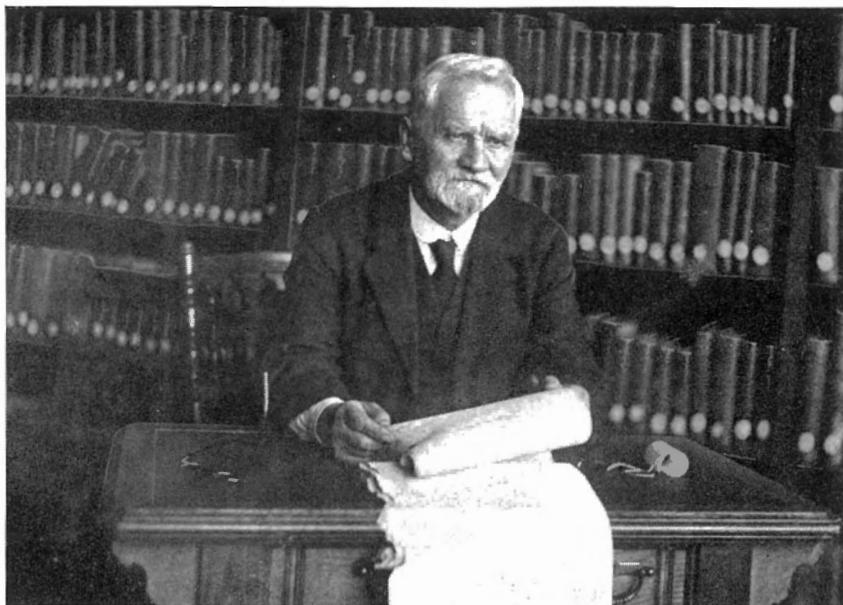


REDSTONE MEMORIAL VOLUME

SUFFOLK FARMING IN THE
NINETEENTH CENTURY



V. B. Redstone: a photograph taken in May, 1928, for the University of Chicago, in connexion with his work on the Chaucer records.



Lilian J. Redstone at work in the Public Record Office: 1928.

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CENTURY

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1958

SUFFOLK RECORDS SOCIETY
VOLUME I

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Line drawing: Details of Ransome's plough patented for Scotland, 1810,
p. 78.

Front end-paper: Map of Suffolk showing parishes mentioned in the text,
with soil types according to Arthur Young, 1797.

Final end-paper: Map of the hundreds of Suffolk, according to Bryant, 1826.

Vincent Burrough Redstone, F.S.A., F.R.Hist.Soc.
1853–1941

Lilian Jane Redstone, M.B.E., B.A.
1885–1955

This first volume of the Suffolk Records Society is published as a memorial to Lilian Redstone and her father. Any modern historical study of Suffolk and its people, if it is properly based on the original materials, is in a sense one more memorial to the Redstones. It was largely through their example, especially Lilian's, that the Record Offices were established in Bury and Ipswich to preserve and make available such materials – the local counterparts of the central records of the Public Record Office in Chancery Lane. Without a home of their own and an expert keeper the written records of local history were exposed to neglect and destruction, and the historian's job of recreating and examining the past was so much less possible to perform. The principal object of the Redstones, as it is of this Society, was to help the historian. The devotion and generosity with which they accomplished their object are our first reason for remembering them here.

The Redstones were as keenly aware as anybody that written records were only one (even if generally the most important) type of indispensable historical evidence: they wrote history themselves and knew that it concerned every aspect of the lives of men and women. The frontispiece shows them working with manuscript records, because such a picture is appropriate to the volume. They were interested as wholly in the signatures of men and women across the landscape – in the siting and working of farms or of towns, the construction and function of chapels or of chariots. It is equally valid and proper to visualize Redstone demonstrating to Fellows of the Society of Antiquaries the surviving fabric of the gaol of St Audrey's Liberty at Melton, or in earnest altercation with the late St John Hope; and to recall in imagination the purposeful, rather stocky figure of Lilian within the last decade accompanying three antiquaries across the flat, remote fields of South Elmham to examine the provoking ruins of the minster. A memorial to the Redstones is not a simple undertaking. They saw the value of these things. Though they never failed to encourage, their standards were exacting. At least we cannot doubt how delighted they would be that in Suffolk, fortified by the work of the Record Offices and by kind financial support from our local friends and from the Pilgrim Trust, we have felt able to risk the economic difficulties of modern publishing and found the first independent county records society to be established by local initiative since the Second World War.

The Redstones were not the only searchers and transcribers of Suffolk records. But in the days of their honourable predecessors, from Sir Simonds D'Ewes (1602–50) to David Elisha Davy (1769–1851), such work was exclusively a private hobby. It was generally based on private collections that

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were dispersed at the owner's death, and it is notable good luck that voluminous collections of Suffolk transcripts are preserved intact and accessible in the British Museum. Nor were the Redstones the first to be concerned with making Suffolk records available. Samuel Tymms edited a selection of Bury wills and inventories for the Camden Society in 1850. Between 1882 and 1885, W. C. Metcalfe printed the heraldic and genealogical *Visitations of Suffolk of 1561, 1577 and 1612*, John Cordy Jeaffreson gave, in the ninth and tenth Reports of the Historical Manuscripts Commission, detailed accounts of the manuscripts of the Corporations of Ipswich and Eye, while W. H. Richardson printed the *Annals of Ipswich*, compiled by Nathaniel Bacon during the Civil War. In 1889–90, Lord John Hervey was bringing out his transcripts of Domesday Book for Suffolk, arranged topographically in Hundreds, with Latin and English on opposite pages. Then in the 1890s a start was made on the records of Bury when Thomas Arnold edited three volumes of *Memorials of St Edmund's Abbey* in the Rolls Series. In six volumes entitled *Suffolk Records and MSS.* (1904–7), W. A. Copinger provided a useful index to Suffolk references in the main public repositories, and S. H. A. Hervey anticipated (again rather as a private hobby, unprofessionally) the work of the Suffolk Records Society with his series of 'Suffolk Green Books', beginning in 1894 and coming to an end soon after the First World War. The circumstances of two world wars have in themselves done much to make the preservation of historical records a public interest and responsibility. In Suffolk this process has been inseparably associated with the name of Redstone.

Vincent Redstone was twenty-seven when he came to Suffolk in 1880 as an assistant master at Woodbridge School. When he was two months old his father, a Hampshire man and Master of the Alton Union Workhouse in that county, died of scarlet fever. So almost from the start he owed his upbringing to an Infant Orphan Asylum, at Wanstead, and there a master who read historical novels aloud to the children on Sunday evenings aroused his first interest in history. After a period of instruction at Winchester Training College he returned to Wanstead as a member of the staff. His readiness to return, and assuredly the evidence of all his subsequent life, attests the excellence of that institution. His wife, too, was educated in an orphanage. When, in 1903, Redstone's knowledge of Suffolk history brought Sidney and Beatrice Webb to his home for dinner and tea one day, Mrs Redstone remarked in her diary: 'They seem interesting people.' One notes with respect Mrs Redstone's implicit reserve. Certainly those indefatigable and important authors of *English Poor Law History* might, with no exaggeration, have recorded a similar judgment of their hosts.

It was not until he reached his late thirties – 'soon after 1889' – that Redstone was interested in local historical documents by a clerk in the Woodbridge solicitor's office which handled the business of the Seckford Trust. He taught himself to read these documents, and then taught his eldest daughter, Mabel. Lilian, the youngest of the three daughters, learnt palaeography after Mabel left home to teach in 1900. Thus when Ethel Stokes – possibly the most remarkable, doughtiest character in the history of the preservation of British records – came over to Woodbridge, Lilian

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was able to do some transcription for her, and their friendship began.

Redstone had already published his *Bygone Woodbridge* (1893) and *Annals of Wickham Market* (1896), and become Hon. Secretary and Hon. Editor of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and Natural History, posts that he held from 1898 to 1905. These years were marked by solid and valuable contributions to the *Proceedings* of the Suffolk Institute, nor did his own contributions cease when he relinquished those posts to become Hon. Excursion Secretary. In 1902 he won the Alexander Prize Medal of the Royal Historical Society with his essay on 'The Social Condition of England during the Wars of the Roses'; displaced now, naturally, by modern researches, but based, like everything he wrote, on a foundation of original materials. (After he had read it to the Society he received a letter of congratulation from Charles Hewitt, of the Royal College of Surgeons: 'I think you astonished the bigwigs: what an execrable speaker is Professor G—!' The poor Professor in question was seventy-four.) The Suffolk Institute published Redstone's edition of the Suffolk Ship Money Returns in 1904, and three years later his Calendar of Pre-Reformation Wills at Bury. In 1908 he edited *Memorials of Old Suffolk*, an excellent volume in an uneven but estimable series, and contributed largely to it. Much of the best work in that book has not been noticed and assimilated, let alone superseded, even by the more scholarly among modern writers on Suffolk history.

Lilian set off for London to work at the Public Record Office in August 1904. It was not her first visit to Chancery Lane: she later wrote, when Miss Stokes had been killed in 1944: 'My father and I were welcomed at Miss Stokes' home in Maida Vale when we spent happy school holidays at the P.R.O. Miss Stokes was loud in her praise of the twopenny tube . . .' Perhaps it was those early visits of Lilian's that started the respectful legend running among the staff of the *Victoria County History* (Sir Hilary and Lady Jenkinson cited it in their appreciative short obituary notice in *Archives*, Lady Day, 1955), 'that a special meeting of the Trustees of the British Museum had been necessary to award a Reader's Ticket to one so young.'

Redstone had been up to London to see Mr Doubleday, the first editor of the *Victoria County History*, in 1902. From 1904 to 1909, Lilian worked as a 'topographical supervisor' for the *V.C.H.* 'In those days,' Miss Catherine Jamison informs me, 'the history was housed in two floors above Constable's office in Orange Street, Haymarket, spreading into the office next door. There was a large staff of topographers and architects at work on a variety of counties . . . There was a supervisor for each county, to whom we gave our account of each parish when finished, and she overhauled our work before it was passed to the editors. Unfortunately Miss Redstone was never my supervisor, but I know she was very much liked and appreciated by those working under her.' The archives of the *V.C.H.*, which the present General Editor has kindly placed at my disposal, do not reveal the counties for which Lilian was 'supervisor'. But they show that during those years she herself wrote narratives and 'descents of manors' for thirty-three West Suffolk parishes.

The topographical volumes for Suffolk were never completed, and indeed Lilian's own work on eighteen of these thirty-three parishes seems to have

been lost when the *V.C.H.* archives shared the vicissitudes of other documents in the wars. The two volumes on the general history of Suffolk were published. When Vol. II appeared, Redstone wrote (17 March 1907) to Dr Page, Doubleday's successor, saying how much he liked Oppenheim's chapter on 'Maritime History' (it still seems the most valuable in the book), and how much he regretted the dropping of a 'local editor' to check such errors as a scholar in London might make with, for instance, local names. Vol. I followed in 1911, with due acknowledgements for his 'ready help'. The delay with Vol. I reveals the pecuniary difficulties inseparable from learned publications. Lilian herself ceased to be a topographical supervisor in 1909. Her wage had been exiguous, and she successfully established herself as a Record Agent, on the model, perhaps, of Ethel Stokes. That year she was at work with Miss Stokes on the muniments of the borough of Sudbury, at the same time preparing herself for the London B.A. (External) Degree in History, which she obtained in 1910: most admirable, and characteristic. She proceeded to take her place among that first generation of learned ladies who made history their profession, and who thereby themselves made a history that we are beginning to formulate. It will not be thought inappropriate that this memorial volume has been jointly edited by two ladies.

Nor was Lilian content to remain a technician, an expert in finding her way through public and private collections of historical documents. She wrote, and her writing career began with contributions to the *V.C.H.*, made mostly (that is, excepting her work on Suffolk and Surrey) after she had ceased to be a member of the staff. Apart from single accounts of the towns of Aylesbury (Bucks.) and Kidderminster (Worcs.) she wrote a great many parish histories in the published topographical volumes for the five counties of Berkshire, Hampshire, Hertfordshire, Huntingdonshire and Surrey. Of all these I should like to select the account of Harwell as an example of the excellent way in which she could combine a clear visual description with remarkable scholarship (*V.C.H.*, Berks., III, pp. 484–5: published in 1923 and possibly revised then, but all this *V.C.H.* work Lilian completed before 1914). Her paper on Farnham Castle, in R. S. Rait's book, *English Episcopal Palaces (Province of Canterbury)*, 1910, pp. 123–54, presumably fitted in with her work on Surrey, which was spread over the years 1905–9. When the disruptions of the Great War made historical research almost impossible, members of the *V.C.H.* staff boldly turned to a piece of contemporary history published as *Commerce and Industry* (2 vols., 1919), to which Lilian contributed the chapter on 'Foreign Competition: 1892–1900'. From 1917 to 1920 she was an administrative assistant in the Historical Records Section of the Ministry of Munitions and Disposal, and was awarded the M.B.E. Her work on the origins of the Tank, subjected to the most rigorous scrutiny during the legal enquiries into patent rights, was not found wanting. The essential qualifications for expert research are the same whether the documents are medieval rolls or the contents of modern office files.

The war drew off the younger teachers, and Redstone retired from Woodbridge School only in 1921, at sixty-eight. (His wife had died ten years earlier.) This memoir, pre-occupied with the Redstones' contribution to

local history, may have given the impression that he was similarly pre-occupied to the detriment of his profession. On the contrary, a school colleague wrote in *The Woodbridgian*, with possibly a moment's envy: 'Mr. Redstone has been endowed by some kind power with the secret of preserving through all his years of strenuous work the spirit of boyhood . . . and this has enabled him to exert an influence on the lives of his pupils.' The truth of this is freely and gratefully acknowledged by his pupils themselves. His daughters have described the domestic scene with their father at the table in the evening, absorbed in the documents he was transcribing but immediately ready with advice, while they sat on either side helping some aspiring pupil through the formalities of geometry or the perversities of Latin syntax.

Redstone's knowledge and his continually growing collection of transcripts were always at the disposal of students. Since 1905, when he printed in the *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute* the document showing the connections of the poet Chaucer's family with Ipswich, he had always been specially interested in both Ipswich and the Chaucers. His article on the Ipswich Port Books in the *Proceedings* (1912) represents perhaps the earliest use of those repellent but rewarding raw materials for our economic history (cf. *Journal of Transport History*, November 1957, pp. 81, 91). In the 1920s he made a free gift of all his notes on the Chaucer family to Professors John Manly and Edith Rickert of the University of Chicago: transcribed, these notes themselves covered twelve reams of quarto. Later on, one of Lilian's major tasks was the direction of research in England on behalf of these American scholars, with a view to a new edition of the *Life Records of Chaucer*, originally published for the Chaucer Society in 1900. One result of this massive and impressive scholarly industry was *Chaucer's World*, published by the Columbia University Press in 1948. The volume on Geoffrey Chaucer himself is now nearing completion, and is expected to be ready by the end of the summer of 1958.

A full bibliography of the Redstones' works would be impossible to compile. Their work, and their influence, spread widely through many publications in which they are acknowledged only in the Preface. The Venns, for instance, in their biographical dictionary of Cambridge University, *Alumni Cantabrigienses*, pay special tribute to Redstone's assistance, and his diary for his first year of 'retirement' contains many entries about time spent on *Alumni*. (Next year, F. V. Morley's delightful *Travels in East Anglia* appeared, the presentation copy modestly inscribed 'With all best wishes and apologies'.) In Lilian's case, a list of indebted authors would be even longer than in her father's, and range from A. M. Burke (*Calendars of Westminster Records*) and Gladys Scott Thomson (*Two Centuries of Family History and Family Background*), to Lindsay Fleming (*History of Papham*: 3 vols., privately printed, 1949). Among her most important books in her own name is *The Church of All Hallows, Barking*, Vol. XII of the great 'Survey of London'.

Suffolk people will remember many of Lilian Redstone's books with affection; *Timperley of Hintlesham* (1931), written jointly with the late Sir Gerald Ryan, of which Professor Sir J. E. Neale writes privately (12

November 1957): 'I have continually cited it to friends and students as a model of the type of family history scholars really need'; *Our East Anglian Heritage* (1939, revised and enlarged, 1951), which is particularly welcome in local schools; *Suffolk* (in the 'Borzoi County Histories'); and *Ipswich Through the Ages* (1948), scholarly – of course – but presented in terms of the life of the people in a way that anyone can understand: it is disquieting and deplorable that this book should have been remaindered. The writer of this memoir has never felt more flattered than when he was asked to see through the press Lilian's article on 'Christianity in Suffolk', the historical introduction to the East Suffolk Education Authority's Handbook of Religious Instruction. That was at the beginning of her last illness, which also prevented the completion of her editorial work on the professional manual of the Society of Local Archivists.

In 1939 the Sutton Hoo discoveries, among the most exciting archaeological events of our time, occurred almost within sight of Woodbridge, and Redstone was kept fully informed by those taking part. He died in 1941. In September 1940 Lilian was engaged in work on the Beaufort archives at Badminton, where the late Queen Mary made her wartime home. There is a charming, intimate letter home to Woodbridge describing tea with the Queen and Lady Cynthia Colville, who 'poured out, and I was put to face the Queen'. Apart from the interest of the occasion, one can see in Lilian's account of this episode all the qualities that were discerned by those who had the good fortune to know her: modesty, self-assurance, resolution and gentle good humour.

During the Second World War, Lilian acted as secretary in the registering and classifying of Service Ordinands under the Rev. Kenneth Riches, rector of Bredfield, near Woodbridge, now Bishop of Lincoln. This occupied only a part of her time, but the rest was soon in demand. The tremendous salvage drives, designed to help make our island as self-contained as possible, soon began to involve the destruction of irreplaceable sources of our history. In London Ethel Stokes, long the devoted organizer of the Records Preservation Section of the British Records Association, undertook the central direction of the campaign to save as many records as possible. She enlisted seven hundred 'referees' all over the country, and proceeded to organize them all, writing in her own hand on available scraps of paper terse but extremely legible letters of individual advice. Lilian was naturally her chief 'referee' in Suffolk, collecting and sorting documents that ought to be preserved, and making one or two spectacular rescues. (For instance, a Boy Scout in her service brought her, from the dump, some despatches sent from Moscow during the Napoleonic War.) She loyally carried on the heavy duties of Ethel Stokes as Hon. Secretary of the Records Preservation Section from 1944 for more than a year, until a permanent successor was found.

In the post-war years, when the now-flourishing profession of local archivist was being practically created, the Suffolk authorities recognized in Lilian Redstone a worker of unfaltering energy and steady vision, and with almost a half-century's experience. She became Archivist to the Corporation of Bury, and later held the post jointly with that for West Suffolk. She was also Archivist to the Ipswich Borough Library, and later held that post, too,

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jointly with East Suffolk. In this way she brought the present Joint Record Offices in Bury and Ipswich into being, and helped to avert the inconveniences – by no means uncommon – of separate Record Offices for county and county town. After the appointment of full-time archivists in both Bury and Ipswich, Lilian was content to act as Consultant Archivist to Bury and West Suffolk, and part-time Calendarer to the East Suffolk Record Office. Since her death, her sisters have made over to the appropriate libraries in Bury and Ipswich the Redstone Collections, a very substantial quantity of MSS. and books relating to Suffolk. The Ipswich Historical Society, today one of the most flourishing societies of its kind, owes its origin chiefly to Lilian, who described it as 'growing out of our first attempts to draw attention to the richness of local material in the Ipswich Library.'

Lilian Redstone saw her life's work accomplished, a more creative achievement, and a more enduring one, than most of us have the ability and the chance to perform. It was not her whole life. There remained her two sisters, Mabel and Elsie, who survive her, who to a great extent shared her interests, and whose kindness, incidentally, has been indispensable to the writing of this memoir. It must have been these particularly happy family relations that Lilian most acutely regretted leaving. The family concentrated at 3 Seckford Street, Woodbridge, after 1927, in the old house adjoining the Seckford Library of which Elsie was, and happily is, Librarian. This is not the place for the essay the Seckford Library deserves. In appearance and atmosphere it resembles a college library rather than one that serves a highly literate little town and neighbourhood, but nowhere can librarians have a livelier awareness of the members' individual tastes and interests. It is the setting of a memorable scene enacted regularly in the later 1930s. Lilian would return from her day's work in London, make up her diary, and then go straight into the Library to help put the books away. She would put them away in one part of the library, her father in another, while Elsie and Mabel tackled the clerical work. After five minutes: dead silence. Then Elsie and Mabel would look round and find their father and Lilian reading; their father sometimes aware that they had noticed, but Lilian oblivious.

The nineteenth-century brick front of 3 Seckford Street is misleading. Like the carved, half-timbered house opposite, and the ancient red-brick Shire Hall with its orientally curved Dutch gables which fill the view at the end of the street, it has provided centuries of use, and remains perfectly serviceable, almost animate with character, and above all homely. For thirty years now friends and students of East Anglian history, many of them from as far as Scandinavia and the United States, have been made welcome there – usually in the larger of the two living-rooms ('Yorkshire' as against 'Rutland'), low-ceilinged but light, with the oak beams plastered over, and with two Regency French-windows. Outside stands the great grey flint tower of St Mary's, above the most English of garden views, with roses and holly, elm and ash and poplar. Blue-tits and an occasional nut hatch come for food to one of the windows. And within, the home of the Redstones remains as Lilian and her father knew it. That memory, of the home and the whole family, must always inspire those that knew them.

January 1958

NORMAN SCARFE

The Suffolk Records Society

The Society has been founded for the encouragement of the study and preservation of Suffolk records, and for the annual publication of a volume of documents relating to Suffolk and its people in all periods from the Middle Ages to the present day.

The foundation has been made possible by building up an endowment fund with the aid of a grant from the Pilgrim Trust and the equally encouraging local response to an appeal over the signatures of the Earl of Stradbroke as *Custos Rotulorum* and Patron of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology, the Earl of Cranbrook as Chairman of the East Suffolk Records Committee, the Earl of Euston, Lady Marjorie Erskine as Chairman of the West Suffolk Records Committee, Sir Henry Lowry Corry, until 1957 Chairman of the West Suffolk County Council, the Lord Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, and Alderman P. Weiner, the Mayor of Ipswich in 1956-7. A list of donors appears below.

The Earl of Cranbrook, C.B.E., F.L.S., has kindly accepted the Presidency of the Society. Before the Inaugural Meeting in October 1958 the affairs of the Society are in the hands of a Provisional Committee under the Chairmanship of Mr Leslie Dow, F.S.A., President of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology. The Provisional Committee consists of the two Hon. General Editors, Dr G. H. Martin and Mr Norman Scarfe of Leicester University, the Hon. Secretary, Mr Derek Charman, Archivist of Ipswich and East Suffolk, the Hon. Treasurer, Mr M. W. G. Wathen of Barclays Bank Ltd, and Mr M. P. Statham, Archivist of Bury and West Suffolk.

The Society is indebted to the following donors for their generous help:

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Preface

The history of farming, though not a new branch of learning, has been immeasurably enriched of late years by the study of local diversity, for every corner of England may be said to have its own special blend of traditional farming lore, constantly modified by experiment and innovation. This volume of documents is intended to illustrate the special characteristics of Suffolk farming in the nineteenth century at a time when the spirit of invention and experiment was stronger than it had ever been before. Our main problems have been to illustrate the many facets of the subject, despite the uneven rate of survival of different kinds of document, and despite limitations of space. In the end, we found space more unyielding than the archives, and had to discard many documents that we would have liked to print. Nevertheless, we have managed to preserve the full variety of the original plan while limiting the number of documents. In one case only did we fail in our purpose. We had to omit all manuscripts illustrating the draining of the Suffolk fens, though these will qualify better perhaps for inclusion in a volume illustrating the history of the county in the eighteenth century.

We are deeply indebted to many kind friends and advisers, and many owners of documents and of information who have generously aided us. But we would like particularly to thank the archivists of the two record offices, Mr Derek Charman at Ipswich and Mr Martin P. Statham at Bury St Edmunds, and Mr Norman Scarfe, one of the general editors of this series, who was our constant counsellor and assisted us untiringly with his knowledge of Suffolk history.

1 May, 1958

JOAN THIRSK

JEAN IMRAY

ABBREVIATIONS AND RULES OF TRANSCRIPTION

D.N.B. Dictionary of National Biography

BPP British Parliamentary Paper

B. & W.S.R.O. Bury St Edmunds and West Suffolk Record Office

I. & E.S.R.O. Ipswich and East Suffolk Record Office

In the transcription of documents, the spelling of the originals has been preserved, but abbreviations have been extended where necessary to clarify meaning, and the use of capital letters and punctuation, where necessary, has been modernized.

Doubtful readings are enclosed in square brackets. Square brackets are left empty where the original document was illegible. Round brackets have been used to enclose explanatory matter inserted by the editors within the text of the documents.

Notes and other explanatory headings at the beginning of documents, not forming part of the original manuscript, are printed in italics.

The editors have not usually deemed it necessary to draw attention to obvious misspellings and omissions in the original text of documents.

In the designation of sources, *From* preceding the name of the repository denotes an extract only. In other cases it may be assumed that the whole document has been printed except where small omissions are indicated in the text by dots.



Suffolk Farming in the Nineteenth Century

One of the most striking features of agricultural development in the nineteenth century was the publicity accorded it. The reports of the Board of Agriculture, Royal Commissions of enquiry, journalists' homilies, the publications of the Royal Agricultural Society after 1840, the official agricultural statistics after 1866, all bore witness to an unprecedented zeal to enquire, publicize, and generalize about the state of agriculture. This at a time when England was devoting more and more of her resources of labour and capital to industry and trade reflected a state of tension in agriculture. Not that the century was one of unmitigated gloom. There were two periods of great prosperity, both of them, however, associated with exceptional wartime conditions. But for nearly two-thirds of the century farming was a depressed industry. And although many bold enterprises of land improvement were carried out, and much land transformed out of recognition by new methods of scientific farming, a great proportion of the literature of the nineteenth century sprang from anxiety about the future. In consequence, surviving records consist to a large extent of summary conclusions, generalizations, and recipes for salvation, based upon detailed personal interviews and written questionnaires which were not themselves printed or preserved. For the historian, reviewing the past, it is now much easier to generalize than to particularize. The strong sense of localism which emerges from the study of husbandry in earlier centuries tends to be submerged in the nineteenth century by the weight of information illustrating national trends.

The documents in this book are designed to illustrate both the national and the local history of agriculture and rural society. Suffolk was affected like all other counties by wars, booms and depressions, extremes of weather, price changes, taxation, tithes, the repeal of the Corn Laws. But these influences worked upon a county with its own peculiar characteristics of soil, climate and topography, and with its own special class structure. Its responses, therefore, were local.

Local eccentricity is most conspicuous of all in Suffolk's experience of the so-called agricultural revolution. As a national phenomenon this revolution is associated with enclosure, the popularization of rootcrops and the Norfolk rotation, horse-hoeing husbandry, and improved field drainage. In most counties, these innovations spread most rapidly in the century after 1760. In Suffolk, however, they did not play the same spectacular rôle because the county had been among the pioneers in the practice of these improvements. Its agricultural revolution, according to the conventional definition, was already far advanced before 1800.

Nevertheless, Suffolk did experience a revolution in the nineteenth

century, a revolution in specialization, dictated by price trends. At the beginning it was celebrated for the dairies which characterized its strong lands. At the end it was noted as a grain-growing county and was one of the worst hit by the agricultural depression. Wilson Fox, the Assistant Commissioner who investigated the fortunes of six English counties in East Anglia and the north in 1895, considered Suffolk's condition the most desperate of all. The change from dairying to corn growing had occurred in response to the high price of grain during the Napoleonic War. Quixotically, it had been accelerated, as in other counties, by falling prices in the 'twenties and 'thirties, for farmers tried to cut their losses by growing more and more corn. Finally prices fell so low that the land ceased to be worth cultivating. In 1896 Suffolk could be 'given away to anybody who will take it'¹.

The century that had opened with an optimistic appraisal of Suffolk agriculture by Arthur Young ended with a pessimistic and indeed despairing report by Wilson Fox. In the intervening hundred years the pattern of land use had changed, but so had the market conditions, and Suffolk farmers found their produce out of tune with prices and demand. The only hope for the future then envisaged by contemporaries was to turn back the clock and restore the dairies to their former importance. This was the main theme of plans for reconstruction when the century closed. But although progress was made in this direction in the next decade, it did not proceed far before the First World War ushered in another spell of artificial prosperity. The necessity for radical changes in land use temporarily disappeared.

* * *

The broadest generalizations concerning the husbandry of Suffolk relate to the strong clays of central Suffolk which cover about two-thirds of the county. To the west lies a wedge of sandy land upon a chalk subsoil and beyond it a triangle of fenland forming part of the Bedford Level. The coastal area, east of the central clays, is a mixture of infertile sand and warm, free-working, productive loams, interspersed with rich marshes along the coast and river estuaries (*see front end-paper map*).

Topographers before the nineteenth century divided the county into these same four farming regions. Central Suffolk was a dairying district, much of it in tillage, which had won for Suffolk a high reputation as a cheese and butter producer. The western sands supported a sheep and barley husbandry, the more barren parts being given over to rabbit warrens. The eastern sands made good corn land when improved with marl, the unimproved heaths were sheepwalks, while the coastal marshes were used for cattle feeding grounds. Finally, the fens of north-west Suffolk, though lightly peopled, fed a large number of stock in summer. No doubt some of the cattle droves from the north, which trudged south in the eighteenth century to be fattened in Norfolk and Suffolk, tarried in the fens of Mildenhall, Brandon, and Lakenheath on their way to London.²

By 1800 some revolutionary improvements were under way. The fenlands

¹ *British Parliamentary Paper* (=BPP), 1895, XVI, pp. 392, 365; 1896, XVII, p. 124.

² William and Hugh Raynbird, *On the Agriculture of Suffolk*, 1849, pp. 79-81; Cal. S.P.Dom., 1629-31, p. 111; Joan Thirsk, *English Peasant Farming*, 1957, p. 234.

were being drained with varying degrees of success, and, where they were suitable for the plough, were being pared and burned, and sown with cole-seed, which was fed off or kept for seed. This was followed by oats and seeds left down for six to seven years when the whole cycle of paring, burning, and ploughing began again. The routine was the same as that followed throughout the fens of eastern England and was the prelude to the permanent conversion of the fen from a pastoral to an arable, and later on a market-gardening region.¹ On the western sands some of the rabbit warrens and sheepwalks were disappearing before the ploughshare as turnip cultivation opened up new opportunities for rendering the land fertile for corn. The system of sheepfolding, long since traditional on the more fertile portions, remained an integral part of the programme for cultivating this virgin soil.² The eastern sands were already in a high state of tillage and won superlative praise from Arthur Young. In the course of centuries they had been greatly improved by marling, but even greater strides were made with the aid of crag, a mixture of shell, sand, and gravel found on the coast and in river beds, and in general use as a manure by the third decade of the eighteenth century.³ Carrots, which had been grown in the fields about Framlingham since the early seventeenth century, were now part of the routine of husbandry in the triangle of coastal land between Woodbridge, Saxmundham, Orford and Leiston and were despatched to the tables of London. This also was the destination of large numbers of cattle from Scotland, which were fattened on the coastal marshes.⁴ On the central clays dairying was still the main pursuit, the most celebrated dairy farms lying on the south-eastern fringe of the clay belt along the upper reaches of the Blyth, Alde, Deben, and Gipping rivers. Much of the land continued in pasture, but a practice of feeding cabbages to cows had developed in the previous twenty-five years and was proving a better food than hay. Carrots and cabbages, indeed, were the two usages of Suffolk which Arthur Young was most concerned to publicize (see p. 63).⁵

The policy of Arthur Young in compiling *The General View of the Agriculture of Suffolk*, as he took pains to explain in his introduction, was to pick out 'the most interesting features of the local practices', 'touching very lightly on those articles which must necessarily be common to every county'.⁶ His was not a general view of the county but a device for giving publicity to improved husbandry. The more humdrum routine of farming escaped remark, and it is difficult, therefore, to gauge the extent of bad and average farming in the county at the beginning of the century. However, the fact that Suffolk was precocious in assimilating new farming methods

¹ Arthur Young, *A General View of the Agriculture of Suffolk*, 1797, pp. 42, 74.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 37-42.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 5. John Kirby, who surveyed the county in 1732, 1733 and 1734 referred to the great improvements achieved by the use of crag. Its value was discovered accidentally by a farmer at Levington about 1718. - J. Kirby, *The Suffolk Traveller*, 2nd ed., 1764, p. 2.

⁴ E. Kerridge, 'Turnip Husbandry in High Suffolk', *Econ. Hist. Rev.*, 2nd Ser., VIII, no. 3, p. 390; A. Young, *op. cit.*, p. 103; S. C. Roberts (transl.), *A Frenchman in England*, 1784, pp. 173-4.

⁵ A. Young, *op. cit.*, pp. 179, 182.

⁶ A. Young, *op. cit.*, p. vii.

suggests that at least from the sixteenth century onwards its average farms attained a higher standard of productivity than those of most Midland counties. In the first place, it had the advantage of having been long since enclosed. Indeed, the heavy clays of central Suffolk probably never lay in open fields, while much of the land to the west and east of this central area had undergone enclosure before the sixteenth century. By 1760 the bulk of the open land consisted of commons and waste, which, according to Arthur Young's rough guess, amounted to only one-eighth of the county. More than half the 115 Parliamentary enclosure acts for Suffolk related exclusively to commons, while the majority of parishes with remnants of open field lay in the western sector of the county, on the poorer sands which had only recently become improvable. In brief, the better quality farmland was enclosed well before the days of Parliamentary Acts. After about 1760 it was, of course, unusual for enclosure to take place without an Act (see p. 60). But the Framlingham correspondence and the account of the common greens in Debenham (see p. 60) are a reminder that when all parties acquiesced, small pieces of land might still be enclosed without this expensive preliminary.¹

The introduction of roots as a field crop was an eighteenth-century improvement which Suffolk dairy farmers had already pioneered in the seventeenth. The earliest references so far found to turnips date from the 1660s. Two peasants farming in the Waveney valley at Weybread and St Olave's-in-Herringfleet were feeding their fat and dairy cattle on turnips in the early 1660s. Tithes were being taken on turnips at Theberton near the coast in 1674. But since turnips were already used as a garden vegetable in Norfolk in the 1570s, this turnip-dairying husbandry of Suffolk may well date from the early seventeenth century. A hundred years later it was sufficiently celebrated in the outside world for Defoe to credit the county with the rôle of pioneer. The turnips were used by the dairy farmers to feed their milch cows and so enabled them to continue milk and butter production throughout the winter.²

The introduction of the Norfolk four-course is more difficult to follow in contemporary documents. It seems likely, however, that a six-course rotation – turnips, barley, seeds left down for three years, wheat – which made less demand on the land since wheat was grown only once in six years, was the older and more usual practice of Suffolk before the four-course was popularized and became the standard rotation enforced by landlords in the nineteenth century. Even then the six-course continued in favour and, indeed, in the first quarter of the century was still regarded by some observers as the norm, but it was now adapted to include two white corn crops, viz: turnips, barley or oats, seeds for two years, wheat, barley.³

Hollow-draining was another improvement much canvassed in the

¹ A. Young, p. 147; W. E. Tate, 'A handlist of Suffolk Enclosure Acts and Awards', *Suffolk Institute of Archaeology*, XXV, 1952, pp. 240–6.

² E. Kerridge, 'Turnip husbandry in High Suffolk', *Econ. Hist. Rev.*, 2nd Ser., VIII, no. 3, pp. 390–2. Dr Kerridge gives five examples of turnip cultivation in the Waveney valley, but only two of the places are in Suffolk; J. Spratt, *Agrarian Conditions in Norfolk and Suffolk, 1600–1650*, London Univ. M.A. thesis, 1935, p. 205.

³ BPP 1881, XVII, p. 675; *White's Directory of Suffolk*, 1844, p. 31.

nineteenth century which was practised in Suffolk in the 1740s and probably earlier. No doubt, necessity was the mother of invention on the heavy clays, but experiment and capital expenditure were encouraged by the fact that central Suffolk was enclosed country. The usual method of draining was to dig trenches and fill them with stubble, ling, straw, and sometimes peat, which then supported the earth until it became compressed to form a firm arch. Even after the invention of tile drains in the 1820s and 1830s the traditional Suffolk method continued to have its advocates since it was cheaper and in some farmers' opinion equally durable.¹

By 1800 the technique of agriculture in Suffolk was ahead of that of most Midland counties. Methods of farming that were a novelty elsewhere were here an old routine. How then did Suffolk respond to the extra stimulus of high prices and grain shortage during the Napoleonic War? In some ways its advanced agriculture was its ultimate undoing for it enabled farmers to effect greater changes in land use in a short time than farmers in counties where improvement waited upon enclosure, and enclosure waited upon the slow passage of Acts of Parliament, followed by surveys, and public hearings of enclosure commissioners. Awards were not usually made until two, three and more years after the Acts were passed. Since so many Suffolk farmers were able to convert their land without delay of this kind, it left them in an extremely exposed position when the post-war depression supervened. They had increased corn production at the expense of stock and had enjoyed handsome profits. But when the slump came it was grain prices which were the first to fall.

In the sandy regions of Suffolk, high wartime food prices encouraged bold expenditure in bringing marginal land under the plough. This expansion of cultivation and the system of management are mirrored in the particulars of two farms in east and west Suffolk given to the Royal Commissions of enquiry in 1828 and 1836. The first belonged to J. G. Cooper of Blyburgh.² Like many farms on the eastern sands it was large, amounting to sixteen hundred acres, and was held in conjunction with coastal marsh, which enabled the farmer to feed as well as breed. The heath was a sheep-walk of 527 acres. The arable amounted to 783 acres and had been under the plough for many years on a Norfolk rotation. The marsh was mostly ordinary pasture of 272 acres. On this farm a breeding flock of 920 sheep was fed on the heath and folded on the arable.³ The second farm was at Ingham on the western sands. In the 1820s it amounted to between eleven and twelve hundred acres. Like most of the farms on this ungrateful soil it was a prairie-like establishment, but it was not farmed in conjunction with fenland as were many other western light land farms. The soil was described by the farmer as a poor sand and gravel. Without fen he could not do much feeding of sheep and cattle during the summer, but fertility was

¹ Rev. Copinger Hill, 'Evidence on the antiquity, cheapness, and efficacy of thorough-draining or land-ditching, as practised throughout the counties of Suffolk, Hertford, Essex, and Norfolk, collected by Ph. Pusey . . .', *Jnl. Roy. Agric. Soc.*, IV, 1843, pp. 23–33.

² Arthur Young described this farm, *West Wood Lodge* in Blyburgh, as 'without exception the finest farm in the county.' – A. Young, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

³ BPP 1836 (79), VIII, pp. 290, 292.

again maintained by sheep folding. The farmer at Ingham clipped about 1,000 sheep a year, fed his flocks on furze on the heath during the day, and folded them on turnips on the arable at night. They were short-woollen Southdown – a breed which was less commonly found than the Norfolk, though both travelled well and were suitable for folding. The corn harvest was precarious at all times and in dry years dwindled to almost nothing. Yet the population in the district had been increasing steadily since about 1800 as the farming boom had attracted settlers into hitherto neglected areas. The most reliable portion of this farmer's income came from his sheep. The flock paid the rent. Hence he was protected from the first hard blows dealt by the post-war fall in grain prices.¹

After 1813 and with but short bright intervals, depression lasted until towards the end of the 1830s (see pp. 92, 94). Meat and wool prices did not fall as rapidly as corn prices, but by 1828 the woolgrowers who had received 1s 9d a pound for their wool in 1824 and considered 1s 6d a remunerative price were fortunate to receive 9½d. This state of affairs continued until 1830 when the decline was arrested by sheep rot which broke out in 1829 and 1830. It brought comfort to those farmers whose flocks had not been decimated by disease. But it afforded only temporary relief and by the mid-'thirties the light-land farmer was bordering on ruin. His system of husbandry did not, indeed could not, change. The arable was tilled on a Norfolk rotation. Folding was the principal preparation for wheat, some rye was grown for sheep feed in lambing time, and this filled the interval after the turnips were finished and before the spring grass was ready. Where carrots were grown as the rootbreak, the tops were folded with sheep in the autumn. A change in the breed of sheep was pioneered after the war by farmers who not only bred sheep but also fed them. Whereas the Norfolk and the Southdown had been considered the only suitable types in the early years of the century, the favoured breeding sheep was now a cross between the Norfolk and the Southdown, the best grazing sheep the half-bred Leicesters. The only cattle kept on the heathlands were usually bought in lean in the autumn for fattening in the yards and were sold from February onwards. Many of them came from Scotland and were bought in at Woolpit Fair which was held for a week from 16 September.²

On the heavy clays the Napoleonic War initiated a slow revolution as the dairy pastures were ploughed up to make room for more profitable corn. When grain prices fell, conversion continued because farmers, unable to revert quickly to a former routine, and convinced that the dry climate of Suffolk could never produce good grassland, sought their salvation in growing more and more wheat. This policy was the more compelling because farmers were unable to compete against the low prices of imported Dutch and Irish butter and cheese. But in placing so much reliance on the corn harvest – it was not unusual to find eighty per cent of the land on a farm in tillage – the clayland farmer was merely aggravating his own distress. At

¹ BPP 1828 (515), VIII, pp. 544–7, 521; A. Young, *op. cit.*, pp. 189–90.

² BPP 1828 (515), VIII, pp. 521, 544; 1836 (79), VIII, pp. 295, 292; W. & H. Raynbird, *op. cit.*, p. 24 *et seq.*, p. 45; Herman Biddell, 'Agriculture', *Victoria History of the County of Suffolk*, II, p. 391.

the same time, if he once attempted to reduce his losses by cutting labour costs, he faced a rapidly rising parish bill for poor relief. Mr Cooper of Blythburgh, who gave evidence before more than one Select Committee, was paying £121. 10s 4½d in poor rates in 1824, and more than twice as much ten years later. Some farmers abandoned their farms altogether for want of means to pay the rates. Others less desperate were yet so destitute of capital by the mid-thirties that they were unable to stock their farms, and entered into agreements with stock dealers who supplied the beasts and received them back again when fat. In other counties, impoverishment on this scale was unusual at this early date and was a sign of exceptional distress.¹

Continued depression in the late 'twenties and early 'thirties again brought problems of poor relief to a head. Suffolk's experience of poor law administration had run a somewhat different course from that of most other counties. It had marched ahead in using the hundred rather than the parish for rationalizing and cheapening the cost of maintaining the poor. In rural areas elsewhere, the grouping of parishes was not generally undertaken until after 1782. In Suffolk this step was first taken in 1756 when the gentry of the hundreds of Carlford and Colneis, on their own initiative, obtained a local act setting up a governing body of J.P.s, freeholders, leaseholders and clergy to arrange for the building of a workhouse at Nacton and to administer poor relief throughout the two hundreds. This experiment reduced the cost of the poor so effectively that by 1780 all the hundreds of east Suffolk, except Plomesgate, as well as Cosford hundred in west Suffolk, had organized themselves in the same way. Unfortunately, the administration did not continue as efficient as it had begun. Costs began to rise and more and more outdoor relief was given until, by the second decade of the nineteenth century in some hundreds, outdoor cost far more than indoor relief. This trend was aggravated by the introduction of a new scheme for spreading the cost between parishes. At first they had contributed a fixed sum determined according to their average expenditure in the years before the parishes were amalgamated under hundredal administration. Since they paid the same whatever the number of their paupers, they had no misgivings about despatching them all to the workhouse. Between 1801 and 1820, however, new arrangements were made whereby parishes paid according to the numbers sent to the workhouse. There was now an incentive to keep numbers low, and parish officials were tempted to grant outdoor relief in some cases. Ultimately, the cost to the parishes rose and the workhouses were neglected. After 1825 a strong movement developed in favour of dissolving these old incorporations and reverting to the former plan of outdoor relief under parish management.² It was in these circumstances that fresh schemes were advanced for relieving and employing the poor and distributing the financial burden evenly among the employers of the parish. John Lay wrote to the Earl of Stradbroke in 1830 appealing for legislation to enforce some such scheme in all parishes where two-thirds of the vestry

¹ BPP 1833 (612), V, p. 91; W. & H. Raynbird, *op. cit.*, p. 7 *et seq*; BPP 1836 (79), VIII, pp. 295, 293, 297.

² Sidney and Beatrice Webb, *English Local Government: English Poor Law History: part I*, pp. 125–44, 252–3.

could be brought to agree (see p. 134). The list of unemployed which he compiled for Blything and Hoxne Hundreds explains why emigration from Suffolk began so early. Already in the 1830s labourers were moving northwards and to America, whereas in other eastern and Midland counties this movement did not assume any significant proportions until the 1860s (see p. 138).

In the end, Parliament came to the aid of the farmer with the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 and the Tithe Commutation Act of 1836. The Suffolk labourer was again refused outdoor relief, and had to find a job or go into the workhouse. Tithes were commuted for a money payment fixed according to the current price of grain. In the early 'forties, the over-taxed, impoverished farmer regained confidence as the rates fell. He took on more labour and slowly resumed his old programme of high farming. His efforts were assisted by the foundation of the Royal Agricultural Society, which gave practical help to the farmer by spreading knowledge of scientific agriculture, and by the formation of local agricultural societies such as the East Suffolk Agricultural Association, founded in 1831, which held shows and offered prizes for good farming (see p. 72).¹

In the application of science to farming Suffolk played an outstanding part, for Suffolk men were among the pioneers in the manufacture of fertilizers and modern machinery. In 1843 both Edward Packard and J. B. Lawes of Rothamsted were dissolving bones in acid with a view to using the product as a field fertilizer. In the same year J. S. Henslow, professor at Cambridge and from 1837 to 1861 devoted rector of Hitcham, applied the process to the coprolites found in the coastal areas of Suffolk between Dunwich and Felixstowe and in other eastern counties (see p. 81). As a result of these experiments fertilizer factories were established in Suffolk, which have since grown into vast enterprises with world-wide reputations. Joseph Fison had a business in Ipswich in 1850; Edward Packard had a small works for grinding coprolites at Snape in 1843, and in 1854 erected a complete superphosphate factory and sulphuric acid works at Bramford. These two great firms with Prentice Brothers of Stowmarket were amalgamated in 1929, and took the name of Fisons Limited in 1942.²

The fertilizer enterprises of Suffolk were influenced in their choice of a home by the presence of coprolites in the county. The establishment of implement manufacturers there seems to have been due to the accident of personalities, assisted, perhaps, by the traditionally kindly reception given to new ideas and new inventions by Suffolk farmers. The three outstanding firms that have survived and prospered to this day were founded by Robert Ransome, Richard Garrett, and James Smyth. Robert Ransome was the son of a schoolmaster of Wells in Norfolk, who was apprenticed to a Norwich ironmonger and in 1789 moved to Ipswich with one workman to set up his own foundry in an old malt brewery. He had already taken out a patent for tempering cast-iron ploughshares in 1785, but it was not until 1803 that he

¹ BPP 1833 (612), V, p. 462; 1837 (464), V, p. 144; 1836 (79), VIII, p. 297.

² W. G. T. Packard, *The History of the Fertilizer Industry in Britain*, 1952, pp. 8-10, 14; 'Superphosphate - its history and manufacture', *Trans. Institution of Chemical Engineers*, XV, 1937, pp. 21-2.

perfected the idea of a share that remained sharp in use and did not constantly have to be resharpened like the wrought-iron share. This he achieved by chilling the cast iron and thus hardening the underside of the share while the upper part, which was continually being worn away, remained soft. A permanently sharp edge was thus preserved (see p. 77). Robert Ransome also succeeded in making the parts of the plough body removable so that repairs could be carried out in the field. In 1840, at the meeting of the Royal Agricultural Society at Cambridge, Messrs Ransome exhibited eighty-two differently constructed ploughs. These, however, were only one of many implements of husbandry manufactured by them. They included scarifiers, harrows, threshing machines, horse rakes, and later steam engines and steam ploughs. By the middle of the century, Ransome and May's factory spread over ten acres of ground at Ipswich and employed 800–1,000 men. Nearly half of these were engaged in the making of farm implements, while the rest carried out engineering work for the railways.

Richard Garrett of Leiston had a smaller business than Ransome's by 1850, employing 300–400 men, but the firm paid the same attention to the quality and uniformity of their work and specialized in adapting their tools to the needs and convenience of the farmer. For this reason much of their equipment was made easily portable (see p. 79).

The third important firm of Suffolk manufacturers was founded by James Smyth who set up in business at Peasenhall as a wheelwright repairing Suffolk drills, and with his brother Jonathan of Sweffling perfected a new type with coulters which, instead of being fixed, could be raised and lowered for different widths of work. They sent travellers about the country to demonstrate their drill and undertook contract work for 2s 6d an acre. In course of time they built up a prosperous business with a number of branches manufacturing a great variety of agricultural implements.¹

The year 1830 saw the establishment of a notable experiment in co-operative farming at Assington, sponsored by John Gurdon, the local squire. It was a cause of common concern at the time that the self respect and independence of the labourer had been undermined by long years of poor relief. To give the labourers in his parish both the incentive and the opportunity to improve their income, John Gurdon offered a vacant farm of one hundred acres to twenty of the more conscientious labourers. He lent them £400 free of interest and they each paid a guarantee of £2 and undertook to cultivate the farm according to his stipulations. These, however, went no further than the normal restrictions imposed by landlords on their tenants (see p. 111). In ten years the capital was repaid, and a second farm of 150 acres was leased to thirty men on the same terms in 1852. Both farms were run by a farm manager with the help of men and boys. But the labourers who leased the farm did not normally work on it unless they lost their jobs with other farmers, when they were given the first opportunity of work. John Gurdon's declared purpose in making the experiment was to raise the condition of the agricultural labourer without raising him out of his class.

¹ James Caird, *English Agriculture in 1850 and 1851*, 1852, pp. 148–50; J. A. Scott Watson and M. E. Hobbs, *Great Farmers*, 1937 ed., pp. 58–9; G. E. Fussell, *The Farmer's Tools*, 1952, pp. 60–1, 108.

He regarded the experiment as entirely successful and in 1863 listed its merits thus: there were now fifty parishioners in Assington with a vested interest in keeping the poor rates low; they had some understanding of the farmers' point of view; there was less poaching and marauding. He had no information concerning profits made from the farms but the absence of any complaints suggested that the rewards were satisfactory.

This co-operative enterprise did not receive much national publicity but it gained a local reputation and one of the reporters to the Royal Commission on the Employment of Women and Children in Agriculture made a special investigation into its management. In his view the virtue of the co-operative farm lay in reviving the small farm without reviving the class of small farmers, 'a class that neither did themselves nor anyone else much good.' This judgment was passed in 1867 before the great depression, but after the end of the boom years in English farming. The comments reflected a viewpoint widely held by the 'eighties and 'nineties that small farms were much more productive than large because they were more intensively cultivated. More attention was paid to poultry, for example, and more stock kept than on the large farm. Yet everyone knew the vulnerability of the small holder in hard times. Hard work in the long run could not compensate for the lack of financial resources to tide over bad years. The only adverse comment on the Assington farms concerned their social consequences and was made by the vicar of the parish. The tenants of these farms did not occupy the social position of the ordinary farmers. They did not take part in the management of parish affairs, nor render the services to the community self-imposed on the middle-class farmers. Many of the labourer farmers at Assington could neither read nor write. Poverty had deprived them in their youth of any education in service to the community and the parish suffered for lack of their beneficence. From an economic standpoint, however, the Assington experiment in the early years was a great success and these farms continued to be managed on the same lines up to the outbreak of the First World War. One society was dissolved in 1913 when Mr George Rice, foreman and shareholder in Society Farm, bought out the other twelve members, each share being then worth £121. 3s 1d. The other co-operatively-run farms in the parish by that date were Knotts Farm and Severall's Farm, which continued in existence till about 1918. They failed at the end, however, and the shareholders received nothing when their association was dissolved.¹

The optimism of farmers in the early 1840s did not survive for long in this world of rapid and often precarious industrial expansion. The collapse of the railway boom in 1845, business depression, the potato famine in Ireland, and the consequent repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846 constituted a

¹ The details concerning the size of farms and the number of people involved differ somewhat in the report printed by the Royal Commission from those given by John Gurdon himself in an article in the *Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society*. I have followed the latter in all important particulars since it is clearly the more authoritative version. — John Gurdon, 'Co-operative farms at Assington, Suffolk', *Jnl. Roy. Agric. Soc.*, XXIV, 1863, p. 165 *et seq.*; *BPP* 1867-8, XVII, pp. 107-10. Information on the recent history of the farms was kindly given by Mr W. Rice of Dillock's Farm, Assington, nephew of Mr George Rice. The 1867 reporter became Bishop of Manchester, 1870-85, cf. D.N.B. and p. 142 below.

series of unpredictable events more damaging to the farmer than many an unkind summer. Since Suffolk was a primarily agricultural county, majority opinion was almost certainly reflected in the petition of the inhabitants of Groton who protested to the House of Commons against the policy of free trade (see p. 96). But the interests of agriculture took second place now that industry was absorbing an ever larger proportion of the nation's resources. The country wanted cheap corn for the sake of its townsfolk. As the farmers had feared, the prices of home produce fell and they viewed the future with renewed anxiety.

The crisis that followed is mirrored in correspondence between Mr E. F. Leguen de Lacroix, owner of Chediston Hall, his solicitors, and his local agent, John Crabtree. Landlords were obliged to make at least temporary rent reductions, amounting in the case of the Chediston Hall estate to 12½ per cent in 1851 and 1852 and 10 per cent in 1853. By 1853, however, the immediate panic was over, in the next year the Crimean War stimulated demand, and the ten years from 1853 to 1862 were later called 'the golden age of English agriculture' (see p. 96).

Even the heavy clays of Suffolk shared in this prosperity, for from the distress of the 'twenties and 'thirties farmers had drawn the conclusion that the only hope of survival lay in improving the efficiency of their arable husbandry. And in this direction they achieved remarkable success. By the mid-nineteenth century Suffolk was noted for its admirable management of the heavy clays. In the words of Sir James Caird, 'The chief characteristic of Suffolk agriculture is the success with which heavy land farming is carried on.'¹

Success in cultivation was due first of all to the excellent and comprehensive system of draining, already practised for more than a century, and secondly to a careful system of drill husbandry, made possible by the co-operation between farmers and Suffolk manufacturers of agricultural implements. The injurious treading of the soil was avoided by harnessing only two horses to the plough, and by using drills, harrows, rollers and horse-hoes constructed to fit the width of a whole or half stetch so that the horses and wheels moved in the furrow. Thirdly, the land to be sown in spring was prepared in winter, was brought to a fine tilth by the frosts, and needed only a light harrowing in spring before the barley was sown. Fourthly, mangolds were introduced about 1820 to replace turnips. They were sown earlier and could be taken off the land by the end of October or the beginning of November. The land could the sooner be prepared for barley. Furthermore, in order to prevent damage to the land by horses and carts, the entire crop was frequently taken off the field by hand.²

By the mid-nineteenth century the characteristic husbandry of the heavy clays was mixed. Sheep and cattle were fattened, and a four-course rotation used on the arable of clean fallow or tares, mangold or turnips, followed by barley, followed by clover or pulses alternately, followed by wheat. By that time the region was being cited by agricultural writers as a lesson in exemplary management.

¹ James Caird, *English Agriculture in 1850 and 1851, 1852*, p. 152.

² W. and H. Raynbird, *op. cit.*, p. 7 *et seq.*

Although neglected by agricultural writers because of its small extent, the fenland of Suffolk was also a model farming region, efficiently drained with steam pumping engines. The peat had been transformed into fertile arable land by the admixture of clay dug from the subsoil and bones, and by the middle of the century was in continuous cultivation. Instead of being laid down to seeds for six or seven years at a time, it sustained a rotation of coleseed, oats or barley, seeds or beans, and wheat.¹

On the light lands no outstanding changes were introduced to call for special remark. Carrots continued to be grown but were now used for horse and cattle feed and to fatten bullocks. Turnips were the main root crop, however, for the sheep flock was the basis of husbandry.

Suffolk's reputation among agriculturists rested upon its techniques of arable husbandry, not on its management of pasture and stock. There were two exceptions to this generalization, however. It developed its own breed of black-faced sheep, and it perfected its own breed of chestnut horses, the Suffolk Punches, until they became celebrated throughout the world. The black-faced Suffolk sheep is a mixture of the Norfolk and the Southdown, with a trace of the Hampshire and the Sussex in its pedigree. At the beginning of the nineteenth century the two commonest breeds in the county were the Norfolk and the Southdown. In the eastern heathlands, these two were crossed to produce a sheep which combined the hardiness and the fine-flavoured meat of the Norfolk with the early-maturing qualities of the Southdown. On the heavy lands, in contrast, the sheep breeders concentrated on producing a heavier carcase by crossing the Southdown with a Hampshire or Sussex ram. These two types were then crossed and in-bred until the Suffolk black-faced sheep was recognized as a distinct breed. 'Probably no ewe in England', wrote Herman Biddell in 1907, 'produces the number of good healthy lambs to the score that these sheep do'.²

The chestnut horse was probably an indigenous type, but it was perfected by Thomas Crisp of Ufford in the late eighteenth century. In 1773 he advertised his unnamed chestnut horse 'to get good stock for coach or road', and from this horse nearly every Suffolk Punch is descended. In a later generation, Thomas Crisp, building upon the foundation laid by his forebear in the days of Arthur Young, moved from Rendlesham to Butley Abbey and there won an international reputation as a breeder. He was the true successor of Robert Bakewell of Dishley, a breeder not only of the celebrated Suffolk Punch, but of prizewinning Shorthorn cattle, and of Black Suffolk, Small White, and Berkshire pigs. From 1837 for thirty years and more his stock won prizes at national and international gatherings, and today 'his trainloads of stock for shipment abroad have become almost legendary'.³

The 'fifties and 'sixties were the prosperous years in the middle of the century when colourful Suffolk personalities, like Richard Garrett with his large hats, adorned the agricultural shows, and Thomas Crisp of Butley

¹ W. and H. Raynbird, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

² *Victoria History of County of Suffolk*, II, pp. 400-1; J. A. Scott Watson and M. E. Hobbs, *Great Farmers*, pp. 168-9.

³ Herman Biddell, *The Suffolk Stud-Book*, 1880, p. 38; J. A. Scott Watson and M. E. Hobbs, *Great Farmers*, pp. 194-7.

Abbey was despatching a menagerie of prize stock to foreign princes.¹ These years also saw the spread of a system of compensation to tenant farmers for unexhausted improvements which greatly encouraged capital expenditure on the land. It would be difficult to explain why Suffolk was so slow to adopt the system. It was introduced into Lincolnshire in the mid-eighteen-twenties, but in Suffolk it was still only practised on a few exceptional estates in 1848. One of these was the estate of Sir Robert Adair of Flixton, who allowed compensation only if the farmer left his farm at the instance of the landlord. Another was the estate of John Tollemache, where compensation was granted without this one-sided restriction. Since it benefited landlord and tenant alike, it is not surprising that it spread throughout Suffolk in the next forty years. Previously, it had been common form for farmers to farm high for the first half of their leases and badly for the second half. 'Much bad farming', declared one of the tenants of Sir Robert Adair, 'is due to lack of security' (see p. 103). But by the time that the Agricultural Holdings Act of 1883 was passed, Suffolk was so satisfied with its own voluntary system of tenant right that few people chose to invoke the Act in preference.²

When the 'golden age' of agriculture came to an end in the mid-seventies, Suffolk yet again became one of the most depressed counties in England. Both the light and heavy lands of the county were costly to cultivate and not easily adaptable, like the fens, to other systems of management. They could not be farmed profitably if prices were low. And from about 1875 to the end of the century farmers faced an almost continuous series of bad harvests, together with low prices resulting from the unrestricted import of foreign produce. The year 1879 was the most disastrous of all, 'the black year' as it was termed in the memorandum book of the Carter family (see p. 101). Snow fell at rye-seeding time; the summer was continuously wet. Farmers were carting wheat on 4 October. Severe winter weather set in on 20 November and lasted till Christmas. This disastrous year was followed by others (see p. 102). Landlords, who had given their tenants extra time to pay the rent in February 1879, had to face the necessity of reducing rents in July, and had extreme difficulty in letting vacant farms in September (see p. 99). By 1881 agents were advising their clients to let farms 'at any rents that can be obtained'.

The farmers of Suffolk laid the blame on bad weather, the increased cost and lower efficiency of labour as more and more of the best workers migrated, the rising expense of rates and the unfair method of taking the tithe averages. Their worst enemy, however, was foreign competition, for when harvests at home were bad the farmer did not receive the compensation of high prices. His yield was small, its quality was poor, but the market was plentifully supplied with good foreign produce. In central and west Suffolk farmers were further handicapped by the inadequate railway system, and viewed with envy the advantages of farmers in the south-east of the county, who could make use of cheap sea transport to London. Those who

¹ J. A. Scott Watson and M. E. Hobbs, *Great Farmers*, pp. 59, 195–6. Three of Garrett's hats are preserved in the Council Chamber of Leiston U.D.C.

² BPP 1866, VI, pp. 84–8, 97–8, 191.

lived within reach of the Stour and the Orwell sent their hay, straw, and sometimes roots to London by water and received back dung for their fields (see p. 161). Moreover, their land near the rivers was watered and kept moist and did not suffer the dryness of other parts of Suffolk. They could thus turn arable to pasture and effect considerable economies. In consequence, their farms continued to command a good rent. So, indeed, did all farms which still possessed good grassland, but they were few and far between. The agricultural revolution of the nineteenth century had banished the pastures and overworked the plough. The revolution could not lightly be reversed.¹

How did the depression affect the different regions? The fens continued relatively prosperous for they turned to the growing of market-garden crops which had a ready sale. Much of the lighter heathland, however, went out of cultivation altogether, though it was some years before farmers and landlords yielded to this desperate expedient. But the relentless fall in grain prices, coupled with losses of sheep through liver fluke in 1880 and 1881 left them little alternative. They waged war on the lessees of sporting rights over their land and insisted when taking up farms on becoming themselves the lessees. A few years later, however, even this was not enough to attract tenants. The cost of claying the land periodically – an essential measure for retaining fertility – ceased to be a remunerative proposition, and the land yielded a meagre harvest without it. The land was allowed to revert to rabbit warren or was reserved for game. Commentators viewing the situation after twenty years of almost unmitigated depression came to the conclusion that the land ought never to have been cultivated. The only profitable heaths were those which could successfully be put down to grass, while farmers living near Newmarket managed to make some profit by selling straw to the stables.²

Yet the light-land farmers were not the worst sufferers. By 1881 rent reductions on their land amounted on an average to 15 per cent. On the heavy lands it was 20–40 per cent. Here economies were achieved by employing less labour, using less manure, less marl, keeping fewer stock, and eventually leaving the land to fall down to grass. Much hay and straw were sold off the land and landlords were powerless to prevent it. The practice was revived of farmers taking in dealers' stock to graze their land, receiving in return no more than the manure. Alternatively, when farms were entirely unoccupied, the feed was auctioned.³

Landlords shared the losses of their tenants by reducing rents and adjusting themselves to a lower standard of living. Their straitened circumstances may be gauged from the statement that the rent drawn from Lord Stradbrooke's estate in 1895 was one-third the income which it received in 1877. Many landowners sold up their property or let their houses to shooting tenants and went to live more cheaply elsewhere. The Suffolk countryside was emptied of its nobility and gentry, and all spirit was knocked out of the farmers. Wilson Fox, summarizing his conclusions in 1895 before the Royal

¹ BPP 1881, XVII, pp. 672–3; 1881, XV, pp. 347–8.

² BPP 1881, XV, pp. 341, 347; 1895, XVI, p. 341.

³ BPP 1895, XVI, pp. 342, 343.

Commission on the agricultural depression, declared of Suffolk – 'Matters are so serious that I hardly know how to lay the facts before the Commission with sufficient emphasis.' Seven years later Sir Henry Rider Haggard, in *Rural England*, demonstrated in more detail the melancholy state of husbandry in the county, ranging with his examples from the catastrophic fall in the value of land in Mr Flick's neighbourhood at Theberton to the deplorable condition of cottages at Newton Green, near Sudbury.¹

The agricultural labourer shared the misfortunes of the Suffolk farmer, and during most of the century endured much insecurity and poverty. That his plight was frequently worsened by estrangement from his employer was often an indirect result of the class structure and layout of Suffolk villages. From the time of the Anglo-Saxon conquest, Suffolk had been a district with a high proportion of freeholders. In parishes where there was no resident manorial lord, they represented its ruling members, yet were too numerous to rule it in any effective way. A resident squire regulated the pace of new settlement and prevented the erection of new cottages if they were to be occupied by labourers who might later become a charge on the poor rates. Moreover, his own territorial ambitions as a landlord and farmer had the effect of limiting, if not diminishing, the number of farmers and hence also the number of labourers finding employment in the parish. Villages occupied by many freeholders, on the other hand, grew in size without let or hindrance. By the nineteenth century they had a distinct character of their own: they were known as 'open villages', and formed a reservoir of labour for supplying neighbouring farms. Settlers had not been deterred from moving into the parish. Indeed, they had been encouraged, for the local tradesmen and small holders had found it extremely profitable to become petty landlords, buying up old and often almost derelict cottages and letting them to labourers. Fifty pounds would buy a cottage that would yield a rent of 3–5 guineas a year. House purchase, in consequence, was considered one of the most rewarding forms of investment for village people with a small amount of capital² (see p. 125).

The existence of Suffolk's many 'open' villages had significant consequences for the agricultural labourer. His living quarters were frequently cramped and insanitary, and he lived out of sight of his employer. He walked daily from the village to his work on a nearby farm and took no share in the domestic life of the farmer. Little fellow-feeling subsisted in consequence between employer and employee, a fact which forcibly struck contemporaries who were familiar with a different situation in the northern counties, where the single labourers lived in the farmhouses, the married ones in cottages on the farm, and all shared their meals at the same table during the working day. The arrangements in Suffolk seemed to them to account for the rapid spread of trade unionism after 1872.³

The Suffolk labourer throughout the nineteenth century seems to have had a lower standard of life than his fellows in some other eastern counties.

¹ BPP 1895, XVI, pp. 347–8, 365, 366; H. Rider Haggard, *Rural England*, 1902, II, pp. 402, 392.

² BPP 1893–4, XXXV, pp. 35–6; 1896, XVII, p. 121; 1836 (79), VIII, p. 298.

³ BPP 1893–4, XXXV, pp. 23–4.

The agricultural depression after the Napoleonic War hit him doubly hard because it occurred at a time when home spinning, the occupation of the women folk which supplemented the family income, also disappeared. His diet, judging from a few casual remarks in the 1820s and 1830s, included little meat and much bread and potato, and many labourers drank nothing but water. No wonder that already in the mid-1830s they were migrating to the factories of Lancashire and to America, and many more were anxious to go but lacked the necessary capital.¹

The housing conditions of Suffolk labourers became notorious, and public attention was drawn to them by Royal Commissions and journalists in an effort to remedy matters (see pp. 125, 150). Finally, Suffolk became known for its successful efforts to improve housing accommodation, but the praise was exaggerated by the extent of the former deficiencies. The chief obstacles in the way of reform were the petty landlords who had little or no capital and no sense of social responsibility. Many of the great landowners had both and made notable progress during the prosperous 'fifties and later in erecting new cottages and renovating old ones. The cost was high in relation to the rent that labourers could pay and did not constitute a profitable investment. Improvements were rather a social service rendered (at considerable expense to themselves) by the more benevolent private landlords. Among these were Lord Stradbroke, part of whose survey of the cottages on his estate in 1874 is printed here (see p. 121), Sir Edward Kerrison, whose paternal interest in his tenants touched many other aspects of their welfare besides housing, and Lord Tollemache who spent £16,092 on his estate cottages between 1852 and 1881. Fifty-two cottages were rebuilt on the Tollemache estate, and ninety-one new ones erected. The latter cost £278 a pair and were built in one unit to enable the occupiers to be of assistance to each other. In the words of the reporter, they were 'a protection and a check to one another'. A chimney between the two cottages warmed both houses and in illness each had neighbours to call on for help. These dual units are still a familiar sight in the Helmingham neighbourhood.²

The large landowners won a deservedly high reputation for benevolence towards their tenants and workers. But their influence was exerted over but few villages in Suffolk. In the rest the labourer was at the mercy of a casual, if not grasping landlord, and an employer who was often too hard pressed by the times to show great generosity to his workers. Most labourers, including even the horsemen, stockmen and shepherds, were employed on a daily or even an hourly basis, which made it easy and tempting for farmers to put them on short time in order to reduce expenses. They rarely received anything in kind from their employers apart from firing for the hearth. Their only opportunity to earn extra money was by doing piecework, particularly harvest work (see p. 43). In addition, their wives might take in work to do at home for the clothing factories. The one advantage which the Suffolk labourer had over his northern fellows was shorter hours of work. And, if he lived on one of the larger Suffolk estates, he had a cottage

¹ BPP 1828 (515), VIII, p. 546; 1821 (668), IX, p. 85; 1836 (79), VIII, pp. 297, 298.

² BPP 1867-8, XVII, p. 426; 1881, XV, pp. 342, 343.

and a garden at a fair rent which was the equivalent of an extra shilling or two on a man's wages. Allotments also were common on which labourers grew vegetables.¹

During the prosperous decades for farmers between the 'fifties and 'seventies, the Suffolk labourer managed to secure considerable wage increases. This improvement was not hampered by the employment of women and children in gangs, which in other counties had the effect of depressing men's wages by fostering the idea that the women and children of the family were also breadwinners.

Gang labour took firm hold in the mid-nineteenth century in areas where land, hitherto neglected, was being improved and ploughed for the first time, and where the labour supply was inadequate. Farmers made good the deficiency by hiring gangs of men, women, and children from neighbouring villages on a day-to-day basis. The undesirable social and moral consequences of gang labour had to be brought to an end by legislation in 1867.² The compulsory licensing of gangmasters (see p. 141) ensured that they were reputable people with a sense of responsibility towards their gangs, while the compulsory education Acts of 1870, 1873 and 1876 restricted the employment of children to the school holidays.

It is at first sight surprising that the problem of gang labour was so small in Suffolk, since the cultivation of the fen and the breckland must have created a large new demand for labourers and cottages. Yet the Royal Commission of 1862 was informed that only about five hundred people were employed in gangs in the county and that there were very few in the western half, the district where one would have expected most. The explanation must lie in the disposition of the villages in relation to the newly cultivated land. If 'open' villages lay close at hand providing housing for all comers, labourers were likely to be attracted there and so eliminated the need for additional female and child labour. Moreover, the system of gang labour does not seem to have been introduced into Suffolk before about 1850 when the worst shortage of labourers had already passed and the new poor law had succeeded in inducing landlords to build more cottages. In other counties gangs were working in the 1820s.³

Before the passage of legislation against gangs precautions were often taken on the large estates to protect children from the moral corruption of gang labour. On the Tollemache estate, for example, the cottages were let at moderate rents on condition that the children attended school regularly up to the age of eleven years. On Sir Edward Kerrison's estate near Eye, at his express wish, girls were not employed in gangs and Sir Edward and Lady Caroline Kerrison personally supervised the careers of the young people, helping them with clothing and travelling expenses when necessary. The employment of children during the school holidays could not be abolished entirely. To have done so would have been to condemn some families to unnecessary poverty. But farm work such as scaring crows (see p. 140) and shepherding flocks on nearby farms did not present the same

¹ BPP 1893-4, XXXV, pp. 35, 37.

² BPP 1893-4, XXXV, p. 9; Joan Thirsk, *English Peasant Farming*, 1957, pp. 268-70.

³ BPP 1867, XVI, pp. 75, 154, 213.

moral problem as work in gangs. Children were employed on these tasks into the present century. The practice seems to have died out with the rise in the standard of living, the growth of a more indulgent attitude towards children and concern to secure for them a more happy and carefree childhood.¹

The low standard of living of the Suffolk labourers no doubt explains why agricultural unionism took rapid hold in the county. The first union had been formed by Joseph Arch at Leamington in Warwickshire in May 1872. In Suffolk unions began to spring up in the months immediately following, and by October were sufficiently well established for some Essex and Suffolk farmers to form a Farmers' Defence Association, pledging themselves not to acknowledge the labourers' union 'by entering into any contract with such Union or employ a unionist on strike without the consent of the acting committee'. Some preliminary skirmishes between union labourers and employers ensued in 1873, including a lock-out organized by the Essex and Suffolk Defence Association, when about a thousand union men were dismissed and others induced to give up their union tickets. But the more bitter struggle began at Exning in February 1874 when the labourers demanded an advance of wages from 13*s* to 14*s* a week and the farmers replied by locking out all union men.² The strike spread throughout the county and thence into Norfolk, Essex, Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire, Oxfordshire, Hampshire, Warwickshire, Gloucestershire and Huntingdonshire, even into counties where the unions had made no wage claims. The issue would probably not have assumed such dimensions nor attracted such widespread attention, however, had not the Bishop of Manchester written a letter on the subject of the Suffolk lock-out to *The Times* on 2 April, 1874, sympathizing with the labourers and deplored the 'suicidal' association of employers. 'Are the farmers of England going mad?', he wrote. 'Can they suppose that this suicidal lock-out, which has already thrown 4,000 labourers on the fund of the Agricultural Union, will stave off for any appreciable time the solution of the inevitable question what is the equitable wage to pay the men?' His letter prompted some brisk replies from Suffolk employers, including one from the Countess of Stradbroke, which brought her a number of congratulatory letters (see p. 142). Sir Edward Kerrison intervened in the dispute to suggest a system of arbitration on wage rates between unions and employers which would put an end to sudden strikes ordered at a week's notice by the executive of the unions. It was the centralized organization of the unions, and the directives issued without regard to local conditions, that seem to have incensed Suffolk farmers most. Sir Edward Kerrison also suggested that the unions concern themselves entirely with wage negotiations and leave their social insurance activities to benefit societies which would unite labourers, farmers and landlords (see p. 156). Sir Edward Kerrison's proposals coincided with a scheme already sponsored by Lord Stradbroke, and led to the formation of the Suffolk Provident

¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 207, 209.

² Before the strikes of 1874 the average wage for a Suffolk labourer was 13*s*. In North Lincolnshire, in contrast, it was 15*s*-16*s* in 1871 and 18*s* in 1872 – Rex Russell, *The 'Revolt of the Field' in Lincs.*, p. 60.

Society, an all-county society founded on a more secure financial basis than the many village societies that had hitherto existed (see p. 155).¹

Meanwhile the lock-out and strike continued during the spring and summer of 1874 throughout East Anglia.² The farmers managed to sow their fields with the help of non-union labour and to begin the harvest. The funds of the Union dwindled away until finally in July the men agreed on a return to work. Their first great strike had failed and there was little strong support for the unions in the depressed years that followed. They managed to survive but with a falling membership into the early 1880s, but after a brief revival in the early 1890s they died of the disease that infected all classes engaged in agriculture, economic depression. One consolation for the Suffolk labourer in these lean years was the comparatively slow fall of wages. In 1874 the average Suffolk wage was 13s; it was still 12s in 1893. His loss was smaller in proportion than the loss in income of farmers and landlords.³

The profitless years of the 'eighties and 'nineties taxed the ingenuity of farmers to the utmost, for if they were not to abandon farming entirely and see the work of a lifetime wasted – and many of them did – they had to find ways of making a living, however poor, from the land. Many of them turned their attention to the small enterprises of the farm, which in the halcyon days they had neglected. They concentrated on poultry keeping, for which the county is still celebrated, and they devised new and more profitable ways of marketing their produce. One enterprise which came into existence towards the end of the depression and has prospered to this day was a local scheme for the marketing of eggs. It was launched in 1903 under the aegis of Canon Abbay, rector of Earl Soham, who encouraged the farmers in the Framlingham district to sell their eggs to a central collecting organization instead of disposing of them in small quantities to travelling higgler or to the nearby grocer. The scheme grew from a local marketing enterprise into one drawing supplies from a wide area of the county and has developed into the present-day organization known as the Framlingham Egg Society.⁴

The chief experiments in farming in these years, however, were made by Scottish farmers newly settled in Suffolk. They had come south without capital, attracted by the fact that farms, particularly those on the heavy clays, could be had for very low rents. Landlords preferred to let the land at any price and on any terms rather than let it go untilled, and although by the 1890s they usually paid all tithes and waived all crop restrictions, they still felt themselves fortunate if their land was occupied.⁵

The Scots farmers, applying experience gained in Scotland, were among the few people who made the Suffolk land pay. They had many adverse critics who believed that they ruined the arable by their bad management.

¹ Frederick Clifford, *The Agricultural Lockout of 1874*, 1875, pp. 2–14; Rex Russell, *The 'Revolt of the Field' in Lincs.*, pp. 59–60.

² In Lincolnshire the strike and lock-out were brought to an end in May – Rex Russell, *op. cit.*, pp. 69–70.

³ BPP 1893–4, XXXV, p. 37.

⁴ Jubilee Booklet of the Framlingham Live Stock Association and Framlingham Egg Society, 1953, pp. 41–3; J. G. Cornish, *Reminiscences of Country Life*, 1939, pp. 64–5.

⁵ BPP 1895, XVI, pp. 331, 332.

Yet everyone admitted that they worked hard and paid their rent punctually. They accepted a lower standard of life than the Suffolk farmer was accustomed to and their wives did jobs such as mucking out the sheds and sties which no Suffolk housewife would have contemplated. But then, in the words of a contemporary, 'they come as strangers: they have no social position to lose'.¹

The Scottish method of farming was reminiscent of the husbandry of central Suffolk in the early nineteenth century, but the resemblance was superficial. Although it consisted in a return to the dairying, for which the county had once been renowned, the routine of management was new. Some of the land was put down to grass for a few years, but no attempt was made to restore the land to permanent pasture. Suffolk farmers still clung to the view, which the Scottish farmers did not attempt to challenge, that, because of the low rainfall, the strong land would not grow grass. How they would have explained the existence of good pastures in Arthur Young's day it is difficult to say unless it was that they had taken years to establish, and could not quickly be restored. The innovation of Scottish farmers lay in bringing Ayrshire cows into the county and keeping them for most of the year under cover. They completely reversed the Suffolk practice of the early nineteenth century when farmers kept their cows out of doors all the year round, milking them in the fields and only bringing them into the yard in frost and snow. The Scotsman's first request of his landlord, in consequence, was a cow byre. He fed his herd on hot food including grain procured from the breweries, and claimed that by this method he got the best yields with the greatest economy. He sold some milk in the neighbouring towns but most of it was despatched by train to London.²

To many Suffolk people the brightest future for farming seemed to lie in a return to dairying, in which the experience of earlier generations of Suffolk farmers was combined with that of the Scots immigrants. And yet as they discussed the possibility they recognized that it could only be a long-term policy, and farmers were in no mood at that time to embark on long-term programmes. The land would take years to produce good grass. The experienced dairymaids had been allowed to go to the towns and liked their new life too much to return. One suggested solution for this last problem was to establish cheese and butter factories where the available labour could be economically used. They would ensure produce of a uniform quality, the lack of which had prevented the Suffolk dairy farmers from competing successfully against the Dutch and Irish importers in the 'twenties and 'thirties.³

The move to increase dairy enterprises in Suffolk centred around the Eastern Counties Dairy Institute at Akenham, founded in 1888, and the Akenham Dairy Company to which Suffolk farmers sold their milk. The secretary of the company, Mr J. A. Smith, postulated the following essential reforms if dairying were to develop successfully: that improved accommodation for cattle be provided; that proper dairies be erected, preferably village

¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 377-80; 1896, XVII, p. 125.

² BPP 1896, XVII, p. 122; S. C. Roberts, *A Frenchman in England*, 1784, 1933, pp. 192-3.
BPP 1896, XVII, p. 127; 1895, XVI, pp. 322-3.

rather than house dairies; that a better system of drainage be installed on the farms so that the dairies did not lie, as so often, next to the farmyard or the cesspool. The Institute spread knowledge of dairying by training students, giving public lectures and examinations, and the dairy company set an example of good butter and cheese making, concentrating in the cheese dairies on the making of Cheddar. In 1895 the Institute moved to Gippeswyk Park, Ipswich, and its work expanded until one thousand students were being trained each year. The cost was borne by the County Council and by a Government grant.¹ The Institute's influence was considerable and by 1906 milk production in the neighbourhood of the towns was rising steadily. Today a considerable amount of milk is produced on the central clays, but Suffolk did not become a dairying county. The First World War restored prosperity to agriculture and Suffolk farmers were able to make a living as before without resorting to revolutionary and costly changes in land use. After the war the revolution that did occur was of a different kind and resulted from the passing of the Beet Sugar Subsidy Act in 1925, that 'solid lifebelt to which the drowning arable farmer could cling'. It was not the first time that the possibilities of sugar beet had been demonstrated to Suffolk farmers. A factory had been opened by James Duncan at Lavenham in 1869 but had closed down again by 1873 for lack of adequate supplies. But that was before the great depression. Times had changed and now the Suffolk farmer adopted the sugar beet wholeheartedly, abandoning almost entirely the traditional crops of the root break. The sheep disappeared in consequence, but the plough remained. In the 1880s, 75 per cent of the agricultural land of Suffolk was under the plough. In 1935, the proportion was still 70 per cent and in 1955, 79 per cent. Suffolk, in short, remained an arable county.²

JOAN THIRSK

¹ *White's Directory of Suffolk*, 1885; 1892; *Kelly's Directory of Suffolk*, 1896; information kindly collected by Mr H. E. Wilton of Ipswich.

² *BPP* 1895, XVI, p. 322; 1906, XCVI, p. 684.

I Routine Husbandry

THE FARMER'S YEAR

This diary of Arthur Biddell, of Hill Farm, Playford, illustrates some of the routine of farming and marketing, in 1817, on a naturally well-drained farm of light and heavy soils north of Ipswich. Among the interesting features are sales of flax to a Hull merchant, the sale of calves to London, the bankruptcy of a neighbouring farmer in this year of agricultural depression, the sale of barley and beans to a London merchant, sales of radish-seed and cress, the comparison of yields from land of which part was clayed and part not, and the bill for tiles for draining meadow land.

1817 Memorandums

Meat waggon goes from Ipswich Thursday mornng. 11 o'clock. Bett & Bury Wright Bowden & Co. - Flax mer: Hull

May 4, 1817 - finished sowing carrots on Stack Hill

April, 1817 Weighed a calf alive 154 lbs. and killed the same - the four quarters weighed 88 lbs.

	Dead weight
May. Weighed a calf alive 239 lbs.	126
another Do. 246	130
Sold the above to Mr. Waspe at 6L 6s (which he considered 6d. per lb.)	
The four quarters of the above calves according to Mr. Waspe's account weighed as above stated	
May 13th sent 3 samples of tow from flax to Mr. Wright, Hull, as under	

No. 1 without being combed weighed 11 oz.

2 coomed fine as pr. sample left at home

No. 3 short tow pulled from No. 2 - weighed 3½ oz.

May 13th The Paddock sowed with hemp & the flax - the hemp was sown in Barnfeild a week sooner

June 3 Killed 2 calves for London

1st live weight Dead Do. 129 lbs.

2nd Do. Do.

4th Six acre Common Feild red clover spared up for seed

The Town Meeting was held at Mr. Mannings Thursday 15th May

June 24, 25, 26th sowed Westrup's turnips

June 30th Allowance for employment of men ceased

July 7th sent the flax machine to Ipswich to be forwarded to Mr. Hitchcock, Lavenham

Augt. 15 Town Meeting held at Mr. Goodings

1817 Augt. 20 the first wheat carted and stacked from Home Barnfeild. I believe it was dry but not unduly hard & must be thrashed late in spring or summer, about 48 coombs, & the stack topped up from peices in Stack Hill & Further Barnfeild & 1 load from Hollys making altogether about 20 coombs more

ROUTINE HUSBANDRY

25 Got up to the Barn Culpho feild wheat & began to thrash,

Con L B
the whole 101.3

Sep. 2nd Got up Tuddenham feild wheat & stacked about 9 acres & about 70 coombs, carried the remainder into the barn to thrash for seed

Killed a sheep that weighed alive 49 lb. alive, dead 66 lbs.

2nd Stacked the Grove Peice about 38 coombs on Brick Round, with a part of load out of Tuddenham feild.

Proved 44 coombs

Thrashed Church feild wheat. In all 32 coombs - 26 of which sold to Barber.

The remainder on granary.

18th Thrashed part of Tuddenhamfeild for seed - 13 coombs being all the white wheat grown in that feild.

18 Mr. Waspe a calf (no price)

18th Journey to Bredfeild to sale of the estate to Cutting's bankruptcy

Quit rents due to Cutting's bankcy.

Bowman - 3s. 6d. one year

Dillingham - 4s. pr. year. Paid

Markham 2s/4d. pr. year for 4 years ending 1815

Mr. Nursey's 2s/7d. pr. year for 3 yrs.

20 Sent Mr. Ely 26c. 1 b. tares at 30s. & recd. 5 coombs rye back at 1L/ls

25th Mrs. Cutting sent 16½ score sheep to eat feed sold at 2/s. pr. acre

1817 Memorandum

Sepbr. 30 began to dibble wheat in Thistley feild

Oct. 2nd Mr. Sawer 32½ cwt. hay at 4L/5s

3rd Mr. Cole Dr. meeting Mr. Simpson to balance Summerland hay &c. &c.
- £2/2s

7th meeting Mr. Welton to balance at Newsoms - £2/12s/6 to Mr. Biddell.

See Stamp Oct. 9th included in this charge

8 Mr. Acton 22 c. wheat } at 40s.
9 Do. 4 Do. }

10 Recd. from Mr. Ely 30 c. oats at 13

21st Valueing at Mr. Ables, muck, hay, &c. - £1/ls to Waspe

28 Mr. Reeve 4 c. wheat at 2/2

Memo: 30 finished dibbling the Six Acre Commonfeild wheat. The 11 stetches next to Barnfeild are with white wheat from Mr. Cuttings. The remained from my own stock of white wt. mixed with red.

Recd. from Mrs. Cutting 3 c. of wheat at 45s.

Mrs. Cutting Dr. for sheep feed 119 acres at 2s.

Nov. 4 Mr. Barber 22. 3 barley at 1£

Mr. Barry came Oct. 31st, 1817

Mr. Waspe an appraisement stamp for the estate 1. 0. 0 Oct. 31st 1817

Nov. 14th Measured Abbeys Croft considering Mr. Dillingham's land to extend 452 lings south of Mr. Hunt's Lower Feild.

Mr. Dillingham's land contained	3.	3.	37
My own (to New England)	5.	3.	27

Whole Feild	8	3	24
-------------	---	---	----

SUFFOLK FARMING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

- 15 Mr. Candler 3 c. 6 pecks hemp seed at 50s. pr. coomb
 Part of Lollys wheat thrashed with machine. In all dressed up 45 coomb,
 26 of which was sold to Acton Sep. 9th, the remainder on granary
 Nov. 26 26 c. barley to Mr. Barber at 17s.
 27 26 c. barley to Sawyer & Co. London
 28 11 c. radish seed to Fair at 25s.
 15 bush. cress Do. to Do at 18s.
 12 new sacks & 3 old ones 2L 2s
 Capn. Revans 1 sack pottatoes
 Gave Mrs. Lane 2 sacks potatoes & sack carrots
 28 Mr. Clarkson 11 c. of oats at 13s.
 Do. 2 at 16
 Cr. by 3 c. barley at 1L for hogs
 Error in parish accounts 3L
 28 Received of Mr. Ely 22 c. oats at 13
 & 4 at 16
 Thrashed 6 comb wheat & 3 pecks from Lollys – 1c. $3\frac{3}{4}$ b. grew upon 2
 stetches that had no clay upon them and 4c. $1\frac{1}{4}$ b. on 4 stetches that had
 been clayed in the Decbr. & Janry. of 1815 & 1816 – shewing an advantage
 by the clay, in the produce of wheat after the rate of about 3 bushels pr.
 acre.
 The total quantity of wheat dibbled & drilled on $54\frac{1}{2}$ acres amounted to
 32 coombs.
 Dec. 11th 6c. Windsor beans,¹ from Bransons, on board the *Brittania*
 for Sawyer & Co.
 18 Sent Mr. Abbot 5 wheys & 64 lbs. at $2\frac{1}{2}$ ($\frac{1}{2}$) pr. lb. Paid
 Mr. Clarkson 8 coombs oats from Capons at 14s/6d
 18 Mr. Cowel & Co. 15 c. barley at 17s.
 Dresst up 45 c. 2 b. long pod beans from Nethouse Peice thrashed by
 day
 Mickelborough owes for cart & collar 18s.
 19th Mr. Clarkson 12 c. oats at 14
 Mr. Rogers 7 c. long pods at 29 from Bransons
 – Ely 15 Heligolands² at 24
 Memorandums brought up
 1817 Decbr. 25th Mr. Manby 26 coombs long pod beans at 22s/. Paid
 One thousand draing tyles from Goodings of Tuddenham Dec. 16 – used
 in meadows
 Thousand red bricks for stable shed at Bransons from Goodings of Playford,
 Dec. 22
 1817 Decbr. 30 sent Mr. Austin 2l. 3 wheat from Bransons at 45s pr coomb
 first wheat from there.
From I. & E.S.R.O., Biddell Papers, Ref. No. HA2/A3/2.

¹ A superior variety of bean, extensively cultivated in the U.K. in the mid-nineteenth century. It was specially recommended for cottage gardens since it ripened unequally and thus yielded a continuous supply in season.

² The Heligoland bean was an earlier variety than the common Scotch or Horse bean, specially suited to rich alluvial soils.

ROUTINE HUSBANDRY

 CROPPING ON THE FARM OF ARTHUR AND HERMAN
 BIDDELL AT PLAYFORD, 1807-70.

 Schedule of Cropping, Hill Farm & Bransons¹

Fields Names	<i>Netters Field</i>	<i>Holly Bush</i>	<i>Lolly's</i>	<i>Common 10 Acre Field</i>	<i>Common 6 Acre Field</i>
Acres	10	10	7	10½	6
1807	Turnips	Turnips	Wheat	Wheat	Clover
1808	Barley	Barley	Turnips	Turnips	Wheat
1809	Clover	Clover	Barley	Barley	Oats
1810	Wheat	Wheat	Tares	Clover	Turnips
1811	Beans	Turnips	Wheat	Wheat	Barley
1812	Wheat	Barley	Turnips	Turnips	Beans
1813	Turnips	White clover	Barley	Barley	Wheat
1814	Barley	Wheat	Clover	W. Clover & Trefoil	Turnips
1815	White Clover	Beans	Wheat	Wheat	Cresse & Potatoes
1816	Wheat	Wheat	Beans	Beans, Cresse & Flax	Wheat
1817	Beans & Radishes	Turnips	Wheat	Wheat	Clover
1818	Wheat	Barley	Turnips	Turnips	Wheat
1819	Turnips	Beans & Radishes	Barley	17 acres oats	4 wheat & 2 oats
		Clover failed except on 1 acre next Nethouse Piece			Bank beat down into Common Field & Tuddenham Field in the summer of 1818
1820	Barley	Wheat	Trefoil	Red Clover	
1821	Red Clover	Turnips	Wheat	Wheat	
1822	Wheat	Barley	Sumld.	Turnips	
1823	5 beans & 5 potatoes	Red Clover	Barley	Barley	
1824	Wheat	Wheat	Red Clover	Trefoil	

¹ The fields listed here are only a sample of the whole. Arthur Biddell died in 1860 and was succeeded at Playford by his son, Herman.

	<i>Netters Field</i>	<i>Holly Bush</i>	<i>Lolly's</i>	<i>Tuddenham or Great Field (late Commons)</i>
Acres	10	10	7	16½
1825	Turnips	Turnips	Wheat	Wheat
1826	Barley	Barley	Peas	Sumld.
1827	Red Clover	7a Peas & 3a Beans	Wheat	Barley
1828	Wheat	Wheat	Potatoes	Red Clover
1829	7a beans	Sumld.	Wheat	Wheat
	3a potatoes	Turnips		
1830	Wheat	Barley	Tares	Sumld.
1831	10 Sumld.	10 Red Clover	Barley	16½ Barley
	3½ Potatoes			
1832	6½ Turnips		Red Clover	W. Clover
1833	Barley		Wheat	Wheat
1834	Red Clover		Potatoes and Tares	Wheat
	Wheat			

SUFFOLK FARMING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

	<i>Netters Field</i>	<i>Holly Bush</i>	<i>Lolly's</i>	<i>Tuddenham or Great Field (late Commons)¹</i>
Acres	10	10	7	16½
1835	Sumld.	Trefoil & Rye grass	Wheat	Barley
1836	Barley	Wheat	Trefolium and Tares	Trefoil
1837	Trefoil	Sumld.	Oats	Wheat
1838	Wheat	Barley	Trefoil	Sumld.
1839	Sumld.	Red Clover	Wheat	Barley
1840	Barley	Wheat	Sumld.	Red Clover
1841	Beans	Turnips after Rye & Trefolium	Wheat	Wheat
1842	Wheat	Barley	Turnips	Beet & Turnips
1843	Turnips after Rye & Tares	Tares & Carrots W. Clover failing	Barley	Barley
1844	Barley	Wheat	Red Clover	Beans
1845	2½ Potatoes	2½ Beet	Wheat	Wheat
	2½ Beans	Rye		
	2½ Red Clover	Turnips		
1846	Wheat	Barley	Turnips	Turnips
1847	Turnips	Gold of Pleasure	Barley	Barley
	Beet, Tares			

¹ This field was apparently the amalgamation of *Ten Acre Field* and *Six Acre Field* carried out in 1818. See note under the two fields in 1819.

	<i>Nethouse & Home Field</i>	<i>Holly Bush</i>	<i>Lolly's & Newfield</i>	<i>Great Field</i>
Acres	15½	10	8	16
1848	Barley	Wheat	Beans	Red Clover
1849	Clover	2 Tares, Rye & Turnips	Wheat	Wheat
1850	3a Beans	Barley	W. Turnips	Sweeds
	Wheat			Beet
				Barley
1851	Potatoes	Red Clover	Barley	
	Beet, Sweeds			
1852	Barley	Wheat	White Clover	Trefoil
1853	Trefoil	White Turnips	Wheat	Wheat
1854	Wheat	Barley	Oats	White Turnips
				Swedes
1855	Oats	W. Clover	Turnips	Barley
1856	White Turnips	Wheat	Barley	Red Clover
1857	Barley	Beet	Red Clover	Wheat
1858	Red Clover	Barley	Wheat	Beet
1859	Wheat	Trefoil	White Turnips	Barley
1860	Beet	Wheat	Barley	White Clover
1861	Barley	Potatoes, Beet W. Turnips	Trefoil seed	Wheat
		Barley		
1862	Peas		Wheat	Sweedes
				Potatoes, Beet
1863	Wheat	Red Clover	W. Turnips	Barley
1864	Potatoes	Wheat	Barley	Peas, Flax, Beet
1865	Beet, Swedes			
	Barley	W. Turnips	Potatoes (W)	
		Swedes	W. Turnips (E)	Wheat

ROUTINE HUSBANDRY

	<i>Nethouse & Home Field</i>	<i>Holly Bush</i>	<i>Lolly's & Newfield</i>	<i>Great Field</i>
Acres	15½	10	8	16
1866	Red Clover	Barley	Wheat	Beet W
1867	Wheat	Peas	Potatoes W. Turnips	White Turnips E
1868	Carrots Potatoes, Beet	Wheat	Barley	Barley
1869	Barley	Turnips		Red Clover
1870	Peas	Barley	Barley	Wheat Beet

From I. & E.S.R.O., *Biddell Papers*, Ref. No. HA2/B3/1.

HARVESTING

Suffolk labourers were usually hired by the day or week, but harvest work was treated separately and done by contract. This extract from the account book of George Rope of Grove Farm, Blaxhall, on the light lands of the coast, shows the method of accounting and the allowances of food to the harvesters. It includes the contract for 1879, the most disastrous farming year of the century, but not that for 1863, described by Rope as 'the finest harvest I ever knew.'¹

Harvest 1860

Agreed July 21st, 1860, with 6 men, viz. Joe Levett, Jas. Hammond, Joe Row, Ben. Keeble, Jas. Leggett & Robt. French for the Harvest as hereafter named:

All the wheat @ 8/- pr. acre and
Barley, peas & turnips @ 7/- pr. acre

Wheat

	acres
John's field	9
Ten Acres	10½
Backhouse field	10
Pit field	6

35 acres @ 8/- 14

Barley

	acres
School House walk	8
Shepherds Walk	14
Pit field	5

27 acres @ 7/- 9 9

¹ For the shipping activities of the Rope family, see p. 160. For Suffolk harvest customs, see G. E. Evans, *Ask the Fellows who cut the Hay*, 1956.

SUFFOLK FARMING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

	Peas		
Eleven acres	8		
Barnes Hill	$5\frac{1}{2}$		
		$13\frac{1}{2}$ @ 7	4 12 9
Forward			28 1 9
	Turnips		
Packgate Walk	$5\frac{1}{2}$		
Stone lands	$2\frac{1}{2}$ for 5 acres twice		
Kiln Hill	6		
Three Corners	$1\frac{1}{2}$		
		$15\frac{1}{2}$ @ 7/-	5 8 6
Allowances – as last year			33 10 3
Viz. – 1 Coo. wheat @ 20/-			forward
35 lbs. mutton @ 4d.			
3 Bls. malt given.			
1 st. mutton instead of dinners.			
$\frac{1}{2}$ pt. best beer in the morning and			
1 pint in the afternoon when after the corn.			
Hiring money – 1/- each			
Wetting Do.			

Agreed with Joe Row – for his sons – Ephraim @ 11/- pr. week for 5 weeks & 2 Bls. malt and Charles 7/- pr. week for 5 weeks & to have 1 Bl. malt.

15th Augt.

The wettest and coldest summer to this time I ever remember. The corn ripens very slowly. I am told that a large quantity of wheat in Yorkshire & northward of that County is not yet in ear. The wheat & barley on the mixsoil lands, well manured, promise exceedingly well, but on the cold clays & wet lands the barley crop will be very bad, thousands of acres in Suffolk will not produce 3 coombs pr. acre and a large portion will not pay for harvesting. The pea crop promised well but there being so much straw the continual wet weather has rotted the straw before the peas were ripe and the earliest pods have burst by the swelling of the peas so that instead of a large crop of that grain it will be a small one and inferior quality.

Began making up peas today (13 Aug.), the first fine day for some time. I think I may venture to say two thirds of the hay is spoiled.

Began cutting tolavera wheat¹ the 15th August.

16 & 17th tolerably fine – 18th began raining at noon and rained all the afternoon

¹ Talavera wheat was a common variety improved by Col. Le Couteur of Bellevue Villa, Jersey, in 1838. In the middle of the nineteenth century it was considered the best spring wheat for black land or easy-working soils.

ROUTINE HUSBANDRY

- 19th Sunday – rained part of the day
- 20 Monday – fine day – but threatening
- 21 Tuesday – cutting wheat till noon, when it rained about 2 hours – but not heavily – began cutting again about 4 o'clock
- 22 Wednesday – Ips. Lamb Fair – this has been a thorough wet day – it scarcely ceased the whole day and the water stands in the furrows – at night it blew hard
- 23 Fine day with strong drying wind – but rained again at night for several hours
- 24 Fine morning – but wet & cold afternoon
- 25 A drizzling rain all day – wheat beginning to grow
- 26 Sunday. A fine day – but appearance of more rain tonight
- 27 Monday – Rained till 9 o'clock – then fine all day
- 28 Tuesday – Rained in the night – fine day
- 29 Wednesday – slight shower or two – in the middle of the day
- 30 Thursday – fine drying wind – almost a gale – but it rained in the morning – about half an hour heavily – got a stack of wheat up
- 31 Friday – very fine day – got another stack of wheat up – and some peas into barn

Sep. 1 Saturday – a very fine day – got another stack of wheat and all my peas up

- Sep. 2 Sunday – rain part of day
- 3 Monday – Heavy rain in morning – fine afterwards
- 4 Tuesday – fine day
- 5 Wednesday – fine day – finished carting wheat
- 6 Thursday – fine day – cutting barley
- 7 Friday – fine day – cutting barley
- 8 Saturday – fine day – carted stack of barley
- 9 Sunday – fine day
- 10 Monday – fine day – carted a stack of barley
- 11 Tuesday – fine day – carted stack barley
- 12 Wednesday – fine day – carted stack barley
- 13 Thursday – fine day } carted the last
- 14 Friday – fine day } stack barley
and finished Harvest with fine weather, but an appearance of rain.
- 15 Windy with rain at times
- 16 Sunday – fine day
- 17 Monday – wet day
- 18 Tuesday – wet day
- 19 Wednesday – rained all the afternoon
- 20 Thursday – fine day – but rained at night
- 21 Friday – fine day – Harvest supper
- Saturday 22 – very wet day
- Sunday 23 – fine day
- Monday 24 – almost a deluge of rain with a gale of wind
- Tuesday 25 – gale of wind with rain – marshes flooded

A large quantity of
barley yet about

SUFFOLK FARMING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Amt. of Harvest forward		33 10 3
J. Levett	5 11 8½	
Jas. Hammond	5 11 8½	
Robt. French	5 11 8½	
Joe Row	5 11 8½	
B. Keeble	5 11 8½	
Jas. Leggett	5 11 8½	
	£33 10 3	
Ep. Row		2 15
Chas. Row		1 8
Geo. French		16 3
Hiring money		6
Money instead of staying late		12
Larges ¹ for all		5
Malt		
Difference in price of wheat		
Extra beer		
Mutton		

Durham's rick contains all the Hardcastle wheat² off the 10 acres – except – 1 load which is on Bloss' rick above the tolavera.

Brick rick contains all the Tolavera out of Backhouse field except – 1 load which is on Bloss' rick – at bottom.

Bloss' rick contains all the tolavera off the Pit field – except 2 loads which is put into the barn for seed. It also contains 1 load tala off Backhouse field & all the drag rakings.

Iron rick – is all off John's field, Hardcastle, with 1 load out of 10 acres at bottom.

In barn – 3 loads Hardcastle off John's field & 2 loads Tolavera off Pit field – for seed. And all the peas.

1st stack of barley – all off the Pit field, 11 loads, topped up with 3 loads off Schoolhouse Walk.

2nd stack of barley – 16 loads off Schoolhouse Walk and 2 loads out of Pit field to top up with.

Harvest 1861

Agreed July 27th, 1861, with 6 men, viz. Joe Levitt, Jas. Hammond, Joe Row, Ben Keeble, Jas. Leggett & R. French for the harvest as last year.

Viz. All the wheat @ 8/- pr. acre & barley, peas & turnips @ 7/- pr. acre, I finding drivers and to shock the sheeves.

Allowances –

3 bls. malt given

1 coo. wheat @ 20/-

35 lb. mutton @ 4d. pr. lb.

½ pint beer in the morning and

1 pint in the afternoon when after the corn

¹ For explanation of this term, see p. 56. ²A white wheat particularly popular in the U.S.A.

ROUTINE HUSBANDRY

1 st. mutton instead of dinners

Wetting - 6/-

Hiring - 6/-

E. Row 16/- pr. week for 5 weeks & 2 bls. malt.

C. Row 11/- pr. week for 5 weeks, 6 pks. malt.

Boy French 4/- pr. week for 5 do. & 2 pks. malt & $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. hops given.

Began cutting tolavera on the 1st August and carted the first stack in fine order for threshing on the 6th.

	acres		
Wheat - 11 acres -	11		
Do. Packgate Walk	8		
Do. Schoolhouse Do.	10		
Do. Barn's Hill	$10\frac{1}{2}$		
		<hr/>	
	39 $\frac{1}{2}$ @ 8/-		15 16
Barley			
Kiln Hill	12		
Stonelands	$12\frac{1}{2}$		
		<hr/>	
	24 $\frac{1}{2}$ @ 7/-		8 11 6
Peas			
Shepherds Walk	14		
Pit Field, lower part	5		
		<hr/>	
	19 @ 7/-		6 13
Turnips			
Backhouse Field	10		
John's Field	$7\frac{1}{2}$		
		<hr/>	
	17 $\frac{1}{2}$ @ 7/-		6 2 6
		<hr/>	
	£37 3 -		
		<hr/>	

£6 3 10 each man

Iron rick contains all the tolavera off the Schoolhouse Walk except a load & half in the barn and dragrakings.

Brick rick contains all the tolavera off the Packgate Walk with 4 loads Hardcastle out of Barn Hill to top up with.

Durham rick contains the Hardcastle off Barn's Hill. Two or three loads in the barn for seed.

Bloss' rick contains wheat (red & white) off the 11 acres and the stack on the ground together is all off that field.

2 barley stacks off Kiln Hill

3 barley stacks off Stonelands

Harvest of 1862

Agreed July 26th, 1862, with six men - viz: J. Levett, Jas. Hammond, R. French, Joe Row, B. Keeble & Jas. Leggett for the harvest at 7/- pr.

SUFFOLK FARMING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

acre round, I finding shockers & drivers, with the following allowances –

3 bls. malt. Gift

1 coo. wheat @ 20/-

35 lbs. mutton @ 4d.

1 st. mutton instead of dinners

$\frac{1}{2}$ pt. beer in the morning and

1 pint in the afternoon when after the corn.

Wetting 6/- Hiring 6/-

Chas. Row 16/- pr. week for 5 weeks with 2 bls. malt. To work as wanted whether at Saxmundham or at home.

Henry Hammond 11/- pr. week for 5 weeks & 6 pks. malt

Geo. French 6/- pr. week for 5 weeks, 2 pks. malt, $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. hops.

	Wheat	acres	
Ten acres		$10\frac{1}{2}$	
Pit Field		11	
Shepherds Walk		14	
		<hr/>	
		$35\frac{1}{2}$	$35\frac{1}{2}$
Barley			
Backhouse Field		10	
John's Field		9	
		<hr/>	
		19	19
Peas			
Kiln Hill		12	
Part of Stonelands		$7\frac{1}{2}$	
		<hr/>	
		$19\frac{1}{2}$	$19\frac{1}{2}$
Turnips			
Schoolhouse Walk		$9\frac{1}{4}$	
Eleven acres		$9\frac{1}{2}$	
		<hr/>	
		$18\frac{3}{4}$	$18\frac{3}{4}$
		<hr/>	
		$92\frac{3}{4}$	
Forwd. 92 $\frac{3}{4}$ acres @ 7/-			32 9 3
J. Levett	5 8 $2\frac{1}{2}$		
J. Hammond	5 8 $2\frac{1}{2}$		
French	5 8 $2\frac{1}{2}$		
J. Row	5 8 $2\frac{1}{2}$		
B. Keeble	5 8 $2\frac{1}{2}$		
Leggett	5 8 $2\frac{1}{2}$		
		<hr/>	
	£32 9 3		
		<hr/>	

Chas. Row

Henry Hammond 5 weeks 11/-

2 15

Geo. French 5 weeks 6/-

1 10

ROUTINE HUSBANDRY

Blaxhall Harvest, 1878

July 16th

Agreed with the following men for the harvest --

James Leggett

Joe Row

Ben. Keeble

James Jaye

Mark Poacher

Lionel Richardson, jr.

to cut and secure all the corn, hoe the turnips twice, lift the barley once, turn the peas once, make bottoms for stacks, cover up when required and to do all in a workmanlike manner to my satisfaction for 8/- pr. acre with the following allowances --

Viz. 3 bls. malt

3 lbs. hops

1 st. mutton. Gift (instead of dinners)

35 lb. mutton @ 4d.

1 coo. wheat - 20/-

17/- for largess
or spending money } for all the family

James Ling 14/- pr. week as long as the harvest lasts, 6 pecks malt

1½ lb. hops

Allen 10/- pr. week.

It is hereby farther agreed that should any man lose any time through drinking he shall forfeit to the company 5/- pr. day for every day he thus offends.

And should he lose any time through sickness he is to forfeit 2/- pr. day to the company

and 5/- pr. day to the master.

	Wheat	acres	
Shepherds Walk		14	
Schoolhouse Walk, top part		8	
Pitfield, lower part		$5\frac{1}{2}$	
		<hr/> $27\frac{1}{2}$	$27\frac{1}{2}$
Barley			
Ten Acres		$10\frac{1}{2}$	
John's Field		9	
Backhouse Field		10	
Pitfield, top part		$5\frac{1}{2}$	
		<hr/> 35	35
Peas			
Kiln Hill		12	
Packgate Walk		8	
		<hr/> 20	20

SUFFOLK FARMING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Turnips			
Eleven Acres	11		
Schoolhouse Walk	10		
	<hr/>		
	21	21	
	<hr/>		
	103½		
6 men - 17 acres a piece - 102	}		
1½ acres over	}		
	103½ @ 8/-	41.	8. 0

1878 Stacks & Barn

1. The top pea stack got up without rain, straw bright - in Stonelands.
2. Long pea stack in Stonelands - straw bright, nearly up to roof - and topped up afterwards - *after the rain* - straw not fit for feeding.
3. End of barn, three or four loads got up before the rain and the remainder after the rain.
4. Small round peas stack carted after some rain - therefore the straw not so good for feeding.
5. 1st Durham's Rick
Talavera wheat off Shepherds Walk, 13 loads - in good order.
6. 2nd Brick Rick
Talavera off Shepherds Walk with 3 loads to finish up with off Pit Field.
7. 3rd Iron Rick
All the Lenny's white¹ of the top part of Schoolhouse Walk.
Saturday, 10th Aug. set in wet and has rained little & much every day since & today it has rained heavy (16 Aug.) since 3 o'clock - found some grown wheat in shock - & barley cut a few days since also sprouted.
8. 4th Bloss Rick
Contains all the Talavera off Pit Field with all the talavera drag rakings - except 3 loads which is on the brick rick.

Barley Stacks

No.

9 Aug. 19	1st stack	}	both of 10 acres & stacked there	
10	2nd do.	}		
11	3rd do.	off John's Field and stacked there.		
12	22nd 4th do.	off Backhouse field and stacked there.		
	5th do.	off Backhouse field & stacked there.		
	6th	One end of barn off Pit Field		
	James Leggett's share of harvest		6 18 -	
	Joe Row	do.	6 18 -	
	Ben Keeble	do.	6 18 -	
	James Jaye	do.	6 18 -	
	Mark Poacher	do.	6 18 -	
	Lionel Richardson, jr.	do.	6 18 -	
			<hr/>	
			41 8 0	

¹ A wheat variety, or a white wheat bought of C. Lenny? Cf. p. 57.

ROUTINE HUSBANDRY

	<i>Brought forward</i>	41 8 0	
Hiring money		6 0	
18 bls. malt for above - 9/-		8 1 0	
18 lbs. hops ,,, 1/6		1 7 0	
6 st. mutton - 10/6		3 3 -	
Extra 35 lbs. mutton at 6d. pr.			
lb. less than value		17 6	
6 coo. wheat at 20/-, worth 26/-		1 16 0	
Wetting, 2 bottles gin - say -		10 0	
Spending money 12/-, larges 6/-		18	
½ pt 1 pt			
Gin & beer for 11 a.m. & 4 p.m. - say		3 15	
		<hr/>	
	£20 13 6	62 1 6	
	41 8 0		
	<hr/>		
	62 1 6		
Extra Men			
Jno. Hammond	6 18 0		
share of allowances	3 9 0	}	
Boy Allen	2 10 0		
Board &c.	2 10 0		
Boy Jaye	2 10 0		
About the cost of labour for getting in harvest		17 17 0	
		79 18 6	

Blaxhall Harvest, 1879

August 29th, 1879

(began cutting wheat this day)

Agreed with the following men for the harvest -

James Leggett

Joe Row

B. Keeble

Jas. Jaye

Mark Poacher

Lionel Richardson, jr.

to cut and secure all the corn, hoe the turnips twice, lift the barley once, turn the peas once, make bottoms for stacks, cover up when required and to do all in a workmanlike manner to my satisfaction for 8/6 pr. acre with the following allowances, viz:

3 bls. wheat

3 lbs. hops

1 st. mutton. Gift (instead of dinners)

35 lbs. mutton @ 4d.

1 coo. wheat 20/-

17/- for largess & spending money for the family

It is hereby further agreed that should any man lose any time through drinking he shall forfeit 5/- to the company and 5/- to me for every day he

SUFFOLK FARMING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

thus offends - and should he lose any time through sickness he is to forfeit 2/- pr. day to the company.

J. Leggett		
Jas. Jaye		3 bls. malt
M. Poacher		3 lbs. hops
Lionel Richardson		
Joe Row		
B. Keeble		1 bl. malt
Jno. Hammond		1 do. do.
Harry Crisp		& 6/- pr. week
Jas. Ling		16/- pr. week
		2 bls. malt
		2 lbs. hops

Boy Jaye

1879

	Wheat	acres
Stonelands, in part	10 $\frac{3}{4}$	
Kiln Hill	12	
Packgate Walk	8	
Three Corners	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	33 $\frac{1}{2}$
Barley		
Eleven acres	11	
Barns Hill	10 $\frac{1}{2}$	
Schoolhouse Walk	10	31 $\frac{1}{2}$
Peas		
Backhouse Field	10	
John's Field	9	19
Turnips		
Schoolhouse Walk	8	
Shepherds Walk	14	22

105 $\frac{3}{4}$

6 men - 17 $\frac{3}{4}$ pr. man @ 8/6 - 7. 9 10 each man

£	s	d
105 $\frac{3}{4}$	@ 8/6	44 18 10 $\frac{1}{2}$

1879

Stacks

1. Pea stack (long) in Stonelands }
2. do. (do.) do. } off John's field and Backhouse field
3. do. (do.) do. }
4. Wheat stack - Durham's rick - talavera off Kiln Hill } 1 load in barn
5. do. do. Brick do. do. off Kiln Hill }
6. do. do. Bloss' rick, talavera off Packgate Walk }
1 $\frac{1}{2}$ load in corn hole for seed }

ROUTINE HUSBANDRY

7. Barley stack - long - in good order - Barns Hill
8. Barley Stack - long - in good order - Barns Hill & S. Walk
9. do. do. long - expect roof is wet - S. Walk & Barns Hill
10. do. do. long - off 11 acres - covered when half up with tilt - but wet - but thrown off & dried
11. do. do. long - off 11 acres - in good order
12. Wheat - off Stonelands
13. Wheat stack, off Stonelands - 4 loads at bottom off Three Corners cut & carted before last rain.
14. do. do. off Stonelands.
15. Dragraking wheat stack
16. Dragraking barley do.

1879

Aug. 23. Began cutting tolavera - slightly sprouted as it stood - from continual rains for the last fortnight.

The wettest season since 1860 and similar, but not so cold - about two thirds of the hay & clover spoiled - and a large quantity carried away by floods - on the 22nd July we had the greatest flood I ever remember here.¹

I had cut no grass - but after the flood we had about 8 days fine warm weather and I cut & secured my hay without any rain. The Leiston marshes all flooded and are likely to be till after harvest so that they will get no hay and are obliged to get stock out. Mr. J. Toller took 4l - at the Park (Glemham) & 20 at Sudbourne.

At Framlingham boats & carts were used to take passengers to & from station.

Streets & shops at Halesworth flooded and hay, where cut, carried away by the stream - after this we had a few fine days and then it came on wet with an occasional fine day till the 17th Sep. when in the evening about 9 a thunder storm came gradually on which was very severe. About 1 o'clock a cow was killed in the Dunningworth Hall meadows below John Hammonds - another cow was killed at Mr. Chaplin's, Sudbourne.

At Ipswich it was said to be even more severe - and great floods followed - and here the flood was nearly as high as on the 22nd July - but at Leiston they had very little rain.

Sept. 24 Leiston marshes again flooded. Archer had given orders for some of his bullocks to come home on Monday but the rain came down in torrents on the 23rd & 24th Sept. and caused another great flood, so that he is completely flooded again. Langham is not safe to pass - the water runs over Mr. Smith's wall, all the length of it - and foot planks are not visible.

Arthur, Jessie, Ellen, Edith & Edwd. gone to Shrewsbury - Henry's wedding - they report a deluge of rain all the way down - but the 25th was a splendid bright sun shining day for the bride - 26th & 27th also fine.

A great deal of corn has been carted in bad condition - many stacks have been taken down because of heating - and very many wheat stacks

¹ Compare p. 101.

SUFFOLK FARMING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

will not be fit to thresh till well up in the summer. I have been patient and have got all mine in very fair condition except that the wheat is more or less sprouted.

Finished carting the wheat off the Stonelands (a fine day) on the 5th Oct. – and all the dragraking of barley on the 7th.

Some of the barley stacks and one wheat stack are very wet on the roofs from not being thatched in time – Randall being very ill the stacks were finished by Shepherd Ling.

	1879
James Leggett – share of harvest	7 9 10
James Jaye – do.	7 9 10
Mark Poacher – do.	7 9 10
Lionel Richardson – do.	7 9 10
Joe Row – do.	7 9 10
Ben Keeble – do.	7 9 10
	<hr/>
	44 19 0
Wetting – 2 bottles gin – say	7 0
Jno. Hammond's a/c of money paid to boys, etc. } } }	14 2 7
Jas. Hammond's wages – shocking sheves etc. } } }	3 15 2
including J. Hammond's & boys' } } }	24 lbs. malt – 9/- 10 16 – 24 lbs. hops – 1/6 1 16 – 7 st. mutton @ 9/- 3 3 0 17½ st. mutton 9s. 7 17 6 cash reed. 4d. 4 3 0 per lb. 3 14 6
	<hr/>
7 co. wheat @ 20/-, worth 5/- more } } }	1 15 –
Hiring money –	6 –
Spending money & larges for family } } }	17
Extra beer & gin –	3 10 –
	<hr/>
Wages for & during harvest	£89 1 3

From I. & E.S.R.O., Rope Family Archives, 50/23/1.8(12).

* * *

Harvest Home or Horkey

The harvest was generally agreed for the gathering in, or 'put out' as they called it, some weeks before it began, either to board the men during the

time or pay all in money and the bargain concluded with a pint or quart of strong ale to each man.

One was selected from amongst themselves as 'My Lord', the oldest workman on the farm if able, and one also for 'My Lady' who went next him. My Lord took the lead in the field and a forfeiture was the consequence of any attempt to get before him. All were bound also to keep within a short distance of him, that is to say about a 'couple of clips', equal to about half a sheaf. Friends and strangers who went into the field were asked for a largess & for this if wished they would express their thanks by what they called 'hallowing it'.¹ One of my father's labourers, Robert Buckerham, was a capital workman and could with the greatest ease leave all behind, which would be quickly manifested if they tried to give him the least run. He would call out exultingly 'Here's another bend, a bend, a bend ho!'. This was a signal for all to bend and tie up at the same time, otherwise some would to spare themselves trouble make their sheaves too large. In Colneis Hundred if any required a little rest for a few minutes some would call out 'Blowings, my Lord', which was allowed them.

The harvest ended, then came the Horkey. I just remember one or two at Ulveston Hall, and one also at the farm adjoining, Mr. Pettits of Mickfield. It was generally on a Saturday night and that immediately after the harvest had ended. The supper began at six and the drinking & smoking finished at 12, to which only the men came. In some places their wives & families were also invited. Extra helps also sometimes joined them, such as the wheelwright, carpenter, blacksmith, collarmaker & tailor & partook of the same fare. No drink was allowed after 12 that the Sunday might not be infringed upon. My Lord usually took the head of the table and my Lady sat next him on his right, the rest sitting as they followed each other in the field. The feast consisted of a profusion of cold plum pudding, pork, beef, etc. The president did not usually help all, but they helped themselves as the dishes might be placed near them. Each brought his own knife and fork, or, lacking the latter, one was soon formed of wood, a skewer which answered the purpose. I remember the large milk pail with bright iron hoops being placed upon the table filled with the best foaming harvest ale and of which they had as much to drink as they pleased. Gin & water (Curtis tells me), a bowl of punch and syllabub made by milking into beer with spice and sugar was allowed late in the evening and all had pipes and tobacco who wished for it. My Lord had the pail placed before him and he took from thence a gotch or jug full as he required it. It was poured from thence into two horns, which number sufficed, passing round to all.

Then commenced the singing. The first song generally was:

Now supper is ended and all things are past
Here's a Mistress good health boys in a full flowing glass.
She is a good mistress, she provides us good cheer,
Come all my brave boys now & drink off yar beer.

This was repeated as the horn passed to each as it was given them 'Come drink off yar beer' and then:

¹ I.e. hallooing. See final paragraph.

SUFFOLK FARMING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Drink my boys drink, till you come unto me,
The longer we sit my boys, the merrier we shall be. Then:
Here's a health to our master, the founder of the feast,
I wish with all my heart and soul in Heaven he may rest,
I hope all things will prosper that now he takes in hand
For we are all his servants & all at his command.
Drink my boys drink and see you do not spill
For if you do you must drink two which is your master's will.

Another song began: Now harvest is over
And the barns are well filled, etc.

Another: Fill up your glass, cock up your chin,
Open your mouth and let it run in
For the faster you drink the sooner you fill, etc.

Another song: We'll merrily hunt the fox
Down the red lane
Shall we go catch him boys
Aye if we can.
Ten thousand to one
If we catch him or none,
His beard & his brush
Are both of one colour,
I'm sorry kind Sir
Your glass is no fuller, etc.

This was a signal again to drink all round. A labourer, John Abbott, who had a good voice, used to sing:

Tobacco is an Indian weed,
It grows in the morn and is cut down at eve,
The smoke it does up high ascend
To shew man's life must have an end.
Think of this when you smoke tobacco, etc.

Much jocularity and merriment was indulged in on the occasion. The principal topics discussed were those of their late occupation and incidents connected with it. My father & one or two neighbours smoked their pipes in an adjoining room, and therefore no indecency of speech or song would have been allowed. In the course of the evening my Lord was called upon to dance a hornpipe to which he (Buckingham) readily assented for the amusement of the company, himself humming the tune of the College Hornpipe. He had a competitor in this dance, but who did not come off with equal eclat with my Lord and was in consequence the occasion of some little jealousy and anger between them, otherwise the meetings were generally very harmonious.

In halloing the largesses the men all assembled in the yard and taking hold of each others hands formed a circle, my Lord mounting the jostling block calling out 'Halloo largess' 3 times. Then all the men holding their heads down made a kind of moaning noise for a short time, then suddenly erecting their heads all called out as loud as they could 'Halloo largess'.

ROUTINE HUSBANDRY

This also was repeated three times. After this my Lord called out the name of any person who had given them one, with 'Thank Mr. — for his largess', which was afterwards re-echoed by the whole corps. These frolics altho very grateful to the men were very troublesome at the houses where they occurred and were therefore gradually got rid of. 2/6 each is now presented to each man instead of a supper and the largesses divided amongst them & as a farther compensation one or two hot dinners of plum pudding and meat with ale are given to them during the harvest. The 2/6 given to each with the largesses collected during harvest was for some years spent by the men at a publick house after Horkey had ceased, but now all the money thus obtained is generally divided amongst themselves so that their wives and families may share in the benefit.

From 'Collections towards a History of Debenham, Suffolk, collated from the MSS. of Sam Dove, Esq. (late of that parish) and other authentic sources by W. S. Fitch, with illustrations from drawings by J. S. Waller, F.S.A., copied by Wat Hagreen', Ipswich, 1845. MS. original in the custody of the incumbent and churchwardens of Debenham. Microfilm copy in I. & E.S.R.O.

* * *

*ACCOUNT OF SHEEP AND CATTLE AT PARK FARM, HENHAM,
1859-60*

Balance Sheet of Sheep kept at the Park Farm in Henham
from Septr. 1st, 1859, to Septr. 1st, 1860

Date	No.	Description, if bought or bred	Price per head £ s. d.	Amount £ s. d.	Total £ s. d.
1859					
Septr. 1	12	Wether grazing sheep on the farm	2 6 -	27 12 -	
	41	Ewe " " " "	1 14 -	- - -	
	403	Stock ewes " " "	1 18 -	765 14 -	
	5	Cotswold tup " " "	4 - -	20 - -	
	—		— - -		883 - -
Octr.	1	Tup bought of C. Lenny	3 10 -	3 10 -	
	4	Tups " " H. Aylmer	7 10 -	30 - -	
	2	Tups " " Sir E. Kerrison	5 - -	10 - -	
	10	Dorset ewes bought of Munnings	2 19 -	29 10 -	
	—		— - -		73 - -
1860					
March	540	Leicester lambs 'bred'	— - -	- - -	
	10	Dorset " "	— - -	- - -	
	—	Artificial consumed viz.	— - -	- - -	
	—	15½ tons linseed & cotton cake	— - -	123 10 9	
	—	1 bushel linseed	— - -	7 3	
	—	200 sacks maltcins	— - -	30 - -	
	—	1 ton pollard	— - -	5 - -	
	—	Profit for the produce of the Park 18 acres swedes, 6 acres turnips 6 acres mangold & 22 acres clover layer	— - -		158 18 -
	—		— - -		629 9 10
Total	1028	Number		Total amount	£1744 7 10

SUFFOLK FARMING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Date	No.	Description, if sold &c.	Price per head £ s. d.	Amount £ s. d.	Total £ s. d.
1859					
Octr. 1860	1	Old tup sold to Reeve	2 5 -	2 5 -	
February	3	" ditto " at Halesworth	2 9 -	7 7 -	
April	43	Fat sheep killed for the Hall	2 2 9	91 19 5	
	—	229 st. 13 lbs. at 8/- per stone	1 10 10	15 8 -	
	10	Fat lambs 22 st. at 14/-			
	—				116 19 5
July	8	Lamb tups sold to F. G. Freeman			
	260	Lambs " " Nesling	1 6 -	338 - -	
	20	do " "	1 4 -	24 - -	
	17	do " "	1 - -	17 - -	
	24	do " " Larter	1 19 -	22 16 -	
	10	do 'Refuse' " " Seamans	1 8 -	4 - -	
	—				423 6 -
	1	Ewe sheep sold to Reeve	1 5 -	1 5 -	
	1	Tup " "	2 11 2	2 11 2	
	2	Old sheep killed for greyhounds	1 - -	2 - -	
Sepr.	60	Crones sold at Halesworth	1 4 -	72 - -	
	12	do " " "	1 17 11	10 15 9	
	—				88 11 11
	27	Ewe & lamb skins to Reeve			
	—	Skins off fat sheep to Reeve			
	—	Wool sold 54 lbs 15 lbs. at 42/-			
	—				126 10 6
	312	Stock ewes on the farm	2 - -	624 - -	
	10	Dorset ewes " " "	2 - -	20 - -	
	7	Tups " " "	5 - -	35 - -	
	200	Lambs " " "	1 11 -	310 - -	
Total	1028	Number		Total amount	£1744 7 10

The average produce of each ewe was 42 $\frac{1}{2}$

Balance Sheet of Beast kept at the Park Farm, Henham,
from Septr. 1st, 1859, to Septr. 1st, 1860.

Date	No.	Description, if bought or bred	Price per head £ s. d.	Amount £ s. d.	Total £ s. d.
1859					
Sepr. 1	14	Dr. Irish beast on the farm	12 - -	168 - -	
	1	heifer " " "	11 10 -	11 10 -	
	1	Suffolk bull, " " "	12 - -	12 - -	
	—				191 10 -
	—	Artificial consumed 4½ tons cake	- - -	46 1 5	
	—	" 20 cms. wheat	- - -	19 13 4	
	—	" 36½ cms. barley	- - -	31 18 9	
	—	" 13 cms. linseed	- - -	18 17 -	
	—	" 1 bushel brans	- - -	5 -	
	—	Profit for the Root Crop	- - -	- - -	
	—				116 15 6
	—				50 11 6
Octr. 15	22	Irish steers bought at Norwich	6 10 -	143 - -	
Decr. 10	10	Galloway heifers " of Sir E. Kerrison	8 15 -	87 10 -	
	2	Steers from the Hall	5 - -	10 - -	
	—	Profit for the produce of the Park & marshes	- - -	- - -	
Total	50	Number		Total amount	£749 7 7

ROUTINE HUSBANDRY

Date	No.	Description, if sold &c.	Price per head £ s. d.	Amount £ s. d.	Total £ s. d.
1859 Decr. 20	— 1	Irish heifer sold to Reeve	18 10 —	18 10 —	
1860 April 21	— 3	Fat beast sold in London	22 18 4	68 15 —	
28	5	" " "	22 7 5	111 17 0	
May 5	6	" " "	21 7 6	128 5 0	
July 4	— — — — 1	Fat bull sold to Heffer	31 10 —	31 10 —	
	— — — —		— — —	— — —	
1859 Decr.	— 4	Irish steers sold with lung disease	— — —	26 — 7	358 17 —
1860 March	— — 3	" " " " "	— — —	19 10 —	
Sepr. 1	15 2 10	" " " on the farm Polled steers, " " " Galloway heifers on the farm	12 — — 12 10 — 14 — —	180 — — 25 — — 140 0 0	390 10 7
Total	50	Number		Total amount	£749 7 7

I. & E.S.R.O., Rous Family Archives, Ref. No. HA11/C3/28.

II Agricultural Improvement

This section illustrates some of the more important features of the agricultural revolution in Suffolk.

ENCLOSURE

These two documents throw light on one method of enclosure, carried out, without Act of Parliament, by express or tacit agreement between the manorial lord and his tenants. It was the usual method of enclosure from the late-sixteenth to the mid-eighteenth century, and was the means by which most of the Suffolk enclosures were effected. That it continued to be used in the nineteenth century is generally forgotten. It was probably only practicable when small areas of land were involved, as was the case at Framlingham and Debenham. After the middle of the eighteenth century the customary method of enclosure was far more expensive, involving an Act of Parliament and also an Enclosure Award that might take several years to complete.

Enclosure at Framlingham

To the worshipfull the Master, Fellows, and Scholars of Pembroke Hall in the University of Cambridge, lords of the manor of Framlingham at the Castle in the county of Suffolk.

The humble petition of us whose names are hereunder subscribed Sheweth,

That there are within the said manor certain greens and waste grounds parcel of and belonging to the said manor called or known by the respective names of Brabling Green, New Street Green, Habershaw Green, or Apsey Green, Coles Green, Lampard Brook Green, and the Castle Brookes.

That those greens and waste grounds are of little or no use in their present state, but in many respects injurious to the adjoining property of us respectively.

That by inclosing the same greens and waste grounds in a proper manner, the respective adjoining lands will be greatly improved and benefitted (particularly in their outward fences) and the publick highways leading over the same will, in many respects, be rendered more commodious.

Now we whose names are hereunto subscribed humbly request and hope you will, as lords of the said manor, give us leave and licence, as far as by law you may or can, to inclose at our own expence the said greens and waste grounds under the direction of such person or persons as you may think proper to appoint and for which we are ready to make such recompence and

AGRICULTURAL IMPROVEMENT

satisfaction as the steward of your courts of the said manor or any other agent or agents of yours shall judge reasonable.

William Pain	George Turner
The mark of John Person	John Say
Joseph Benington, senior	Jasper Peirson
Abraham Girling for William Hilling	Jasper Peirson for Doctor Goodwyn
Joseph Wase	Thomas Aldrich for Mrs Aldrich
Mary Warner	Samuel Fruer
John Felgath	William Folkard
Ahan More	John Stanford

We the Master, Fellows, and Scholars of Pembroke Hall in the University of Cambridge, having duly weighed and considered the import of the petition hereto annexed, do give and testify our consent to the prayer thereof as far as by law we may or can. And we do hereby authorise and empower Mr. Samuel Kilderbee (the steward of the courts of our manor of Framlingham at the Castle)¹ and Messrs Wenn and Dunningham of Ipswich in the County of Suffolk, his assistants, jointly or severally, to attend on our parts to see the same carried into execution. Given under the seal of our College this twenty-fourth day of March one thousand eight hundred and eight.

British Museum, Additional MS. 23960, ff. 23-4.

* * *

Enclosure at Debenham

GREENS

There are several places that still come under this denomination. The Cherry Tree Green where the Horse and Lamb fair were formerly held, but now so much enclosed (that the fair is generally transferred to a field behind the Cherry Tree Inn) by the erection of buildings and the enclosure of gardens. George Edmunds built a cottage upon part of it and took also a piece of ground for a garden and Lord Henniker, as Lord of the Manor, allowed the Revd. W. Hurn many years since to enclose a part opposite the Vicarage, also the cottage & garden run now the property of Mr. Locke, a brick dwelling house and buildings for an iron foundry, the National School also built in 1834 and an osier ground now occupies a considerable portion of the Green. A stream from the Stonham boundary leading to the Deben nearly divides it and during floods in its primitive state I have seen it nearly overflowed.

THE CROSS GREEN

A portion of land now much encroached upon – Goodman's cottages & garden – a garden & yard added to Howe's premises, as also to several cottages by a moat called *Cookshall ditch*. An Engine House has also been recently erected upon it. I remember it an open space extending from the cottages by the lower Church gate to the corner opposite the Bells.

¹ Not the Rev. Samuel Kilderbee, rector of Campsea Ash, but his father, Samuel Kilderbee (1726–1813), who was Town Clerk of Ipswich and Gainsborough's lifelong friend. The Town Clerk acted as Steward of a number of manors, but was eighty-two years old in 1808.

KEMPS GREEN OR CAMPING GREEN

A portion of land on the road to Kenton – enclosed many years and added to a farm belonging to the Corporation of Ipswich, but I have some idea that it was quite open within my own memory. It is still pasture and a brook runs at the bottom of it towards Debenham. The Helmingham Volunteers used sometimes to be exercised upon it, but whether by sufferance from the tenant or public right I am unable to say. This was no (1840) doubt the Camping place¹ for the inhabitants described in another place.

RUMBLE GREEN

Rather a large portion of unenclosed land in my early days, with no hard road over it leading from Debenham to Wetheringsett. It was enclosed many years since and added to the farm now in the occupation of Mr. Tacon. A good road runs now on one side of it which in my memory was almost impassable.

THE GULLS

A long strip of rugged land, some years since enclosed by Mr. Joseph Barker who purchased the contiguous property. It leads from the end of the street by the Aspall road to the entrance of a lane leading to Mr. Barker's House. This road is many feet below the surface of the fields on each side, bushy & wild on both sides for some way & deep with water and quite impassable after very heavy rain or a thaw. It is the channel from the source of the Deben and in the part called the Gulls, as some labourers were some years since excavating for sand, they found an anchor deeply imbedded in it.

And doubtless many an age had past
 Since in that cavity 'twas cast.
 It caused our sages all to stare
 With wonderment to find it there.
 But if from vessel tempest toss'd
 It separated and was lost
 When erst old Deben's spacious stream
 Did with such objects proudly teem
 No one could tell, but all agreed
 To find it there was strange indeed.

LAND ENCLOSED

On the road leading from Debenham to Stonham there was a long strip of land leading from Prixfeld Cottage to the farm house now Mr. Wade's. It was enclosed by Mr. Bedingfield and added to the White Hall Farm. Also from the cottage aforesaid leading to Debenham there was a road on each side the stream terminating at the point where the upper & lower road branches off to that place. One of these roads being useless was allowed to be enclosed by the parish to Mr. Darby who then was the proprietor of Poplar Hall. The stream where it ran between the two roads was considered the boundary of the farms but a few years afterwards Mr. Darby fancied

¹ Camping place = the place set aside for 'camping', the ancient local ball-game. See R. Forby, *The Vocabulary of E. Anglia* (1830), I, pp. 50-4 and *Victoria History of County of Suffolk*, II, p. 384.

AGRICULTURAL IMPROVEMENT

from having enclosed the road he had a right to cross the stream and to take down some poplar trees that stood on the opposite side supposed to belong to Mr. Bedingfield. They were however claimed by the Lord of the Ulveston Manor, or the Corporation of Ipswich. A lawsuit was the consequence; it was held at the following Bury Assizes. A verdict was obtained against Mr. Darby, who was obliged to pay costs of the value of the trees taken away. The farm house have ever since retained the name of Poplar Hall. There were some doggerells circulated on the occasion but I can recollect only two of the stanzas.

Timber Will lives up a hill
It blew a gentle breeze
And in his head he stuff'd it still
To take eleven trees.

Then came Simple Simon
With horses and men so fat
I'm glad says he – we've got the trees
They'll do to stop a gap.

There was also a ridge of land near the mill, now belonging to Dr. Chevallier, which was enclosed by the late Mr. Lillaston, miller. It ran some way parallel with the road but was exchanged some years since with Mr. Jackson, who was then proprietor of Gostling Hall, for the piece of land now in front of the mill and house.

Also on the road leading from Debenham to Aspall Hall there was a long strip of rugged land thro which the stream runs by the side of the road, which was enclosed about 1814 by Mr. Ringe and added to his farm. At the same time the railing was put up on that road by Dr. Chevallier by order of & at the expence of the Trustees of the Turnpike.

From 'Collections towards a History of Debenham, Suffolk, collated from the MSS. of Sam Dove, Esq. (late of that parish) and other authentic sources by W. S. Fitch, with illustrations from drawings by J. S. Waller, F.S.A., copied by Wat Hagreen', Ipswich, 1845. Original in the custody of the incumbent and churchwardens of Debenham. Micro-film copy in I. & E.S.R.O.

CABBAGES AND DAIRYING IN HIGH SUFFOLK

Minutes relating to the dairy farms, etc., of High Suffolk, taken at Aspall, the seat of the Rev. Mr. Chevallier, in January 1786, by Arthur Young, F.R.S., Secretary to the Board of Agriculture, 1793–1808.

The view I have taken of the dairies of this county has confirmed me in the opinion that there is no other in England so generally interesting to the farming traveller. The horses, carrots, and shell-marl of the sandlings beyond Woodbridge: the sheep farms near Bury, that possess uncontestedly the finest of the breed called, improperly, Norfolks: the cows and cabbages of High Suffolk: the turnep-husbandry of the great farms on the coast: the circumstances also of fens, warrens, hops, hollow-draining, etc., form a variety rarely to be found in a single province.

The country which is more peculiarly, but not exclusively, the seat of the dairies, is marked out by the parishes of Codenham, Ashbocking, Otley,

Charsfield, Letheringham, Hatcheston, Parham, Framlingham, Cransford, Brusy whole, Baddingham, Sibton, Heveningham, Cookly, Linstead, Metfield, Wethersdale, Fressingfield, Wingfield, Hoxne, Brome, Thrandeston, Geslingham, Fenningham, Westrop, Wyverston, Gipping, Stonham, Creting, and again to Codenham, with all the places within that line, forming an oblong tract of country, about 20 miles long by 12 broad. The limits, however, of any management or breed of cattle can never be exactly defined; the fine cows spread irregularly beyond this line, perhaps, in every direction, but this is nearer to the bounds of it than any other to be traced. Here and there a fine dairy may be found beyond, but within it nearly all are good. . . .

About 40 years ago there was very little under tillage. At the death of Mr. Chevallier's father, he found his farms around Aspal all under grass; but he has given his tenants leave to plough some. That gentleman, who has attended very carefully to the rural oeconomy of the neighbourhood, is clearly of opinion, that ploughing to a certain degree is very proper, and gives this decisive proof of it. That the farms have now more cows upon them with a fourth under the plough, and consequently much corn grown, than when the whole was grass. . . .

One very great object of their ploughing is the culture of turneps and cabbages for their cows: this is so universal, that I did not find a single dairy farm without both those crops on it. The heavy part of Suffolk is the only district in England, that, to my knowledge, has the culture of cabbages thoroughly established among common farmers, and is in that respect curious. . . .

They do not have recourse to either turneps or cabbages as a necessary article in any course of crops, but merely in subservience to the dairy. On the contrary, they are very generally of opinion that the husbandry with any other view is disadvantageous. The wetness of their land is such, that carting off these crops poaches the soil to an extreme, so that the barley which succeeds them is damaged considerably. . . .

It was universally agreed among all the farmers I conversed with, that cabbages and straw were by far better food for milch cows than any quantity of hay: if this point is well considered, it will be entirely decisive of the question of their merit, and put their exhausting qualities almost out of the enquiry. A circumstance that proves their goodness for butter, is the veal carts which go regularly from this country to London, taking large quantities thither, which is sold and eaten as hay-butter as long as the cabbages remain sound. . . .

A very singular practice, which I never saw or heard of before; and it shows how often it is necessary to examine a country before all its peculiarities are to be known; is that of tying up their cows in the field, without house, or shed, or roof to cover them. With a few rails, planks, or any rough contrivance, they form something to answer the purpose of a manger on the ground, in which they give turneps, cabbages, or straw. Small posts are driven into the ground 3 feet to 3 feet 6 inches asunder, to which the cows are tied; before their heads a faggot hedge is set up to screen them: they are regularly littered, and the dung piled up in a wall behind them, which there answers also as a screen: a slight trench near their heels is

dug, just sufficient to conduct away the urine. I was much pleased to see, at Mr. Dun's, at Tannington, a hole made to receive it; whence it was taken regularly and spread upon a field. But this was not a general custom by any means. This method of tying up cows is found to be greatly preferable to letting them range at will; and they find that any sort of food thus given goes farther. Being exposed to the weather they think even better than being kept covered, as in this system they are kept constantly tied up, except being let out to water, if they have not turnip or cabbages enough to preclude the want. The warmth, they say, of laying so near each other sheltered from the wind, is enough without being covered. This method is commonly used only with cows before calving: when they calve they are moved to the neat houses.

Compared with the more common system of this country I cannot but highly approve of this method. And if they do as well as under sheds, or in houses, it is so far better, as the expense of buildings is saved; of this, however, there is no proof; though a most interesting question, that well deserves to be carefully tried. . . .

I come now to a very interesting point, the breed of the cows which give these very considerable products. The quantity of milk they yield exceeds that of any other breed I have ever met with in the kingdom. There is hardly a dairy of any consideration in the country that does not contain cows which give in the height of the season, that is in the beginning of June, 8 gallons of milk in the day, and six are common among many for a large part of the season. I have reason from my enquiries to believe, that for two or three months, a whole dairy will give near 5 gallons a day on an average; unless the season should be unfavourable. Compared with the other breeds of the kingdom, this quantity of milk does not appear in its true light without the size of the cow being considered. It is a very small breed. On an average of all the dairies I saw, they would not fatten to 50 stone (14 lb. to the stone). The price is proportioned more to the size than milk; for any cow in the country that is to be bought at all (some few instances except) is to be had with her calf at a fortnight old for 9 guineas. Many for eight: and among themselves in the common intercourse of business, I have reason to believe 6 guineas an average price. . . .

Large, handsome, well made cows, that keep themselves in good flesh, are not often those which give much milk; but I was assured, that the milk of a cow that usually keeps herself in very good condition is more productive of cream and butter than that of a lean cow; but that this superiority would not make amends for want of quantity. The very extraordinary milkers in a dairy are often the worst-looking cows in it, in respect to shape, cross and ill-lying bones, and a carcase the very reverse of that, equal, level, and filled up, surface that indicates a disposition to fatten.

The points they generally admire here are a clean throat, with little dewlap; a snake head; clean thin legs and short; a springing rib and large carcass: a good loin, the hip-bones to lie square and even; and the tail to rise from the rump. In respect to colour no particular rule, except an idea that light ones indicate tenderness. In size, a preference of small cows.

From a reprint in pamphlet form of an article in 'Annals of Agriculture', Vol. V., No. 27.

CROP IMPROVEMENT BY SELECTION

Within thirty years following the discovery of Chevallier barley, it became one of the most popular varieties grown in England, and was not improved upon and displaced until early in the present century.

Origin of the Chevallier Barley

from Mr. Sam Dove of Debenham, April 22, 1835

About (from) 10 to 15 years since John Andrewes, a labourer of (my father's) Mr. Edward Dove of Ulveston Hall, Debenham, had been threshing barley and on his return home at night he complained of his feet being very uneasy. On taking off his shoes he discovered in one of them part of a very fine ear of barley. It struck him as being particularly so, and was careful to have it preserved. He afterwards planted it in his garden and on the following year Dr. and Mr. Charles Chevallier coming to Andrewes cottage to inspect some repairs going on (the cottage belonging to the Doctor) saw three or four ears of the barley growing, he requested it might be kept for him when ripe. The Doctor sowed a small ridge with the produce thus obtained and kept it by itself until he was able to plant an acre and from this acre the produce was 11½ coombs, now about 9 years since. This was again planted and from the increase thence arising he began to dispose of it & from that time it has been gradually getting into repute. It is now well known in most of the corn markets in the kingdom and also in many parts of the continent and called after the Doctor's name, the Chevallier Barley.

From 'Collections towards a History of the parish of Debenham, Suffolk, collated from the MSS. of S. Dove, Esq. (late of that parish) and other authentic sources by W. S. Fitch . . . , Ipswich, 1845. f. 128.

FIELD DRAINAGE

Memorandum of Agreement between Septimus Worrell of Portman Street, Portman Square in the County of Middlesex, Esquire, of the one part and Edwin Barthrop of Kettleburgh in the County of Suffolk, farmer, of the other part.

Whereas the said Edwin Barthrop is tenant to the said Septimus Worrell of a farm in Kettleburgh aforesaid and the said Septimus Worrell has entered into an agreement with the Reverend Ellis Walford of Dallingho, the owner of an estate in Hoo, in the said County of Suffolk for payment to the said Ellis Walford of the sum of four pounds annually for permission to lay down a quill or watercourse from the estate of the said Septimus Worrell thro' the river there and on to the estate of the said Ellis Walford and for a course for the water thro' the said quill into the back ditch of the said Ellis Walford for the purpose of draining some portion of the estate of the said Septimus Worrell and the said Septimus Worrell hath agreed to pay two third parts of the expences of the quill and the laying down thereof and in consequence of the improvement made by the said quill to the lands in the occupation of the said Edwin Barthrop he hath agreed to pay to the said Septimus Worrell the sum of two pounds a year as an increase of rent and also five pounds per centum per annum on the sum to be expended by the said Septimus Worrell in making and laying down the said quill and the

AGRICULTURAL IMPROVEMENT

expenditure consequent thereupon Now for the considerations aforesaid the said Edwin Barthrop doth hereby agree and undertake from the eleventh day of October one thousand eight hundred and forty six to pay to the said Septimus Worrell as an increase of rent the sum of two pounds per annum and also five pounds per centum per annum on such sum of money as the said Septimus Worrell shall expend in and about the said quill so long as the said Edwin Barthrop shall continue to occupy the said farm and in case of nonpayment thereof or of any part thereof that the said Septimus Worrell shall be entitled to such remedies for the recovery thereof as landlords are by law or custom authorized or accustomed to use for the recovery of rents reserved upon lease or otherwise. Dated this 22nd day of Decr. 1846.

Edwin Manning Barthrop

Witness

George Moor

I. & E.S.R.O., Austin Family Archives, Ref. No. 50/18/10.2(2).

THE CONTROL OF ANIMAL DISEASES

Increasing scientific knowledge concerning the causes of disease among stock led to Government action to arrest the spread of infection. The following documents constitute two examples of government intervention. In 1848 an outbreak of sheep pox (variola ovis) occurred which was particularly violent in Norfolk and Suffolk. The Privy Council circulated a questionnaire, some of the replies to which are printed here. In 1865 cattle plague or rinderpest, a disease which had first occurred in England in 1714 and again between 1745 and 1757, reappeared. A Royal Commission was appointed to enquire into the causes, spread and cure of the disease and in 1866 the Cattle Diseases Prevention Act was passed, to compel the slaughter of all infected animals, and to allow the slaughter of others in contact with them or in the same herd. This Act was effective in rapidly stamping out the disease. These documents show how much more assured was the government's handling of the problem in 1865 than in 1848.

Office of Committee of Privy
Council for Trade,
Whitehall, 12 July 1848

Sir,

I am directed by the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade to request that you will acquaint the Commissioners of Customs, that information has recently been received by this department, that the disease called 'Variola Ovis' is now greatly extending in some parts of the country, especially in the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk, and that apprehensions exist that it may be caused by the importation of infected sheep. I am, therefore, to request that you will move the Commissioners, with the least possible delay, to make particular inquiries upon the subject, especially at the Ports of Hull, Great Yarmouth, Southampton, London, and other places having direct communication with the east of Europe, and to inform my Lords whether it appears that sheep are now being imported in an infected state.

SUFFOLK FARMING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

This subject was fully discussed between the Commissioners of Customs and this Board in October last. But my Lords are desirous of being apprised whether any recent information has been received with respect to the importation of infected sheep, and whether the Commissioners are of opinion that it would now be expedient that an Order in Council should be issued, authorizing the destruction of diseased animals.

My Lords would also suggest to the Commissioners the propriety of instructing their officers at the different ports of entry to exercise the greatest vigilance in enforcing the precautions which they were previously authorized to adopt in this matter.

I am, &c.
(signed) Denis Le Marchant

Charles Scovell, Esq.

&c. &c. &c.

From 'Disease among Sheep', BPP 1847-8, LI, p. 501.

Office of Committee of Privy Council for Trade,
Whitehall,
11th October, 1848

My Lords,

I am directed by the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade to acquaint you that my Lords are desirous of obtaining information as to the prevalence of the disease called Sheep-pox or Variola Ovina, and that it has occurred to them that such information might be obtained through the Boards of Guardians in several parts of the country. I am therefore to request that your Lordships will move the Commissioners of the Poor Law to issue instructions to the Boards of Guardians to acquaint Her Majesty's Government whether this disease now prevails, and to what extent, in their respective districts, and whether it appears to be necessary that any measures should be taken with respect to it.

The disease appears to be at present in the Eastern and South-Eastern Counties, but it would be well that these enquiries should be made of a general character.

I am further to request that the Boards of Guardians may be instructed, wherever the disease may appear at any future time, to report to my Lords upon the above points.

I am,
My Lords,
Your Lordship's obedient Servant,
Denis Le Marchant.

The Viscount Ebrington.

&c. &c. &c.

Poor Law Board,
Somerset House,
26th October, 1848.

Sir,

I am directed by the Poor Law Board to transmit to you on the other side

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a copy of a letter which they have received from the Committee of Privy Council for Trade, in reference to the disease called Sheep-pox or Variola.

You will observe that their Lordships are desirous of obtaining information in regard to the prevalence of the disease in question; and I am directed by the Poor Law Board to request the favour of your supplying their Lordships with such information accordingly, as respects the Union of which you are the Chairman.

The Poor Law Board entertain no doubt that the importance of this matter to the Agriculturists of the country will induce the Chairmen of the several Boards of Guardians readily to comply with this request.

A form in which the required information may be inserted is sent here-with.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

Geo. Nicholls

Secretary.

The Chairman of the Board of Guardians.

BLYTHING UNION

Parish of Blythburgh

STATEMENT respecting the prevalence of the Disease called Sheep-Pox,
or Variola Ovina.

1. If the disease prevails in your Parish. A parcel of 44 lambs have been affected by the Sheep-pox at times; ever since the 1st of Octr. last.
2. The extent to which the disease prevails. The above is the only case at present known in this parish. Five lambs only have up to this time been attacked.
3. The number of Sheep attacked The number which have died under it. None.
4. Whether it appears to be necessary that any measures should be taken with respect to the disease.

In all cases where Sheep are attacked with Variola Ovina, as soon as detected, the *Owner* ought to be obliged to make the same public in his immediate neighbourhood, and without loss of time, to inoculate all the Sheep he may have on his occupation.

Diseased sheep to be kept as far from the neighbourhood of healthy stock as possible, and not put on land adjoining the public roads

Signature: Jas. G. Cooper.¹ Churchwarden

Dated 13th day of November, 1848.

BLYTHING UNION

Parish of Covehithe

STATEMENT respecting the prevalence of the Disease called Sheep-Pox,
or Variola Ovina.

¹ Jas. G. Cooper gave evidence before the Select Committee on the agricultural depression of the 'thirties. See pp. 21, 23.

SUFFOLK FARMING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

1. If the disease prevails in your Parish. Not any disease.
2. The extent to which the disease prevails.
The number of Sheep attacked –
The number which have died under it.
3. Whether it appears to be necessary that any measures should be taken with respect to the disease.

I consider it highly essential that all foreign sheep should be slaughtered within 48 hours after their arrival in this country, and within a short distance from where they are landed.

Signature: Edm. Cottenham. Churchwarden

and Overseer

Dated 13th day of November, 1848.

BLYTHING UNION
Parish of Henham

STATEMENT respecting the prevalence of the Disease called Sheep-Pox,
or Variola Ovina.

1. If the disease prevails in your Parish. Yes.
2. The extent to which the disease prevails. Lord Stradbroke flock of 460 ewes.
The number of Sheep attacked 41 in the natural way the remainder all inoculated.
The number which have died under it. 22 there are 8 or 10 now very bad that I think cannot recover under any treatment.
3. Whether it appears to be necessary that any measures should be taken with respect to the disease.

Whenever the disease first makes its appearance the best possible means to be pursued is to inoculate the remainder; up to the present time only 6 have died from the inoculation. 16 out of these were taken in the natural way.

Signature: Thomas Freeman, Agent.

Churchwarden
or Overseer

Dated 22d day of November, 1848.

BLYTHING UNION
Parish of Huntingfield

STATEMENT respecting the prevalence of the Disease called Sheep-Pox,
or Variola Ovina.

1. If the disease prevails in your Parish. Yes.
2. The extent to which the disease prevails.
The number of Sheep attacked. 224
The number which have died under it. 20
3. Whether it appears to be necessary that any measures should be taken with respect to the disease.

As soon as the disease makes its appearance, if not before, among a lot of sheep, would strongly recommend inoculation as it will bring on a mild and safe form of the disease,

AGRICULTURAL IMPROVEMENT

the losses from which will be very small indeed, while from a natural outbreak an *malignant* form of the disease probably from 30 to 50 p. cent will die if not arrested by the above named remedy.

Signature: S. A. Goodwyn. Churchwarden
or Overseer

Dated 14th day of November, 1848.

BLYTHING UNION
Parish of Walberswick

STATEMENT respecting the prevalence of the Disease called Sheep-Pox or Variola Ovina.

1. If the disease prevails in your Parish. No disease at present in this parish, but a case of sheep pox in the adjacent parish.
2. The extent to which the disease prevails. --
The number of Sheep attacked --
The number which have died under it. --
3. Whether it appears to be necessary that any measures should be taken with respect to the disease.

Where any sheep are attacked with Variola Ovina the whole in the lot affected ought to be immediately inoculated & kept as far apart from healthy stock as possible and not suffered on lands adjoining the public roads.

Signature: John Leveritt. Churchwarden

Dated 14th day of November, 1848.

I. & E.S.R.O., Rous Family Archives, Ref. No. HA11/B5/72.

* * *

Cattle Plague in 1865

SUFFOLK

The first outbreak in this County took place on the 5th of July 1865, at Beccles, and the infection is traceable to the London market, through that of Norwich.

During the month of September the plague is recorded to have been at its height. From that period up to the middle of July, cases were reported continuously, although with a marked decrease in numbers for the months of May, June and July 1866. Only three cases were reported for the period from July 14th to October 6th, when the last attack is recorded, at Thelnetham in the Petty Sessional Division of Blackbourn.

Cases have been reported from 23 of the 27 Boroughs and Petty Sessional Divisions of this county. Those which suffered most heavily are Lackford or Mildenhall, for which 784 cases are recorded, and Melford, for which 304 were reported. The attacks in the different Divisions, etc. are as follows: Beccles, 44; Beccles Borough, 44; Blackbourn, 184; Blything, 90; Bungay, 36; Bury St. Edmunds, 25; Cosford or Hadleigh, 46; Eye Borough, 13; Framlingham, 102; Hartismere, 131; Hoxne or Stradbroke, 44; Ipswich, 157; Ipswich Borough, 65; Lackford or Mildenhall, 784; Melford, 304; Mutford and Lothingland, 137; Needham Market, 155; Stowmarket, 14; Sudbury Borough, 1; Thedwastre, 34; Thingoe, 56; Wickambrook Down, 19; and Woodbridge, 13.

SUFFOLK FARMING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

The following cases of individual sufferers by the Plague may be mentioned, viz: On a farm at Lackenheath, out of a stock of 60, 48 were attacked; on a farm at Bardwell, 42 were attacked, and 11 were slaughtered healthy, out of a stock of 79; and on a farm at West Row, all the stock (41) were attacked.

The plague visited 354 farms, etc., of which 15 were revisited, after having been free for 21 days. The aggregate number of animals attacked (2,498), represents 1 in 23 of the estimated ordinary stock.

From Appendix No. 1 to the 'Report on the Cattle Plague in Great Britain during the years 1865, 1866, and 1867'. BPP 1867-8, XVIII, p. 239.

AGRICULTURAL ASSOCIATIONS

Agricultural societies in the nineteenth century did much to promote farming efficiency and to advertize and encourage improvements. The following document lists the premiums and prizes awarded by the East Suffolk Agricultural Association in 1849. This association was founded in 1831. A West Suffolk Association was formed two years later and the two amalgamated in 1856 into the Suffolk Agricultural Association. Its headquarters nowadays are at 30 Museum Street, Ipswich. The rules of the Association describe its objects thus: for the Aid and Advancement of Agriculture, the incitement of Skill, Industry and Good Conduct among Cottagers, Servants and Labourers in Husbandry, and the Incitement of Enterprise and Emulation among the Owners and Occupiers of Land. Village farmers' clubs like the one at Debenham, described in the second document, were conducted on the same lines as the county association, but on a more modest scale.

Premiums offered by the East Suffolk Agricultural Association for 1849.

PREMIUMS

Class I

£ s. d.

To the labourer in husbandry, whose rent does not exceed five pounds, ten shillings a year, by whom the greatest number of legitimate children has been brought up to the age of 8 years, without, or with the least parochial relief –
15 premiums of £2. each

30 0 0

See – Certificates sent with Report.

Class II

To the horse-driver or labourer, who has served the longest upon the same farm, or with the same master or mistress –
15 premiums of £2. each

30 0 0

Class III

To the male unmarried yearly domestic farm servant, who has lived the longest upon the same farm, or with the same master or mistress – 5 premiums of £2. each

10 0 0

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Class IV

To the unmarried female domestic dairy servant, having the care of at least four cows, who has lived the longest upon the same farm, or with the same master or mistress – 5 premiums of £2. each	10 0 0
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Class V.

To the married female dairy servant, having the care of at least four cows, who has served the longest upon the same farm, or with the same master or mistress – 1 premium	2 0 0
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Class VI

To the unmarried female domestic servant, in the house of any member of this Association, who has lived in the service of her master or mistress, the greatest number of years – 5 premiums of £2. each	10 0 0
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The Right Honorable Lord Rendlesham, M.P. and E. S. Gooch, Esq., M.P. respectively offer five premiums of two pounds each, to labourers in husbandry, whose rent does not exceed £4. and who have brought up without parochial relief since the passing of the new Poor Law Act, a family of not less than four children the oldest of which not to exceed 10 years, the rent of allotments not to be considered as a part of the man's rent, 10 premiums of £2. each	20 0 0
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Mr. Richard Garrett, of Leiston, offers a premium of £3. to the man who manages and keeps in the best working order, his employer's drilling, horse-hoeing, chaff-cutting, thrashing, grinding and general agricultural machinery.	3 0 0
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Also a premium of £2. to the second best ditto	2 0 0
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Class VII – Shepherds

To the shepherd who shall have reared from not less than 400 park-fed ewes put to the tup, the greatest number of lambs, with the smallest loss of ewes, up to the first of June, 1849	2 0 0
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To the shepherd who shall have reared from not less than 200 park-fed ewes put to the tup, the greatest number of lambs, with the smallest loss of ewes, up to the first of June, 1849	1 10 0
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To the shepherd who shall have reared from not less than 600 ewes put to the tup, the greatest number of lambs, with the smallest loss of ewes, up to the first of June, 1849	3 0 0
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To the shepherd who shall have reared from not less than 300 ewes put to the tup, the greatest number of lambs, with the smallest loss of ewes, up to the first of June, 1849	2 10 0
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To the shepherd who shall have reared from not less than 200 ewes put to the tup, the greatest number of lambs, with the smallest loss of ewes, up to the first of June, 1849	2 0 0
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SUFFOLK FARMING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Shepherd's Certificate

I A.B. of C. in the County of Suffolk a member of the East Suffolk Agricultural Association, do hereby certify that D.E. my shepherd has reared up to the first day of June, 1849. lambs from ewes put to the tup in last, and that the loss of ewes has not exceeded

(No shepherd shall be eligible to receive a premium unless he has reared more lambs than he set ewes.).

In awarding the shepherd's premiums, the loss of one ewe shall be considered as equivalent to three lambs, and flocks, partially park-fed, shall only be eligible to shew against park-fed flocks.

Park-fed flocks are those which have been fed upon parks, or park-like lands, within the year preceding the delivering in of the certificate.

Class VIII – Horses for Agricultural Purposes
(To the owners of)

	£	s.
1. The best stallion	10	0
2. The second best ditto	5	0
3. The best three-year old entire colt	5	0
4. The second best ditto, the Rt. Hon. Lord Henniker's premium	3	0
5. The best two-year old entire colt	3	0
6. The best gelding of any age	3	0
7. The best mare with foal at foot	5	0
8. The second best ditto	3	0
9. The best foal	5	0
10. The second best ditto	3	0
11. The best gast mare	5	0
12. The second best ditto	3	0
13. The best three-year old filly	5	0
14. The second best ditto	3	0
15. The best two-year old filly	3	0

Class IX – Horses for Riding Purposes
(To the owner of)

16. The riding brood mare with best foal at foot	5	0
(The age of the mare and the foal to be certified in the certificate.)		
17. The best three-year old riding gelding or filly	5	0
18. The best two-year old riding gelding or filly	3	0
19. The Rt. Hon. the Earl of Stradbroke's premium for the best foal by Sycophant or Alpheus	5	0

Class X – Cattle, Sheep & Swine
(To the owners of)

20. The best Suffolk bull	5	0
21. The second best ditto	3	0
22. The best Suffolk bull calf, under twelve months old	2	0
23. The best bull of any other breed	6	0
24. The second best ditto	3	0
25. The best bull calf under twelve months old of any other breed	2	0

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26. The best Suffolk cow in milk or calf	5	0
27. The second best ditto	3	0
28. The best three-year old Suffolk heifer, in milk or calf	3	0
29. The best two-year old Suffolk heifer	2	0
30. The best one-year old Suffolk heifer	2	0
31. The best cow in milk or calf, of any other breed	5	0
32. The second best ditto	3	0
33. The best three-year old heifer, in milk or calf, of any other breed	3	0
34. The best two-year old heifer of any other breed	2	0
35. The best one-year old heifer of any other breed	2	0
36. The best tup, of the pure Southdown breed of any age	5	0
37. The best shearling Southdown tup	5	0
38. The second best ditto	2	0
39. The best tup of any other breed of any age	5	0
40. The best shearling tup of any other breed	5	0
41. The best pen of five shearling ewes, of the pure Southdown breed	5	0
42. The best pen of five shearling ewes of any other breed	5	0
43. The best boar	3	0
44. The best breeding sow and pigs	3	0
45. The best sow	2	0
46. The best fat ox, or heifer	3	0
47. The best fat ox or heifer bred by a member	4	0
48. The best pen of three fat shearling Southdown wethers	2	0
49. The best pen of three fat shearling wethers of any other breed	2	0

Certificates for each of the classes are sent with this Report, or may be obtained of the Secretary, if others should be wanted.

Class XI – Under-draining

To the tenant (a member of this Association) who shall have spade-drained, from the Annual Meeting in September, 1848, to the first of August, 1849, the greatest number of rods, in proportion to his occupation, and that he specifies in the certificate also the number of acres drained, the number of rods cut, the size of his occupation, the quality of the land, the materials used in draining, and whether he has been assisted in the operation by his landlord, and to what extent, and that the premium be given at the discretion of the Committee to such candidates as they shall think to have best performed the operations, a premium of 4 0

Tile Draining

To the tenant (a member of this Association) who shall have drained the largest breadth of land exclusively with tiles, or pipes, in proportion to the extent of wet and clay land upon his occupation, a premium of 4 0

RESOLVED:—That the following gentlemen be appointed a standing Committee on Under-draining, who shall be requested to ascertain by

SUFFOLK FARMING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

personal inquiry and inspection, information upon this important operation and to furnish a report annually, to this Association, stating the result of their experience both with regard to execution, expense and permanency.

Mr. Barthropp, jun. Cretingham.	Mr. Roberts, jun. Burgh.
Mr. Bond, jun. Earlsoham.	Mr. Welton, Wickham Mkt.
Mr. Capon, jun. Westleton.	

Certificate. For Under-draining

Number of acres drained; – number of rods cut; – distance of drains; – depth of drains; – size of occupation; – quantity of land requiring draining; – quantity of land not requiring draining; – materials used in draining; – if assisted by landlord and to what extent.

Certificate. For Tile Under-draining.

Number of acres drained; – number of rods cut; – distance of drains; – depth of drains; – size of occupation; – quantity of acres requiring draining; – if clay or wet land; – number of tiles used; – number of pipes used; – if assisted by landlord and to what extent.

Class XII – Ploughing

Fourteen meetings will be held annually, at the following places (viz.)

Framlingham	Beccles	Eye
Saxmundham	Bentley	Woodbridge
Halesworth	Wickham Market	Debenham
Stradbroke	Lowestoft	Wrentham
Ipswich	Coddenham	

When premiums will be awarded at each place to the amount of £3. to ploughmen above and under 19 years of age, and in no case shall a premium exceed 15s.

A notification signed by three members certifying their desire to hold a ploughing match, the time and place for the same, and their intention to superintend the management thereof, to be forwarded to the Secretary at least ten days previously, in order that the same may be advertized.

Each candidate will be required to bring into the field with him a written recommendation from a member, in the following form. –

Ploughman's Certificate – I of a member of
this Association, do hereby recommend of as
a fit and proper person to compete for the ploughing premiums at
on the day of 1849. Member.

* The same person shall not be allowed to plough at more than one meeting in any one year.

From I. & E.S.R.O., Rous Family Archives, Ref. No. HA11/B1/23/1.

* * *

The Debenham Farmers' Club

FARMERS CLUB, MARCH 13, 1840

A meeting of farmers & others was held at the Cherry Tree Inn to establish a Farmers Club for Debenham & its neighbourhood – about 39 persons became members subscribing 5/- each. Its object was stated to be for the

AGRICULTURAL IMPROVEMENT

purpose of promoting the cause of agriculture by the discussion of subjects and disseminating information relative to its practice & to purchase such agricultural and other works for the use of its members as may be thought advisable. Mr. Lionel Dove was appointed Chairman, Mr. Green of Ashfield Secretary & Mr. S. Dove of Debenham Treasurer.

FARMERS CLUB

was established in the year . Monthly meetings were adopted for the discussion of subjects relating to improvements in agriculture. The annual subscription 5/- and a forfeiture of 6d for nonattendance at each monthly meeting. Books occasionally ordered and kept as stock for circulation amongst the members. A vegetable show is held at the annual meeting, principally for the encouragement of labourers, to whom prizes are distributed according to merit.

From 'Collections towards a History of Debenham, Suffolk . . .', Ipswich, 1845, ff. 123, 152.

THE MANUFACTURE OF AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENTS AND MACHINERY

The following documents concern the patenting of one of Robert Ransome's plough designs in Scotland in 1810, and Richard Garrett's attempt to gain support for his new portable steam engine and threshing machine in 1849.

To all to whom these presents shall come I, Robert Ransome, late of Mount Place, Whitechapel, in the County of Middlesex, but now of Kelvedon, in the County of Essex, gentleman, do send greeting – Whereas His most excellent Majesty George the third by his Letters Patent under the Seal appointed by the treaty of Union to be used in place of the Great Seal of Scotland bearing date at Edinburgh the 5th day of March now last past did give and grant unto me the said Robert Ransome, my executors, administrators & assigns, his special licence, full power, sole privilege & authority that I, the said Robert Ransome, my executors, administrators & assigns, should & lawfully might make use exercise & vend within that part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain & Ireland called Scotland my invention of several improvements in the body of the wheel & swing plough in which said Letters Patent there is contained a proviso obliging me, the said Robert Ransome, under my hand & seal to cause a particular description of the nature of my said invention & in what manner the same is to be performed to be inrolled in his Majesty's High Court of Chancery in Scotland within four calendar months next & immediately after the date of the said in part recited Letters Patent as in & by the same relation being thereunto had may more fully and at large appear otherwise the said Letters Patent to be void, Now know ye that in compliance with the said proviso I the said Robert Ransome do hereby declare that my said invention is fully described and ascertained in manner following, that is to say – my invention consists in applying various sorts of mould boards, turn furrows or breast plates to an iron frame forming the body of the plough so as to be exchanged in a few minutes & by means of sliders to make a furrow of any desired width & also in forming the shares & coulters in a particular manner –

SUFFOLK FARMING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

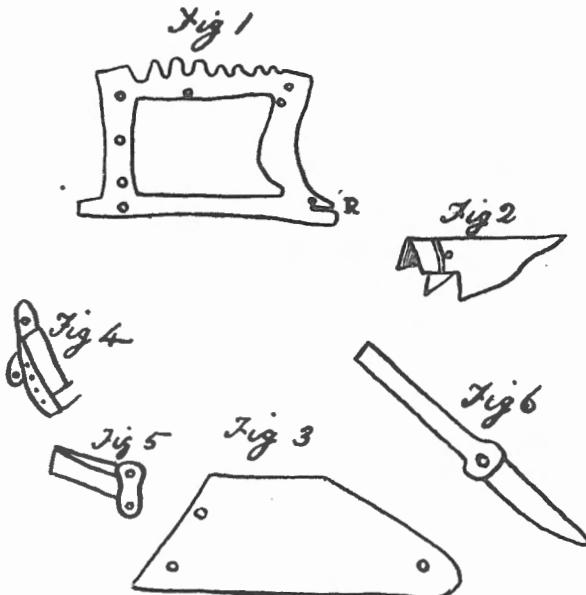
The drawings in the margin hereof exhibit more clearly the precise nature of my invention –

Fig. 1 is an iron frame fastened to the beam & handles by screws & nuts or such other means as may be chosen to which is affixed a mould board, turn furrow or breast plate either of the shape, fig. 3 or of any other better adapted for the kind of soil intended to be ploughed. R is the nose of the iron frame on which is affixed the share by a wooden or iron peg.

Fig. 2 represents a share made with a socket to fit the nose of the iron frame. The share is made of cast iron hard on one side & soft on the other which is effected by casting the side to be hardened in contact with an iron mould & the other side to be soft in contact with sand or loam.

Figs. 4 and 5 shew the sliders. Fig. 4 is fastened to the iron frame by screws and nuts or other convenient mode. Fig. 5 is the other part of the slider fastened to the breast plate. Fig. 3: By these two parts the breast is easily set to different widths as may be required & fastened by a nut or screw or such other fastenings as may be approved.

Fig. 6 is an iron coulter, the upper part being made of cast or wrought iron & formed with a socket to receive the blade or with holes only to admit of a pen or screw to fasten the blade which is made of cast iron &c. – is made hard on one side & soft on the other which is effected in the same manner as the share is above described to be.



In witness whereof I the said Robert Ransome have hereunto set my hand & seal this twenty sixth day of June, 1810.

I. & E.S.R.O., *Ransome documents, Ref. No. (2718)*.

* * *

AGRICULTURAL IMPROVEMENT

Richard Garrett's Portable Steam Engine and Threshing Machine

Leiston Works,
near Saxmundham,
Suffolk.
Aug. 17th, 1849

My Lord,

Some 8 or 10 years since your Lordship at a meeting of the East Suffolk Agricultural Society earnestly called the attention of the agriculturalists to the use of steam power.

Your Lordship's expressions were at that time considered by many as erroneous but are now being fully realized to the great advantage of the agricultural community. You will see by the enclosed that I have not been altogether unmindfull of yr. suggestion that I have succeeded in producing the best portable steam engine to the R.E.A. Society in competition with the United Kingdom at Norwich. I hope your Lordship will some day favor me with a look at it and to consider yourself the instigator for I have ever bourn in mind your remarks on that occasion and hence it is I date the success of my production. I will shew your Lordship an engine at work on the farm I occupy driving all the fixed heavy machinery and so simplified as to be applicable to all farms of 200 acres & upwards.

I intend to wait on your Lordship some early day to explain my idea of the necessity (to prevent monopoly) of lisencing another public house in this villiage. We are most grossly imposed upon by the only house there is at present in this parish being illibrally tied too & supplied very badly by its present owner, a brewer, wine, spirit & cigar merchant & my business, its visitors & the workmen I employ are so badly served that I consider it my duty to beg your Lordship's kind assistance in lisencing another house forthwith so they can be supplied with good articles at reasonable prices.

My Lord,
Your mo. obt. & very
faithfull sert.
Rd. Garrett.

By Her Majesty's Royal Letters Patent: Portable Steam Engine and Thrashing Machine, as seen at work, manufactured by R. Garrett & Son, Leiston Works, Saxmundham, Suffolk.

The principal prize of £50 for the best portable steam engine, for thrashing and other agricultural purposes, and the prize of £25 for the best threshing machine, were both awarded to R. Garrett & Son of Leiston Works, at the Royal Agricultural Society's meeting at Norwich, July, 1849.

In addition to the above, the following prizes have also been awarded to R. Garrett & Son, for their patent threshing machines:—

	£
At the Royal Agricultural Society's meeting at Newcastle . 1846,	25
At the Royal Agricultural Society's meeting at Northampton, 1847,	20
At the Royal Agricultural Society's meeting at York . . 1848,	20

SUFFOLK FARMING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

At the East Norfolk Agricultural Society's meeting at Norwich			
		1842,	3
At the East & West Norfolk Agricultural Society's meeting at Norwich		1847,	5
At the East & West Norfolk Agricultural Society's meeting at Swaffham		1848,	5

List of Prizes

awarded R. Garrett & Son at the Royal Agricultural Society's Exhibition
at Norwich, July, 1849:—

	£
For the best portable thrashing machine, applicable to horse or steam power	25
For the best portable steam engine, applicable to thrashing or other agricultural purposes	50
For the best corn drill	10
For the best turnip drill, on the ridge	10
For the best drop drill, for depositing seed and manure	10
For the best horse hoe, on the flat	10

Net Prices of Steam Engines

Delivered carriage free to London, Hull or Newcastle on Tyne, by water; to
any station on the line of the Eastern Counties and Eastern Union Railways
between London, Ipswich, Bury St. Edmunds, Norwich and Peterborough;
or thirty miles land carriage from the Works.

	£ s. d.
Six horse power portable steam engine, with tubular boiler, mounted on four strong carriage wheels, with double shafts, &c.	
Four horse ditto, ditto, ditto, ditto, ditto,	
Six horse power portable steam engine, with patent flue boiler, as shewn in the annexed engraving, mounted on four strong carriage wheels, with double shafts, &c.	
Four horse ditto, ditto, ditto, ditto,	
The following additions may be made with advantage to either of the above engines, and will be charged extra, at the prices affixed:—	
A jacket of thick hair felt, to cover the boiler, and cased with iron or wood, as preferred	8 0 0
A governor, to regulate the speed of the engine when em- ployed at irregular work	12 0 0
Howe's Registered Glass Water Guage	2 10 0
Whistle	1 15 0

Net Prices of Thrashing Machines

No.	£ s. d.
50C. Patent Improved Bolting Thrashing Machine, adapted for horse or steam power	30 0 0
50D. Ditto, with R. G. & Son's Registered Straw Shaker	42 12 0

AGRICULTURAL IMPROVEMENT

50E. Patent Improved Bolting Thrashing Machine, adapted for horse or steam power, with Registered Straw Shaker, and screen for riddling loose ears and short straws	50 0 0
50F. Patent ditto, with Straw Shaker, screen for riddling loose ears and short straws, and Winnowing Machine to separate the corn from the chaff, so that once passing through the Dressing Machine will render it fit for market	65 0 0
Either of the above machines may be made portable on a carriage and one pair of wheels, at an extra cost of Or mounted on a carriage with four wheels, on which it may stand when at work, with shafts, &c., complete, as shewn in the engraving on the other side, at an extra cost of	5 0 0
	10 0 0

Soham, Cambridgeshire:

Printed by William Playford, bookseller, Albion Office, High Street.

I. & E.S.R.O., Rous Family Archives, Ref. No. HA11/C10/6.

THE MANUFACTURE OF FERTILIZERS

*The following pages are extracted from an account book of Thomas Waller,
owner of a coprolite pit and a farm at Waldringfield. The full coprolite
account covers the years 1876 to 1891, those selected here refer to the
period June 1876 to October 1878. Before 1876 the pit was worked by a
tenant, Mr Kersey. Under the management of Mr Waller all the coprolites
were delivered to Packard's works. It will be noted that the system of
account was unusual: a balance was struck at Michaelmas annually
which was then carried forward from year to year.*

For a description of labour conditions in coprolite pits, see p. 149.

Coprolite Dr
Receipts

To Receipts during Mr. Kersey's tenancy paid* by him (nett) 7881 6 10¹

* About 30/- of this on "Garden Field" account

Coprolite Cr
Payments

1876	By	Brought over	No. of Voucher	£ s. d.		
				69	15	7
June 24	J. J. Bloomfield	50 pipes 8/- . }	16		10	
	Carting same			17	3	4 3
,, 30	Stollery ²					

¹ The next folio, giving the account for the first months after the Wallers had taken over the working of the pit is missing.

² Stollery is probably Isaac Stollery, landlord of the 'Maybush' at Waldringfield. He combined his business as innkeeper with the ferry that brought the workmen from the Sutton side of the river. He evidently carried goods as well. He died in 1880. See W. G. Arnott, *Suffolk Estuary*, Ipswich, 1950, p. 84.

SUFFOLK FARMING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

July	7	Stollery	18	4	19	4
"	14		19	5	1	
"	21		20	4	3	10
"	28		21	4	4	10
Sept.	1	Stollery	24	3	4	9
"	"	Nails & wire	25		3	4
"	8	Stollery	26	3	15	9
"	9	Mr. Kersey planks, tools &c. taken by Ward's valuation	27	27	18	3½
"	"	Do. carting & loss of barley land	28	8	10	
"	15	Stollery	29	2	19	4
"	23	Do.	30	4	18	10½
"	25	Stollery self 99 tons loaded @ 3d		1	4	9
"	"	Stollery & Hunt land		1	-	-
"	29	Do. for labour £5 9s 3d for loading 99 tons £2 9s 6d	31	7	18	9
				153	12	8

Coprolite Dr
Receipts

1876						
Oct.	7	Balance brought over	69	2	4	
"	13	Overpd. Stoll: last wk. (repaid)		7	4½	
"	"	Potatotoes off coprolite land, $\frac{1}{2}$ of 5 bush: @ 7/6	18	9		
Nov.	24	1 sack small potatoes @ 3/6 = 3½ sacks do. @ 2/- = 10/6 (x $\frac{1}{2}$)			5	3
				70	13	8½

Coprolite Cr
Payments

1876			Voucher			
Oct.	6	Stollery on acct.	32	5	10	-
"	12	Rix carting pipes		3		
"	13	Stollery	33	7	10	7
"	19	Do. on account		7	-	-
"	23	Do. balance of acct.	34		8	10½
"	27	Do.		6	16	8
"	"	Do. 2 sieves 8/-, 1 st. spike 3/6	35		11	6
Nov.	3	Do. on acct.		7	5	0
"	10	Do. labour $\left\{ \begin{array}{r} 7 \\ 10 \\ \hline 6 \end{array} \right. \begin{array}{r} 8 \\ 8 \\ \hline 17 \end{array} \begin{array}{r} 0 \\ 8 \\ \hline 4 \end{array} \right\}$	36	6	17	4
"	17	Do.	37	8	2	10½
"	20	Do. labour				8½
"	"	1 lb. wire				8
"	24	Labour	38	8	1	1½

AGRICULTURAL IMPROVEMENT

Nov.	24	4 deal planks	39	1 11 10
Dec.	1	Stollery labour	40	7 6 6½
"	8	Do.	41	7 8 10½
		Carting		10
"	15	Stollery	42	6 13 9
"	22	Do.	43	6 14 1
"	"	Do. Xmas box 5 men @ 2/- + 9 boys @ 1/- each	19	-
			89 12 5	

Coprolite Dr

1876

		Brought over	70 13 8½
1877 Feb.	24	Packard's cheque 120 tons @ 45/-	270 - -
			340 13 8½

Coprolite Cr

1876

		Coprolite Cr	No. of Voucher
		Brought over	89 12 5

Dec.	29	Stollery	44	3 15 2
1877				
Jan.	5	Do.	45	6 15 -
"	12	Do.	46	6 1 4½
"	"	5 sieves	"	1 1 -
"	19	Stollery, labour & washing	47	8 8 1½
"	22	Do. for beer (shipping)		2
		Blacksmith		1 3 9
"	26	Stollery labour (+ 6d shipping)	48	7 12 4
"	"	Do. for self 3d per ton on 120 tons }		1 10 0
Feb.	2		49	7 18 3
"	9	Stollery	50	6 16 1
"	16	Do.	51	7 16 5½
"	23	Do.	52	11 - 4
Mar.	2	Do.	53	11 16 2½
"	9	Do.	54	9 13 9
"	15	Part Whittaker's bill, board		7 10
"	16	Stollery	55	10 17 5
"	23	Do.	56	9 8 4½
"	"	Whins 5½ loads @ 3/-		15 9
"	"	Stollery for planks		2 16 8
"	"	On acct.		9 - -
			214 18 3½	

(See folio 37)

SUFFOLK FARMING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

	Coprolite Dr Fr. folio 26		
1877	Receipts		
June 25	Brought from folio 36	340 13 8½	
	Packard's cheque for 118 tons @ 45/- shipped Ap. 23rd	265 10 -	
		Income tax return made to April 5th, 1877, for preceding year = £125 11 8½ Water rent added to this in Return About £4 for loss of 1 acre wheat	
		606 3 8½	

From Account Book in the possession of Mr C. A. P. Waller, Bury St Edmunds.

* * *

Money raised by coprolite (in part from Glebe) & expended on
Church & the living in various ways as follows:—

Sept. 1865	Smith's expenses after Church journey to London, &c.	1 13 1
„ „	Bills altering beams &c.	122 15 4
„ „	Painting walls &c.	151 10 -
June, 1865	Benches	145 - -
Oct. 1865	Stool & chairs (chancel)	2 5 -
May, 1864	Organ altered	20 - -
	Painted & gilded	9 5 -
1866	Brass sconces	9 4 -
Nov. 1867	North windows	16 11 -
Sept. 1867	East window (37-7-4) (73-17-0)	111 4 4
Mar. 1870	Communion platter	1 10 -
1870	Texts over E. window	2 11 -
Jan. 1870	S.E. window	8 15 -
1874	West windows	17 12 -
	Alms box	8 6
	Church porch work	2 16 11
	Smith's bill (church)	18 10 11
	Bread safe in porch	18 -
	On Glebe & Rectory	
	Enfranchisement of Glebe	24 - -
	Water tank, 1867	6 5 -
	2 brick walls back of premises	23 10 -
	New larder	25 - -
	New map of glebe	5 5 -
	Expenses of enfranchisement	7 9 -
		743 19 1

AGRICULTURAL IMPROVEMENT

Deduct collections for Church: see offertory a/c 1865				
including £25 from Kersey	£53	3	9	
Part of East window per				
Kersey	50	0	0	
Do. of West from Do.	13	16	0	
				116 19 9
Do. whole of S.E. window (pd. by my mother)				626 19 4
(Alteration & improvement of Rectory				8 15 -
offices, 1880)				
Ventilator N.W. window, Church, 1893, pd.				1 4 6
				636 18 10
Expenses of deepening Rectory well				5 11 9
Ridge coping on Rectory roof, July, 1891				9 10 -
New quarry floor back kitchen				4 15 6

¹ Given by Kersey in consideration of coprolite & therefore not to be deducted.

From Parish Book in the possession of Rev. Trevor Waller, Waldringfield Rectory, Woodbridge.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS ON THE FARM

The Lands Improvement Company was incorporated in 1853 with statutory powers to execute work or lend money for the execution of any work designed to improve the value of agricultural land. The company had authority to lend money to all owners of land including tenants for life and lessees for terms of not less than twenty-five years. Work authorized included the construction of farm buildings, cottages, and roads, drainage, embanking, clearing, reclamation, planting, and enclosing. Between 1853 and December 1879 over four million pounds were lent for these improvements. During the depression the emphasis in landowners' applications was on cottages and the more urgent farm improvements needed to attract tenants.

To obtain a loan, the landowner approached the Lands Improvement Company with an application on a printed form, accompanied by a schedule of the lands to be charged. A provisional contract was then entered into, the Enclosure Commissioners sent an inspector to report whether the proposed expenditure would add to the value of the property, and when sanction was received, the work proceeded. The Lands Improvement Company lent the money on completion and charged the land with a rent redeeming principal and interest in twenty-five years. On an average the charge on the land was seven per cent.

Contract No. 1917

Lands Improvement Company
Lord Waveney's Improvements, Inclosure Commission,
3 St. James's Square, London, S.W.
9th March, 1874

Sir,

I am directed by the Inclosure Commissioners to state, that subject to

SUFFOLK FARMING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

their requirements, the proposed improvements as set forth in the accompanying Schedule are sanctioned, and may, therefore, be proceeded with, subject to the provisions of the Company's Act. The whole of the roofs of the farm buildings to have king-post trusses instead of simple collar ties as shewn on the sections and the scantlings of the several timbers to be as altered in red ink in the specifications. The roofs of the cottages to be covered with slates. Each pair of cottages to be provided with a large soft water tank. Plans, elevations and sections shewing the works proposed to be carried out in connection with the existing barns on Middleton Hall and Wingfield Castle farms to be forwarded to the Commissioners.

In all cases of building, the Commissioners require to be informed by letter, addressed to their Office in London, by the landowner or his agent, when they are in skeleton; and in carrying out buildings and other works, no alterations or deviations of any description must be made from the plans and specifications that have been approved of by the Commissioners, unless previously submitted to and sanctioned by them.

The non-compliance with these requisitions may entail upon the land-owner the refusal of the Commissioners to allow the cost of the works when completed.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

G. B. Mayo.

By order of the Board.

Captn. R. N. Cartwright

		£ s. d.
Schedule of Works Allowed.		
Drainage at £ per acre feet deep, yards apart, using pipes		}
Erection of farm buildings		20,000 0 0
Plans and specifications as to which have been approved by the Commissioners to the extent of £7606, viz:—		
Farm House – Flixton –	£787 0 0	
Additions to farm buildings –		
St. Peter's Hall –	700 0 0	
Do. do. do. –	941 0 0	
Do. do. do. –	485 0 0	
Do. do. do. –	1225 0 0	
Do. do. do. –	735 0 0	
Do. do. do. –	633 0 0	
6 pairs of labourers cottages	2100 0 0	
	<hr/>	
	£7606 0 0	

AGRICULTURAL IMPROVEMENT

Embanking	
Watercourses	
Roads	
Irrigation	
Inclosing	
Planting	
Reclamation	
Clearing	
	<hr/> <hr/> £20,000 0 0

The increased value consequent on the expenditure is estimated by
the Inspector at a greater sum than the annual charge.

Endorsed:

1874
Lands Impt. Co.
Encl. Comn. approve plans.

SUFFOLK FARMING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Contract No. 1917

Amount of Loan £20,000

Works proposed to be executed under 'The Lands Improvement Company's Act'.

The property of Lord Waveney

In the parishes of Flixton, St. Peters, St. Margarets Southelhamham,
Saint Andrews Ilketshall and Westhall

In the County of Suffolk

Nearest Post Town: Bungay

„ Railway Station: Homersfield

& Bungay

Particulars which must accompany Preliminary Report of Inspector.

Name of Farm and Occupier: and, if on lease, length of term	Extent, specifying arable, pasture, &c., separately	The sorts and average nos. of stock usually kept on farm	Farm Houses and Buildings					Nature and Description of Proposed Building
			Present Rental	Proposed Outlay	Increased Rental	Estimated increased value and how arrived at		
Joseph Harris, Flixton yearly tenant	181 arable 74 pasture — 255 —		£346	£ s. d. 786 . .	£ None	Two farms are combined, neither of the houses are sufficient, one very bad	Farm house	Ba
William Howlett, St. Peter's Hall, yearly tenant	a 102 arable 71 pasture — 173 —	8 horses 20 bullocks 10 pigs 50 sheep 6 cows	£250	700 . . 350 . .	None 7	The buildings are absolutely necessary for the farm, it is not now worth its rent	New building	A ot Ne
William Pretty, St. Margarets Southelhamham yearly tenant	a 174 arable 149 pasture — 323 —		£560	350 . .	£7	Rent for cottages	A pair of cottages	G
Robert Button, St. Andrews Ilk. yearly tenant	87 arable 60 pasture — 147 —		£170	350 . .	7	Rent for cottages	A pair of cottages	G
Benjamin Saunders, Westhall, yearly tenant	200 arable 88 pasture — 288 —	12 horses 10 colts 12 bullocks 50 sheep 10 pigs 8 cows	408	632 . . 350 . .	None None	The buildings are absolutely necessary, the cottages are to replace a pair fallen down. The farm is much overrented at present	New building A pair of cottages	Ba A
	Buildings not yet determined on. (Plans &c., to be hereafter submitted) Total proposed outlay for buildings			£3518				

AGRICULTURAL IMPROVEMENT

existing build- ing give state of repair	Is site of new buildings well selected, and on level ground?	Have any been com- menced?	Is there a good supply of water?	Other Improvements included in the application		Remarks
				Nature of Works Allowed by Comrs.	Estimated Outlay	
	Yes	No	A well will be sunk	Not finished	£ 787 . .	£787 Wm. Ludkin 14th Ap. 74
old barn, all is bad cottages	Yes	No	Yes	Postponed	700 . .	S.E.
	Yes	No	Yes	Postponed } Yes	350 : :	
	Yes	No	Yes	Finished	350 . .	350 --
	Yes	No	Yes	Postponed	350 . .	696 15 -
od barn	Yes Yes	No No	Yes Yes	680 Postponed *Buildings ...	633 . . 350 : :	
				Total of Application . Cr. frd	£3520 . .	

(Signed)..... Inspector day of 18.....

SUFFOLK FARMING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

No. 2 Brt. frd.

Contract No. 1917

Amount of Loan £20,000

Works proposed to be executed under 'The Lands Improvement Company's Act'.

The property of Lord Waveney

In the parishes of Mendham, Fressingfield, Wingfield, Wilby

In the County of Suffolk

Nearest Post Town: Harleston

,, Railway Station: Harleston

Particulars which must accompany Preliminary Report of Inspector.

Name of Farm and Occupier: and, if on lease, length of term	Extent, specifying arable, pasture, &c., separately	The sorts and average nos. of stock usually kept on farm	Farm Houses and Buildings				Nature and Description of Proposed Building
			Present Rental	Proposed Outlay	Increased Rental	Estimated increased value and how arrived at	
John Saunders Middleton Hall Mendham 12 yr. lease	125 arable 85 pasture — 210	18 horses 30 bullocks 100 sheep 20 pigs 8 cows	£ 310	£ s. d. 940 .. 350 ..	£ 340	New tenant, pays increased rent when buildings are erected	New building A pair of cottages
Thomas Feaveyear Fressingfield Yearly tenant	84 arable 43 pasture — 127	6 horses 20 bullocks 50 sheep 10 pigs 6 cows	200	734 ..	None	Farm overrented with present buildings, no increase possible	New building
James Hill Wingfield Castle Yearly tenant	240 arable 126 pasture — 366	14 horses 6 cows 45 bullocks 20 pigs 250 sheep	600	1225 .. 350 ..	None None	Farm much overrented with present buildings, no increase possible. Cottages much wanted, only one small one on farm.	New building A pair of cottages
Emily Buxton Wilby Hall Yearly tenant	127 arable 84 pasture — 211	8 horses 20 bullocks 50 sheep 10 pigs 10 colts or young stock 6 cows	235	485 ..	312	This farm is of very good land & with new buildings will be well worth new rent which has been the same for 17 years	New building
	Buildings not yet determined on. (Plans &c., to be hereafter submitted) Total proposed outlay for buildings			£4084 3518			
	No. 1 forwd.			£7602			
						Sent in 17 Feb. 74 to H. W. Keary	

AGRICULTURAL IMPROVEMENT

If existing build- ings, give state of repair	Is site of new buildings well selected, and on level ground?	Have any been com- menced?	Is there a good supply of water?	Other Improvements included in the application		Remarks
				Nature of Works Allowed by Comrs.	Estimated Outlay	
Ruinous except a good barn. No cottages	Yes	No	Yes	Br. frd. 1043	£ s. d. 3520 . . 941 . . 350 . .	1096 5 9 360 . .
	Yes	No	Yes			
Ruinous except a good barn	Yes	No	Yes	803 Finished	735 . .	735 + 68 addl. = £803 828 3 10 Thos. Feavey year 17 Ap. 74
Very bad except a large barn & cartshed	Yes	No	Yes	1347	1225 . .	1536 13 5 (1225 + 122 = £1347)
	Yes	No	Yes		350 . .	350 . .
A good barn & pair of stables. Off barn just repaired & sheds for 12 bullocks built .	Yes	No	Yes	485		513 13 -
				*Buildings		5731 11 - Actual cost
				Total of Application Allowed	£7606 . .	179 9 11 Clerk of Works 260 Architect 63 12 7 Interest
						6234 13 6

(Signed)..... Inspector day of..... 18.....

III Agricultural Depression

The following documents illustrate the recurrent crises and depressions through which farming passed during the nineteenth century. The first, which began in 1813, was aggravated by the end of the Napoleonic War, and continued with varying intensity to the end of the 1830s. Unsettled and generally low prices following the Repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846 were succeeded by a second short crisis lasting from 1850 to 1853. The third and most severe depression began about 1874 and lasted to the end of the century.

SUFFOLK IN 1816

An enquiry into the state of agriculture was conducted by the Board of Agriculture in 1816. The following communications were received from Major Edward Moor of Great Bealings and the Rev. Henry Hill, squarson of Buxhall, a prominent agriculturist who was locally celebrated for his experiments with wheat drilling.

EDWARD MOOR. In some cases of unoccupancy the farms are in the hands of assignees. A large farm of 5 or 600 acres in the parish of Kesgrave was out of lease last Michaelmas, and the tenant agreed on a renewal of his lease, but he has since declined retaining the farm, and the landlord, Mr Shawe, is, I understand, looking out for another tenant. Another farm, in the same parish, of 3 or 400 acres perhaps (I speak much at random in this instance), is unoccupied by a tenant, the last being a bankrupt; the landlord, Mr Edwards, has the farm on his own hands. Another, of about 150 acres, in Culpho, is in the hands of assignees of the late tenant. One in this parish, of about 60 acres, on which a tenant (Reeve) has brought up a large family very respectably, is in the hands of the last mentioned assignees, the bankrupt tenant of that farm being the owner of this. Reeve is now working as a labourer, as are his sons, being in fact on the parish, though not actually relieved out of the poor rates. Another little farmer with a large family, who seven years ago sold a small farm, for 1,000 guineas, and has since lived in a house of his own, with about 10 acres of land, is now on the parish. I could enumerate many others that I know of by rumour, but the above may suffice, as coming within my immediate knowledge.

As a magistrate for this county, heretofore so wealthy and happy, no day, scarcely no hour of any day passes, without some occurrence bringing before me some instance of agricultural distress. I see, however, your query is confined to the farmer; even so confined, I could fill my sheet with a detail of their distresses. Small farmers coming to parish officers for work — all classes of farmers employing more men than they want, and would employ, if left to their own choice; though they can so ill afford this, it is

better than maintaining able men to do nothing, and living upon the rates. In my and many other parishes, the farmers employ all that want work, paying supernumeraries less than the wages of the regular or constant men. By this means the bad effects of idleness are prevented, and the rates kept from any great increase. In other parishes farmers take a certain number of these supernumeraries, on the requisition of the overseer, according to the rating of the farmer, perhaps one man for every 40, 30, or 20 pounds, and for each man 6s a week for his work. If the labourer has a family, he receives sufficient out of the poor rates to maintain them, and in the following proportion:—for his wife only, about 1s; if one child, 2s; two children 3s. 6d; three children, 5s. 6d; 4 children, 6s. 6d; and so on. This has been done by the advice and under direction of the magistrates, who have entered into minute estimates, calculations, and enquiries, on the points that have led them to a pretty full acquaintance with the situation of the labouring class. You cannot easily imagine the extent of magisterial interference in these matters of recent occurrence. I speak in respect of the neighbourhood of Woodbridge. I believe very great benefit to have arisen to all classes from this interference. But I am running into too tedious a detail. Inability to pay rent and their current expenses are other circumstances denoting the distress of the farmers, who still hold their ground. Instead of riding they walk to market, where within short distances. Instead of dining at their clubs at their different inns, many of them go home to dinner. I do not note this as a distressing part, only as denoting a feeling of the times. Few of those who do remain to dine, drink wine, as they almost all did, until lately. This is no great hardship, nor that their daughters come no longer to the milliners or dancing masters, etc. who have thus lost by far their best customers. Even gentlemen of comfortable incomes (say from one to two or three thousand a year) depending on the rents and profits of land, are unable to pay their tradesmen's bills. A medical man, in great practice, instead of receiving 300*l.* from the neighbouring *farmers*, as he usually does, on account of his bills, at Christmas, did not, this year, receive 20*l.* In short the pressure is very great. I give it as my opinion, not formed hastily, but necessarily somewhat vaguely, that if the farmers of Suffolk had, for the last year, had their farms rent free, they would not have made any money of them. Labour, taxes, tithe, and tradesmen's bills would, I think, have absorbed the whole produce. I farm 150 acres of my own; it is a highly improved little farm, that I estimate at 300*l.* a year rent (it would have let for more three years ago) and 100*l.* for interest of capital employed. The produce of the year ending last Michaelmas was 150*l.* less than my outgoings, and I go pretty closely to work. Perhaps 50*l.* may have been expended in draining and permanent improvements; still I cannot reckon my loss at less than 500*l.* This, however, I do not offer as an approximation to the average result of the loss of farmers, and I cannot easily account how I happened to be so much out of pocket: for the year before last I got 300*l.* over my yearly expences, and the year before upwards of 500*l.* It thus appears to me that such of us as have capital are living on it; those who have not (or credit, which comes to the same thing) must sink. Those who were rich are virtually bankrupts. Those who were poor are paupers . . .

SUFFOLK FARMING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

REV. HENRY HILL — The farmers have in general been very backward in paying their rents and tithes, and some have paid neither, nor can they, as they have barely enough to pay their expenses, rates, and taxes.

Since my return into Suffolk, I find the farmers much more distressed than they were when I left them; and what adds very much to their distress is the high rates; which are very much increased by so many hands being out of employ; and particularly from the women and children having at this time no employ, owing to the total stagnation in the wool spinning, and I suppose that affects this country as much, or more, than any other: the earnings in this small county having been, some years, so great as one hundred and twenty thousand pounds in the year, and now the whole of that is thrown upon the poor-rates.

From 'Agricultural State of the Kingdom in February, March, and April, 1816; being the substance of the replies to a circular letter sent by the Board of Agriculture to every part of the kingdom', 1816, part II, pp. 33–5, 46.

SUFFOLK IN 1836

After 1816 the most comprehensive surveys of agricultural depression were those carried out by Royal Commissions or by Select Committees of the House of Commons or the House of Lords. One committee reported in 1820–2, another in 1833–6. The following testimony was offered by a Suffolk farmer to the committee of the House of Lords in 1836. He, or his son, re-appear at Wantisden twenty years later, see below p. 165.

Die Veneris, 26^o Februarii, 1836

The Lord Wynford in the Chair

Mr John Lewin is called in; and examined as follows:

914. Where do you live? — At Wickham Market in the county of Suffolk.
915. What quantity of land do you occupy? — My son and myself occupy between 400 and 500 acres of land between us. I am a miller (I have two water-mills and two windmills) and a buyer of corn to a considerable extent. I can speak as to the produce of 50,000 or 60,000 acres of land around me.
954. You say that the wages cannot be sustained at the present price of produce? — It is impossible.
955. In what condition will your poor be, if that is the case? — They are in a most dreadful state now. In 1822 there were two fine jolly farmers riding through the village I live in to complain of their distress to a public meeting in the neighbourhood, and they were joked and jeered about their being in distress; but in two years afterwards they were paupers on the parishes where they now remain.
956. Have many passed from being ratepayers to paupers? — Yes, a very great number; there is a poor widow (73 years of age), whose husband occupied the largest farm in the parish, her heart and purse were always open to the distress of others; but she is now dependent on parish relief, and under this new Poor Law is allowed only a pound of flour and 3d per day.
957. Is the distress confined to the tenants, or does it extend itself to the

peasants? – On the part of the peasantry it is dreadful. There is one poor widow in another adjoining parish to the last-mentioned (aged 75), whose husband occupied one farm of his own for which Lord Huntingfield offered him 5,000 guineas. He has now, from circumstances over which he had no control, become distressed, died broken-hearted, and he has left his widow dependent on the parish, and she receives a pound of flour and 3d a day, same as last mentioned.

958. Was that the effect of improvidence, or the effect of the times? – The effect of the times; there could not be a more steady, respectable man; his son is now a policeman in the City of London; I met him in Fleet Street yesterday, when he informed me that two other young men, farmers' sons whose names I have, and whose fathers were living one on the right, and the other on the left of me, were just in the same situation; each of the fathers had a farm on their own and rented another. The father of one of the young men is at this moment in prison for debt; the other is left without a shilling. The two eldest sons have come to London, and they are in hopes of getting employment in the city police.
959. Are those cases exceptions to the general rule? – No, there are hundreds of other instances who have been reduced to distress by the state of the times.
960. Have you many poor out of employ? – A great number around me. I have contracted for flour for 14 parishes under the new system; I have a mill two miles from where I live, where the paupers come from three of the parishes for their flour; I see the men and to hear their complaints is dreadful. One good labourer, whom I have known for years, who worked in a barn opposite my mill, said he was discharged last April and had but two weeks' employment since; receives only two stone of flour, 2s. 8d and 2s. 6d. for four of them, he having a wife and two children. The farmers do not hesitate, if a man has a large family, to say, "I cannot afford to keep him, he wants more wages than I can afford to pay"; consequently many men with large families are turned upon the parish; and if the farmers can give but 6s. per week, they must either reduce the quantity of labour on the farm, or they must have the same number of men at a less price. They are getting now into the habit of hiring men at reduced wages; and as young healthy men have no resource from the new Poor Law, they are offering their services at less money.
961. What is the rate of wages now? – Eight or nine shillings is about the regular rate of wages; but when men have large families we generally give them an opportunity of earning 1s., 2s., or 3s. more, making 10s. or 12s. a week.
962. Can that rate of wages be sustained at the present prices? – Certainly not.

From 'Minutes of Evidence from the Select Committee of the House of Lords appointed to inquire into the State of Agriculture in England and Wales', BPP 1836 (79), VIII, pp. 50–2.

SUFFOLK FARMING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

THE REPEAL OF THE CORN LAWS

To the Honourable the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland in Parliament assembled

The humble petition of the landowners, tenant farmers and labourers of the parish of Groton in the County of Suffolk¹

Sheweth

That whilst an active agitation is being carried on throughout the Country to cause it to be believed that distress wheresoever it exists is occasioned by the protective duties on agricultural products and that the abolition of these duties would ensure the prosperity of all classes of people we feel that we should be blameable in observing a silence which might be construed into an assent to this pernicious doctrine and we think it right respectfully to express our thorough conviction of its delusion and that the adoption of it into practise would be to bring ruin and distress upon the agricultural community without affording any substantial or permanent benefit to the classes upon whom a greater degree of distress now pressed and

We humbly pray your Honourable House not to diminish the protection now afforded to agriculture by the existing laws

And your petitioners as in duty bound shall ever pray etc.

George Augustus Dawson, M.A.	Ruffle Spraggens	Samuel Flavis
Groton House, Suffolk	Samuel Stevens	William Holden
John S. Halifax	C. Goddon	John Hearn
Robert Worters	Robt. Gladwell, junr.	James Trickler
Thos. Tiffon	Robt. Gladwell	Wm. Kingsbury
William Simpson	John Gosling	Joshua Steed
William Worters	Sam Parker	James Hearn
James Ardley		Arthur Cook
		Stephen Cook
		Henry Studd M.A.
		Groton Rectory

I. & E.S.R.O., Rous Family Archives, Ref. No. HA11/B1/11/13.

RENT REDUCTIONS, 1852-53

The estate at Chediston, to which the following letters relate, belonged for about ten years between 1835 and 1845 to George Parkyns, esq., who bought it of the Plumer family and greatly 'enlarged and beautified' Chediston Park. The Hall was demolished in 1954. At his death, Madame Leguen de Lacroix claimed an interest in the estate, and the Law Officers of the Crown decided in 1845 that half the estate should pass to Mrs Parkyns, the widow, for the term of her life, and the other half, and on the death of Mrs Parkyns, the whole estate, to Madame Leguen de Lacroix. Madame Leguen de Lacroix lived in France and died in February, 1878. Eugene, the recipient of this correspondence, was her son, John Crabtree, the local agent and rent collector, and F. J. Ridsdale, the solicitor handling the English affairs of the family.

¹ This petition is undated but belongs to the period c. 1842-4.

AGRICULTURAL DEPRESSION

Gray's Inn
19 Jany 1852

Dear Sir,

I send you copy of a letter received this morning from Mr. Crabtree and will thank you for your Mother's directions on the subject. I fear there is no alternative but to reduce the rent as Mr. Crabtree proposes.

Believe me, Dear Sir

Yours truly

Mons. T. E. Leguen de La Croix

Ridsdale and Craddock

Halesworth
17 Jany 1852

My dear Sir,

It becomes necessary again to refer to the reduction in the Chediston rents which it will be necessary to make this year in order to keep things together. Prices are about the same as last year but the crop of wheat in Suffolk is worse than has been known for many years arising from a blight before it arrived at maturity.

I have no hesitation in recommending that the $12\frac{1}{2}\%$ we reduced last year should be made £15 per cent this year and I doubt if with this our small tenants can go on much longer.

This is the reduction that Lord Huntingfield is making on his farms in the same neighbourhood. Will you kindly write to Mr. La Croix tomorrow if you think it necessary and favor me as soon as the post will allow with the result.

Yours faithfully,

F. J. Ridsdale Esq^{re}

John Crabtree

Gray's Inn
12 March 1852

My dear Sir,

I sent Mr. Crabtree a copy of your last letter complaining of the reduction made from Mr. Rant's rent for the Hall and on the other side I send you a copy of his answer. I shall be glad if you will tell me what you think of it. I believe Mr. & Mrs. Rant are good tenants and keep up the Hall in good condition.

I have received £350 on account of your Mother's share of the Chediston rents.

Believe me, Dear Sir

Yours sincerely

à Mons^r. E. L. de La Croix

F. J. Ridsdale

St. Malo, Ille et Villaine, France.

Halesworth
19 Feby 1852

Dear Sir,

I have been unable before to send a reply upon the subject of Mr. La Croix letter to you upon the subject of Mr. Rant's rent. I confess after giving the subject my best consideration that I think the reduction was

SUFFOLK FARMING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

properly and equitably made and I think it is very desirable that Mr. La Croix should know that the value of the Hall shooting and plantations are not the same as when the lease was taken for there is no property in this county so depreciated in value of houses of this description and I have no hesitation in saying, were it now disposed of, we should have great difficulty in letting it at all, or certainly not more than £70 or £75 a year. I have now on my hands 3 different places each more desirable than Chediston and am unable to find a tenant & I mention this that Mr. La Croix may understand what the state of things is in this country and I think we ought not to lose sight of the fact that the reduction which Mr. Rant is obliged to submit to on the moiety of the rents renders him less capable of living in and keeping up the Hall.

Upon talking over the subject of the rents with Mr. & Mrs. Rant we agreed to make £12 - 10s per cent reduction instead of £15.

I therefore reduced them 12½ per cent for the year ending Michaelmas last. There are still some arrears but on the whole we did pretty well. I hope on reconsideration that you and Mr. La Croix will allow Mr. Rant's rent on the Hall as well as the land to share the fate of the others and be reduced accordingly. I feel no doubt whatever that this is the equitable course to pursue.

I remain,

Yours very faithfully

F. J. Ridsdale Esq.

John Crabtree

Gray's Inn.

19 Jany 1853

Dear Sir,

I send you copy of a letter which I have today received from Mr. Crabtree and will thank you to show it to your Father and Mother.

I think the allowance mentioned by Mr. Crabtree is a reasonable one for this year, but I hope it will not be necessary to repeat it next year as times are improving for the farmer.

I shall be glad to hear from you as soon as possible.

And with best complts to your Father and Mother.

Believe me, Dear Sir

Yrs very truly

Mons. E. L. de La Croix

F. J. Ridsdale.

St. Malo, Ille et Villaine, France.

Halesworth

18th January 1853

Dear Sir,

The time is now close at hand for receiving the Chediston rents and it becomes necessary to decide what it is proper to do towards the tenants. I have talked the matter over fully with Mr. & Mrs. Rant and they coincide with me in opinion that it would be right to abate 10 per cent for the year to those tenants who have not made fresh hires since the repeal of the Corn Laws and therefore extending to those only who pay what may be called the Old Protection Rents. I trust the times are improving and that another year we may not be called upon even to do this. Perhaps you will have the

AGRICULTURAL DEPRESSION

kindness to favor me with your opinion at as early a day as possible and if you should have occasion to write to Mr. La Croix on the subject pray have the goodness to do so by tomorrow's post. It may be right to mention that the crop of wheat this year in Suffolk is a very bad one, our county having suffered very severely from milldew.

Yours very faithfully

F. J. Ridsdale Esq.

John Crabtree

From documents in the possession of E. Leguen de Lacroix, Esq., Bury St. Edmunds.

RENT REDUCTIONS, 1879-81

Gray's Inn
18 Feby. 1879

Dear Eugene,

I congratulate you and your wife upon the birth of a son and I trust he will grow up to be a comfort to his parents and a worthy descendant of your respected Father.

On account of the *great* depression under which farmers are now labouring it has been thought reasonable to allow the tenants a longer time than usual to pay the balance of their rents.

With best wishes for your wife's speedy recovery.

Believe me, Dear Eugene
Yours sincerely

Mr. E. F. L. Leguen de Lacroix

F. J. Ridsdale

Gray's Inn,
3 July 1879

Dear Eugene,

On the other side I send you copy of a letter which I received yesterday from a Mr. Howlett and I enclose a cheque for the £400 mentioned in his letter.

Unless there is an improvement in the condition of the farms I fear there must be a serious reduction of rent.

With best regards
Believe me, Dear Eugene,
Yours sincerely
F. J. Ridsdale.

I see I have misplaced the initials of your Christian names.

Please endorse the cheque accordingly.

E. F. L. Leguen de La Croix Esq.,
White House, Harleston, Norfolk.

Wissett Halesworth Suffolk
29th Sept. 1879
"Cookley Grance"

My Dear Sir,

Having advertised this farm to be let in our local papers several weeks without success, I think we must immediately provide for occupying it for

SUFFOLK FARMING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

one year or until we can find a tenant. To do this the purchasing of stock, implements etc. and engaging horse drivers and labourers should be done before the 11th of October.

I have had but one application and offer for the farm which is at such a reduced rent that I cannot recommend it being accepted. Mr. Robert Wm. Hall who is now a tenant on the estate has made the following offer for a term of 11 years to farm *off hand* – namely rent per annum for the first 3 years £170 – at the end of that period the farm to be valued by two persons in the usual way who shall fix the rent for the last 8 years. I offered the farm to Mr. Hall subject to your concurrence at £210 per annum for 3 years and subsequently as he proposed, but he will not give the rent. The present tenant pays £290 and if we entertain Mr. Hall's offer I think it would have a very bad effect upon the tenants generally on the Chediston Hall Estate; besides I hope the serious depression we are experiencing will shortly terminate.

I shall be glad of your advice and instructions by return of post.

& remain Dear Sir

Yours very truly

F. J. Ridsdale Esq.,

Jonⁿ Howlett

£1200 to £1500 will be required for the occupation and I suggest advances being made by our bankers from time to time, and a separate farming account being kept without interfering with our yearly rental account.

J.H.

5 Gray's Inn Square,
London W.C.
17 May 1880

Dear Eugene,

I am sorry to hear of Baby's accident but hope he will soon recover from it.

I have received for the balance of your share of the Chediston rents to Michaelmas 1879 – 133 – 2 – 6

out of which we have paid the following

April 16th	Third instalment of your succession duty on your Mother's death	£13 – 17 – 6
,, 27	Rates on your sporting rights	1 – 18 – 11
May 4	Seventh instalment of succession duty on your father's death	13 – 19 – 8 29 – 16 – 1
		103 – 6 – 5

and I now send you cheque for the balance of £103 – 6 – 5.
Please to acknowledge its receipt –

You have no doubt heard that Mr. Andrews the late tenant of the Hall Farm has died insolvent without leaving sufficient to carry on the Farm and that his family wish the Trustees to take it off their hands.

With best regards

Yours sincerely,

E. F. L. Leguen De Lacroix,
White House, Harleston, Norfolk.

F. J. Ridsdale.

AGRICULTURAL DEPRESSION

5 Victoria Road

6 Oct. 1881

Dear Eugene,

I think it will be best to let the farms at any rents that can be obtained. The incoming tenants will of course pay the valuations.

Should it be found impossible to let the farms and the trustees have to pay the valuations I think they will have a right to pay the valuations out of any rents in their hands.

I trust the question of providing a fund to carry on the farms will not arise.

The £250 received from Andrews will not be applicable in the same way as the rents. But as the money received for enfranchising copyhold is *Capital* and not income I am not sure that it can *now* be properly dealt with.

Believe me

Yours sincerely,

E. F. L. Leguen de Lacroix Esq.

F. J. Ridsdale.

From documents in the possession of E. Leguen de Lacroix, Esq., Bury St. Edmunds.

A STOWUPLAND FARMER'S DIARY, 1879-85¹

The year 1879 is called the black year. Some snow at rye seeding, very wet all summer. Clovers nearly all spoilt. Hay much damaged. Corns with more weeds in than ever known before, could not be cleared, so wet. Harvest very late. Corns bad especially barley 2, 4 and 8 cbs. an acre. Wheat 4 to 7 cbs. Beans and peas 4 to 5 cbs. But all small, say, 10 loads an acre. Carting wheat 4th October. Winter severe since 20 November till Xmas. Wheat 16½ stone, 18/- to 21/-. Barley 13/- to 25/-. Peas and beans soft 18/-. Terrible accident railway on River Tay near Dundee in Scotland on 28th. Bridge washed away. 200 rushed into the river. All lost.

The year 1880. Frost at beginning of year late cold spring. Wet June, *very wet* July, *spoilt* pea crop. 1 month harvest fine, then very wet for suckling clover and beans. Wheat light weight, 10 combs acre. Wheat and beans Barley 11 combs an acre. Peas 6 cbs. Mustard 5 sks acre 40/- Bu. Haysall very wet. Clover and hay much spoilt. Wheat seeding done bad. Up by Christmas. Clover and suckling 2 to 3 bu acre price 30/-. Good say 30/- to 60/-. Wheat 15/- to 23/-. Barley 14/- to 20/-. Beans etc. 18/- to 20/-. Malt 21/-. Beet and turnips large and great crop.

The year 1881. The wheat seeding heavy, a great deal of wet before Christmas. Sharp winter, cold and backward Spring. Good clover, best quality ever had. Sold 6£ ton. Good hay. Capital make for both corns. Pretty good

¹ This farm was Green Farm, Stowupland, then and now in the hands of the Carter family. Thomas Carter farmed at Crown Farm at the beginning of the nineteenth century, moved about 1832 to Loose Hall, Wattisham, and returned in 1850 to Stowupland. His son was Thomas Edgar; his grandson, George, is the present occupier.

SUFFOLK FARMING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

first week. Harvest fine, then the most wet days ever known and corn spoiled. Wheat, beans, barley, clover seed. Price Wheat 16/- to 28/-. Barley 12/- to 24/-. Clover seed 25/- to 60/-. Tares 9/- Bu. Beans 20/-. Good maize 15/6. Oats 1/- stone.

The year 1882, the wheat seeding heavy. A great deal of wet before Christmas. A very mild winter, no frosts. Early spring, plenty of feed, early haysall, partly fine, then very wet, dull and wet. Summer fickle. Harvest corns rise bad. Price bad. Wheat 18/- to 22/-. Barley 13/- to 20/-. Beans 18/- Peas 18/-. Clover seed 30/- to 90/-. Many shipwrecks and lives lost. Large fires in London, Colchester and Bury. Tares 7/- Bu. Maize 17/- Comb. The fall of a shaft at Bradford. 50 lives lost and buried in the ruins. Traction engine on Dcd^d 12 tons linseed.

The year 1883, wheat seeding rather heavy. Haysall late, good quantity and quality. Plenty of feed all summer. Harvest late. Wheat light. Barley good. Beans good. Fine harvest. Beet good. Wheat 8 to 9 Combs acre 20/-. Barley 13 Combs 14/- to 20/-. Beans 10 to 12 Combs acres (*sic*) 18/- to 20/-. Seeds 40/- to 60/-. Mild winter.

The year 1884, very mild winter, neither frost nor snow. Barley land for seeding in terrible condition. *Dung* hard and *dry*. Good deal of it never grew or came to perfection. Very dry up till Christmas, early haysall, no rain, light crop. Clover very bad. Harvest early, no rain. Wheat good quality. Barley various. Seed crop pretty good. The wheat seeding good. Land never done better, like barley land in a good season. Wheat selling bad, 15/- to 18/- comb. Hay 5£ ton. Wheat all up, good plant, and looking well. Barley 13/- to 18/- comb. Beans 3 to 6 lbs acre. Peas bad crop, all selling bad.

1885. The corn on Stowupland farm averaged 12 Cbs an acre – wheat, barley, beans, and oats.

The year 1886. Mild winter, early spring, good haysall and plenty of it. Fine harvest. Corn rise middling, seed good, 30/- to 40/- bu. Wheat seeding good, up by Xmas, all corns low.

From B. & W.S.R.O., Memorandum Book of the Carter Family, Ref. No. TEM 131/12(C).

IV Landlords and Tenants

THREE FARM LEASES

'The Suffolk form of leases, as generally drawn up, is a great cause of the slow progress of agricultural improvement.' Thus wrote William and Hugh Raynbird in 1849 in their book, 'On the Agriculture of Suffolk'. Farmers either had no leases at all, or rented their land from year to year. Where leases were granted, they were usually for four, eight, or twelve years. It was generally agreed that longer leases of twelve to twenty years would promote capital expenditure by tenants on the land. But this was an opinion based upon experience of farming in prosperous times. In the depressed years at the end of the nineteenth century tenants favoured annual leases. The following three examples illustrate (i) a lease for fifteen years, (ii) a lease for one year and (iii) a lease for an unspecified period, probably for one year and renewable.

Memorandum of an agreement made the 14th day of May, 1798, between Lord Rous and Mr. William Fisher of Badingham in the County of Suffolk.

The sd. Lord Rous agrees to let and the sd. William Fisher agrees to hire the farm in Bruisyard late in the occupation of Richd. Mills from the 10th day of October ensuing the date hereof for the term of 15 years at the yearly rent of £100 for the first 5 years and at the yearly rent of £105 for the last ten years of the said term, under the usual covenants, provisoies, reservations, etc., the sd. Willm. Fisher being allowed to break up any of the lands except certain small pieces of old pasture & the driftway near the house hereafter to be described, he first claying & draining the same, and the sd. Ld. Rous agrees to take down or to sell as they stand to the sd. Willm. Fisher all such pollard trees as stand in the way of the plough. In witness whereof they hereto set their respective names.

Rous

Wm. Fisher

Moses Gabbitas present

I. & E.S.R.O., Rous Family Archives, Ref. No. HA11/C4/4.

* * *

An agreement made this twenty-second day of August 1818 Between Henry Edwards of the parish of Sutton, gent. on the one part and Mrs. Mary Carter of the parish of Stowupland, wid. on the other part. That is to say

The aforesaid Henry Edwards agrees to let to the aforesaid Mary Carter a certain farm and premises situate in Stowupland aforesaid and now in her tenure and occupation and

The aforesaid Mary Carter agrees to hire the said farm and premises for

one year from the eleventh day of October 1818 at the rent of two hundred pounds of lawful money of Great Britain to be paid one half on the sixth day of April 1819 and the remainder on the eleventh day of October ensuing that date without deductions except quitrent, land tax, and necessary repairs.

And also the aforesaid Mary Carter binds herself, her heirs, administrators and executors to fulfil the following conditions and covenants viz:

To quit and give up the quiet and peaceable possession of the aforesaid farm and premises on the eleventh day of October 1819 without further notice.

And also not to cut lop or destroy any of the timber or other trees upon the estate except the usual proportion of faggot wood for own use.

And also not to dig or plough up nor convert into tillage any of the pasture or meadow land upon the said estate.

And also to farm and crop the arable land in the following course or manner of husbandry viz:—

One fourth part fallow or summerland in a husbandlike manner

One fourth part barley or oats

One fourth part beans or peas to be twice well hoed or clover. To be allowed for the hoeing of such part of the beans or peas as was sown with clover and

One fourth part wheat as near as the size of the fields will admit.

And also not to sell any straw, corn in the straw, hay, clover, turnips or other vegetables to be carted off but spend them on the farm as is usual and customary.

And also to leave all the muck, dung and compost made the last year and all hay, clover hay and summertilths and to sow one half part of the barley or oat land with a fair seed of clover being allowed according to valuation for them as is usual and customary.

And also the aforesaid Henry Edwards agrees that the incoming tenant shall pay the outgoing tenant such price as shall be fixed by valuation as aforesaid for threshing and dressing all the corn grown the last year upon the said estate (and getting the stacks into the barns) and carry the corn to market not exceeding the distance of Ipswich, having the straw, chaff, and colder thence arising, and the present occupier to have the use of the barns and stackyard to Lady Day 1820.

We the undersigned parties hereto do hereby severally agree to fulfil the aforesaid agreement to the full intent and meaning thereof.

Witness our hands this twenty second day of August 1818

Henry Edwards

Witness Jas. Trookes.

B. & W.S.R.O., Carter Family Papers, Ref. No. TEM 131/3.

* * *

This agreement witnesseth that I James Chapman of the parish of Mundford tea dealer in the county of Norfolk and Thomas Carter farmer in the county of Suffolk of the other part made this 26th day of September

LANDLORDS AND TENANTS

1850 that for and in consideration of the rent or sum of one hundred and fifty pounds per annum, the covenants and agreements to be observed as mentioned in Mr. William Whistlecraft's lease, straw for thatching to be found by the tenant, the said premises first to be put in tenable repair by the said James Chapman, afterwards the said Thomas Carter to do one third of all repairs, also the said Thomas Carter agree to farm and cultivate the said pasture and meadows and arable land the same as mentioned in Mr. William Whistlecraft's lease, as see lease dated 21st March 1843, to be farmed in a good and husbandlike manner according to the custom of the county, and that no part of the meadow lands to be broken up or ploughed without leave under the penalty named in the above mentioned lease, and also agree the said rent to be paid quarterly if demanded in four equal payments, the said Thomas Carter agree to observe everything mentioned in the said mentioned lease and also to keep in repair so much of the road leading from Stowmarket to Gipping as extends along any part of the estate no trees to be cut without leave of the said James Chapman. The said Thomas Carter agree to buy 25 loads muck in each year and underdrain not less than seven or ten acres of land in each year the draining to be paid for by him the said Thomas Carter.

Sign'd J.C.
J.C.

Witness by C. of Stowmarket.

B. & W.S.R.O., Carter Family Papers, Ref. No. TEM 131/7.

NEGOTIATIONS FOR A LEASE

E. C. Cavell, Esqre.
Bawdsey Hall, Woodbridge.
March 26th, 1873.

Sir,

Mr. French has informed me that Miss Walker has sold her farm at Flixton to you. I had applied to her for the farm, having heard it is to be let. Might I ask for the 'refusal' of that or any other farm of about 200 acres which you may have to dispose of?

I can give as much reference as you may require.

Excuse my writing to you: but I do not know your agent.

I am Sir,
Yours obediently,

Frank T. Chevallier.

E. C. Cavell, Esqre.
Bawdsey Hall, Woodbridge.
April 9th, 1873.

Sir,

Not knowing your address, I wrote to Sir Shafto Adair, asking if he could give me the 'refusal' of a farm belonging, till lately, to Miss Walker.

SUFFOLK FARMING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

I have received a letter from him today saying I had better communicate with you: and that I shall 'receive due and careful attention'. I have since been informed that the farm in question is only 110 acres. What I wish for is about 200 acres. Is it likely more will be added to Miss Walker's farm? Or have you any other occupation likely to fall? Probably you have heard the name of Chevallier: and I shall be happy to give any reference that you may require.

I am sir,

Yours truly,

Captain Cartwright.

Frank T. Chevallier.

Bawdsey Hall, Woodbridge.

April 18th, 1873.

Dear Sir,

Thanks for your letter received on the 15th. I presume Miss Walker's late farm will contain, when the addition is made, nearly 300 acres? I do not think that will be too much for me, as I shall have capital in all probability to the amount of £10 per acre. So that I still greatly wish for the 'refusal' of the farm in question. I am sure my instructors in farming will give me good characters in anything you may wish to know. Allow me to thank Lord Waveney and yourself for the kindness which you have shewn me.

I remain sir,

Yours very truly,

Captain A. N. Cartwright.

Frank T. Chevallier.

Bawdsey Hall, Woodbridge.

May 6th, 1873.

Dear Sir,

There are a few things which I forgot to ask about when Mr. Thurtell and myself were with you on Wednesday. One thing I should much wish to have done: viz. a house or shed built for horse gear, as there is no place at the home farm for cutting chaff, grinding oil cake &c. Also a henhouse is wanted. Of course when I come over again I shall be better able to see what is required. On the off-hand farm I shall have a good opportunity of seeing what will be required during the ensuing year.

I should also like to know clearly about the shooting - which I am rather fond of? Now with regard to rent: it is to be £500 per annum for 306 acres: which I find is 32s. per acre: I am quite aware this will reduce the rent on the home farm but as I take both farms on one lease would it be out of place to ask Lord Waveney to let the first year's rent be in the proportion I have named?

Mr. Cox tells me the name of the place is to be the 'Oaklands' which I think a very good name for it.

Will it be better to send in particulars of what I require to have done for Lord Waveney to see? or to inform you of them as I may find out what is wanted. I also perceived the granary stairs are not in good order. Please excuse if I have written more than I ought to have; but I am pretty sure

LANDLORDS AND TENANTS

that but for you I should not have obtained the farm; therefore I do not think I have done harm in writing what I have done, about the rent.

Remaining, sir,

Yours very truly,

Captain R. Norton Cartwright, Flixton. Frank T. Chevallier.

Bawdsey Hall, Woodbridge.

May 7th, 1873.

Dear Sir,

I was much disappointed at your reply, regarding Miss Walker's late farm upon which I wrote to my Uncle, Henry Bellman, asking advice. His answer is that I have misunderstood your letter; that you do not say I cannot have the farm, but that Lord Waveney cannot keep it open for me. He goes on to say that if at first I had told Lord Waveney I would take the farm (from what you said to my Uncle) Lord Waveney would have let me have it.

Now I only asked for the 'refusal' of the farm as a matter of form. I still think I expressed in my letter to you that I should take the farm. I sincerely hope my Uncle is right. So I wish Lord Waveney clearly to understand that I would take the farm (at a reasonable rent) if he will offer it to me.

You will oblige me much by letting me know, if I still have a chance of the farm. Should this be so, I can come to Bungay at any time for the purpose of looking over the farm &c. Trusting I shall have a favourable reply.

I remain sir,

Yours very truly,

Captain A. Norton Cartwright,
Flixton.

Frank T. Chevallier.

Bawdsey Hall, Woodbridge.

May 19th, 1873.

Dear Sir,

Enclosed are letters from gentlemen with whome I have lived: which I think you will consider satisfactory. You will perceive I first went to Mr. Boby and then to Mr. Thurtell and, as I did not succeed with meeting with a farm last year, I am at present living with Mr. Cavell.

With regard to my Banker's guarantee, the money at present does not belong to me: but I enclose you a letter from my Mother: also one from my Uncle which I apprehend is the same as a Banker's guarantee.

I sincerely trust the enclosed testimonials will decide Lord Waveney with letting me have the farm. Perhaps I had better state beside the £3000 from my Mother I have myself over £200 of my own. I shall anxiously await the result.

Remaining, sir,

Yours very truly,

Frank T. Chevallier.

Bawdsey Hall.

19.5.73

Sir,

Mr. Chevallier has asked me to write to you respecting his capability for farming.

SUFFOLK FARMING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

I have much pleasure in stating that, from what I have seen of him since he has been with me, I should consider him quite capable of carrying on the business of a farm satisfactorily as he has plenty of energy & confidence & takes a great deal of interest in all the details of farming.

I also should wish to state that in every other respect I consider him to be a gentleman in whom the greatest confidence may be reposed.

I am, Sir,

Yours faithfully,

E. C. Cavell

The Hall,
Loudon
May 15th, '73

Sir,

Mr. Chevallier has written to me saying that you had asked him if he had any letters from Gentlemen with whom he had been living which would testify to his farming abilities &c. &c.

I have great pleasure in saying during the time he lived with me he was most active, industrious and gentlemanly in his conduct and quite capable of managing a farm. I think very highly of him and sincerely hope you may do him the favour of giving him the offer of the farm, as I think him a most deserving fellow.

I am, Sir,

Yours faithfully,

J. W. Thurtell.

Thorpe Hall,
Ashfield, Debenham.
May 15th, 1873.

Sir,

I have just received a letter from Mr. Frank Chevallier, wishing me to write to you relative to his ability in taking a farm. I have much pleasure in bearing testimony to the high respectability of Mr. Chevallier's character, and can strongly recommend him as a young man possessed of most industrious and persevering business habits. Mr. Chevallier lived with me two years as pupil and during that time was very desirous of acquiring knowledge in agricultural pursuits and made himself very useful on the farm. I still entertain a high opinion of him. If you wish for any further information I shall be most happy to write again.

I am, Sir,

Your's truly,

Chas. Boby.

Captain Cartwright.

Clapham

May 16th.

My dearest Frank,

I must only write a short note telling you I do hope you may be able to have the farm under Lord Waveney. I will consent to let you have £3000 in consideration that Julia & myself live with you. I shall enjoy the country

LANDLORDS AND TENANTS

and like to have employment so fond of a garden. As soon as you have a decided answer do let me know as I am anxious. With love ever

Your attached Mother,
F. C. Chevallier

Bungay, 17 May '73.

My dear Frank,

In reply to your letter of the 16th inst. as your mother consents to advance you £3000 to enable you if necessary to take the farm you mention, I can for that purpose at her request & as the surviving Trustee of her settlement raise part of that sum out of the Trust monies pursuant to a power for your advancement in life, your mother can make up the difference from her own money.

I am

Your affecte. Uncle,
Henry Bellman

Bawdsey Hall,
Woodbridge.
May 27th, 1873.

Dear Sir,

I was much pleased at receiving your letter this morning; and will go to my Uncle's at Bungay tomorrow afternoon. On Thursday morning I propose going over the farms, and shall ask Mr. Thurtell to come with me. If I do not see you on that day, will call on you on Friday; unless you make any other arrangement.

I am, sir,
Yours truly,
Frank T. Chevallier.

Captain A. Norton Cartwright.

Bawdsey Hall,
Woodbridge.
May 31st, 1873.

Dear Sir,

I this morning received a letter from Mr. Thurtell saying he will not return home till Tuesday: so I propose looking over the farms with him on Wednesday next: and hope one day will make no difference to Lord Waveney or yourself.

Remaining, sir,
Yours very truly,
Frank T. Chevallier.

Captain R. Norton Cartwright.

Bawdsey Hall,
Woodbridge.
17th July, 1873.

Dear Sir,

I intend, shortly, going over to Bungay to see Mr. Cocks about the valuation &c. but I have not fixed the time, as I am expecting to have a copy of the lease sent me, as promised. Also Lord Waveney said he should

SUFFOLK FARMING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

be at Flixton about this time; when perhaps he would accede to my wish concern – the horse gear, henhouse &c.

Might I also enquire when I am to sign the lease, as I do not know the usual custom in such cases.

If you do not mind the trouble of writing me a line concerning the above, I shall be obliged.

Yours very truly,

Frank T. Chevallier.

Captain A. Norton Cartwright.

Bungay.

Saturday evening.

Dear Sir,

When convenient to you will you come down to 'The Oaklands' when I should like to shew you the fences I wish to throw down. I do not like commencing until you see what I propose doing, as there are some trees which will have to be taken down.

Mr. Cocks has asked me – and I have consented – to let him remain in the house till Monday the 13th inst: and he does not have his auction till the week after next: but as I have been carting muck all this week, I ought not to complain.

I remain sir,

Yours sincerely,

Frank T. Chevallier.

I. & E.S.R.O., Adair Family Archives, Ref. No. HA12/D3/5.

A FARM SURVEY AND REPORT

September 4th, 1828. The State of Cropping and report made on surveying a Farm in the Occupation of Mr. Robert Fuller at Westerfield.

STATE OF CROPPING

Nos.	Field names & acres	1826	1827	1828
1	Ten Acres 10	Peas	Wheat	Oats
2	Nine Acres 7½	Fallow	Wheat	Peas
	The same 1½	Do.	Do.	Oats
3	Ten Acres 10		Clover	Wheat
4	Pightle &c. 2		Pasture	
5	Ringles 5	Summerld.	Barley	Rye grass layer
6	Little Ringles 5		Turnip seed	Tares
7	New Enclosure 4½		Pasture	
8	Breaky Hill 12		Summerld.	Barley
9	Croft 9		Wheat	Summerland
10	Four Acres 4½	Sumld.	Barley	Clover
11	Eleven Acres 5	Summerld.	Oats	Wheat
	3½	Wheat	Oats	Wheat
12	Small Croft 6		Sumld.	Oats
13	Gravil Pit feild 9	Barley	Wheat	Sumld.
			Clover	Wheat
Computed net measure		96 acres		
New lane, fences & waste, &c.		11		
Total		107		

LANDLORDS AND TENANTS

OBSERVATIONS

The cropping of No. 1 is a breach of the covenant of the lease and injurious to the future occupier. The same observation applies to about 1½ acres of No. 2. The farming of No. 11 has been contrary to covenants and good husbandry; but is accounted for by Mr. Fuller's having (as he states) about 2 years since with the view of improving the farm laid different enclosures together which had not then the same crops upon them; with such explanation and presuming the whole feild will be summerland next year, I think it not advisable to take advantage of such an irregular cropping. A large part of the muck which now remains on the farm & which the tenant (if he quits) will claim to be paid for, should by the covenants of the lease have been laid upon No. 2, in the last spring. The above deviations from the lease have thrown the farm into an irregular division for crops; and next year the spring corn ought only to extend over 15 acres. Fourteen acres of the land to make up the regular division for wheat next year requiring to be immediately cleaned to give a prospect of a crop. By better farming the land may be brought into a good & regular shift in the remainder of the term of the lease & if such a course be adopted the effect of the late cross cropping would fall upon the tenant without injury to the estate.

The dilapidations of the cart sheds and fencing about the yards are to a considerable extent & thier appearance is disreputable. Mr. Fuller states that these buildings were erected by himself of his own materials and that the fences about the farm yards were never of any other sort than of faggots or bushes. If this be true I think he ought not to be called upon now by the covenants of the lease to make more substantial fences or repair such sheds. There are several gates & post wanted upon the farm & others that want repairing. The porch of the barn should be thatched this year. Tylng is preferable. The stable thatch is very thin. Both being done together take much straw. The tenant's part of these dilapidations would be about ten pounds.

Arthur Biddell.

Endorsed:

Copy of Report to the Corporation of Ipswich of the State of Mr. Fuller's Farm.

I. & E.S.R.O., Biddell Papers, Ref. No. HA2/A2/1/51.

AGRICULTURAL CO-OPERATION AT ASSINGTON

This document recites the agreement and rules and regulations governing John Gurdon's lease of a farm at Assington to twenty agricultural labourers (see Introduction, pp. 25-6).

The Assington Agricultural Co-operative Society

'Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labour; for if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow; but woe to him that is alone when he falleth, for he hath not another to help him up.'

'Wealth gotten by vanity shall be diminished; but he that gathereth by labour shall increase.'

'Much food is in the tillage of the poor; but there is that is destroyed for want of judgment.'

Agreement

I agree to let from Michaelmas, 1830, for my life, to the undermentioned persons, forming themselves into a *Co-operative Society*, a farm, containing 114 acres more or less, free of Great Tithes, for the annual rent of 168*l.*, upon the following conditions:—That the Society do not diminish their number of 20 members; that the land be farmed upon the four-course husbandry; that they conform to the rules of the Society and pay their rent regularly; that they keep the premises in good repair, the landlord finding all rough materials; that they do 1 day's carting with 4 horses and 2 men; that they insure the premises for 500*l.* against fire, and that every 12 years the farm be revalued.

(Signed) JOHN GURDON

Assington Hall, March 25, 1830.

Names of Members.

T. Butcher	H. Crisels	H. Harper
W. Crisels	W. Clark	T. Hyward
W. Hazel	J. Crisels	J. Crisels
J. Deal	Widow Goslin	J. Deal
W. Deal, Sen.	Widow Butcher	G. Frost
W. Deal, Jun.	W. Harper	W. Griggs
J. Ward	Widow Harper	

Rules and Regulations

1. That this Society be denominated the "Assington Agricultural Co-operative Society", and consist of 20 members, for the purpose of cultivating the aforesaid farm for their mutual benefit.
2. That a committee, consisting of three members, be appointed yearly, by ballot, at Michaelmas, for keeping the accounts and superintending the cultivation of the farm.
3. That four meetings be held at the house yearly, viz. the first Tuesday after every quarter-day, for auditing the accounts and transacting any business that may be requisite.
4. That the house be let to two members agreed upon by the Society; that they have the charge of the live stock; that one be regularly employed upon the farm; and that whatever extra labour is required be arranged by the committee.
5. That the following articles be provided by the committee for the use of the members, viz. household stores of all descriptions, home-brewed beer, milk, pork, bacon, flour, and whatever else may be considered desirable.
6. Any member convicted of fraud or any other crime to be excluded from the Society, with the forfeiture of his share;¹ if refusing to work when called upon, or slighting it, the committee to find a substitute, and to pay him out of the member's share of the profits.
7. Any member, falling into unforeseen difficulties, may be advanced a loan upon his share to half its value at 5 per cent. interest, provided the

¹ John Gurdon added a footnote to this clause explaining that 'a share so forfeited is designed to form a reserve fund to meet contingencies; the latter part of this rule is not acted upon'.

funds will admit of it, or he may sell his share, subject to the landlord's and members' approval.

8. That the Society be answerable for no debts, except those contracted by the committee for the public advantage.

9. Upon the death of a member, if his share be not disposed of by will, his widow may enjoy it during her widowhood, and at her decease or subsequent marriage the share to be vested in his eldest son living in the parish; in default of sons to be sold for the benefit of daughters or next of kin.¹

10. If a new member upon the purchase of a share be unable to advance the whole amount, he must be charged 5 per cent. for such moneys in arrears, until the whole be paid to those entitled to it.

11. Vacancies to be filled up by ballot upon terms agreed upon by the members; but those only who are labourers of the parish and members of the Stoke and Melford Union Association to be eligible.

12. Any alterations to these rules, or new ones added, may be effected, if carried by vote at either of the public meetings, with the sanction of the landlord, and entered into the general minute book.

From John Gurdon, 'Co-operative Farms at Assington, Suffolk, with remarks by P. H. Frere', 1863, pp. 4-6. (Reprinted from 'Jnl. Roy. Agric. Soc. of England,' XXIV, part 1.)

A FARMER'S CAPITAL

October, 1853: I this Michaelmas take the Grundisburgh Farm of my brother, William, and set off with a capital of something like £1310 : 0 : 0 in business for myself. The money I have become possessed of has come in this way as near as I can remember

	£ s. d.
The six shares I own in the Ipswich Gas Light Company were bought with the legacy left me by Mr. Docrora, sundry gifts from my late Uncle George, gifts from other relatives &c. and are now worth about	} 96 0 0
1 share in the Great Northern Railway bought with gifts chiefly from AB	} 14 12 0
Sundry articles of my own clothing, little pieces of furni- ture, books &c. say	} 8 15 0
Share of my late Uncle George's legacy, clear of legacy duty - paid by the executors up to the present time about	} 1158 0 0
Interest received for money left with Mr. Shepherd who bought cottages of me	} 7 10 0
Profit on Cook's cottages sold to Shepherd	10 0 0

¹ John Gurdon added a footnote to this clause saying Rule No. 9 has been thus modified: 'Each member should make his will before two witnesses in favour of his widow; it should be sealed and deposited with the committee. The widow should enjoy the share during her widowhood; at her decease or subsequent marriage the share should be vested in the eldest son living in the parish. In default of sons, it is to be sold (subject to the landlord's approval) for the benefit of daughters or next of kin.'

SUFFOLK FARMING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Interest on 600£ note of hand with AB	11	13	0
Interest for money kept at Alexanders	4	10	0
<hr/>			
	£1311	0	0

At this time the money as described on opposite page is placed or invested something pretty nearly as follows

	£	s.	d.
The six Gas shares	96	0	0
Gt. Northern R.W. share	14	12	0
Clothing, books, furniture, &c. &c.	8	15	0
With A. Biddell in a note of hand	600	0	0
At Alexanders Bank as a running act.	420	2	0
Stock bought for the Grundisburgh Farm &c. up to the present time	171	11	0
<hr/>			
	£1311	0	0

Herman Biddell

November 22nd, 1853

Playford

Suffolk

I. & E.S.R.O., *Biddell Papers*, Ref. No. HA2/B5/1.

TWO BALANCE SHEETS

Jan^y 1, 1806.

I, Henry Carter having this day compleated the forty-eight year of my aage and the Lord haveing prospered my endavours and blessed the work of my hands and increased my worldly substance beyond my utmost expectations I do from this time forward dedycate the tenth part of the increase thereof to religious and charytable purposes and I intend keeping a book of my distributions and to balance it with the increase at the end of each year on this paper and my desire is that my executors or whosoever may have the management of my affairs after my decease may faithfully apply it to the use for which it is intended. Relying on divine grace to make me faithfull to this my ingagement and trusting in His good providence to succeed my indavours knowing that I am a sinfull creature and can merit nothing at the hands of my Creater I pray for mercy and pardon through the merits and riteousness of Jesus Christ.

	£	s.	d.
1807. Jan ^y . 1. 10th of increase	20	-	0 - 0
Distributions	6	-	3 - 6
<hr/>			
Jan ^y 1, 1808 Balance	13	-	16 - 6
10th of increase	20	-	0 - 0
<hr/>			
	33	-	16 - 6

LANDLORDS AND TENANTS

	Distributions	7 - 4 - 0
	Balance	26 - 12 - 6
Jan ^y 1, 1809	10th of increase	20 - 0 - 0
		46 - 12 - 6
		8 - 9 - 10
	Balance	38 - 2 - 8

B. & W.S.R.O., Carter Family Papers, Ref. No. TEM 131/3.

* * *

Balance Sheet. Mr. Chapman's farm	Stowupland	September 20 (18)50
Dr.	£ s d	a(cres) c(=combs)
Rent	120 0 0	15 Wht 8 - 20/-
Rates	11 - -	15 Bar. 10 12/-
Tithe	31 13 9	8 Beans 8 13 5
Labour	120 - -	9 Cows
Horse Corn	30 - -	Sheep
Collar maker - blacksmith	7 - -	Pigs
Carpenter and Rat mole	3 - -	Loss by farming
Seed Corn. Wheat &		14 - 13 - 9
Barly	15 - -	434 - 13 - 9
Clover seed and bean	5 - -	
Tares and turnip seed	2 - -	P.S. If a corn rent - a comb of
Interest (on) (£) 800	40 - -	wheat p. acre - beginning at 18/- to
Farmer's labour	40 - -	28/-.
Loss of stock, wear and		I shall be at home if you want to
tare	10 - -	see me tomorrow.
	£434-13-9	

Dr. Sir

Sep. 20, 1850 -

You will see by this calculation there will be a loss by farming of Mr. Chapman's farm of £14. 13. 9. and after mature thought I don't see how or where it can be alter'd so that you must be very cautious how you are acting - but I don't think you can do better than hire it with a 12 years lease, repairs and trees. Doors and windows right hoping by so doing you may increase the produce a little, but this must be doubtful - this year the crop fall short of my statement but we will lay our heads together and do our best which of course must be [famous].

I am Dr. Sir

Yours respectfully

Endorsed: Mr. Carter

Thos. S. Harwood

Loose Hall, Stowmarket
To be left at Miss Carter.

B. & W.S.R.O., Carter Family Papers, Ref. No. TEM 131/6.

V The Agricultural Labourers

FOUR PORTRAITS

The following character sketches are taken from a manuscript volume entitled '*A Few Parochial Features of Wortham from A.D. 1828–1870*' written by the rector of Wortham, the Reverend Richard Cobbold (1797–1877). Cobbold was widely known as the author of '*Margaret Catchpole*'. He was the fourteenth child of John Cobbold, the brewer, and was curate and rector at Wortham for fifty-two years. His mother, Mrs Elizabeth Cobbold, of Holywells, Ipswich, took the lead in establishing in that town in 1812 a Society for Clothing the Infant Poor, which by 1824 had provided warm clothing for over 2,000 infants. This volume was dedicated to the Earl of Stradbroke, and includes carefully executed watercolour portraits of the personalities described. The sketches printed here, though more prosaic, are none the less comparable with those of Crabbe's immortal poor in '*The Borough*' (1810).

No. 33 William Cotton

William Cotton, for many years a marked feature in the parish of Wortham in which he lived all the days of his life, was a hard working and industrious man. Firm as a rock and strong as a lion, he never knew what a bed of sickness was until his old age. As he rose in the morning by his old alarm clock, so he expected every one of his family to rise with him. His wallet was filled by his careful wife over night, and those of his boys also, so they had nothing to do but to wash their faces and hands, follow their father to Major Rays not far off him, and to work two hours before breakfast. At twelve o'clock home to his dinner, a hot dumpling, and when butter was dear and pork not within the good housewife's means, pork-lard or a little sugar or a little treacle was the sauce the boys and himself got for their mid-day meal. Saucy he never permitted one of his boys to be to his mother, and this we might truly say of him, that he never complained of the provision set out for him by his ever careful wife.

If William had been but as careful in his early days to take them all to church with him as he was in his older days, he would have spared them and himself many a pang of regret. His wife always insisted upon the daughters going with her to the parish church. She used to say: "Dears, we are there not to be conspicuous before men but we go to meet our God." There was not even a Sunday School in that day, but when the resident Rector came, among some of the very best of his scholars were the daughters of John Cotton.¹ As to the boys, having no work to do and no school to go to, they used to go rambling over the fields, birds nesting. The eldest boy, John, like his father, became a capital workman, but, alas, a capital poacher also and got into trouble.

Who were the receivers of game from poor country labourers, it was

¹ He presumably means William Cotton.

difficult to say, but there must have been those who paid well for what they got, and themselves got better paid long before the sale of game was allowed by a regular licensed practitioner.

William's son, John, could work well in the day and work ill at night. The Rector had a covey of sixteen young partridges on his lawn, and John confessed twenty years afterwards that he took them all in one midnight hour, and sold them as the fattest birds that ever went to the London market. The Rector forgave him as John's conscience made him confess, but though the Rector forgave he did not fail to tell him he had to ask forgiveness for the sin of theft to One who gave the Commandment "*Thou shalt not steal*". So he added: "Let him that stole, steal no more, but rather let him labour working with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth."

In his latter days old William became with his partner a constant, steady, thoughtful old man. He lived and died in a cottage belonging first to Major Ray, then to Robt. Gamble Esqre., then to Chas. Harrison Esqre. (1869) the present owner.

He died Aug. 1st 1852, in peace, aged 85.

No. 25 James Harbur

James Harbur was once a well-to-do man as an active cattle dealer who, long before what in modern days is called the rinderpest or cattle plague, had the misfortune to lose more than one hundred beasts on their journey to Bury market. They were on the common at Wortham when they began to drop, and before they could get to market on the Wednesday following the Monday they started from Norwich, they were all gone. The poor man never got over this loss. It preyed upon his mind to such a degree that he was never after the active man or the monied man or the well-to-do dealer he had been. But worse still, his wife took it to heart and went out of her mind, and though James did all he could to support her, and still kept on jobbing and dealing, he could not support her as he used to do, and she was compelled to go into the Melton Asylum.

The old man pined – his house was gone,
His neatly furnished well kept house,
And he was left to sigh alone
Yet nothing could his spirit rouse.

His bones were wracked with ague pains,
Rheumatic gout his limbs set fast,
And gone were all his jobbing gains
And poverty came in at last.

We do not like to write records of cruelty, but the truth must and shall be told. This poor man was at last compelled to make application to the Board for relief. It was a pang to him to say in his 79th year: "Gentlemen, I can work no longer. I have a being offered to me by Miss Harrison's gardener, Hubbard, who lives in the Hill Cottage in the parish. I pray you, Gentlemen, to grant me out door relief."

"Go out of the room."

"This old man can work. He was offered work on the roads. He was too proud to go to it. Give him the house and let him pick oakum."

"Call him in."

"Master Harbur, cannot you work?"

"If I could, I would not trouble you gentlemen. I am afflicted with rheumatic pains which seize me so suddenly that I drop all in a moment when I am standing in the wind."

"Ah well, Master Harbur, there is an order for the house for you, and perhaps you can do a little work in the workshop without standing in the wind."

In silence deep – in grief profound
The old man left the room,
And tottering beneath the wound
He reach'd his friends and reach'd his home.

He never more from bed arose,
He never more applied.
He had relief from all his woes,
That very week he died.

Of course no one could be blamed! It was a natural death. No Relieving Officer could be blamed – No Guardian! No overseer! There is a day of judgment to come!

But the Lord maketh rich and maketh poor, He bringeth low and lifteth up. He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes and to make them inherit the throne of glory. For the pillars of the earth are the Lord's and he hath set the world upon them.

(1 Sam. 2: 7, 8)

No. 53 George Minter

George Minter, though he 'gained a settlement' in the parish of Palgrave, never settled in it. His brother and sisters belonged to Wortham, and George was always a resident in the latter parish, though he never had a house either hired or found for him as a residence. Speak of characters! This man was as incomprehensible a one as ever lived. By no means a fool, experience had long taught him in the school of vagabondism that vagabonds may be wealthy as well as the poor and destitute. If to do blackguard things, things unbecoming the character of a gentleman or a lady, to cheat, to say things without meaning, and to be full of pride, envy, hatred, lying, slandering, backbiting and malignity be found more prevalent among the wealthy than the poor, is it not vagabondism as bad as any that poorer wanderers may be guilty of?

This poor, miserable and wretched man became a voluntary outcast from all society except that of the beasts of the field, with whom, indeed, he lived upon the best of terms and slept every night winter as well as summer. He was permitted by Mr. Wm. Read, a farmer, to sleep in his barn or in his bullock shed just which he pleased and whosoever it pleased him so to do.

Many were the attempts made by kind hearted Christians and friends to induce him to change his uncouth dress and habits, but all in vain. He was sent twelve different times to prison for a tramp and vagabond, but he never committed any theft or was sent to prison for riotting or drunkenness.

He was a fine robust framed man, and if clean and dressed well, would have been termed good looking. It was said of him that in his youth he was gilded by the girl he loved – and married another in the spirit of vexation. Certain it is that he behaved very ill to a very tidy and respectable young woman whom he did marry, and it caused her very early decline and death. It is equally certain that ever after he lost his wife he became a wanderer whom neither Union House nor prison could cure.

He was never melancholy, quite the reverse. He could mend umbrellas, cut walking sticks and dress stock that were diseased. He was never known to be unkind to a child or to an animal. Neither man, woman nor child did he ever assault or hurt, unless anyone attacked him. And very few but the constable or police interfered with him, and he never resisted them.

His language was always of a pompous, egotistic character.

"Let me till you, sir, that I sleep as comfortably on my bed of straw as you do on your bed of down! I owe no man anything. I have no evil will towards any man. I am content with a piece of bread and a swede turnip, and enjoy it as much as you do turbot and lobster sauce. I envy neither King, Lords nor Commons, and am most thankful when men will only let me alone!" This man lived in this way for many years, one gave him a herring, another a bit of bread, another a glass of water or beer.

So lived poor George, till found one wintry day
 Half dying and half mad. Conveyed away,
 He in the Union hospital lay down,
 And there life ended which he called his own.

No. 54 Sarah Dye

There are some scenes and events in a parish which sometimes awaken more than ordinary attention at the time and which pass away and are no more thought of because they happen among the simple annals of the poor. Did not some observant person make a note of them, they would be forgotten in this world, though in the day of Judgment the sufferers, whoever they may be, will be justified and the wicked, whoever they may be, if not truly penitent, will be judged. The evil of many a slanderer may not be known until then. Happy they who bear no false witness against their neighbour and do not slander them. Open rebuke is better than secret praise, as secret praise, when spoken to encourage, is better than passing flattery.

Mrs. Dye, Widow Dye and Sarah or Sally Day are the same person. She had an afflicted husband whom good Miss Harrison got into the Norwich Hospital, and there he died after a long, painful and complicated disease. Sarah Dye had to go to Norwich for the body of her husband which was decently buried in Wortham churchyard, Decr. 28th 1846 or rather, to

speak more correctly, he died on that day at Norwich and was buried January 2nd 1847.

He had not been buried long before the voice of slander arose, and the finger of scorn was pointed at the widow as the woman who sold her husband's body to the surgeons for dissection and buried a coffin filled with bones and rubbish, the main slanderer affirming that he heard the stones rattle in the coffin.

The voice of slander is always cruel because the secret fiend is sure to say: "Don't say I said so," or "I will never tell you anything more, if you say I told you so." But the mischief of a lie may be beyond the power of refutation and consequently the more abominable.

In this case, however, happily not so. For the poor widow was so annoyed that she went and begged of the Rector to let her late husband's grave be opened, the coffin lid taken off and all the slanderers and parishioners take a look at her dead husband's body in the coffin.

The Chancellor of the Diocese was applied to. The Bishop gave his consent. The Magistrates gave permission for the presence of the Police. The day was appointed for the exhumation. The clergyman, churchwardens and parishioners assembled in the churchyard. The chief accuser had to unscrew and take off the coffin lid and there in the sight of all man lay the remains of the deceased poor man in all the silent solemnity of the dead. Decently attired in proper grave clothes, as he came out of the Norfolk Hospital, an honour to the care and decency of that public institution, and such a rebuke to the slanderer as he never forgot to the day of his own death. She died June 21st 1868.

But she lived many years respected in her widowhood: was Sunday School mistress at Burgate church and carried out letters beyond the delivery of the *walking post*. She was well known to all the farmers. An incident of a very different kind occurred to her about ten years after this, and rather amusing. "Sir, the Widow Dye wishes to speak to you" said the servant to the Rector at his breakfast table. He arose, found the poor widow in deep distress. "Such an accident, sir! Such a dreadful accident!" and the tears flowed fast. "What is it, my good woman?" "Oh sir, I can't tell you. It is such a dreadful thing." And really for a long time she would not name it! At last it came out, with a prayer for a petition that she might take round the parish! "*My old gander has flown against Mr. Edwards' barn and broke his neck.*" "And is that all?" said the worthy Rector, "we will soon set his neck for you." He literally went away laughing to his study and wrote this humble petition of the *Widow Dye*, and gained her geese and gander too!

Mistress Dye had a goose fly!
Against a barn and die!
Now Mistress Dye, twixt you and I,
Again must try for a goose to fly!

The Rector

From 'A Few Parochial Features of Wortham from A.D. 1828-1870, by the Rev. Richard Cobbold, A.M., Rector of Wortham and XXVII years Rural Dean', Wortham, 1870. - I. & E.S.R.O., Rous Family Archives, Ref. No. HA11/A13/10.

THE AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS

DOMESTIC COMFORT

List and description of Cottages belonging to the Earl of Stradbroke, 1874.

BRAMPTON

Observations

Cottage on Westhall Hall Farm by Beccles old
Turnpike in 3 tenements.

Brick and tile

Lewis Spindler & wife 1 girl age 5 yrs. 1 boy 2	{ Living room 12×11 Washhouse Pantry Bedroom over living room Back do.	Stairs want repairing Go through front bedroom to this.
William Walker & wife 2 boys ages respectively 19 & 16 1 girl 8	{ Living room 12×11 Washhouse Pantry Bedroom over living room Back do.	Go through this to back bedroom
George Baldry & wife 2 boys ages respectively 4 & 2 1 girl 6	{ Living room 12×11 Washhouse Pantry Bedroom over living room Back do.	Nothing to prevent falling down stairs in any of the above. Inconvenient, being at one end of the house; and not pleasant, because it adjoins privies.
Bake office common to the 3 tenements		
Gardens to each		

Cottage at Blacksmith's Shop on Westhall Hall Farm
in 1 tenement.

Brick and tile

Henry Card with wife and daughter	{ Living room 13×12½ Washhouse 13×10 Pantry with lattice window Bedroom over living room Do over washhouse	Floor in bad state. Iron oven worn out. No shutter Go through this to next bedroom. No protection to stairs. Stairs want repairing. Privy wants to be rebuilt.
Small garden adjoining Do. over the road		

SUFFOLK FARMING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

FROSTENDEN

Brickkiln Cottage in 1 tenement.

Brick and tile

Samuel Sharman & wife	{	Living room $11\frac{1}{2} \times 11\frac{1}{4}$	
		Sitting room $11\frac{1}{2} \times 11$	
		Washhouse	
		Pantry & cellar	
		Bedroom over living room	Go through this to next bedroom
Large garden		Do. over sitting room	Pond filled up and water is now taken from a well made by the tenant. Every place is well kept, and the premises much improved by him.

REYDON

Old Limekiln Cottage on Limekiln Farm in 2 tenements.

Brick and tile

Robert Sones & wife	{	Living room $13\frac{1}{2} \times 12$	Door wants repairing.
1 boy age 16		Washhouse	
1 girl 11		Pantry	
		2 bedrooms each $12 \times 9\frac{1}{2}$	Go through one to the other. <i>Very</i> narrow stairs.
William Cord & wife	{	This tenement is the counterpart of the former.	Door to living room wants new threshold.
2 boys ages 19 & 14			Bedroom floor wants repairing, having holes through it. <i>Very</i> narrow stairs.
1 girl 13			

Gardens to each.

Cottage near Reydon Wood on Wood Farm late Bloom's in 2 tenements.

Brick and tile

George King & wife	{	Living room 14×13	
2 boys ages 16 & 10		Washhouse	
1 girl 5		Pantry	
		Bedroom over living room	Little repairs wanted.
		Do. over washhouse	Front bedroom floor wants repairings, ceiling likewise.
John Smith & wife and father	{	This tenement is the counterpart of the above.	Back do. do.
			Plenty of water in pond, but no stairs.

Stairs common to each tenant.

Gardens to each.

THE AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS

SOTHERTON

Cottages at east end of Moor in 2 tenements, on
north side of road to Halesworth

Brick and tile

William Marsh & daughter	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Living room</td><td>14½ × 12</td></tr> <tr> <td>Washhouse</td><td>16 × 9</td></tr> <tr> <td>Pantry</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>2 bedrooms over living room</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>1 do. over washhouse</td><td></td></tr> </table>	Living room	14½ × 12	Washhouse	16 × 9	Pantry		2 bedrooms over living room		1 do. over washhouse		<p>Go through one to the other & through both to the next.</p> <p>No protection to stairs.</p>		
Living room	14½ × 12													
Washhouse	16 × 9													
Pantry														
2 bedrooms over living room														
1 do. over washhouse														
Frederick William Farrow and wife 3 boys ages 8, 6 & 3 Gardens to each	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>This tenement is the counterpart of the above.</td><td></td></tr> </table>	This tenement is the counterpart of the above.												
This tenement is the counterpart of the above.														
Cottage north side of Sotherton Moor, being the old farm house late Knights's in 3 tenements. The 1st & 2nd stud, plaster and tile; the 3rd brick & tile														
John Smith & wife 2 boys ages 10 & 6 5 girls 13, 12, 9, 4 & 1	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Living room</td><td>15 × 10½</td></tr> <tr> <td>Washhouse</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Pantry</td><td>9½ × 9</td></tr> <tr> <td>& cellar adjoining</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Bedroom over living room</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Do. over pantry</td><td>15 × 10½ &c.</td></tr> </table>	Living room	15 × 10½	Washhouse		Pantry	9½ × 9	& cellar adjoining		Bedroom over living room		Do. over pantry	15 × 10½ &c.	<p>Go through this to the former bedroom.</p> <p>No protection to stairs.</p>
Living room	15 × 10½													
Washhouse														
Pantry	9½ × 9													
& cellar adjoining														
Bedroom over living room														
Do. over pantry	15 × 10½ &c.													
Edgar Goodchild & wife 1 boy age 1 yr. 1 girl 3	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Living room</td><td>14¾ × 12½</td></tr> <tr> <td>Washhouse</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Good pantry</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Bedroom over living room</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Attic over bedroom, and over bedroom in the above tenement.</td><td></td></tr> </table>	Living room	14¾ × 12½	Washhouse		Good pantry		Bedroom over living room		Attic over bedroom, and over bedroom in the above tenement.		<p>Floor not good.</p> <p>Floor bad.</p> <p>Landing wants repairing.</p>		
Living room	14¾ × 12½													
Washhouse														
Good pantry														
Bedroom over living room														
Attic over bedroom, and over bedroom in the above tenement.														
George Harvey & wife 1 boy age 1 yr. 1 girl 3 Widow Harvey & daughter	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Living room</td><td>14½ × 14½</td></tr> <tr> <td>Washhouse</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Good pantry</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>2nd pantry</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Bedroom over living room</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Do. over wash- house & pantry</td><td>17 × 8</td></tr> </table>	Living room	14½ × 14½	Washhouse		Good pantry		2nd pantry		Bedroom over living room		Do. over wash- house & pantry	17 × 8	<p>Floor wants repairing.</p> <p>Do.</p> <p>Go thro this to the next room.</p> <p>A leanto roof & very low</p>
Living room	14½ × 14½													
Washhouse														
Good pantry														
2nd pantry														
Bedroom over living room														
Do. over wash- house & pantry	17 × 8													

SUFFOLK FARMING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Gardens to each

Cesspool to privy out of repair, the filth oozes through the brickwork into a ditch, which is offensive: and there is nothing to prevent children falling from the bridges which cross the said ditch into the yard. Some pales are wanted. Two children fell into the mire the day before this note was taken.

Cottage at Sotherton Corner adjoining the road in
2 tenements.

James Card & wife Living room 10×10 Floor wants repairing.
Boy age 19 yrs. Washhouse $8\frac{1}{2} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$ Do.

{ Very small pantry
Bedroom over living room
Do. over washhouse

Empty (late Smith) { This tenement is the
counterpart of the above.

Bake office common to both.

No water in pond.

Long row of cottages at Sotherton Corner in 5
tenements

Brick and tile

James Roberts snr.
& wife { Living room 11×10
Washhouse $9 \times 6\frac{1}{2}$
Small pantry
Bedroom over living room Go through this room
Do. over washhouse & to the next.
pantry

David Norman &
wife { Living room 11×9
Washhouse
Pantry
Bedroom over living room Go through this room
Do. over washhouse & to the next.
pantry

John Gilbert &
wife { Living room 11×10
Small washhouse
Small pantry
Bedroom over living room Go through this room
Do. 12×7 to the next. Lower step
occasionally to stairs bad.
1 girl age 3 an
orphan

James Roberts
junr. & wife
2 boys ages 17
& 16 { Living room 11×10
Washhouse
Pantry, small
Bedroom over living room Go through this room
Do. 11×7 to the next.

Bake office common to the above 4 tenements

THE AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS

Henry Gilbert & wife 1 girl age 1 yr.	{	Living room $12 \times 10\frac{3}{4}$	No fastenings to
		Washhouse $10\frac{1}{2} \times 7$	windows.
		<i>Small</i> pantry	
		Bedroom over living room	
		Do. over washhouse & pantry	

From I. & E.S.R.O., Rous Family Archives, Ref. No. HA11/C3/25.

* * *

There is a marked difference between the cottages in the "open" and those in the "close" villages.¹ The lot of a labourer in the latter is very different to that of one in the former. On estates such as the Duke of Grafton's, the Marquis of Bristol's, and Lord Cadogan's, the cottages are well built, are kept in excellent repair, and are provided with good gardens, sheds, out-houses, closets, and wells, and are often let for £2 10s or £3 10s. I visited the cottages belonging to Mr Manfield, a large farmer in Ixworth Thorpe, and there was a great contrast between them and those in Ixworth, which is a large "open" village about a mile and a half distant. Mr Manfield's cottages are built of brick with tiled or slated roofs, and each contained a large sitting room, three bedrooms, a pantry, a scullery, and a bakehouse, and are provided with an outhouse, a closet, a well, and a quarter acre garden. The rent of these cottages is £3 a year, and some of the occupants are able to pay it out of the profits they make from the apple and other fruit trees in the gardens.

In the open villages, the cottages are constantly owned by small tradesmen who have bought the property as an investment, men without means to carry out improvements or to effect necessary repairs, and whose one object is to get as high a rent as possible. This class of property is frequently mortgaged, and in some instances there is no margin available for outlay even if the owner has the desire to improve it. The condition of these cottages is often deplorable. In many instances the bedrooms let in rain and wind. In others the ceilings are so low, sometimes little over five and a half feet, that it is impossible to stand upright, while the windows are often only a foot or two square. In cottages with two bedrooms one is frequently little better than a passage, and many have no light or ventilation except through the door of the adjoining apartment which generally has several occupants.

In Mr Frederick Clifford's book entitled "The Agricultural Lockout, 1874" which was originally published in the form of letters in the "Times" of that year,² he describes the bedrooms in a Suffolk village in the words which I would apply to some I saw in Barrow, Ixworth, and elsewhere.

"You went upstairs into a sleeping room with shelving barn-like roof, lighted dimly by a small window; and in this one room, or rather loft, were thickly crowded miserable truckle beds, in which father and mother, and in one case four small children, must lie and sleep. . . . In one loft, into which I put my head, the children had been put to

¹ A "close" village had a resident lord who regulated migration into the village. In "open" villages there was no such control. See also p. 31.

² For other extracts from these letters, see p. 149.

bed, and already the air felt close and heavy. What must it be with five or six people breathing the same confined atmosphere in the hot nights of the summer? It was wonderful how, in such dwellings, the women could look so clean and neat. Habitations like these are enough to crush nearly all the sense of decency or notion of tidiness and comfort among the women, while they must inevitably drive the husband to the public house. The wonder is that the women are so tidy and that the men are not worse."

At a public meeting at Barrow, a labourer gave the following particulars of his house:—

"I have to shift my bedstead to stop the rain. My room is 7ft 6in. by 6ft. 9in. There are two bedrooms both this size. It is hardly a prisoner's cell. Twenty-one people go to one closet."

In the open villages many of the cottages have very small gardens, and some have none. In such cases there are often no back doors or sheds, and then all the washing and cooking has to be done in the living room, which is very inconvenient and uncomfortable. The closet accommodation is often insufficient. Sometimes there are only one or two in a row of four or five houses with a great many occupants. Another defect in many cottages are the staircases, which are frequently narrow, steep, and dangerous. In Barrow a number of cottages have no staircase but a rickety ladder, up and down which a woman has somehow to drag her children. In many instances there is overcrowding, though the sanitary authority are active in this respect. In a village where the majority of cottages have only two bedrooms, and where there are no empty houses, it is difficult to see how they can remedy the evil. The people themselves do not always seem to appreciate the impropriety of the elder boys and girls continuing to sleep in the same room, as they have been accustomed to do from childhood. In a cottage inhabited by a farm bailiff, a most respectable man, I found sleeping in the same bedroom two sons aged 16 and 14, two daughters aged 24 and 15. As it happened this state of things was quite unnecessary, as there was a second room on the ground floor 9ft by 9ft, which was unused, and would have made a good bedroom for the sons.

At Ixworth the cottages are notoriously bad. In 1891 an inquiry was held there under the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890, by Lord Francis Hervey, M.P., with the result that six houses are about to be built with a quarter of an acre of garden each, and the expense thrown on the union. The report drawn up by Lord Francis Hervey says:—

"In some instances there was proof of serious overcrowding, in others decrepitude and decay have gone so far as to make it more than doubtful whether the time of patching and mending has not passed. In others glaring structural defects and faults of arrangement seem to make half measures futile; in some the ground itself seems overcrowded with hovels (they can scarcely be called houses, how much less homes!) as these hovels are themselves sometimes overcrowded with inhabitants. "Among the particular features of danger and reproach the following may be specified:—Want of sufficient and proper sleeping room, roofs and walls not watertight, privies ill placed and not sufficient in number,

back premises defective or entirely wanting, floors ruinous, want of ventilation and light, water supply endangered by proximity to cess-pools or other sources of contamination, staircases not securely railed off, no means of removing refuse etc. from the backyards to the street, except through the dwelling rooms. There is no sanatorium to which cases of infectious disease can be moved for isolation, and the position and structure of the tenement are too often such as threaten the most lamentable consequences, should an outbreak occur. Allotments appear to have been provided to some extent, but of garden ground attached to cottages the supply is but meagre. Upon the whole I am driven to the conclusion that further accommodation is necessary for the housing of the working classes in Ixworth." . . .

On the whole the water supply is good, and I heard few complaints on that score. Sometimes the tenants have to go some way for it, but very seldom more than 200 yards. At Chevington the water supply was insufficient. There were but few wells, and many of the people had to get water from ponds. There is no system of drainage. In some places there are cesspools. Most of the closets are earth ones.

The cottages are mostly concentrated in the villages, though there are nearly always some on the farms and let with them, and sub-let to the labourers by the farmers. In some instances landowners prefer to keep the cottage in their own hands in order that they may control the repairs, but farmers generally desire to take enough cottages with their farm to accommodate their labourers in charge of animals.

Farmers have told me that many of the men prefer to live in a village, with worse accommodation, smaller gardens, and at a longer distance from their work for the sake of the proximity of the schools and shops, and other attractions of a town to which I have already referred. In no instance do the labourers own their own cottages.

From 'The Report of the Royal Commission on Labour', BPP 1893, XXXV, pp. 35-6.

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These extracts are taken from a short thesis entitled 'Survivals of Early Culture in Later Civilisation', written by Mrs Emma Osmond in 1903-4 when attending a class in Sociology held by Professor A. C. Haddon at Toynbee Hall. Born in 1868, Mrs Osmond was descended on her mother's side from a Suffolk family, and spent all her holidays when young at Hepworth.

The villages in which my information has been gleaned are Suffolk villages remote from the railroad, almost on the borders of Norfolk.

All my informants were natives of villages in the Blackbourn Hundred, but some had resided in villages belonging to the Thingoe, Thedwestre, and the Hartismere Hundreds of Suffolk and in the Guiltcross Hundred of Norfolk.

These villages border on the Fens, where fifty years ago the villagers used to cut turf for their house-greens, and for fuel, for their remoteness from the railway station made coal almost unobtainable . . .

The houses were mostly built of thick oak beams or baulks covered with laths, and plastered, or with clay-lump, made by mixing sifted road-grit, clay or marl, and chopped horse-hair, which made so strong a mixture that the plastering would last sixty or more years. The roofs were thatched with fen-reeds, or straw which kept the house cool in summer, and warm in winter, its chief drawbacks being the ease with which starlings, sparrows, and swallows made their nests in it, and its likelihood to take fire.

A red brick chimney was erected at one, or both ends of the house, of a large size. The hearth was open, and the fire was either on the open hearth, or on a fire-place of white washed bricks with iron bars laid across them to support the cooking utensils.

A notched iron hake (or hook) hung down the chimney from an iron cross bar built into the brickwork, upon which a cooking pot or kettle could be hung, while flitches and hams could be hung from the crossbar for drying in the wood smoke.

In the best room an iron brazier or firedogs of iron and polished steel stood in the fireplace. A copper was often fixed on either side of the keeping-room fireplace, one for brewing, and one for washing, or boiling hams.

Some had a Dutch oven on one side, which was of iron, heated underneath by a small furnace, and used when a small baking was required. Sometimes in connection with the main chimney, occasionally in an outhouse, was the more ancient brick oven. This was a large brick chamber, heated weekly or fortnightly by building a fire of faggots and brushwood inside it. After about three hours heating, the ashes were raked out with a fire-rake or peale, and the things requiring the greatest heat were set in first, some directly on the floor, others in tins or earthen dishes. The first batch usually consisted of bread, pies, cakes and turnovers. When these came out, meat and milk puddings went in, and lastly fruit in stone jars which were left all night, acquiring a rich flavour and colour to be obtained in no other way. The meat was generally sodden in water with cut vegetables and baked in pans of brown or yellow earthenware.

Two favourite dishes were chitterling pie and apple hoglins. Frumenty was also baked all night in the oven for the twelve days of Christmas. In summer the fire was built out of the house on the house green. The house was kept cool, and the fitful gleams of the fire gave a delightful light to talk or sing by after sunset. Fifty years ago baking arrangements in cottages were more primitive. The turf or peat was piled on the hearth, and bread or meat was put into earthenware or iron pans with lids, and covered up with peat till cooked. The mantle-shelf was high, the mantle usually consisting of a frill of coloured chintz or repp hanging on a rod at the edge of the shelf, with curtains to draw in winter, and shut in the chimney corner. This was the favourite place for story-telling in the long winter evenings.

The floors were of half-square or square red or yellow bricks laid on the soil.

The stairs were shut up in staircases and were of curious designs with high steps and low steps and funny little twists to fit the space.

The bedchambers usually opened one into another, the maids' or daughters' room being furthest from the stairs, through the parents room,

THE AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS

and the young men's on the opposite side of the stairs. Very few had landings or passages. Generally the roofs were sealed, and slanted to within two or three feet of the floor at the sides, where the roof was pierced by lucombe or gable windows.

The cupboards were made to fit into the corners of the lower rooms from floor to ceiling. They were often carved or painted, and held the ancestral china, glass, pewter or other ware, while clothes were kept in oak presses or chests to match the cupboards, and bread and flour in oak hutches with sliding lids. If anyone moved from one farm to another (not a very common occurrence), they took their firedogs or grates, their Dutch ovens, coppers and cupboards with them . . .

As everyone worked before breakfast, they usually had a roll and cheese, slice of harvest cake, or bread and onion which they called their "dewbit" or "dewsnap" or sometimes their "dewbait". Breakfast was a substantial meal, mead and ale being the usual beverages, heated in very cold weather by stirring with a red hot poker. Cold and hot meat, bacon, eggs, potatoes and honey were eaten.

During the harvest the men had their "levenses" or "bever" at eleven and their "fourses" at four, brought to them in the fields, and men, women, and children sat in the shade of a hedge or tree and ate harvest cake and drank sugar- or small-beer. (The men in Bury workshops called their lunch "bever" in 1900.)

Dinner or nuncheon at noon was another heavy meal, with boiled meat or fruit dumplings, egg puddings, baked batter, meat and vegetables and beer.

After their "fourses" the men worked till supper, between six and seven. Women often drank strong bitter tea without milk but with plenty of sugar, but if the men had it they generally took ale after. The usual fare for supper included meat patties, ham or cold boiled bacon, sausages, fry or chitterling, apple turnovers and hoglins, home-made jam, stiff sago or rice-puddings firm enough to be eaten with the curly-handled, two-pronged forks, and flat cheese.

From 'Survivals of Early Culture in Later Civilisation,' B. & W.S.R.O. Ref. No. Acc. 788.

UNEMPLOYMENT AND THE POOR

The following documents illustrate various aspects of the problem of unemployment. The account of income and expenditure on poor relief at Ickworth relates to a parish which was not incorporated in a Poor Law Union until 1834 and where responsibility for the poor lay entirely on one landowner. The second and third documents illustrate efforts made to arrest the rapidly rising cost of poor relief in Blything, Hoxne, and Lackford Hundreds, a purpose finally achieved on a national scale by the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834. New provisions for medical attention were made necessary by this Act and these are described in a report from Cosford Union. The medical clubs there referred to were the precursors of the later provident societies (see pp. 152-7). The remaining documents illustrate measures taken to secure work for children and adults in the factories of northern England and to encourage emigration. (See also

SUFFOLK FARMING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

E. H. Priestley, 'Nineteenth century poor law migration from Suffolk', The Suffolk Review, I, no. 6, 1957, pp. 123-9; Hugh Fearn, 'The apprenticesing of pauper children in the incorporated hundreds of Suffolk', Proc. Suffolk Inst. Archaeology, XXVI, 1955, pp. 85-97.)

May 30, 1826.¹ Copy to Poor Law Commission

	to 1 March 1835	1836
Money levied -	£102 0 0	£126 18 8
Expenses in relief etc.	74 16 0	89 17 1

Observations.

Several [] continue 5 quarters of a year to clear the acct. to Lady Day when the parish was taken into the Union. Lord Bristol being the sole proprietor the allowances have been higher than they would otherwise have been and more of the nature of private charity.

Dr. the parish of Ickworth in acct. with William Hall, overseer from March 25, 1818, to March 25, 1819

	1818	£ s. d.
The Earl of Bristol – Rent £544 @ 7/10 in the 1£	213 1 4	By cash in hand from last year's acct.
		7 8
Relief to sundry persons:		
52 weeks @ 21/6 per week	55 18 0	
Relief to the wife of William Green during his imprisonment from Jan. 31 to April 25th.	12 weeks.	6 12 7
Relief to James Cross during illness from March 28th to May 9th.	7 weeks.	5 1 0
Relief to Joshua Pryke during illness April 11th & 25th	10 0	
April 25. Do. to Benj. Pryke junior on acct. of his wife's illness.	10 6	
Do. to Abraham Arbon April 4th., 4/- & Nov. 7th. 20/-	1 4 0	
June 6 Do. to John Pearson's wife	1 5 0	
Oct. 3 Do. to Rose Pryke on acct. of illness	2 6	
,, Do. to Edmd. Willingham on acct. of his wife's illness	5 0	

¹ This is clearly an error and should read 1836. The account of poor relief in 1835 and 1836 appears on page 1 of this volume and is entirely unrelated to the rest of the account.

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	Nov. 28th Do. to Joseph Pryke Do. of illness	10 6
	Do. to Edmund Willing- ham on acct. of Do.	10 0
	Do. to Thos. Evered on acct. of illness 52 weeks	17 10 0
Carried forward	£213 1 4	Carried forward
Brought forward	£213 1 4	Brought forward
	Relief to Benj. Pryke junr. 172 weeks from Oct. 1815 to Jan. 30, 1819 @ 2/- per week	£17. 4. 0.
	Deduct premium for binding out Thomas Pryke apprentice £11. 11. 0 & £13. 11. 0.	3 13 0
	Cash on acct. for cloathing him £2. 0. 0.	
	William Sale's Bill for making & mending shoes for John Green £0. 14. 0.	
	J. Bailey for pair of shoes for Mary Green £0. 6. 6.	1 0 6
	Mr. Chinnery's bill for medicine and attend- ance on the parish	36 11 6
	Mr. Cooke's bill for coals for the poor	53 13 7½
	Rents paid viz. Wm. Emmett's 1 year £1 10 0	
	Mr. Willingham's $\frac{3}{4}$ year £0 16 0	
Carried forward	£213 1 4	Carried forward 2 6 0
Brought forward	£213 1 4	Brought forward £2 6 0
	Rents paid viz. Edmd. Willingham's 1 year 0 17 0	£185 5 4½
	William Green's 1 year 3 3 0	6 6 0
	Quarterages £3. 2. 6;	

SUFFOLK FARMING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

	£ s d	£ s d	£ s d	
	4. 3. 4; 3. 2. 6. & 5. 4. 2.			15 12 6
James Howe's bills of ex-				
enses as constable etc.				
	£ s d	£ s d		
	1. 16. 0;	0. 14. 0;		
	£ s d	£ s d		
	1. 2. 0;	0. 19. 10.		4 11 10
To cash in hand to be				
carried to next year's				
account				1 5 7½
£213 1 4				213 1 4

Allowed by us April the fifth 1819

John Godbold
R. Davers

Dr. the parish of Ickworth in acct. with William Hall overseer from March 25th, 1819 to March 25, 1820.

	£ s. d.
The Earl of Bristol. Rent £544 at 7s 9d. in the £1	£210 16 0
By cash in hand from last year's account	1 5 7½
By relief to sundry persons 45 weeks at £1. 1. 6.	
per week	48 7 6
Do. Do. 1 week	1 5 6
Do. Do. 6 weeks at £1. 7. 6.	8 5 0
Do. Do. 1 week	- 15 6
Do. to Thomas Evered 52 weeks	15 5 0
Do. to John Green Senr. 28 weeks	8 5 0
Do. to Edmund Willingham	1 0 0
Do. to Abraham Arbon	10 6
Do. to Benj. Pryke Senr. 50 weeks at 2/- per week	5 0 0
Do. extra to Do.	6 0
Do. to William Emmett	6 6
Do. to Widow Copsey extra	2 6
Do. to William Green	8 0
Carried Forward	£210 16 0
Carried forward	93 6 1½

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	£ s. d.
Brought forward	£210 16 0
Brought forward	93 6 1½
Cloathing viz.	
For Joseph Pryke's family	2 0 0
Do.	1 5 6
S. Sale's bill for shoes for John Green	14 6
J. Houghton's bill for clothes for do.	4 2 2
Mr. Chinnery's bill for medicines & attendance of the poor	13 3 6
Mr. Cook's bill for coals for the poor	61 14 6
Rents paid viz.	
Wm. Green's to Mr. Tennison	3 3 0
Wm. Emmett's to White House Cottagers	1 10 0
Edmd. Willingham's to Henry Cater	17 0
Expenses of Joseph Pryke's funeral	2 13 11
Wm. Edwards's bill for coffin for Do.	2 5 0
Quarterages 5. 4. 2; 5. 4. 2; 5. 4. 2; & 3. 2. 6	18 15 0

Carried forward	£210 16 0	Carried forward	195 10 2½
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£ s. d.	£ s. d.
210 16 0	Brought forward
	195 10 2½
	J. Howe's bills of expenses as Constable etc.
	1. 9 0; 0. 16. 0; 1. 8. 0;
	0. 15. 0
	4 8 0
	Schooling for James Arbon
	12 0
	Cash in hand to be carried to next year's Account
	5 9½
210 16 0	210 16 0

Allowed by us April 1, 1820

T. J. Cullum

M. J. Cocksedge

From 'The Poor Account Book of Ickworth', pp. 1-7, in the possession of the National Trust, Ickworth.

* * *

SUFFOLK FARMING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Peasenhall, March 6th, 1830

My Lord,

I am sorry to trespass upon your Lordship at this present time, well knowing of your Parliamentary engagements, but conceiving my subject not to be altogether unimportant or unseasonable, I venture to address you, being quite certain from the following statements I am able to shew that the distress of this County will prove general, instead of partial, without immediate relief is afforded the agriculturist by reduction of taxation, improvement in the value of their produce or some legislative enactment to enforce the employment by proportion & render legal & binding upon the whole when two thirds of a parish in vestry assembled agrees to adopt some particular plan for the employment of their able bodied labourers, if such plan appears to the magistrates of the district to be so far equitable as to warrant their support. As I could shew in many instances when one or two obstinate people in a parish have, through local or interested motives, opposed plans which were in themselves equitable, & even also supported by nine tenths of the parishioners, & which wld. have kept their labourers in a profitable employment, instead of the most ruinous & degraded sistem of road work, which inevitably has increased to such alarming extent, as I will hereafter shew, some three fourths, some two thirds, & but few less than one half of the able bodied men are so employed, which must very soon render us dependent upon other nations for the supply of human food, in consequence of the culture of our lands at home being so neglected. With a view of ascertaining as correctly as possible the no. of able men out of employ in this Hundred, I issued a circular to the different overseers about a fortnight ago requesting them to return the no. in each parish with the amount paid in consequence thereof for the month ending Feby. 13th. I have also been able to obtain similar returns from six parishes in the Hundred of Hoxne & one in the adjoining Hundred which I am certain are quite sufficient to shew a man of your Lordship's quick discernment & good understanding that nothing less than some legislative enactment will sett us a going again or suffer us to remain upon our farms. In the parish of Stradbrooke the poor rates were 22/6 on the pound for the year to Xmas & one farm is actually laying dormant at the present time. Framlingham rate was 11/6 from Octr. to Feby. & many in Hoxne Hundred not being incorporated equally high.

Blything Hundred

No. of able bodied men between 2500 & 3000

No. out of employ	1001	Souls	£	s.	d.
Wives belonging	602	4002	Cost for the month	938	9 4
& children	2399		Outdoor relief for the same month & those maintained in the House	844	11 8

Total expence of poor in the Hundred of Blything for one month to Feby. 13th, 1830 £1783 1 -

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	No. of able men	Hoxne Hundred & out of employ				
Baddingham	110	60	Cost for the same month	84	5	4
Dennington	150	65	Cost etc.	65	12	8
Wilby	71	32	Cost etc.	80	-	-
Laxfield	100	55	Cost etc.	73	-	-
Stradbrooke	110	70	Cost etc.	97	-	-
Fressingfield	140	110	Cost etc.	176	-	-
Framlingham	200	160	Cost etc.	222	10	-

By a return made within the last month in the Hundred of Blything I find the pauper population has increased between 1100 & 1200 souls in the last 3½ years. Shd. this increase of population continue & the decay of agriculture also a short time longer, I think the Ministers wod. be spared the trouble of enquiring into the state of the nation as proposed by the Earl of Stanhope & on whose side you very much to the credit of Suffolk & yourself voted. With every apology for troubling your Lordship with so long a scrawl

I beg to subscribe myself
My Lord
Your Lordships
Most ob. hon. ser.—
John Lay

To the right Hon^e the
Earl of Stradbrooke

I. & E.S.R.O., Rous Family Archives, Ref. No. HA11/B1/6/2.

* * *

November 26, 1830¹

We, the magistrates acting for the hundred of Lackford, taking into our consideration the alarming state of the country in other districts, and being of opinion that it is at all times better to *prevent* than to *cure*, do recommend the *overseers* and *church-wardens* of your parish to take all the means in their power to provide work for the labourers, at fair wages; and we wish to call your attention, most particularly, to the impolicy of reducing the pay of single men to such a low standard as is but too frequently the case.

John T. Hale
H. Waddington
George Gataker.

You are requested to keep the above and show it only to the occupiers of property within your parish.

B. & W.S.R.O., Ref. No. EL25/7/18.

* * *

Although the main purpose of the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 was to put an end to outdoor relief, it also made necessary new arrangements for the medical relief of the poor. Previously the parish authorities

¹ This is a printed notice, of which the postscript is handwritten.

had made contracts with doctors for attendance on the sick poor, but they had not defined the classes of people who were entitled to this attention at the expense of the parish. In consequence, most labourers called on the services of the parish doctor whether or not they were receiving relief. The 1834 Act left all medical relief to the discretion of the Boards of Guardians, and in emergency to the overseers, churchwardens, and justices of the peace. Its object, however, was to reduce the dependence of the poor on parochial aid and to oblige them to help themselves. As a result, many parish medical clubs came into existence, to which all the labouring population subscribed. J. Phillips Kay reported on the remarkable progress made in Cosford Union where every parish had a club.

The following is the evidence of Mr George Scott, the indefatigable relieving officer of one of the districts of that Union (Cosford).

"There is an independent medical club in every parish in my district, and each club generally includes all the poor of the parish. I have not been asked for more than twenty medical orders in the last three months. So that it may be said the poor have provided medical assistance for themselves. I am sure the surgeons are well satisfied with this arrangement, and the poor are decidedly much better attended as members of the independent medical clubs, than they were under the old parochial contracts. They the poor are pleased with the change; they now go to their surgeon as a matter of right whenever they are ill. . . ."

The following extract from a letter from the Rev. Samuel Cole of Brettenham in the same Union, may serve to show how these clubs are regarded by intelligent and humane gentlemen in the district.

"The Poor Law Amendment Act is still at work. It has given rise to many medical clubs in the parishes of this Union, and the surgeons are now better paid than under the late corruption or corporation. I am treasurer or manager of such a club in my parish, the subscription to which will enable me to double the former salary of the surgeon, and raise a fund over and above for necessaries to sick males and lying-in women. I hope the Commissioners in London will relieve us of payment to their appointed surgeon. Our relieving officer, who is one of the best of his profession, says the club should be called the Independent Medical Club."

From Appendix B of the 'Second Annual Report of the Poor Law Commissioners: the Report on the Administration, under the Poor Law Amendment Act, in Suffolk and Norfolk by James Phillips Kay, Esq., M.D., Assistant Commissioner of Poor Laws'. BPP 1836 (595), XXIX, part 1, p. 182.

* * *

Poor Law Commission Office,
Somerset House,
8th August, 1835.

Sir,

The Poor Law Commissioners for England & Wales have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 6th inst. and herewith forward to you an extract from the communication received from Mr. Lorenzo Christie in

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which he states that he is desirous of taking several girls as apprentices. The Commissioners conceive that you will find therein the information which you require on the subject.

Signed by order of the Board
Secretary.

To Geo. Sandby Jr. Esqre.,
Chairman of the Wangford Union, Bungay.

Extract

Eddle Mill,
near Castleton,
Derbyshire.
July 27th, 1835.

Sir,

By the recommendation of Messrs. Harvey Tysoe & Co. of Manchester who have seen you on the subject I take the liberty to inform you that I am in want of a number of girls as apprentices for employment in doubling fine yarn. They must be of the full age prescribed by the Factory Act and during the term of the apprenticeship I should of course provide them with food, clothing, lodging and all other necessaries and would engage to provide for their moral & religious as well as for their intellectual instruction. There are children in the Metropolitan parishes ready to be apprenticed but by law no parish within a certain distance of London can apprentice beyond 40 miles. These parishes are in the habit of paying a premium of £4. 2. 0 with the children they apprentice but if the Poor Law Commissioners have power to dispense with this law I should be willing to take from 20 to 25 stout healthy girls on the parish or parishes paying their expences here and giving them the usual outfit of clothing. A saving of nearly £3 each would by this means accrue to the parishes.

Messrs. Harvey Tysoe & Co. inform me that you spoke of removing families but I fear that in my case this would not be advisable for at present there is no employment here for men & boys, and even women of mature age would not be desirable for you are doubtless aware that sufficient quickness and manual dexterity are seldom acquired except by the young.

There is an advantage to parishes in apprenticing children, namely, that they at once get rid of all chance of their becoming burdensome, the master being bound to maintain them in sickness as well as under all the chances of bad trade &c.

I. & E.S.R.O., Poor Law Records, Ref. No. ADA9/AQ2/1/18.

* * *

Wangford Union

Ilketshall Saint Margaret Parish

At a meeting of the Guardians of the Poor of the Wangford Union held at the Board Room this twelfth day of March, 1856.

It was resolved:

That William Earl, a poor person having a settlement in the parish of

SUFFOLK FARMING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Ilketshall Saint Margaret in the County of Suffolk, being desirous of emigrating to Australia under the sanction of the Emigration Commissioners, the necessary steps be immediately taken to effect the emigration and that a sum not exceeding twenty shillings be expended for such person and be charged to the said parish in pursuance of the Statute 12 & 13 Victoria, Chap. 103, Sec. 20.

(Signed) Adolphus Homes
Chairman
Robt. W. Clarke
Clerk

We, the undersigned by the majority of the Guardians for the said parish, do concur in the above resolution and in the expenditure required to carry the same into effect not exceeding the sum of twenty shillings for such emigrant.

As witness our hands.

N. C. Smith.
John Wright.

I. & E.S.R.O., Poor Law Records, Ref. No. ADA9/AQ3/1/1.

* * *

Answers of Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Unions to questions respecting migration and emigration, January 1837

Questions

5. To what extent have migration and emigration proceeded in your union?
6. Have you received satisfactory accounts, or otherwise, of the condition of the migrants and emigrants?
7. Has any sensible diffusion of the population among the parishes of your union, or to more distant parts of the country, occurred without the intervention of your board, by the unassisted exertions of the labourers?

Answers

5. To a considerable extent.
6. Remarkably satisfactory.
7. In a small degree.

Earl of Stradbroke, Chairman of Blything Union.

5. —

6. Very satisfactory accounts have been received from the migrants, as to their improved condition; and also from their employers, as to their industrious habits and orderly conduct.
7. I am told that many of our labourers are gone to the railroads; a considerable number have, without the assistance of the board, removed for the present; but it is not known where they are gone to.

R. N. Shawe, Esq., Chairman of Woodbridge Union.

5. —

6. The accounts have been satisfactory of our migrants, as far as they have gone, with the exception of one or two individuals of complaining habits.

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7. A few labourers have gone for work on railroads, but I do not think to any extent.

Major Moor, Vice-Chairman of Woodbridge Union.

5. There has been no emigration. The number of migrants sent, by permission of the Poor Law Commissioners, to Lancashire and Yorkshire, has amounted to 202* persons of all ages. The relieving officers report that about 30 families have gone away without the intervention of the board of guardians; and a considerable number of young men have also left their respective parishes, to get work elsewhere.

* About one half of this number was sent into Lancashire by Messrs. Ansell & Kersey, with the sanction of the Commissioners, but without the aid of their agent at Manchester.

6. With one solitary exception, all the accounts received have been most satisfactory.

7. The farmers now employ labourers, with much less regard to the place of their legal settlement. Many single men have gone to the railroads now in progress, or have obtained situations in and near London.

Rev. F. Calvert, Chairman of Cosford Union

5. Migration and emigration have not been carried on to great extent with us; and I fancy that I perceived, at an early day, a suspicion growing up amongst the board, that the surplus population, of which we have heard so much, would, in the end, prove more imaginary than real; whether I have been mistaken or not in this opinion, we have only had six families migrate, and nine emigrate; to which should be added 18 orphan children that have been apprenticed in Lancashire.

6. The reports, both from the emigrants and migrants, have been very satisfactory, except in one case among the latter; and in this too upon inquiry having been made, there was strong reason for suspecting that no real ground for complaint had ever existed.

7. In regard to this question, I am informed that the young men go about the country looking out for and obtaining work, quite in a different manner to what they used. One of our relieving officers informs me that in the town of Beccles there used always to be 20 or 30 men standing about; but that "they are now gone, he does not know where."

Rev. G. Sanby, Jun., Chairman of Wangford Union.

5. Burgess Rickwood, a bricklayer, and his family, have migrated to Cheshire, and about seven single men have gone to work on the Birmingham railroad. Three families, comprising 17 persons, emigrated to Van Dieman's land in October last.

6. The accounts from Burgess Rickwood have been very satisfactory; he and his family are now earning 2*l.* 3*s.* 4*d.* weekly; whereas, here, he himself worked for 15*s.* and his son for about 8*s.* per week, and at those wages they had not constant employment.

The young men on the railroad are earning, I hear, 16*s.* a week.

SUFFOLK FARMING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

7. A few young men, in addition to those mentioned above, have gone to work on the railroad voluntarily and unassisted by the parish; many labourers, who would never go into the fen for work during the winter whilst they could receive parish relief in a manner agreeable to themselves, now go many miles into that part of the parish to seek employment.

Mr. E. Curling, Guardian of Mildenhall.

From Appendix to 'Report from Select Committee on the Poor Law Amendment Act', 1838, BPP 1838, XVIII, pp. 533-6.

CHILDREN'S EMPLOYMENT ON THE LAND

Children were regularly employed on the land in and out of school terms until the passage of the Education Acts of 1870, 1873, and 1876 when they had to attend school for a minimum number of days in the year. The most common task given to children, as this account shows, was scaring crows.

			£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
<i>1843</i>								
Novbr.		Odd Men, Boys, &c.						
Dec	1	Boy Gooding 5 weeks scaring crows off B Barn Field (cash)	9	9		9	9	
	22	Boy Robinson 6 weeks scaring crows off Westrups at 1/9 (cash)	10	6		10	6	
<i>1844</i>								
July	26	Boy and Girl Man 62 days scaring birds. Cash	15	6		15	6	
Nov.	29	Boy Gooding for scaring crows off Great Field				14	0	
		Boy Man 25 days scaring crows off Bush Field				6	3	
		Cash to Mr. Man	1	0	3			
Dec.	28	Cash to Gilman 5 days	1	3		1	3	
		Boy Polkins 6 weeks. 1. 9 every week	10	6		10	6	
<i>1845</i>								
Jan	25	Cash to Girl Man 3 weeks	5	3		5	3	
Feb	7	Cash to Girl Man 10 days	2	6		2	6	
March	7	Cash to Girl Man 18 days	4	6		4	6	
	14	Cash to Girl Man 7 days	1	9		1	9	
April	18	Man on acct. of his children keeping crows	6	0				
May	9	Boy Goodwin 11 days Cash	2	9		2	9	
	2nd	Man for 3 children crowkeeping 81 in all at 5d. Cash	14	3		1	0	3
	2	Boy County 26 days Cash	6	6		6	6	
Dec	5	Cash 14. 0 Mann for 3 children						
<i>1846</i>								
Jan	16	13. 9 crowkeeping	1	7	9	1	7	9
	30	Boy Garrod crowkeeping 7 weeks 4 days	13	3		13	3	
		Mann for 2 children crowkeeping 6s. had before and 11. 9	17	9		17	9	
April	4	Boy Hackford set on in the place of Mayhew to feed sheep at 1/0 per week						
June		Now have 2s. per week & had double wages for 4 weeks in harvest						
Aug	20	Boy Goodwin 29 days	7	3		7	3	
Nov	27	Mann cash on ac/	5	0				
<i>1846</i>								
Jan	15	Girl Mann 34 days } scaring rooks	0			8	6	
"		Boy Mann 81 days }	1	3	9	1	0	3
		Cash	1	8	9	1	8	9

THE AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS

1843		
Novbr	Joseph Rush	
	This boy has 2/6 one week and 2s. the next week averaging 2s. 3d. per week	
1844		
Jan 8 to 12	This boy lost abt. 4 days from illness but no deduction was made in pay	
Sept 6	Had 12s. extra for harvest	
1845		
March 14	Turned off for a week in consequence of negligence in not looking for sheep as ordered	
Aug 15 to	Had 4/8 this week having earned 2/2 extra threshing wheat See 46 page	
Sep 19th	Was paid 6s. per week for 5 weeks which was his harvest so he had 1£ to take September 19th	
1844	Boy Coats	
	This boy has 2/6 per week. This boy lost 4 or 5 days abt. Dec. 30 but he lost them because our mare kicked him so we paid him all the same. Had double wages for 5 weeks in harvest time.	
Dec 13	From this time the boy have had 3s. per week Left the parish Dec 14th and went to live with his father at Woodbridge	
	1845	
	Boy Mayhew set on Feb. 28th	
May	Have 4s. per week & takes it as he earns it	
Aug 15th 22	Lost time in this month by reason of wet & Whitsuntide Had 6/3 because he earnit 2/3 extra, see page 46 Cash 6s. 29th 10s. Sep. 5th 8s. Sept. 12-8 and Sep. 19th 8s. making 8s. per week for 5 weeks which was his harvest	
Sep 26 / 4s. Oct 26	Turned off having told some falsehoods about some beer & from other causes Set on again and now have per week Went away April 3rd	
1846		
Jan 2	Pulling &c. 13 stetches of swedes Grinding 2½ c. of peas Cutting chaff with Woly 4 days' work	6 6 1 3 1 2 2 8
		----- 11 7 11 7
	Cash 3/6 & 8. 1	

From I. & E.S.R.O., Biddell Collection, Ref. No. HA2/B2/5, ff. 16v, 17r.

* * *

Gang Labour: Licence to a Gangmaster, 1869.

Agricultural Gangs Act, 1867.

30 & 31 Vic. cap. 130, sec. 7.

Suffolk } We, the undersigned, being two of Her Majesty's Justices of the
to wit. } Peace, in and for the County of Suffolk, in Divisional Petty Sessions, holden at the Shire Hall, Woodbridge, in the said County, in and for the Petty Sessional Division of Woodbridge, in the said County, do hereby license Joseph Addison of Tuddenham in the said County, labourer, not being a person who is licensed to sell Beer, Spirits, or any other excisable Liquor, to act as a Gangmaster under 'The Agricultural Gangs Act, 1867,' for the period of Six Calendar Months from the date hereof, due proof having been given to our satisfaction that the said Joseph Addison is of good character, and a fit person to be intrusted with the management of an Agricultural Gang. Provided always, that this License is granted on condition that the distance within which any child employed by the said Joseph Addison as such Gangmaster shall be allowed to travel on foot to his work shall not in any case exceed the distance of three miles.

SUFFOLK FARMING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Given under our hands and Seals this fourth day of February
in the year of our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and Sixty
nine at Woodbridge, in the County aforesaid.

Wm. Beeston Long
Rendlesham

By Sec. 4.—1. No child under the age of Eight years shall be employed in
any Agricultural Gang.

2. No females shall be employed in the same Agricultural
Gang with males.

3. No female shall be employed in any Gang under any male
Gangmaster, unless a female licensed to act as Gangmaster
is also present with that Gang.

N.B.—This License expires Six Months from the date.

Endorsement

Shire Hall, Woodbridge
25 March, 1869

The within named Joseph Addison was convicted of an offence under the
Gang Act, 30 & 31 Vic. c. 130, Sec. 10 by us

Rendlesham
Rolla Rouse

I. & E.S.R.O., Records deposited by Wood & Barham, solicitors, Ref. No. 50/20/16.1.

*AGRICULTURAL UNIONISM:
THE STRIKE AND LOCK-OUT OF 1874*

This strike and lock-out was the first great trial of strength between the agricultural trade unions and the farmers. It began at Exning and later spread into many other counties (see also p. 34). A letter from the Bishop of Manchester condemning the action of the farmers was published in 'The Times' on April 2, 1874. On April 16 it elicited the following reply from Lady Stradbroke.

"Henham Hall, Wangford".

My Lord,—

I apologize for intruding upon you this letter; my only excuse is that your public attack on our Eastern Counties farmers challenges replies, and that I am prepared to say a few words in their defence, and to set you right upon some points of the case on which you have evidently received erroneous information.

1. The 'lock-out' consists at present in declining to employ and pay wages to some whose intention it is to strike against their employers at any moment, and without more than a week's notice. No increase of wages has yet been demanded; the labourers have been well-paid and fully employed throughout a long winter, and had no cause for discontent; delegates have been sent down from other parts of England (chief towns), and are endeavouring to make our men dissatisfied and join their league to swell their own funds. There is no combination of employers to resist the demands of their workmen, as in the manufacturing and coal and iron districts, but the farmers in declining to engage men who have joined this

league adopt the simplest form of defence against a threatened attack, which if it came in time of hay or harvest would not only ruin the farmers, but produce scarcity and distress throughout England.

2. On the point of 'inequitable wages'.

Wages in these agricultural districts have always been regulated by the price of provisions. As the profits of the farmers have slowly increased, so have the wages of the labourers slowly, but surely and steadily. Rents have not much increased; for the last 20 years they have been much the same, while taxation on land and all landed interests (farmers and rectors included) is nearly doubled. We have had many burdens laid on us to further the interests of the commercial classes. Is it fair that these classes are now to come down upon us and rob us of the only advantages we possess – peace, quietness, and contentment?

Can you, my Lord, point out one man who has made a colossal fortune by farming? I think not; and with reference to 300-guinea horses, balls, &c., excuse me for saying that I cannot but smile at an exordium on the luxuries of landowners proceeding from the diocese of Manchester, the well-known market where all that is most costly, *recherché*, and priceless is sure to find a ready sale – that city whose wealth has been entirely created by the profits on labour, and whose extravagance and luxury have become a proverb.

Lastly, as to the rate of wages in the Eastern Counties, you are in error in supposing them to be low. The men are offered 17s. and 18s. a week all the year round, and have declined, making more than that at the present rate of weekly wages and the extra pay given for hay and harvest. You make no mention, and probably have never taken into account, the low rent of their cottages. For good houses with three bedrooms, kitchen, and parlour, and a quarter of an acre of garden, they pay only 1s. 9d. a week; for two bedrooms 1s. 6d. a week. Also you say nothing of their many Benefit Clubs, clothing, coal, and shoe clubs, &c. subscribed to unanimously and chiefly supported by their employers; their cottage garden shows and prizes; their dinners and treats at Christmas and harvest; schools for their children, which until the passing of the late Act, were kept up entirely, and many are still, by their employers and landlords. All these are benefits and comforts which are not thought of, and would not be feasible in large manufacturing districts, but which add materially to the happiness and unity of the two classes – employers and labourers.

'It is more blessed to give than to receive', and deeply shall we who have formed these clubs, and carried them out to the best of our ability, for the good of our poorer neighbours, grieve to be obliged to give them up; but this sad union of labourers against their employers will at once put an end to the harmonious and happy relations hitherto existing between farmers and landlords and their men, and I find already difficulties arising as to the payment of subscriptions to these local charities which have been cheerfully given for years. It is easy enough to sow discontent and encourage bad feelings in every class. 'It must needs be that offences come, but woe to him through whom the offence cometh.' Our labourers have hitherto been a content, peaceable, honest set of men. Delegates have now been sent down from districts like your own, where class has been fighting against class for a

quarter of a century, and have sown the first seeds of unhappiness. 'They have sown the wind; let them take heed that they do not reap the whirlwind', for in England one part of the community is so bound up in another that one member of the body cannot suffer without the whole body suffering with it. My object in writing this letter to you is to let you feel and know, my Lord, that our labourers are a much-cared-for class.

I am from the north country myself, and know what north country cottage homes are and the class who inhabit them.¹ Having now lived 20 years in the east of England, I am prepared to say, and prove if you will come down and judge for yourself, that, taking wages, rent, labour, everything into consideration, our Eastern Counties agricultural labourers are 10 per cent better off than their fellows in the north. I say nothing as to the superior sobriety, conduct, and manners of the east. Being north country myself, I blush for the drunkenness, disorder, and dirt which so much and so sadly prevail in all the northern counties. Probably if our easterns succeed in obtaining what the delegates wish them to strike for – inordinately high wages and few hours' work – we shall see the same melancholy results – miserable, unfurnished homes, squalid wives and children, a feast one day, starvation the next, and disorderly men with pipes in their mouths reeling about our calm and peaceful lanes. What a contrast from the pretty clean cottages, rosy happy children and industrious fathers, working during their leisure hours in their own neat trim gardens! My Lord, if you, as shepherd and Bishop of souls, desire the real good and happiness of a whole class, come down and judge for yourself if the agricultural labourers in this east of England will act wisely in throwing themselves into antagonism with their employers and benefactors. Far from blaming the farmers and calling them mad for resisting the spread of the Union, you would, I am sure, counsel the men to have nothing to do with it, to trust those who have supported them in sickness and distress, and who in self-interest, even putting aside all higher motives, will never trample upon a class whom they have been taught from their growth up to regard as fellow workmen. The object and mission of the Church of Christ is to preach peace and concord, but not strife and dissension. Unfortunately, your letter published in *The Times* has done more to encourage the latter than, perhaps, you may think possible. The working-class naturally say, 'Oh, if a Bishop thinks we are right to strike we must be', and fancy themselves martyrs. On the other hand, the farmers say 'The Church is always against us; they take our tithes, and do not care if we starve.' All this is mistaken, but written, and especially printed, words have immense power for good and evil. As a true friend of the labourer, whose family histories I have known and sympathized with, and for whose interest I have fought a good fight for years, I earnestly ask you to reconsider this subject, and to give good advice to those poor deluded men who are going to throw away homes, happiness, content, perhaps even country, by persisting in joining this league.

I have the honour to remain, my Lord, your obedient servant,

From 'The Times', April 18, 1874.

Augusta Stradbroke.

¹ Lady Stradbroke was the second daughter of the Reverend Sir Christopher John Musgrave, ninth baronet, of Edenhall, Cumberland.

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The foregoing letter prompted some letters of support for Lady Stradbroke, two of which are printed below. Further correspondence in 'The Times' ensued.

Royal Academy of Arts,
Burlington House, Piccadilly, W.
London. 17 April 1874.

My dear Lady Stradbroke,

I must write a line to express my hearty agreement with your letter, and my admiration at the courage with which you have challenged the Bishop to a fight at close quarters – I hear he is known as “the talking Bishop” and like most people who are always talking he talks a great deal of nonsense. It seemed to me that *The Times* *really* agreed with you, though it had not the courage to say so outright. The papers are always afraid to say anything for fear it should not be popular with those who call themselves “the people” and who are generally a clique of paid agitators with no stake in the country. I hope you may be able to beat the Union, but with bitter opponents and half hearted friends, it will be no easy task. You who I know have done so much at Henham in school, church and cottages have a right to speak if any one has. I feel very sorry you should be plunged into so unpleasant a business as, however things end, they will leave ill feeling behind, between those who hitherto have been friends. I see by the Bishop’s letter to Mr. Arch in to-day’s *Times* that he is beginning to be alarmed at the national results of his interference, and now preaches moderation and peaceful language. I think he will be generally condemned for having meddled at all.

We are all full of the budget. I don’t like it – no one will be the better for saving a farthing a pound in sugar, and I think the tax on railway travelling very unfair now taxes on horses and carriages are taken off and reduced. It might easily have come off with a surplus of 6 millions.

With kind regards to Lord Stradbroke. I remain with all admiration of your spirited rejoinder.

Yours very sincerely
E. M. Barry¹

I. & E.S.R.O., Rous Family Archives, Ref. No. HA11/B6/13.

Meeting Hill
Worstead, Norwich
April 18th 1874

My Lady,

I have been so struck with your spirited reply to the “Bishop of Manchester’s letter” that I cannot refrain from thanking your Ladyship for the excellent advice contained therein. Your forcible remarks I trust will make my Lord of Manchester *think* before he acts.

Though a perfect stranger, I hope you will not think me imprudent in

¹ E. M. Barry was the architect to the Stradbrokes, who italianized Henham Hall in the years 1858–68 and destroyed the charm of the earlier building by Wyatt. The house is now demolished.

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sending this letter to you, but so strongly did I feel the force of your remarks, that I felt I could not refrain from thanking your Ladyship.

I remain

Your humble servant
H. F. Nockall

Rt. Hon. the Countess Stradbroke
Henham, Suffolk.

I. & E.S.R.O., Rous Family Archives, Ref. No. HA11/B6/13.

John Bull Office,
6 Whitefriars Street,
Fleet Street, E.C.
April 21 1874

The Editor of John Bull (the Rev. E. A. FitzRoy) begs to ask the Countess of Stradbroke as a great favour to communicate to him from time to time any special information as to the progress of the strike in Suffolk.

I. & E.S.R.O., Rous Family Archives, Ref. No. HA11/B6/13.

FARMERS AND LABOURERS
To the Editor of *The Times*.

Sir, — In a desert of strikes and locks-out my property forms a sort of oasis. In Suffolk for many miles surrounding it general locks-out have either taken place or are impending; but in Norfolk, two miles from my house, an unasked-for increase of wages has within the last week been given.

I venture, as one of the few landlords in the district, the views of whose tenants as a body are in unison with his own as to the general inexpediency of locks-out where no advance of wages has been demanded, to make some suggestions upon the present state of things.

It is evident to us that unless some steps can be devised to put an end to the internecine war now raging in the Eastern Counties between employers and employed, some of the best bread-producing land in the kingdom will be left without labour to cultivate it, and the question now agitating the district thus assumes a national aspect.

The farmers wage war against the Agricultural Unions, but, so far as I can judge, without making any serious attempt to obtain a modification of the rules by which those associations are governed.

Farming cannot be carried on successfully without a continuous supply of labour at all seasons of the year, and cannot be left liable to the arbitrary action which those rules have set in motion against farmers.

One rule which vests all power of ordering strikes at a week's notice in the executive should be altered before arbitration can be successful.

At least one month's notice in writing should be given by either party to the other in case of an advance or lowering of wages being thought necessary. To obviate the unjust system of striking at farmers in detail a district (which in a county consisting of small parishes like this should not be less than five parishes) ought alone to have the power of action.

In case no agreement can be come to, reference might be had to a system

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of arbitration, to be established upon an agreed basis in each county, or possibly district. The grounds for any change should be set forth in writing by those desiring it.

Men should be paid by the hour or by piece-work, with the exception of special harvest arrangements, when higher wages are always paid.

It seems to me that if these – which I believe to be the principal points at issue – can be adjusted, there is no reason why immediate arbitration should not take place, under which smaller matters of detail might be arranged.

The Eastern Counties locks-out have been directed principally against those who have advised action upon the objectionable rules, and I believe that if these rules are modified, Agricultural Unions may proceed in amicable relations with employers, and without the necessity of resorting to extraneous agency.

The whole labour question as now existing must be divested of all those benevolent or charitable adjuncts which with the most praiseworthy but most mistaken views are imported into it; they only divert the real question at issue, that of wages, which of necessity must henceforth be based upon commercial principles.

I have the authority of the farmers on my property to say that the working men employed by them, whether members of Unions or not, have throughout these trying times conducted themselves in the most satisfactory manner.

I write this in the confident hope that enlightened public opinion will assist those who are endeavouring to deal fairly with the working man, and who, while desirous of avoiding locks-out and strikes, object to some of the present rules of the Agricultural Unions, which, in their opinion, are calculated to act alike injuriously to the interests of Unionists as to those of farmers.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

Edward Kerrison.

Oakley Park, Suffolk. April 17.

From 'The Times,' April 18th, 1874.

I. & E.S.R.O., Rous Family Archives, Ref. No. HA11/B6/14.

Sir Edward Kerrison's proposal received support from the Bishop of Manchester in a second letter, printed on April 20, 1874, in which he explained that he had served as an Assistant Commissioner in 1867 enquiring into the employment of women and children in agriculture in the Eastern Counties, and had seen the care which Sir Edward bestowed on his tenants and employees. Of his estate, he said, 'If it did not quite realize Lady Stradbrooke's idyllic picture, the failure was not the fault of the landowner.'

Two days later Lady Stradbrooke sent to 'The Times' a letter from the Bishop of Manchester which she had received together with her own reply, which reiterated the statements made in her previous letter. Both were printed. The Bishop's letter again referred to her picture of Suffolk as idyllic though he admitted that such conditions might well exist here and there on the big estates like that of Lord Stradbrooke. Lady Stradbrooke received further letters of congratulation.

April 22nd 1874

To The Rt. Honble.

The Countess of Stradbroke

Your Ladyship's able and truthful letter to the Bishop of Manchester is as you observe answered by the Bishop in the Times to-day.

The Bishop alludes to Mr. Purcell FitzGerald who owns only about 700 acres in Suffolk.

The mansion and a park of 138 acres and 3 farms one the Hall Farm and 2 others, this I know from my father having been his Agent some years.

Mr. FitzGerald is a kind, well meaning man, but so very undecided, and changeable as to amount to imbecility (in that respect only).¹ He is more at home in doctrinal points of religion than in opinions as to farm labourers.

This day I have sent up to Lord Rendlesham a draft of a pamphlet on the lock-out and strike of farm labourers in East Suffolk – as to houses and wages I agree with your Ladyship's view and as to the behaviour of the peasantry do entirely agree with you as to their great superiority to the Northern labourer.

I intend to prove by the population tables since and including 1801 that there now is a surplus of labourers of about 3100, being 6 to each of the 500 parishes of the County excluding 10 urban parishes.

The Earl of Stradbroke will remember my father as a large stock auctioneer and selling Catlins Butley Abbey stock as a conclusion.

I knew the Earl in the days of Sycophant, Knowsley, Melbourne and Alpheus.

If your Ladyship is disposed to remit by P. Office order anything towards expences of printing, I will send pamphlets to your order to amount.

I have the honour to remain

Your Ladyship's
obt. servt.

Wm. Cana

address

Northview,

Clayton, Manchester

I. & E.S.R.O., Rous Family Archives, Ref. No. HA11/B6/13.

Meanwhile 'The Times' carried regular reports on the dispute, recording the meetings of Unionists, the meetings of the Farmers' Defence Association, and the emigration of locked-out labourers.

The Agricultural Lock-Out:—Meetings of farmers in East Suffolk have been held at which resolutions to lock out all Union men were agreed to. On Thursday, at Woodbridge, all the labourers on strike, many accompanied by their wives and sons, all wearing blue rosettes, met on the Market-Hill. The Union agents present declared that they should receive their pay of 9s. a week for the Union one week longer than the farmers could hold out. Never had so large a crowd been seen on the Market-hill of Woodbridge. The farmers are not as yet much hampered by the strike. The land is in

¹ This view of Mr FitzGerald was shared by his brother, Edward, the poet and translator of the *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyám*.

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good order, and much of the seed corn is already in. One farmer, who has had to do some drilling, says he has done as much in six hours as his men took nine hours for. A steam plough has also been introduced, in order to dispense as much as possible with manual labour. The men conduct themselves very peaceably, and both parties appear to be equally determined to hold out. As yet the tenant-farmers have alone been seen in the front. No landlord has attended any meeting. It is, however, rumoured that one owner of a large estate in the neighbourhood of Eye is in favour of meeting the demands of the men.¹ This may be mere conjecture, derived from the fact that he has always shown himself ready to improve the position of the labourer.

From 'The Times', April 4, 1874.

A small contingent of farm labourers left Liverpool yesterday in the Allan steamer *Sarmatian*, for Quebec. The party consists of eight families, numbering 50 persons, of whom the great proportion are children. They emigrate under the auspices of the National Agricultural Labourers' Union, of which Mr Arch is the chairman. The labourers who seem to be in excellent health and most hopeful in their anticipation of success in Canada, are for the most part from the neighbourhood of Newmarket.

From 'The Times', April 17, 1874

Frederick Clifford was engaged by 'The Times' to submit regular reports from Suffolk on the progress of the dispute. The following is an extract from the report of 16 April. In its complete form it included an account of a public meeting of farmers at Newmarket two days previously, when they again repudiated the suggestion that they re-employ Unionists; a description of coprolite digging in Burwell, Cambridgeshire, just over the border from Suffolk, reprinted here since it reflected conditions that also prevailed in the mines in south-east Suffolk; a comparison between the excellent housing conditions in Burwell, where the Crown was the chief landowner, and those at Exning, partly reprinted here since Clifford's remarks prompted Lord Stradbroke to reply (see p. 151); and some revealing remarks on benefit societies which help to explain the concern of large landowners to found an all-county benefit society (see p. 152).

THE LOCK-OUT OF FARM LABOURERS (From our special reporter)

Newmarket, Wednesday

... 'Some hundreds of labourers are employed in the Fens of Cambridgeshire in coprolite digging, and this comparatively new industry competes with husbandry for labour. In Burwell, a parish adjoining Exning, I visited some of these diggings today upon land belonging to Mr Stephenson. The coprolites are a mass of petrified dung of extinct reptiles, found in the green sandstone formation, often mingled with bones and fossils. The surface soil where they are met with is black peat, which is about a foot deep. The coprolites lie here at a depth of six or eight feet, in layers about six inches thick, above the stiff blue clay, here called "gault". Fenland, the fee of which used to be worth less than 10*l.* an acre, now lets for the mere

¹ A reference to Sir Edward Kerrison.

privilege of winning the coprolites at from 70*l.* to 200*l.* an acre. When it is dug into, the peat topping is put carefully aside, and after the coprolites are extracted the ground is levelled and the peat mixed with the new surface soil. This made land – the local name for which is “slurry land” – is then worth 10*l.* more an acre as arable land than it was before. The coprolites are carefully washed to free them from the clay, and come out then like bits of blackish stone, generally rounded, from the size of a cherrystone to a pigeon’s egg, sometimes bigger. They are valuable as manure, and in a factory close by, belonging to Mr. Ball the son of the late member for Cambridgeshire, I saw the process of conversion. They are ground in mills into a very fine powder; but this is valueless for manure until it has been mixed with sulphuric acid, when the product becomes a soluble superphosphate, and is worth about 55*s.* a ton. The coprolite diggers earn 17*s.* or 18*s.* a week, and at harvest time desert the diggings for the farm. They are, in fact, agricultural labourers; but the work is much harder than that of the ordinary farm hand, though the hours are shorter, and there is a Saturday half-holiday. The result, I am told, is that the number of recruits is small, and that farm hands who have tried the work often go back to their old occupation at 13*s.* a week. Another local industry is pursued by the Fen men, who dig peat for fuel or cut sedge for thatching, and are said to earn in this way an average of 20*s.* a week. The farmers say that the existence of these two industries in the district side by side with that of agriculture proves that the rate of wages paid to the farm hands must be a fair market rate, otherwise the farm hands would seek these two employments more generally than they do. The coprolite diggers are now turning Unionists. I may add that the Fenland in Burwell, where the coprolites are won, forms part of the Great Bedford Level. There is a navigable cut into the Cam, and the land is kept drained by pumping engines, the cost of which is defrayed by a drainage rate.

Here follows a description of Burwell and its housing accommodation, and then this comparison with conditions at Exning.

Many cottages have but one bedroom. I visited one such cottage in which father, mother, and six children were compelled to herd together – one a grown-up daughter. To be sure, the loft which formed the one bedroom was twice as long as the usual run of such places. The man said he had asked his landlord to put up a partition and make another window, but in vain. In another case the woman said they had put the children upstairs, and she and her husband had slept in a bed on the brick floor below until the bottom board of the bed had fallen to pieces from damp, and then they had to go among the children again. The sanitary inspector visits these dwellings occasionally to prevent overcrowding, but the difficulty is for the poor to find other cottages, even when they are inclined to pay more rent. Some of the worst of these cottages belong to small occupiers; some are mortgaged up to the hilt, and the owners often can afford neither to rebuild nor repair. It is a hard thing, again, for the sanitary inspector to pronounce a cottage unfit for human habitation, when no better – perhaps literally no other – can be had for the family.

Another question forced upon one in these villages concerns benefit clubs. A farmer today called one of his men from the field, and this conversation followed:—"How old are you, John?" "Sixty-one next birthday, Master." "How many children have you had?" "Twelve – nine living." "You have always kept them without help from the parish?" "Yes, thank God; I never had a penny from the parish in my life." The man, as I afterwards found, had received a small money prize from the village Agricultural Society for bringing up a large family without parochial relief, and he was now earning the usual 13s. a week. "How long did you subscribe to that benefit club of yours, John?" — "Nigh upon five-and-thirty years." "It's gone now, has it not?" — "Ah, yes! That was a bitter bad job, surely!" This poor man – happily still hale and strong – had paid into the club 1s. 6d. a month out of his hard earnings – by what extraordinary thrift and self-denial one may easily imagine with his large family – and now all was lost. But for the sentiment of the thing he might as well have been idle and improvident; and if the children for whom he had worked so hard could not support him his only prospect in old age was the workhouse. The club had "broke up", and he tried to tell us how and why. The story need not be repeated; but that, said my companion, "is the history of three-fourths of the benefit clubs about here."¹

To Frederick Clifford's remarks on housing accommodation at Exning, Lord Stradbrooke framed the following reply.

Sir,

Your printed letter on the subject of the locked out agricultural labourers at Newmarket, has just been placed in my hands. You assume, on what evidence I know not, that I am ignorant of the condition of the labourers in the parish of Exning. Now Sir, I have been a large farmer for 47 years, never occupying less than 1000 acres and sometimes 1500. It would indeed be a disgrace if I were not intimately acquainted with every thing connected with agriculture. Whether as to valuing a farm, determining what amount of wages were proper, as well as all the contingencies to which a tenant is liable from bad seasons or excessive imports, I am not only well acquainted with the character of the cottages in East Suffolk, many of which I should take pleasure in shewing you on various estates, but I have often seen the cottages at Exning, and deplore their wretched condition. I know a large farm between Newmarket & Exning, let for £3 per acre: I believe I know of farms between Exning & Ely let for £4 per acre; the land here varying from 20 shgs. to 38 shgs per acre. My opinion is that farmers can pay 14 shgs. per week to their men more easily in the former district than in the latter. Here they receive 13 shgs. during a long winter & now 14 shgs. for ordinary work, and more if they will accept piece work and give up their Union tickets. A man must be very ignorant if he believes that the question at issue rests on these two payments. The printed rules, which all Union men possess, and the violent and blasphemous language used at their meetings tell a

¹ Frederick Clifford's reports to *The Times* were subsequently published in book form in *The Agricultural Lock-out of 1874*. To this paragraph in the book he added this footnote – 'I myself,' writes a correspondent, 'have heard just such a tale scores of times, and this is exactly what has led to the establishment of the Suffolk Benefit Society'.

SUFFOLK FARMING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

very different story. Two foolish young men here were so excited by their speeches that on their way home they burnt down two wheat stacks, the produce of 31 acres, besides some straw, and 2 or 3 sheep & lambs. In page 4 of your letter, you refer to the much maligned paid agitators; they are always, I believe, strangers where they speak, consequently it is almost impossible to discover their characters. At Bungay, 12 miles from hence, one of these heroes appeared; fortunately he was known to one accidental listener. He was obliged to confess his name and was then told that he had been convicted and punished for getting his own daughter with child. This upset the business & he was driven off. At Woodbridge one of the most enthusiastic speakers turned out to be a broken down farmer who had been thrice a bankrupt, and left his creditors in the lurch.

Sir, you probably may have been present in the North of England on pay day; if so you must have witnessed the conduct and heard the language of those highly paid men. In Suffolk it has always been peaceable and respectable. If you know the cottages of the men employed in iron works or coal pits I should like to compare them with our clean and comfortable dwellings with the garden attached, rent varying from £2. 15s. 0d. to £4. 0s. 0d.; but in villages without a garden often £5. In the North may I say that the charge is from £6 to £10 but I am no authority for their rents.

Tusting that you will obtain the printed rules of Unionists

I am Sir

Yr obed sert.

Stradbroke

I. & E.S.R.O., Rous Family Archives, Ref. No. HA11/B6/22.

Before the strike and lock-out took place, many gentry in the county had been alarmed at the precarious financial basis of some of the village benefit societies, to which labourers subscribed during their working life in order to receive an allowance in sickness and a pension when they retired. They proposed to replace the many village societies with a single Suffolk Provident Society. Undeterred by the strike, Lord Stradbroke convened a meeting on the subject for 21 April 1874 at Ipswich.

Copy

County Meeting

My Lord,

To the Earl of Stradbroke

In prospect of the meeting called by you on Tuesday next, I write these few lines.

It is impossible that anything can be more disappointing and discouraging than the present state of the labouring class in East Suffolk, so detrimental to themselves, so embarrassing to employers, and the more to be deplored as agriculture generally prospers & the working-man's condition greatly improved, in comparison with former years. They seem by the reports in the public journals to listen implicitly to any idle tale of doubtful & imaginary advantage, & receive money from strangers, from week to week, to eat the bread of idleness.

Anything promoted on Tuesday to encourage the deserving laborer in Benefit Clubs or kindred objects will be just another symbol that the landlords & tenantry are continuously his best friends, & ready at all times to

THE AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS

promote his welfare. But, my Lord, *something more is wanted*. The present aspect of this eventful crisis, if not changed for the better, will increase in intensity for the worse, & the position become more unfavourable for settlement.

I therefore take the liberty of calling your attention to Sir E. Kerrison's letter in the 'Times', dated 17 April, respecting arbitration, & hope it may be agreeable to you to suggest to the meeting, whatever else may be done, that Sir E. Kerrison's proposition, as expressed in the letter, & to be resolved by the meeting, be accepted, & that he be requested to take such steps as may seem best to him to promote a final & advantageous arrangement for all parties.

I regret I am prevented having the opportunity of attending the meeting. I apologise for thus expressing my sentiments.

I am, my Lord,
Etc.
signed W. Long

From 'The Ipswich Journal', Tuesday, April 21, 1874.
I. & E.S.R.O., Rous Family Archives, Ref. No. HA11/B6/14

33 Hyde Park Gardens, W.
Apr. 20/74

Dear Lord Stradbroke,

I hope to be at Ipswich tomorrow but in case of being prevented I write to assure you how heartily I am with you in this matter of a Friendly Sty. I suppose the contributions of landlords, farmers & others will be invited to supplement the otherwise inadequate contributions of the labourers either to the Post Office or other satisfactory bank for granting super-annuation annuities, so that the man being a farm labourer who can contribute enough to buy (say) 3s. per week super-annuation ann^y will have (say) 2s. per week added to it, he continuing to reside in this county & to abstain from joining any society similar to the Agricultural Union in its objects. These are my ideas in the rough, but the rules wd. have to be drawn up with great care & forethought, especially taking into consideration the not improbable rise of wages, perhaps to some considerable extent. A professional actuary ought to be employed in connexion with a Committee.

Yours very truly,
E. Hollond.¹

I. & E.S.R.O., Rous Family Archives, Ref. No. HA11/B6/14.

The Old House,
Carr St. Ipswich.

To The Rt. Hon. The Earl of Stradbroke

Dear Lord Stradbroke,

A severe attack of indisposition which compels me to address you through an amanuensis leaves me no hope of being able to attend your meeting at the Town Hall on Tuesday.

I am desirous to place before your notice the Rules of the Mutual Assurance Benefit Society of Ipswich which has been established now nearly forty

¹ The Reverend Edmund Hollond, M.A., of Benhall Lodge.

years and with which I have been more or less associated since its formation.

Its results have been during that period largely beneficial to a gradually increasing number of members beginning with about 150 of the class of agricultural laborers and domestic servants in the country, it has now reached to about 350 and by its gradual annual receipts over expenditure has accumulated about £6500 placed in the funds.

Some of the members of the Committee amongst whom are a few of the original promoters are of opinion that the time has arrived at which by careful analysis, its true position may be determined, and place us in a position to secure by sound professional advice the knowledge of whether and to what extent its benefits might be enlarged & be available over a much wider range, especially having regard to the rural districts. The towns and districts immediately adjoining are comparatively amply supplied by the various Lodges of the Odd Fellows and Foresters Societies who have throughout the County something like 50 separate Lodges consisting of from 100 to 500 individual members and as these societies are neither of them of the slightest political character and as their management is directly in the hands of the local officers of the various bodies their disbursements are economically made and their management so popular that it is only in the local agricultural districts that the 'Ipswich Benefit Club' can expect much increase.

In the earliest and most successful of these, the 'Orwell Lodge', of which I have been since the commencement a Treasurer and Trustee, the number of their members are now 500 and their funded capital £10,000.

Presuming that one portion of the business on Tuesday will be to appoint a general Committee and possibly local Committees, it strikes me as advisable to seek from all existing Societies of a similar character in the eastern part of this County such communication with your Committee as may secure for the benefit of each the accumulated information which local Committees may effectually render, that some general action may be taken in harmony with all.

I remain yours respectfully,

J. Allen Ransome.

(Chairman of Ips. Committee)

I. & E.S.R.O., Rous Family Archives, Ref. No. HALL/B6/14.

The meeting at Ipswich on 21 April was reported in 'The Times' on the following day.

At Ipswich yesterday a large county meeting, convened by Lord Stradbroke, Lord Lieutenant of Suffolk, was held for the purpose of establishing a Labourers' Benefit Society for the county. The meeting comprised Lord Gwydyr, Lord Rendlesham, M.P., Mr. F. S. Corrance, Sir George Broke-Middleton, and others of the landowners and tenant farmers. Letters of apology were read from Lord Mahon, M.P., Lord Henniker, Lord Waveney, Sir William Rose and others.

The Chairman (Lord Stradbroke) briefly explained that the object was to establish a society which would save the industrious labourer from

THE AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS

spending his old days in the workhouse, which was in too many instances the case under existing circumstances.

Lord Rendlesham, M.P., moved—

"That it is expedient to establish for this county on a sound basis a benefit society for the purpose of assisting the labouring classes to provide for themselves a comfortable maintenance in sickness and provision for age, to be called the Suffolk Benefit Society."

He replied to those who thought the present time inopportune that there was now a great amount of feeling in favour of it, and it was best to strike while the iron was hot. He believed the labourers were most anxious for such a society, and that a vast amount of good might be accomplished by it.

Mr Deck of Blyford, a tenant farmer, seconded the motion and it was carried almost unanimously, only two or three hands being held up in opposition.

Other resolutions were passed asking landowners and occupiers to subscribe towards the capital and become honorary members, and appointing a council to frame a scheme and draw up rules.

From 'The Times', April 22, 1874.

The following papers, illustrating the later discussions, are among the collection of family documents of Lord Stradbroke. The Suffolk Provident Society was finally founded and registered in April 1875. Its address was 71 Berners Street, Ipswich, Lord Waveney was the first President, and Samuel Waters the first Secretary. Its present address is 9 Friars Road, Ipswich.

I must apologize for this long letter

Oakley Park,
Scole, Norfolk.
May 21

Dear Lady Stradbroke,

Although we may have started with a similar object in a different way possibly we may now agree entirely on our way out of this difficulty.

For many years I have been concerned with the extraordinary organization of the Trades Unions. I was certain therefore that if the Agric. Union were once attacked, the other Unions would come to the rescue – and now, the public having taken up the men's side, the fight is between 1 million 500 thousand agriculturists, landowners and farmers & all labourers of both sexes against the remaining 24 million. No doubt a certain number of men will & have left the Union but others are continually joining. In 4 parishes, where Unionism was almost unknown, as the lock-out advanced about 100 men joined (in Suffolk) & are weekly joining.

You may be sure that I would have nothing to do with the Union whilst its objectionable *rules remained* – which I have worked hard to get withdrawn, & as you see they are withdrawn. It remains therefore for every one to consider how, without bowing to the Union in any way, it can be put on a proper basis. I have wished all along to be present at some of the Union meetings to combat the false statements made by the speakers but the farmers (my tenants) seemed so anxious that I should not go, that even at

my own door I am obliged to hear of these things being said & have no opportunity to contradict them.

This is a state of things that may be perpetual to us all, & on each farm a sort of agitation be going on – until the humbling of occupier or landlord.

The only way I can see to counteract this is by landlords and farmers combining to form a Benefit Society (but allowing the delegates to do it) in connexion with the Union – *now deprived of its objectionable rules*.

The clergy have been obliged to keep aloof & are I regret to say in consequence losing all power with the labourers, who either go to chapel or nowhere. The clergymen could be let in in their way & all could attend the "Benefit Society of the Union".

There are as you probably know *only 11 whole County Benefit Clubs*, 2 have this year been found insolvent. The Essex, established in 1848, own £79,000. The Dorset, established 27 years ago, own £2000, & this is only for sickness pay. West Suffolk is solvent, after 27 years, but has only 800 members. And the whole tendency of the labouring population in their present migratory disposition is opposed to anything but *affiliation* Societies like the Manchester United Foresters &c which have Clubs everywhere. I do not think any great number will ever join the County Society, for the reason that it cannot be *well affiliated*. With 110,000 agricultural labourers in Union, there would be no fear of supporters to such a movement as I describe, & all the *youngest men belong* to the Union. Just now I could have power to induce hundreds to join such a society – I am quite aware that it will be a pill to swallow, but what other plan can be suggested by which the people (employers) who ought to have [full power] can obtain that [position] again. I see no other plan. I tried by offering £1000 to 5 parishes 3 years ago to get hold of the young men for superannuation allowances. I was met by "You want to save the rates & more especially you want to keep us here". "We will only subscribe to Clubs which allow us to migrate".

I have heard that you and Lord Stradbroke are not disinclined to such a movement as I describe & which for more than 6 months I have been endeavouring to get people to agree to. A large placard announcing a monster meeting for June 20 at Manchester in support of the Agric. Labourers shows that the leaders of the League are preparing for a long struggle.

Norfolk entirely declines to lock out. My property runs for $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles alongside that County, and the way the farmers in Norfolk support the Suffolk farmers is to give 1 shilling a week more than we do to Union or Non Union men.

Yours sincerely,

Edward Kerrison

P.S. I intend to publish a statement with reference to Benefit societies in a short time, but wrote you first. Today's papers together with other private information more important than any I have received yet leads me to think that the lock out is not far off an end on the original basis of the withdrawal of rules which I have, as you know, all along contested for.

I. & E.S.R.O., Rous Family Archives, Ref. No. HA11/B6/13.

THE AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS

Proposed the following gentlemen to act provisionally as a council, till 24 names are suggested to form the permanent council—

Earl of Stradbroke, Lord Gwydir, Ld. Rendlesham, Sir George Broke, Mr. Corrance, Archdeacon Groome, Mr. Lomax, Mr. Holland, Mr. Deck, Mr. Sherwood, Mr. Knatchbull, Mr. Shepherd, Mr. French, Mr. Brooke.

I. & E.S.R.O., *Rous Family Archives, Ref. No. HA11/B6/14.*

Some suggestions for forming a Provident Society for agricultural laborers in Suffolk.

It appears to me that under the local circumstances this is a large & rather difficult question, not by any means insurmountable if you will go to the root of the matter, but requiring some energy & ability to cope with—

It is said that 3 out of 4 of the old local benefit clubs have broken up. It would seem that the Guardians are in the habit of supplementing the club payment in such a manner as to put a premium on improvidence. It is evident also from the Local Government Blue Books (I have not the last to refer to) that the Poor Law administration in some of the Unions of Suffolk is very lax in outrelief & therefore very bad: e.g. Sudbury, Mildenhall & Thingoe. The best administered appear to be Ipswich, Hartismere & Wangford.

One great difficulty in establishing such a Society on sound bases is that the wages of the unskilled laborer are hardly enough to allow of his payments being sufficient, or at least *were* not until lately. The 'Oddfellows' & the 'Foresters' for instance contain very few agricultural laborers for that reason, but there are other points that if properly provided against might enable many a struggling club to pay its way, especially with present wages—

- A. Let the numbers & area be large enough.
- B. Let gentlemen & farmers join as hon. members & look into the acct. a little & the management. Their subscriptions may go towards the expense of the annual meeting & their countenance & assistance in their several localities may almost insure stability.
- C. Let the management be strict & sound, no impostors on sick list, no meeting at public houses but rather the village school, & plenty of young members induced to join.
- D. Let the Guardians make a distinction between those who have belonged to clubs & those who haven't, in their administration of relief.

I. & E.S.R.O., *Rous Family Archives, Ref. No. HA11/B13/3.*

VI Marketing

AN IMPROVED CORN AND CATTLE MARKET AT SAXMUNDHAM

Although undated, this proposal for forming a company of shareholders, to improve the market facilities at Saxmundham and provide accommodation for public meetings, evidently dates from about 1836 since the company was to come into existence in 1837. It bore fruit between 1842 and 1846 when the Bell Inn (now a Trust House) was rebuilt by a company of shareholders and the present Corn Exchange and Market Hall were erected with tall stucco arcade, and decorated with the arms of the Longs of Hurts Hall. William Long, esquire, was a signatory to this prospectus. Prospectus for enlarging and improving the Corn and Cattle Market, in the town of Saxmundham, for establishing an annual bullock and lamb fair, and for erecting public rooms capable of affording ample accommodation to such public meetings as may be held in the town of Saxmundham, in the County of Suffolk.

The town of Saxmundham is surrounded by a highly respectable and wealthy neighbourhood, by a rich grazing and corn district, comprising several large flock farms, and is situate in the centre of the Eastern Division of the County. The high road from London to Yarmouth passes through it, and it is distant only five miles from the wharf, at Iken, and four from that of Snape, and seven from the port of Aldeburgh, in which places a great proportion of the corn grown in the adjacent country is shipped. Owing to the convenient situation of Saxmundham and the excellence of the roads by which it is approached, the corn and seed market held there has, for many years, much increased in business; and the exports at Aldeburgh are well known to equal those of Woodbridge and Ipswich. From the advantage of local situation and other causes, Saxmundham has been often selected for public meetings, and if proper accommodation were afforded, there can be little doubt but that a considerable proportion of the public business of the Eastern Division of the County would be transacted there. All persons acquainted with the advance which Saxmundham and its neighbourhood have made within a few years in their agricultural and commercial relations, must be convinced that a large proportion of the trade of the surrounding country is connected with the prosperity of the place, and it is therefore considered advisable to increase the accommodations to the public in proportion to the growing importance of the town. That the agricultural interest of the Kingdom has been suffering under much depression for some years past is well known, and the improvement of the local districts, the enlargement of their markets, and the establishment of fairs for the sale of cattle, cannot fail to be productive of considerable relief, and with the increased prosperity of the district, it is reasonable to look to the introduction

of manufacturing establishments. Several meetings of the landed proprietors, merchants, farmers, graziers, tradesmen and other persons in Saxmundham and the neighbourhood have been held to discuss the subject of these improvements, and an unanimous opinion has been expressed, that it is of the greatest importance to carry them into execution without delay. A provisional committee has, therefore, been appointed to make certain inquiries and reports as to the best sites for the market, of the probable expense of erecting the same, and of the income which may be expected to be derived from it. It has been calculated by an eminent surveyor, under the direction of the committee, that an outlay of three thousand pounds will be required to carry into effect the above objects: and plans and estimates, formed on that scale, have been prepared. Presuming that the improvements produce the expected increase of business, the returns will yield a liberal remuneration for the capital embarked in the undertaking, independent of the general benefit and convenience to the public.

IT IS THEREFORE PROPOSED

To enlarge and improve the corn, seed, and cattle market of Saxmundham; to establish an annual bullock and lamb fair, and to afford necessary and convenient accommodation for all public meetings and societies of the district, and the Eastern Division of the County.

That a capital of three thousand pounds be subscribed, to be divided in shares of five pounds each, and that a power be vested in a committee of management, with the consent of two-thirds of the shareholders, to increase the number of shares at such times, and upon such terms, and to such an extent as may be agreed upon; the entire number of shares, with the original six hundred, not to exceed eight hundred.

That there shall be a committee of management, consisting of thirteen persons, holding not less than five shares each, and five to be of the quorum, who shall be empowered to act, and that such committee shall have the power to purchase and take a conveyance of all buildings and lands for the purpose of securing sites for the intended market and public rooms, and to erect and build a suitable and convenient corn exchange, offices and public rooms, to be vested in trustees for the benefit of the shareholders; and that such committee shall have the management of the affairs of the establishment. That the shares of the establishment shall be transferable and be personal estate, and that any shareholder ceasing to hold five shares, shall be immediately disqualified from acting as one of the committee.

That the committee of management shall meet to examine the accounts at the public rooms, annually, on the first Thursday in July in each year, at eleven o'clock in the forenoon, and certify the same preparatory to a general meeting of the shareholders, to be held annually on the following Thursday, for the purpose of receiving such report, declaring a dividend, and transacting all necessary business.

That the market shall commence at two o'clock, and from the first day of November to the first day of March, shall close at four o'clock, and for the remainder of the year at six o'clock.

That the members of the committee shall be elected for one year, one-third shall retire by rotation and shall be re-eligible.

That the shares shall be paid by five several monthly instalments of one pound per share, commencing on the first day of January, one thousand eight hundred and thirty-seven, and in case of non-payment of any instalment for a space exceeding one month, the share to be forfeited for the benefit of the establishment.

That the committee shall have the power of making bye-laws, from time to time, for the regulation and management of the establishment.

That a deed of settlement be prepared by the secretary and solicitor of the establishment, to contain all necessary and proper provisions for the purchase and conveyance of houses and lands, and the enfranchisement of the copy-hold parts by the committee, and for erecting and building a corn exchange, offices, and public rooms, and renting and leasing the same; also, with the consent of two-thirds of the shareholders, for the exchange, mortgage or sale thereof, and for the general regulation and management of the establishment and the security of the shareholders.

That the following gentlemen be the committee from the eighteenth day of August, one thousand eight hundred and thirty-six to the first Thursday in July, one thousand eight hundred and thirty-seven, to carry into full effect the foregoing rules and regulations, and to act thereon as they may think most advisable for establishing and forwarding the interests of the establishment, with power to add to their number, and that five of them be of the quorum, and that the chairman have the casting vote.

Committee

Sir Charles Blois, bart.	Edward Fuller, Esq.
John Moseley, Esq.	James Newson, Esq.
Henry Bence Bence, Esq.	The Rev. L. R. Brown, Clk.
William Long, Esq.	Mr. George Mingay.
Robert Colmer, Esq.	Mr. Richard Fennell.

Prospectuses may be had at the office of

Thomas Mayhew, Esq., Saxmundham,
Secretary and Solicitor to the establishment.

I. & E.S.R.O., Vernon-Wentworth Family Archives, Ref. No. 50/21/6.1.

THE COASTAL TRADE IN FARM PRODUCE FROM SUFFOLK

The following letters are a sample taken from the correspondence of the firm of Mingay and Rope. The Ropes were merchants and shipowners on the Alde River from 1766 to 1881 and had lived on this coast since the seventeenth century (see W. G. Arnott, 'Alde Estuary', Ipswich, 1952, pp. 44-5). The letters printed here illustrate their business in transporting farm produce as well as other goods from Suffolk to London and the north. George Rope (1814-1913), the writer of the letters, controlled affairs at Iken, Snape Bridge, and Blaxhall, G. W. Mingay was in charge at Orford, while George Mingay, the recipient of the letters, was stationed in London. George Rope also farmed at Blaxhall and Sudbourne. For extracts from one of his harvest books, see p. 43. A notable photograph of him in old age is reproduced in G. E. Evans, 'Ask the Fellows who Cut the Hay' (1956).

Blaxhall, Jany. 18th, 1845

My dear Uncle,

I am very glad to tell you the *Coaster* got off on Friday night without any damage, they filled the *John & Mary* and *Robt. & Mary* out of her which was a very fortunate thing for had she had 10 tons more coals in she would not have come off – for she only just dragged off as the tide was coming down at sea, the weather was very favourable which was fortunate – today we have had a breeze. Lucock got her ashore entirely through carelessness for there never was a finer chance to take her in, plenty of water and a fair wind, and just enough to fill the sails. I do not know what the men will expect. I think that there was about 9 or 10 of them beside the crew and pilots, but most likely you will hear from G.W.M. who knows better about them than I do as he set them on. He took Saml. Whyard on board when he first went down and put him in charge and to employ what quantity he thought would be wanted. I think George could not have done better for Saml. is a good fellow.

We have been very busy lately as you may imagine from the arrival of the vessels. Mr. Barthorpe has been a good shipper – his business is worth our attention. We have sold him 10,000 Engl. Cakes lately, and must have taken as much as 30 or 40 lasts corn. He wants us to bring a cargo of London muck down for him, which I rather hesitated about, thinking it was a nasty thing for the vessels, but the captains tell me that plenty of corn vessels take it and even new vessels, and that it is better than chalk for a vessel. He would give one of our sloops £9 for the cargo and work it all out himself. The *Perseverance*'s cargo would be about double that sum and think I will offer to bring him one cargo by her it would pay the wages and fill the beef tub. I made enquiry about Nottage's wife coming down. I find she came by the Ipswich steamer, I felt sure Nottage would not bring her particularly as I told him not.

Buckingham has some carrots for you which I beg you will do me the favor to accept and hope you will find them good. We have made every arrangement for changing the wharf – have got cards and circulars printed for distributing here and so has Mr. Hartley in London. I shall advertise it next week. I thought it best not to make much noise about it till just before the time, as it might make a confusion with the goods. I can get no answer from Mr. Barber about Mr. Packard's things that are lost. I have written him again. Our Profit & Loss book now stands thus

288.	11	3
233.	6	9

55. 4 6 loss which is better than it has done since July – what we are going to do now remains to be proved.

I regret to say Mrs. Rope is very poorly not having been up these ten days, but think she is rather better today, therefore hope she is improving. Hoping my aunt is better and you and Carry well, and with kindest remembrances in which Mrs. Rope and James unite with me

Believe me my dear Uncle,
Yours very sincerely,
Geo. Rope

Sunday morning

I have recd. yours of yesterday and will see about insurances immediately any time before the 26th Jany. will do.

Yours very sincerely,

G.R.

Saxmundham, Dec. 31st, 1846

My dear Uncle,

With pleasure I recd. yours of the 28th inst. I quite agree with the arrangement you made in your note to Mr. Woodley about the *Idas* and wish we may meet with a customer. The *Idas* cargo of corn will pay well. I will inform you the result as soon as I get the a/c. The *Sophia* I expect will be up for next Monday and hope to a good trade altho' bought high the advance since will bring it all right.

I did very little yesterday but have taken several samples today not liking to be out of stock. The *Ann* is now at Orford going to take in 200 sacks potatoes and 100 coo. W. Peas from T. Crisp which will finish her up. The *Plough* will also take 200 sacks as soon as we get enough in to send her away, but fear if this should be a sharp night we shall be stopped at Iken Cliff. There was a good deal of floating ice today.

The *Clementina* was at Cob Island at one o'clock today I hope she will get up but am rather doubtful - but Burrows has orders to go back to Orford if he finds he cannot. I understand the price of wheat at Liverpool is up 4/- pr. qr. last mket. day notwithstanding the large supply. Our prices were very high here today, red wheat 30/- to 36/6, barley 26/- to 27/6 & one or two parcels at 28/-, but I did not give the extreme prices. I am puzzled but do not like to be quite out of stock. I understand that Mrs. Nottage has recd. £15 from his club which is a good thing for her. Will there be a chance of getting the little boy into the Merchant Seamen's School? Am glad to hear you think Clutton is improved since he was in London. I hope he will get on.

I understand Mrs. Hunt's Stratford farm will be to let at Michaelmas if so it would be a very nice little farm for G.W.M. if you thought proper. If he can get the refusal of it but expect there will be great competition for it as it is a nice place. Wishing you, my aunt & Carry a happy new year and many of them.

Believe me to remain

Yours very sincerely,

Geo. Rope

I believe Buckingham is down.

Blaxhall, Jany. 6th, 1847

My dear Uncle,

With much pleasure I recd. yours of the 2nd inst. and have now recd. a letter from Buckingham who is safely arrived at Middlesbro' he went first to Hartlepool and finding he could not get any good coal there under three weeks he came back and went to Middlesbro' and expected to get load the day he wrote viz. 2nd inst. with South Kelloe W.E. - he says a good coal - the price is 24/6 pr. chaldron.

The *Idas'* cargo of corn pays well viz. £67 6. 0. The *Sophia's* was all sold yesterday except the W. Peas and by what I can see it will clear nearly or quite £100 which is well. The *Ann* is now at the harbour ready to go to sea. She has two rooms full of potatoes & peas of Mr. T. Crisp's therefore she has only about 23 lasts of our corn in. The *Plough* is also load except one room of potatoes which expect she will take in this morning at Orford Quay and we have now begun the *Clementina* so we have been rather busy in the corn trade lately. These are wonderful prices for barley – but really it is getting very short. Very many farmers in this neighbourhood have sold all and I am told in the woodlands¹ in several parishes they have not enough for seed.

I observe that the factors are going to charge interest on there sales where the cash is paid. I have written to Mr. Woodley to ask him what amount he will require in his hands to save us from the interest. We have generally had a balance in his hands of £400 or £500, sometimes more. You are quite right in your remark about the corn trade should a reaction take place. There will most likely be a good deal lost. It is impossible for us or anybody else to judge as to the prices of corn. We might have done better had we bought more, but I have acted according to the best of my ability and I am quite sure that your advise has been intended for the best therefore I am perfectly satisfied.

I should certainly like to make up our loss last year – but I shall act very cautiously now. I suppose we had better offer the *Idas* this time of coming home by auction. George W. Mingay of course must be the auctioneer. I will have the handbills circulated to Southwold etc. etc. Will it be as well to advertise in the Journal? I will send you a copy of the handbill or advertisement before it is printed. I am very sorry to hear you are troubled with the tumour at the back of your neck again. I hope the lancing will do it good & that I shall hear in your next it has subsided. I saw Mr. Artis yesterday to ask him about Mrs. Hunt's farm thinking as he lived many years in one adjoining he was likely to know. He says that he has many times in his life said that if he could get that with Mantle's which joins, about 90 acres, he would not change with anybody. I understand that that farm Mr. Moseley intends to lay to it and take 14 acres away which lays in Glemham but this cannot be done till after three years as Mantle has a lease that does not expire till then. I am told there is about 150 acres of Mrs. Hunt's – taking the 14 away makes it 136 with 90 to be added in three years. He says with the present price of corn & stock it could not be taken comfortably under 10£ pr. acre which would take about £1360 or £1400 now and £900 when the other farm is laid to it but perhaps things may be lower then. I will make more enquiry about it. With our united kind regards to all. Believe me to remain my dear Uncle,

Yours very sincerely,

Geo. Rope.

Saxm. 7 Jany. 1847

I. & E.S.R.O., Ref. No. 50/23/1.12 (1, 3, 4)

¹ An interesting example of an old, but once common, usage. "Woodland" signifies "Central Suffolk" or "High Suffolk."

VII Suffolk Farmers at Home and Abroad

The following letters were written between January 1852 and December 1865 by Mr Charles Cordy of Searson Farm (now Searson's), Trimley St Mary, to his brother John Cordy who emigrated from Hacheston to New Zealand and settled on a farm near Christchurch.

Mr. Jn^o Cordy, Bridle Path, Heathcote River, Christchurch, Port Littleton, New Zealand.

Dear Jn^o,

I was much delighted at the sight of your handwriting on the 8th of this month and extremely anxious to ascertain the information it contained. I took it to my son Chas. house and had Emma read it aloud over their kitchen fire. Now I have your address I will not lose much time before writing to you. In the first place I shall reply to the contents of your letter and then proceed to give you some idea of what has taken place since you left and also what is now going on. I have written to Mr. H. Largent hoping to succeed better thro' his influence than my own with Mr. H. Keer. At present I have not had any direct answer from him but he told my son Chas. he believed every thing had already been settled and paid for – but shd any cash be forthcoming I will immediately attend to your wishes respecting a Y.L. plough,¹ &c. but otherwise I cannot afford to buy one as I have had so many heavy demands upon my purse of late. Your letter is dated June 10 and I presume therefrom that you had previously written and sent by Miss Ransome when the Travencore returned which I have not yet had although a letter arrived same day as above addressed to my wife by your Mrs. Cordy dated April. Whether you have done wisely in embarking your all in Mr. Self's land I cannot say. It appears to me a hasty step and ties you to a certain locality when you might hereafter hear of others offering greater advantages. We hear of gold mines now-a-days and nobody knows what. At any rate I think I shd have kept my breeches pocket close buttoned up as long as ever I could (how like my brother Chas. you will say) besides you think sheep & cattle will be very prolific. Meat is dear and wool excellent; surely this employment is more to your taste and here you are practically experienced, more so than at digging and ploughing and then it is much less laborious, but I hope you may be right and by this time are reaping a good reward for your money and labour. How you are to harvest, thrash, get to market &c., &c., remains a mystery to me but necessity is full of invention. It is said of Columbus, the discoverer of America, that he never knew the meaning of the word 'impossibility' so I hope these seeming difficulties may by industry and perseverance be easily overcome. With

¹ As a result of a customer's complaint in 1843, the firm of Ransomes brought out their famous Y.L. (Yorkshire Light) plough, still selling in large numbers. It had iron beams and handles. Its special feature, however, was the trussed beam.

SUFFOLK FARMERS AT HOME AND ABROAD

regard to Mr. Arnott or Mr. Joselyn being spoken to upon the subject you name, I think wd. be very wrong, but if I shd ever be consulted, you may rely upon my using every influence in my power for your interest. You will be surprised to hear of the death of my brother in law, Mr. John Keer, which took place last March. I saw him at Wantisden a few days before. He got immensely stout with his inactive habit which ended in water on the chest. The farm is given up and Mr. Jn^o Lewin of Hollesley has hired it.¹ The horses sold high at the sale. I bought 4 for my sons, one mare 5 yrs. old for 38 guineas. I have hired the farm lately occupied by Mrs. Churchman in this parish for my son Chas. for 12 yrs. upon a corn rent much as my own. It is in desperate trim and required a great deal of money to be expended in labour &c. to make it look as I wish to see it. Chas. is very industrious and you may imagine frequently requires his father's assistance in more ways than one. It adds much to our comfort having him so near us. John is now farming on his own account at Felixstowe and assisting me at home as usual so you may suppose we are all in pretty full collar now. You will, I am sure, be deeply grieved at what I am about to communicate with respect to my brother in law, Mr. R. Bond. He is obliged to give up his business. His bankers refused to allow his acct. with them to continue as it had been considerably overdrawn. Consequently he has made an assignment to them, Mr. W. Toller and Mr. Fras. Keer who are his principal creditors. He is to continue at Hacheston till Michs. at which time we hope some situation will be found for him but at present nothing is done and I fear there is great difficulty in meeting with such as we wish. His son, Robert, is wanting the same thing and Chas. has actually taken his passage to Australia so you see we are not without trouble and trial. What havoc a few months has made amongst my relatives & friends. I feel I have much to be thankful to Almighty God for in my own family matters. Altho' I am spared these trying reverses of fortune which others experience I am not foolish enough to attribute it to my merit or deserving of my own but entirely to the blessing of God.

I remain my dear brother,
Yours most sincerely & affectionately,

Jany. 20th, 1852.

Charles Cordy

My dear brother,

Your desire for one of Ransome's Y.L. ploughs² having been communicated to Mr. Sam^l Toller he has most kindly commissioned one, to get the Ransomes to send 2 ploughs (properly packed and directed) to London and cause them to be placed on board a vessel going to the colony as a present to you from him. He says 'I have said 2 ploughs because at first I thought of sending only one and paying the freight but it afterwards occurred to me that it might not be proper to do so and if John has 2 new ones he will be enabled to sell his present ones to pay the freight'. I acted accordingly and found that the plough wd. cost about £8. I have added £2 from my own

¹ This is Wantisden Hall farm. Mr Lewin, or his father, gave evidence before Lord Wynford in 1836, see p. 94 above.

² See *supra*, p. 164.

purse and Messrs. Ransomes £1 from theirs 'for old acquaintance sake' to give you a supply of shares and the other wearing parts which I hope will make an acceptable present. They were in London 3 months waiting the sailing of a ship direct to Canterbury Settlement; they are now on board the 'John Taylor' and I hope will reach you safely. I have just recd. a letter as follows. 'The shippers could not well make the freight payment here and they have charged a high rate of freight.' What Mr. Toller will say to this I don't know; however what he does not pay, I shall, so that at any future day you should plough into a gold mine, have the goodness to send me a lump value £7 8. 7d. If not, I hope you will be the better from this circumstance and I none the worse. You will present the enclosed bill of lading to the Captain when the ship arrives which will show your title to the goods named and write to me immediately as you will perceive I have *paid Insurance as well as freight.*

Now dear brother I have written and am sure you have read this much with great pleasure and I would fain fill up my paper with pleasing intelligence but duty compels me to inform you I was much astonished and vexed at receiving a letter from Mr. G. Keer dated July 8 containing the painful information of the death of your son, John, which took place that morn^g from a severe attack of brain fever of about 10 days continuance; further particulars you will no doubt hear from Elizabeth. My son Chas. went with me on Tuesday 12th inst. and attended his funeral which of course took place at Marlesford and the grave made use of which you had made when his poor mother died 11 yrs. previously. There were present upon the melancholy occasion Mr. G. Keer and myself, Mr. Cook of Dennington & C. Cordy, Mr. H. Largent, Mr. R. Bond, junr. & Mr. H^y. Keer, junr. I was pleased to find your man Stockings & wife succeeded Stannard in the occupation of the cottage on the common and poor John lodged with him and I am sure he had good advice from them, but it appears he had formed an acquaintiance with a young woman at Marlesford Bell and had of late wasted his time and finances there. Mr. H. Largent confirmed Mr. G.K's account that there would be little or nothing to spare when all expences were paid. I felt it my duty to enquire particularly in this matter because you are his heir-at-law and in the absence of a will entitled to what property he might have left. As it is Mr. G. Keer and his wife will settle his matters without my interference. How uncertain, dear Jn^o, is our tenure here and what a warning to you and me who are father & uncle to deceased to set our 'house in order' that by God's Almighty grace through Jesus Christ we may be ready to obey our summons to depart hence. I hope you and Mrs. Cordy and all the young folks are well to whom my wife and family all desire our very best love. Believe me to remain your most affectionate brother,

July 14, 1853

Charles Cordy

Mr. Jn^o Cordy, Hatcheston Farm, River Heathcote, Canterbury Settlement, New Zealand.

Dear Jn^o

Your letter dated Augt. came to hand here Decr. containing the welcome intelligence of your good health, improved circumstances and cheering

prospects – thank God – well done. I wrote you last July and am anxious for your reply but must wait with patience some months yet, however I dare say you don't wish me to defer writing again till that time so I shall endeavour to amuse you with our proceedings in this part of the world since last I wrote. I am pleased to find you are appointed one of the Judges of Stock at the Canterbury Agricultural Show. Be careful, Judges sometimes make great mistakes at least so they say who get no prizes. You'll begin to think I am speaking feelingly – well, the fact is I sent an Entire Horse 3 yrs. old to the Show at Ipswich last Sept^r so also did my neighbour Mr. Williams, they were both by Mr. Catlin's famous horse 'Duke' mine was considered the best by our neighbours and I believe by Mr. W. himself, not so the 'Judges' but I have since had the satisfaction of being offered £160 for him by gentlemen from Carlisle who had then refused the other at £150. Again my son-in-law Sam^l Wolton sent a foal to the Ips. Show, he got no prizes but has since sold it for £52. 10^d. What those that gained the prizes would fetch I can't say, perhaps if both were put together they might make as much so mind what you are after Mr. 'Judge'. I know you are dearly fond of a horse story so I shall go on. You probably remember I had a colt from my roan mare. I had it broke at 2 yrs. old that it might be very quiet for my own use. He turned out a splendid fellow and I was tempted to sell him last Aug^t for £80 (he was 4 yrs. old) and content myself with a less costly steed. Winter has set in with us unusually early and with great severity the roads in many places completely blocked with snow. We have had in this parish 30 men throwing snow upon many farms. Sheep had actually to be dug out. We have a sad deficient crop of wheat and in consequence is selling at a very high price 40 to 44 pr. coo. barley 24s. beef 8s. per stone and mutton 9s. I sold 94 sheep a month since at 56s. each and Jn^o has just sold 6 beasts from the Model Farm, Felixstowe, £22. 10s. each so you see Free Trade has not brought as its advocates anticipated low prices. My Barnet Fair bullocks of last year which cost £7 made out £17. 10s. Chas. and I bought 50 last Sept^r which are going on well. Mr. F. Keer met us as usual in London and we paid our respects to our new relation Mr. Turner who married his daughter Mary Anne and resides in St. James Square. We also called at Norfolk St. but Mr. Baxter was at Maida Villa. Have since had a letter from him to thank me for a brace of pheasants and informing me of the death of his son, Charles. Mr. Joselyn told me the other day that Hy. Kear of Marlesford had got a shocking crop of corn this year and that he feared he was not going on well. Mr. Geo. Keer your son-in-law has removed from Framlingham to Wickham Mkt. on his being appointed surgeon to the Union House and some parishes there vacated by Mr. Muriel which I hope will be to his advantage, we have not heard of Elizabeth lately. Our Rector Revd. M. Edgar of the Red House, Ipswich, died last Augt. and the living here being in the gift of the Crown the Lord Chancellor has presented it to the Hon. & Revd. Jn^o Horatio Nelson a great nephew of the late immortal Naval hero of the same name, he has hired Mr. Ashwell's house opposite my son Chas. as a temporary residence, will ultimately build a new rectory & I hope do much good in the parish. My neighbour Mr. Boby has just brought home a new wife from

SUFFOLK FARMING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

London so you see what great changes a few years make. My stock of news is now pretty well exhausted but as some of my party intend writing and as they are more famous than myself at epistolatory correspondence I conclude with my best love to yourself, Mrs. Cordy, nieces & nephews believe me dear John,

Yours sincere & affecte. Brother,

Jany. 7th, 1854.

Chas.

Trimley St. Mary. Oct. 7, 1855.

My dear brother,

We are all much pleased with your letter in which you express yourself so well satisfied with the removal from the Hacheston Farm to the Home Bush Station and that Mrs. Cordy & the young folks are all so well. I trust you will go on to prosper and that future accounts will be still more cheering. I shd have reply'd immediately to yours but my mind was then so much occupied in the prospect of settling in life by marriage not one only, but two of my dr. girls and knowing by experience the uncertainty of all human projects – love affairs especially, I wd rather wait to inform you of what we have actually done. I am happy to say I believe I have much to be thankful for in both cases and I trust God will vouchsafe his blessing upon them. At one time we thought the two weddings shd take place on the same day but afterwards for the convenience of all parties it was arranged differently.

Ellen was married to Robt. Miller of Ipswich on the 31 of May. They took a wedding tour of about 3 weeks to the Lakes of Cumberland, &c. and are now duly installed in the Butter Market House in the firm of Robt. Miller & Son. His father has given him a share in the business and removed himself to a house in Brook St. Emma was also married on the 6 of June to Wm. F. Woods of London, the eldest son of the proprietor of Woods' Hotel, Furnivals Inn and also of the Castle & Falcon Hotel, Aldersgate Street. Their wedding tour was to Paris and Switzerland for 6 or 7 weeks. We did ourselves the pleasure of spending several days with them the beginning of last month on my way to & from Barnet Fair. They reside at the first named Hotel, a splendid concern and of which his father gives him a share. We found her looking so well & happy. My son William who lives in London and to whom the Woods are extremely kind joined our party that is my wife and John which made our visit very delightful. After all these domestic affairs I know you will like a little agricultural news. Our crops are not generally so good as last year. Wheat is worth 40s. per coo., beef & mutton 8s. & 9s. per stone. You remember I told you in my last that I was fortunate in breeding a capital cart stallion. I named him 'Marquis' because his father is Mr. Catlin's celebrated horse 'Duke' the winner of all the best prizes for some years past. The E. Suf. Agricull Show was held at Ips. last July supposed to be the largest and best ever exhibited. My horse was pronounced No. 1 beating all our most eminent breeders – Catlin, Crisp, Barthrop & Hearn and I had the felicity of receiving the £10 prize. I sold one of his colts last year (1 yr. old) to Mr. W. Wilson of Ashbocking for £55. He has just sold him for £200 to go to Australia. In consequence of the death of Mr. Catlin,

Mr. Tho. Crisp will succeed him in the occupation of Butley Abbey. Your old friend Cana had the sale last week. The fancy lots sold high – best foal 76 gns. Yr. old colt 95 g., 12 yr. old filley 125 g., 3 yr. old 180 g., and the famous old horse Duke 9 yrs. old 255 g. the company supposed to be 5000 persons. I was much pleased to hear of you by Mr. Wood from New Zealand who being a Suffolk man I presume is on terms of intimacy with you. I saw him twice at Ips. Market and he promised to call upon me at Trimley. I find he intends going out again and I expect he will have several companions with him. We had a letter from Mrs. Fra. Keer this morn^g. She says two of Mr. Seaman's sons intend starting for New Zealand immediately and wished me to give them a letter of introduction to you. They are unknown to me but have no doubt of their being highly respectable young men. My nephew Geo. Keer married their sister. You will I am sure give them your best advice. We called on Mr. & Mrs. Baxter. He is wonderfully well. Their son Robt. is about to be married again. The lady is the youngest Miss Folkard his late wife's sister which being contrary to our law they are going to Prussia for the aforesaid purpose. What a famous letter you wrote to Mr. Sam Toller. It was sent to Raydon and thence to me. Accept my kind love yourself and for Mrs. Cordy and my nephews and nieces and believe me dear John

Yours affectionate brother,
Charles Cordy

Mr. John Cordy,
Home Bush Station, Christchurch, Canterbury Settlement, New Zealand.

Trimley St. Mary, Jan. 8th, 1862.

My dear brother,

I feel very much obliged to you for your last very interesting letter containing as it did such cheering & gratifying accounts of your proceedings. We had thought much of you in consequence of the war with the natives of New Zealand, but now hope that the new Governor will bring about a better feeling so desirable for all parties. By this time you and your family must be very important Colonists and in the question of peace or war have no small stake. I should think you are likely to have plenty of British settlers. The year 1860 from its extreme wetness was most disastrous to all heavy land farmers and pretty well emptied the pockets of the already needy tenants. At the same time the competition for land is so great that young men generally will be wise to seek their fortunes in one or other of our Colonies. Am glad to find you are all so well and happy. As for ourselves we are somewhat scattered about & as I find the last date to my letter to you (1855) I shd have a long arrear of news to tell had not my wife who is a much better correspondent than myself kept up accounts more closely. I only need now say we have married eight out of our ten children, and have fourteen grandchildren. Charles and John have no family, Anne has 4, Emma 2, Ellen 2, Catherine 2, William 2, Lois 2. I ought to say Catherine is Mrs. Alf Wrinch lives at Harcourts old shop, Butter Mkt. Ips. William married Miss Woods and lives at Chelsea, grocer &c. and has a good business and Lois is Mrs. Edw. Woods living at the Sparrowes Nest nr. Ips. a farm 170a.

The two youngest Addie & James make up our present household. My son John who married Miss Taylor of Woodbridge some 3 or 4 years ago and been living at the Model Farm cottage has in addition hired the East End Farm, Felixstowe, where they now reside & which makes him a capital business. James Cordy & myself attended the funeral of Mr. Baxter. He died very rich leaving his widow 3 or 4000£ a year but no legacy for either of us. Mrs. B. has since made me a present of £300 and J.C. a diamond ring. Rt. Burrows senr. £100 and I get my Stilton cheese as usual at Christmas. I rarely go from home except to Ips. Mkt. or to visit my own children, if any business shd take me to Wickham Mkt. I certainly intend calling upon my niece Elizabeth. I suppose you frequently hear of her. I believe Geo Keer gets on very well and they are very comfortable. Your old friends Mrs. & Mr. Bond are living with their kind son Rbt. in Queen St., Ipswich. Mrs. B. is nicely well for her & so is he except his eye sight which is I fear hopelessly bad. He calls himself a Commission Agent, attends several Mkts. every week but I believe does not get enough to pay his expenses so is in fact entirely dependant upon his two sons he was much pleased with your letter and desires to be kindly remembered. Mr. & Mrs. F. Keer are well. You know Sam is dead. Jonathan gone back to India and F (of Iken) is said to be engaged to Miss Tottar and we are all astonished they are not yet married after so long a courtship. We think him a terrible slow coach.

Our gt. Squire G. Tomline of Orwell Park, Nacton, is very anxious to buy up all the land in this neighbourhood having added to what was Sir R. Harland's estate - Stratton Hall, Martlesham Hall, Mr. Shaw's estate, Kesgrave, Seckford Hall, and this year Mr. Bobys & Mr. Fulcher's farms¹ at Walton. He would like to have the Duke of Hamilton's estate (Trimley) to make him complete but I suppose that is not to be had. The Londoners are expecting to reap a famous harvest this summer by the Great National Exhibition but I fear the *lamented* death of our *Prince Consort* who was its grand promoter will be a great drawback. With best love to yourself, your good wife & family.

Believe me dear John

Yr. Affecte. brother,

Charles Cordy.

P.S. I sold a cart foal last year for 35£ and another this year from the same mare for 37£.

Trimley St. Mary, Dec. 14th, 1865.

My dear brother,

Must certainly plead guilty to not having written to you for a long time but in the interim my wife has officiated for me and herself once if not twice which I hope you received. If not I think I gave you pretty full particulars of my domestic matters which up to that time seemed to be all and every thing we could consistently wish and desire. Since then I am sorry to tell you we have passed through a time of great trial & trouble. Mr. Edwd. Woods who married my daughter Lois came to live at Walton having hired Mr. Fulcher's farm which you know is close by us. We were all delighted

¹ Walton Hall and the Grange, respectively.

in having so many of our dear children settled so near and so happily. About two months after her confinement poor dear Lois was feeling poorly with symptoms of ague. We got her to Trimley for a little change, she however got worse and much to the grief and distress of us all she died at our house after a month's distressing illness leaving three beautiful children. My dear wife as you may suppose was so upset & unnerved that for a long time I feared she would never be herself again. To make our trial still greater I had placed in a capital business at Chelsea my son William with the hope and prospect of his making a good fortune. He was foolish enough to be led astray by a set of gamblers, lost his money and as neither his father-in-law nor myself would advance any more money under such circumstances he was obliged to give up his business much to our mortification and his own disgrace. Well we are nevertheless surrounded by many mercies and blessings and upon the whole we are all nicely well. Up to this time we have been spared any losses from the dreadful cattle plague in this immediate neighbourhood but on the other side of Ipswich they have had some very serious cases and in many parts of the Kingdom it is still raging fearfully. All markets and fairs are closed by an order from the Government, and the cattle trade is at a perfect stand still. What will be the consequence it is impossible to say. I never knew the price of meat so high. I have just sold 100 shearling sheep of my own breeding for 70s. each. I have 12 good Shorthorned bullocks in my yard which I think will make £30 each soon after Xmas. Am selling pork at 8s. per stone. I made 2/- a pound of my Hogget wool this year, last year 2^s 4d. We are expecting a railway to be made from Ipswich to Felixstowe, in consequence land near the beach is selling very high for building purposes. I sold an acre of land in the parish of Walton for £200 and shall be most happy to accommodate at the same price any of her Majesties subjects who may please to fall in love with my property. My wife is writing and will hunt up all the Suffolk news better than I can therefore I need only add how delighted I am to hear of your well doing. Accept my best wishes for the welfare of yourself good wife and family.

Believe me dear John to remain,
Yours very affectionate brother,
Charles Cordy.

Dec. 14th, 1865.

Mr. Jno. C., Hororata, Christchurch, Canterbury Settlement, New Zealand.

From letters in the possession of Mr. Charles Wrinch, of Bakers Close, Radley, Berks.



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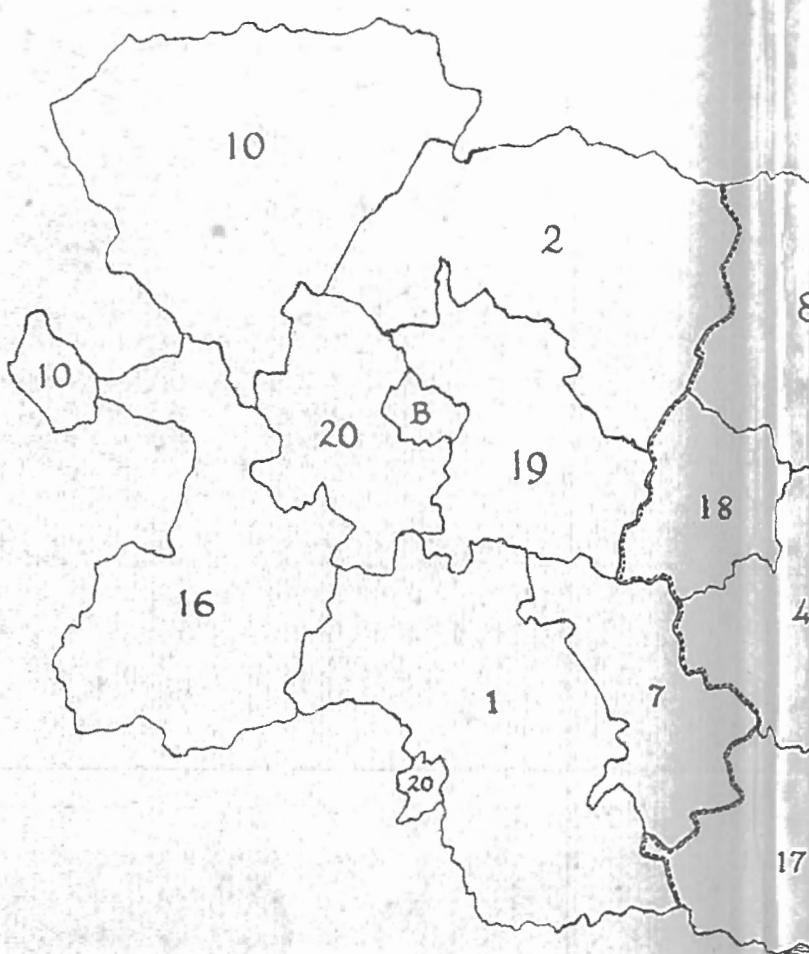
Suffolk : A map of parishes mentioned in the text, with soil types accord



Arthur Young, in 1797



East & West Suffolk, showing the Hundreds according to Bry



B=Bury St Edmunds

G=Ipswich

- | | | |
|--------------|------------|---------------------------|
| 1 Babergh | 5 Carlford | 9 Hoxne |
| 2 Blackbourn | 6 Colneis | 10 Lackford |
| 3 Blything | 7 Cosford | 11 Loes (with Woodbridge) |

nt, in 1826



- | | | |
|----------------|---------------|---------------------------|
| 12 Lothing | 16 Risbridge | 20 Thingoe (with Sudbury) |
| 13 Lothingland | 17 Samford | 21 Thredling |
| 14 Parham | 18 Stow | 22 Wangford |
| 15 Plomesgate | 19 Thedwastre | 23 Wilford |