53.

Membership is open to all who are interested in the subject and the subscription is ONE GUINEA due on 1 February in each year.

Details may be obtained from the Secretary, c/o Museum of English Rural Life, 7 Shinfield Road, Reading.

The Agricultural History Review

Editorial Board

G. E. FUSSELL

JOAN THIRSK

J. W. Y. HIGGS

R. TROW-SMITH

H. P. R. FINBERG

The Review is published by the British Agricultural History Society and issued to all members. Articles and letters offered for publication should be sent to the Editor, 34 Sheffield Terrace, London, W.8, accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope for return if necessary. The Society does not accept responsibility for the opinions expressed by contributors, or for the accidental loss of manuscripts.

Printed at The Broadwater Press, Welwyn Garden City, Herts