

Additional Notes on Enclosure

(following talk to History Group on 19th February, 2015)

Location of Parliamentary Enclosure

See map; a large triangle of Open Field agriculture from North Yorkshire, the East Side of the Pennines, the Welsh Marshes, the Midlands, East Anglia to Dorset in the South, excluding New Forest, the area round London (*part of Essex*) Kent, part of Sussex – especially for market gardening for London.

Old enclosures; the South West peninsula, Celtic Enclosures in Wales, Viking enclosures in Cumbria and the North East, old enclosures in Lancashire and Cheshire.

The only Open Field Village still existing is Laxton in Nottinghamshire.

Means of farming an Open (Nucleated) Village

1. Three open fields (*common fields*) divided into strips 20 × 220 yards, an acre or 'furlong'. Divisions between each strip were baulks, (*along sides*) and headlands (*at each end*).
2. Land held by tenants or free holders, where strips distributed in each field and between the three fields.
3. Usual crop rotation wheat, barley, fallow (*for bread, ale and a rest year*). In Sutton, wheat, peas and fallow, cider orchards for drink.
4. Each field was surrounded by a barrier or fence; the gates were opened after harvest to allow stock to graze on stubble.
5. The meadow provided winter fodder for the stock, which was not slaughtered at Michaelmas or Christmas.
6. The Common (*owned by lord of manor*) allowed common rights for villagers (*ie land holders in common or open fields labourers*) which were grazing, wood collection and peat (*where relevant*).
7. The waste extended beyond the common land.

There were not a lot of open field villages in Herefordshire and they were enclosed later than elsewhere.

Procedure for Enclosure

- a) Notice put on Church door for three consecutive Sundays in August or September.
- b) Four fifths of land holders had to be in favour at meeting of tenants and/or land holders (*including land owners*).
- c) A solicitor was engaged to draw up a Petition to Parliament and find a sponsor in Parliament.
- d) As a private bill: three readings and committee stage, for amendments, between second and third reading in House of Commons. Likewise through House of Lords, followed by Royal Assent.
- e) Appointment of three Enclosure Commissioners for each Act, eg lawyers, JPs, land agents, clergymen, even tradesmen. Earned £2 per day when sitting.
- f) Functions:
 - i employed surveyors, valuers and clerks to remap area
 - ii heard complaints
 - iii arranged advertisements with regard to relocation of roads
 - iv arranged for relief of poor (*who lost common rights*) if specified; sometimes an award was given for poor
 - v gave special treatment to landowner and tithe holder.

Results

1. New arrangement of rectangular fields.
2. Surrounded by barriers, initially fences; then blackthorn or hawthorn were recommended, as they were quick growing.
3. Ditches dug; drainage difficult until introduction of circular pipes in 1840's.
4. New farmhouses and out buildings situated in the area of the new farm, eg Frankhurst, Boulcott's farm, built 1826 on well or spring line, with drives or lanes where necessary.
5. Roads constructed, wide enough for carts to pass, see Churchway, Ridgeway.

All this could take between two and twelve years. Farming operations continued during this time.

Reasons for enclosure of individual villages

Usually initiated by landowner

- i for social reasons, enhancing his status
- ii higher rents from larger farms and enclosure of the common – extension of the cultivated area
- iii agricultural innovation could be used
- iv commercial farming rather than semi-subsistence agriculture.

General Reasons for Enclosure

1. Linked to the price of grain, especially the peaks in price.
2. By 1760's, owing to rising population and development of industrial towns, which could not provide their own food, eg Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, Birmingham as well as London, England changed from being a net exporter to being a net importer.
3. High prices in Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, 1793–1815 owing to
 - i transport dislocation
 - ii main grain imports from North European plain; Napoleon's enlargement of his Empire in this area curtailed imports.

Relative inactivity see Enclosure statistics, 1781–95.

1. Landed interest thought enough had been done with enclosure; did not want another abundance as in 1740's – large harvests due to fine summers and following low prices.
2. Interest rates (*borrowing*) high on account of borrowing by Government for War of American Independence. A bad harvest reactivated enclosure.

Innovations in Agriculture

1700 1 person engaged in agriculture could feed 1.7 persons

1800 1 person engaged in agriculture could feed 2.5 persons.

Increase of 47% – higher yields per acre and extension of cultivated area.

Publicist for new Methods

Arthur Young produced his 'Annals of Agriculture' as a result of his tours. He became Secretary of the (*new*) Board of Agriculture in 1793.

New crops and rotations

Townshend's Four Course Rotation; wheat, alfalfa (*lucerne*), barley, turnips. Also sainfoin, mangel wozels, with lucerne and turnips – fodder crops and nitrogen fixers (*as were peas*).

Tools

Jethro Tull – horse hoe, seed drill (*book 1733*), Rotherham plough from 1730's – iron plough used 2 horses and 1 ploughman (*previously a wooden plough with 4, 6 or 8 oxen, 1 driver, 1 ploughman*).

Animal Husbandry

Many individual improvers by observation methods, or rule of thumb and good luck.

Much improved animals and carcasses compared with the poor standard of animals on the common.

Famous breeders: Robert Bakewell and his New Leicester Sheep, Colling Brothers and their Durham Shorthorns.

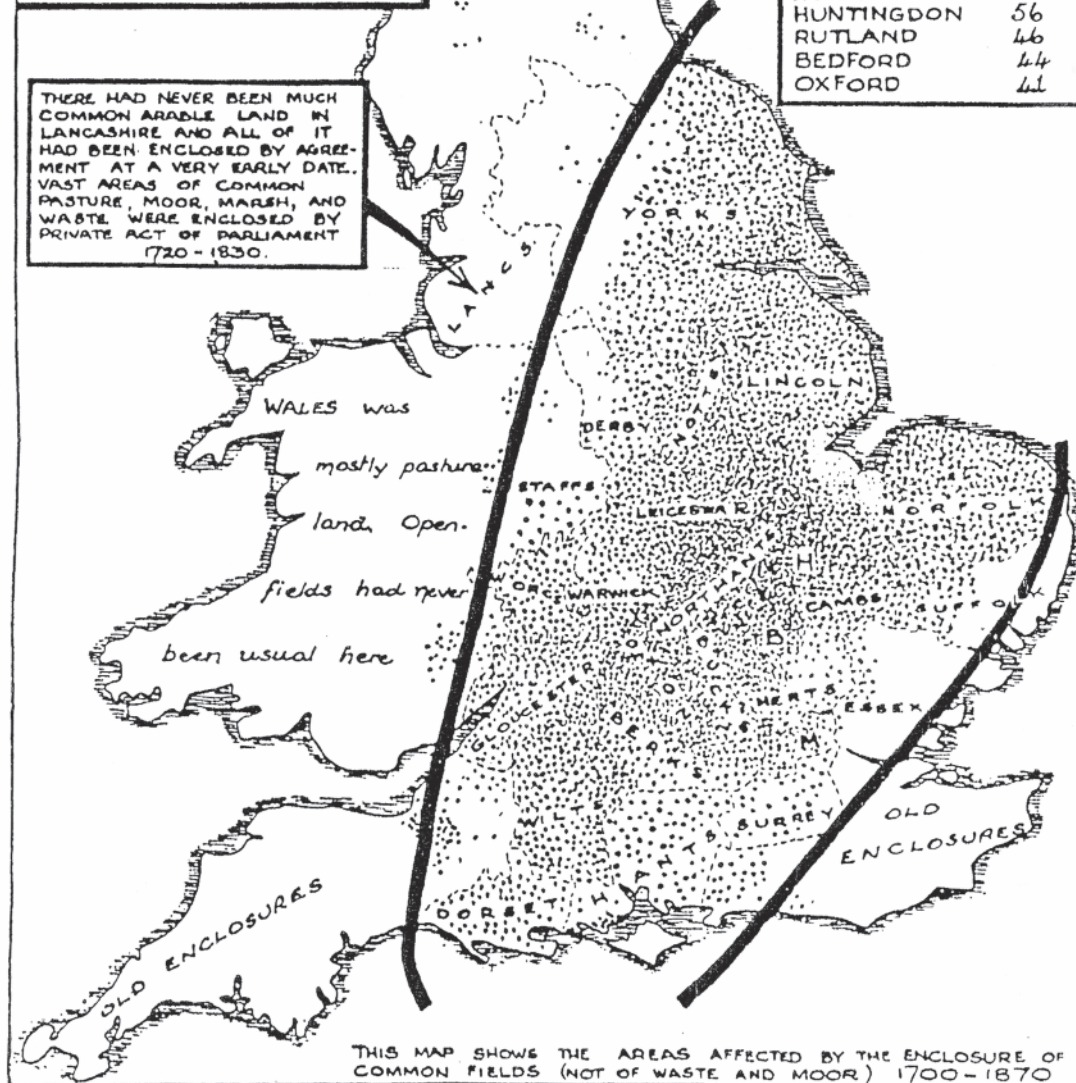
THE ENCLOSURE MOVEMENT IN THE XVIIITH & XIXTH CENTURIES

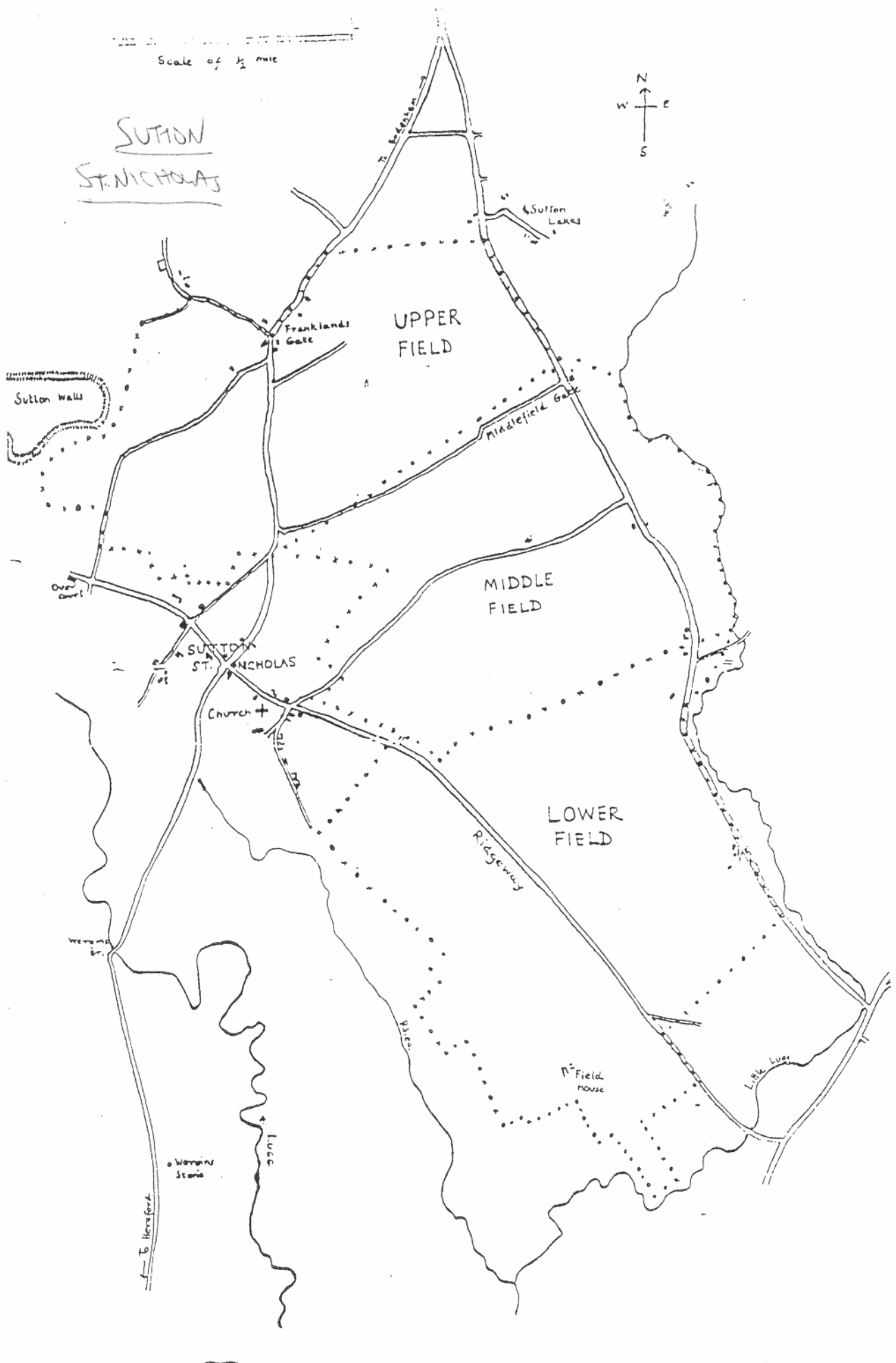
EACH DOT REPRESENTS THE ENCLOSURE OF 1000 ACRES BY ACT OF PARLIAMENT.

THERE HAD NEVER BEEN MUCH COMMON ARABLE LAND IN LANCASHIRE AND ALL OF IT HAD BEEN ENCLOSED BY AGREEMENT AT A VERY EARLY DATE. VAST AREAS OF COMMON PASTURE, MOOR, MARSH, AND WASTE WERE ENCLOSED BY PRIVATE ACT OF PARLIAMENT 1720-1830.

THE ENCLOSURES OF THIS LATER PERIOD WERE MOSTLY IN A WIDE BELT OF COUNTRY STRETCHING NNE-SEW. FROM THE NORTH SEA ACROSS THE MIDLANDS TO THE ENGLISH CHANNEL. ABOUT ONE-HALF THE AREA OF SOME MIDLAND COUNTIES WAS AFFECTED, e.g.:

NORTHAMPTON	51½%
HUNTINGDON	56
RUTLAND	46
BEDFORD	44
OXFORD	41





DEVELOPMENTS IN AGRICULTURE

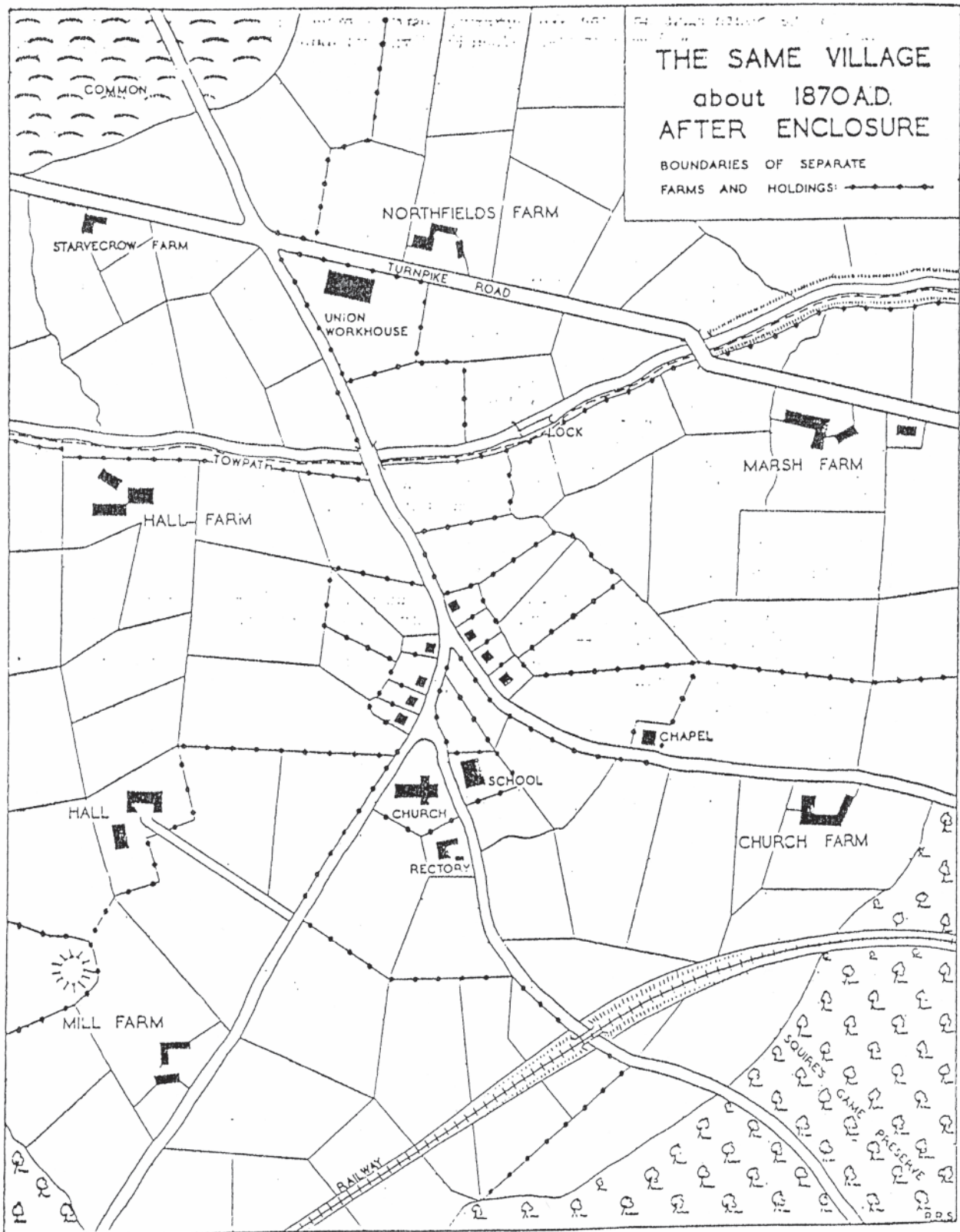


FIG. 13
[27]

From Coningsby Map, 1717

(Thomas Coningsby bought the Manor of Marden for £2,000)

Map

Upper, Middle and Lower Fields (*some enclosures on borders for orchards*).

Rotation

Wheat, Peas, Fallow.

The Common/Open Fields 1717: 863 strips.

27 people – 1 strip only	}	all with Rights of Common on Lugg Meadows
1 person – 2 strips		
30 persons – 834 strips		

1 strip = 1 acre (22×220 yards) 4840 square yards.

Many strips had a name, eg Cocks Furlong, Dusty Way, Hare Furlong, Churchway Furlong.

Access to Open Fields

Franklands Gate

Lynings Gate

Middlefield Gate

White Gate

Lower Gate (*near St. Nicholas' Church*).

Habitations

On road between St. Nicholas' and St. Michael's

Chief houses: Sutton Court, Freens Court.

Inn: Church Inn (*now Pantalls Cottage*)

School: at Sutton Cross

Poor House: The Ford.

Enclosive Act, 1819 (*most Acts in Hereford rather later than elsewhere*)

Award to 51 persons in compact parcels:–

6 persons awarded 40+ acres each

22 persons awarded 4 – 40 acres each

23 persons awarded less than 4 acres.

Enclosive meant extension of the cultivated area as common land was included.

The Long 18th Century Population of England

(Wrigly and Schofield)

		Compound annual growth rate %
1681	4,930	0.0
1691	4,931	0.0
1701	5,055	0.3
1711	5,230	0.3
1721	5,350	0.2
1731	5,263	0.2
1741	5,576	0.6
1751	5,772	0.3
1761	6,147	0.6
1771	6,448	0.5
1781	7,042	0.9
1791	7,740	0.9
1801	8,664	1.1
1811	9,886	1.3
1821	11,492	1.5

Number of Enclosure Acts

1760–69	385
1770–79	660
1780–89	246
1790–99	469
1800–09	847
1810–19	853
1820–29	205

Enclosure from Common or Waste

1727–60 c. 7,500 acres
1761–92 c. 478,000 acres
1793–1815 over 1,000,000 acres
1816–1845 c. 2,000,000 acres

High Wheat Prices per Imperial Quarter

	s	d
1790	54	9
1795	75	2
1796	78	7
1800	113	10
1801	119	6
1805	89	9
1809	106	5
1812	126	6
1813	109	9
1822	44	7