THE WOOL SUPPLY AND THE WORSTED CLOTH INDUSTRY IN NORFOLK IN THE SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES.

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by

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CONTAINS PULLOUTS

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PREFACE.

The diverse geographical conditions of England had given rise to innumerable regional variations in the methods and objects of husbandry long before the sixteenth century; by then, however, highly developed inter-regional exchange, expanding foreign trade, and the demand of big cities and industries for food and raw materials had intensified these specialised economies and virtually removed the lingering mediaeval need for local self-sufficiency. Until individual studies have revealed the full extent of these variations, national agrarian and industrial development in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries must remain only imperfectly understood. Norfolk is of considerable interest and importance in this respect: not only did natural conditions enable some three-fifths of the county to be recognised as at once a granary and a wool-house, but the city of Norwich - for long second in size to London alone - and the worsted industry exerted a considerable influence on agrarian development.

Although distinguished attention has been given to its pre-history, the subsequent history of Norfolk has long been shrouded in an antiquarian mist; long periods and large areas are still invisible. The most notable clearance has been that of the Domesday scene effected by Professor Darby, but work on later centuries remains for the most part disconnected and unpublished. It is hoped that this study will throw further

light upon the sixteenth and seventeenth century economy, but with a county of such great size and diversity some limitation of scope is essential: the thread which will be followed throughout is provided by wool - its production and marketing in Part One and its manufacture in Part Two.

While present-day corn production in Norfolk leans heavily upon rotational and artificial fertilisation of the soil, the sixteenth and seventeenth century farmers depended upon the dung of sheep. The extensive light soils could not be profitably cultivated without this "tathing" and inevitably the sheep-corn husbandry provided an abundant supply of wool. Chapter One contains a description of the regional conditions of the whole county, but thereafter prime consideration is given to that three-fifths of Norfolk in which every agrarian development stemmed from the peculiarities of the sheep-corn husbandry. The methods of sheep farming are dealt with in Chapters Two and Three, and the agrarian discontent aroused by landlords' accentuation of the sheep-rearing aspect of the husbandry in Chapter Five. The survival of their shepherds' and sheep-reeves' accounts makes possible a detailed examination of the methods of some of the more substantial sheep farmers in Chapter Six. In the final Chapter of Part One, the marketing of both sheep and wool is discussed.

Norfolk's wool production was not only substantial but distinctive: the peculiar qualities of the medium-staple wool were ideally suited to the manufacture of worsted cloth, and

the location of this industry in Norfolk was intimately connected with the county's agrarian development. In Part Two of this study, attention is turned to the worsted industry, together with the minor wool-using occupations of the city and county. Chapter Eight describes the industry's background, and Chapter Nine the first of the three phases of its development during these two centuries: the decline, continued from the fifteenth century, of the traditional mediaeval worsted industry. The worsted weavers had relied almost entirely upon Norfolk-grown wool, but their decline resulted in the diversion of a growing proportion of the Norfolk supply to the Essex and Suffolk cloth industries by the mid sixteenth century.

This decline was arrested and the second phase opened by the introduction of Dutch and Walloon immigrants into Norwich in 1565; their manufacture of new draperies - most of them cloths essentially worsted in type - revived the industry's fortunes and the demand for Norfolk wool. The arrival of the Strangers and the nature of their cloths are described in Chapters Ten and Eleven; and their impact on the worsted industry in Chapter Twelve. The growing production of new draperies in England led to the imposition of a national subsidy and alnage on their production, but the Norwich weavers continually attempted to gain exemption from its payment - largely on the grounds that the new draperies differed little from their traditional worsteds which had never paid the alnage always exacted from the English broadcloth industry; the imposition and history of the duties on the new draperies are described in Chapter Thirteen.

With the increasing production of new draperies in Norwich, Norfolk wool was able to meet the industry's needs in neither quantity nor quality. Supplies were drawn from the Midland counties whose wool had been lengthened by the improvement of pasture resulting from the extensive enclosure and conversion of arable land; such wool was, by the late sixteenth century, even better suited to the worsted manufacture than the medium-staple Norfolk wool. The early stages of this change-over are described in Chapter Twelve; by the early seventeenth century, Midlands wool was indispensable in Norwich.

The third phase of the industry's development was the increasingly prosperous manufacture in the seventeenth century of Norwich Stuffs - a wide variety of worsted-type cloths evolved from the Strangers' new draperies. The growth of that industry is considered in Chapter Fourteen, and in the final Chapter, the personnel of the industry - their wealth, tools, materials and products - and of the marketing trades are examined with the help of their testamentary inventories.

In the later seventeenth century, the Norwich worsted industry was already experiencing temporary setbacks in its home and foreign markets, and competition from Yorkshire worsteds and both imported and Lancashire cottons was intensified after 1700. The broad picture of the decline of Norwich in the eighteenth century and the transference of the worsted industry

to the West Riding in the early nineteenth has already been filled in, but these developments are surely deserving of a more detailed study.

It is perhaps necessary to state at the outset the procedure which has been followed in this thesis with regard to quotations from original manuscript sources. In almost all cases, quotations are exact: abbreviated words have not been protracted, and abbreviations are not indicated in any way; exceptions to this rule have been made only where the meaning of an abbreviation is obscure, and in such cases the full word is given in brackets.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

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I have appreciated the help of many people in providing access to archive repositories in Norfolk, Norwich and elsewhere. The Earl of Leicester allowed me to visit Holkham Hall where much help was given by his librarion, Dr.W.O.Hassall and the Estate Office Staff; Sir Edmund Bedingfeld permitted me to use a valuable item from his collection, and his mother, Lady Bedingfeld, made the necessary arrangements for its loan with Mr. A.E.B. Owen of the National Register of Archives who went to great trouble in providing a reproduction of the document; Dr. J. Saltmarsh made possible the use of manuscripts at King's College, Cambridge; Mr. F. Conway, Town Clerk of Great Yarmouth, allowed me to see the borough archives; Miss Grace and, especially, Miss Capon gave much assistance in the Norwich Corporation Muniment Room; the Rev. J.F.Williams gave friendly advice and unrestricted admission to the Bishop's Chapel, Norwich; Mr. Bolingbroke received me at the

Cathedral Muniment Room, Norwich; and Captain Anthony Hamond of Mousehold House, Norwich, accorded me the benefit of his knowledge of local manuscript collections and brought to my notice a number of useful items among the collection of documents which he has rescued from destruction. While the co-ordination and accessibility which a County Record Office would provide is sadly lacking in Norfolk, the assistance received from these and other people has always been freely given; they would be the first to admit, however, that the improvement and extension of existing facilities is beyond the reach of individual and piecemeal attention. Irreplaceable losses will be caused by the further delayed establishment of a local Record Office.

I am grateful above all to Mr. M.W. Beresford for his supervision: for the example of his enthusiastic and exacting approach to historical research and his unfailing interest.

PART ONE.

S H E E P F A R M I N G
AND
W O O L P R O D U C T I O N.

CHAPTER ONE.

SHEEP IN THE NORFOLK AGRARIAN ECONOMY.

I.

A county is rarely a convenient basis for the study of regional agrarian conditions; farming regions have little respect for county boundaries. Especially is this true in a county as large as Norfolk, where variations of soil and topography are so striking. Several centuries of improvements in farming methods have lessened the contrasts between the major regions of the county; the less fertile regions have been improved and the boundaries have become blurred. Yet the broad divisions of sixteenth-century Norfolk may still be recognised beneath the more complex pattern of the modern land utilisation map.(1) In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, sheep were essential to the development of a large part of Norfolk; the wool supply was very considerable, but the greatest importance of sheep had always been and still was the part they played in a complementary corn-sheep system of husbandry. The lighter soils yielded good corn crops only with intensive fertilisation by sheep, and the fundamental land-use division of Upland Norfolk was between those areas which did, and those areas which did not, need to employ this system.

'Upland Norfolk' is, of course, only a comparative description - the highest point in the county is only 350 feet above sea level. But the level monotony of that large part of the Fenland which lies within Norfolk renders the term Upland

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(1) Mosby, J.E.G., "The Land of Britain", Part 70, Norfolk (1938), p.193.

Norfolk a real and convenient one. Although the arable fields of Fenland are now known to have been larger and more productive than was formerly supposed, the sixteenth and seventeenth century economy was predominantly pastoral.(1) The landward fens and the seaward salt marshes provided permanent, if sometimes seasonal, pasture for large numbers of sheep and cattle. The Norfolk Fenland will be considered in some detail, but the Fenland flocks were numerically far surpassed by those of the Upland. Moreover, they contributed little to the distinctive wool supply which Norfolk sheep provided, above all, for the worsted industry. The breeds and pastures of Marshland sheep produced a very different fleece from that of the old Norfolk breed on the Upland.(2) The Marshland economy closely resembled that which Dr. Thirsk has described for the South Lincolnshire Fenland.(3) The marshes of the East Norfolk Broadland area, and those along the North Norfolk coast, were nowhere very extensive, and were mainly regarded as valuable additions to the pasture of adjacent Upland districts.

Upland Norfolk, then, will be the chief concern of a study of the county's sheep farming, and within the Upland the western and northern sectors were those employing the sheep-corn husbandry. The large corn production depended on the

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(1) Joan Thirsk, "Fenland Farming in the Sixteenth Century", University College of Leicester Occasional Papers in English Local History, Number 3 (1953).
(2) See Chapter 7.
(3) Thirsk, op.cit.

improvement of the light and sandy soils by sheep dunging, or tathing.(1) The soils of Norfolk are rarely influenced as much by the underlying chalk as by the mantle of overlying glacial deposits. In west Norfolk generally, these deposits are light and sandy over large areas, and sometimes very shallow. Much of north Norfolk is of a similar type, and even in the north-east of the county, an area of mixed and fertile loams, a significant proportion of the soils are light. This arc of light and medium soils comprises about two-thirds of the county and contrasts sharply with the central and southern districts whose soils are heavy and sometimes clayey. In the latter areas, the glacial deposits are in the form of heavy Boulder Clay.(2)

This fundamental twofold division lies behind Dr. Mosby's present-day land utilisation regions. The lighter soil area includes his Breckland, Greensand Belt, Good Sand Region, Loam Region, the Holt-Cromer Ridge and part of mid-Norfolk.(3)

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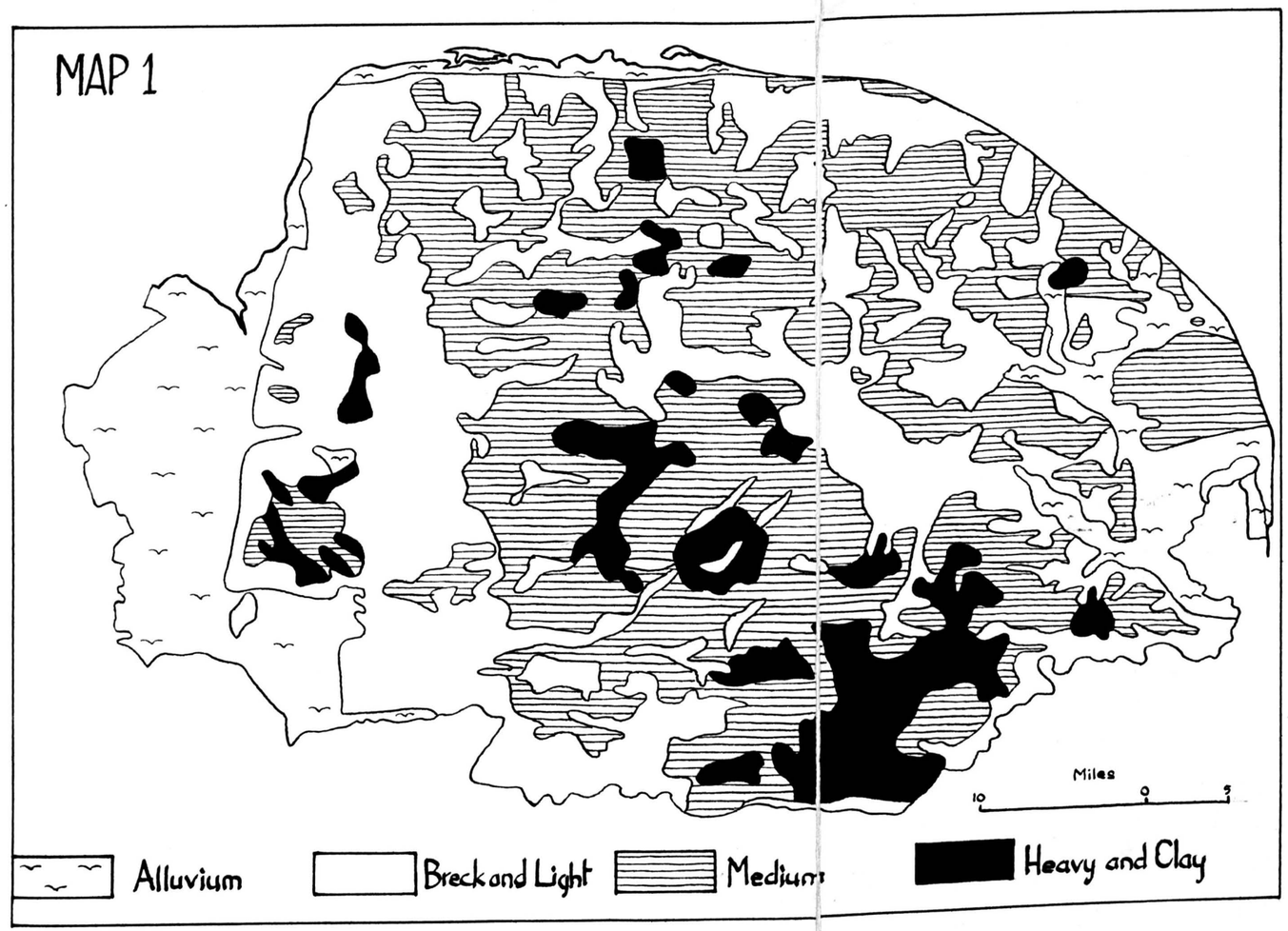
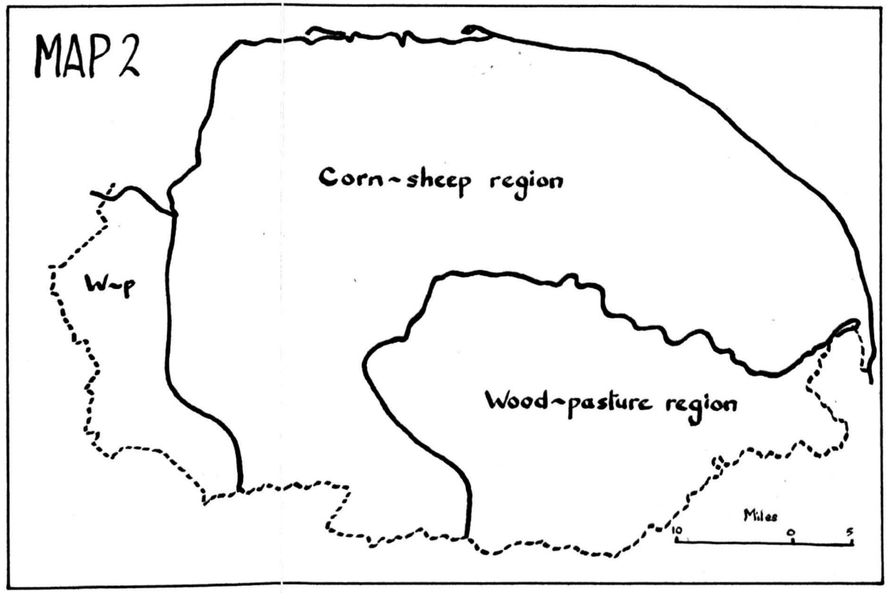
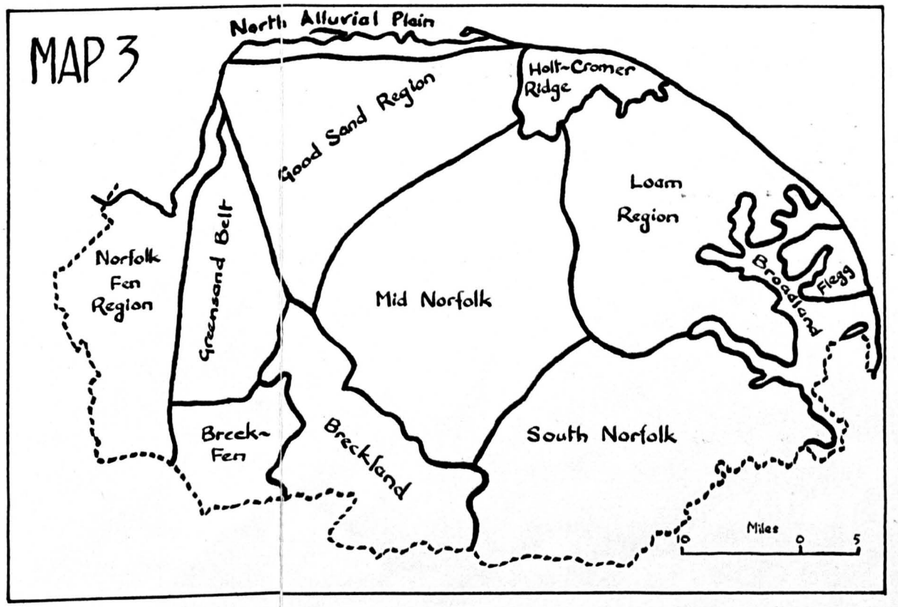
(1) The tathe of sheep included more than their dung: Marshall wrote of tathe, "This is a provincial term, conveying a compound idea, for which we have no English word. When we make use of the term fold, as applied to the fertilising effect of sheep pent upon land, we do not mean to convey an idea merely of the foeces they leave behind them, in this case, but also of the urine, the trampling, and perhaps of the perspiration, and the warmth, communicated to the soil by the practice of folding." Marshall, "The Rural Economy of Norfolk" (1795), Part I, pp. 33-34.

(2) See Map One, based on that in Mosby, op.cit., p.95. (The original map was prepared for the Cambridge University Farm Economics Branch Report No.22, 1933).

(3) See Map Three.







MAP 1 SOIL TYPES (See text p.3)

MAP 2 CONTEMPORARY LAND-USE REGIONS, 17th CENTURY (See text p.27)

MAP 3 PRESENT-DAY LAND-USE REGIONS (See text p.3)

The lightest and poorest soils of all are found in Breckland, which includes areas of shallow wind-blown sands. Even today, Breckland is marginal or sub-marginal for cultivation, and large areas have been covered by Forestry Commission plantations. Much heathland still survives and this was the state of much of Breckland in the Middle Ages and throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.(1) To the north the name of the Good Sand Region implies some advantage over Breckland; it was so called by Arthur Young(2) who found that the soils and yields were much improved by the agricultural changes of the eighteenth century. Prior to those improvements, however, there was much uncultivated and uncultivable heathland,(3) and although the arable fields were more extensive than those of Breckland, these two - Good Sand Region and Breckland - comprised one land use region, together with the Greensand Belt and part of the Loam Region.(4) Nowhere was it more true that "the foot of the sheep turns the sand into gold". Although it took second

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(1) See, for example, Cranwich (Blomefield, Norfolk, vol.ii, p.223), Little Cressingham (vi, 109), and Chapter Two below.
(2) "A General View of the Agriculture of the County of Norfolk" (1804)
(3) See, for example, Narford (Blomefield, vi, 232), Grimston (viii, 444), Appleton (viii, 329), Warham (ix, 264), Godwick (ix, 509) and Fring (x, 304); and Chapter Two below.
(4) See infra pp. 26-7, and Maps 2 and 4.

place to dung, the wool supply was large, and profits from the sale of wool - together with a growing demand for mutton - were the incentive for an increased emphasis on this aspect of the husbandry during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.(1)

In Mid and South Norfolk, the more fertile soils had little need for the treading and dunging of sheep, and the extensive heath pastures of the sandy areas were largely absent. The heavy soils, too, naturally supported much good grassland of the type which could not be developed on the sands; consequently, the most important livestock was cattle, and in the seventeenth century this part of the county was noted for its dairy production and a mixed husbandry.(2) Again, the largest amount of surviving woodland in Norfolk

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(1) See Chapters Five and Seven.

(2) It was "sustained chieflye by graseinge, by Deyries and rearings of Cattell", "State Papers relating to...Norfolk" W. Rye, pp. 180-187; and it was used for "divers feeding and breeding of great cattle", N.P.L. MS. 2641, 3A2.
In 1645, the Downham Tithe Book recorded 2320 acres of land, 700 being under grass - probably meadow grass, since pastures were called simply 'erbitch', B.M.Addit.,24825, quoted by Spratt, J., "Agrarian Conditions in Norfolk and Suffolk, 1600-1650", unpublished thesis, University of London, 1935, pp.199-200.
In south-east Norfolk, the Wood-Pasture Region included the marshes of the Waveney Valley: at Stockton in 1608, 60 per cent. of the area surveyed was under grass, P.R.O. E315/413/1-64, quoted by Spratt, op.cit., p.205.

was to be found on these heavier soils,[1] and it will not be misleading to refer to this part of the county as the Wood-Pasture Region; indeed, this term was used by a seventeenth century writer.[2] Sheep were much less conspicuous in the economy of the Wood-Pasture Region; the big manorial flocks of the Sheep-Corn Region were neither possible nor necessary, and sheep ownership was more widely distributed between the various classes of the landowning population.[3] Dung, wool and mutton satisfied personal and domestic needs to a much greater extent than in the Sheep-Corn Region, and south Norfolk made little contribution to the wool supply of the county. The sheep of the Wood-Pasture Region had no extensive heath pasturage, and there were no arrangements for large-scale

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(1) At the time of the Domesday Survey, the most dense woodland was in mid-Norfolk, and in a belt extending north-eastwards; there was much less in south Norfolk than the heavy soils would suggest because of the dense population and cultivation. There was little wood in the north-west and south-west. Darby, H.C.,The Domesday Geography of Eastern England, 1952, pp. 126-129. Moreover, the map of Domesday sheep on the demesne in 1086 shows a negative correlation with the woodland map, with most sheep on the light soils of west Norfolk. Darby, op.cit., p.144. For wood and pasture in south Norfolk, see for example: Hethel (Blomefield, op.cit.107), Tibenham (v,282), Redenhall (v, 368), Pulham (v,399-400), Aldeby (viii, 2), Ellingham (viii, 6), Kirby Cane (viii, 30), Loddon (x,155) and Thwaite (x, 182)
In Toft Wood (143a) in East Dereham, 2860 timber trees were reserved from the lessee. P.R.O. E317/10.

(2) Infra, p. 27.

(3) See Chapter Three, pp. 110-130.

feeding over the open fields as there were in the Sheep-Corn Region; instead, the tenant's sheep joined his cattle, swine and poultry on the commons, enjoyed a certain amount of enclosed grassland, and were fed on individual strips of open field arable land.(1)

In crops, too, there were notable differences between the two chief regions of Upland Norfolk. Barley was probably the most widely grown corn crop in the whole county, but it was pre-eminent on the lighter soils where the proportion of wheat grown was low. On the loams of the east of the Sheep-Corn Region, wheat figured more prominently, but its most successful cultivation was on the heavier soils of the Wood-Pasture Region. The least fertile sands, in Breckland, were not able to produce good barley crops, and here rye becomes of some importance.(2)

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(1) Sheep feeding in the Wood-Pasture Region resembled that in the Midlands of England; infra, pp. 21-4.

(2) Analysis of growing corn from a number of surveys:

Region.	Barley	Wheat	Peas & Vetches	Oats
Wood-Pasture	49%	27	17	7
Sheep-Corn	58	15	21	6

Spratt, op.cit., p.202.
Holkham was typical of the townships of the Sheep-Corn Region; in 1641, of 2300 acres - 1300 were under barley, and 120 under wheat, with some rye, oats, peas, vetches and beans. Holkham MSS. 14/675, quoted by Spratt, op.cit. pp. 185-186. Barley comprised 50-58% of the Holkham corn crops in 1641, 1642, 1645, 1648 and 1650. Spratt, op.cit., p.195.
See Marshall, "The Rural Economy of the County of Norfolk", Second Edition, 1795, pp. 203, 233.
See also, infra p.27.

A final important contrast between the two Regions in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was in the different degree of enclosure. Sheep-Corn Norfolk was predominantly an open, champion country, and while the system of intensive feeding of sheep over the fields remained, widespread enclosure was impracticable. Much common field land here remained un-enclosed until the eighteenth century and the Parliamentary Enclosure Acts, but piecemeal enclosure was proceeding rapidly in many townships during the seventeenth century.(1) A larger proportion of Wood-Pasture Norfolk was already enclosed by the sixteenth century, much of it as permanent pasture; the open fields had been considerably reduced in size.(2)

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(1) See Chapter Two, pp. 56-68.

(2) One-third to one-half of the arable fields of Forncett lay within enclosures, nearly all of which were from 3 to 15 acres in area, in 1565. Davenport, F.G., "The Economic Development of a Norfolk Manor, 1086-1565", 1906, p.81.
In a number of early seventeenth century surveys of mid-Norfolk townships, Spratt found that as much as three-quarters of the land was enclosed, involving the smaller landholders to a considerable degree. His examination of north Norfolk surveys showed, in contrast, that the arable fields retained a comparatively open character, and that enclosure was mostly the result of seignurial activity. Op.cit., pp.45,49.

II.

These contrasts within Upland Norfolk were very apparent to the eighteenth century agricultural writers, notably Marshall and Young, and to the eighteenth century county historian, Blomefield. It was Young who first produced a map of the land use regions of the county.(1) Though much improvement had already taken place, the topographical descriptions of these writers are highly informative of the older regional variations.

Of the Sheep-Corn Region, Young writes, "The southern part comprehends by far the poorest part of the county, a considerable portion of which is occupied with rabbit-warrens and sheep-walk heaths, and has a most desolate and dreary aspect." (2) In contrast, "The north-eastern angle, of better sand, contains large tracts of excellent land, intermixed with a good deal of an inferior quality." (3) Even the Breckland was improvable, Young believed, by the use of marl and chalk; but in the Good Sand Region he found that the eighteenth century improvements had established the famous Norfolk Husbandry and "A country of rabbits and sheep-walk has been covered with some of the finest corn in the world."(4)

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(1) Young, A., "A General View of the Agriculture of the County of Norfolk", 1804, reproduced in Mosby, op.cit., p.94.
(2) Young, op.cit., p.2.
(3) op.cit., p.3.
(4) op.cit., p.3.

Later, Young was even more outspoken in his description of Breckland; from Thetford to Swaffham he found a tract of land "which deserves to be called a desert: a region of warren or sheep-walk, scattered with a scanty cultivation, yet highly improveable. This is a capital disgrace to the county, and has been the result of an absurd prejudice in favour of these old heaths for sheep." (1) The prejudice does not seem so absurd in view of the limited success enjoyed by the eighteenth century improvers in Breckland, and of the vast extent of conifer plantations to which the soils have been surrendered today.

Blomefield described Grimshoe Hundred, in Breckland, as "...a hilly, champion, open Country, the land being Sandy and Barren, unless improved by the Farmer's Industry, or by the Flocks of Sheep which are kept in almost every Town in the Hundred for that Purpose, there being no where better Mutton than this barren land affords, the Sheep being not liable to the Disease called the Rot, as they often are in the more Fertile Parts of this County...". The land was also much improved by manuring, so that "tho' the Champion, or Fielding Country (as 'tis commonly called) may appear to the Traveller to be of little Value, either to the Owner or Occupier, it is in reality far otherwise, being render'd by

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(1) op.cit., p.385.

these Improvements as valuable as a far better Soil."(1)

Young found a great contrast in High Norfolk, the Wood-Pasture Region: "In the southern part of it, in Diss hundred, and some adjoining ones towards Norwich, there is much strong wet loam, where summer fallow and beans are found; and similar land is scattered in other parts; but the general feature is a good sandy loam, upon which turnips come in regular course: it is an old enclosed woodland country, which could not be noted as very famous for management ... The natural fertility is considerable." (2) Blomefield's description is very similar: "The whole Hundred (of Diss) is inclosed, and abounds much with Wood; it being reckoned as part of the Woodland Half of Norfolk ... the lands in general are moist ... the Soil is in general Rich, and about one-half of the Land is used for the Plow, the other for the Dairy, and Greasing; it produces much Wheat, Turnips, Clover, and all other Grain in abundance, except Buck or Brank, and Cole-Seed, of which there is but little sown"(3) Wayland Hundred, again in Blomefield's words, "...is chiefly inclosed, the greatest part of it being a strong Soil and pretty well wooded..." (4)

Blomefield's descriptions of the Hundredd lying partly in the Sheep-Corn and partly in the Wood-Pasture Regions, emphasize the rapid changes inmthe landscape. Of Guiltcross

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(1) Blomefield, op.cit., II, 270.
(2) Young, op.cit., p.4.
(3) Blomefield, op.cit., I, 212
(4) Op.cit., II, 373.

Hundred he writes, "The half of this Hundred towards Thetford is Champion, the Land being very light and sandy, the other is heavy Ground and enclosed, it produces plenty of grain of all Kinds, and in the Champion Part there are good Flocks of Sheep; the Soil there is Chiefly a Chalk under the Sand."(1) The same contrast was to be seen in South Greenhoe Hundred: "It is mostly open and a Champion (country), and famous for the Number and sound Feed of Sheep"(2); and Swaffham stood in "a fine open champaign country".(3) But "the Eastern Part of this Hundred is a very good Soil, and chiefly Inclosed, and hath its share of Wood; the Western Part is Champion, and a very poor barren Sandy Soil, tho' now so much Improved by Marling and Claying that it often produces very good Crops of Corn."(4)

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Loam Region of north-east Norfolk had been the most fertile part of the Sheep-Corn Region, and the distribution of flocks of sheep had been localised on the patches of poorer sandy soils. With the eighteenth century agricultural improvements it became a region in whose husbandry Young and Marshall could delight. Marshall, indeed, gave almost his sole attention to this part of Norfolk which be believed had nurtured the Norfolk Husbandry and was well in advance of West Norfolk.(5) Young, however, rightly gave that credit to the Good Sand Region, the home of

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(1) Blomefield, op.cit., I, 359.
(2) Op.cit., VI, 1.
(3) Op.Cit., VI, 205.
(4) Op.cit., VI, 239.
(5) Marshall, op.cit.

Coke, Townshend and Walpole.[1] Not that Young failed to appreciate the Loam Region: "...one of the finest tracts of land that is any where to be seen: broads and marshes occupy too much of it; but the land, under the plough, is a fine, deep, mellow, putrid, sandy loam, adhesive enough to fear no drought, and friable enough to strain off superfluous moisture; so that all seasons suit it... The husbandry is good, but by no means perfect."[2] Marshall noted the commons and heaths which occurred even in this district, but by the end of the eighteenth century sheep were kept in very small numbers in an area where the fattening of bullocks was the primary adjunct of corn production; in July, August and September, Marshall found the east Norfolk farms "as free from sheep as elephants."[3] This situation was in strong contrast to that elsewhere in the Sheep-Corn Region where sheep were still of great importance in the new eighteenth century husbandry. Blomefield, too, noted the sandy soils within the Loam Region: "The Soil of the Northern Part of this Hundred (Humbleyard) is light and sandy, that of the Southern more rich and heavy, the whole is inclosed, tho' the southern part hath more Wood than the other, but there is no great quantity in any Part of it."[4] And of Henstead Hundred he wrote, "Part of this Hundred is inclosed, and part uninclosed, the Soil is inclining to be Light, and the greatest Part of it is but Middling, and was it not for the Convenience of being Improved, by Muck so easily brought from the City of Norwich, it would be but Mean land."[5]

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(1) Young, op.cit., p.3. (2) Op.cit., p.4.
(3) Marshall, op.cit., Vol.I, p.363.
(4) Blomefield, op.cit., V, 122.
(5) Op.cit., V, 527.

III.

Sheep were essential to the agricultural development of that large sector of Upland Norfolk in which light soils predominated. By the sixteenth century, a system of open-field farming had been developed which enabled extensive and thorough sheep pasturage over the arable land. The Norfolk open-field system was very different from that of the Midlands, one of its most unique features being the foldcourse - the area in which every flock of sheep moved. A detailed consideration of fold-courses, in Chapter Two, must be preceded by an understanding of the whole open-field organisation of which they were a part.

The basic feature of the open-fields of the Midland system(1) was usually two or three large, well-defined fields (or sometimes a multiple of those numbers); they were often distinctively named, and those of a three-field township might, for instance, be East Field, West Field and Church Field. Upon the three fields was based a three-course system of husbandry in which one field - one complete field - would lie fallow every year; East Field might be fallow, while West Field was sown with winter corn and Church Field was under spring corn. In Norfolk, the large and distinct fields were uncommon, though not unknown. Instead, the open-field area (often called simply 'the arable field') was divided into a number of "precincts"; there may have been from two to ten or more,

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(1) Some areas using the Midland system of open-fields and agriculture are discussed later, infra pp. 21-4.

usually divided from one another by roadways.(1) The sub-division of the precincts into furlongs and strips gave the land the usual open-field appearance, but the precincts had no such rotational significance as the fields had in the Midlands. The strip itself was the unit on which the three-course rotation was based in Norfolk.

In the Midland system, a rotation based on the three fields demanded that the strips of which a tenant's holding was comprised should be roughly equally distributed between the fields. Each tenant was thereby ensured of his share of the cropped land each year. In Norfolk, such a distributinn of strips was not necessary, and a tenant's strips were

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(1) See Spratt, op.cit., pp.35-39. Also infra, Chapter Two.
In some cases, the precincts are described as "Parts":
Burnham Overy, in 1572: the First Part, of 13 furlongs,
the Second Part of 7,
and the Third Part of 30.
Holkham Mss., Burnham Deeds, 3/42.
Burnham Sutton, in 1591: the First Part, of 12 furlongs,
the Second Part of 31 furlongs,
and the Third Part of 19.
Holkham Mss., Burnham Deeds, 3/47.
Where the name "fields" IS used, they are of very unequal size:
Whissonsett, in 1486: East Field, of 6 furlongs,
South Field, of 9,
West Field, of 14,
North Field, of 8,
and North-west Field, of 2.
Holkham Mss., Tittleshall Deeds, 5/32.

concentrated in a limited sector of the open-field area, perhaps in one or two precincts.(1) His strips were still intermixed among those of his neighbours but they were less dispersed than in the Midland fields, and often some would be actually contiguous. If the precincts had been the units on which the three-course rotation was based, and if whole precincts had been fallow at one time, the Norfolk peasant would have been without any cultivated land in certain years. But the rotation was in fact arranged by each individual tenant on his own strips,(2)

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(1) Gray illustrates this point from the field notebook of a Weasenham farmer, George Elmdon. Gray, H.L., "English Field Systems", p.322, quoting Holkham Mss., Holkham Deeds, Second Series, 231.
The larger holdings in Weasenham were unequally divided between the two precincts and the smaller holdings often lay within one precinct; map of 1600. Gray, op.cit., pp.316-318.
The distribution of holdings is well illustrated by 14 tenancies at Castle Acre in 1546-7:

Holding	East Field	West Field	Middle Field
1	35a. 1r.	84a. 2r.	21a. 0r.
2	5 3	13 0	8 2
3	8 2	5 0	3 0
4	-	1 0	-
5	9 3½	16 1½	8 2½
6	3 3	9 0½	1 3
7	-	1 0	-
8	6 2½	0 3	0 2
9	-	5 2	-
10	1 2	0 3	-
11	5 2	-	-
12	2 1	-	2 2
13	2 3	-	-
14	-	92 3	26 2
	81 3	229 3	72 1½

P.R.O. L.R.2/255/35-49.

(2) Gray illustrates this point from the field notebook of George Elmdon; supra p. 16 f.n. 1.

and the net result might well have been for the township's arable field to be roughly equally divided between winter corn, spring corn and fallow, or summerley.

As a result, strips in all three stages of the rotation lay intermixed each year in each precinct. This pattern was to some extent simplified by the contiguity of a tenant's strips, for he could (and did) arrange that his fallow strips, for instance, lay comparatively close together; it was simplified too by the practice for tenants to arrange that their fallow lay near their neighbour's fallow. Yet the striking feature of the arable field was the absence of large, compact sections lying either sown or fallow: there was no large fallow field for animal grazing, as in the Midlands, so that special pasturage arrangements were needed if the advantage of less rigidity in the rotational organisation was not to be gainsaid. Enter the foldcourse system: not only did it make sheep pasturage on the arable fields practicable, but it supported large flocks to provide the intensive dunging that these light soils needed.

Most manorial lords in the townships of the Sheep-Corn Region possessed a liberty of sheep feeding, a right of foldcourse. The foldcourse was a strictly defined area of the township, including both open-field arable and permanent heath pasture within its bounds. In a one-manor township, the foldcourse might in fact include the whole of the arable field area; otherwise the arable would be divided between the foldcourses of the several manors. And there were two or more manors in the majority of the Norfolk townships.(1) The availability of the

(1) In 1600, even after much consolidation of manors had taken place, 30.3% of 637 Norfolk villages had more than one manor. Spratt, op. cit. p. 20.

two types of pasturage in the foldcourse ensured that a flock had adequate feed for the whole year; the heathland was largely used as summer pasture, since as much as two-thirds of the arable land might then be under corn crops of one kind or another. In winter, after harvest, the flock moved on to the arable stubbles, avoiding the recently fallow strips which had by then been sown with winter corn. In some townships the manorial flock was also taken over the fallow strips during the summer, but in others much of the fallow was reserved for the tenants' great cattle.

The methods of feeding the sheep over the arable fields varied from summer to winter. In the winter, after harvest, the unsown stubbles were of great extent and relatively uninterrupted by cropped strips; these shack fields were common to the inhabitants of the whole village whose animals moved freely over them, together with the lord's flock of sheep. During the summer, however, the fallow area was much smaller and more fragmented: a freely moving flock would have been kept off sown land only with great difficulty, and so the sheep were at this time penned within folds of hurdles, moved continually over the fallow parcels within the foldcourse.(1) The movement

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(1) Gray supposed that folds were used within the foldcourse: "Each flock of sheep, furthermore, never passed beyond the bounds of its fold-course; within this course it was presumably folded from day to day over the fallow acres. Since in all probability wattles were used, no inconvenience arose if sown and fallow acres lay side by side." He has no evidence to support this. Gray, op.cit., p.329. Confirmation is provided in the seventeenth century Treatise on Foldcourses, see infra p. 47.

of the fold through the patchwork of sown and unsown strips was facilitated by the customary obligations of tenants to keep relatively compact areas in the same land-use;(1) sometimes, in fact, the open field was used in "shifts", a different one being sown each year. The observance of shifts was the nearest approach in the Norfolk field system to the use of compact areas in the three-course rotation.(2)

Gray has shown that the peculiar field system of Norfolk may be traced back into the early Middle Ages, when sheep feeding was already of a distinctive kind.(3) In those earlier centuries, the manorial lords possessed 'rights of foldage' and obliged their tenants to put their sheep into the fold on the demesne land. Tenants could gain exemption from this by the payment of 'faldagium', and instead of keeping their sheep "in falda domini" they were then granted "sua falda" on their own land. From a small fold on his demesne, the lord had by the sixteenth century evolved the foldcourse which gave

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(1) See supra, p. 17.
(2) See infra, pp. 45-6.
(3) The manor of Sedgeford was of great value in the early Middle Ages to Norwich Cathedral Priory as the result of the combination of sheep and arable farming. Saunders, H.W., "An Introduction to the Obedientiary and Manor Rolls of Norwich Cathedral Priory", 1930, p. 35.

his sheep feed over demesne and tenants' land alike. Tenants' private folds had disappeared and instead they were often allowed to keep regulated numbers of sheep in the lord's flock. The development of the foldcourse thus made possible the keeping of larger demesne flocks and allowed for more intensive fertilisation of the fields. Sixteenth century documents sometimes refer to a lord's 'right of foldcourse and foldage': the early right of foldage was embodied in the foldcourse which had replaced it.(1)

The use of the foldcourse was confined to the Sheep-Corn Region and the lighter soils, but the Norfolk open-field system as a whole was found throughout the county. In the Wood-Pasture Region, the sheep lose their place, but the peculiarities of the open-fields remained; nowhere in south Norfolk, or in the Norfolk Fenland, did the system used resemble that of the Midlands.(2)

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(1) The early arrangements are fully discussed by Gray, op.cit., pp. 341-354. He concludes that foldcourses were already in existence prior to 1086; but his description of foldage and that of foldcourses are quite inconsistent. The thesis of the development of one right from the other is, however, consistent with all the data quoted by Gray. Good details of thirteenth century foldage arrangements may be found in Morgan, M., "Select Documents of the English Lands of the Abbey of Bec", Royal Historical Society, Camden Third Series, Vol.lxxiii, 1951.

(2) See Thirsk, op.cit.

IV.

In the Sheep-Corn Region of Norfolk, sheep farming was developed on the large scale essential for the successful cultivation of the sandy soils. Pasturage arrangements were necessarily superior to those of the Midland open-field system. It has been convenient to use the generalisation of a typical Midland system of agriculture but of course farming practice varied greatly within the Midlands. The system commonly referred to as typical of the Midlands is perhaps best represented in much of Leicestershire, part of Northamptonshire, and the "felden" district of Warwickshire.(1) There, the Midland three-field system was widely practiced,(2) soils were

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(1) Hilton, R.H., "The Social Structure of Rural Warwickshire", Dugdale Society, Occasional Papers No. 9, 1950.

(2) For discussions of the field system and agriculture of Leicestershire see Hilton, R.H., "Mediaeval Agrarian History" and Thirsk, J., "Agrarian History, 1540-1950", both in V.C.H. Leicestershire, Vol.II, 1954. And Hoskins, W.G., "The Leicestershire Farmer in the Sixteenth Century", Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological Society, Vol.22, 1941-5. 79% of the villages for which glebe terriers were examined had the three-field layout. Beresford, M.W., in Studies in Leicestershire Agrarian History, edited W.G. Hoskins, 1949, p.94.

fertile over wide areas and the economy was originally predominantly arable. In Leicestershire, heaths and commons were reduced to a bare minimum: "Few parishes except those on the fringes of Charnwood had any waste land by the 16th century, and fewer still had woodland of any size. The county was in fact one of the most highly cultivated areas in the kingdom, the barren lands of Charnwood occupying about 3½ per cent. of the total area, and other waste land perhaps an additional 1½ per cent."(1) The feeding of sheep, both by lords and tenants, was conditioned by the amount of pasture which could be inserted into the open-field system on individual strips, and by the use of meadow land. "The allocation of meadow and pasture allowed farmers to keep about 1¼ sheep for every acre of land, and a few cattle according to their stint."(2) The inhabitants of a Leicestershire village might thus muster more sheep than those of a Norfolk village were allowed to put into the lord's flock; but in Leicestershire, only large-scale conversion of arable land to pasture, with all its attendant evils of depopulation, allowed the lord to keep really large

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(1) Thirsk, V.C.H. Leicestershire, Vol.II, p.211.

(2) Op.cit., p.211. (referring to period 1540-1640) "The number of animals kept on the average (median) farm in 1588 was 30 sheep and 9 head of cattle. Through inclosure the number of sheep had increased by 1603 to 52 but it was only among the squirearchy that sheep-farming on a large scale was practiced." Dr. Thirsk quotes two such flocks of 3100 and 1300 sheep, "but among the yeomen 200-300 sheep was a good-sized flock in the 16th century." Op.cit., p.213.

flocks of sheep.(1) The enclosure movement of the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries emphasises the lack of pasturage arrangements in the normal Midland open-field system. Without extensive permanent pasture, and without the insistent need for dunging the fertile soils, the sheep population in these Midland areas was much below that of the Sheep-Corn Region of Norfolk unless widespread conversion of arable land took place; and, of course, it was the attraction of profits from wool production, and not the needs of corn growing, which led the Midlands landlords to increase their sheep pasture.(2)

The feeding of sheep on the arable fields of the Midlands was a much more individual affair than it was in Norfolk; and the big demesne flocks of Norfolk provided much more intensive dunging than the collection of tenants' sheep and cattle in Leicestershire. This was the real advantage that Norfolk possessed: the more frequent dunging in Norfolk imagined by Gray clearly cannot be supported by the facts. "Arable fallow", he says, "was naturally better fertilised when sheep were folded regularly upon it than when the township herd and flock wandered aimlessly over it every second or third year, as they did in the midlands"; and again, "It was an arrangement far better for the soil than was that of the midlands, since by it each parcel of arable was assured of fertilisation during the fallow season."(3) However, a three-course rotation, whether

(1) See Hoskins, W.G., "The Deserted Villages of Leicestershire" in "Essays in Leicestershire History", 1951.
(2) See Beresford, M.W., "The Lost Villages of England", 1954
(3) Gray, op.cit., pp. 349, 329.

based on fields or strips, meant that arable land was available for sheep feed only during the fallow season and after harvest; in this, Norfolk and Leicestershire were alike.(1)

The division of the arable land between foldcourses may perhaps be explained by the multiplicity of manors in Norfolk townships. A single fallow field could not conveniently have been used by several flocks.(2)

Although the Norfolk field and foldcourse systems appear to have been unique,(3) a sheep-corn husbandry of some kind was practised in many parts of Lowland England.(4) In the

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(1) In Leicestershire, "Pasture rights for these animals were exercised in the fallow field all the year round; in the pease field after the gathering of the crop until 25 March next following; in the corn field and in the meadows from harvest until the following 2 February." Thirsk, V.C.H. Leicestershire, Vol.II, p.211. This was clearly little different from the Norfolk situation.

(2) This explanation of foldcourse development is postulated by Gray, op.cit., pp.350-351.

(3) The foldcourse has yet to be discovered elsewhere except in the similar conditions of west Suffolk. See Spratt, op.cit., pp.234-240.

(4) See Kerridge, E., "The Sheepfold in Wiltshire and the Floating of the Watermeadows", Economic History Review, Second Series, Vol.VI, No.3, 1954, pp.282-289. Cornwall, J., "Farming in Sussex, 1540-1640", Sussex Archaeological Collections, Vol.92, 1954, pp.48-92. "The Farming and Account Books of Henry Best", edited C.B. Robinson, 1857, Surtees Society, Vol.33. (concerning the East Riding of Yorkshire). Harris, "Pre-enclosure Agricultural Systems in the East Riding of Yorkshire", unpublished thesis, Hull University College, 1951.

chalk lands, extensive pastures were available on the downs - good quality pastures compared with the heaths of Norfolk - and the adjacent arable fields were given the benefit of the sheeps tathe. In contrast to the almost seasonal movement of sheep between heath and arable in Norfolk, the flocks of Wiltshire or Sussex moved daily for much of the year between the downs and the fields; they were kept on the grassland during the day-time and on the fields at night. The sheep were kept in folds, gradually moved across the field - a much more straightforward process in the three-field system than with the Norfolk arrangements. In southern England, the sheep fed on the harvest field, too, but this was less extensive than the all-important winter shackage of Norfolk.

In the chalk lands, separate flocks were owned by the manorial lords and larger, landowners but most townships had a common flock composed entirely of tenants' sheep - a very rare occurrence in Norfolk.(1) Sheep were put into the Sussex town flock by a rate based on the acreage of the tenants' land-holding, and his share of the fold varied accordingly: if a tenant had no sheep, his land received no tathe. This participation of the peasantry in the ownership of flocks was very different from the Norfolk situation, where demesne flocks

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(1) "There be 2 kindes of foldcourses: one consisting of ye sheepe of ye Lord or ownr of ye fould wch is usuall wth us in Norff. ye othr of ye sheepe of ye Tenants & suiters of ye fould wch is comon in .... & in ye western parts", a seventeenth century Treatise on Foldcourses in Norfolk, B.M. Addit. 27,403.

fed over tenants' land. During these two centuries, Norfolk landowners were taking an increased interest in their sheep and becoming less concerned with the corn production of their tenants and demesne farmers. The resultant widespread landlord oppression sprang to a great extent from the divorce of interest between the two sectors of the Norfolk sheep-corn husbandry.

V.

Finally, by mapping the distribution of the townships in which the foldcourse system was used, the boundaries of the Norfolk Sheep-Corn Region may be more precisely drawn.(1) The foldcourse was naturally completely absent from the Fenland, and only two or three instances occur in the Wood-Pasture Region of mid and south Norfolk. Within the Sheep-Corn Region, foldcourses were extensively used in Breckland and the Good Sand Region, and it seems likely that most townships in these regions contained one or more foldcourses. In the east, foldcourses were fewer and confined to the more localised areas of lighter soils: they were noticeably present on the sandy soils of the Wensum valley, and the plateau gravels north of Norwich.

The twofold division of Upland Norfolk was as clearly recognised in the early seventeenth century as it was by the eighteenth century agricultural writers. It was well known to

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(1)See Map Four. The sources of data used for this map are given in Appendix One.

MAP 4

DISTRIBUTION OF

FOLDCOURSES

(See text p. 26, and Appendix 1)

(For the land-use region boundaries, see Map 3)

Miles

10 0 5

the writer of "A breif note howe the Countie of Norff. is compwnded and sorted of soyles apte for grayne and sheepe, and of soyles apt for woode and pasture."(1) His dividing line ran "most indifferentlie" from Great Yarmouth to Norwich, East Dereham and Kings Lynn; all the Hundreds north of this line, and three south of it, comprised the Sheep-Corn Region. He made his division on the basis of Hundreds, so that it is necessary to divide two or three Hundreds which lay partly in both regions.(2) This done,(3) his regions closely resemble those defined by mapping the distribution of foldcourses. The east of the Sheep-Corn Region, he said, was best suited to wheat, the remainder for barley and rye; he estimated that in an average year the whole region was able to send out of Norfolk 40,000 quarters of barley, and as much of wheat and rye, "over and besides the expenses and seed sufficient for that part of the county." If need be, those amounts might be at least doubled, he claimed. These were the exaggerations of a man pleading for the removal of restrictions on the export of corn, but such beliefs speak eloquently of the profits to be gained from the application of the Sheep-Corn husbandry.

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(1) N.P.L. MS. 2641 3A2.
(2) Supra, pp. 11-2.
(3) See Map Two.

CHAPTER TWO.

UPLAND SHEEP FARMING: THE FOLDCOURSE.

I.

In the Sheep-Corn Region of Upland Norfolk, sheep farming was essentially adapted to the improvement of the soils; barley and sheep were said to "maynetayne" each other by "a particular course of husbandry there used".(1) That is to say, the foldcourse system. The partnership of barley and sheep looked for support to the heath and waste lands which were the main source of summer pasturage throughout the Region. Occasionally, pasture closes or coastal marshes supplied summer feed, but with few exceptions, foldcourses comprised an area of open-field arable land for use as winter shackage or summer fallow and a varying proportion of heathland for summer pasturage.(2)

One of the chief witnesses to be called in the examination of the foldcourse system is Thomas Russell, lord of the manor of Northall in West Rudham; his general description of foldcourses is most explicit: "Whereas a great part of Norfolk is champion consisting of open fields where the lands of several men lie intermixed, and whereas the commodity and wealth of that part of the county comes chiefly from foldcourses of sheep and corn; the foldcourses being mostly on arable land lying fallow or unsown for certain terms and at certain times for sheep pasture, whereby the land gives

(1) Rye, W., "State Papers", p.181, quoted by Spratt, op.cit. p.229.

(2) The writer of a 17th century Treatise on Foldcourses (a contemporary note suggests that it was written either by Sir Henry Spilman between 1617 and 1626, or by Guibon Goddard, Recorder of Lynn in 1650) gives this definition: "A foldcourse is a libertye to erect & use a fold within a certein prcinct of ground for ordring ye shepe of yt

(over)

Footnote (2) - continued

fould, & tashing ye land there (i.e. the arable part of the course): And also to feede ye sd sheepe wthin ye same prcinct & placs belonging to yt fould course att such seasons of ye yeere, as tyme out of minde hath bin accustomed" (i.e. the heath and pasture part of the course). B.M. Addit. 27,403.

greater yeild"; and speaking of his own foldcourse, he said: "These sheep have always been depastured and fed yearly and at all times of the year on pasture, bruery[1] and heaths in W. Rudham called the Somer pasture of the said foldcourse..."[2] Few foldcourses included substantial areas of other land, in addition to the open field and heathland; but small pasture closes not infrequently lay within a foldcourse, together with some arable closes and occasionally some meadow land. The enclosed land was laid open to the flock whenever required, arable closes supplying the usual winter shackage,[3] and meadow land being available for the flock after mowing for hay.[4] On the Fenland borders or towards the north Norfolk coast, the normal pasturage was supplemented by salt-marsh or fen.

The Warren Foldcourse belonging to Southall manor in Feltwell, on the Fenland border, included pastures of almost every kind: "Itm the seuerall & standynge Sheepes pasture and free warren of & belonging to the sayd Southall manor lyes upon ye heath ground in ffeltwell St maries called blakhow...

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(1) An alternative name for heath or waste land.
(2) P.R.O. C2/R6/61, temp. Elizabeth.
(3) North Creake, infra p. 40.
(4) Kilverstone; the lord of two manors there claimed the use of "the Lowes" after the hay had been mown, and during droughts, for his flock. (His tenants claimed it as feed for their great cattle, see Chapter Five, p. 164.) P.R.O. E134/35 Eliz./Easter 24, 1592.

"The seuerall Shackadge & ffeldyng belonging to ye sayd ffoldecourse begynneth on ye West pt pt (sic) of Wylton way & goes upon Thehooe feld southward from the foresayd Cadges pathe unto the p'cession way betwyn ffeltwell and hockwold & wylton feldes & so forth downe into southfeld & southall wonges & upon ye felds more westward & so upon the medowes & ffen$^{n}_{k}$ borders that lye betwyn hockwold medowes & longholmes unto ye north syde therof. There is also ryght & lyberty for to walke & dryue this sayd flocke of sheepes downe through ye felds of mekyhylbergh unto$^{n}_{k}$ ye north fenns of ffeltwell to take feede there in all seasonable (times) for ye same so as ye sayd flocke of Sheepe doe not excede the nomber of fiue hundred & fortye Sheepes."(1)

The diverse and extensive lands of a foldcourse were firmly established by long usage, and the shepherd

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(1) N.P.L. N.R.S. 10030, 1539-40.
The number is 640 sheep (100 = 120)

had to know exactly where its boundaries lay.(1) The right of foldcourse was no vague idea, but was applied to a rigidly defined area whose limits were well known in terms of natural features and property divisions. And it was leased, demised and sold as any parcel of land might be. In a one-manor township, the foldcourse might include the whole of the arable field area, as at West Lexham.(2) Since manors frequently possessed land in more than one township, the foldcourse might transgress parish boundaries, at Hellesdon for instance.(3) Conversely, a manorial lord did not always enjoy shackage over all of his own land: the lord of Great Massingham had land over which the sheep of the lord of Little Massingham were entitled to feed.(4)

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(1) The shepherd might be instructed to leave certain lands untathed in order to concentrate the dunging on the lord's land; and an accurate knowledge of the distribution of lord's and tenants' strips would be essential. B.M. Addit. 36990, c.1630-50, quoted by Spratt, op.cit.,p.248. Shepherds were required to keep a careful watch on the land used by their sheep; at Cawston, two flocks used Stonegate Common with Stonegate way dividing their respective pastures: when one shepherd saw the other's sheep feeding across the way, he would whistle as a signal for them to be fetched back. P.R.O. E134/8-9 Eliz/ Michaelmas 2, 1565-66. See Chapter Five, p. 173.

(2) Holkham Mss., map 5/87A, 1575.

(3) Survey Book of the Bishopric of Norwich, C.U.L., Mm.2.19, 1641. And at East Lexham, the foldcourse extended on to the commons and fields of East Lexham, Great Dunham, Great Fransham and Kempstone. Carthew, G.A., "The Hundred of Launditch", II,1878, p.666.

(4) Holkham Mss., Massingham Deeds, 9/206-213, c.1600, quoted by Spratt, op.cit., p.251.

In most cases, the arable land in a township was divided between the foldcourses of two or more manors. Whole fields might lie within the bounds: North and West Fields comprising the shack of the foldcourse belonging to the manor of North Hall in Weasenham, and another course extended over the whole of Camphowe Field in neighbouring Wellingham.(1) Shackage might be limited to certain precincts, or to a number of furlongs, and the foldcourse boundary sometimes ran in between individual strips within a furlong.(2) In a terrier of Burnham Westgate, the lands were divided under two headings: "the ewes ground or greate pasture" - comprising 720a.3r. in at least 18 furlongs - and "The Hogges grounde al(ias) little grounde" - comprising 220a.1½r. in at least 38 furlongs.(3)

In these descriptions of foldcourses, the heath pasture is usually coupled with the shackage. A foldcourse in Wymondham included most of the common of Northwood, with winter feed over North Field and Park Field;(4) the foldcourse in Weasenham (supra) had its "somer" pasture adjoining the

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(1) P.R.O. C1/730/33, 1529-38.
(2) North Creake, see infra p. 40 : the boundary of East Pasture ran between strips in this way.
(3) Holkham Mss., Burnham Deeds, 3/49, 1610.
(4) P.R.O. E.134/17 Eliz/Trin. 9, 1574.

shack fields, and in Wellingham, the 300 acre Wellingham Common was grazed by the sheep.(1) Where closes contributed to the permanent pasture, they were usually, at least in the sixteenth century, ancient demesne enclosures; some were used for the care of sick sheep or as shelter in severe weather.(2) During the seventeenth century, new enclosures were constantly being made in the fields, to the detriment of the foldcourse system;(3) but the older enclosures provided a valuable addition to the flock's pastures. A foldcourse at Oulton included, besides about 335 acres of open-field land and 39 acres of common, seven closes, six of them totalling over 130 acres.(4) Another foldcourse including enclosed pasture was that of Burgh Hall in Holkham: in 1634, there were "160 acres called the Ashyards...and there is one peece of ground called the fower score acre peece on which the fiue hundred sheep are depastured besides the feed over the common fields..."(5)

Arrangements were made to supplement the customary feed of a foldcourse if it proved insufficient in special circumstances. A piece of ground called "Stirston Moore" lay within the bounds of Sturston glebe foldcourse, and was claimed as common by the inhabitants; but it could be used by the flock in hard weather.(6) To allow for such an emergency,

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(1) Supra, p. 32 f.n. 1.
(2) See Chapter Six, p. 304, for example.
(3) See Chapter Two, Section Five.
(4) N.P.L. N.R.S. 13324, 28A4, undated map, probably early seventeenth century.
(5) Holkham Mss., Holkham Deeds, 13/639, 1634, quoted by Spratt, op. cit., p. 250.
(6) P.R.O. E123/26/319-322, 1597. See Chapter Five, pp. 177-8.

Thomas Fermor was granted liberty of shack and feed with his flocks belonging to East Barsham and Sculthorpe manors in 50 acres of meadow, pasture and marsh ground in Sculthorpe; Fermor had just sold the land but he retained this right to feed the sheep from 1st November until 25th March yearly "in the time of froste and snowe and not other wyse."(1) In other cases, additional feed was leased in order that the foldcourse might carry a larger flock. When the Duke of Norfolk farmed his foldcourse and flock of 1440 sheep at Castle Acre to Thomas Payne he included in the lease "therles wyken", which the Duke rented from the Earl of Arundel; but in 1547, the foldcourse was said to support only 360 sheep and "the cawes of that dekaye is that the Chefe feede of the shepe was upon the sayed Erle of Arundells grounde the whiche the sayde Duke helde but to ffearme frome yere to yere." If the Earl's ground were not leased again, only a few sheep could be kept in the foldcourse.(2)

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(1) N.P.L. N.R.S.14327, 29B1, 1584-85. For Fermor's sheep farming, see Chapter Six, pp.231-8.

(2) P.R.O. L.R.2/255/35-49, 1547-48. The evidence was misinterpreted by Hammond. He suggests that Payne leased 1320 sheep (he excludes 120 crones) from the Duke for a foldcourse of 360 ewes; finding that the feed was insufficient, Payne then leased the Earls Wyken from the Earl of Arundel. Hammond, R.J., "The Social and Economic Circumstances of Ket's Rebellion", unpublished thesis, University of London, 1933, p.61.

In the further consideration of foldcourses, it will be found that they were often known by distinctive names, taken from the village, the manor, the lord, a topographical feature or a peculiarity of the flock.(1) The number of sheep which could be kept in the foldcourse was customarily regulated; the smaller foldcourses carried only about 200 sheep, but some flocks were of 1000 or 1500 head. To exceed the normal number not only over-taxed the pasturage, but also impinged upon the tenants' rights and hindered the tillage of the fields.(2)

II.

The physical nature of foldcourses may best be understood by considering the examples of several villages of the Sheep-Corn Region.

The land utilisation of the parish of Sturston was probably typical of many of the smaller Breckland townships.(3) The small village was situated in a valley, with some meadow land by the stream, and the open arable field on the valley side. A survey of the glebelands mentions no fields or precincts, but only furlongs and their component strips: it was simply "the arable field of Sturston". On the higher

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(1) For example:- 1. Wormegey Course; 2. Feltham's Course in Great Massingham; 3. Waite's Course in Tittleshall; 4. the Warren Course in East and West Rudham; 5. the Red Backed Course in Sturston, or the Ewe Course in Roudham.
(2) See Chapter Five.
(3) In the course of a dispute concerning the glebelands, a survey was made in which the flocks were described, P.R.O. E123/26/319-322, 1597. See Chapter Five, pp.176-8.

ground was an extensive stretch of heathland; much of it is still heath and forestry plantations today, and the cultivated land was still confined to the valley side when the War Office took the parish into a battle training area. Such is the marginality of Breckland. At the end of the sixteenth century, the heathland was used by three flocks: the Red Flanked Flock,(1) feeding in the Little Ground and comprising 600 to 720 sheep; the Red Backed Flock of 960 head; and the Red Necked Flock of 600 to 720 sheep. The two latter flocks belonged to the lord of the manor, and they probably shared the Great Ground.(2) The Red Flanked Foldcourse belonged to the parsonage and its boundaries are carefully described in the survey. The heath pasture of this course was provided by the Little Ground, bounded on the south by the lands of West Wretham and the Red Cross, on the east by Tottington Shodd,(3) on the west by Parsons Thorn, the Great Ground and the Coppedhoe Elm, and on the north by the arable field. The shackage of the foldcourse lay over that part of the field in the east of the parish, the boundary

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(1) These flocks are named from the different parts of the sheep that were given the distinguishing daub of "redding". See Chapter Six, p.301.

(2) It was not unusual for two flocks to use the same heathland: See Cawston, infra p. 173 ; Holkham, infra pp.42-3. If adjoining foldcourses belonged to the same man, they might be combined: Geoffrey Cobbe owned Broke Hall foldcourse in Dersingham (for 360 ewes), and the adjoining Butlers and Byrons course in Babingley (for 360 wethers), and he used them together as one foldcourse, P.R.O. C78/75.

(3) A term being used to describe the parish boundaries of Sturston; see also a map of West Wretham of 1741, K.C.C. Mss. (Infra, Map Eight)

of the shack extending from the Parsons Thorn directly to the stream on the north, along the stream to the shodd "which parteth Tottington and Stirston" on the east and up to Gawford Bushes[1] on the south.

Local people usually described the foldcourse boundaries with reference to various topographical and tenurial features, similar to those used in the Sturston survey. Several inhabitants at Hindringham were asked to describe the land over which the flock belonging to Norwich Cathedral Priory fed in summer; eighty-year-old Richard Coo remembered the bounds as extending from Langdale northward to Binham Elms, north again to Binham Gate, southward for three furlongs along a way leading from Binham to Hindringham, eastward by the lands of divers men and finally south to Northmore Dyke.[2]

In the large parish of Tittleshall, on the borders of the Good Sand Region and Mid-Norfolk, the land utilisation was much more complex than in Sturston.[3] The centrally situated village was surrounded by crofts and closes, many presumably under grass, and by 1596 most of the eastern third of the parish was enclosed as permanent grassland.[4] These enclosures

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(1) Query: these two words are almost illegible.
(2) P.R.O. D.L.3/39, 1541-42. For the Priory's sheep farming see Chapter Six, pp.238-253.
(3) See Map Five; Holkham Mss.,map 4/73A, 1596.
(4) The green colouring on Map Five indicates enclosures and does not necessarily signify grassland.

had formerly been the open East Field, and some of the enclosure at least must have been fairly recent in 1596.(1) Most of the remaining open-field land lay in the west of the parish, and although not named on the map, it must have comprised North and West Fields. Beyond the fields were several areas of common and heath, notably Burland in the north-west. The 1596 map indicates the boundaries of only two foldcourses, but at different times during the sixteenth century there had been three in use at once.(2) The smaller foldcourse of 1596 was probably Waite's Course:(3) it comprised arable and heath roughly in the proportion of three to one. Most of the arable land in this foldcourse was in large parcels in the several possession of Mr. Coke, and some were hedged on one or two sides;

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(1) Three very large enclosures were named "Eastfielde", and another "parte of Eastfielde"(1596 map). A survey of 1561 describes open-field land in North, West and East Fields, Holkham Mss., Tittleshall Books, 33. And a drag of 1578 mentions land in East Field, Tittleshall Books, 12. In 1517 Henry Fermor was reported to have enclosed 40 acres of arable land in Tittleshall, Leadham, T.R.H.S., new series, Vol.VII; See Chapter Six, pp. 237-8.

(2) Newhall & Coxford, Burland and Waite's foldcourses, Holkham Mss., Tittleshall Books, 19.
Newhall, Burland and Waite's courses in 1521-22, N.P.L.Ms. 1583, 1D4; see Appendix 3, Table 33.
The Newhall and Coxford foldcourse is apparently sometimes called Peak Hall foldcourse: in 1561, the open-field lands in Peak Hall course included 69 acres of Coxford lands, 31 acres of Newhall lands, 4 acres and 3 roods belonging to Townshend, and 13 acres 3 roods of Fermor and all other men, Holkham Mss., Tittleshall Deeds, 7/72.
It is possible that one foldcourse was lost by the enclosure of East Field.

(3) It lay near Caley's manor, formerly owned by William Waite, Blomefield, op.cit., X,66; and most of the arable land within the foldcourse is described as belonging to "Mr. Cooke nup(er) Waites", the map of 1596.

Open-field arable

Woods

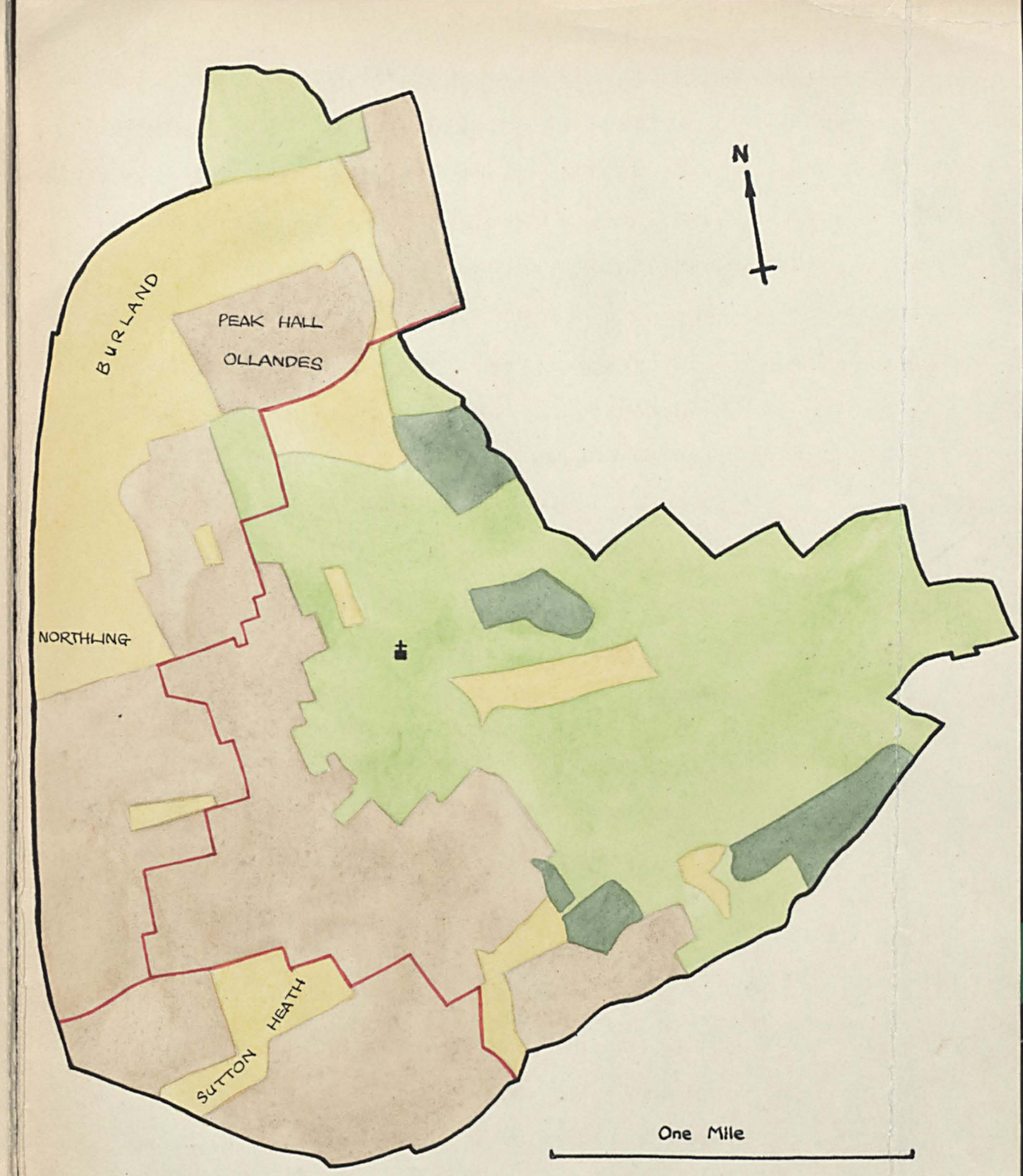
Closes

Common wastes

Boundaries of foldcourses

MAP 5 TITTLESHALL

DRAWN FROM THE MAP OF 1596.



this contrasts with the rest of the open field, most of which was composed of furlongs and strips. Coke's large parcels may be the result of consolidation of strips, but they may represent his demesne encroachment on the once-larger Sutton Heath.(1) Burland foldcourse included a much larger proportion of heathland, and supported a very large flock;(2) some enclosed land lay within the course, but it is not clear from the map whether all was under grass or not.(3) Several large parcels called Peak Hall Ollandes may have been only irregularly cultivated as long leys.(4) A large area of open-field furlongs lay within Burland foldcourse, but both courses together used only a little over one-half of the open-field land.(5)

The land utilisation of many villages in west Norfolk followed the pattern of that at North Creake.(6) The village

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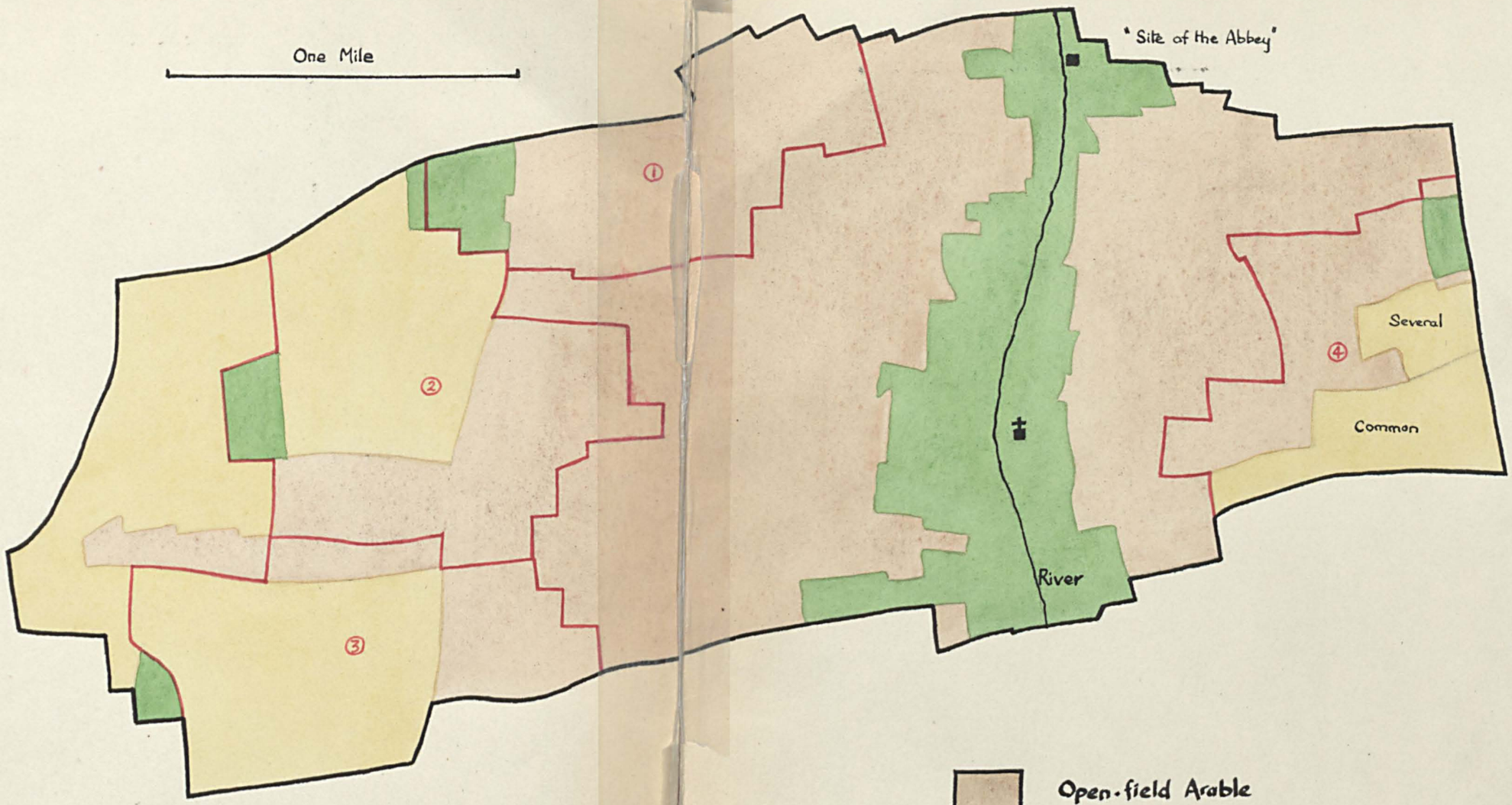
(1) No confirmation of these explanations has been found in the field books of Tittleshall, at Holkham.
(2) Of over 1000 sheep in 1542-43, Holkham Mss., Tittleshall Books, 19.
(3) The closes in the extreme north of the parish lay next to a stream and were probably pasture or meadow land.
(4) See infra p. 50 f.n. 2.
(5) In some townships, part of the open-field arable did not lie within a foldcourse, and tathe was supplied by the tenants' great cattle.
(6) See Map Six; N.P.L. N.R.S.3503, 13E, undated, but early seventeenth century: part of the heathland in the west lay in "Sr John Tounsendes fould course called Easthall Course" in Great Barwick; Sir John died in 1603, seized of that manor, Blomefield, op.cit., X,295. One of the North Creake manors had belonged to the Knevet family ("Knebit's manor") until sold in 1592 to the Armigers; Blomefield, op.cit., VII, 69; and much land is shown on this map as being in the possession of an Armiger.

lay in the valley of the Burn river, together with a considerable acreage of grass closes and crofts, and some meadowland. On the valley sides to the east and west stretched the extensive open fields, divided into precincts by the roadways. Remote from the village, the poorer soils on the high ground supported only rough heath. There were four foldcourses in North Creake: Coniver Course, belonging to North Creake Abbey; Shammer Course, belonging to the Bishop of Norwich's manor; the Frith Course, of Knebit's manor; and the East Pasture, including divers liberties of sheepwalk. Shammer Course was composed of roughly equal proportions of heath and arable land, the latter comprising 12 complete furlongs. In addition, it included two closes: Shammer Close ("parcell of Shammer foldcourse") and a second, "pcell of Shammer shacke" and therefore probably arable. The Frith Course contained approximately twice as much heath pasture as arable land, the shackage lying over six furlongs. Roughly equal proportions of commons and arable made up the East Pasture; 16 furlongs provided shackage. Part of the heath in this foldcourse was several ("the East Frith"), and part was "The Common called East Linge". Coniver Course presents the unusual situation of a foldcourse with no heathland pasture: most of it was open-field land (7 furlongs) with two closes in addition to "Coniver close heretofore inclosed now laid plain", and three or four several but unenclosed parcels of indefinite usage. The latter, together with the two closes, probably provided the summer pasturage of the foldcourse.



MAP 6 NORTH CREAKE DRAWN FROM AN ANNOTATED, EARLY SEVENTEENTH CENTURY MAP.

Finally, the field and foldcourse arrangements of Holkham provide a clear illustration of these systems; this is another township of the Good Sand Region. Gray relied to a considerable extent on the Holkham evidence for his analysis of the Norfolk system; he used the three most valuable documents, the map of 1590,(1) the report of a commission in 1594,(2) and the conveyance of a manor in 1583.(3) It has been seen, however, that Gray misunderstood certain aspects of the foldcourse system,(4) and his account of Holkham must be modified.

The arable lands of Holkham lay in three fields - Church, Stathe and South Fields. To the north of the coast road were extensive salt marshes, divided roughly equally between the several marsh of Burgh Hall and the Common Marsh. The largest area of upland commons was the Lyng, in the extreme south-east. In addition to "the Comon salt marshe" and "the Comon Linge", the commission of 1584 reported three smaller areas of common: "the Clynt" lying between Church and Stathe Fields where a small creek ran down to the marshes,

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(1) See Map Seven; Holkham Mss., Map.1.
(2) P.R.O. Duchy of Lancaster, Special Commissions, 350; see Hubert Hall, "A Formula Book of English Official Historical Documents", ii,17. Hall prints the commission and part of the return.
(3) Holkham Mss., uncatalogued.
(4) See supra, p. 20 . The account of Holkham is in Gray, op.cit., pp.326-330.

"houghe hill" in Church Field, and "the Towne Moore" in the centre of the houses of the village. All these are shown on the map of 1590.

The boundaries of four foldcourses are indicated on the map; they nowhere correspond with the field boundaries, but all the field land is included within the courses in contrast to the situation at North Creake. The Lyng was shared as summer pasture by two foldcourses - Wheatley's, which was held in the right of Hill Hall manor, and Caldowe, belonging to Burgh Hall. The latter manor also possessed the North Course (or Burgh Hall Foldcourse). The commissioners found that the sheep of North Course fed on no other commons but the Clynt during the summer,(1) and none but Howe Hill and the Clynt in shack time; they did, however, have access to the several marsh of Burgh Hall for their summer pasturage.(2) The commissioners found that the fourth foldcourse was "fed with the sheepe of one Edmund Newgate and others the Inhabitunts and house holders there. But whether Newgate's be taken as a folde corse or no we knowe not." This thus appears to have been in the nature of a town flock, but most of the sheep were owned by Newgate; William Porter, a yeoman of Holkham,

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(1) The boundary of Burgh Hall foldcourse is not shown to include the Clynt on the map.

(2) In 1634, this foldcourse included 350 acres of salt marsh, 42 acres of ordinary grazing, and 240 acres of several or enclosed pasture: the two latter areas are not apparent on the map of 1590, and must represent new enclosures. Holkham Mss., Holkham Deeds, 13/639, quoted by Spratt, op.cit., p.187.

Salt Marsh

Closes

Open-field Arable

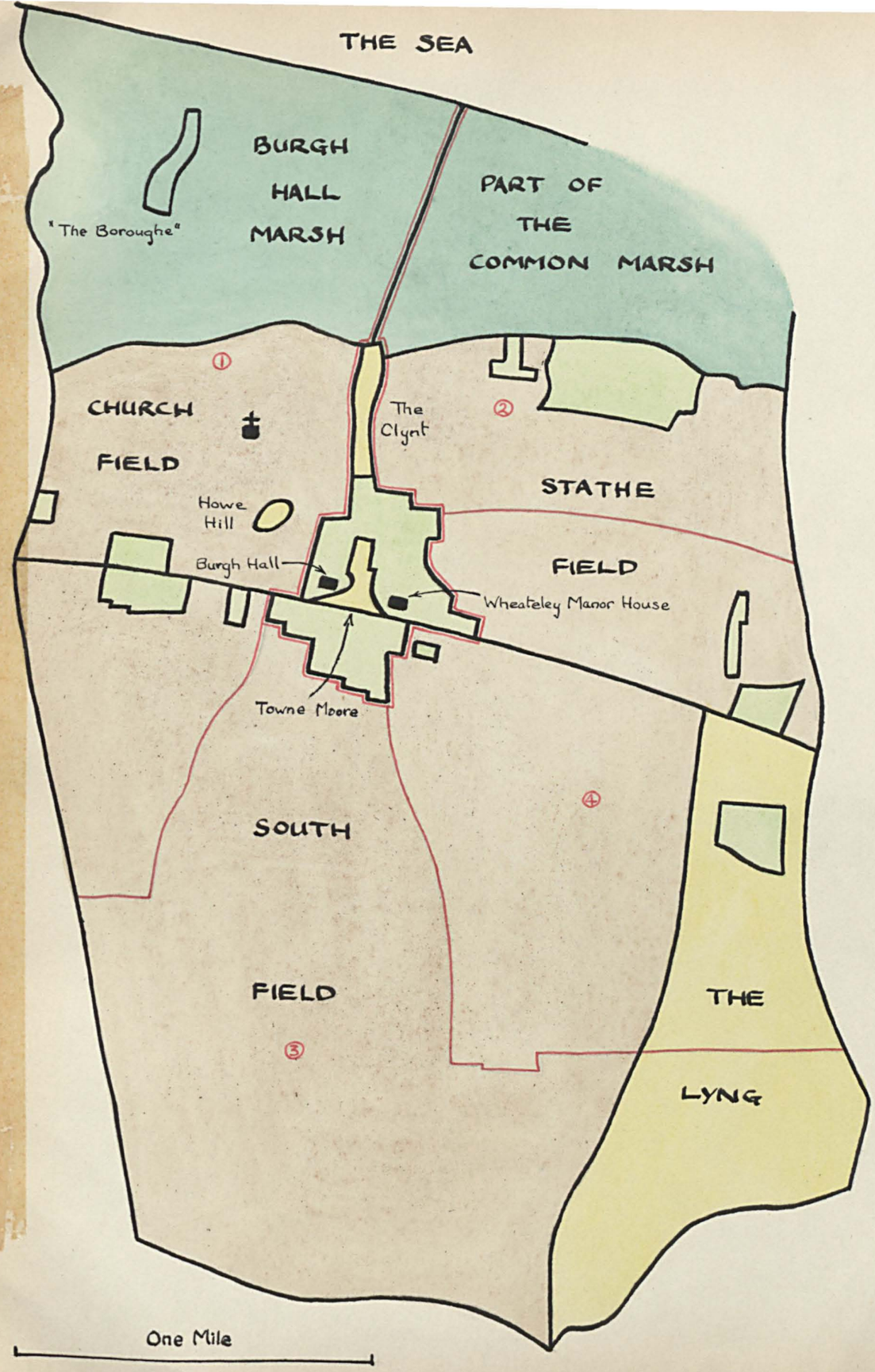
Common Wastes

Boundaries of foldcourses

① North Course
② Newgate's Course
③ Caldowe Course
④ Wheatley's Course

MAP 7 HOLKHAM

DRAWN FROM THE MAP OF 1590



told the commissioners that he thought no foldcourse should be kept on the common marsh, but that of late Edmund Newgate had kept 600 sheep there, though his grandfather and others had fed only 240.

The various rights of commonage in Holkham, some enjoyed by the lords of the manors and some by the tenants, are detailed in a conveyance of the manor of Nealds or Lucas in 1583. The demesne arable consisted of 234 acres in South Field, 67 acres in Church Field, and 88 acres in Stathe Field. Appurtenant to these lands, some of which were of course in the hands of tenants, were certain common rights of pasture. The first two were enjoyed by the lord and together comprised the liberty of Caldowe foldcourse:
"Item a Liberty of Fouldcourse and Fouldage and shacke with shepe in the southe fielde of Holkham", and
"Item a common of pasture...for horse, neate and sheepe at all tymes in the year in fourteen score acres lyinge in the southe parte of Holkham Common Lynge." (cf. Map Seven)
The remaining two rights were for the tenants' benefit:
"Item another common of pasture...in all tymes of the year for horse, neate, and swyne in all the commons of Holkham aforsayde."
"Item another common of pasture...for horse, neate, and swyne uppon all the feilds, grounds, and marshes within Holkham aforesaid lyinge freshe and unsowne yearly from the feaste of St Mychael the archeAngell or the ende of harveste until the annunciation of our Ladye or untill

suche tyme before the sayde feaste...as the said fields and grounds be sowen agayne."

These rights gave the tenants feed for their cattle - but not sheep, it will be noticed - on the commons all the year, and on the shack of the harvest fields, which they shared with the lord's flock. The use of the summer fallow arable is included in the first item which gave the lord's flock the use of both summer fallow and winter shackage over the arable land.(1)

The tenants had no right, therefore, to feed their sheep on either the commons or the arable land, but they were allowed to put certain limited numbers of sheep into the lord's flock.(2) In 1559, Caldowe flock consisted of 577 sheep and 148 lambs belonging to the lord at the beginning of the year, but in addition ten tenants put a total of 150 sheep into the flock.(3)

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(1) Gray is not explicit in his use of this evidence; he concluded that tenants' cattle were excluded from the fallow fields in summer which were then reserved for the flocks. But the flock also fed over the shack after harvest, and Gray was mistaken in thinking that shack was a term applied to the summer fallow. His conclusion was used as a generalisation for the foldcourse system elsewhere, but itwill be seen that winter shack was more important than summer fallow in most foldcourses, and that in some cases tenants' cattle did use the fallow. Gray does not comment on the lack of provision for tenants' sheep in these rights.

(2) This was termed a "cullet right", and is discussed in Chapter Three.

(3) Holkham Mss., Holkham Deeds,10/318; in 1557, 16 men put 264 cullet sheep into this flock (10/318), and in 1588 7 men put in 87 sheep (10/398).

In addition to making clear the composition of the four foldcourses, the Holkham evidence has provided some valuable information concerning the usage of the arable land for sheep feed. This aspect of the foldcourse arrangements must, however, be given separate consideration.

III.

The feeding of a flock of sheep over an open field of intermixed holdings in different stages of the three-course rotation would not have been practicable but for the observance of certain customary arrangements by both lord and tenants. These restrictions on cultivation and pasturage were often irksome, and were frequently abused: most of the available information comes from disputes arising from their non-observance.

There is a certain amount of unquestionable evidence that in some townships the arable land was divided into "shifts", so that fallow and sown strips lay in compact blocks; but it is doubtful whether this arrangement was universally used throughout the Sheep-Corn Region since shifts are so infrequently referred to. Thomas Russell, however, was sure of its existence in West Rudham: "The custom and usage there is and time out of mind of man has been that lands lying in the fields of W. Rudham have been divided into several shifts or parts of which some have been used yearly and every year and in course have been sown with corn, and some yearly left fallow."(1)

(1) P.R.O. C2/R6/61, temp. Elizabeth; see supra p. 28.

The evidence relating to Docking is equally definite: the farmers of the lord's foldcourse had right of shack in East Field, and other field grounds, in which the sown land lay each year in a "shyft". In 1591, the shift consisted of 100 acres in the south-east part of East Field.(1) The tenants of Harthill manor in Hunworth may have been using a similar method of sowing their strips, for in 1611 they protested that the lord of the manor was using the same area as sheep feed for a number of consecutive years.(2) In the absence of a definite shift system, it appears that tenants assisted the feeding of the flocks by sowing their land in a relatively compact area, and the distribution of their strips in limited sections of the field enabled this to be done more effectively than if the strips of a holding had been widely scattered.(3) Most disputes of which there is record do not mention shifts, but concern the sowing of isolated parcels of land by tenants having little regard for the free passage of the flock. Dunging by the flock should have been ample compensation for the restriction imposed on a tenant's freedom of tillage, but there were always peasants who obstinately refused to conform to these communal regulations.

(1) P.R.O. C2/H11/45, 1591.
(2) B.M. Addit., 39221, 1611, quoted by Spratt, op.cit. p.248.
(3) Supra, pp. 16-17.

Pasturage on the summer fallow involved the use of a fold of hurdles[1] which was moved over all the un-cropped land within the foldcourse: the foldcourse was "ye prcinct or Territory wthin wch ye foulde may have itts course, yt is may walke & be erected & oute whereof itt may not pass..."[2] The fallow was continually used by the flock for the whole summer until the extensive winter shack was available; the remarks of the writer of the Treatise on Foldcourses are worth quoting in full: "The somer pastr is a certein prcinct of ye field composed eythr wholy of ye Lords owne lands or mixtly of ye Lords & ye Tenants, to whome by Custm he giueth alowance for ye same eythr in rent, exchange or shepegate,[3] on this they feed all ye somer tyme until ye Haye & Cornes be inned & ye fields cleered. Then begimeth there wintr pastr wch they fetes ouer all ye fields wthin ye limitts of there walke whosoeuer ye lands be till ye Anunciatn of ye blessed virgin or yt ye fields be again sowne, or for such othr time as Custm or prscriptn haue detrmind - wherein bee:

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(1) "A foulde is ye least butt most eminent parte (of the whole foldcourse): a small enclosure made wth Hyrdells to shutt ye sheep in eythr for Tathing or othr wyse ordring of them", Treatise on Foldcourses", B.M.
(2) Loc.cit.
(3) For instances of this custom, see infra, pp.83-4,306. "shepegate" may refer to the putting of sheep into the lord's flock.

all mens cattell go then p'miscuouslye & as itt were upon spoyle wee call this time & kinde of feed shacke...". The shack was of two kinds: Lammas shack on meadow and pasture from which hay had been taken; and Michaelmas shack on the arable land.(1)

The shack period was always carefully delimited, and it was most commonly the five months between the Feast of Saint Michael the Archangel (29th.September) and the Feast of the Annunciation (25th March).(2) If harvest was late, the sheep would be delayed in moving on to the field,(3) and conversely the shack period might be "from the time the corn is off the lands before Mich(aelm)as to our Lady day."(4) There were local variations in the shack period,(5) and it was also often abused by the lords.(6)

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(1) Treatise on Foldcourses, B.M.
(2) For example, at Swaffham, P.R.O. Requests 2/187/11,1603.
(3) For example, at West Rudham, P.R.O. C2/R6/61, temp. Elizabeth.
(4) For example, at Hoo, Carthew, "Launditch", II, pp.738-9.
(5) For example, at Ormesby, 1st November to 30th November, P.R.O. E134/29 and 30 Eliz./Mich.8, 1596-97; at Flitcham, 18th October to 25th March, on certain of the arable land and 1st November to 25th March on moor, meadow and closes, P.R.O. E164/46, 1589; at Congham, 29th September to 1st November, and sometimes "a sevennight" before Michaelmas if harvest was completed; two shepherds of this flock had kept the sheep on the fields for different periods, but both had not fed them there continuously during the shack period - one said they stayed longer when the weather was dry, the other that they would stay perhaps for a fortnight and then leave for a few days before continuing their feed. P.R.O. E134/40 Eliz./Easter 3, 1597.
(6) See Chapter Five.

Despite the advantage of the sheep's tathe, tenants were not always satisfied with the shackage arrangements, and they may have believed that the necessary dunging could have been provided by their own cattle.(1) Tenants' cattle usually shared the shackage with the sheep - in Caldowe foldcourse at Holkham they shared the shack of South Field with the lord;(2) but in some townships tenants enjoyed the shack of land outside the foldcourses.(3)

The custom regarding sheep feed on the summer fallow was variable; in some townships it was certainly used, and a foldcourse lessee might be bound to prepare the tathed fallow for cultivation as a condition of his lease.(4) At Crimplesham, the flock fed over land in the four fields "when it lyeth somerley in the somer tyme",(5) and at Holkham, the summer fallow in South Field was "tryed & truden owte" by the shepherd.(6) At Hickling,

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(1) See infra pp.155,158.
(2) Supra pp.43-4.
(3) For example, at Docking, P.R.O. C2/H11/45, 1591.
(4) Holkham Mss., Castle Acre Deeds, 1657, quoted by Spratt, op.cit., p.247.
(5) P.R.O. E315/201/55-59 and 65-173, 1625 and 1596, quoted by Spratt, op.cit., p.245.
(6) Holkham Mss., Holkham Deeds, 10/371, 1580.

the arable feed consisted of "Somerleyes, ollands, and stubbles,"[1] ollands being parcels of land lying fallow for more than one year.[2] On other manors, however, not all of the summerley was used as sheep feed: at Walsingham, some of the summerley was included in the foldcourse and some was not.[3] If summerley was not used by the flock, tenants would keep their own cattle on their strips, and if it was used by the flock they were allowed recompense for the loss of cattle feed.[4]

After summerley land had been ploughed in the autumn, it could still enjoy the benefit of tathing until the land was actually sown; care then had to be taken to see that the

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(1) P.R.O. E134/8 Chas.I/Easter 4, 1632-33.
(2) Ollands were old lands, or long leys. In some cases, they probably represent the irregular cropping of marginal soils in a township, and were added to the sheeps' pasture for certain periods: at Carbrooke, 14 acres of open-field land were described as "ollands for the Shepys Pasture", P.R.O. L.R.2/220/270-274. At Tittleshall, Peak Hall Ollandes were almost completely surrounded by heathland, and may represent encroachments upon it, see Map Five. Gray found ollands being regularly laid down or cropped by a Weasenham tenant, supra, p. 16 f.n. 1. One olland there was referred to as "bastard Sommerlay". At Keninghall, the Duke of Norfolk laid 90 acres of ollands as common for the tenants in lieu of another piece of common that he had taken from them. P.R.O. E164/46.
(3) In the East Field of Old Walsingham, 139 acres were cropped, 59a.1r. were unsown as sheep pastures, and 12a. lay summerley. Similarly in the West Field of Little Walsingham. The cropped lands would be used as shack: some were explicitly ascribed "to Sidney (the lessee) for his fold course", P.R.O. L.R.2/220/327-333, temp. Henry VIII.
(4) Supra, p. 47.

sheep did not destroy the sprouting corn. At Hockwold, the owners of the flock had destroyed winter corn on land that had recently been "sommerlay", and the Court of Star Chamber repeated a decree made previously that they might use their own land, and no other, in the period between tillage and sowing. The earlier decree had ordered that if any of these men, "being great shepe masters freholders there", had as much as 1½ acres of land in the open fields "tylled to sowe yt", then they might lawfully "pynne and folde thire shepe upon suche ther lands to tathe them (provided that) they do no (damage) to the corne of there neyghburs and sowe ther said landis wthout covyn or fraud at suche tyme as the seasen of the yere shall requyre by the custome of the countrey." The same care was to be taken by the inhabitants in feeding their great cattle; they were not to be fed on the open fields after sowing "except they tye them upon ther owne proper lay landis not doyng any hurt therby to any of ther neyghburs"; and tenants were to observe all customs "aswell in sowing of there landis & laying of ther lay feldis."(1) The implications of these orders are that the fallow land was used as feed for the flock, but that after it was tilled in preparation for sowing both tenants and flock owners were entitled to keep their animals there - but only on their own strips. Only the special circumstances of land tilled but as yet unsown made it necessary for individual animals to be

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(1) P.R.O. St.Ch.2/8/158, temp. Henry VIII.

tethered; since all tenants would not have sown their strips at exactly the same time, it is easy to visualise that corn might otherwise have been destroyed on some strips while it had not sprouted or even been sown on others. No other reference to such a procedure has been found, but local arrangements of this kind may often have been made.(1)

Heathland lying within a foldcourse was usually several to the lord; in some cases, however, it was part of the common heathland used by the tenants and the sheeps' feed was then limited. Although the majority of foldcourses included heathland for summer pasturage, some flocks had in addition feed over other waste ground in winter only, for the same period as arable shackage.(2) The flock of the Bishop of North Elmham went over part of Beetley Heath for the whole year, and over the rest of it in shack time only;(3) and at Flitcham feed over moor, meadow and closes was limited to the winter months.(4)

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(1) The only other reference to tethering comes from Cawston, and concerns sheep "staffe holden" on the heathland; even this seems to have been contrary to custom, P.R.O. E134/8-9 Eliz./Mich.2, 1565-66.
(2) For example, at Roxham, P.R.O. E134/1653-54/Hilary 7.
(3) Carthew, "Launditch", II, p.560.
(4) P.R.O. E164/46, 1589.

The bestowal of dung on the tenants' land was not regarded by the flock owner as just repayment for the use of the sheep feed: on the contrary, tenants paid the lord for the privilege of receiving tathe. Between one and two shillings per acre was a common payment, but the charge was always greater for winter than summer tathing. The reason for this difference is not clear. It may be that the lord wanted a higher payment for the inferior stubble feed of the shack than for the better feed of the grass ley on summer fallow; and of course this would help to meet the cost of hay for winter fodder. Alternatively (or this may be a complementary reason), the explanation may lie in the size of the flock which was at full strength in the winter, and would then give better tathing.(1) Payment for tathe was an additional reason for the peasants' objection to shackage.(2)

The restrictions of the foldcourse system had always been irksome to the tenants, despite the undoubted benefit of tathing, and many landlords were anxious to ignore the customary limitations on their sheep feed. The two-fold strain to which the system was consequently subjected

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(1) See Chapter Six, pp. 201, 248, 265.
(2) See Chapter Five, pp. 160-1.

eventually caused its breakdown, but during the sixteenth century the weight of custom and the power of the landlords were sufficient to suppress non-co-operation by individual tenants. The sixteenth century disputes thus provide illustrations of the normal working of the system.

IV.

As a result of the observance of shifts in the fields of West Rudham, Thomas Russell said that "the sheep of the said foldcourse can more conveniently feed and shack", but his tenants were not always co-operative: he complained that Henry King and his son failed to observe the shifts. They had, he said, sown both dispersed and contiguous parcels of land in the fields, and had also sown spring and winter corn on adjoining strips. As a result, to have taken his accustomed sheep feed would have meant destroying some of the corn. The Kings had also restricted the feed by enclosing several parcels of land, and by sowing two others lying in the summer heath pasture.(1)

Similar difficulties were encountered by William Reade at Holkham; three men had sown several dispersed

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(1) Supra, pp. 28,45 . But the Russells themselves did not always respect tenants' rights in West Rudham: in 1517, Henry Russell was reported to have enlarged his sheeps' pasture by converting 40 acres of arable to pasture, and causing a plough to be put down. See Chapter Five, pp. 183 et seq.

parcels in South Field with "sundry kinds of corn", thus "incompassing some part of the said foldcourse circlewise with one or two ridges of corn."(1) Part of the fallow was inaccessible to the flock.

At Swaffham, Robert Chabner had always been unhindered in his use of a foldcourse for 960 sheep which he held in right of a messuage called the "old Swanne"; in 1596, he leased the Old Swan, together with "Swanne Close" and 107½ acres dispersed in West Field, to Thomas Halman - but he reserved the right of foldcourse to himself. The sheep fed over the commons of Swaffham all the year, and over the whole of West Field in shack time. After several years, Halman brought a number of actions of trespass against Chabner for turning his sheep on to the fields, claiming that the clause in the lease which reserved the foldcourse to Chabner was insufficient at law. Halman claimed that he wanted two of the parcels of land concerned for his great cattle, but if the complainant in this case is to be believed, Halman had already been allowed to use some of Chabner's several grounds for this purpose.(2)

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(1) P.R.O. C2/R4/18, temp. Elizabeth.
(2) P.R.O. Requests 2/187/11, 1603. The shifts at Docking were abused; in 1597, the sown shift was of about 100 acres in East Field, leaving about 1000 acres of the field unsown for shackage; two tenants sowed parcels in other parts of the field, one replying that when in previous years he had observed the custom of not sowing certain land with winter corn, the lord had usually allowed him some land in the breck or pasture of the foldcourse for sowing - this had not been done this year, P.R.O. C2/H11/45, 1591.

Together with the sowing of scattered strips, the enclosure of isolated parcels of land was a most serious threat to the flocks' pasturage. Small enclosures not only deprived the sheep of shackage over the close itself,(1) but sometimes had more far-reaching results. Thomas Wilson had "enclosed and taken into seu'altie" three acres of land lying in the open fields of Fulmodestone and Croxton, thus preventing the passage of the flock that used both fields and necessitating a reduction in the size of the flock.(2) Shackage was considerably impaired by the widespread enclosure of strips in the fields: in 1533-34, the Bishop of North Elmham was confirmed in his right of feeding his flock over all the arable shackage in Great Bittering, and all those tenants who had enclosed their holdings since 1513-14 were ordered to provide gaps for the sheep to enter the closes.(3)

This toleration of "half-year closes" was a not infrequent concession made to un-co-operative tenants, but it was undoubtedly the thin end of the wedge - a wedge that was firmly driven home during the seventeenth century.

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(1) John Payne infringed the shack in Carbrooke by enclosing 3a. of land with a quickset fence, P.R.O. St.Ch.2/29/65, 1530, quoted by Hammond, op.cit., p.73.

(2) P.R.O. DL1/171.

(3) Carthew, "Launditch", II, p.560. The writer of the Treatise on Foldcourses stressed that all land within a foldcourse should be subject to feeding by the lord's flock: if he did not feed them in a tenant's close, then either he had released it or taken some composition for it, or the close had never 'anciently' been part of the foldcourse. He mentioned one way in which tenants were able to defy the lord: they laid their strips to permanent pasture and then claimed that sheep feed could be taken only on the shack or summerley of ploughed ground, B.M.

Already in 1632, Martin Calthorpe was finding it difficult to maintain his foldcourse in Hickling. Witnesses confirmed that many parcels of land in four fields in Hickling had been enclosed by the tenants to the hinderance of the sheep feed. But the defendants claimed that they had made the enclosures - for they did not deny making them - under licences from the lord, and that ways had been left open for sheep to reach the lord's own lands.(1) Many foldcourses were being thus reduced in size long before their final downfall.

In an attempt to maintain their foldcourses in face of enclosure and random sowing of strips, landlords were forced to take legal action to achieve the customary exchanges of land with their tenants. When "A few wilfull persons" at Anmer ploughed and sowed scattered parcels of land in both the winter and summer pastures of two foldcourses, a commission was appointed to arrange exchanges, and to assess damages, for the benefit of lord and tenants.(2)

During the seventeenth century, the tempo of resistance to the traditional foldcourse arrangements was quickened, and the threat of ultimate disruption of the system was being appreciated. In 1627, the Justices foresaw an ultimate breakdown if the abuses were allowed to continue:

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(1) P.R.O. E134/8 Chas.I/Easter 4, 1632-33.
(2) Privy Council Orders, 1627, printed in Rye, "State Papers", pp.70-71, quoted by Spratt, op.cit., p.254.

"This Court was now of opinion that the plowing and sowing of small quantities of land dispersedlye or disorderlye within ye shacks and winter feedinge of ye said ffouldcourses, and the refusal of a few wilfull persons to lett ye owners of ffouldcourses have their quillets of land (Llying intermixt in the places where ye sheep pasture is layd) upon indifferent exchange or other recompense for the same, are things very mischievous and will tend to ye overthrow of very many fold courses."(1) Not all tenants refused to accept exchanges: at Spixworth, Amy Wilkings exchanged 21½ acres which "did lye very troublesome to the sayd sheeps pasture" (of Sir Robert Southwell) for 18¾ acres elsewhere;(2) and at Hindringham, certain tenants were obliged to give up their lands lying in the summer pasture of the foldcourse - they were either given other land in exchange or compensated at the rate of 8d. per acre. Two of the tenants refused to give up their land and ploughed it instead, demanding that the compensation be raised to 1s. per acre.(3)

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(1) N.N.A.S., Original Papers, pp.70, 73, 1627, quoted by Tawney, "The Agrarian Problem in the Sixteenth Century", pp.395-6.
(2) P.R.O. C2/M7/15, temp. Elizabeth; for Southwell's sheep farming, see Chapter Six, pp. 254-269.
(3) P.R.O. DL3/49, 1541-42.

V.

During the seventeenth century, piecemeal improvement by small landowners became of increasing significance; more and more land was removed from the common fields and common heaths to be used in severalty, and as the open fields dwindled, so did many flocks of sheep. Enclosure by tenants removed small parcels of land from the sheep pasture, open-field strips became "half-year closes", and eventually "whole-year lands" replaced "half-year or shack lands". Although the flocks' tathe was lost, enclosure gave tenants freedom from common field rights and restrictions, and improved methods of cultivation were possible. The introduction of new crops into the rotation resulted in the continuous cultivation of land which was no longer lying unsown for winter shackage; the progress of enclosure was often coincident with the introduction of turnips as a field crop.(1) In the disputes which arose, it is clear

(1) The earliest available references to turnips as a field crop are given below (in text). See also, Norwich Bishop's Chapel, inventories, Smith 27 (1662), Smith 68, (1661), Cupper 85 (1677). Roots were being grown by Dutchmen in closes outside Norwich much earlier; in 1575 a note of the benefits of the prescence of the Strangers since they arrived ten years earlier, included "Item - they digge and delve a grete quantite of grounde for rootes which is a grete succor and sustenaunce for the pore bothe for themse(lves) as for all others of citie and contrie", P.R.O. S.P.12/20/49, printed in Moens, "The Walloons and their Church at Norwich", p.262, and in Tawney and Power, "Tudor Economic Documents",Vol.I, pp.315-316. For references to such cultivation see City Court Books, 13/110(1596), 13/190(1598), 15/506d.(1623) ("Carrett Roots"), 16/455,457(1633). Roots were probably grown as a field crop under this Dutch influence: it is noticeable that at Shropham turnips were grown on an estate belonging to the city (infra) and that Hellesdon was on the boundaries of the city (infra).

that the landlords no longer had control over tenants' use of land, and the maintenance of foldcourse rights depended on the enforcement of custom by the courts of law. Individual landlords may have realised that rights of sheep feeding were inimical to progress, and some cut their losses by allowing tenants freedom from shackage by sale or exchange. In 1610, the tenants of Kenninghall purchased their lands in the foldcourse in order to make them whole-year lands;(1) and at Burgh-next-Aylsham the lord renounced his right of feeding the flock over the tenants' field land in return for the tenants' surrender of their right of common on Burgh Heath.(2) In many cases, however, landlords were jealous of their rights and anxious to maintain the profits from their flocks, fighting a long rearguard action before submitting to the break-up of their foldcourses. This is well illustrated by the history of events at Foxley, where successive landlords resisted the

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(1) Blomefield, op.cit., I, 220.
(2) Sir Edward Coke agreed with the tenants that "...all their lands...lying in the field of Burgh...shall be from henceforth quite released and discharged for ever of the liberty of common of pasture, shack, foldage, or feed which the Lords of the said Manor have had or ought of right to have or demand." The tenants renounced their rights of common on 50 acres of Burgh Heath;in 1588. Though the lord's rights in the fields were thus removed, individual holders of land there enjoyed shackage until the enclosure act of 1814, Holkham Mss., quoted by Mosby, op.cit., p.124.

progress of enclosure and turnip sowing.

The lord of Beck Hall manor possessed a right of foldcourse extending over the open field of Foxley, and already by the late sixteenth century he was having difficulty in maintaining it. Enclosure of strips by tenants had been progressing for many years before 1592, when an enumeration was made of the "Lands Inclosed wthin the shacke of ffoxley the seide Landes beinge in ffoxley": there were 19 offences, involving 21 parcels of land totalling 70¼ acres. In addition, four of those closes prevented the sheep from reaching a further 4 parcels of 14½ acres. The enclosed strips had been "Always before fed with ffoxley flocke in shack time", and they ranged in size from one to eight acres. The earliest of the enclosures had been made in about 1546, two or three years before the "campe": these enclosers were peasants who had not forgotten the rebellion under Ket, provoked by the inordinate demands of sheep-rearing landlords. With what revengeful pleasure must one enclosure have been made by the widow of John Porter "who was slayne in the Comocion time here in Norff." The lord of the manor in 1592 was William Andrewes, gent., and like his predecessor, John Cursson, he "lokyd Littill to the

Inclosures."[1]

No record has been found of the fate of those sixteenth century enclosures or of subsequent developments during the seventeenth century; but by 1755, the lord was making important concessions to his tenants. The foldcourse then included a number of closes, in addition to open-field land and heath.[2] Robert Leeds had leased the manor and foldcourse of Beck Hall from the Earl of Leicester, Sir Thomas Coke, and in 1755 he made a compromise agreement with 18 tenants who were sowing turnips in both half-year closes and field land.

The tenants agreed to sow only such closes and lands "as shall lye in Shifts or Contiguous together", and at Michaelmas, when shackage began, they were to "hurdle or Fence the same out with a Fencing Stuff in such a manner as the Shepherd...may without any Annoyance keep the flock...from feeding of the said Turnips." The recompense payable to Leeds for loss of shackage was to be two shillings per acre. Tenants were also bound to sow the

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(1) Holkham Mss., Billingford and Bintree Deeds, 12/846. One enclosure had been made before the "comocion", two two or three years before the "campe", two since the camp, one four years after the camp, eight between 1575 and 1578, one in 1584, one in 1589 or 1590, two in 1591 and one within the previous three days.

(2) Map of Foxley foldcourse, Holkham Mss., Billingford and Bintree Deeds, 15/976, undated but about 1700. A particular of the lands in the foldcourse, ditto, 15/1002, undated but about 1755.

turnip lands in the following year with barley or oats, and then to lay them down with clover or grass seeds "& so to Continue the said Lands in an Husbandlike Manner." Leeds agreed to make these concessions on condition that all 18 tenants would participate.(1)

If Leeds did not trust individual tenants to maintain the agreement, he was soon proved right. In December 1756, he contemplated bringing an action against William Browne for disturbing his right of sheepwalk. Browne and his father had kept the sheep out of three closes which witnesses declared to be half-year lands: a previous owner of the closes said that he had paid Leeds not to feed the sheep over turnips sown in them.(2) Browne acknowledged his fault on this occasion,(3) but this was no doubt not the last dispute before the foldcourse rights were finally extinguished by the Parliamentary Enclosure Act.(4)

But turnips had been sown to the detriment of foldcourses long before the mid-eighteenth century; at Shropham in 1681, a tenant had harvested a rye crop only to sow the land immediately with turnips, "whereby the foldcourse let by the city will be spoiled." The Norwich

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(1) Holkham Mss., Billingford and Bintree Deeds, 15/1003, 1004.
(2) Ditto, 15/1006.
(3) Ditto, 15/1007, 1757.
(4) Infra, pp.67-8.

Court of Mayoralty ordered him to appear at the next manor court at Shropham[1] and no more is heard of the matter.[2] At Hellesdon, just outside the city, far more extensive and damaging turnip cultivation was being encountered by Sir William Gostling.

This dispute came before the Assizes at Norwich in 1684; the defendant, Mr. Sabberton, was alleged to have enclosed 100 acres of land lying in Gostling's foldcourse, and with other landholders to have sown turnips in the fields: Gostling's shepherd had been obliged to feed his sheep over these roots in shack-time. The verdict had been procured against Gostling, and a friend later commiserated with him that false witnesses had been called to uphold the defendants' story. Although they were probably instructed as to their evidence, there may have been some truth in the witnesses' assertion that turnips had been sown in the fields for forty, fifty or sixty years,

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(1) N.C.M.R., C.B.25/98; see W.Rye, "Notes from the Court Books of the City of Norwich from 1666 to 1668", 1905, p.164.

(2) Until 1696. Then, the tenant of the foldcourse was instructed to "turne in his sheep and eat vp the Turnips" if the offender gave no satisfaction, N.C.M.R., C.B.26/24d.
This order was repeated in 1700, N.C.M.R., Assembly Book 8/239d.

since Gostling had in fact taken payments from tenants for not feeding the sheep over their turnips. Soon after the trial, his farm bailiff reported that the sowing of turnips was continuing, and that he was afraid that the offenders, encouraged by the legal decision, would sue him for taking compositions in return for not feeding over turnips in the past.

Charles Gostling succeeded Sir William, and encountered further difficulties. In 1718, one of the former offenders was reported to be making enclosures in the fields, and to have encouraged the inhabitants of Drayton to do the same. In the following year, one Norris, refused to lay his closes open for shack, and a Mr. Berney, writing to Gostling, voiced a general despondancy among flock owners: "I find gents who have sheeps walkes are fearfull of suffering inclosures...least in time it may occasion unforeseen inconveniencys." In 1721, Berney reported that the inhabitants of Drayton had enclosed land against the foldcourse, and in 1722, that if the offenders were not restrained they would continue until the foldcourse was finally overthrown. Berney, like the farm bailiff of the 1680's, was reporting to an absentee landlord - a fact which must have heightened the tenants' sense of grievance, and perhaps made their task easier.

If half-year closes were properly laid open to shack, both sheep feed and agricultural method were improved. This was the line taken by Norris in 1719 when he claimed that his action had been in everybody's interests. He had divided his 43 acres lying together in Hellesdon Field into six enclosures, he said, "In Order to improve the land for my Tenant in the Summer, and by consequence for your Sheep in the Winter." He claimed to have fixed gates for the entry of the sheep into the closes, and reminded Gostling that he was not alone in his misfortune, "Seeing the Owners of fflocks do suffer such new Inclosures yearly to be made in many of our Fields". Moreover, "for twenty yeares together before, not only in Hellesdon but in Drayton and other Fields where your Sheep do constantly feed, great numbers of new Inclosures were everywhere made, and not the least notice ever taken thereof, they being always deemed an advantage to your flock." In fact, of course, Gostling's father had been objecting to enclosures nearly forty years earlier, but it is true that he had allowed the sowing of turnips on payment of compensation. In 1743, he again allowed tenants to compound, at the rate of one shilling per acre, to reserve their turnips and

carrots from sheep feed,[1] provided that they were either sown in enclosed grounds, or on contiguous parcels in the open field "according to the Usage of Sheeps Walks."[2] As at Foxley, this compromise arrangement was probably maintained until the Parliamentary Enclosure Act.

While landlords and flock owners were no doubt united in their condemnation of enclosure by tenants, they were not always respectful of each other's rights. At Great Dunham, for instance, Henry Bastard (lord of the manor) had made four enclosures of over 128 acres in all in the shackage of the foldcourse of Sir Philip Wodehouse, whose manor was in neighbouring East Lexham. Bastard made a "faint"defence, claiming that the enclosures were exempted from shack by reason of their long continuance; an award was made confirming Wodehouse's right, but Bastard was to have 60 sheep in the East Lexham flock during shack time.[3]

Whenever rights of shackage on common field land persisted until the second half of the eighteenth century,

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(1) At Hoo, in 1781, 26 acres of half-year lands (including four closes) were exempted from sheep feed on the payment of 1s. per acre, Carthew, "Launditch",III,p.377.
(2) This dispute is described in a bundle of papers relating to Hellesdon foldcourse, N.P.L. Mss.9697, 8F1.
(3) N.P.L. N.R.S.12831, 31E5, 1617.

their final extinction was included in the purposes of the Parliamentary Enclosure Acts. That for Happisburgh and Lessingham in 1801 was, "An Act for dividing, allotting, and inclosing the open and common fields, half-year or shack lands, commons, severals, and waste grounds within the parishes of Happisburgh and Lessingham in the county of Norfolk, and for extinguishing all rights of sheepwalk and shackage in, over and upon the lands and grounds within the said parish of Happisburgh.(1) Another Act is 1773-74 proposed to enclose the open and common fields, crofts, brecks, and other half-year closes in Beetley, Great Bittering and Gressenhall, including the liberty of Beetley foldcourse and the commons in that parish. An estimated 700 acres of open-field lay within the foldcourse in the three parishes, about 130 acres in the brecks, ahd about 300 acres in Beetley Heath and Beetley Common. The award, in 1775, made a special allottment to the lady of the manor, in lieu of her rights of soil and sheepwalk.(2)

VI.

The extinction of retrogressive common rights, and the final abandonment of the foldcourse system were ultimately achieved by the Parliamentary Enclosure Acts; but in many

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(1) K.C.C. Mss., P.37.
(2) Carthew, "Launditch", III, p.46.

parishes these Acts were concerned with the re-allottment of enclosed land more than with the initial enclosure of open fields.(1) Especially in north-east Norfolk, piecemeal enclosure had been very extensive.(2) While many landlords were attempting to maintain their old rights of foldcourse and were resisting the progress of open field enclosure, others were re-organising their estates on new lines; the development of the new Norfolk Husbandry in the later seventeenth and eighteenth centuries involved radical changes on the estates of some of the more progressive gentlemen, especially in the Good Sand Region of north-west Norfolk. The introduction of new crops and new rotations was accompanied by a transformation of the open-field organisation, and entire townships were enclosed by the time the Enclosure Commissioners arrived. The arable fields were totally enclosed and became known as "infields" and the heaths were divided into brecks and closes - the "outfields". Under the new system, sheep retained an important position, but they were no longer the freely-moving creatures that had dunged the open fields and the

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(1) Often the whole parish was re-divided and re-allotted, whether open or not. See Gray, op.cit., pp.305-306.

(2) See Marshall, op.cit., Vol.I, pp.4, 8.

un-improved heaths; in the remodelled foldcourse - for the name at least remained unchanged - the flock was carefully folded over the closes, fattened on the root and fodder crops, and harnessed to the cultivation of the heathland brecks.

Even before the enclosure and re-allotment of these estates, and often as a preliminary development, extensive consolidation of land ownership was taking place. While some flock owners were attempting to maintain their foldcourse rights over the intermixed lands of their tenants, others were purchasing and exchanging their lands until not only the sheep but the arable land within the foldcourse was largely or entirely in their own hands. This was the policy adopted by Sir Richard Hovell at Docking; by the second half of the seventeenth century, his tenants retained only a tiny proportion of the arable land within his two foldcourses, Kneegong and Lugdon Hill Foldcourses, and only Mr. Drewry possessed a substantial acreage to interrupt his freedom of shackage.(1) The aggravation of the tenants' acres was relieved by giving them "exchang for their lands", and Hovell paid an annual

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(1)

	Kneegong F.C.	Lugdon Hill F.C.
Hovell	86a. 1r.	144a. 1r. 20p.
Drewry	92a. 0r.	89a. 0r. 20p.
Tenants	2a. 3r.	4a. 2r. 20p.

rent for the use of Drewry's land as sheep feed.[1] Drewry's strips still lay "intermixt land by land" with Hovell's. A flock of 900 sheep could be supported by Hovell's own land in the two foldcourses, but by renting the additional feed he was able to increase the flock to 1200 head. In some years Drewry chose to put 300 of his own sheep into the flock, sharing the charges with Hovell,[2] but whichever course was followed, the situation was much simpler than the old customary methods used at Docking.[3]

By 1669, the two principal landowners were Sir William Hovell and Hugh Hare, and in that year they reached an agreement by which each man acquired virtually sole rights in one of the foldcourses. Hare was to enjoy all Hovell's land in Kneegong Course, with all the ground gained by exchanges with tenants, until 1680; and Hovell received all Hare's ground in Lugdon Hill Course, as well as an annual rent of £16.[4] After such consolidation, open-field land was ripe for undisputed enclosure.

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(1) In a second mss., "my lord Collrayne" was the recipient; it appears that Drewry was probably his lessee. Collrayne received 5s.6d. per acre from Hovell.
(2) N.P.L. N.R.S.9288 and 9276, 22B4, undated.
(3) Supra, pp.46,55.
(4) N.P.L. N.R.S.9276, 22B4.

The wholesale enclosure and re-distribution of land may be best observed on the estates of the Coke family.(1) Traditional open-field and foldcourse systems had long been employed in these townships, but the eighteenth century estate maps preserved at Holkham show how complete the changes were. Only insignificant areas of open, common fields remained; indeed, some of the townships had been completely enclosed. The arable lands were the infields, whose constituent closes were usually divided into several large, compact farms in the hands of tenant farmers; the rest of the open-field landholders had become wage-labourers. Sheep were no longer essential to the maintenance of fertility, but were not entirely replaced by the new rotational methods and crops; many sheep were profitably fattened on turnips, and, especially in north-east Norfolk, bullocks were a prominent feature of the Norfolk Husbandry.(2)

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(1) Excellent material concerning eighteenth century husbandry is to be found in the manuscript collections of the Coke, Walpole, Townshend and L'Strange families. Only a limited inspection has been possible for this study. The Coke collection is in the estate office at Holkham; much of the Walpole collection is in the University Library, Cambridge; much of the Townshend collection is in the Norwich Public Library, some in the British Museum, and some at Rainham Hall; most of the L'Strange collection is in the Shire Hall at Norwich.

(2) See Marshall, op.cit..

A complementary change had taken place on the heaths; as enclosed and periodically cropped brecks, they were known as outfields. These poorer soils could not readily forgo the benefits of sheep tathing, and very large flocks were still supported; the foldcourses were often leased separately from the infield farms, and the efficient preparation of the fallow brecks for cultivation was a notable feature of the leases.(1)

VII.

As a feature of the changes involved in the development of the Norfolk Husbandry, the infield-outfield system was the creation of the eighteenth century improvers. It was, however, a system sometimes employed much earlier in other parts of the country in areas of light and sandy soils(2) in areas very similar to the Norfolk Breckland. An infield-outfield system has been described as existing in one

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(1) Infra, pp.89.

(2) In parts of Northumberland and Cumberland, Gray, op.cit., p.270; the East Riding of Yorkshire and Cornwall, Clapham, "An Economic History of Modern Britain" (1926), I, 24; and West Nottinghamshire, Chambers, "Nottinghamshire in the Eighteenth Century" (1932), 155 et seq.

Breckland township in the early seventeenth century,[1] and it is necessary to consider whether it was more extensively used prior to the eighteenth century developments.

In the Norfolk field system, the permanent arable fields were improved by sheep tathing, but the heathland of a foldcourse received this benefit as well,[2] with the result that small areas of waste land might occasionally be tilled for a speculative crop. Sir John Hare had the right to plough the heathland of his foldcourse if he so desired,[3] and Thomas Wright claimed a similar right at Kilverstone.[4] Similarly, tenants might find it possible to plough their doles of heathland: two of Thomas Russell's tenants at West Rudham ploughed copyhold land lying in the "somer" heathland pasture of his foldcourse.[5] Such haphazard and

(1) Darby, H.C., and Saltmarsh, J., "The Infield-Outfield system on a Norfolk Manor", Economic History, Vol.3, No.10, 1935, pp.30-44. Their definition of the system is this: "Its fundamental principle lay in the division of the arable land in the township into 2 unequal parts: a small infield lying close to the settlement, manured with all the dung from the homesteads and cropped continuously year after year; and a larger outfield, made up of five to ten temporary enclosures made from the waste (called brakes, folds or faughs), of which one was broken up every year, cropped continuously for a few seasons, and then allowed to revert to its former condition till its turn came to be ploughed again."

(2) Cf. the attempts in Wiltshire to concentrate the dung on the arable land, supra, p.25.

(3) His foldcourse at Hargham included, in 1629, 162a. of several heath as well as the commons and wastes; it was stated that "Swangaie heath may be plowed at ye Lord's pleasure", B.M. Hargreaves, 249.

(4) P.R.O. E134/35 Eliz./Easter 24, 1592.

(5) Supra, p.54.

extremely irregular cultivation involved no systematic breaking-up of enclosed brecks, but this would have been a natural second step, and it was taken in a number of cases.(1) Where this happened, it was probably the result of improvement, and should not be regarded as a field system distinct from the usual system of these parts of Norfolk. One or both of two circumstances would explain such improvement as early as the beginning of the seventeenth century, or even the sixteenth century: periodic cultivation of heathland might be prompted by the land and corn hunger of a large or growing village; or consolidation of land and rights might give freedom of action to a progressive landlord with an eye on the corn and wool markets. In either case, the early existence of the infield-outfield system is merely symptomatic of the potentialities for improvement in west Norfolk which were realised in the eighteenth century. In contrast to the eighteenth century infield-outfield system, that practised in the early seventeenth century, at West Wretham for instance, was simply a variation on the Norfolk field system, and was easily accommodated to the usual foldcourse arrangements.

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(1) For example, the demesnes of Fring manor included "the breakes", P.R.O. C2/518/41, 1588.

The land utilisation of West Wretham was similar to that of many Breckland villages;(1) a comparatively small arable field - the infield - of 226 acres lay on the better soils around several meres, and centred on the village itself, while the outlying parts of the parish consisted of extensive heaths providing ample sheep pasture for the lord's flock. The heathland included seven brecks, known collectively as the outfield: "There are belonging to the said lords of the manor of West Wrotham seven Brecks or shifts(2) of arable lands called outfield land wch are folded in Course every year wth the Flock of Ewes there, and they contain in all about four Hundred Acres of Land."(3) Darby and Saltmarsh suggest that each breck was tathed once in seven years, and after two or three years' cropping, allowed to revert to waste until its turn came for folding again; it seems most unlikely, however, that the unsown brecks would not be used as sheep feed whenever possible. Both the brecks and the

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(1) See Map Eight; compare with Sturston, supra, pp.35-7.

(2) Not to be confused with shifts in the open fields, supra, pp. 45-6.

(3) A considerable increase in the size of the brecks took place during the seventeenth century:

Breck	1612	1741
1	about 60a.	156a. 1r. 9p.
2	about 55a.	72a. 2r. 0p.
3, 4 and 5	about 170a.	204a. 0r. 5p.
6	about 60a.	88a. 3r. 6p.
7	about 55a.	75a. 0r. 14p.

Darby and Saltmarsh, op.cit., p.42.

infield land of West Wretham, together with the unimproved heathland, were used as sheep feed under the usual foldcourse system: in the words of the terrier of 1612, "In all which Heaths and Arable Lands both outfield and infield...the Lords of the Manor of Westwrotham...have free sheepscourse & depasturing for so many Sheep at all times of the Year as hath been accustomed..."

At West Wretham, an interesting variation on the normal foldcourse arrangements concerned the tenants' rights. In 1612, the flock consisted of "about Seventeen Hundred and three-score Ewes and Hogges", all of which belonged to the lords of the manor except "one Trip[1] or Liberty of two Hundred Ewes belonging to the said Henry bacon..., and one other Trip or Liberty of threescore Ewes belonging to the Parson of Westwrotham..." These 300[2] sheep fed freely with the rest of the flock as cullet sheep did elsewhere, and were kept by the lord's shepherd at the lord's "Costs and Charges"; but contrary to the usual customs regarding cullet sheep,[3] the tathe of those 300 sheep was to be bestowed only on the demesne lands in return for their upkeep by the lord.

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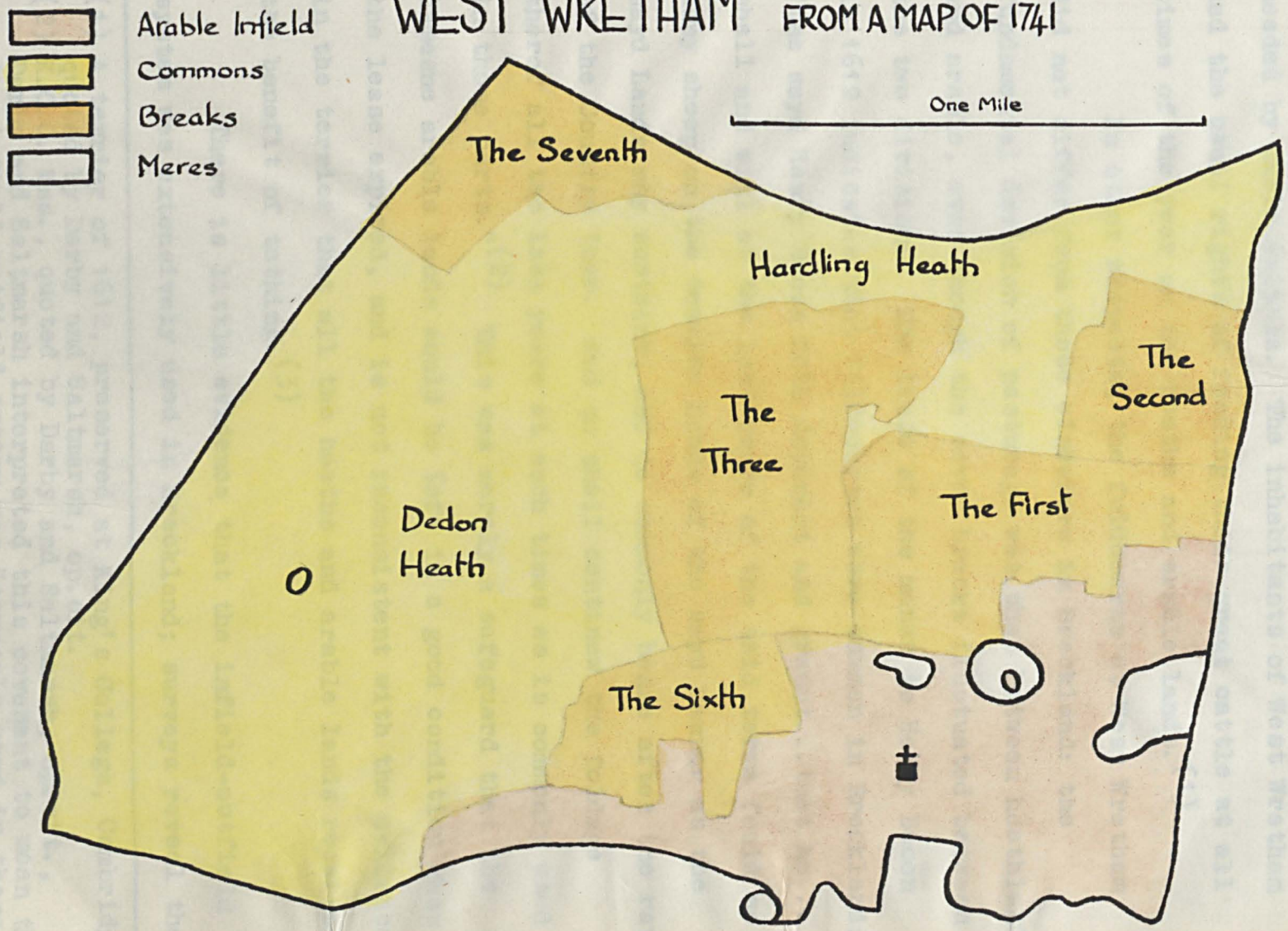
(1) A small flock. Also - a goite is a small flock, Treatise on Foldcourses, B.M.
(2) Assuming that the terrier uses the long hundred. Similarly, the whole flock numbered 2100 sheep.
(3) See Chapter Three, pp. 98-106.

MAP 8
WEST WRETHAM FROM A MAP OF 1741



Bacon and the parson had, however, to provide any fodder needed by their animals. The inhabitants of West Wretham had the usual rights of feeding their great cattle at all times of the year on the heaths and arable lands.(1)

In other respects, the foldcourse at West Wretham did not differ from those elsewhere in Breckland: the fundamental devision of pasturage was that between heathland and arable, even though the seven brecks fluctuated between the two divisions. The lease of the manor to Henry Bacon in 1612 indicates that foldcourses were common in Breckland: "the sayd Henry Bacon doth Covenant and graunt...that he... shall and will at the last yeare of the said terme fould so many sheep on the demayne Lands of the sayd Mannor as the sayd Lands may sustaine, and do commonly beare after the rate of the Country ther. And so shall continew the foldage therof all the last yeare at such times as is commonly used in those parts."(2) This was merely a safeguard that the demesne arable lands would be left in a good condition when the lease expired, and is not inconsistent with the evidence in the terrier that all the heaths and arable lands received the benefit of tathing.(3)

There is little evidence that the infield-outfield system was extensively used in Breckland; surveys reveal the

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(1) A terrier of 1612, preserved at King's College, Cambridge, quoted by Darby and Saltmarsh, op.cit.

(2) K.C.C. Mss., quoted by Darby and Saltmarsh, op.cit., Darby and Saltmarsh interpreted this covenant to mean that the infield-outfield system was "commonly used in those parts"; bearing in mind the negative evidence against this,

(continued over)

f.n. (2) - continued.

and that the terrier revealed a normal foldcourse system, it seems much more likely that it was this method of sheep pasturage that was implied as the custom of Breckland.

(3) Supra, pp. 76-7.

usual Norfolk field system[1] and the foldcourse was widely employed.[2] Definite evidence of the kind of arrangement prevailing in West Wretham has been found for only one other Breckland township: at Kilverstone in 1592, the lord of two manors was alleged to have fed his sheep over more of the "ine fielde" than he should have done, and he also claimed the right to plough parts of the heathland;[3] this suggests at least a rudimentary infield-outfield system. Of the two reasons suggested[4] for the early improvement of heathland by the use of this system, the second is the more likely explanation in the case of West Wretham. Although there had been about 30 taxpayers in the fourteenth century,[5] only five peasant landholders remained in 1612 when Bacon had consolidated a large part of the land into his own possession. In addition to his own freehold and copyhold land, Bacon had leased the manorial demesne, and by 1628 he had acquired four of the peasant holdings; the fifth following in 1670.[6] The

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(1) For example, see Sturston, supra, pp.35-37.
(2) See Map Four.
(3) P.R.O. E134/35 Eliz./Easter 24.
(4) Supra, p.75.
(5) 26 taxpayers in 1329, 31 in 1332; P.R.O. E179/149/7 and E179/149/9.
(6) Darby and Saltmarsh, op.cit..

depopulation of the village and the consolidation of land ownership may well have encouraged the institution of more progressive methods by the lord of the manor; one suspects that the encroachment of demesne brecks upon the common heathland had not been made while West Wretham was still a flourishing village community. It may be more than co-incidence that Kilverstone was another township in which the consolidation of a demesne estate had resulted in the reduction and eventual depopulation of the village. Thomas Wright had been encroaching on the inhabitants' rights in the later sixteenth century, and by Blomefield's time, Kilverstone was "a small village...now wholly owned by Thomas Wright esq....At this time there are no tenants belonging to the manors, the whole being purchased in."(1)

Such an explanation of the development of the infield-outfield system at West Wretham would be consistent with an important difference between the system there and that at Great Massingham. The West Wretham brecks were held in severalty as manorial demesne, but those at Great Massingham were divided between a number of landholders and were presumably composed of open strips: temporary open-field furlongs, as it were. Communal reclamation of heathland to meet the needs for additional arable land would seem to be the likely explanation here, and the outfield was probably

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(1) Blomefield, op.cit., I, p.541.

an extension of the permanent infield.(1) The clearest evidence for the system at Great Massingham is of the late sixteenth century. Various tenants held land in the two divisions of the arable fields: Mr. Walpole, for instance, possessed freehold land in the "within ffielde" and in "Le Oute ffielde". Both the infield and the outfield lands lay within three foldcourses - Feltham's, the Mament, and the West courses.(2) The system was already in existence in 1538-39: in a survey of that date, details of the "owte fyldes or sheps walkes" followed those of the permanent open field;(3) and another survey of the same period makes a similar division: one section is concluded by the statement, "& ther ys thend of all the loy & the owtfeld". This outfield consisted of nine sections, corresponding to the brecks at Wretham, whose names all had the suffix "loy"(4) - presumably co-terminous with ley land. The three foldcourses were also named in this survey.(5)

In Sedgeford and Great Ringstead in the Good Sand Region, the infield-outfield system was in use in the early seventeenth century, and probably earlier.(6) At this time,

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(1) As at Sedgeford and Great Ringstead, infra.
(2) The survey also uses the term "Le Inneffielde". P.R.O. S.C.12/30/25, temp. Elizabeth.
(3) Holkham Mss., Massingham Deeds, 6/103.
(4) For example, Bardowloy, Hardeloy and Calkepitloy.
(5) B.M.Addit.,6034, temp.Henry VIII. Five tenants hired breck. grounds in Great Massingham belonging to Fincham foldcourse, N.P.L. N.R.S.7674, 23E2, temp. Henry,VIII.
(6) The earliest detailed evidence for the Sedgeford brecks is in a Breck Book of 1620, L'Strange Mss.,1C ; but certain furlongs are indicated to be breck lands in an undated 16th century survey, 1B ; in two surveys of 1581, one describing the foldcourses,the open-field land is detailed

(continued over)

f.n. (6) - continued.

without mention of any brecks - but the brecks were part of the open fields and even in the last-mentioned ms. were indicated only by later marginal notes, 1B

it was no doubt coupled with the traditional methods of sheep pasturage in the foldcourse system, but by the eighteenth century the infields and outfields here were only one aspect of the improvements brought about by Sir Hamon L'Strange. The brecks resembled those at Massingham in that both tenants and lord possessed land in them, and they were also extensions of the open fields rather than isolated enclosures in the heaths. The three foldcourses in Sedgeford (North Ground, South Ground and East Ground) each included eight brecks in addition to considerable areas of infield land, and a number of closes, fen grounds and heathlands. Each breck was cultivated for four consecutive years, lay fallow for a fifth, and then reverted to pasture for four years.(1) As a result of exchanges of land arranged with his tenants, the lord of the manor became the principal holder of breck lands, and in 1631 the "Sm total of all the lords land in all the fouldcourses" was 1611a. 3r. 7p., excluding the infield lands over which the sheep enjoyed shackage.(2) In addition to the eight regular brecks, other parts of the heathland were sometimes cropped.(3) The North Brecks and South Brecks,

(1) Sedgeford Tithe Table, 1C ; Sedgeford Breck Book, 1631, 1C
(2) Breck Book, 1631, 1C
(3) For example, in 1642 there were "Landes Lying in the East feild in the sheepes Pasture not Reckoned in the Brecks but lyeth Continually for the sheep, onely once in 10 or 15 yeares some haue been Broken vp, and in 1631 John Fisher sett out about II^{xx} and 12^{ac} deuided into 6 Brecks, then letten to Will Guybon", 1C ; these were presumably the 6 "New brecks in the East feild at Sedgford" in 1652, 1C

in Great Ringstead were similar to those of Sedgeford in their situation, and no doubt in their management as well.(1)

In the early eighteenth century, before any extensive enclosure had taken place, the foldcourses of Sedgeford retained many of the features of the traditional foldcourse system coupled with several aspects of the improvements in methods of husbandry. A survey of East Hall and West Hall manors in the eighteenth century, by which time they had been united, describes the feed of the sheep as being "partly vpon the Comon whereof there is not above 100 Acres in the whole, partly vppon the Shack lands of the said Mannor and none else are to keepe sheepe there or on the said Comon but the Lord, and partly on the lay or vnplowed ground of the said Brecks whereof five parts - the whole into Eight beinge divided - are every yeare to ly lay for the pasture of the said sheepe, and where it falls out in Course that any of the Coppiehold or ffreehold lands are to ly lay for the purpose aforesaid The lord allowes to the Tents in exchang recompense for the same a like quantity of his Demeane arrable lands soe that we conceive the sd shacke

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(1) A map of these brecks, undated seventeenth century, HC ; a book of particulars and maps of the brecks, EH 9; field books of c.1620, EH 4; and 1690, EH 7. Brecks are not mentioned in numerous field books of L'Strange's manors in Hunstanton and Holme.

& Comon ffor the sd sheepe is onely to be accompted as Cleare pfitt for the Lord and wee value the same att xv li p Ann." As in the traditional foldcourse system, the tenants were given exchange for their arable lands whenever they would have been used for sheep pasture, but a departure from the former system was in the use of the infield lands for shackage: this was taken only after crops had been harvested, and none of this land lay fallow for a whole year as sheep pasture; "Nota all the feild grounds wch are demeasnes of the said Mannor beinge intermixed and vndevided with Customary and other lands are distinguished into Infield lands and the Balks (brecks) whereof the infeilds are not at all to ly lay for the sheepe..."(1)

The evidence for the use of an infield-outfield system in Norfolk in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is thus restricted to only four or five townships; despite variations in the nature of the outfields, the system always seems to represent an improvement and extension of cultivation from the normal Norfolk open-field system. At West Wretham,

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(1) The lands of the manors were:-

Enclosed grounds	44a. 3r. 0p.
"Whinns or ffursy ground"	308a. 2r. 20p.
Infield lands	399a. 3r. 20p.
In the 24 brecks	969a. 0r. 0p.

Massingham and Sedgeford the infield-outfield system was never divorced from open-field methods of cultivation and sheep pasturage; but in the eighteenth century, the infield-outfield system was introduced on many estates in the Sheep-Corn Region in conjunction with extensive enclosure of fields and heaths, and it involved a complete break with open-field husbandry.

VIII.

This process of re-organisation and improvement in the eighteenth century is well illustrated by the case of Flitcham. In the sixteenth century, the land utilisation of Flitcham resembled that of many villages in the Good Sand Region: in the central area of an elongated parish were the extensive open fields, beyond which lay Westmore Common on the west and a very large area of heathland on the east. Four foldcourses used the arable shackage and the heaths: Westmore Course on one side, and North, Bishops,(1) and Boundes Courses in the east.(2) These flocks fed on both

(1) The Bishop of Norwich was granted this foldcourse on the dissolution of Walsingham Priory, Blomefield, op.cit., VIII, 415.

(2) N.P.L. MS. 4290, map of Flitcham, 1550-1580; N.P.L. Flitcham Mss., 8/318. The 1517 Commission of Enquiry reported a considerable acreage enclosed and converted to pasture in Flitcham; some of this land may have been returned to the open field by the date of the aforementioned map, but the map shows a large area of closes around and to the west of the village.

fields and heaths according to the traditional methods of the foldcourse system,[1] but by 1627 it seems that some attempt was being made to cultivate small areas of heathland.[2] By 1655, the foldcourses had been re-organised with the merger of Bishops and Boundes Courses into a new "great Ground", and the replacement of North Course by the "Litle Grovnd";[3] Westmore Course was unchanged. Edward Lord Coke had owned two of the foldcourses in 1627, and had seemingly acquired Bishops Course by 1655.

Having gained possession of a large estate in Flitcham,[4] the Earl of Leicester effected a complete transformation of the parish; an early eighteenth century map gives particulars of the three large farms into which the township had been divided, with only 290a. 0r. 5p. in the hands of 15 small landholders. The old open field was

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(1) P.R.O. E178/1587, a survey made on the attainder for high treason in 1589 of the Earl of Arundel (Thomas, Duke of Norfolk); P.R.O. E164/46, the articles of institution for that survey list, under Flitcham, the four foldcourses as well as a fifth in Anmer.
See also, N.P.L. Flitcham Mss.,8/349, undated c.1560 survey; 7/294, undated 16th century survey, but between 1542 and 1557. (Blomefield, op.cit., viii, 413)

(2) N.P.L. Flitcham Mss.,12/460; N.P.L. MS.4291, map of Westmore Common, 1601.

(3) N.P.L. MS.4293, map of Flitcham, 1655.

(4) Lord Chief Justice Coke bought Poyning's manor, to which the other manors had been previously united, and the estate passed to Thomas Coke, Earl of Leicester; Blomefield, op.cit., viii, 413.

still unenclosed (it had been enclosed by 1828[1]) but was now called the infield; the heathland in both west and east had been completely enclosed, with the exception of 222a.3r.0p. remaining as common for the tenants,[2] and the large eastern heath was divided into many closes and brecks.[3] At least one flock of sheep[4] remained, but the "foldcourses" were now of a very different nature.

The Earl of Leicester had improved his other estates in much the same way, introducing an infield-outfield system where only the normal Norfolk system had been known before. A significant feature of many of the maps of the Holkham estates is that only the enclosed brecks of the former heathland are described as constituting the new-style foldcourses; improvements in crops and rotations have removed the infield lands from the sheep feed, and under the new husbandry sheep were moved into the arable closes only to be

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(1) N.P.L. MS.4296, map of Flitcham.
(2) Proposals were made for enclosing the tenants' common in 1755, N.P.L. Flitcham Mss.,15/489.
(3) N.P.L. MS.4295, undated, 1728-1744; the largest farm, Flitcham Abbey Farm, was comprised of:-

Enclosures	442a.2r.27p.
Infield lands	495a.2r.32p.
Brecks	1234a.0r. 6p.
Homesteads, etc.	10a.0r.15p.
	2182a.2r. 0p.

There were also some brecks on Westmore Common, N.P.L. Flitcham Mss., 14/481, 1739.
(4) N.P.L. Flitcham Mss., 15/489. Mr. Leeds leased one flock; See supra pp. 62-3 for another of Leicester's flocks leased by Leeds.

fattened off the turnip crops.(1) At Warham, for instance, the old open field was almost entirely enclosed in 1712, and the heathland lay in "The breaks or fold course".(2) Sometimes, despite the limited use of the infield for sheep pasture, the closes are nevertheless coupled with the brecks as part of the foldcourses.(3) The enclosed fields and heaths were divided into a few large farms.(4)

(1) Rochefoucould describes the improvement of a farm at Rougham by marling and enclosing; the land never lay idle, being cropped in a rotation of turnips, barley sown with clover, clover alone, and wheat; the large flock of 2000 sheep was fed on the turnips and clover in winter, presumably taking its summer feed from the outfield brecks; op.cit., quoted by Mosby, op.cit., pp.126-7.

(2) Holkham Mss., map 2/23

(3) As at Wighton, map 3/27, 1720. Lousedale foldcourse in Wighton comprised 7 brecks and 7 enclosures as well as an area of unenclosed common, map 3/31, c.1750.

(4) The open fields of Longham (map 5/92, c.1580)had been enclosed and divided into four large farms, map 5/93, 1700-1725. At Wighton, Mr. Bedingfield's farm consisted of:

Brecks	212a.	1r.	32p.
New Closes	164	0	36
Infield lands	281	3	18
Arable enclosures	221	2	0
Pasture and meadow	75	1	18
Homesteads, etc.	5	3	2
	961	0	26

Map 3/27, 1720.

The surveyor of Waterden in 1713 had divided the enclosures "into their Respective Ancient Furlongs, as near as could be discovered"; the whole of the parish of this depopulated village lay in the farm of Edmund Skippon:-

11 enclosures - heath,breck & sheepswalk	232a.	2r.	31p.
10 arable enclosures in the "En-Fields"	276	3	10
9 other arable enclosures	132	3	8
Meadow and pasture closes	124	2	17
Homesteads, etc.	3	2	8
	770	1	34

Map 3/48.

See also the maps of South Creake, map 4/50, 1728-1744; Wessenham, 1726-1728, quoted by Gray, op.cit.,p.325; Castle Acre, map 5/80, 1700-1725, and 5/81, 1757; Quarles, another depopulated village lying in a single estate comprising the sheepwalk brecks and "The Field of Quarles the sole property of Christs Colledge", Holkham Mss.,Quarles Deeds, 1/8, 1772-73, giving calculations made from the map of 1735.

and these Leicester leased together with the foldcourses. These developments were not confined to Leicester's estates or to the Good Sand Region, and were applied to Breckland townships such as Caldecote(1) and East Wretham.(2)

The management of the foldcourses in the eighteenth century involved a systematic use of the sheep in conjunction with the new crop rotations, and the lessees of foldcourses from the Earl of Leicester or from L'Strange were strictly bound in their preparation of the brecks for tillage. A condition of the lease of the Manor Flock at Heacham in 1696 was that the farmer must "tath in ye last year as much of the Brecks & Cleylands as shall be somertill'd, wth his Flock wch shall consist of 700^{c} sheep & the Fold to consist of 8 doz hurdles sett in a square fold."(3)

The degree of improvement and the late survival of the traditional foldcourse system was extremely variable between the townships of the Sheep-Corn Region. While some had been completely transformed by the big landowners of

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(1) See Mosby, op.cit., p.128.
(2) In addition to 187 acres of open-field land and 712 acres of heathland sheepwalk, there were 19 brecks totalling more than 810 acres, N.P.L. MS.10071, 34D1, an undated eighteenth century survey.
For the distribution of brecks by the nineteenth century, see a map prepared from the tithe awards by Mosby, op.cit., p.131.
(3) L'Strange Mss., KA 14, "Abstracts of leases of all my farmes". Similar conditions bound the lessees of the North Foldcourse in Sedgeford, East Hall and West Hall Farms there, and Caly Foldcourse in Heacham.

the Good Sand Region, others had been only partially improved. At Brancaster, over 1000 acres of open fields and over 200 of half-year lands remained to be enclosed by the Act of 1755; but the heathland here had already been improved, 900 acres lying in brecks.(1) In other cases, little or no improvement had been achieved; at Salthouse and Kelling, the Act dealt with 1490 acres of open fields and half-year lands, and 1626 acres of warren, common and heath.(2)

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(1) Mosby, op.cit., p.129-30.
(2) Op.cit., p.124.

CHAPTER THREE

SHEEP OWNERSHIP.

I.

The ownership of foldcourses and flocks was concentrated in the hands of the larger and more wealthy landowners; foldcourses were usually appurtenant to manors, and although many were leased to farmers, only the most substantial tenants could afford to rent and maintain them.(1) Many freeholders and copyholders were, however, able to keep a small number of sheep, and there has already been cause to mention the various ways in which these sheep were maintained. In the Sheep-Corn Region, the peasants' rights of pasturage were three-fold: sheep were kept on the commons, they were fed on the unsown fallow fields and they were put into the lords' flocks as cullet sheep. In the Wood-Pasture Region, commons were much less extensive and there was, of course, no opportunity for cullet rights to be established; sheep feed here was provided to some extent by a tenant's fallow strips, and meadow and pasture attained a greater significance

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(1) The annual rent of a foldcourse might be as much as £10, varying of course with the size of the flock: a course at Great Dunham was leased in 1615 for £10, Carthew, op.cit.,III, 81. A rent of £3 per hundred was not unusual when the sheep themselves were leased: at Great Massingham in 1560, 250 sheep in Feltham's foldcourse were leased for £9, Blomefield, op.cit., IX, 9. Even further beyond most purses was the cost of buying a foldcourse: a moiety of a course at Great Bircham was sold in 1601 for £260, Blomefield, op.cit., X, 293. For the costs of the maintenance of flocks, see Chapter Six.

than in the Sheep-Corn Region. It seems that the proportion of men owning sheep was as high in the Wood-Pasture as in the Sheep-Corn Region, but owing to the absence of large flocks in the former, the average number of sheep per man there was considerably lower; on the other hand, the median number of sheep was lower in the Sheep-Corn Region where most peasants kept only a very small number of animals.(1)

In the Sheep-Corn Region, especially in the west of the county, commons were of great extent, and their use as pasture, as well as a source of fodder and fuel, was of the greatest importance to the peasant landholder.(2) In the western townships, there was often sufficient heathland for some to be set aside for the exclusive use of the tenants, at least for part of the year; but in many cases, lord's sheep and tenants' sheep and cattle shared the same stretch of common. In these areas the abundance of heathland often made the limitation of sheep numbers unnecessary, but in east Norfolk there was a greater premium on the use of the less extensive commons and stinting was frequently needed. Swaffham and Crimplesham were typical of the conditions in west Norfolk: at the former, the lord used extensive heathland and the tenants were not stinted;(3) and at Crimplesham there was

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(1) See infra, Tables 2, 7 and 12.
(2) See Chapter Five, pp.162 et seq.
(3) Temp. Edward VI, Blomefield, op.cit., VI, 201.

restriction as to dates, but no stinting.(1) In contrast, the inhabitants of Roughton in north-east Norfolk were strictly stinted in their use of Roughton Heath; an order of 1530-31 entitled them to feed 60 sheep each there, and they were fined 4d. for every sheep above that number.(2) After a commission had examined the commonage in 1613, a new stinting was devised by which 6 sheep could be pastured on the common for each messuage, tenement or cottage, and each man fed an additional sheep for every acre of land in his holding.(3) Such stinting was doubly important when the common concerned was used by the lord's flocks as well as by the tenants' animals: the lord of the manor of Ranworth found the feed of his 840 sheep hindered by tenants who exceeded the stint allowed them on four waste grounds.(4)

In the fertile districts of the Wood-Pasture Region, heaths were generally absent and the small commons were the

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(1) P.R.O. Lands and Revenue, Vol.201, quoted by Spratt, op.cit. p.62. At Hargham, sheep and other animals were fed on the common with no stinting, P.R.O. E134/42 and 43 Eliz./Mich. 28, 1599.

(2) Rye, "North Erpingham", I, p.165.

(3) Thus, 745 sheep were fed in right of 31 messuages, cottages and tenements, and 563 acres 3 roods of land; two men together owned 270 sheep, P.R.O. DL44/901, 1613. At Antingham, an award made in 1566-7 allowed one sheep to be pastured for every acre, Rye, op.cit., p.20.

(4) P.R.O. C2/H23/9, temp. Elizabeth. A tenant at Brinton had rights of commonage appurtenant to two messuages - for one, he kept 60 ewes and their lambs and one ram on "Litle moore", and in right of the second, 100 sheep on "great moore"; these commons were part of a foldcourse; P.R.O. C78/80, No.26.

subject of valuable privileges for the tenants: when the Abbot of Sibton pastured 220 sheep on the Great Green of Brisingham, he paid not only a rent to the lord of the manor but also alms to the poor of the parish.(1)

In west Norfolk, few villages needed to share commons with their neighbours,(2) but inter-commoning was frequent in east Norfolk(3) and in the Wood-Pasture Region. In the latter, there were often townships without any substantial commons at all, and more fortunate neighbours were troubled by intruders across the parish boundaries. The inhabitants of Banham were stinted in the use of their common(4) and it was

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(1) Blomefield, op.cit.,I, 72. Other commons there were used exclusively by the inhabitants, and some tenants took sheep feed on Great Green.

(2) Some of the smaller villages in the west of the county did intercommon with neighbours; Appleton shared part of Westmore Common in Flitcham, and the inhabitants of West Newton encroached on this common, N.P.L. Flitcham Mss., 14/481, 1739, and map of the common, N.P.L. MS.4291, 1601. Intercommoning was necessary in some of the townships on the borders of the Good Sand Region and mid-Norfolk, for example between Mileham and Beeston, and Brisley and North Elmham, Carthew, op.cit.,II, 383-384, 401, 559-560.

(3) For example, the inhabitants of Antingham, Thorp Market, North Walsham, Bradfield, South Repps, Gimmingham and Trunch all had rights on a common in Antingham; and on Oldfield Heath there, the inhabitants of Thorp Market were limited to 100 sheep, Rye, op.cit., p.16. Also, Trimingham and Sidestrand, Duchy of Lancaster Pleadings quoted by C.M. Hoare, "Records of a Norfolk Village" (Sidestrand), 1914.

(4) Robert Cooke of Banham kept 60 sheep on the common in right of a tenement and 10a. pasture, and John Rowse kept 100 sheep there in right of 50a. of land, wood and pasture, P.R.O. E164/46, 1588.

necessary to exclude the sheep of the inhabitants of neighbouring Winfarthing and Tibenham.(1) Nearby, the inhabitants of New Buckenham and Carleton Rode disputed the use of an area of common which lay astride their parish boundary. This land was of some importance to New Buckenham since the 40 to 45 acres of common within their bounds in fact belonged to Old Buckenham.(2) In 1573, a commission laid down a boundary on the common to divide the two villages, and ordered that "ffrom hensforthe no entercomoning or comon pur cause de visinage be had claymed or used by any of the saide inhitaunts in any of the saide peces of waste or comon as allotted or appoynted unto eyther of the saide Townshipps..." and this order was repeated in 1602.(3)

Although the lords often owned several heathland, it was unusual for tenants to do so; occasionally, however, "doles" were set out on commons after the manner of the customary allotment of meadows. On Mousehold Heath, near Norwich, the

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(1) In 1618, some inhabitants of Tibenham claimed to hold commonages on Banham Heath by copy of court rollfrom Banham manor; thus one man had 60 sheep and 1 ram on the heath, and altogether fifteen Tibenham men had 50-100 sheep there. A jury denied the inter-commonage and declared that commonage could not be demised "to any customary tenant whatever", Blomefield, op.cit., I, 351.

(2) P.R.O. E134/38 Eliz./Hil.24.

(3) P.R.O. E159/365/Mich.426 (1573); and P.R.O. E123/28/121 (1602). For proceedings leading up to second decree, see E134/38 Eliz./Hil.24 (1595), E123/23/58 (1595), E123/25/308 (1598).

commonage was interrupted by many doles and "severall Interests" whose owners were restricted in their use of the un-allotted heath.(1) Tenants' animals usually fed freely over the commons, but there is evidence that in some cases the pasturage was divided between the tenants according to the number of animals they possessed. At West Rainham, for example, an area of pasture was set aside for neat cattle, and in 1648 eighteen tenants rented a total of 93 acres - most of it demesne land - at the rate of 1 acre and 2 roods per cow.(2)

The commons supported a great variety of stock: at Hargham, the tenants fed their sheep, horses, cows, swine, geese and fowls on the common which was also used by the lord's flock.(3) And in fact sheep were probably in the minority among the tenants' animals on the commons of the Sheep-Corn Region, for they could be fed in the lord's flock as cullet sheep, enjoying the whole feed of the foldcourse and being cared for by the lord's shepherd. Most references to tenants' rights of commonage mention cattle, sometimes

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(1) P.R.O. E178/7153, 1600.
(2) "A note made in May 1648 how ye Cows pasture in West Reinha' is to bee Laid for ye yeare ffollowinge." N.P.L. MS.1508, ID2.
(3) P.R.O. E134/42 and 43 Eliz./Mich.28, 1599. Nicholas Turner had 1 cow, 1 heifer, 3 horses, 4 swine and 11 geese "In ye Comon" at Longham in 1676 (Norwich Bishop's Chapel inventories, Wales 48); William Ancell kept 3 mares, 2 colts, 1 foal, 3 milch cows, 2 heifers, 2 steers and 2 calves "In the Comons" of Catfield in 1619 (Inventories, Mason 110).

together with sheep but often as the only stock allowed.(1) This emphasis on the tenants' great cattle is also noticeable in their rights of shackage over the harvest fields,(2) and it is clear that although cattle farming was not developed on the scale that it was in the Wood-Pasture Region, the inhabitants of the Sheep-Corn Region nevertheless kept numerous cattle for domestic and local purposes.(3)

II.

Tenants' rights to feed their animals on the unsown arable land were variable between different manors and different townships. There is abundant evidence for the right of tenants to use the winter shackage, and it is clear that in many cases the tenants' animals shared the shack that was used by the lords' flocks; at Swaffham, the shack of West Field lay within a foldcourse and was also fed over by the tenants' great cattle,(4) and the same was necessarily the case in townships like Holkham where the whole of the

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(1) For examples of tenants' rights of commonage see Chapter Five.
(2) As at Holkham, supra, pp.43-4.
(3) The 93 acres rented by the inhabitants of West Rainham in 1648 supported 62 cows, supra, p.96, f.n.2. In 1568, the inhabitants of Great Riburgh had 80 cows and 33 bullocks, 26 tenants having from 1 to 10 animals each, B.M. Addit. 39221, m.64.
(4) P.R.O. Requ.2/187/11, 1603.

arable land lay within one foldcourse or another.(1) In other cases, however, tenants' and lords' shackage were distinct with an obvious gain in convenience;(2) at Docking the lord and flock owner claimed to have allowed his tenants more than 100 acres of land for the shackage of their neat cattle in return for their observance of the shift system whereby his sheep enjoyed the sole right of shackage over East Field.(3) Custom was equally variable in regard to summer fallow.(4)

In almost all cases, rights of shackage and of feed over fallow land were for the tenants' great cattle only: only occasionally were their sheep included.(5) But in many townships a cullet(6) right gave at least some of the tenants the opportunity to feed sheep on the shackage by putting them into the lord's flock.

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(1) Supra, p. 42.
(2) In a petition to Queen Elizabeth it was claimed that "The Shak ons defyled & ou'ronne ons wt sheppe" it could not be fed by the tenants' great cattle, P.R.O. E163/16/14, temp. Elizabeth, see infra, p. 155 . Marshall gives examples from the 18th century of cattle refusing grass where sheep folds had stood. ("Rural Economy", II, 13).
(3) P.R.O. C2/Hll/45, 1591. See supra, pp. 46, 55.
(4) Supra, pp. 49-50.
(5) Sheep could be kept on tenants' own strips only for certain periods at Hockwold, supra, pp. 51-2 . The Chancellor and Council of the Duchy of Lancaster decreed that no inhabitant of Gimmingham should keep more sheep and cattle on the winter shackage than he had kept on his own grounds during the summer; a commission investigated this in 1580, P.R.O. DL44/295.
(6) It is suggested in the Treatise on Foldcourses that "cullet" is derived from "quillett", meaning a small number of sheep; a quillett of land is a small parcel of land. See supra, p. 58.

The number of sheep that each tenant was allowed to keep in the flock was determined by the size of his land-holding, and on some manors at least, only the freeholders were allowed to participate. A single flock might be augmented by several hundred sheep,(1) substantially increasing the amount of tathe as well as the lord's financial profit: tenants often made a per capita payment for these sheep which were tended throughout the year without any additional charge on the tenants towards the costs of the lord and his shepherd.(2) In addition to the benefit of tathing, received by lord and tenant alike, the tenants took the increase of lambs from their ewes and also the wool clip.

The working of the cullet system is made clear by a dispute between lord and tenants at Hilborough; denial of this right by flockowners was one cause of complaint against

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(1) At Holkham in 1577, 14 tenants put 264 sheep into Caldowe flock; their quotas were 68, 34, 28, 24, 20, 18, 17, 11, 10, 10, 8, 6, 5, 5; Holkham Mss.,Holkham Deeds, 10/318. At Great Ringstead in 1598, it was stated that North Hall flock was normally made up of 360 cullet sheep and 360 of the lord's sheep; as the result of tenants exceeding this number, a rate was appointed in 1595 of the number of sheep to be allowed for each "ancyent tent.". In 1598, 31 tenants had 30,20,20,15,15,15,15,14,12,12,8, 8,8,7,7,7,6,6,6,5,4,4,4,4,4,4,4,4,4,4,4; the number was made up to 360 by 80 sheep allowed for Read's chief messuage; L'Strange Mss., EH . For other examples, see Chapter Six.

(2) At Great Ringstead, 2d. per annum was paid for each sheep in 1598, L'Strange Mss. EH . At Antingham in1640, 6d. was paid for each of 200 sheep, N.P.L. MS.6027e, 16B7. For other examples see Chapter Six.

them during the sixteenth century.[1] The foldcourse at Hilborough includes areas of warrens, commons, heaths and open fields; the large flock included cullet sheep inserted on August 24th each year by the free tenants. If any of the cullet sheep died or were sold, others could be put in to replace them, but the number was never to exceed that allotted to each tenant and on the same date any excess resulting from the birth of lambs was to be removed. The shepherd was provided and paid by the lord, or the lessee of his demesne, who received the benefit of the tathe of the 390 cullet sheep; the wool and lambs, however, were taken by the owners of the sheep who were obliged to wash and clip the animals and brand them with their own marks. The spokesman for the free tenants in this dispute were Edmund Ware senior, the rector, and junior. The rector had the right, he claimed, to put 204 sheep into the flock in respect of the rectorship, Chapel Close, a capital messuage with some closes, and a second messuage; Ware junior put in only 42, in respect of two parcels of land of five and one acres, and the rest of the freeholders added smaller quotas. These arrangements were no doubt representative, but the rector's cullet right was an unusually large one.[2]

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(1) See Chapter Five, pp. 160-1.
(2) P.R.O. C78/75, 1723.

A second informative dispute concerning cullet rights is that between Sir John and Christopher Heydon and the inhabitants of Salthouse and Kelling.(1) Three tenants claimed, on behalf of 52 others, that they not only had rights of commonage on Salthouse and Kelling Common for the whole year, but also were entitled to keep sheep and cattle in both several and shack time(2) on the arable fields and wastes.(3) The number of sheep kept was limited according to each man's "power" and was called a "collet".(4) These rights, they said, had not been questioned until the Heydons impounded the tenants' sheep in their "Hoggs Cote", returning them half-starved four days later; Heydon had nevertheless allowed strangers' sheep to go into his flock. Sir John Heydon in his reply claimed to have right of foldcourse for at least 2040 sheep in Salthouse and 960 in Kelling;(5) his lessee, Christopher Heydon, had therefore lawfully fed 3000 sheep on the shack fields between harvest and March 25th, and on the

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(1) P.R.O. St.Ch.3/3/42, temp. Edward VI.
(2) Several time here refers to the summer, when the arable land was not laid open to common feeding but when individual tenants could use their own unsown strips.
(3) A witness for the complainants stated that the tenants were un-stinted in this commonage.
(4) The same witness remembered 8 cullets, varying from 120 to 240 sheep.
(5) These numbers are confirmed by witnesses for both defendants and complainants.

heaths throughout the year.(1) He asserted that the tenants' cullet right was for 240 sheep in Salthouse and 170 in Kelling,(2) a yearly payment being made for each animal.(3) In recent years, he said, these rights had been surpassed by the setting up of a completely new flock by the tenants, and the sheep had accordingly been impounded.

Heydon's answer brought a denial from the complainants; they made one further allegation - that it was unreasonable for such a large flock to be kept in the arable fields since Heydon owned only three acres of land there. If this were true, it would suggest that Heydon, like many landowners, was farming his demesne and becoming directly concerned almost solely with sheep-farming.(4) In a rejoinder, Heydon expounded the Norfolk custom concerning cullet rights: "By custom of the said county of Norfolk no man have used nor ought to shack in any open or common field or several heath with sheep or great cattle without number. But by the

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(1) His witnesses confirm this.
(2) A shepherd puts the cullets at 360 and 120. Henry Bawbeney, gent., deposed for Heydon, divided the Salthouse flock into two parts: 1560 were kept on the sheeps pasture called the Heath, 1080 or 1200 being the lord's sheep and the rest cullet of tenants and foreigners, and 480 on the Eye, part lord's and part cullet.
(3) Henry Bawbeney deposed that 1½d. was paid for each wether and gelded ("gyld'") ewe, and 2d. for each ewe with lamb; the shepherd agreed; John Borne said 2d. for each ewe under 360, and 3d. for each one over that number.
(4) See Chapter Five.

custom of the said county every man that have any land lying in any open field (except such as has liberty of foldcourse and foldage) ought to shack there with his cattle according to the proportion of his land lying in the said field." (1) He stressed the point that cullet sheep were of a restricted number: "a cullet of sheep, which the said complainant do claim to have without number, is to have a number of sheep certain appurtenant to some tenement as a hundred or two hundred sheep going and feeding after or with the lords flock"; it could be termed a cullet right only if the lord had a foldcourse and flock in which the cullet sheep were kept.(2) Heydon declared that cullets were usually for not more than 240 sheep in a flock. About nine or ten years previously, he continued, many sheep belonging to his farmer of the foldcourse, together with the cullet sheep, had been drowned "by the rage of the waters" owing to the negligence of the farmer's shepherd; it was agreed as

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(1) Heydon's witnesses agreed that cullets were limited by tenure, and that a small number of sheep kept by themselves were also according to a strict rate: one witness calls such a small flock an "end" or a "parre".
(2) His witnesses confirmed this as "the custom of Norfolk".

a result that the cullet sheep might be kept as a separate flock with a shepherd of the tenants' appointment.(1) Neither Sir John nor his new farmer agree that the cullet sheep should remain in a separate flock and they have therefore been justly impounded. In a further rejoinder, the leading complainant protested that he had not heard of the "custom of Norfolk" concerning cullet, but all the available evidence confirms Heydon's exposition.

Although the number of cullet sheep belonging to the rector of Hilborough was unusually large, there are several instancesof minor flocks being kept together with the lord's sheep. The flock of 2100 sheep at West Wretham included sheep of the shepherd and the cullet, and also 240 ewes as the "Trip or Liberty" of Henry Bacon and 60 ewes in the trip of the parson.(2) Heydon's testimony that cullet rights were never for an unlimited number of sheep may be generally upheld, but there were certainly some exceptions; Thomas Falk, for instance, owned two tenements in Ickburgh in right of which he put 52 and 60 sheep into the lord's flock

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(1) John Borne was the farmer who had allowed the tenants to keep their sheep separately; he said that Heydon had impounded the sheep several times since then and that each time the tenants had agreed to pay the usual cullet charges; he adds that this was cheaper than keeping a separate flock because the tenants paid their shepherd 2d. per sheep kept as well as other charges.

(2) K.C.C. Mss., quoted by Saltmarsh and Darby, op.cit.; see supra, p.77.

although one of these rights was said to be without number.[1] As a result of these restrictions, tenants' sheep rarely formed the larger part of a flock and there are only few instances of tenants owning separate flocks.[2]

The largest individual quota of cullet sheep in a flock was often that of the shepherd: this was his chief perquisite of office.[3] The cullet allowance to shepherds was very

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(1) PR.O. C1/1121/1, 1544-1553.

(2) For example, at Swaffham in 1549-50, a foldcourse and 90 acres of land belonging to Aspal's manor were granted after the Dissolution to the "Use of the Town", Blomefield, op.cit., VI, 203. A map of the lands of Panworth Hall manor in Ashill in 1581 shows three foldcourses, one belonging to the inhabitants of Ashill, Holkham Mss., maps 5/104. At Runcton, the cullet flock had right of shackage in the harvest fields after the lord's flock had gone over them, quoted by Spratt, op.cit., p.256. The small private folds used by tenants in earlier centuries (see supra, p.19) were not maintained with the development of the foldcourse system, but a few indefinite references to such folds have been found for the seventeenth century; a tenant of Hill Hall manor in Holkham was said to hold, in 1632, 15 acres of land with a fold at 2s.6d. per annum, and he also paid 5s.2d. for the common feed of 100 sheep; Holkham Mss., Holkham Deeds, 13/632, 591, quoted by Spratt, op.cit., pp.256-7. This seems clearly inconsistent with the foldcourse arrangements as described for Holkham (supra, pp. 41-5) and may refer to a cullet right in the flock and commonage on the heath. It may be noted that Thomas Falk's cullet right at Ickburgh (supra, p.104) was referred to as a right of foldcourse and foldage. At Sheringham in 1645, a husbandman had a fold in South Field where he kept 45 sheep for his brother as well as his own animals; Norfolk Quarter Sessions Records, quoted by Spratt, op.cit.; this may also refer to a cullet right.

(3) The conditions of employment of shepherds are discussed in Chapter Seven.

variable, not only between employers but also between the flocks of one landlord; Roger Townshend allowed his five shepherds 160, 80, 80, 60 and 60 sheep in 1480-81, but by 1485-86 they had cullets of 180, and 80 in the other four flocks.(1) Shepherds might also pay for additional cullet sheep above their allowance.(2)

III.

Foldcourses and flocks were normally appurtenant to manors; in the sixteenth century at least, most manorial lords owned only a single manor so that flock ownership was enjoyed by a large number of individuals. In the later sixteenth century, and throughout the seventeenth, many landlords were improving their estates by consolidating the manors within individual villages; by adding to their hereditary estates by purchase and leasing of manors, the more wealthy gentlemen of the county also owned lands and flocks in many different townships. The ownership of manors in Norfolk in the decade 1640-50 hasbeen carefully analysed by

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(1) N.P.L. MS.1475, 1F. The usual allowance for shepherds was 50 to 100 sheep; occasionally it exceeded 200: William Howse had 260 at Congham in 1584, P.R.O. E134/40 Eliz./Easter 3, and at Heacham in 1693-1703, the shepherd had the exceptionally large cullet of 480 sheep, L'Strange Mss., NR

(2) Two of Roger Townshend's shepherds had 160 and 60 sheep allowed to them in 1480-81, and they each paid 3s.4d. for an additional 20; a third shepherd kept 16 sheep in a flock other than that which he tended, N.P.L. MS.1475,1F.

Spratt;[1] he found that 276 lords owned nearly 800 manors. Although many lords still held only one manor,[2] more than fifty per cent. of the manors were owned by a wealthy upper class of 35 men.[3] In these circumstances, many lords owned several flocks and some of them had developed their sheep-farming on a very large scale; even in the sixteenth century, the more wealthy landowners had possessed flocks in a number of manors, and were producing a very considerable quantity of wool. The organisation of the sheep-farming of a number of these gentlemen will be the subject of Chapter Six, but a summary of their flocks here illustrates the importance of,this class of flock-masters, and incidentally gives an impression of the average size of Norfolk flocks in general.

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(1) Op.Cit., Chapter Three.

(2) 149 lords held one manor each, 119 of them designated as gentlemen; 46 lords held two manors each, 31 being gentlemen.

(3) These 35 men owned nearly 400 manors; most noteworthy were the Earl of Arundel and Surrey who was the lord of 20 whole townships and about a dozen smaller manors, the Paston family owning nearly 30 manors, Wyndham, Coke, Hobart and Gawdy; most of them were knights, and they included also two peers.

TABLE 1.

	Date	Number of flocks	Total sheep	Smallest flock	Largest flock	Average size of flocks
Townshend	1480	11	8374	125	1447	761
"	1546	4	3960	720	1320	990
"	1567	5	5023	437	1622	1005
"	1626	3	1747	-	-	582
"	1637	6	4855	540	1252	809
Norwich Cathedral Priory	1485	6	4091	431	889	682
"	1517	12	8636	40	1378	720
Fermor	1522	23	15977	31	1352	694
Southwell	1551	14	12153	538	1549	868
Gawdy	1666	3	1555	412	648	518
Corbett	1557	7	5648	464	1448	807
LeStrange	1693	5	2523	231	774	505
"	1703	3	1321	220	637	440

It may be noted that some men at the other end of the scale owned only part of a single foldcourse; some manorial lords, like the owner of Lexham's manor in Houghton St. Giles,(1) possessed only the moiety of a foldcourse, and leases might be held by two men in partnership. Thus, William Lawrance of Badbarham in Cambridgeshire and William Adam, a "wollin Drap'", leased two foldcourses in Burnham Westgate to be held in partnership.(2)

The Religious Houses of Norfolk had no interest in sheep-farming comparable with that of the Cistercian abbeys

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(1) C.U.L. Mss., M.m.2.19, 1641.
(2) P.R.O. Requ.2/114/46.

of Yorkshire, for instance; but a number of them owned foldcourses and flocks in right of their manors, and Norwich Cathedral Priory derived a large income from its sheep.(1) The majority of the abbeys and priories, however, owned only a small number of sheep, and they were comparable with the many lay lords possessing one, two or three flocks. Wymondham Abbey, for example, had three foldcourses in that town, although they were leased out for many years before the Dissolution;(2) beneficiaries had given the Abbey rights of pasture and sheep in a number of villages, some like South Wootton, Snettisham and Sherneborne(3) being far distant from Wymondham. Shortly before the Dissolution, however, only the pasture at Happisburgh provided mutton towards the Abbey's hospitality.(4) Several of the houses in west Norfolk owned a few thousands of sheep each,(5) and in addition to

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(1) See Chapter Six, pp. 238-253.
(2) Calendar, Letters and Papers of Henry VIII, 1537, part II, p.212.
(3) Blomefield, op.cit., II, 517.
(4) Supra, p. 109 f.n. 4
(5) For example, Bromehill Priory had 2400 sheep in 1514; Rushworth College had 3600 in the same year; the Austin Priory at Walsingham had sheep distinct from 1200 owned by the Prior (1514). West Acre Priory had something under 3600 sheep in 1514, and 6000 in 1520; "The Visitations of the Diocese of Norwich, 1492-1532", edited by the Rev. A. Jessop, Camden Society, 1888, pp. 86,91,103,114,164. See also the notes concerning the disposal of possessions at the Dissolution, in V.C.H. Norfolk, Vol.II.

providing mutton for the kitchen, these flocks added appreciably to their incomes by the wool clip.(1)

IV.

The general pattern of sheep ownership has already become clear; in the Sheep-Corn Region of Norfolk, most of the sheep were in the flocks of the more wealthy farmers - the manorial and other landowners. A great many of the smaller men possessed a few sheep as a result of their common and cullet rights, but these animals were outnumbered by the lord's flock. In the Wood-Pasture Region, the big manorial flocks were almost entirely absent: relatively small numbers of sheep were owned by a great variety of farmers.

A more detailed examination of sheep ownership is made possible by the evidence of the testamentary inventories.(2) No inventories have survived prior to the last decade of the sixteenth century, but thereafter they are plentiful and a random sample of 145 inventories for the years 1589-1596 is probably well-representative of all classes of

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(1) For example, the prior of Castle Acre contracted to supply wool to a London dealer for 10 years, and in one year supplied 270 stones for £45, P.R.O. C1/578/15, 1515-29. The prior of Weybourne contracted to supply 200 stones of wool at the rate of 60 stones a year, P.R.O. C1/192/58, 1485-1500.

(2) The Norwich probate inventories are now kept in the Bishop's Chapel at the Cathedral.

rural society; the poorest labourers probably did not make wills, even at the end of the sixteenth century, but a few very poor people are included in this sample; at the other extreme, the most wealthy gentlemen are excluded since their wills were usually proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury.(1) In both the Sheep-Corn and the Wood-Pasture Regions, over fifty per cent. of these individuals had a total personal wealth of less than £60, but there is no marked bulge in the numbers of very poor people; this is partly to be explained by the absence of wills of that class, but it would seem that Norfolk had a higher proportion of very small farmers than Leicestershire at this period,(2) and as high a proportion as the Fenland district of Lincolnshire.(3)

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(1) Hoskins, W.G., "The Leicestershire Farmer in the Sixteenth Century", in "Essays in Leicestershire History", 1950, p.126.
(2) Hoskins, op.cit., p.135.
(3) Thirsk, Joan, "Fenland Farming in the Sixteenth Century", University College of Leicester, Occasional Papers in English Local History, No.3, 1953, p.43.

TABLE 2. Owners of sheep, 1589-1596.

Number of animals	Sheep-Corn Region		Wood-Pasture Region		Total	
1-5	4	9.5%	-	-	4	6.2%
6-10	6	14.3	3	13.6	9	14.1
11-20	7	16.6	3	13.6	10	15.7
21-30	4	9.5	6	27.3	10	15.7
31-40	1	2.4	5	22.6	6	9.4
41-50	4	9.5	1	4.5	5	7.8
51-60	6	14.3	1	4.5	7	10.9
61-70	1	2.4	-	-	1	1.6
71-80	2	4.7	-	-	2	3.1
81-90	-	-	-	-	-	-
91-100	1	2.4	2	9.1	3	4.7
101-150	1	2.4	-	-	1	1.6
151-200	3	7.1	1	4.5	4	6.2
201-300	-	-	-	-	-	-
301-400	2	4.7	-	-	2	3.1
Total	42	99.8%	22	99.7%	64	100.1%
Median	30 sheep		28 sheep		28 sheep	
Average	58 sheep		39 sheep		51 sheep	
Some sheep	42	44.2%	22	44.0%	64	44.1%
No sheep	50	52.6%	27	54.0%	77	53.1%
Number not stated	3	3.2%	1	2.0%	4	2.8%
Total	95	100.0%	50	100.0%	145	100.0%

N.B. This is a random sample of inventories (preserved at the Bishop's Chapel in Norwich) except that all townsmen of Norwich, Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn, and all country textile workers (whose inventories are analysed in Chapter 15) are excluded. Most of the 145 men were farmers; 7 were tradesmen and craftsmen, and 7 were clergymen.

In contrast to both those counties, there was a high proportion of wealthy farmers, with inventories of over £100, especially in the Sheep-Corn Region. These result in a higher average wealth for the Sheep-Corn Region, but the median wealth was much the same throughout the county - between £58 and £59. (See Appendix Two, Table 1.)

The evidence of these inventories concerning sheep ownership confirms the general pattern already suggested. (See Table 2) In the Sheep-Corn Region, a little over 50 per cent. of these individuals owned no sheep at all: these included men of all classes, but a majority were the less wealthy husbandmen - men who had no cullet right and only a small share in the use of the commons. Of those men who possessed some sheep, over 75 per cent. had fewer than 60 animals, and 40 per cent. had less than 20: a wide variety of holders of cullet and common rights. The median number of 30 sheep is increased to an average of nearly double that number by several owners of large flocks who most likely owned rights of foldcourse too. Five men and women in this Region possessed flocks of over 150 sheep:[1] all were wealthy farmers, four owning other animals worth more than their sheep, and four owning corn and crops of considerable value. (See Table 5)

(1) The number of sheep in these five flocks is stated; in a sixth case - that of Robert Read of Great Ringstead in the Sheep-Corn Region - only the value of the sheep is given, and this suggests a flock of about 650 sheep.

TABLE 3. Value of sheep, relative to the total values of the inventories, 1589-1596.

Value of sheep as percentage of total wealth	Sheep-Corn Region		Wood-Pasture Region		Total	
1-5	16	36.4%	11	50.0%	27	40.9%
6-10	11	25.0	5	22.7	16	24.2
11-15	6	13.6	4	18.2	10	15.2
16-20	4	9.1	2	9.1	6	9.1
21-25	3	6.8	-	-	3	4.6
26-30	-	-	-	-	-	-
31-35	2	4.5	-	-	2	3.0
36-40	-	-	-	-	-	-
41-45	-	-	-	-	-	-
46-50	1	2.3	-	-	1	1.5
51-70	-	-	-	-	-	-
71-75	1	2.3	-	-	1	1.5
Total	44	100.0%	22	100.0%	66	100.0%
Median		8%		6%		6%
Average		12.0%		6.8%		10.3%
Some sheep	44	46.3%	22	45.8%	66	45.5%
No sheep	50	52.6	25	52.1	77	53.1
Value not stated	1	1.1	1	2.1	2	1.4
Total	95	100.0%	48	100.0%	145	100.0%

N.B. The sample is the same as in Table 2.
In 2 of the 4 cases in Table 2 in which the number of sheep was not specified, the value of the sheep was given.

TABLE 4. Details of the inventories of the four men whose sheep represented more than 30% of their total wealth, 1589-1596.

	Sheep	Other Animals	Crops	Debts	Rest	Total
William Atkinson, Snettisham, 1595.	46%	14%	11%	3%	26%	100% £35
John Daber, North Creake, 1595.	31%	7%	21%	nil	41%	100% £22
William Betts, Salhouse, 1591.	74%	nil	nil	nil	26%	100% £12
Robert Payne, Croxton, 1591.	34%	12%	11%	9%	34%	100% £51

N.B. All four villages were in the Sheep-Corn Region.

TABLE 5. Details of the inventories of the six people with flocks of over 150 sheep, 1589-1596.

	Sheep	Other Animals	Crops	Debts	Rest	Total
Kathleen Skarlet, Harpley, 1595.	16%	10%	28%	18%	28%	100% £490
Thomas Skippon, Heacham, 1595.	22%	26%	19%	nil	33%	100% £322
Richard Kynne, 1591, Terrington St.Johns	17%	29%	40%	3%	11%	100% £359
John Applyard, Dunston, 1592.	15%	25%	9%	nil	51%	100% £268
William Jerves, Burgh Parva, 1595.	20%	25%	32%	nil	23%	100% £212
Eupheme Edowes, 1589, Little Cressingham.	11%	17%	45%	nil	27%	100% £291

N.B. Five of these villages were in the Sheep-Corn Region; Terrington was in the Fenland.

TABLE 6. Details of the inventories of four men whose sheep represented less than 6% of their total wealth, 1589-1596.

	Sheep	Other Animals	Crops	Debts	Rest	Total
Edmund Crowe, East Ruston, 1592.	3%	47%	25%	nil	25%	100% £16
William Watson, Houghton, 1594.	3%	41%	11%	nil	45%	100% £14
John Gosling, Beddingham, 1595.	5%	29%	12%	6%	48%	100% £436
Hamond Shillinge, 1595, Hoveton St. Peter.	5%	17%	35%	16%	27%	100% £436

N.B. Three of these villages were in the Sheep-Corn Region; Beddingham was in the Wood-Pasture Region.

In the Wood-Pasture Region, there was an equally high proportion of men with no sheep at all; of those men with some sheep, 75% had less than 40 animals, giving a median number similar to that in the Sheep-Corn Region. However, since there were few large flock owners in this Region, the average number of sheep is only 39 compared with 58 in the Sheep-Corn Region. The one owner of a flock of over 150 sheep was a wealthy Fenland farmer. (See Table 5.)

Two points stand out in comparing these figures with those for Leicestershire: the median number of animals for those men who had some sheep is the same for Norfolk in 1589-1596 as for Leicestershire in 1588, and in both Leicestershire and the Sheep-Corn Region of Norfolk over 70% of those men had fewer than 60 sheep; and secondly, rather

more men in Norfolk than in Leicestershire owned large flocks, although this was probably not so by the beginning of the seventeenth century as a result of the increased momentum of enclosure and conversion of arable land to pasture in Leicestershire.(1) In comparison with the figures for the Fenland of Lincolnshire, those for the Sheep-Corn Region of Norfolk show a smaller proportion of men with very few sheep, giving a slightly higher median for Norfolk, and a higher proportion of men with large flocks; much the same thing has been said in comparing Leicestershire with the Lincolnshire Fenland.(2)

Finally, it may be of interest to compare the value of these mens' sheep with their total means (See Table 3). Throughout the county, sheep formed only a small proportion of the farmers' total wealth, and this was especially so in the Wood-Pasture Region. Even in the Sheep-Corn Region, only four men could count more than 30% of their wealth in sheep (See Table 4), and none of them was wealthy although one had a flock of 100 sheep. As has been seen, the largest flocks were owned by men who were prosperous all-round farmers. Most of the men with sheep forming a very small proportion of their wealth were poor labourers and husbandmen, of whom Crowe and

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(1) Hoskins, op.cit., pp.174-5.
(2) Thirsk, op.cit., p.42.

Watson were typical (See Table 6), owning a handful of animals. On the other hand, sheep might provide only a small proportion of the wealth of prosperous farmers: Shillinge had 75 sheep and Gosling 93 (Table 6).

A similar analysis of inventories for the period 1614-1622 shows some of the sixteenth century features in an even more exaggerated form. The distribution of the men in this sample according to total personal wealth is very similar to that of 1589-1596 (See Appendix Two, Table 2).[1] By this time, however, a higher proportion of wealthy farmers, with inventories of over £200, was to be found in the Wood-Pasture than in the Sheep-Corn Region, and both median and average wealth lagged behind in the latter Region.

In sheep ownership, the proportion of men owning no sheep at all has increased to the very high figure of 70% in the Sheep-Corn Region, although remaining unchanged in the Wood-Pasture Region; moreover, 88% of the men with some sheep had fewer than 50, and nearly 60% less than 20 in the former Region. As a result, the median number of sheep has fallen to 19-20 in the whole county, and for the Wood-Pasture Region the average number has fallen too; the average for the Sheep-

(1) Concerning the comparability of values in inventories of these different periods, see Appendix Two.

Corn Region is substantially increased, however, by the presence of one very large flock. (See Table 7). Three flocks in this Region exceeded 100 in number, all belonging to wealthy farmers; that of John Freman was certainly the largest but its size must be estimated from the value given - probably a little over 1000 head (See Tables 9 and 10). Reynold, with an estate in the depopulated village of Pudding Norton,(1) had 885 sheep - 373 of them,however, were kept at Wolferton where Reynold had a lease of 340 acres of coastal marsh and other pasture. The one large flock of the Wood-Pasture Region again belonged to a Fenland farmer.

The value of sheep as a proportion of the total wealth of these farmers has changed in accordance with the changes in sheep ownership: by 1614-1622, sheep formed a very small proportion of an even larger percentage of men than in the late sixteenth century, and only three men could count more than 20% of their wealth in this commodity.(See Table 8). Two of these three were Freman and Reynold, the wealthiest men of the whole sample, and owners of the two largest flocks. (See Table 9). Again, men of widely varying means are included in the lowest classes of this analysis.(See Table 11).

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(1) See infra, pp. 181-2.

TABLE 7. Owners of sheep, 1614-1622.

Number of animals	Sheep-Corn Region		Wood-Pasture Region		Total	
1-5	4	23.5%	1	9.1%	5	17.9%
6-10	2	11.7	3	27.3	5	17.9
11-20	4	23.5	1	9.1	5	17.9
21-30	-	-	4	36.4	4	14.3
31-40	2	11.7	-	-	2	7.1
41-50	3	17.6	-	-	3	10.7
51-60	-	-	1	9.1	1	3.6
61-70	-	-	-	-	-	-
71-80	-	-	-	-	-	-
81-90	-	-	-	-	-	-
91-100	-	-	-	-	-	-
101-150	1	5.8	-	-	1	3.6
151-200	-	-	1	9.1	1	3.6
201-800	-	-	-	-	-	-
801-900	1	5.8	-	-	1	3.6
Total	17	99.6%	11	100.1%	28	100.2%
Median	19 sheep		21 sheep		19-20 sheep	
Average	87 sheep		34 sheep		66 sheep	
Some sheep	17	24.0%	11	34.4%	28	27.5%
No sheep	49	70	17	53.1	66	64.7
Number not stated	4	5.7	4	12.5	8	7.8
Total	70	99.7%	32	100.0%	102	100.0%

N.B. This is a random sample of inventories (preserved at the Bishop's Chapel in Norwich) except that all townsmen of Norwich, Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn, and all country textile workers (whose inventories are analysed in Chapter 15) are excluded. Most of the 102 men were farmers; 8 were tradesmen and craftsmen, and 7 were clergymen.

TABLE 8. Value of sheep, relative to the total value of the inventories, 1614-1622.

Value of sheep as percentage of total wealth	Sheep-Corn Region		Wood-Pasture Region		Total	
1-5	11	55%	9	60%	20	57.1%
6-10	3	15	3	20	6	17.1
11-15	3	15	2	13.3	5	14.3
16-20	1	5	-	-	1	2.9
21-25	1	5	1	6.6	2	5.7
26-30	1	5	-	-	1	2.9
Total	20	100.0%	15	99.9%	35	100.0%
Median		5%		4%		5%
Average		8.4%		6.2%		7.4%
Some sheep	20	28.6%	15	46.9%	35	34.3%
No sheep	49	70	17	53.1	66	64.7
Value not stated	1	1.4	-	-	1	0.9
Total	70	100.0%	32	100.0%	102	99.9%

N.B. The sample is the same as in Table 7. In 7 of the 8 cases in Table 7 in which the number of sheep was not specified, the value of the sheep was given.

Thus, the inventories indicate a notable trend between 1589-1596 and 1614-1622: sheep ownership was becoming concentrated in fewer hands. The sample of inventories for 1668-1678 shows that this trend was continued throughout the seventeenth century. With regard to total wealth, the proportion of wealthier farmers has again increased, and in both median and average wealth the Wood-Pasture Region continues to outstrip the Sheep-Corn Region. With the latter Region awaiting the farming improvements of the eighteenth century, the Wood-Pasture farmer had the advantage of the increasing markets for the valuable products of his mixed farming.(1) (See Appendix Two, Table 3).

The striking features of sheep ownership shown in the 1614-1622 inventories are reproduced in those of the 1670's. The number of men owning no sheep at all has further increased in both Regions, the proportion reaching 75% in the Sheep-Corn Region. Of the men who did own some sheep, the distribution is essentially the same as in the previous period: over 70% of these men in the Sheep-Corn Region had less than 30 sheep, giving a low median number, and there were a number of large flock owners, resulting in the very high average of 136 sheep. The average has increased, too,

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(1) Cf. sections I and II of Chapter One.

TABLE 9. Details of the inventories of the three men whose sheep represented more than 20% of their total wealth, 1614-1622.

	Sheep	Other Animals	Crops	Debts	Rest	Total
William Reynold, Pudding Norton, 1617.	29%	24%	22%	8%	17%	100% £1481
John Freman, Caistor, 1617	23%	24%	21%	18%	14%	100% £1118
Isaac Pursill, Tilney, 1617	21%	26%	36%	3%	14%	100% £279

N.B. Two of these villages were in the Sheep-Corn Region; Tilney was in the Fenland. All three flocks were of more than 100 sheep.

TABLE10. Details of the inventory of the fourth, and final, owner of a flock of more than 100 sheep, 1614-1622.

	Sheep	Other Animals	Crops	Debts	Rest	Total
William Hollye, Holme-next-the-Sea, 1617.	15%	16%	42%	Nil	27%	100% £217

N.B. Holme was in the Sheep-Corn Region.

TABLE 11. Details of the inventories of four men whose sheep represented less than 7% of their total wealth, 1614-1622

	Sheep	Other Animals	Crops	Debts	Rest	Total
William Gryeme, Gimmingham, 1621.	4%	17%	12%	Nil	67%	100% £476
Cuthbert Norris, D.D. North Tuddenham, 1621.	3%	6%	7%	62%	22%	100% £708
John Dixson, senior, North Creake, 1617.	3%	16%	Nil	Nil	81%	100% £16
John Washinton, Welbourne, 1622.	6%	29%	18%	Nil	47%	100% £62

N.B. Three of these villages were in the Sheep-Corn Region; North Tuddenham was in the Wood-Pasture Region.

in the Wood-Pasture Region where sheep ownership is much less concentrated at the lower end of the scale than previously, but the gap between the averages for the two Regions is greater than ever. (See Table 12). Four flocks in the Sheep-Corn Region exceeded 200 in number (See Tables 14 and 15), all belonging to wealthy farmers; the largest were those of Downinge - 968 sheep - and Dent - 972. There was one flock of over 200 sheep in the Wood-Pasture Region.

TABLE 12. Owners of sheep, 1668-1678.

Number of animals	Sheep-Corn Region		Wood-Pasture Region		Total	
1-5	6	28.6%	2	11.8%	8	21.1%
6-10	1	4.8	2	11.8	3	7.9
11-20	6	28.6	3	17.6	9	23.7
21-30	2	9.5	2	11.8	4	10.5
31-40	-	-	1	5.9	1	2.7
41-50	-	-	1	5.9	1	2.7
51-60	1	4.8	2	11.8	3	7.9
61-70	-	-	-	-	-	-
71-80	1	4.8	2	11.8	3	7.9
81-90	-	-	-	-	-	-
91-100	-	-	1	5.9	1	2.7
101-150	-	-	-	-	-	-
151-200	-	-	-	-	-	-
201-300	1	4.8	1	5.9	2	5.3
301-400	1	4.8	-	-	1	2.7
401-900	-	-	-	-	-	-
901-1000	2	9.5	-	-	2	5.3
Total	21	100.2%	17	100.2%	38	100.4%
Median	17 sheep		26 sheep		20 sheep	
Average	136 sheep		51 sheep		98 sheep	
Some sheep	21	22.8%	17	35.4%	38	27.1%
No sheep	69	75	29	60.4	98	70
Number not stated	2	2.2	2	4.2	4	2.8
Total	92	100.0%	48	100.0%	140	99.9%

N.B. This is a random sample of inventories (preserved at the Bishop's Chapel in Norwich) except that all townsmen of Norwich, Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn, and all country textile workers (whose inventories are analysed in Chapter 15) are excluded. Most of the 140 men were farmers; 19 were tradesmen and craftsmen, and 7 were clergymen.

TABLE 13. Value of sheep, relative to the total values of the inventories, 1668-1678.

Value of sheep as percentage of total wealth	Sheep-Corn Region		Wood-Pasture Region		Total	
1-5	13	61.9%	11	61.1%	24	61.5%
6-10	1	4.8	3	16.6	4	10.3
11-15	-	-	2	11.1	2	5.1
16-20	3	14.3	1	5.5	4	10.3
21-25	-	-	-	-	-	-
26-30	1	4.8	-	-	1	2.6
31-35	-	-	-	-	-	-
36-40	1	4.8	-	-	1	2.6
41-45	-	-	-	-	-	-
46-50	-	-	1	5.5	1	2.6
51-55	1	4.8	-	-	1	2.6
56-60	1	4.8	-	-	1	2.6
Total	21	100.2%	18	99.8%	39	100.2%
Median	2%		5%		3%	
Average	12.4%		8%		10.4%	
Some sheep	21	22.8%	18	37.5%	39	27.9%
No sheep	69	75	29	60.4	98	70
Value not stated	2	2.2	1	2.1	3	2.1
Total	92	100.0%	48	100.0%	140	100.0%

N.B. The sample is the same as in Table 12. In 1 of the 4 cases in Table 12 in which the number of sheep was not specified, the value of the sheep was given.

TABLE 14. Details of the inventories of the five men whose sheep represented 30% or more of their total wealth, 1668-1678.

	Sheep	Other Animals	Crops	Debts	Rest	Total
Thomas Dent, Hilborough, 1676.	30%	10%	31%	12%	17%	100% £1186
Robert Downinge, Weasenham, 1675.	38%	12%	21%	14%	15%	100% £834
Anthony Fuller, Mundford, 1678.	40%	5%	Nil	22%	33%	100% £63
James Golding, Shipdham, 1676.	50%	Nil	Nil	Nil	50%	100% £6
William Goodwin, Carbrooke, 1678.	59%	18%	Nil	Nil	23%	100% £17

N.B. Four of these villages were in the Sheep-Corn Region; Shipdham was in the Wood-Pasture Region. Dent and Downinge had flocks of over 200 sheep.

TABLE 15. Details of the inventories of the three other men with flocks of over 200 sheep, 1668-1678.

	Sheep	Other Animals	Crops	Debts	Rest	Total
Edward Elliott, Bressingham, 1676.	12%	40%	14%	12%	22%	100% £520
Richard Miles, Wighton, 1677.	16%	12%	47%	Nil	25%	100% £745
Thomas Syers, North Creake, 1668	17%	17%	36%	17%	13%	100% £417

N.B. Two of these villages were in the Sheep-Corn Region; Bressingham was in the Wood-Pasture Region.

TABLE 16. Details of the inventories of five men whose sheep represented 5% or less of their total wealth, 1668-1678.

	Sheep	Other Animals	Crops	Debts	Rest	Total
Philip Bedingfield Ditchingham, 1673	1%	7%	3%	8%	81%	100% £1765
William Everett, North Elmham, 1677	2%	21%	30%	26%	21%	100% £277
Thomas Fitt, Walsoken, 1677	5%	90%	1%	3%	1%	100% £259
John Dennis, Hillington, 1677	1%	49%	41%	Nil	9%	100% £47
Thomas Richards, Starston, 1676	2%	15%	5%	Nil	78%	100% £39

N.B. Elmham and Hillington were in the Sheep-Corn Region; Starston and Ditchingham in the Wood-Pasture Region; Walsoken in the Fenland.

Turning to the value of sheep within the inventories, the impression of sheep providing a very small proportion of most mens' wealth has been strengthened. (See Table 13). There is a small increase in the proportion of farmers whose sheep were prominent, but only Downinge, Dent and Fuller (with about 80 sheep) had substantial numbers. Some examples of men of varying means with but little wealth invested in sheep are given in Table 16.

The evidence of the inventories accords well with the descriptive account of sheep farming given in previous chapters, and earlier in this chapter. The population of the Sheep-Corn Region is clearly divided into three: a small number of flock-owners with a large number of sheep; a

large proportion of men (decreasing from 44% to 22% between the late sixteenth and the late seventeenth centuries) owning variable but small numbers of sheep; and a very large proportion of men (increasing from 52% to 75%) owning no sheep at all. In the Wood-Pasture Region, the first group is almost entirely absent. Some interesting changes are seen taking place in the Sheep-Corn Region during this century, notably the concentration of sheep ownership into fewer hands - the large flocks increase in size, and the participation of the small sheep owner decreases. Seen in the light of agrarian developments, these changes reflect the improvements of the seventeenth century; the improvement of the commons by enclosure into brecks, the enclosure of the infields and removal of common rights of pasture over the arable land, and the consolidation of land in the estates of the improving landlords - all these trends adversely affected the small man's opportunities for stock keeping.(1) The increasing reaction of small landholders against the restrictions of the foldcourse system had had the same result for they had decreased their own shackage by enclosure; the

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(1) See supra, pp. 68 et seq.

adverse effect of this reaction on foldcourses and flocks was subordinate to the advantages gained in many areas by improvement, and on the whole piecemeal enclosure contributed to the changes in sheep ownership.[1]

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(1) See supra, pp. 59-68.

CHAPTER FOUR.

MARSHLAND SHEEP FARMING.

I.

In any estimate of sheep farming in the county, the Norfolk Fenland must be considered of secondary importance when compared with the upland districts. The Marshland district of Norfolk had, however, an extremely prosperous agricultural economy in the Middle Ages, as is amply attested by the high fourteenth century tax assessments[1] and the magnificent mediaeval churches. The true nature of the Fenland economy is at last being understood, and the concept of an unproductive wasteland prior to the eighteenth century is being corrected. It has been shown[2] that in the neighbouring fens of Lincolnshire, very extensive drainage and reclamation of salt marsh and, especially, fen had been achieved by the end of the thirteenth century, and that the sixteenth century economy of the Lincolnshire fens was both varied and prosperous.[3] The Norfolk Marshland district

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(1) The average tax assessment of the Marshland villages of Tilney, Walsoken, Wiggenhall, West Walton, Terrington and Walpole in 1334 was £32.1.2.; the average for the remaining villages in Freebridge Hundred - villages in the Sheep-Corn Region of the sixteenth century - was £7.11.4. (to the nearest penny). See Rev. W. Hudson, "The Assessment of the Townships of the County of Norfolk for the King's Tenths and Fifteenths, as settled in 1334", Norfolk Archaeology, Vol.12, 1895.

(2) H.E. Hallam, "The New Lands of Elloe", University College of Leicester, Occasional Papers in English Local History, Number 6, 1954.

(3) Joan Thirsk, "Fenland Farming in the Sixteenth Century", Number 3 in the same series, 1953.

must have presented a close parallel in many respects to the Lincolnshire wapentake of Elloe.

Nearly one-sixth of the whole Fenland area - 200 square miles out of 1300 - lies in Norfolk; in the south, large areas remained as (productive) fen until the eighteenth century drainage schemes finally reclaimed them as good pasture land, and further north a very extensive common fen remained unenclosed until the end of the eighteenth century, but north again the half-hundred of Freebridge Marshland must long have possessed extensive reclaimed fens and marshes. In the absence of any comparable research on the Marshland district, a probable analogy may be suggested to the development of reclamation in neighbouring Elloe.(1)

The ancient villages of Elloe were all situated on the silt ridge which is continued in Marshland: in this belt in Norfolk, running roughly parallel with the coast, were the villages of West Walton, Walpole, Terrington and Tilney. From the arable fields - the townlands - on the silt ridge, reclamation proceeded in both directions: "The villages of Elloe increased their arable, pasture, and meadow by reclaiming land from the fen to the south and the sea to the north, chiefly between the Norman Conquest and the end of the thirteenth century."(2) Landwards, reclamation of the fens

(1) The following paragraphs are based on Hallam, op.cit..
(2) Hallam, op.cit., pp.40-41

had at some points reached to eight miles south of the silt ridge by 1241; Hallam estimates that about 50 square miles had been reclaimed from the fen in Elloe between about 1170 and 1240, and several fen hamlets had been established far from the parent villages.(1) There seems little doubt that similar reclamation in Marshland had achieved the drainage of the substantial area of land between the silt ridge and the un-drained commons of the Marshland Fen and Smeeth; and there are a number of counterparts to the Elloe fen hamlets.(2)

On the seaward side, the inhabitants of Elloe had, by the late thirteenth century if not earlier, established one general sea-bank: the so-called Roman Bank. Assisted by natural accretion, groups of landholders had enclosed various "newlands" beyond this bank in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Again, developments in Marshland were probably very similar: the "Roman Bank", and its continuation north of the Wiggenhalls,(3) is the line of the common sea bank, already established, perhaps, by 1300.

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(1) For example, Whaplode Drove, Holbeach Drove and Gedney Hill.
(2) St. John's Highway, Walpole Highway, and West Walton Highway are probable examples.
(3) These banks are mapped and discussed by E.M. Beloe, "Freebridge Marshland Hundred and the Making of Lynn", Norfolk Archaeology, Vol.12, 1895.

These general considerations provide a geographical basis for an examination of the sixteenth century economy of Marshland, and of the scope of sheep farming there in this and the following century. Again, much must be inferred by suggesting an analogy to Lincolnshire,(1) with evidence from Marshland adduced in support.

II.

The arc of villages in Marshland stood on the silt ridge, between the former estuary of the River Nene and that of the Great Ouse - the Lin.(2) The open arable fields were situated on the ridge, but by the sixteenth century had been greatly modified by the addition of reclaimed land; the latter was progressively embanked from fen and salt marsh, and later added to the cultivated fields. By the sixteenth century, it is likely that all the ground within the thirteenth century common sea bank was well-drained pasture, with some of it cultivated; the names of the fields often indicate the addition of reclaimed marsh to the arable land.(3) The salt marsh outside the sea bank was liable to flooding

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(1) The following section is based on Thirsk, op.cit..
(2) The nature of the Lin, and its enclosure are discussed in Beloe, op.cit..
(3) For example, Rednewland Field, New Sibley Field, Pinders New Field, Seanewland Field, Newland Feild and Newfield in Terrington St. Clements in 1650, B.M. Harleian 247. Others in West Walton in 1649, P.R.O. E317/18.

by the spring tides, but - continuously raised by natural accretion - sections of it were periodically enclosed and would eventually be amalgamated with the town lands by the building of a new sea bank. Large areas of salt marshes lay around the former estuary of the Nene in Walton, Walsoken and Walpole - a total of over 2500 acres in 1636; some of this marsh had then been enclosed, but beyond it lay the unenclosed "Crabgrounde".(1) Further east, Terrington possessed large marshlands, both enclosed and unenclosed, in 1650;(2) the 330 acre New Marsh was enclosed, but 180 acres of salt marsh occupied with it lay open to the sea; the marshes included East Marsh (part arable, part pasture and of 505a.) and Ewe Marsh (224a.), the whole extent being 1289 acres - 1083a. enclosed and 206a. open to the sea. Some idea of the varying qualities of pasture is given in the valuations of these marshes: the enclosed East and Ewe Marshes were valued at 12s.9d. per acre, 9d. per acre more than the unenclosed Little Marsh; and New Marsh, its name suggesting recent enclosure and so poorer quality, together with the adjacent unenclosed marsh was valued at about

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(1) P.R.O. M.R.142.
(2) B.M. Harleian 247, and B.M. Addit.22,061

10s.6d. per acre. When unenclosed, the salt marshes offered grazing for sheep, subject to interruption by tide and weather. And although the general tendency was for accretion by the sea, marsh outside the sea banks was occasionally lost be erosion: in 1609, certain tenants disputed the levying of money for the charges of certain marshes to the manor of Terrington on the grounds of loss of marsh to the sea; one deponent said that the two marshes in question "ly open aswell to the sea as to other marshes ioyning ther unto", another declared that "at this day the most part of the said two marshes ar drowned and worne away withe the seae and little worthe...thoughe he might have them in severaltie he would not give for the same ijs. by the yeare." These men were keeping sheep and cattle on the marshes.(1) Bad weather imposed increasing strains on the sea banks, and losses of sheep were sometimes involved.(2) To maintain the banks, charges were levied from the owners of the marshes: at Terrington in 1650, three farmers of large areas of salt marsh, pasture and arable land contributed £209.11s.8d.(3)

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(1) P.R.O. E134/7 Jas.I/Easter 33.

(2) John Reppes of Walpole wrote in a letter to Bassingbourne Gawdy in 1563, "These fowl (knott)are commonly taken at Terrington, where has been such great loss of sheep, owing to the last storm breaking their banks, that fowlers have no leisure to lay for fowl"; Historical Manuscripts Commission, Vol.11, Gawdy Mss., p.5.

(3) B.M. Addit. 22,061. Speaking of the Marshland district in general, Camden qualified his praise of its fertility: "but so subject to the beating, and overflowing of the roaring maine Sea, which very often meaketh, teareth, and troubleth it so grievously, that hardly it can be holden off with chargeable wals and workes", Britannia, 1673 edition, p.481, quoted by H.C. Darby, "An Historical Geography of England before A.D. 1800", p.447. See also, P.R.O. Requ. 2/39/3, 1588.

The poor feed of the unenclosed land, and the good quality embanked marshes both supported considerable numbers of sheep and saltmarsh was even claimed to have the advantage of preserving the sheep from rot.(1) In the sixteenth century, part of the marshes in each township were used as commons, with limited areas of demesne held in severalty; but in the reign of James I, the crown asserted a claim to all coastal lands abandoned by the sea and they were disposed of by private grants. Surveys made in the 1630's and in 1661 show how extensive the Norfolk salt marshes were.(2)

Turning inland from the silt ridge, a large area of fenland had already been reclaimed by the sixteenth century. Work on the lines of Hallam's in Elloe will no doubt reveal the several banks of the successive stages of drainage: perhaps the final one, against the great common fen, was the Smeeth Bank.(3) Drained by communal effort, the fen was probably divided and held in severalty by the participants; and although some would eventually have been cultivated, this land was

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(1) Survey of New Marsh, Terrington, P.R.O. E315/419/57, quoted by Spratt, op.cit., p.223.
(2) Surveys of salt marshes in Norfolk, 7-12 Charles I and 13 Charles II, P.R.O. E178/5997. Also, a survey of lands gained from the sea on the north Norfolk coast and in the Yare Valley, 12 and 13 Car.I, E178/5530.
(3) See Ordnance Survey 1" map, sheet 124.

chiefly used as pasture. The banks had to be maintained against flooding from both the undrained fen to the south and the rivers Nene and Ouse; the holders of land in Broad Fen in Wiggenhall were "Joysted" for bank maintenance, and all landholders in the four Wiggenhalls contributed towards the banks in that parish "where there cheiffe Scyte or howse is scytuate."(1) Drainage of these fens was greatly increased in the early seventeenth centuries; grants of large tracts of Marshland were made to "undertakers",(2) and the land divided into very large tenancies. In the Level of Marshland in 1640, nearly 6,000 acres were held by only 71 tenants - the largest holding was of 2281 acres, and 14 tenants held over 100 acres each.(3)

These drained fens were crossed by droves leading to the great common of the Marshland Common and the Marshland Smeeth (or Tilney Smeeth). "This town (Tilney) gives name to a famous common, called Tilney Smeeth, wheron 30,000, or more, large Marshland sheep, and the great cattle of seven towns, to which it belongs, are constantly said to feed; about 2 miles in breadth and (blank) in length, viz. Tilney, Terrington, Clenchwarton, Islington, Walpole, W Walton, Walsoken, and Emneth...".(4) Droves enabled all of these villages to move

(1) P.R.O. E133/10/1477, 1601-2.
(2) S.P.Dom., Cal. 1629, p.558.
(3) P.R.O. E315/201/175-181, quoted by Spratt, op.cit., pp.209-210.
(4) Blomefield, op.cit., IX, 79.

their animals to the common.[1] The Wiggenalls had separate common fens and droves of their own.[2] During the sixteenth century, the inhabitants' rights of common may have been without stint of number, but restriction became necessary later, especially since the increased flow of drainage from the uplands inundated part of the common in winter. Animals were then moved to the drained fens, and increased attention given to fishing and fowling. In addition to the large numbers of animals of the villagers, there were also flocks of sheep on the common belonging to the manors: in 1650, the lord of Terrington had commonage for 200 sheep and 30 great cattle on the Smeeth, Fen and droves;[3] the lord of West Walton kept 200 sheep and 24 great cattle there.[4]

In the seventeenth century, detailed regulations governed the use of the commons, for example "The Laws and Customs relateing to Commoning in the Town of West Walton."[5] Here, the lord and the "drivers" benefited from fines imposed for infringements of a dozen rules:

1. No sheep were to be kept "upon our Common Droves or Lanes" from March 25th to November 1st.

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(1) Shown on a map of 1591, Beloe, op.cit., pp.320-321.
(2) Beloe, op.cit., p.323.
(3) B.M. Harleian 247; Addit.22,061.
(4) B.M. Harleian 247; P.R.O. E317/18
(5) P.R.O. S.C.12/18/81, 1685.

2. No inhabitant was to keep more than 200 sheep "upon the Common Marsh".

3. No inhabitant was to keep more than 6 great cattle on the "Comon Droves, Lanes and Marshes".

4. "Wee order and agree that our Drivers shall drive any out Town sheep being pastured and ffed upon our Common or by driveing to Washing and take of the offenders at their decresion according to the offence".

5. All cattle on the commons were to be branded.

6. No sheep were to be kept on the droves and lanes "at any time of branding or washing but at the time of Cliping then to have xxiiij houres and not longer".

7. No man was to "sode" any sheep, or to "keep shode" on the marsh(1) except before 9 a.m. and after 4 p.m.

8. Only one man from each house was to be a commoner.

9. No stoned horses under 14 hands high, or any "Mangey Horses, small steers or stirks of Malekind" were to be kept on the droves and marshes.

10. All "stamps or Bridges over or against any Comon Sewer" were to be kept "sufficiently for Water Course".

11. No inhabitant was to "take any Great Beasts or sheep to halfs for any out Inhabitant or Sojourners within this Town there to Common them".

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(1) The meaning of the word "shode" which probably applies here is 'to divide' or 'to part'

"Item. Wee all agree that our Ancient Orders and Customs shall hold and continue according to the Leet holden in the Year Anno Dom. 1600."

The commons of West Walton were by this time insufficient for unstinted grazing, and especially notable among the regulations were the two against grazing by unlawful commoners (4 and 11). The maintenance of drainage was also regulated: 24 boarding and brick "Tunnels" and bridges were to be kept in repair, and "Wee think it reasonable to proportion and divide the great quantities of Land in the said Town into twenty six parts or beds amounting to so many hundred of Acres two of which parts or beds shall Yearly by turns and in course as they are hereunder described and sett forth bear the Charge & office of Dikereeve there."

In the later seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, much enclosure and reclamation was achieved in the fens south of the Marshland Common,(1) and in the seaward salt marshes.(2) In 1796, an Enclosure Act authorised the enclosure, drainage and allottment of the Marshland Fen and Smeeth - about 8,000 acres in all, and two years later another 5,000 acres were to be dealt with.(3) The commoners were to be stinted while this

(1) Four important drains were cut in the Norfolk Fenland between 1605 and 1653, Mosby, op.cit., p.105.
(2) 1789, Act for enclosure of 1,300 acres of salt marsh in Walpole; 1790, Act for enclosure of 868a. of commonable salt marsh in the Terringtons, Mosby, op.cit., p.118.
(3) Mosby, op.cit., p.119.

work was in progress, being allowed 15 sheep and 4 other animals each.(1) Young gave the acreage of the Fen and Smeeth as 6,343 - all drained - together with 924a. of drained private marshes; he relates that there were 528 common rights there;(2) and in Walpole St. Peter and Walpole St. Andrew in 1770 he found 11,420 animals, including 10,000 sheep.(3) On this basis, there may have been 60,000 sheep in Marshland in the late eighteenth century. Bearing in mind the immense amount of improvement that had taken place in the previous 150 years, half that number might be a reasonable guess for around 1600.

III.

The marshes of the Fenland are extended along the eastern margin of the Wash, from King's Lynn northwards to New Hunstanton. Much of these marshes, especially in the large bulge north of King's Lynn, has been reclaimed since the mid-nineteenth century when the new channel of the Great Ouse was constructed from Lynn to the sea (1852).(4) Only a narrow belt of marsh was available here in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but it provided valuable complementary pasturage to the upland feeding of

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(1) Open to variation at the rate of 5 sheep to 1 cow, 3 cows to 1 mare or gelding, loc.cit..
(2) Loc.cit..
(3) Op.cit., p.121.
(4) Mosby, Norfolk, pp.237-238.

of the coastal villages; the marshes were constituent parts of the foldcourses which included areas of open-fields and heaths on the light soils of the Greensand Belt.

This usage is well illustrated by the flocks of the Cobbe family. Geoffrey Cobbe owned the manor of Channons in Sandringham with a foldcourse for 600 ewes, another for 360 ewes belonging to Broke Hall in Dersingham, and the foldcourse of Buttlers and Byrons, for 360 wethers, in Babingley (The Lodge Course). These flocks fed on the arable fields and in the brecks of the "sandes" in Sandringham and Dersingham.(1) But in addition, numerous enclosed marshes were available for these flocks in Babingley, Sandringham and Wolferton. Five marshes in Babingley totalled 139 acres, and the wether flock there must have used the 26 acres of "the weather m'she", if not more. In the same year, 1610, 275½ acres of marsh were surveyed in Wolferton; much of it was probably used by the sheep - one parcel of 40 acres is stated to have been formerly used by "Le hogge fflocke" but now by Butlers North Marsh Flock. This survey included only the lands of

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(1) P.R.O. C78/75

the lady of the manor (Domina Marie Cobbe),[1] but the book of the task of Wolferton, made in 1523, gives a much more complete picture of the marshes there.[2] It was compiled by Geoffrey Cobbe and other tenants. In all, 863 acres of marsh are detailed, including the significantly-named Southflock Marsh (150a.), Hoggs Marsh (200a.) and the North Salt Marsh (250a.). In addition to providing valuable feed for the demesne flocks, the marshes offered additional common pasture for the inhabitants of these villages: in Gaywood - the most southerly of them - the "Comon Salt Marish" was of 100 acres.[3]

IV.

The villages on the Fenland margin south of King's Lynn combined marsh and upland pasture in the same way as those further north; only a narrow belt of marsh existed on the east bank of the Ouse, however, and where these parishes included large areas of fen across the river in the Fenland proper (as Stow Bardolph did) it is unlikely that this land was of much value until improved in the later seventeenth century.

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(1) B.M. Stowe 765, 1610.
(2) Ms. cit.
(3) H.L. Bradfer-Lawrence, "Gaywood Dragge, 1486-7", Norfolk Archaeology, Vol. 24, 1932, p.169.

Further south, the extensive eastward promontory of the Fenland[1] provided large areas of marshes for the villages of the upland border - notably Hilgay, Southery, Methwold, Feltwell and Hockwold; but here again, large areas of these fens were unimproved until the later seventeenth century, and even in the eighteenth century they suffered from their remote situation away from the villages.[2]

Despite the seasonal nature and poor quality of this pasture prior to improvement, it was extensively used by the upland villages. As early as 1277,[3] Feltwell included the two large pastures of North Fen and South Fen, together with other several marshes and a common shared with Methwold, Hockwold and Wilton; the manor of Feltwell then had 1000 sheep, besides those of the tenants. In 1278,[4] Northwold manor possessed, in addition to upland feed, South Fen of 1000 acres and North Fen; these were common to the whole town as well as to Methwold. Northwold manor had 600 sheep.

As well as using large areas of fen as commons, these Breckland villages included areas of marsh within their

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(1) This area has been called the Breck-Fen by Mosby owing to the admixture of sands from the upland margins; see Map 3.
(2) Arthur Young said of Methwold Fen: "There is a very great common fen: but situated at such a distance, that many poor people who would use it do not, except for fuel"; quoted by Mosby, op.cit., p.119.
(3) Blomefield, Norfolk, II,189.
(4) Op.cit., II, 211.

foldcourses; the composition of Feltwell foldcourse in 1539-40 has already been noted.(1) The variety of the economy of these townships is indicated by the possessions of Duntons and the other small manors of Feltwell in 1600: 633a. of arable land, 200a. of furze and heath, 100a. of meadow, 180a. of pasture, and 3 foldcourses in Feltwell, Hockwold and other villages.(2)

The value of these fens had always been reduced by the difficulty of drainage: in the early sixteenth century, commissioners had found the several fen pastures of Methwold manor neglected and laid open to the common cattle,(3) and in the reign of Charles I, although the Methwold flock fed partly on upland pastures and partly in the fens, the difficulty of drainage reduced the value of the whole 3500 acres to £118.(4) It was not until the second half of the seventeenth century that substantial improvements were made in the fens of Feltwell. In return for draining the Great Level, the Adventurers were to have a share of the improved fens of Feltwell; the inhabitants were then free to

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(1) See supra, pp. 29-30.
(2) Blomefield, op.cit., II, 191.
(3) P.R.O. D.L.43/7/28, 1523.
(4) P.R.O. E315/419/58-59, quoted by Spratt, op.cit., pp. 225-226.

"improve, devide, or make particon of or otherwise to dispose of New ffodder ffenn, and Newclose ffenn, And all that part of South ffenn lyeing East of the great dreyne...the small parcell of Comon lyeing of the Southside of Stoke Loade onely excepted." No common agreement was reached, however, and 4 men were allotted their share to hold in severalty in 1658; setting aside the Adventurers' share, 20 acres were left to each commonable tenant - "with Overplus".(1) The seventeenth century witnessed the improvement in this way of fenland in most of these villages: Dunstalle and North Fens in Wormegay, for instance, had been ditched, divided and let out to farm by 1635.(2)

V.

The marshes along the north coast of Norfolk were used in much the same way as those along the east coast of the Wash - as complementary pasture with the open-fields and heaths of the uplands. Although these marshes have been continually built up by accretion, they had already attained a considerable width at some points in the sixteenth century, as illustrated by the maps of Holkham,(3) Stiffkey(4) and Blakeney.(5)

(1) N.P.L. MS.9991, 1658.
(2) Two maps of 1635, N.P.L. MS.3748 and 3747, 18E2.
(3) See Map Seven above.
(4) An undated sixteenth century map in the possession of Captain Anthony Hammond of Norwich.
(5) An eighteenth century copy of a map of 1586 in the possession of Col. P.J. Long; reproduced by B. Cozens-Hardy in Norfolk Record Society, Vol.VIII (1936), p.17.

Little systematic protection and reclamation of these marshes was carried out before the seventeenth century, and even today more than two-thirds of the marshes of the North Alluvial Plain are salt, subject to inundation at high spring tides.(1) In 1634, a special flock of wethers was kept in the Danish Camp on the marshes at Holkham, the only part of the marshes not covered by the highest tides;(2) during the severe flooding of 1952-3, the whole of the Holkham marshes were inundated with the exception of the Camp.

All along this coast, the villages of the Goodsand Region extended their foldcourses on to the salt marshes; this situation is best illustrated by the arrangements at Holkham, already fully described in Chapter Two:(3) half of the extensive salt marshes of Holkham lay within Burgh Hall foldcourse, and half were common to the inhabitants. Similarly, in Holme-next-the-Sea a lease was made of a foldcourse on the marshes, commons and arable shackage in the town in 1635; the common rights of the inhabitants there included feed over part of the salt marshes. Around the beginning of the seventeenth century, seven common salt marshes and the meals, or sandbanks, in Holme measured in all 408 acres and 1½ roods, and in addition other marshes were in several ownership.(4) Again,

(1) Mosby, op.cit., p. 212.
(2) Holkham Mss., Holkham Deeds, 13/639, 1634, quoted by Spratt, op.cit., p.225.
(3) See pp. 41-5 and Map Seven.
(4) L'Strange Mss., FQ1, a bundle of papers relating to Holme marshes.

the foldcourse of Salthouse included areas of salt marsh, the large flock using Salthouse Eye; this land was clearly subject to inundation since a number of sheep from this flock were drowned as a result of a sixteenth century shepherd's negligence.(1)

A certain amount of marsh protection had been achieved during the sixteenth century - Sir Nicholas L'Strange, for example, had in 1588 recently dyked a marsh in Holme(2) - but for the most part, the marshes of this coast remained of poor quality and subject to frequent inundation until the seventeenth century. Several schemes of improvement were begun before 1650. In 1588, all the salt marshes in Burnham had been granted to the inhabitants as common, but it was believed that walling and embanking could improve the marshes for good arable, meadow and pasture ground; in 1637, Robert Bacon and Thomas Coke agreed to drain the land in return for three parts of it.(3) Marshes in Blakeney were probably reclaimed in the mid-seventeenth century, and by 1649 Salthouse marshes had been dyked and divided into common and several; at that time, the bank built in about 1637 by John van Hasedunck, a Dutch engineer, was known as "The Ould Bank".(4)

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(1) See supra, p. 102 f.n. 2 ,and p. 103.
(2) L'Strange Mss., FQ1.
(3) Holkham Mss., Burnham Deeds, 5/94, 1637, quoted by R.H. Tawney, "The Agrarian Problem in the Sixteenth Century", p.245.
(4) A nineteenth century copy of a map of 1649 in the possession of Col. P.J. Long, exhibited in Norwich Castle Museum in 1954.

VI.

The substantial area of marshes in Broadland and in the valleys opening out around Breydon Water is in large part the result of improvement in the last two centuries. Touring the Yarmouth Marshes in 1782, Marshall observed that until 20 years previously this tract had been principally under water;(1) the drainage of the Broadland marshes came within the terms of reference of numerous Parliamentary Enclosure Acts between 1790 and 1840.(2) Despite the predominance of swamps and reed ronds in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, some townships had considerable acreages of pasture and marsh in the less low-lying parts of the valleys.(3)

Some of the Broadland marshes were utilised as parts of foldcourses: in 1564, the manor of Earls in East and West Somerton possessed a foldcourse, with 40 acres of heath, 40 a. of pasture, 40a. of meadow, 40a. of feeding marsh, and 200a. of land in the fields.(4) Other marshes no doubt supported sheep and cattle without additional feeding except during

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(1) Mosby, op.cit., p.119.
(2) Op.cit., pp.120, 130.
(3) See conveyances of estates in Fishley, Blomefield, op.cit. XI, 101; Tunstall (XI, 119); Billockby (XI, 150); Hemsby (XI, 167); and Aldeby (VIII, 2).
(4) Blomefield, op.cit., XI, 189-190.

flooding and the worst of the winter weather: such was possibly the case with the 300 ewes and 100 wethers feeding in a marsh called Foul-Holm in 1440.(1) Piecemeal improvement was being carried out in the sixteenth century; in 1555, a piece of marsh or "Russhy" ground in East Somerton was dyked by Sir John Clere after it had long yielded him little profit "by Cause it lay opyn and onclosid".(2) No doubt some land-owners had much improved their Broadland marshes during the seventeenth century, before the large-scale reclamation schemes were adopted: in 1690, Oby Hall in the Flegg district, with land in the Bure valley, had 235 acres of good arable and pasture land, and 345 acres of rich feeding marsh and meadows.(3) During the sixteenth and much at least of the seventeenth centuries, however, the East Norfolk marshes made little contribution to the county's sheep pasturage; in the later seventeenth century and then especially in the following two centuries, this became a highly important beef-fattening area.

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(1) The inheritance of Thomas Berney in Reedham, op.cit., XI, 126. For the feeding of small numbers of sheep and cattle on marshes, see Norwich Bishop's Chapel, inventories, Lyston 75 (Thrigby, 1595), Lyston 152 (Hardley, 1596), Lyston ? (Beddingham, 1595), Lyston 200 (Hoveton St.Peter, 1595), 1647 bundle No.2:69 (Tunstall 1647), Johnson 182 (Caistor, 1617).

(2) P.R.O. St.Ch.2/22/350

(3) Blomefield, op.cit., XI, 177.

CHAPTER FIVE.

LANDLORD OPPRESSION.

I.

Provided that the necessary co-operation between landlord and tenants was maintained, the foldcourse system was mutually beneficial. There was, however, a separation of interests between the small landowners - the corn growers - and their landlords, with their flocks of sheep; encouraged by the profitability of wool production, the landlords and their lessees were giving increased attention to this aspect of the sheep-corn husbandry during the sixteenth century, and this specialisation was detrimental to the peasants. It has been seen that in order to maintain their foldcourses, landlords were frequently involved in disputes with tenants who refused to co-operate in the customary manner; not only were landlords able to enforce customary regulations upon the peasants, but they were also able to abuse the foldcourse system in order to increase their flocks. Indeed, the record of landlord oppression throughout the sixteenth century does much to explain the peasants' antipathy towards the foldcourse, and their greatly increased resistance to its maintenance during the seventeenth century.(1)

It was largely because of social and agrarian grievances that the well-known peasant riding under Ket took place in

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(1) See Chapter Two, pp. 59-68.

1549.[1] That the abuse of their common rights in the sheep-corn husbandry by the flock owners was the outstanding grievance of the peasants is clearly borne out by Ket's 27 articles of complaint: 13 related directly to this agrarian situation. He recommended that the lords should not be allowed to pasture any animals on the commons, and that no man worth £40 or more per annum should keep any sheep or animals except for his own subsistence; that all copyhold land should be rented on the terms that pertained in 1485, and that any special rents payable by the lords should not be passed on to the tenants; that land bought as freehold should not be converted into copyhold; that the number of dovecotes should be restricted, and that rabbit warrens should be fenced in. It will not be difficult to show that many of Ket's recommendations had arisen from genuine grievances, but even in more favourable circumstances the demands would have been unacceptable; it was, as Professor Bindoff has said, "A radical programme, indeed, which would have clipped the wings of rural capitalism."[2] There is no doubt that the increase of sheep-farming, involving many and varied attacks on peasant

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(1) The events of the rebellion, as well as the situation in which it arose, are discussed in an Historical Association pamphlet, "Ket's Rebellion, 1549", Professor S.T. Bindoff, 1949.

(2) Op.cit..

privileges, was the prime cause of Ket's Rebellion.(1) The rebels were eventually routed near Norwich and Ket was hanged; it was merely an interlude in the story of oppression which was intensified during the second half of the century, and the victory of the Earl of Warwick with his 12,000 men had no doubt encouraged the landowners to intensify their policy. The memory of this rebellion was still with the peasants towards the end of the century(2) and it probably effectively deterred them from another attempt to force the gentlemen into reforms, but during Elizabeth's reign a petition presented by certain poor inhabitants of Norfolk against the gentlemen shows in great detail the forms which the oppressions had been taking. The petitioners cannot be accused of exaggeration - the evidence in support of their allegations is too abundant - and in discussing the increase of sheep farming during the sixteenth century, it will be convenient to proceed point by point through the petition.(3) The petition was addressed to

(1) After arguing the existence of the sheep-corn husbandry and the oppression of the peasantry to which it gave rise, Hammond inexplicably came to the conclusion that "Why the rebellion broke out when it did does not emerge any more clearly from the local evidence which has been examined; and in the present state of knowledge this can only be put down to the political crisis, which is already sufficiently familiar"; R.J. Hammond, "The Social and Economic Circumstances of Ket's Rebellion", an unpublished University of London thesis summarised in the Bulletin of Historical Research, vols. 12-13, 1934-36.

(2) See supra, pp. 61-2.

(3) P.R.O. E163/16/14, tempus Elizabeth. The points are not taken in the order in which they occur in the petition; it has been attempted to put them in order of relative importance, considering the stress given to them by the petitioners and the nature of the independent evidence.

"the Quene owre sou'eyne lady" against "dyu's & sondry gentylmen beyng soosore inflamed & enbraced wt suche Couetousness unlawfull desyres of suche thyngs as be not ther owen & ffor suche grudges & malyces as they bere in ther harts towards & ayenst us the seyd pore Comonalty of yor seyd Countye of Norff." The petitioners claimed that "the seyd gentylmen had not us yor seyd subiects & comonaltye at ther Comaundemets in ther p'cedyngs ayenst yor moste hon'able gace"; this is probably a reference to the Rebellion of the North in 1569, when the plot against the Queen was led by the Duke of Norfolk.(1)

II.

The petitioners' most lengthy complaint is against the gentlemen's misuse of the foldcourse system. They said that

> wtin eu'y Towne & vyllage is most comonly on' ij or iij man's (manors) or more & to eu'y man' a Shepps Coursse or ffouldcoursse belongyng;

These sheep cannot be fed wholly on the lord's own grounds but are kept partly on the commons and on the tenants' lands

> in the tyme of som' (summer) and mmedyatly assone as harueste is don'...and sometyme before harueste be don'

The tenants' great cattle could not be fed in the fields

> The Shak ons defyled & ou'ronne ons wt sheppe

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(1) See S.T. Bindoff, "Tudor England", 1952, p.209.

The lords' sheep were kept on the shack for over half the year, from the end of harvest until March 25th, without any recompense being allowed to the tenants. During this period, the sheep fed

> aswell upon suche londs as be sowen eyther wt whete mixtelyn Rye pees & otys

and the petitioners wanted the lords to be punished for this

> ffor the saffegarde of the Cornes & greynes that shalbe sowen yerely

Furthermore, they wanted the shack period to be limited to the three months between November 1st and February 2nd.

The petitioners recognise here the normal six months' duration of the shack period, but they allege that the period was sometimes lengthened by the lords. At Fakenham in 1520, Henry Fermor was accused by his tenants of keeping the sheep on the shack until May 3rd[1] - nearly a month over the customary limit - and at Harthill in Hunworth in 1611 the lord anticipated the beginning of the shack period.[2] Moreover, the petitioners allege that shackage was taken by the sheep even on land that had been sown with winter corn; this was one of the complaints of the inhabitants of Alethorpe against the lord of the manor: "he breaketh up other mens seuerall

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(1) P.R.O. Star Chamber 2/15/11-13, 1520, quoted by Leadham, I.S., in his analysis of the returns of the Commission of Enquiry of 1517; see infra, pp. 183 et seq.

(2) B.M. Addit.39221, 1611, quoted by Spratt, op.cit., pp. 248, 255.

grownde for the more freer passage and ease of his sheepe, and as it is well to be proved, even att this tyme doth drive over their new sowen winter corne and into their home yards and Orchards, eatinge spoylinge and breaking downe their new sett grists and plants..."[1] The available evidence supports the petitioners' assertion that no recompense was allowed to the tenants for the misuse of the shack; indeed, in many cases the lords' object was clearly to increase their own profit to the utmost with no regard for tenants' rights. In the case of Alethorpe, it seems likely that the many-sided complaint against William Dye points to him as the depopulator of this lost village.[2]

Not only was sheep feed extended by the disregard of sown corn, but the lords frequently diminished the shackage available to the tenants by enclosing their demesne strips in the fields; the lords then enjoyed the sole right of taking shackage there, and yet they continued to put an undiminished flock on to the remaining stubbles so that the tenants' cattle

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(1) Norfolk Archaeology, Vol.10, pp.150-151 (1888). At Northwold, four men destroyed 20 a. of wheat and rye with their flock of 2400 sheep, and threatened the owners of open-field strips that if they sowed their summerley with winter corn it would be fed over by the sheep; the threat was carried out; P.R.O. Star Chamber 2/8/158, temp. Henry VIII. At Barton Bendish, Sir Thomas Lovell allowed his animals to feed on his tenants' corn, P.R.O. Star Chamber 2/9/27,28; 2/18/58; 2/27/293; quoted by Hammond, op.cit., pp.83-84.

(2) See infra, p. 179,fn.2.

had insufficient pasturage. This was the source of frequent disputes, and is mentioned by the petitioners: they complained that, despite enclosing both demesne land and parts of the commons, the lords

> wylnot put into the same Shak on' hedde of ther Catell the lesse aslong as there is eny kynde of ffede ey' for y' gret Catell or Sheppe.

As a result, tenants were forced for lack of feed in winter time to sell their cattle to the gentlemen, at the gentlemen's price, or to let them starve,

> ffor pasturyng ffother nor strawe, for eny money, they get non

This type of grievance is very clearly stated by the inhabitants of Alethorpe: "whereas many of his growndes lay open heretofore, for the maintenance of his fold course, he hath now inclosed the moste parte of them and keepeth them several to himself all the yeare and yett notwithstanding doth mantayne his full number of sheepe as ever he did before..."(1)

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(1) Norfolk Archaeology, Vol.10, pp.150-151. At Felmingham, temp. Eliz., witnesses were asked whether the lord enclosed lands in the fields, deprived tenants of shack in the enclosures, and yet kept his usual number of sheep there for the full shack period; there are no depositions; P.R.O. E133/10/1599. At Fulmodestone in 1604, the tenants complained that they had been deprived of shack by the enclosure of field lands there and in Croxton; Holkham Mss., Fulmodestone Deeds, bundle 6, quoted by R.H. Tawney, "Agrarian Problems in the Sixteenth Century", p.413. At Salthouse and Kelling, temp. Edw.VI, Christopher Heydon was alleged to feed his flock in the fields during shack time although he had only three acres of land there; P.R.O. Star Chamber3/3/42. See Great Dunham, infra pp.166-172. See Miles Corbett's sheep farming, Chapter Six, pp.270-9.

When demesne land had been enclosed, it should rightfully have still been available for the inhabitants' shackage: "One who hath purchased divers parcells together, in which the inhabitants have used to have shacke, and long time since have enclosed it, and notwithstanding allwayes after harvest the inhabitants have had shack there by passing into it by bars or gates with their cattell there, it shall be taken as common appendent or appurtennent and the owner cannot exclude them of common there, notwithstanding that he will not common with them, but hold his owne lands so inclosed."(1) As a corollary to this abuse of the foldcourse, there may be mentioned the straightforward overstocking of the course, without any reduction of the shackage; at Harthill in Hunworth for instance, it was alleged that a larger flock was kept than the feed would support.(2)

Another aspect of this kind of activity was the extension of foldcourses to arable and other land that did not customarily lie within their bounds. At Kilverstone in 1592, Thomas Wright was alleged to have put 40 acres more of the"ine fielde" to pasture for his sheep than he should have done.(3) In some cases, landlords were even establishing

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(1) Quot. W. Rye, Materials for the History of the Hundred of North Erpingham, I, p.28.
(2) B.M. Addit.39221, quoted by Spratt, op.cit., p.255.
(3) P.R.O. E134/35 Eliz./Easter 24, 1592.

completely new fouldcourses: at Happisburgh, Thomas Middleton had "reised a fouldcourse of iii c.iiii score and xvi sheep (576) withyn the seid maner as well to the grete annoyaunce of the Kings tenants as to the disinheritaunce of His Majesty."(1)

The petitioners protested not only that the lords misused the feed of foldcourses, but also that they kept so many sheep of their own that the tenants could have

> scantly on' Sheppe goyng in the seyd ffould Course, Neyther ffor the lands that they haue in the seyd Townes or vyllages, althowe the seyd Sheppe do ffede or pasture the halffe yere & more upon the same Tenants londs, nor yet for ther money

This situation was, they said,

> the grett cause of the derth of muttons beeffes velles lambys wolles Clothes & soo consequently of all other thyngs,

since the sheep

> ar' in soo fewe mens hands at this p'sent tyme The Statute made in the (blank) yere of the reignie of yor late noble ffather declaryng what nomb' of Sheppe men ought to kepe not wythstondyng

The petitioners proceeded to ask that all inhabitants who held

> any meses londes tents medowes pasturs & ffedyngs in ffee symple ffeetayle specyall or gen'all eyther by dede Copy of Court rolle Indenture at wyll or oy'wyse for terme of vij yeres at the lest

might be entitled to keep in the lords' flocks

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(1) P.R.O. E315/519/38, 40, quot. Hammond, op.cit., pp.41-42.

> for eu'y acre that he wyll not tyll & lyeng in the som' pasture or coursse...vj sheppe...wtoute eny money payeng (and for) eu'y acre (where the sheep feed) in seu'll tyme or in Shakke, on' Sheppe, eyther wether Ewe or hogg (without paying any money)

These cullet sheep should, the petitioners claim, together with their increase of lambs and wool, be

> well & trewly answerd to the own's of the same sheppe

It has been seen(1) that in some townships, at least, cullet rights were in fact established, and that they were the "custom of the said county of Norfolk".(2) Often, however, cullet rights in a flock were limited to the free-holders(3) who would probably not have been subscribers to this petition; the copyholders either had no sheep in the flock at all, or only a very small number of animals - certainly not as many as the petitioners are asking for here. The denial of existing cullet rights was one more aspect of the landlords' attempts to increase the size of their flocks. Two disputes over cullet rights have already been quoted in describing the nature of cullet;(4) at Taverham, in another such dispute, the lord and foldcourse owner was accused of taking cullet sheep from the flock and selling them: one

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(1) See supra, pp.98-106.
(2) P.R.O. Star Chamber 3/3/42.
(3) See supra, p. 100.
(4) See supra, pp. 99-104.

complainant had the right to keep 50 sheep in the flock in right of 19 acres which he had lying within the foldcourse.(1) Of the concentration of large numbers of sheep in the lords' flocks and the ownership of only small numbers by the tenants there is no doubt; this has been confirmed by the testamentary inventories(2) and by a summary of the sheep owned by a number of gentlemen.(3) The petitioners' allegations that this had caused a dearth of animals, wool and cloth was no doubt true as far as they themselves were concerned. There was certainly justification for the assertion that the statute prohibiting the ownership of more than 2400 sheep by one man was being ignored; a number of presentments were made of Norfolk gentlemen who had done so, and the informers must have been tempted by the flocks of a number of others who appear not to have been molested.(4)

III.

The second direction in which landlords were increasing their numbers of sheep was in the over-stocking and enclosure

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(1) P.R.O. C1/1219/16-19, 1544-53. At Ickburgh, 1544-53, the lord was alleged to have deprived a tenant of his cullet right and yet to have still fed his flock over the tenant's lands; P.R.O. C1/1121/1.
(2) See supra, pp. 110-130.
(3) See supra, p. 108.
(4) See infra, Chapter Seven, pp. 312-7.

of the commons. The petitioners referred to the commons on which they kept

> horses mares & other ther Catell...whiche ought to be noo p'cell of eny ffoulde coursse

They wanted the lords not to be allowed to feed their sheep on such common grounds between February 2nd and September 1st. These were the months between the periods of winter shackage when the flock would normally be feeding for much of the time on heathland and common; but the petitioners wanted an area of common reserved for the inhabitants during these months when arable feeding in the fields was of limited extent. They did not object to the flock feeding on those commons during the winter when the shack fields were available for the tenants' cattle. Later in the petition, the complaint was made that some commons had been entirely denied to the inhabitants for landlords had

> made gret Inclosers not only upon ther owne londs but upon the co'ens

Finally, the petitioners asked for the preservation of their right to take whins, furze, bracken, ling and heather from the commons.

Tenants frequently complained that the lords had either overstocked commons that were used by them both or had fed their flocks on commons that should have been enjoyed by the inhabitants. At Fulmodestone in 1604, the tenants alleged that Roger Salisbury, gent, had taken "the whole benefit of theire comons from them, keepinge there his sheepe

in grasinge and debarringe them of their libertie there which for comon right belongeth unto them."[1] A dispute which illustrates several points made by the petitioners concerned the use of commons in Kilverstone, in Breckland.[2] In 1592, Thomas Wright - the lord of two manors there - was alleged by his tenants to have infringed their rights on "the heath" and "the low grounds"; the tenants claimed to have taken furze, bracken and wood from the heath and to have mown grass on "the Lowes". They had also fed their animals on these commons, in the latter case after nowing was completed.[3] Wright was stated by one witness to have kept 1680 sheep on the commons, and several years previously had made an enclosure there; and he was not entitled to feed cattle and sheep on the Lowes between March 25th and September 14th. A fellow gentleman naturally supported Wright: he stated that Wright could legally plough part of the heath,[4] and that 1680 sheep were normally kept in the two foldcourses

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(1) See supra, p. 158 , f.n. 1 . At Bale, the inhabitants claimed commonage on their own lands, and on the commons and wastes; the foldcourse owner was forbidden to surcharge the commons; P.R.O. C78/75. The Justice of Assize heard the complaint by two tenants that the common at Kettlestone had been overstocked with sheep; Acts of the Privy Council, Vol.XV, pp.394-5, quoted by Tawney, op.cit., p.373.

(2) P.R.O. E134/35 Eliz./Easter 24, 1592.

(3) One witness said that mowing was carried out after May 3rd.

(4) At Eccles, the inhabitants complained that the farmers of the demesne had ploughed certain heath grounds which had been customarily used for common feed; undated, quoted in "The Stiffkey Papers", Camden Society, Third Series, vol.XXVI, pp.50-51.

(together with 200 for each of the two shepherds); the sheep fed on the arable fields and on the heath, and in shack time or during a period of drought they also used certain of the low grounds. The balance of the witnesses' evidence is in favour of the tenants; Wright's oppressions here, apparently continued by his son, may have been responsible for the gradual depopulation of Kilverstone.(1) The younger Thomas Wright owned 2822 sheep when he died in 1667, including 1580 in Kilverstone and flocks in nearby Croxton and Weeting.(2)

At Hingham, Sir Henry Parker attempted to keep his tenants' sheep off the common called Staleham when he leased his own right of feeding sheep there to certain farmers. The tenants claimed that they should have "common appurtenant" on this "grete waste ground" for sheep and great cattle in right of their freeholds, and that Parker had no right to use it as his "several soil" for his 600 sheep.(3)

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(1) In the eighteenth century, Blomefield found no tenants belonging to the manors, the whole being purchased in and the entire village belonging to Thomas Wright; op.cit., I, 541.
(2) Bishop's Chapel, Norwich, testamentary inventories, Box 103, un-numbered.
(3) P.R.O. Star Chamber 2/27/55, 2/29/140, quoted by Hammond, op.cit., pp.80-81.

Many other disputes provide evidence of a similar nature.(1) The case of Great Dunham is of special interest, however, for here the rights of lord and tenants were in

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(1) At Binham, Martin Hastings of Hindringham surcharged the common with "a grete flock of shepe"; P.R.O. Augmentation Office Proceedings 3/78, quot. Hammond, op.cit., p.83.
At Stradsett ("Strogett"), temp. Henry VIII, freeholders alleged that 2 gentlemen had surcharged the common with 1800 sheep, thus endangering the employment of 12 ploughs "for...the seid toune standeth only by tillage husbandry, and not pasturyng of sheep", P.R.O. Star Chamber 2/18/197, 2/17/292, quot. Hammond, op.cit., p.83.
At Barton Bendish, tenants complained that Sir Thomas Lovell surcharged the common with sheep and cattle; and other alleged offences; P.R.O. Star Chamber 2/9/27 and 28, 2/18/58, 2/27/293, quot. Hammond, op.cit., pp.83-84.
At Alethorpe, inhabitants alleged, inter alia, that the lord had surcharged the common with sheep, excluding their cattle, had erected fences against their common, and had encouraged their cattle to stray in order to prosecute them for trespass; quot. W.A. Day, Norfolk Archaeology, Vol.10, 1888, pp.150-151.
At Wiveton, temp. Jas.I, the lord complained that 9 tenants had driven his flock of sheep from the common; P.R.O. St.Ch.8/17/11.
At Stratton Strawless, inhabs. alleged that Henry Martham claimed ownership of the whole common though he had only a dole of 10 or 12 acres there; he enclosed part of the heath and fed 2-300 sheep there claiming to have a foldcourse; the inhabs. fear their case will not be justly considered because Martham's widow was "a woman of great wealth and greatly alyed and freinded in the said Countye..."; P.R.O. DL1/166.
At Swaffham, in 1526-7, the farmer of the King's foldcourse kept 1730 sheep whereas former farmers had kept only 1320 and 960; P.R.O. SC11/930.

Footnote (1) p. 166 (continued)

At Massingham, c.1600, the farmer of the manor ploughed up the enclosed pastures so that the flock depended entirely on the commons; Holkham Mss., Massingham Deeds 9/213, quot. by Spratt, op.cit., p.253.

At Witchingham, in 1588, inhabitants alleged that Christopher Layer, an alderman of Norwich "beinge a greate riche man & neare neighbor", had bought certain lands belonging to the Queen and claimed ownership of Witchingham Heath with a foldcourse for 600 sheep; they lost their commonage; P.R.O. DL1/144.

At Felmingham, temp. Eliz., tenants v. owners of manor, concerning sheep feed on Stow Heath; P.R.O. E133/10/1599.

At Stody, in 1611, tenants v. lord, concerning his exclusive use of certain land for sheep feed; B.M.Addit. 39224, quoted by Spratt, op.cit..

At Trimingham, in 1585, tenants of Trimingham and Sidestrand v. two defendants concerning commonage on Boxyeswell; "The Stiffkey Papers", Camden Society, Third Series, Vol.XXVI, p.11.

At Little Barningham, in 1589, disputed commonage on Heckham Heath; P.R.O.E134/32 Eliz./Trinity 9.

At Shouldham Thorpe, inhabitants v. owner of Wallington manor, concerning rights of commonage; P.R.O. E315/132/82 and Augmentation Office Proceedings, 36/19. Similar cases at Winfarthing (P.R.O. A.O.P. 29/100) and Saxlingham Thorpe (3/76); all quot. Hammond, op.cit., pp. 84-85.

At West Acre, inhabitants v. farmer of demesnes of dissolved monastery, concerning commonage on areas claimed by defendant as his several grounds; P.R.O. A.O.P. 1/38, 39; quot. Hammond, op.cit., pp.88-89.

At Saham Toney, Sir Henry Wyatt alleged that c.100 inhabitants had burnt the railings of his pinfold enclosing a small piece of (common?) ground; P.R.O. St.Ch.2/34/50, quot. Hammond, op.cit., p.89.

Footnote (1) p.166 (continued)

At Attleborough, Eccles and Wilby, in 1549, inhabitants threw down fences erected by lord of Beck Hall in Wilby round part of a common over which they all had common rights; quot. Bindoff, "Ket", p.3.

At Morley, c.1548, inhabitants v. lessee of manor of Morley Hall, concerning sheep pasturage on the common waste; P.R.O. St.Ch.3/3/46.

At Keswick, temp. Eliz., concerning commonage on and enclosure of part of Keswick Common; P.R.O. C2/S26/22.

At Pentney, in 1564, tenants v. Thomas Baker - farmer of demesnes in East Walton, concerning commonage on Pentney Common; P.R.O. C78/30, n.13.

At Oxwick, in 1589, inhabitants allege that Thomas Basham, gent, had enclosed one-third of the land in the town, including part of the commons, denying the tenants their shack there; Acts of the Privy Council, Calendar 1588-9, pp.244-5.

See also Chapter Six, pp.274-9.

dispute at various times between 1500 and 1620. In the reign of Henry VIII, the inhabitants had complained that their rights of common had been infringed upon by successive farmers of the manor who had kept 800 instead of 740 sheep on Dunham Common; the latest farmer, Sir Thomas Golding, had also made some enclosures to deprive the tenants of shack, and he had failed to comply with an award in the inhabitants' favour.(1) In this reign, too, the inhabitants had destroyed an enclosure made by the farmer for a common pound.(2) After further complaints,(3) 18 inhabitants made fresh allegations in 1551 against Golding and Thomas Winckfield, then lords of Great Dunham;(4) they assert that 740 sheep from Winckfield's foldcourse were allowed to use the 300-acre common only during hard weather, and that his farmer had increased the number to 800. They alleged, moreover, that Golding and Winckfield had enclosed part of the common as well as 100 acres in the open fields where the tenants had rights of shackage: the inhabitants' cattle were kept out of the enclosures but the flock still fed over the reduced shack. Again, the two lords

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(1) P.R.O. Requ. 2/8/265, quot. Hammond, op. cit., p. 82.
(2) P.R.O. St. Ch. 2/24/292, quot. loc. cit..
(3) P.R.O. Requ. 2/23/74; 25/76; 102/45; 104/37
(4) P.R.O. Requ. 2/252/20

are alleged to have raised a new foldcourse for 480 sheep which they fed on the common all the year, using none of their own land for pasture. A commission had awarded that only the original flock should be kept and that it should comprise only 740 sheep; and that it should feed on the common for not more than two days a year "and that to be in tyme of snowe and lyinge wether"; the common shack lands of Great Dunham were never to be enclosed.

By 1568, the dispute was renewed between 18 tenants and the new landlords, Nicholas Mynne and others.(1) The flock was stated to be again misusing the common, and a total of 300 acres of the arable shackage had now been enclosed. The former award was confirmed, but a further confirmation was to follow after yet another complaint by the inhabitants.(2) In the early seventeenth century, the foldcourses of Great Dunham were still giving rise to disputes. In 1617, an award was made in favour of Sir Philip Wodehouse whose foldcourse extended from neighbouring East Lexham into Great Dunham: he had been prevented from using the shackage there by enclosures on the part of the lord of Dunham.(3) Also in 1617, several

(1) Ms. cit.
(2) P.R.O. Requ. 2/159/12.
(3) N.P.L. NRS 12831, 31E5.

Chancery commissions had been sent to enquire into the bounds of a foldcourse in Great Dunham belonging to the mayor of King's Lynn: at such times of the year when the sheep were feeding on the shack, several grounds, or closes, the commons and wastes were not to be used.(1)

Not until the later seventeenth century did the landlords enclose commons with the intention of making real improvements, and only then were agreements made by which the tenants gave up their right of common to the lord in return for monetary or other compensations. But it was not unusual for an oppressive landlord to make the defence that such an agreement did in fact exist, or that his tenants had the right to enclose their lands just as he had the liberty to enclose his. After his enclosure of 12 acres of common in Corston, Kimberley and Hardingham, Sir Philip Wodehouse alleged that his tenants had agreed to it; if they had, they now thought better of it.(2) An example of the second situation is provided by a dispute at Ormesby. Sir Edward Clere was accused of allowing part of the commons to be enclosed, and of enclosing about 100 acres of "manor and ffeld grounds" where the tenants had right of shackage; but it was claimed that the tenants had agreed to this, and had themselves enclosed an equal area of land over which Clere's

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(1) L'Strange Mss., ND 21.
(2) P.R.O. St.Ch.8/50/1, c.1609.

foldcourse extended; again, there is no verdict to confirm one's sympathies.(1)

Even when agreements were in fact made between lords and tenants for their mutual benefit from the enclosure of commons, the landlords could not always be trusted. An agreement had been reached in 1641, with the unanimous consent of the tenants, for improvements in the extensive wastes, fens and commons of West Dereham. Enclosures had accordingly been made by Thomas Deereham, and an allottment of some of the grounds made to Charles I, the owner of the manor. The dissatisfied tenants had thrown down the enclosures, and it was alleged on their behalf that the "improvements" were beneficial only to Deereham and not to the generality.(2) Similarly, the improvement of salt marshes along the north Norfolk coast was at times carried out with disregard for tenants' rights of commonage: in 1641, the fishermen and inhabitants of Burnham Norton, Burnham Deepdale and Burnham Overy petitioned against the enclosure, under colour of a patent, of certain salt marshes by William Newe and John van Hasdonke(3) to the loss of their common rights and the stopping up of some of the old havens.(4)

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(1) P.R.O. E134/29 and 30 Eliz./Mich.8, 1596-7.
(2) P.R.O. E134/1653-4/Hilary 7.
(3) See supra, p. 149.
(4) House of Lords Journals, Historical Manuscripts Commission, Fourth Report, p.111.

Since foldcourses often extended into two or more townships and a landlord might have the right to feed his flock on the common of a neighbouring manor or village, inter-manorial disputes over commonage were not infrequent. In 1616, for example, Sir Henry Hobarte - then Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas - complained against Sir Thomas Knyvett of neighbouring Ashwellthorpe for driving 240 sheep and 50 or 60 great cattle belonging to Hobarte's tenants off three commons in Wymondham.(1) The flocks of two manors often shared the commons of a township; attempts to increase the size of the flocks led to a lengthy argument over the use of Stonegate Common in Cawston which was divided between the flocks of the Queen's manor and Mayes manor, and a decree was finally made in 1574 clarifying the rights of the respective lords and tenants.(2)

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(1) P.R.O. St.Ch.8/161/7.
(2) P.R.O. E134/8-9 Eliz./Mich.2, 1565-66; E133/1/108, 1570; E159/365/Mich.506, 1573.
There was a similar dispute between Booton and Guton Hall manors concerning the use as sheep pasture of Brandeston and Booton Heath; P.R.O. C1/1370/6-9, 1553-8. A decree was made in a revival of the dispute in 1587 when the defendant was Christopher Layer, an alderman of Norwich - see supra, p.167, f.n.1 ; P.R.O. C78/71, No.23.
A third dispute of this type was between John Woodhouse of Stanninghall and the farmer of the manor of Horstead; flocks of both manors used Stanninghall Heath; P.R.O. C1/835/39, 1533-38, and King's College, Cambridge Mss., N 3-5, 1538-9.

IV.

In some of the counties of the Midlands during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the demand for an increased wool supply had resulted in the enclosure and conversion of open-field land to permanent sheep pasture; the almost inevitable consequence was the depopulation of many villages and the eviction of the displaced tenants. The methods employed by Norfolk landlords to increase their wool production were different: the arable feed was misused, and the commons were overstocked with sheep. The infringement of tenants' rights thus involved were often accompanied, however, by the acquisition of houses, land-holdings and commons for consolidation into the landlords' estates. The increased emphasis on sheep farming caused the depopulation of villages in Norfolk just as it did in the Midlands, but here depopulation was essentially a gradual process. The petitioners to Queen Elizabeth made a number of complaints on this aspect of the landlords' oppressions.

They alleged that gentlemen had bought up many messuages, tenements and lands, and in many towns and villages had

decayed the houses;

Copyholds which had been held for 30 or 40 years or more had been withdrawn on the pretext that they were part of the demense or

> by reson of some fforfetor that they wyll alege & surmyse ayenst the same pore tenant;

And the tenants had been forced to take lands for greatly increased barley rents. Despite the payment of customary rents, the lords had

> put ther seyd tenants clerely ffrom the seyd mesuags londs & e'y the p'mysses or specyally p'cell of them.

The petitioners ask that copyholders may be allowed to fell timber growing on their lands just as freeholders were permitted to do, and that they might enjoy their property without hindrance by the lords

> The non paymet of the rentes & the rep'acons of the howses only excepte upon resonable warnyng yeuen to them.

A final complaint was that the gentlemen had kept increased numbers of rabbits and doves to the great loss of corn and grass by the tenants.

> The Queen was beseeched to take action against the detestable Couetousnes & selffelove of theys gredy & Couetous p'sons

who had built up large estates, often including late monastic property; the Dissolution had occasioned a great loss of hospitality for the petitioners. Many gentlemen had entered the trades of

> coem m'chaunts Gresyers Bochers maulsters Brewers Bakers ffysshermen

depriving the poor people of their livings. The petition ended with a liberal expression of loyalty to the Queen, and was signed by 15 men who declared

> wee were better to seke or lyuyng in Skotlond or in some other (place) then to lyue in this penury & misery.

Evidence might be brought forward to illustrate the several points made by the petitioners in this expression of their poverty; the raising of rents,(1) the denial of rights of ownership,(2) the deprivations of rabbits,(3) the restriction on their felling of timber,(4) and the addition of monastic property to gentlemen's estates.(5) In some cases it is clear that villages were impoverished to the extreme point of final depopulation by the estate-building of landlords, and an increased interest in sheep farming was usually prominent. This situation is well illustrated by the activities of Edmund Jermyn, as lord of the manor of Sturston in Breckland.

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(1) The copyholders of Happisburgh complained that Sir John Robsart had raised copyhold fines from 2 to 4 or 6 shillings per acre; P.R.O. E315/519/38,40, quot. Hammond, op.cit. pp. 41-42.
(2) For example, at Spixworth, P.R.O. C2/M7/15, temp. Eliz.; Broomsthorpe, P.R.O. St.Ch.2/32/98; Costessey, P.R.O. Aug.Off.Proc. 11/63, quot. Hammond, op.cit.,p.74; and Framlingham, P.R.O. A.O.P.19/98, quot. Hammond, op.cit., pp. 78-79.
(3) For example, at Gimmingham, P.R.O. DL44/295, 1580; Castle Rising, P.R.O. E164/46, 1589; Swaffham, P.R.O. SC11/930, 1526-7; and at Salthouse, P.R.O. St.Ch.3/3/42,Temp. Ed.VI.
(4) For example, at Hindringham in 1546, P.R.O. C78/3, No.94; and Topcroft, P.R.O. C78/72, No.20, 1588.
(5) See Chapter Six, pp. 254-5, 232-3.

The small arable field of Sturston was tathed by the sheep of three flocks,[1] all belonging to Jermyn and totalling 1800 to 1900 animals. Two of these flocks were probably held in right of the manor but the third was part of the glebe of Sturston vicarage; it was not until the Earl of Sussex acquired the living in 1597 that Jermyn's entry into the glebe lands and foldcourse was discovered, and then an enquiry revealed that the village had been depopulated by his appropriation of tenants' houses and lands. Jermyn was alleged[2] to have "wholly subverted" and pulled down all the dwelling houses except the vicarage, to have ploughed up tenancy boundaries and made ditches across the glebelands, and to have converted all the commons in Sturston to his own use. Several witnesses - former tenants of Sturston now living in nearby villages - remembered[3] that there had been up to eight inhabited houses in the village when they had lived there; Edmonde Glascocke stated that three of them had been converted by Jermyn into a malting house, brewing house and dairy house. These old men also recalled the former owners of the houses, and the details of holdings that had belonged to them. They recalled their rights of commonage on Sturston Moor which one witness said was now (1597) enclosed,

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(1) See supra, pp. 35-7.
(2) P.R.O. E123/23, 1597.
(3) P.R.O. E134/38-39 Eliz./Mich.9, 1597.

and they were able to describe the bounds of the glebe fold-course.[1] After these depositions had been heard, a commission was appointed and their survey presented to the court; it mentioned an empty and a wasted tenement, besides the vicarage, manor house and churchyard (but not the church). In describing the lands in the arable field, the surveyors name 17 former tenants.[2] The judgement was given in favour of the Earl of Sussex,[3] but in the following year he was forced to make further complaint.[4] The inhabitants of Sturston would certainly have subscribed to the petition to the Queen.

There is evidence that other villages were depopulated in much the same way as Sturston. At Narford in 1578, Richard Beckham - the owner of one of the manors in the village - was alleged[5] to have infringed upon the rights of the Queen's manor there: he had threatened to deprive the Queen's tenants of their copyholds unless all the offences concerning the use of the commons were presented in his own manorial court. Witnesses referred to Beckham's interference with

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(1) See supra, pp. 36-7.
(2) P.R.O. E123/26, fos. 319d.-322, 1597.
(3) Ms.cit.; the survey was used in a bill of revivor presented by the Earl of Sussex after Jermyn's death.
(4) P.R.O. E207/33/3, 1598.
(5) P.R.O. E134/21-22 Eliz./Mich.31, 1578-79.

their commonage, and deposed that as a result of his exactions there were scarcely enough tenants to make up one jury in the Queen's manorial court although there had formerly been two. One witness stated that 14 tenements had been purchased and allowed to decay - 10 of them by Beckham and his father. This clearly does not represent the complete depopulation of what had been a very large village,(1) but it is indicative of the oppressions involved.(2)

The consolidation of tenements and holdings into a large demesne estate probably accounted for the gradual depopulation of villages like West Wretham and Stanninghall. By 1612, West Wretham had been reduced to five peasant holdings, besides the freehold and copyhold land of Henry Bacon who also owned the manorial demesne. During the next 16 years, Bacon acquired four of the peasant copyholds, and in 1670 he got the fifth. In the eighteenth century, Bacon's successor

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(1) In 1463 there were 81 houses in Narford, terrier of lands belonging to the Priory of Pentney; Norwich Public Library, MS.11353.

(2) Consider also: Alethorpe, whose inhabitants complained against the oppressions of William Dye, supra, pp. 156-8. Kilverstone, where complaints were made against Thomas Wright, supra, pp. 164-5 ; Thorpeland, where Henry Fermor's oppressions were proved, infra, pp. 236-7. and Hargham, where the rights of the lord on Hargham Common were in dispute in 1599, and which, with the exception of one farmhouse, had been completely purchased by the lords by the eighteenth century (Blomefield, op.cit., I, 415) (P.R.O. E134/42 and 43 Eliz./Mich.28).

nibbled at the glebe and annexed the town lands: all West Wretham was in one large estate.(1) At Stanninghall, Thomas Storme had consolidated tenants' property into his estate during the fifteenth century, and at his death in 1540, the estate extended into three nearby villages and included a foldcourse in Stanninghall itself.(2)

Finally, the oppressive activities of the Thursby family in north-west Norfolk provide an outstanding example of the results of increased sheep farming. Thrice mayor of King's Lynn, Thomas Thursby was manorial lord and landowner in many villages in the heart of the Sheep-Corn Region of Norfolk. The Returns of the Commission of Enquiry of 1517 into the enclosure and conversion of arable land to pasture showed that Thursby had been guilty of this offence, on a small scale, in five villages; in addition, the lands of the hamlet of Holt had been completely enclosed for sheep pasture and the inhabitants evicted. This type of enclosure was in-extensive in Norfolk, and to Thursby fell the honour of being the only landowner reported as having effected a complete depopulation.(3) In 1522(4) and 1534(5) suits were

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(1) See Darby and Saltmarsh, op.cit.
(2) See Millican, P., "A History of Horstead and Stanninghall", 1937.
(3) See infra, p. 185.
(4) P.R.O. C2/W15/61.
(5) P.R.O. Star Chamber 2/15/76-77.

brought against Thursby for denial of tenants' rights, and in 1540[1] he was alleged to have deprived the inhabitants of their use of Middleton Common. The men of Middleton complained again in 1548,[2] adding that Thursby had "caused many from necessity to give up their homes." His son was involved in a dispute in 1587[3] over the houses and lands in the now-lost village of Bawsey, and in 1616[4] the vicar of East Winch accused Thomas Thursby junior of having enclosed most of the heaths and commons of Gayton, Ashwicken, Lesiate, Bawsey and Mintlyn. This accusation also held him responsible for pulling down houses and evicting tenants in four of those places - Bawsey, Lesiate and Mintlyn are, in fact, lost villages.

Gentlemen such as Jermyn and Thursby built up large personal estates at the expense of their tenants; although sheep farming was a prominent feature of their activities, it was rarely increased by means of converting arable land to pasture, and they maintained a sheep-corn husbandry in the depopulated parishes. The testamentary inventories of gentlemen with lost village estates make it quite clear that their wealth lay in both sheep and corn. In 1617, William Reynold of

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(1) P.R.O. St.Ch.3/6/13.
(2) P.R.O. Requ.2/18/114.
(3) P.R.O. Requ.2/138/49.
(4) P.R.O. St.Ch.8/182/23.

Pudding Norton died with a personal estate valued at over £1400;[1] his animals were valued at £462, including sheep worth £240, and his corn and growing crops were valued at £334 - all in this depopulated township. At Wolferton, on the west Norfolk coast, Reynold had leased 340 acres of marsh and other pasture from Lady Cobb[2] and he fed there a flock of sheep worth over £189. A small labour force must have been retained to work on these estates, but the village houses were replaced by the ploughmen's, labourers' and shepherds' chambers in the manor house.[3]

V.

The traditional methods of sheep farming in Norfolk were such that the enclosure and conversion of arable land to pasture was not a prominent feature of landlord activity during the sixteenth century; most profit was to be gained by maintaining both aspects of the sheep corn husbandry and increasing the size of the demesne flocks by excluding tenants from land

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(1) Bishop's Chapel, Norwich, inventories, Johnson 147.
(2) See supra, pp. 143-4.
(3) Also, inventories of Robert Read with an estate in Choseley (infra, p. 185), Bishop's Chapel, Lyston 121, 1595; William Jerves of Burgh next Melton, Lyston 14, 1595; Thomas Seafoule of Waterden, Taylor 88, 1591; and Christopher Coote of Testerton, Belowes 107, 1587.

ownership and commonage. It has been seen, however, that Thomas Thursby increased his sheep pastures by a certain amount of enclosure and conversion, and many other sheep farmers did so on a small scale. The known instances of extensive enclosures of this type are very few, but small acreages were sometimes turned to grass as part of a gentleman's programme of oppression: where peasant holdings were consolidated into the demesne estate, conversion to pasture would often have been a desirable use of the additional land.

The returns of the 1517 Commission of Enquiry(1) provide the most comprehensive evidence; but the peculiarities of the Norfolk husbandry and forms of landlord oppression are evident even here. Not all the enclosure reported was followed by conversion to pasture: of the 10,454 acres enclosed,(2) 1,485 (or 14.2%) remained as arable and imply the removal of open-field demesne land into severalty with the extinction of tenants' rights of shack. In several cases, the commissioners explicitly mentioned that shack rights had been infringed by the enclosure.(3) Again, a further 277 acres of the total area enclosed had been under pasture prior to enclosure: here also the deprivation of tenants' rights was

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(1) Printed and discussed in Leadham, I.S., "The Inquisition of 1517, Inclosures and Evictions", Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, New Series, Vols. 6 & 7, 1892 and 1893.

(2) These acreages are those calculated by Leadham, op.cit..

(3) At Little Poringland, Shotesham, Barnham Broome, Saham Toney and Ellingham.

no doubt involved, and in five cases the enclosure of commons was recorded.(1) The remaining 8,692 acres enclosed did involve the conversion of arable land to pasture, but this represents a very small proportion of the area of the county - the whole 10,454 acres was only 0.094% of the area for which returns are given. The majority of the enclosures were reported from the Sheep-Corn Region of the county, the four most heavily affected hundreds being situated there.(2)

Very many of the enclosures are described as having been made for sheeps' pasture, although in only one instance is a foldcourse mentioned.(3) In 34 cases, reference is made to the putting down of ploughs as a result of the enclosure: in all ten cases from Gallow and Brothercross hundreds the entry is similar to this one for West Rudham -

> Item henricus Russell elargauit suam ouium pasturam in Westrudham cum xl acris terre que fuerunt in cultura citra tempus dicte commissionis per quod vnum aratrum deletur.(4)

Several other objects of these enclosures are familiar from the petition to the Queen: at Snettisham 60 acres were

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(1) At Walsingham, Little Massingham, Morningthorpe, Ridlington and Crostwick, and Houghton St. Giles.
(2) They were: Freebridge Lynn, with 2,395a. enclosed (3.03% of the area of the hundred); Launditch, with 1,447a. (2.41%); Smithden, with 1,036a.(2.27%); and North Greenhoe, with 892a. (2.47%).
(3) At Melton Constable the farmer of a foldcourse added 40a. of converted arable to his sheeps pasture.
(4) See supra, p. 28 et alia.

converted to pasture to enlarge the rabbit warren; at Hunstanton 16 acres were converted to enlarge the park, and 60 acres of arable went into the park at Bracon Ash.

The individual enclosures were rarely of any great extent,(1) and very few are reminiscent of the sweeping changes reported by the commissioners in some of the Midland counties. The one total depopulation reported has already been mentioned,(2) but the enclosures reported at Choseley strongly suggests that this village too was depopulated at this time; 600 acres there were enclosed (510 for pasture and 90 for a park) out of a total parish area of 678 acres, and tenants were evicted - Leadham estimates that 10 houses were decayed. Small enclosures were reported at 14 other now-lost villages,(3) but only 16 of the 76 houses reported as decayed were in lost villages(4) and this type of enclosure can only have been a contributory cause of depopulation as part of the wider programme of oppression.

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(1) The sizes of the enclosures were: over 200a. - 4 enclosures, 200 to 98a. - 18; 80a. - 18; 80 to 60a. - 23; 60 to 40a. - 32; 40 to 30a. - 33; 30 to 20a. - 28; 20 to 2a. - 30. (Leadham)

(2) See supra, p. 180.

(3) The details of any enclosures in lost villages are given in Allison, K.J., "The Lost Villages of Norfolk", Norfolk Archaeology, Vol. 31, 1955.

(4) In addition, only 2 of the 34 ploughs put down were in lost villages, and only 2 lost village churches were reported as decayed.

Evidence from other sources confirms the impression that enclosure and conversion of arable land was not extensive in Norfolk. A number of interesting informations were presented to the Exchequer and they again come mostly from the north-west of the county.(1) Almost inevitably the largest enclosure was attributed to Thomas Thursby - it was said to involve 1,000 acres at Ashwicken.(2)

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(1) The largest enclosures involved were at Ashwicken, Fordham and Ryston. The average size of enclosures in 20 cases found in the Memoranda Rolls was just over 264 acres; most of the informers base their allegations on the statute of 1563.
(2) P.R.O. E159/391/Mich.361.

CHAPTER SIX.

LARGE-SCALE SHEEP FARMING.

At the end of the year, after the completion of shearing and after fresh stock had been brought in to prepare the flock for the following season, the shepherd set about his final task - the preparation of an account of the year's activities. No doubt his re-engagement depended to a great extent on this document. The more wealthy land-owning gentlemen usually appointed a sheep-reeve to supervise the shepherds of their various flocks, and it was this official who brought together the shepherds' accounts and prepared from them a comprehensive account for the lord's consideration. Landlords owning only one or a few flocks received the accounts directly from the shepherds, and it seems that such men were often in a position to compile the accounts themselves. The owner of the flock in Antingham in 1640 set out "A note what mony I have layd out for the ffouldcorse"; it was a simple account of expenditure for the sheep and in taxes, and of the money received from tenants for cullet sheep and for tathing.(1) However, the shepherds' and sheep-reeves' accounts of the large landowners give a much more detailed picture of flock management, and these documents have survived among family collections far more frequently than those of the minor manorial owners and farmers.

Shepherds' accounts vary considerably in their detail and presentation, but many of those available provide

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(1) N.P.L. MS.6027 e, 16B7.

a wealth of information and leave un-answered very few of the questions which one would like to ask about flock management. The two main questions are those concerned with the profit to be gained in lambs and wool, and the data are often available for the calculation of both lambing rates and fleece weights. In the more detailed accounts, a large number of reliable price quotations are given.(1)

The sheep-reeve based his accounts on those of the shepherds, bringing the information together under various headings. His main concern was the financial aspect of flock management, and in some cases the sheep-reeve gives a complete account of the income and expenditure of a gentleman's sheep-farming. In the case of Sir Richard Southwell, the various manorial bailiffs' accounts for several years are also readily available, together with the accounts of his Receiver: the profits of his sheep-farming may be examined against the background of all the other receipts from his property.

The sheep accounts of **nine** estates are examined in this Chapter. Some of the gentlemen concerned were engaged in the kind of oppressions described in Chapter Five, and any information on this and other aspects of their sheep farming has been assembled here too. The accounts are those

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(1) Wool prices are considered in Chapter Seven.

of:-

the Townshends of East Rainham, 1479-93, 1545-49, 1565-67, 1626 and 1637.
Framlingham Gawdy of West Harling, 1650-66.
Henry Fermor of East Barsham, 1521-22.
Richard Southwell of Wood Rising, 1544-45, 1548-49, 1550-51 and 1561-62.
John Corbett of Sprowston, 1554-57.
Norwich Cathedral Priory, 1470-1536.
Sir Roger L'Strange of Hunstanton, 1693-1704.
the Walpoles of Houghton, 1658-1726.
Henry Bedingfeld of Oxborough, 1553-1557

A number of smaller and less informative accounts are also used in the concluding section of the Chapter. The chief accounts will be considered in an approximate chronological order, with the exception of the grouping of the five sets of accounts of the Townshend flocks.

THE TOWNSHENDS OF EAST RAINHAM.

The Townshends were one of the most powerful Norfolk families in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, not only by virtue of their landed estate but also for their participation in county administration. The earliest member of the family in whom we are interested is Sir Roger Townshend (d.1493),[1] the eminent lawyer. Admitted as a student there

(1) This notice of Sir Roger Townshend is based on that in the Dictionary of National Biography (D.N.B.), Vol. 57 (1899), pp. 129-130.

in 1454, he became Governor of Lincoln's Inn in 1461, 1463, 1465 and 1466, and in the latter year he was appointed a commissioner of the peace for Norfolk. Sir Roger represented Bramber, Sussex, in Parliament in 1467, and Calne, Wiltshire, in 1472. His appointments included those of serjeant-at-law in 1477, king's serjeant in 1483, justice of the common pleas in 1484, commissioner of array for Norfolk in 1487, and commissioner of the peace for Sussex, Essex and Hertfordshire in 1489. He was knighted in 1486. Judging by the array of flocks owned before Sir Roger's death, he must have acquired a substantial part of the family estates. In 1469, he had bought the manor of East Beckham, with land in ten nearby villages, from Sir John Paston, and the manor of Stinton was brought to him by his first wife; but these recorded acquisitions were only a small part of his possessions for the sheep accounts indicate that he must have had other manors, lands or rights of foldcourse in more than 15 other villages.

Sir Roger was succeeded by the eldest of his six sons, also Sir Roger (1477-1551).[1] Thrice sheriff for the county, Sir Roger represented Norfolk in Parliament in 1529 and 1541-42. Prior to this, he had been a commissioner for the assessment of a poll tax in 1514, a master of the Court of Requests in 1529 and a master of the king's Council in the

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(1) These details of the younger Sir Roger Townshend are from Blomefield, op.cit., VII, 132-3.

same year: he had been knighted in 1525. His later appointments included membership of county commissions in 1544 and 1548. The full extent of the estates is seen from Sir Roger's will of 1550: there were lordships and lands in East, South and West Rainham, Helloughton and Barmer; lands in Guist, Twyford, Wood Norton, Bintree, Broomsthorpe, Bircham Tofts, North Barsham, Shereford, Saham Toney, Stanhoe, Little Riburgh and Oxwick; and the rectory of Barwick. The estate passed to his great-nephew Sir Roger (1543?-1590),[1] who was knighted at sea after taking part in the action against the Armada in 1588.

In 1590, Sir John Townshend (1564-1603)[2] succeeded to the estates. He sat in Parliament from 1593 to 1601, and was knighted in 1596. Sir John married the daughter and co-heir of Sir Nathaniel Bacon of Stiffkey, and it was probably at this point that the manors of Stiffkey, Langham and Morston passed into the Townshend's possession.

Inheriting the accumulated wealth of the family estates in 1603, Sir John's son, Roger (1588-1637),[3] built the palatial mansion of Rainham Hall. He was created a baronet in 1617. At Roger's death, the estates comprised

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(1) D.N.B., Vol.57, p.130.
(2) D.N.B., Vol.57, p.130; and Blomefield, op.cit., VII, 134-5.
(3) Blomefield, op.cit., VII, 135-6.

25 manors, in addition to lands, tenements and rectories in other townships.

Accounts of the Townshend flocks are available for various years between 1479 and 1637 during which time the estates were successively owned by these five members of the family.

SIR ROGER TOWNSHEND, 1479-1493.

I.

The earliest flock accounts cover the years 1479 to 1493, including accounts for the first four of those years.(1) Although presumably originally compiled by the shepherds, they were brought together by Townshend's sheep-reeve, four men occupying this post over the fourteen years.(2) The sheep-reeves' own detailed accounts of receipts, expenses and debts for each year follow the flock accounts. The shepherds' accounts begin at Michaelmas (November 1st) each year and so give details of the midsummer shearing and of the re-stocking of the flocks for the coming year.

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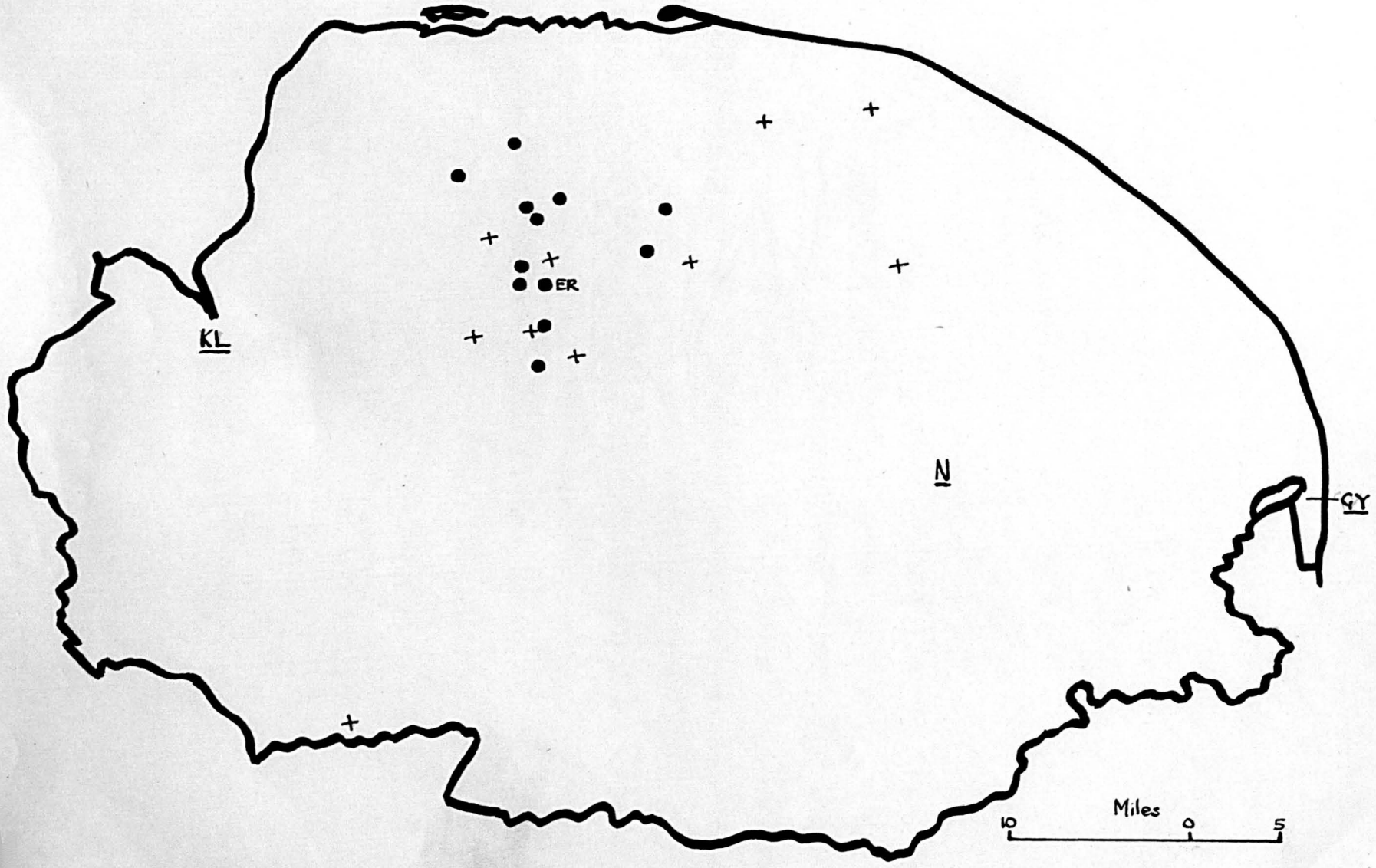
(1) N.P.L. MS.1475, 1F.

(2) 1479-80 and 1480-81 - John Stalworthy.
1481-82 and 1482-83 - William Howes.
1485-86 - John Rouse.
1489-90 - John Stampe.

LOCATION OF THE MAIN (•) AND THE SMALL (+) FLOCKS OF SIR ROGER TOWNSHEND, 1479-1493.

MAP 9



The total number of sheep in the flocks varied from 6,000 to 11,000 (See Appendix 3, Table 13), with ewes usually comprising between one-half and one-third of the animals. Of the 12 main flocks, 5 were composed of ewes, 3 of wethers, 2 of hoggs and 2 of various kinds of sheep.(1) At different times, 10 additional small flocks were formed, and all 21 flocks are included in the summary table.

Of the ewe flocks, that at Lucham was the largest and most constant, rarely falling below 1,400 head; the increase of lambs was variable, but in two years exceeded

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(1) The terms for the different kinds of sheep are these:-

LAMBS	from birth until weaning (Treatise) or until the first shearing time (Best). They are <u>not</u> then shorn.
HOGGS	from then until the second shearing time (both). Hoggs are either WETHER HOGGS - i.e. castrated males - or GIMMER HOGGS (sometimes THEAVES) - i.e. females.
SHEARLINGS	from the second until the third shearing time - i.e. after they have been shorn once (SHEARLING GIMMERS or WETHERS).
EWES	females after the third shearing - i.e. after they have been shorn twice.
CRONES	old ewes, unfit to bear any more lambs.
WETHERS	gelded males. CLEAN WETHERS when fully gelded, and RIGGON WETHERS when one stone is left (or RIGSEY).
RAMS	un-gelded males; sometimes TUPPES. They are either HUNG TUPPES or CLOSE TUPPES according to the position of the stones (Best).
POCKERELLS, POCKS, PUCKS, POWTS	- poor quality lambs, unfit to be kept for fresh stock and fetching very low prices compared with store lambs.
HUSTARDS	The exact nature of these animals is uncertain. They were not fertile sheep - either ewes or rams and apparently resembled wethers.

(Data from the **Treatise** on Foldcourses in the B.M.; and from the farming and account books of Henry Best, Surtees Society, Vol.33, edited C.B. Robinson (1857), together with details from the accounts examined in this Chapter.)

1,000 giving the high rate of 0.76 lambs per ewe. (See Appendix 3, Table 1). The slightly smaller ewe flock at West Rainham experienced similar changes from year to year in lamb productivity (See Appendix 3, Table 2), and the average lambing rates for all the flocks (Tables 3, 4 and 5 and the Summary Table 13) show that for reasons of management and/or weather the years 1479-80, 1482-83 and 1489-90 were particularly successful in this respect. The Sculthorpe account attributes the small number of lambs in 1480-81 to bad weather.

The most constant wether flock was that at Dunton, usually about 1,000 strong. The small Creake flock was very substantially increased in the last two years of the accounts, as was that at Barmer when the wethers were replaced by gimmers. (See Appendix 3, Tables 6, 7 and 8).

The composition of the two mixed flocks was highly variable but either wethers or ewes predominated in any one year (See Appendix 3, Tables 9 and 10); the two hogg flocks were reservoirs of young stock, including both wether and ewe lambs and young sheep awaiting drafting into the other flocks (See appendix 3, Tables 11 and 12). The 10 smaller flocks were of little significance, 7 of them appearing in the accounts for only one year.(1)

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(1) The smaller flocks were at Rougham (all years except 1493); Mileham (1482-3 and 1485-6); Tittleshall Waites (1485-6); Wood Norton (1482-3); Hockwold (1485-6); East Beckham (1489-90 and 1493); Aylsham (1493); Coxford (1493); Toftrees (1489-90); and Holt (1489-90).

Most of Townshend's yearly increase of lambs were used for re-stocking, and the details given for the West Rainham and Lucham ewe flocks, for example, reveal the continual addition of lambs and gimmers to replace old crone ewes (See Tables 1 and 2). The sale of sheep mainly involved crones, no longer fit to bear lambs, or pockerells - the lambs unsuitable for fresh stock. A notable exception to this was the sale of 120 un-shorn wethers, 120 ewes and 120 lambs which fetched £24 from John Lewer of Oxborough in 1489-90. There is little to suggest that Townshend gave much attention to the fattening of sheep for butchers; on several occasions, old sheep were sold for mutton like the 7 crones sent to a Weasenham butcher in 1481-82. However, several sales of wethers fetched good prices from butchers, including Robert Mannyng of King's Lynn and Clement Anger; both bought batches of over 100 wethers.

A by-product of the flocks were pelts, often available in large numbers (See the Tables). The very high number of over 2,000 in 1480-81 probably reflects the bad weather noted in the Sculthorpe account for that year. The pelts were usually sold in bulk: all went to John Grene of King's Lynn in 1479-80 for 14 shillings the 100, and in 1480-81 they were shared between Grene, John Deynes of Hillington (whose pelts - 1,844 - included 24 killed by dogs and of no value), and John Tynker of Bodham. An agreement was then made that all skins from dead or slaughtered sheep between Midsummer 1481 and Midsummer 1482 would be sold to

Adam Note, glover, of "Wyken" for 20 shillings the 100 and an extra 10 shillings; he actually bought 1,706 of the 1,783 pelts that year at 15 shillings for each 120, and large numbers also in three later years. The great majority of the sheep died before shearing thus giving the glovers a considerable quantity of pelt wool for re-sale.

II.

There is little doubt that wool production was the main object of Townshend's sheep-farming for his sales of sheep and lambs were never prominent and were often confined to old or weak animals. The weight of the wool clip for each of five years is given in the summary table of the flocks (See Appendix 3, Table 13). Two outstanding features are the big drop in 1480-81 and the even bigger rise in 1492-93; the former year was marked by a bad winter(1) and was "an evell yere for wull", and in 1492-93 there were increases in both the number of sheep shorn and the fleece weights. The average number of fleeces needed to provide a stone of wool during those five years was nearly 11; in the bad season it was increased to about 14, and in 1492-93 was reduced to about 9.

These average fleece weights for all the flocks

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(1) See supra, pp. 194.

conceal marked differences between the flocks. Almost invariably, ewe fleeces were lighter than those of wethers, from 10 to 18 being needed for a stone of wool against from 6 to 10 for wethers (See Tables 1 to 8). In the mixed flocks this difference is clearly seen as the predominant type of sheep changed (See Tables 9 and 10). In the hogg flocks, the fleece weights varied with the age and type of the sheep; the lambs were not shorn in their first year, but by the following Midsummer the hoggs were often very well-woolled (See Tables 11 and 12). Several figures for fleece weights in the 10 small flocks support these conclusions.(1)

The accounts for four years give details of the contents of the wool house at Rainham (See Appendix 3, Table 14). There were large amounts of one- and two-year old wool in the house besides the current clip, the oldest wool being sold first each year. For two reasons, the new wool in the wool house often exceeded the wool shorn in any one year: first, small additional amounts were bought;(2) and second, there was an increase in weight - "incr. pond". This latter phenomenon is explained by the fact that wool was received into the wool house after shearing at the rate of 15 pounds to the stone, but was sold at 14 pounds to the stone;

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(1) These details are given after Table 12 in Appendix 3.
(2) 58½ stones were bought in 1478-79, 18½ stones in 1479-80, for example.

it is difficult to imagine what the reason for this was.[1] A small amount of wool - included in the wool sold in Table 14 - was sent to the Townshend household each year for cloth making; 21 stones in 1479-80, for example.

In 1479-80, 395½ stones of wool were sold (and 21 used in the household), most of it being either one or two years old. John Blaunche of King's Lynn bought 295½ stones of it at 2s.2d. per stone, John Grene of Lynn 60 at 2s.2d., and John Thursby of Lynn the other 40 at 2s.0d. per stone. In the following year, 210 of the 212 stones sold (9 stones were used in the household) went to Grene and practically all of it was old wool; the price was again 2s.2d.. Although 886 stones of two-year old wool were accounted in 1481-82, it had to be admitted that 58 stones of it were missing. But 820 stones of this old wool were successfully sold (8 stones, including 3 of black wool, were used in the household). In 1482-83, all but 6 stones of the old wool were sold, and only 7 stones of the new.[2]

The two sales in 1482-83 are good examples of the credit transactions between Townshend and the middlemen: in the deals already mentioned, the full sum involved was never

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(1) See also, infra, pp. 294-5.
(2) In this year, an additional 5 stones were sold - wool from the lady's sheep: she had small numbers of sheep in some of the flocks. They were accounted for separately and are not included in the Tables in Appendix 3.

settled at the time. In this particular year, Calybut and Brown of Sporle bought 450 stones at about 3s.3d. per stone. The total sum involved was £74, of which £19 was to be paid at the following Michaelmas, and the rest in annual instalments of £19. Another 480 stones were bought by Firmage of Bakton in Suffolk for £72 - 3s. per stone; 13s.4d. was to be paid at delivery, £9 at the following Feast of Saint Margaret, £9 on the following 4th April, £36 on the Tuesday after the following Feast of Saint Christopher, and £18 at Michaelmas next.(1)

Similar terms governed the sale of 480 stones, at 2s.2d. per stone, to Simon Pygot and Thomas Dyghton of King's Lynn in 1477-78. They paid £1.8s. in 1478-79, £14.16s. in 1479-80, £13.13s.4d. in 1480-81 and the remaining £22.2s.8d. in 1481-82.

Although the detailed flock accounts cover only seven years, certain other details of wool sales are given, and also figures for the wool clips of the years 1488-92: the latter are included in Table 13. The clips of 1488-89 and 1489-90 were each sold complete to a single buyer. Several of the miscellaneous sales mentioned were made on favourable credit terms to the buyers.(2) The examples already given

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(1) These instalments total £72.13.4.; the accountant said "480 stones at £72, that is £18.6.8. the 120" - but on that reckoning the total would be £73.6.8.

(2) A further example: in 1477-78, Thomas Knight bought 120 stones of wool; he paid £2 in 1479-80, £2 in 1480-81, and £10 in 1481-82.

make it clear that the deferred payments were often fully paid, but on several occasions Townshend was obliged to write off sums allowed on credit to wool middlemen: in 1481-82, for example, he discharged his sheep-reeve from accounting for £13 owing for wool sold five years previously.(1) Townshend sold his wool to a variety of customers; some, like the two Sporle men and Simon Mere of Lucham, were local broggers possibly supplying the Norwich worsted weavers; others, like Firmage, came from further afield and may have been supplying the Suffolk cloth industry; and some were merchants from King's Lynn who probably wanted wool for export. Over the 20-year period for which these accounts give figures, the wool prices varied between 2s. and 3s.4d. per stone.(2)

III.

Townshend's receipts from the feeding of cullet sheep in his flocks were small: most of the agisted stock belonged to the shepherds, local parsons, and occasionally the sheep-reeve, and no payment was customarily made for them. At Lucham in 1481-82, the flock included 160 sheep

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(1) A further example: in 1479-80, William Payn of Tymworth owed £1.14.8. for wool; it was still owing in 1480-81, and the following year it was allowed to the sheep-reeve.
(2) See Appendix 5.

for the shepherd, 10 for the rector and 10 for the sheep-reeve; when this shepherd had put in 20 sheep above his customary number the previous year, he had made a payment for the additional animals. Few tenants' sheep were going in the flocks. In 1479-80, 14 ewes at Helloughton were the sole cullet sheep in all the flocks. Only at Toftrees in 1489-90 were there large numbers of such sheep: one man had 115 hoggs going at 1½d. each, another 120 ewes at the same rate and a third 16 hoggs at 1d. each. The occasional cullet sheep in three other flocks cost 2d. per head.

Payments made to Townshend for the tathing of tenants' land were, however, numerous. In 1485-86, no tenants' lands were tathed at East Rainham, only 18 acres and 3 roods of the lord's land; but this was exceptional. At Helloughton in 1479-80, parcels of land belonging to 14 men were tathed - in all, 24a.3r. as against 10a. of the lord's. And at East Rainham that year, 7a.3r. were tathed for 4 tenants as well as 38a. for Townshend. These and other figures indicate a very small acreage of arable land used as sheep feed in some of the foldcourses. In several cases different payments were made for winter and summer tathing;[1] 1s.4d. and 10d. respectively, or 1s.4d. and 1s., or 1s.8d. and 1s.4d.[2]

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(1) See supra, p. 53.

(2) A final small income was derived from the sale of furze.

IV.

A variety of miscellaneous charges and expenses were incurred and are recorded in the shepherds' and sheep-reeves' accounts.

The hurdles of the folds were in constant need of replacement, the old ones being either sold or burnt. The accountants often speak of hurdles stacked in the fields for burning or sent to Townshend's household; some were used at shearing for carrying wool on or for burning under the pitch-pan; in one year, the hurdles were left at the "waschepytt". Local craftsmen supplied the new hurdles: Alexander Smyth of Great Dunham, and others of Beeston and Riburgh. In 1479-80, 17 dozen new hurdles were made, and there were payments for carrying them to the foldcourses; and in the same year, workmen received 1s.1d. for making a pinfold.(1) In 1480-81, 23 dozen were bought, together with the "Sawles",(2) at 1s. per dozen.

Unfortunately, the payments for shepherds' wages are not given in these accounts, being included, the accountants say, in the steward's accounts. But various other labour services were frequently recorded; the driving and carrying of sheep, making drags(3) for them, constructing a bridge and a

(1) A small fold for use when sheep were gathered together, and not, apparently, for use in tathing the fields.
(2) An iron fixture for holding hurdles together; in 1481-82, a "sawle ferr" was repaired.
(3) i.e. systematic searches over certain areas to collect sheep.

a watering trough for the use of the sheep, castrating lambs (11d. was paid for the performance of this duty in four flocks in 1480-81), and the hunting of foxes at Dunton, Lucham and Helloughton in 1480-81. At shearing time, payments were made for the gathering together of the sheep, carrying them to the shearing place, and the shearing itself, and for the winding of the wool.(1) The shearing of the heavier-fleeced wethers was separated in the accounts from that of the ewes, hustards, gimmers and hoggs. Each year, tar, pitch, grease and redding were bought for use at shearing and lambing times; a barrel of pitch cost 5s..

At the end of the accounts for 1481-82, some scribbled instructions to the sheep-reeve are apparently those of Roger Townshend himself. He ordered that good shepherds should be employed and that the sheep-reeve should beware of Maddy;(2) that two flocks should be kept at West Rainham and Helloughton;(3) that the tathe should be well "approwed"; that the old hurdles should be sold or fetched home; that all things should be made ready against the account; that every shepherd should be even with his account - or make it even; that the

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(1) This was the process of rolling up the fleeces for storage.
(2) In 1485-86, Richard Maddy was shepherd at Lucham; he then owed the sheep-reeve 14s.3d. for tathing receipts and 5s.9d. for 22 carcases sold from that flock. In 1489-90, Maddy was not employed for any flock.
(3) These two flocks were sometimes combined: See Appendix 3, Table 2.

shepherds should beware of greasing on foul mornings, of rain and strange weather, of dogs,[1] and of all other things; that the riggons should be gelded; and that the house next to the slaughter house should be hurdled to receive the skins, and a door made between the two houses.[2]

V.

Following his accounts of the various receipts and expenses, the sheep-reeve attempts to reach figures for net profits over the year and to enumerate the arrears due from debtors. Unfortunately, the receipts often fail to take account of wool sold and even if details of these sales are given elsewhere in the accounts, it is impossible to add the sum involved to the receipts since all Townshend's sales gave lengthy credit. Likewise, all the expenses are not included, shepherds' wages, for example, being given in Townshend's steward's accounts. However, the figures as they stand do give some valuable information, especially as to the indebtedness of Townshend's customers (see Appendix 3, Table 15).

The receipts calculated by the sheep-reeve were probably complete with the exception of wool sales: they included the sale of stock, tenants' payments for tathing and

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(1) In 1482-83, the skins of 6 lambs killed by dogs were not worth selling; and see supra, p.195.
(2) Other instructions concerned other aspects of husbandry.

cullet rights, the sale of skins, and one or two small items; and for the first two years wool sales are included as well. Shepherds' wages are the main omission from the expenses, but in some years other small items were excluded too. The sheep-reeve's own stipend of £1 per annum is always included.

The outstanding feature of these figures is the substantial arrears due from debtors each year; most of Townshend's sales of both sheep and wool allowed payment to be made over a period of several years.(1) The great reduction in the arrears between 1480-81 and 1481-82 was the result of the allowance to the accountant of over £135; some allowances were no doubt made for overdue and irretrievable debts, and if this were the only explanation Townshend was a much-abused creditor, but there is the possibility that some of the debts were paid directly to Townshend's receiver so that the sheep-reeve was discharged from accounting for them. The accounts are silent on the nature of these allowances. Each year, 15 or 20 men are named as debtors.(2)

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(1) See examples supra, pp. 198-9.

(2) One man, William Kyng, a carpenter of Bilney, made a new fence on the north side of the moat at Rainham in lieu of his debt of 28s. for 42 crones.

SIR ROGER TOWNSHEND, 1545-1549.

I.

The next set of accounts of the Townshend flocks fall within the lifetime of the second Sir Roger Townshend: they cover the years 1545-1549.[1] The internal evidence of the accounts shows that they were written by Roger's younger son, Thomas, and each year the accounts were said to be "a declaration of the profits of all my fathers sheep". If these really were all the sheep, there had been a considerable reduction since the 1490's, for in 1545-49 there were only six flocks. The term of these flock accounts was again begun at Michaelmas.

The total number of sheep remained constant at a little under 4,000 (See Appendix 3, Table 21). Only one of the flocks was of ewes (another was also a ewe flock but was wound up during the first year of the accounts); two were of wethers and one of hoggs. A sixth flock was formed when the combined Kipton with Helloughton ewe flock was split in the last year of the accounts.

This large ewe flock contained over 1,300 sheep, producing around 1,000 lambs each year at the constantly high rate of about 0.7 lambs per ewe (see Appendix 3, Table 16). A remarkable constancy of flock size was maintained in all

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(1) Manuscripts of the British Library of Political and Economic Science (London School of Economics), R(S.R.) 1032. The accounts were briefly considered by Hammond, op.cit., pp.62-65.

the flocks: the two wether flocks always contained 720 head, and that of hoggs never varied from 1,200 (See Tables 17, 18 and 19). The Shereford wethers were a fresh beginning in 1545-46, all coming from South Creake, and the East Rainham flock was doubled in that year; at the same time, a ewe flock at Barmer was completely wound up (see Table 20). The pattern of this sheep farming was the maintenance of two heavy-fleeced wether flocks, with a ewe flock to provide lambs for re-stocking and one of hoggs awaiting drafting into the other flocks. It was necessary, however, for some young stock to be bought; in 1545-46, 1,080 hoggs were drafted from South Creake into the other flocks and 722 lambs from the ewe flock were sent to Creake; but in addition, 1,122 hoggs were bought externally and 720 were sold externally. In the three following years, most of the fresh wether stock were, in fact, bought externally and large numbers of "young sheep" from the hogg flock were sold. One can only speculate on the reason for Townshend's visits to the markets when it would appear that his flocks might have been self-contained. A likely explanation is that insufficient of the lambs produced by his ewes were, in fact, males, and that the "young sheep" frequently sold from South Creake were gimmers and ewes for which he had no use once his old ewe stock had been replaced. The "young sheep" fetched considerably lower prices than the wether hoggs, an indication of the increasing preference for wethers and wool production.

Even when Townshend bought some and sold other wether hoggs in the same year, he almost invariably received higher prices than he paid, and it is clear that the hogg flock was a source of considerable profit in its own right, and not simply a reservoir of lambs for his own flocks as the hogg flocks had been in the 1479-93 accounts.(1)

Apart from those sent to South Creake to be prepared for either re-stocking or sale, a large number of the yearly increase of lambs was sold as "pucks" (100, 120, 120 and 182 in the four years); these were the poorest quality lambs - those termed pockerells in the first set of Townshend sheep accounts.(2) The lambs sent to the hogg flock were often gelded, and a number of lambs died in the process; some that were physically difficult to geld were kept among the wethers, a number of "ryxs" and riggons being recorded at Shereford and East Rainham.(3) Together with the weak pucks, the old crones were, of course, being disposed of.

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(1) The prices were:

1545-46	Sold 140 "of the worst" wethers	@	2s.3d.
	Bought 480 hoggs	@	1s.2d.
1546-47	Sold 960 young sheep	@	2s.3d.
	Bought 531 hoggs	@	1s.4d.
1547-48	Sold 960 young sheep	@	2s.3d.
	Bought 510 hoggs at average	@	c.1s.4¾d.
1548-49	Sold 377 young sheep	@	2s.2d.
	120 young wethers	@	3s.4d.
	Bought 660 hoggs at average	@	c.1s.10d.

(2) See supra, p. 195.
(3) See supra, p. 193, f.n.1.

The very profitable sale of wether hoggs from South Creake has already been noted; and the sale of fully-grown sheep was also on a much larger scale than in 1479-93. In 1545-46, as many as 720 wethers were sold from the hogg flock to certain Cambridgeshire men, and even the crones and pucks were sent to Newmarket. The complete Barmer flock was sold this year to Robert Baxter, but since he bought the hurdles and spanish staff as well, he no doubt intended to carry on the flock. In 1546-47, 240 fat wethers were bought by Thomas Howse, a Norwich butcher, and the 60 crone ewes, 50 crone wethers,(1) and 120 pucks sold to a Mattishall man were no doubt on their way to the mutton market.(2) In 1547-48, the Norwich butcher took only 22 fat riggons, but 240 wethers were sold in Cambridgeshire. These sales of fat wethers fetched the highest prices of any sheep in these accounts - 4s. and 4s.4d. per head - and it is clear that this was a major object of Townshend's sheep farming at this time.(3)

Pelts were again a source of some small profit, fetching 3d. each during these four years. (The number of pelts are given in the Tables.)

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(1) The term "crone" usually refers to an old ewe; it is occasionally used, as here, for an old wether.
(2) Mattishall and several nearby villages were the homes of many middlemen dealing in sheep and wool, often for the Norwich market; see infra, pp. 363-4.
(3) Mutton used in the Townshend kitchen amounted to 92 wethers and 42 lambs each year.

II.

Only meagre information is given in these accounts of the wool clips and sales, but it is clear that wool was now a secondary source of income to the sales of animals (See appendix 3, Tables 22, 23, 24 and 25). The wool clip averaged about 300 stones per annum (see Table 21), and wethers were again supplying the heavier fleeces; the difference between the weights of wether and ewe fleeces was not here as marked as in the earlier Townshend accounts, or as marked as in some of the accounts later to be considered, but the figures shown in the Tables are not completely reliable since it was necessary to estimate the number of sheep actually shorn.(1) It is possible that the production of fat wethers for the butcher was prejudicial to the weight of the fleeces, which compare unfavourably with those of the wethers of 1479-93. The hogg flock, mainly composed of wether hoggs, shows figures for fleece weights intermediate between those of ewes and wethers.

The whole wool clip was sold each year, with the exception of 20 stones delivered to the lady of the house for the making of shepherds' and servants' liveries. No mention is made of the buyers, but the prices are given: 3s.4d. per stone in the first three years and 6s.8d. in 1548-49.

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(1) The estimated numbers are, however, probably very near the truth in most cases; see Appendix 3, Table 16, note 1.

III.

Notably absent from the receipts are payments for cullet sheep and for tathing: Thomas could say that "the sheep be all now my fathers" with no tenants' sheep in the flocks, and of the tathing payments, "None answered for it is in his own hands".

There are, however, a few entries: 240 cullet sheep at East Rainham in 1545-46, paying 2d. each, and 21s. paid for tathe at Barmer in that year.

IV.

The usual miscellaneous items of expenditure are included in the accounts.

Hurdles were always carefully accounted for, and new ones were bought each year; the old ones were used for carrying wool at shearing, burnt under the pitch-pan, or sold to the shepherd for firewood at 2d. the dozen. A spanish staff was recorded with the hurdles in each flock, no mention ever being made of their replacement: presumably this was the traditional shepherd's crook.(1) New hurdles bought were:

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(1) Few other references to the spanish staff have been found; see infra, p. 252 . Also, Norwich Bishop's Chapel, inventories, Wickham 6, Lyston 41.

1545-46	20	dozens	at	1s.2d.	the	dozen.
1546-47	4	"	"	1s.2d.	"	"
1547-48	16	"	"	1s.2d.	"	"
1548-49	19	"	"	1s.2d.	"	"

A number of interesting gifts of sheep were made. Each year, the shepherd of the ewe flock was given 2 lambs as a reward for marking the lambs, and 2 others were given for licence to wash the sheep at Coxford. Several gifts of sheep were made to poor people, and one sheep was given to the ploughman.

The shepherds' wages were an important item of expenditure. In 1545-46 they totalled £8.10.0., including 10s. paid to the sheep-reeve.

Rainham - £2.10.0. and the joysment of 80 sheep,
Helloughton with Kipton - £2.13.4. and 180 sheep,
Barmer (for one quarter of the year) 13s.4d.
South Creake - £1.13.4. and 80 sheep, together with the profits of tathing.

In the three following years, shepherds' wages totalled £10.10.0., being individually as in 1545-46 except that Shereford replaced Barmer:

Shereford - £2.13.4. and the joysment of 80 sheep.

A small item comprised purchases of tar, pitch, redding, grease and oil, with the tar the most important:

1545-46	3	barrels	of	tar	bought,	each	4s.,	and	1	was used
1546-47	4	"	"	"	"	"	4s.,	"	3	were "
1547-48	5	"	"	"	"	"	6s.8d.	"	3½	" "
1548-49	4	"	"	"	"	"	8s.	"	5	" "

Payments for driving and washing sheep, and the rent of pasture need no comment.

V.

Following the flock accounts, Thomas Townshend compiled an account of the receipts due and the payments to be made (see Appendix 3, Tables 22 to 25). His estimated profits rose from about £99 in 1545-46 to about £143 in 1548-49. Both receipts and expenses are complete, and it should be noted that the latter included a large sum for the rent of the foldcourses.

In none of these four years, however, was the whole of this profit actually received, as Thomas shows in his bill of receipts and payments; in 1545-46 there was, in fact, a deficit to be received of over £54, but in the remaining years the bulk of the profits were received and paid in to Sir Roger Townshend (See Tables 22 to 25). One or two of the items appearing in the account but not in the bill call for some comment: first, the receipt of nearly £24 for animals used in the kitchen was clearly in the nature of a valuation and was never included in the bill of money actually received, but on the other hand, the bill always included the sum of £12.11.8. which was paid to the lady of the Townshend household in recompense for a further batch of sheep to be killed for the kitchen; second, the rent of the foldcourses was again a valuation, since they were all Townshend's own property, and it is consequently included in the account but not in the bill.

VI.

The 1517 commissioners[1] enquired into the enclosure and conversion of arable land to pasture that had taken place between 1488 and 1517. The activities of both the first and second Sir Roger Townshend would have come to the commissioners' notice, and they did in fact report several offences by this family. "Magister Tounesend" had taken to farm the whole manor of Bayfield, and had converted 60 acres there from arable to pasture; Roger Townshend converted 180 acres to sheep pasture at Stanhoe in two separate enclosures.[2]

These reports suggest that the Townshends used illegal methods of increasing their sheep pasture on a small scale only, and their name is conspicuous by its absence from the list of landlords complained against for those oppressions more characteristic of the Norfolk situation.

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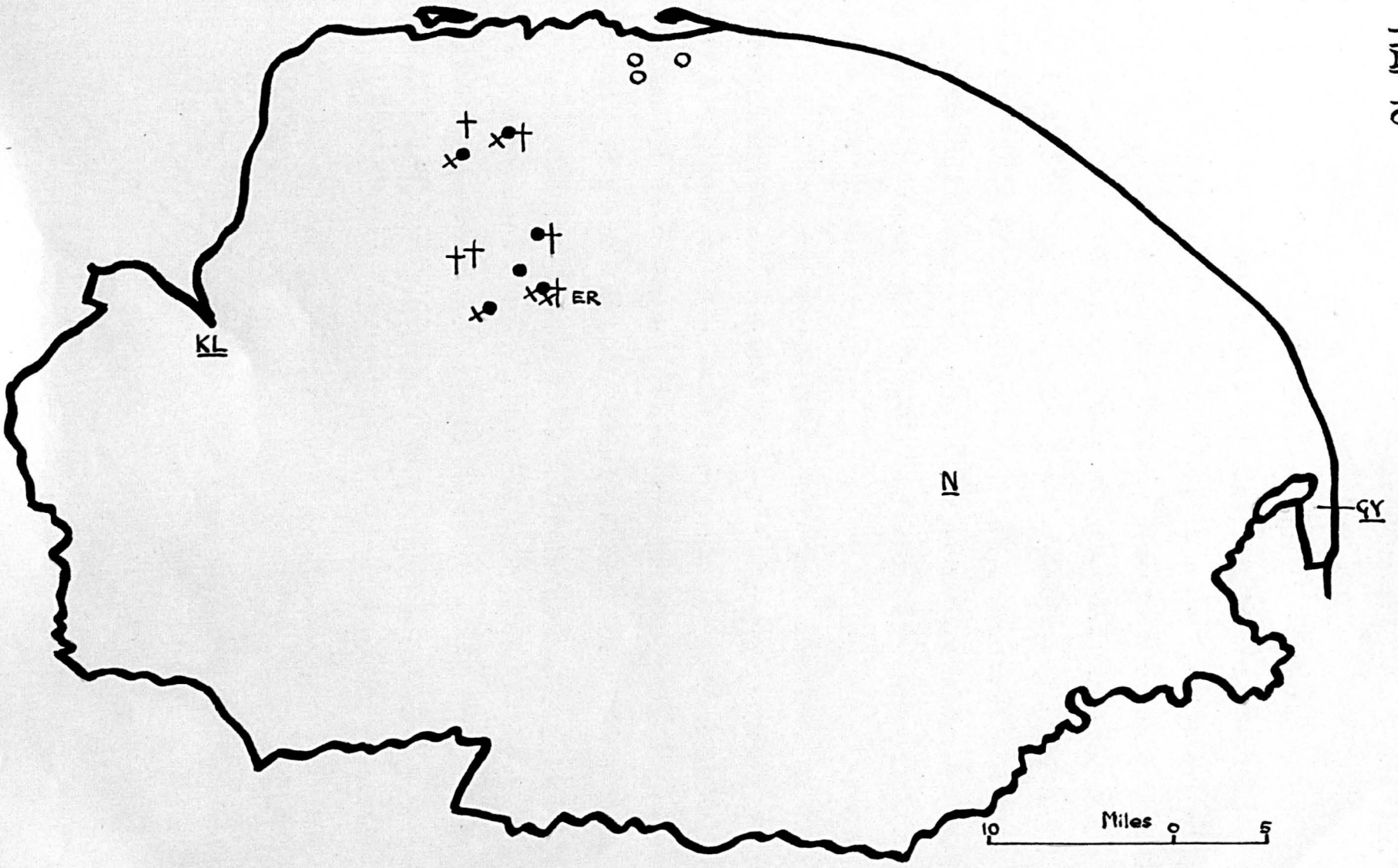
(1) See supra, pp. 183-6.

(2) Leadham, op.cit., VII, pp.164, 169.

LOCATION OF THE TOWNSHEND FLOCKS IN 1545-1549 (•); 1565-1567 (x); 1626 (o) AND 1637 (†).



MAP 10

SIR ROGER TOWNSHEND, 1565-67.

I.

The sheep accounts of 1565-67[1] describe the flocks included in the estate of the third Sir Roger Townshend. The accountant was Luce Skippon, the sheep-reeve, who made his reckoning at Christmas each year in contrast to the usual Michaelmas.

Since 1545-49 there had been little change in the number of flocks: there were now five, the newcomer being that at Normansborough.[2] The total number of sheep varied from 3,800 to 5,000 during the two years (see Appendix 3, Tables 26 and 27); it is impossible to say exactly how many of the sheep were ewes for there seem to have been various types of animals in each flock. The increase of lambs suggests, however, that in three flocks in 1565-66 and two in 1566-67 ewes predominated. In view of this uncertainty, the figures for lambing rates must be considered unreliable: they are based on the supposition that the flocks concerned were composed solely of ewes, and only in the case of the Barmer flock is the rate comparable with those in the earlier Townshend sheep accounts. This rate at Barmer was about 0.7 lambs per ewe. The two largest flocks each exceeded 1,000 head - that at Kipton,

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(1) N.P.L. MS.1598, 1D4.

(2) This foldcourse was situated in the south of East Rainham parish.

composed largely of ewes and that at South Creake a mixed flock.

During these two years, there was apparently no attempt to sell large numbers of prime sheep or hoggs as there had been in 1545-49. The receipts for stock sold were now only about one-third of those at the earlier period, and concerned mainly crones, pocks and rigsies. Thus, the increase of lambs was for the most part used to re-stock the flocks. No doubt many of the poor quality sheep sold were taken by butchers though none is specifically named as a buyer. A Mattishall man, Richard Baldwyn, was again among the buyers; he bought wool too, and was one of a large group of broggers from that neighbourhood.(1)

Pelts again provided a small profit. In 1566-67, the skins of sheep that had died in the wool fetched 4½d. each, and those of sheep dying after shearing only 1d. each; the numbers of pelts are given in Tables 26 and 27.

II.

The incompleteness of the data in these accounts unfortunately extends to wool production. The size of the clip is not given, but in 1566-67 a very high proportion of the previous December's sheep were shorn - over 4,300 out of over 4,500 (see Table 27). Skippon's record of certain sales of

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(1) See Appendix 4.

wool is equally indefinite, but it suggests that the clips in the two years were about 400, and about 500 stones.(1) The customers were all from the Mattishall district - William Patrick, Richard Baldwyn and Mr. Crosswold.(2)

III.

Neither payments for tathing nor for cullet sheep were of any great importance. At least two of the foldcourses included land belonging to tenants, but only very small acreages were involved. And in 1566-67, an estimated 261 cullet sheep were going in three of the flocks at the cost of 4d. per sheep.(3)

IV.

Among the miscellaneous expenses accounted by the sheep-reeve, shepherds' wages are prominent. A total of £22.16.8. was paid to the five shepherds in 1565-66, and in the following year four of them received £14.5.0.

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(1) The details of the wool sales of 1565-66 are not perfectly intelligible, but it seems that 403 stones were sold at 6s.8d. per stone, and 15 stones at the same price; the total receipts were £139.6.8.. In 1566-67, £171 was received for wool, and assuming that the price was again 6s.8d., this gives the amount of wool as 513 stones.

(2) See Appendix 4.

(3) For some of the cullet sheep, the payment is stated to be 4d. per head; it is assumed to have been 4d. for the others too, and the total receipts then give the number of sheep as 261.

Kipton (the whole year)	£6.0.0.	(including arrears)
Robinhoods "	£4.0.0.	
Barmer "	£3.0.0.	
Normansborough (nine months)	£1.5.0.	

The shepherds of the five flocks were allowed 160, 100, 100, 80 and 60 sheep going in the flocks by custom, with no payment made for them. They also received certain gifts of lambs on the completion of marking the animals.

Other details concern hurdles and the marking and annointing materials. In 1565-66, 20 dozen hurdles were bought at 2s. the dozen, and in 1566-67, a similar number. In the former year, a barrel of grease bought at "Lynne Marte" cost 13s.4d., two others cost 23s., and a further two - together with a barrel of pitch - 35s.;and 5s.was expended on redding. In 1566-67, eight barrels of grease were bought at prices varying from 9s.8d. to 10s.6d. each.

V.

Skippon's sheep-reeve's accounts appear to include all items of receipts with the exception of wool sales; the profits from wool sales are, however, given and may be added to the accounts. This done, a net profit of over £110 was made in 1565-66, and of over £185 in 1566-67. These figures do not, however, make any allowance for the rent of the five foldcourses which the accountant did not include among his expenses. The foldcourses were, in fact, part of the Townshend

estates and no rent was actually paid for them, but an allowance of at least £50 must be made[1] if the figures for the net profits are to have any meaning.

The sheep-reeve reached his totals by strange arithmetic, and they have been corrected in Tables 28 and 29; more puzzling still are the means by which Skippon arrived at a clear gain of £283.16.10. in 1566-67. Having (incorrectly) found that there was a profit of £5.10.2., he then states that receipts exceeded allowances by £209.1.6.; with the addition of the value of lambs born and set for stock and of sheep used in the kitchen, this becomes £283.16.10.. It is impossible to ascertain how Skippon reached the figure of £209 odd: even with wool sales included - and he does not include them - the profit was only £185.6.2.. Either certain items are not detailed although included in the reckoning, or this is a further example of Skippon's strange arithmetic.

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(1) Cf. the rents of the Southwell foldcourses for the same period, infra, p. 266.

ROGER TOWNSHEND, 1626.

I.

The sheep accounts of 1626[1] describe flocks in two of the 25 manors of which the fourth Sir Roger Townshend died possessed in 1637: Morston and Stiffkey, on the north Norfolk coast. These townships were some distance from most of the Townshend estates, and it seems that a separate sheep-reeve was responsible for the three flocks here. There are no separate flock accounts after the usual pattern, and the details of John Walker's sheep-reeve's accounts do not enable figures for the size and productivity of the flocks to be calculated, so that the interest of these accounts lies mainly in the charges and receipts that are fully described. The foldcourses were "Netherhalle" and "the Lyzarde" grounds in Stiffkey, and a third in Morston.

An arrangement aiming at self-sufficiency is suggested by the composition of the flocks - wethers at Morston, hoggs at Netherhall and ewes at the Lizard. There was an increase of 540 lambs at the Lizard, and a further 50 were bought, and out of this total of 596, as many as 413 were sent to stock the other flocks; 400 of these store lambs went into the hogg flock, en route for Morston. Of the remaining lambs, 30 were delivered to the kitchen at Stiffkey and 4 were given

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(1) N.P.L. MS.1572, 105.

to the shepherds as a reward at marking time; but of more significance, 100 were sent to Mr. Synckler, the sheep-reeve at Rainham, who sold them at "Cowlidge" - Cowlinge in ~~Essex.~~ Suffolk (1) Other sales of sheep involved 44 lambs, 30 crone ewes and 141 wethers; 120 of the wethers were sold at Wymondham and were probably ultimately intended for the nearby Norwich butchers.

The pelts of 53 dead and 208 slaughtered sheep ("slaughte" skins) were sold, 166 coming from the wethers at Morston. Since no other sales of wethers are mentioned, these slaughtered animals must have included the 141 sold at Wymondham: this re-inforces the suggestion that they were intended for the mutton market. There is an interesting variation in the pelt prices depending on whether the animals were in the wool or not:

Wether skins	- before clipping	@ 1s.4d. and 1s.8d.
Ewe skins	- " "	@ 10d.
Wether skins	- after clipping	@ 6d.
Ewe skins	- " "	@ 5d.

II.

In 1626, the shearers dealt with 1,747 sheep from the three flocks giving a clip of about 195 stones. The fleece weights for the different flocks cannot be separated, but considering that 1,147 of the sheep were ewes and hoggs and

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(1) This was one of the sheep fairs to which many Norfolk sheep were sent; see infra, p.350

only 600 wethers, the average rate of very nearly 9 fleeces to the stone represents an improvement on the sixteenth century figures for the Townshend flocks.

Walker accounts for the wool clips of both 1625 and 1626. In the former year, he recorded 166 stones 8 pounds of wool and 10 stones of locks (excluding tithes), all of which was sold during 1626. The sales were unusual since none of the wool went to middlemen. The wethers' wool was sold to 77 persons, many of them wives of local men ("To Spellers wief", for example), who took only one or two stones each: 76½ stones fetched £47.17.6. at an average price of 12s.6d. per stone. Similarly, 88 people bought the ewes' and hoggs" wool - 90½ stones for £51.14.3., that is 11s.5d. per stone. This is the first time in the Townshend sheep accounts that wethers have been stated to give not only heavier fleeces but better quality wool as well. The locks were sold to 10 persons at 4s.2d. per stone. After £11.12.6. had been respited, the total wool receipts were £90.3.3. and just over half of this had been paid by the end of the account.

In 1626, Walker accounted for 162 stones and 11 pounds of wool and 13 stones of locks (excluding tithes), 1½ stones of which were delivered to the rector of Morston for wethers sold before shearing. None of this wool was sold during 1626.

Preserved with the sheep accounts are 10 slips of paper, receipts for money paid over to Martin May who was presumably Townshend's receiver. Five of them concern sales

of wool, one of November 1625 (£30), three of March, July and August 1626 (£15.6.8., £20 and £6), and one un-dated (13s.). Some of these no doubt refer to the sales during 1626 of the 1625 clip.

III.

These accounts contain no information concerning either cullet rights or the tathing of tenants' land.

IV.

The charges incurred at shearing time give a fuller impression than in the previous accounts of the labour involved. In all three flocks, 1,747 sheep were dealt with. The men who performed the preliminary task of washing the animals were paid at the rate of 1s. per 100 sheep; others received 1s. for "throwinge the sheepe into ye pitte" to the washers, and a further 10s. was disbursed for two days' work by five "draggers" who must have either rounded up the sheep from the pastures(1) or dragged them to the shearers. The clippers themselves were paid 3s. per 100 for ewes and hoggs, and 3s.4d. per 100 wethers. From the shearers the fleeces passed to six "wynders" who received 8s. for two days' work, and another man or boy was given 8d. for gathering up the locks for the same period. A further 1s. rewarded those who carried the wool away. The clippers were not only paid but also fed by Townshend: four

(1) See supra, p. 202, f.n.3.

cheeses cost him 9s.4d.

Other payments concern labour provided other than at the shearing: men responsible for greasing 528 hoggs received 1s.6d. per score, and 1s.6d. was paid for the driving of lambs to Rudham, where Townshend had other flocks.(1) A further 1s.6d. rewarded the efforts of the sheep-reeve and shepherd Wiggin when they went "A swuminge" - presumably to rescue sheep from the sea or the marshes. The wages of the shepherds were the same in each case - £4; two of them were given 4s. and the third 8s. for their livery. One of the shepherds, no doubt at the Lizard ground, needed help at lambing time and 10s. was paid for the assistance of Edmund Broughton.

Again, such commodities as tar are accounted for, and £2 was spent on 10 dozen hurdles provided by William Hille of Riburgh who carried them to Stiffkey. Two stones of pitch cost 4s., one barrel of tar 18s., and 24 pints of oil 6s.; these were all for use at clipping. And 17 pounds of redding for marking cost about 4s.3d.

V.

The sheep-reeve's account shows a net profit of over £190 for the year, £170 of which had been paid in to the lord's receiver by December 18th, 1626 when the account was closed. (see Appendix 3, Table 30). But, as in 1565 and 1566,

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(1) See appendix 3, Table 31.

the sheep-reeve did not include the rent of the foldcourses in his expenses, and an allowance for this must be deducted from the profits.

SIR ROGER TOWNSHEND, 1637.

I.

The sheep accounts of 1637[1] were drawn up after the death that year of Sir Roger Townshend; they concern seven flocks in townships in the neighbourhood of East Rainham itself, and were presented by the sheep-reeve, William Stanhowe, gent. These were not Townshend's only flocks at this time, but separate accounts were made for the group of flocks at Morston and Stiffkey.[2] As with the accounts for 1626, no separate shepherds' accounts are included here: these are simply the summary reckonings of the sheep-reeve and no definite details are given of the size and composition of the various flocks. Stanhowe does, however, give the numbers of sheep in the flocks when they were sold at the end of the year, and from these figures it is possible to calculate approximate figures for both ewes and the sheep shorn; the resultant lambing rates and fleece weights are not, therefore, absolutely reliable

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(1) N.P.L. MS.1481, 1F

(2) See supra, pp. 220-5.

but the likely errors are very small.[1] Made immediately after Sir Roger's death, these accounts were in the nature of a post-mortem stock-taking before the foldcourses were leased out to farmers; the sheep were quite possibly sold to the new lessees. One exception to this was the flock at East Rainham: no reference is made to any winding-up here, so perhaps the home flock was maintained, but there is little data of any kind in the accounts relating to this flock.

Setting aside the East Rainham flock, the total number of sheep must have been around 5,500 at the beginning of the year (see Appendix 3, Table 31). Two of the flocks each exceeded 1,000 head and the great majority of the sheep were ewes; of the seven flocks, five were composed of ewes, one - the smallest - of wethers, and that at East Rainham was probably of mixed constitution.[2]

Although this was an abnormal year in that the flocks were to be wound up, the renew of lambs from this preponderance of ewes must always have been in excess of the requirements for fresh stock, and the sale of lambs must have been a major consideration in the management of the flocks. The increase of lambs this year was over 3,000 and despite a low figure for the large Kipton flock, the rate of lambs per ewe for all flocks

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(1) See Appendix 3, Table 31.
(2) Only a small increase of lambs is recorded for the East Rainham flock suggesting that ewes were not predominant; 12 wethers, 4 rams and 4 rigsies were sold thence.

was over 0.6; in three flocks it was over 0.7. Of this increase, only 257 lambs are explicitly stated to have been in the flocks at the end of the year, and most of the rest were sold at two well-known fairs - that at nearby Kipton and the distant Cowlinge Fair in Suffolk (1,247 and 904 respectively). Smaller lots of lambs were sold locally, together with numbers of ewes, and also 80 "doozie" sheep.(1)

Figures for the profit arising from the sale of pelts are incomplete since the skins of sheep dying after shearing and of slaughtered sheep are not included in the account. The numbers of pelts from sheep which died in the wool are included in Table 31, and they fetched over £11 (see Table 32).

II.

The sheep-reeve's information concerning the wool clip is again incomplete but it has been possible to estimate the number of sheep shorn fairly accurately (see Table 31). Even the size of the clip is uncertain since the shepherds' share has been deducted by the sheep-reeve; no allowance has been made for this, but the amount of wool involved was most likely very small. About 460 stones were shorn from the seven flocks, the ewes providing fleeces at the usual rate of 10 to 13 per stone. Surprisingly, the wethers at Easthall

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(1) Sick sheep; see infra, p.328.

were apparently lighter in fleece than any of the ewes, about 14 fleeces making up a stone of wool. A price of 10s.6d. per stone is quoted for the wool, but it was "yet undeliu'ed".

III.

Cullet sheep and tathing[1] arrangements again make no appearance in the accounts.

IV.

Various labour charges are included among the expenses of the flocks this year. The shepherds' wages totalled over £31, giving an average of about £4.10.0. if all seven shepherds were included, and a further £3.3.0. was paid for the shepherds' covenants. Among other payments for labour was 4s. to two men for fetching 62 wethers from Rudham in the "snowe time", feeding them with hay at East Rainham and driving them back "when the snowe was gone". The expenses of the shearing are not elaborated by rates of payment, and few of the other miscellaneous expenses shown in Table 32 need any explanation. No prices are given for such items as pitch and redding, but the 29½ dozen hurdles cost 4s.8d. per dozen.

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(1) "Tathe this yeare bycause it is lett wth the brecke" - nil

V.

Stanhowe's sheep-reeve's account of receipts and expenses is for the most part complete, but a few items are missing. The profits arising from the sale of the flocks at the end of the year do not appear among the receipts because Townshend's executors received the money direct from the buyers, but this abnormal item is in any case best excluded from the reckoning. This abnormality is, however, probably reflected in the high number of lambs sold this year since, although it has been suggested that a surplus of lambs was probably always available,(1) there were nevertheless no lambs in several of the flocks at the winding-up and the accountant could say that none had been "Laid upon the aforesaid grounds this yeare bycause they ar all lett". Any tendency for the receipts to be above the average is partly offset by the absence from the accounts of the sales of many of the sheep-skins. More important is the exclusion of the payments for wool sold: the accountant records that this money had not yet been received, but he gives the price and it is clear that the total receipts were over £250.

The expenses may have been slightly below those normally incurred as a result of the winding-up, but they include all the usual items. The total is substantially

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(1) See supra, p. 226.

increased by the inclusion of the Town Charges for three years which amounted to over £85; these were presumably some form of taxes and might be expected to be more naturally within the scope of the receiver's account - they cannot be regarded as a normal expense of Townshend's sheep farming.

For these reasons, the net profits shown by the accounts may not be truly representative of the normal annual gain; they amount, nevertheless, to about £380 and this could have been increased to about £620 by the inclusion of the wool sales. Not all of the receipts were paid in this year for a note records that only on 18th October, 1638 had the final debts been received by Robert Chevelye, the receiver, and Townshend's two executors. Once again it is necessary to make the proviso that the rent or valuation of the foldcourses was not included among the expenses and that some allowance for this must be made.

HENRY FERMOR OF EAST BARSHAM.

I.

The Fermor family[1] owned extensive property in north-west Norfolk, centred on the village of East Barsham where William Fermor built the impressive Tudor mansion of East Barsham Hall; parts of the Hall are still standing and owned by the National Trust. Much of the estate had been built up by Henry Fermor who was High Sheriff of Norfolk in 1532, and a knight. By his will made in that year, 1532, Henry conveyed the estate to his son William who was himself a knight and High Sheriff in 1540. Among the gifts included in William's will in 1557 was 10 shillings "to the pore mens boxe, of every town, where I have a flock of shepe going". By 1521, Henry already had 24 flocks in 22 villages, and the accounts of those flocks for the year 1521-22 are available.[2]

Henry's interest in those villages varied from a manor to a small acreage of land or a right of foldcourse. A large part of the estate came into his possession in 1519 when he acquired most of the manors and lands of Roger Wode, and in 1520 another of Wode's beneficiaries released her right to Fermor. At this time, Henry was lord of manors in East Barsham, and Thorpland, and here he presumably possessed the rights of foldcourse appurtenant to the manors. Not until later than

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(1) The following details of the family are from Blomefield, op.cit., VII, 55-57, unless otherwise stated.
(2) N.P.L. MS.1583, 1D4.

1521 did manors in Toftrees, Fakenham, Tatterford, Hempton, Tattersett, Sculthorpe and Newton-by-Castle Acre come into the family's possession: in these places, the flocks of 1521 were held in right of lands there, or by the possession of the foldcourses themselves. William was granted Pinkeney's manor in Tattersett in 1549, but in 1515 Henry had leased 78 acres of land and a foldcourse there from the Prior of Coxford. In 1545, William received the manor of Hempton Priory in Toftrees, but in 1504 Henry already had an interest there, receiving an annuity of 20 shillings from the manor. At Waterden, Henry's foothold may perhaps be traced to 1515 when he was one of the executors of the will of the late lord of the manor, Thomas Sefoule. Henry was farmer to the Prior of Coxford of a foldcourse in Tittleshall, gaining the use of 60 acres lying in Peak Hall and New Hall pastures, with the appurtenant rights of common and shack, in 1515. The 1521 accounts indicate that Fermor was using Waite's foldcourse in Tittleshall; William Waite, as lord of Caley's manor, released certain pasture to Henry and William Fermor in 1533, and in 1549 and 1551 this foldcourse was again stocked with Fermor's sheep.(1)

Sir William Fermor made additions to the estate after the Dissolution of Hempton Priory; in addition to the manor in Toftrees (above), he and his wife were granted in 1546 the priory site, the manor and the appropriated rectory. In 1536,

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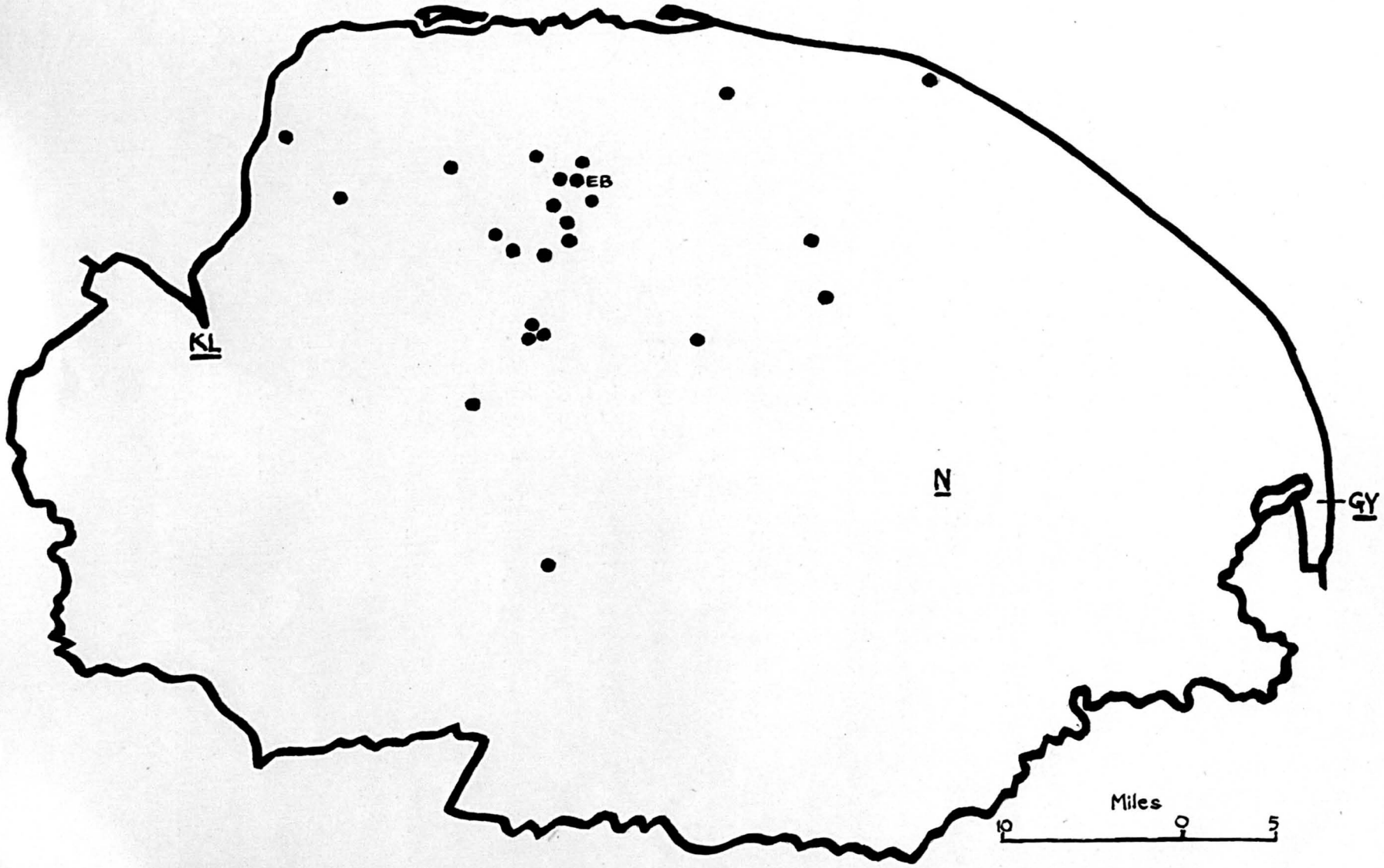
(1) For the flock in 1549 and 1551, Holkham Mss., Tittleshall Books 19. See also, the description of the Tittleshall foldcourses, supra, pp. 37-9.

MAP II

LOCATION OF THE FLOCKS OF HENRY FERMOR, 1521-1522.



the suppression commissioners had found 125 sheep and 40 lambs among the Priory's stock.(1)

The shepherds' accounts of Henry Fermor's flocks for the year 1521-22 were gathered together by his sheep-reeve, John Dalymonde, and give a full picture of his flocks immediately after his acquisition of Roger Wode's estate. This was probably the first year in which Fermor's sheep farming had attained such a large scale.

II.

Each account was prepared by the shepherd, with the help of the sheep-reeve, for the year ending on 2nd March, 1522. Although the more usual date of November 1st had the great advantage of following both shearing and the re-stocking of the flock, March 2nd was a convenient date for Fermor to be given the critical information concerning the increase of lambs. No information is given in these accounts about shearing or the wool clip, so that the chief interest lies in the size of the flocks and the lamb productivity of the ewe flocks. Of the 24 flocks, 12 were composed entirely of ewes and 6 of wethers; the remaining 6 were of mixed composition. Fermor would seem to have been fair game for any informer interested in the Statute limiting the number of sheep to be owned by one man to 2,400; in March 1522, he owned 15,977,

(1) V.C.H. Norfolk, Vol.II, p.383.

showing an increase of 409 over the year. (see Appendix 3, Table 33). Two new flocks had been established during the year, the stock coming from his other flocks, and one had been wound up.

As was usually the case with these large scale sheep farmers, Fermor's flocks were practically self-supporting, the fresh stock needed for replacement being largely supplied by his own increase of lambs. A total of 5,670 lambs were born in the 12 ewe flocks, giving an average of 0.6 lambs for each of the 9,449 ewes; the lowest average in a single flock was 0.35, and the highest 0.79 lambs per ewe. Both lambs and adult sheep were constantly being transferred to maintain the flocks.

After the needs of his own flocks had been met, Fermor was able to sell a large surplus of lambs either locally or at more distant fairs. From the Newton flock, for example, 80 pockerells[1] and 548 store lambs were sold to Richard Skynner and Robert Maddy.[2] Small numbers of adult sheep - both crones and younger animals - were sold locally, but most were sent to fairs. A total of 281 sheep from several flocks were sent to Newmarket this year.

No details are given in the accounts of what will have been a very considerable wool clip. An indication of the

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(1) See supra, p. 193 f.n. 1.
(2) Richard Skynner, Robert Maddy and John Maddy appear as buyers of sheep from 13 of the flocks - in all, 2,787 animals.

bulk sales of wool made by the Fermors is provided by the allegation of an informer in 1557 that William Fermor had sold 400 stones, at 6s.8d. a stone, contrary to the regulations governing wool marketing.(1) Apart from sales of sheep and wool, a small profit was made from skins and mutton. The dead sheep in all the flocks totalled 491, the value of the skins being increased by the fact that many of the animals died before shearing. The sale of mutton was an insignificant object of Fermor's farming, only one such transaction being recorded: 12 ewes were sold from Newton to a butcher of nearby Castle Acre. Numerous small batches of sheep were sent for use in Fermor's kitchen.

Finally, a small profit was made from the inclusion of cullet sheep in the flocks, and from the tathing of tenants' land. Tenants paid 2d. for each of 166 sheep in the Fakenham flock, and for 30 at Tatterford, but only ½d. each for 88 cullet sheep at Shernborne. Payments for tathing are recorded in 8 of the accounts, usually being 1s. per acre but in two cases 1s.4d.

It may be noted that in two cases the efficiency of the shepherds might have been questioned. At Bayfield, 77 sheep were missing at shearing time, and the shepherd at Tittleshall Waites was searching for as many as 158.

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(1) P.R.O. E159/337/Mich.105. See pp.453-5.

III.

Most of Fermor's flocks were legitimately maintained in right of his manors and lands, but in the previous year, 1520, a suit had been presented in the court of Star Chamber[1] by the tenants of the lordship of Fakenham alleging that certain of the flocks were fed to the deprivation of his tenants' rights. The allegations were, moreover, confirmed.

The tenants complained that at Thorpland, where Fermor owned Thorpland Hall manor,[2] he had bought and enclosed certain lands including a foldcourse for 300 sheep, stopped up a common way, and allowed the houses to decay; the jury found these complaints to be justified. The court action seems to have had little effect for in 1521 the accounts show that Fermor brought 482 sheep into the foldcourse to set up a new flock. Thorpland is now a lost village, and Henry Fermor may have been the depopulator.[3]

A second complaint was that Fermor had erected a foldcourse for 1,000 ewes in Thorpland and Fakenham, and had used 100 acres of the shack and common of Fakenham for the last 14 years, exceeding the length of the customary shack period.[4] The jury found that these sheep were kept on "the heth" of

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(1) P.R.O. Star Chamber 2/15/11-13, quoted by Leadham, op.cit., VII, pp.181-183.
(2) Blomefield, op.cit., VII, 98.
(3) For similar activity by landlords, see supra, pp.174-181.
(4) See supra, p.156.

Fakenham to the detriment of the tenants, that a common was kept enclosed and a common way stopped up. In 1521-22, Fermor had 1,312 ewes in the Fakenham flock.

A further allegation was that Fermor kept a flock of 800 sheep in the fields of Sculthorpe although he had only 5 acres of his own land there. The jury confirmed his use of shack there, and also that he impounded tenants' sheep to enforce their payment of 4d. per sheep for pasturage. In 1521-22, the Sculthorpe flock did indeed consist of 830 sheep; and the second complaint may well refer to the payment for cullet sheep in the Fakenham flock.

Finally, the jury found justified the assertion that Fermor allowed the decay of houses in the lordship.

Only three years earlier, the Commission of Enquiry of 1517[1] had reported several offences by Fermor in enclosing and converting arable land to pasture. At Sculthorpe, he was found to have enlarged his sheep pasture with 80 acres that had been in cultivation since 1488; a plough had been put down as a result.[2] It may be indicative of the opposition to Fermor's sheep farming in Fakenham and Sculthorpe that these were two of the three flocks to be substantially reduced during the year 1521-22. Four other enclosures by Fermor were reported by the Commissioners: they involved the conversion to

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(1) See supra, pp. 183-5.
(2) Leadam, op.cit., VII, 217.

sheeps pasture of 40 acres at Wighton, 100 acres at Erpingham, 20 acres at Hindringham and 40 acres at Tittleshall.(1) Erpingham, Wighton and Hindringham do not appear in the flock accounts, but Fermor had three flocks in Tittleshall.

NORWICH CATHEDRAL PRIORY.

I.

The sixteen Norfolk manors and estates of Norwich Cathedral Priory (there were a few others in Suffolk) were widely scattered in the county with a cluster around the city.(2) This distribution ensured that sheep-farming was practiced on some of them, and one or two were in the heart of the Sheep-Corn Region far distant from Norwich. The thirteenth and fourteenth century records of the Priory indicate the importance of sheep rearing and wool production on such manors as Sedgeford and Taverham. By the mid-fifteenth century, most of the Priory's manorial demesnes had been farmed out, but many of the flocks were retained; a notable absentee, however, was the flock at Taverham. In the case of Fring, the foldcourse of a lay manor was leased to the Priory for a short period and

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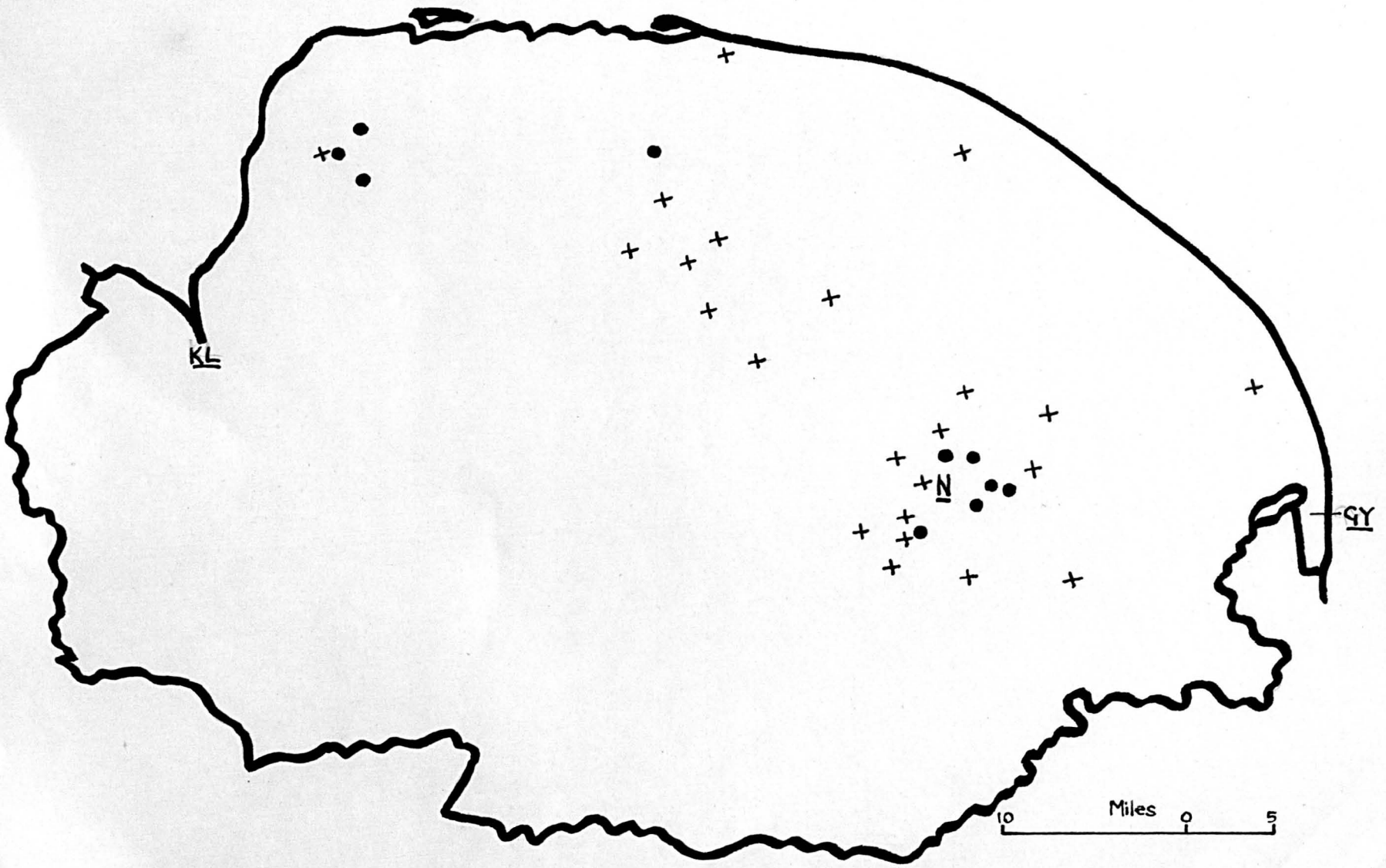
(1) Leadham, op.cit., VII, pp.183, 188, 181, 174.
(2) The Priory estates are described fully in H.W. Saunders, "An Introduction to the Obedientiary and Manor Rolls of Norwich Cathedral Priory", 1930.

LOCATION OF THE MAIN FLOCKS (●) AND THE SMALL FLOCKS AND AGISTMENTS (+) OF NORWICH CATHEDRAL PRIORY, 1470-1536.

MAP 12



made a substantial addition to the wool clip of the flocks.

Preserved among the estate records of the Priory are a large number of sheep accounts covering the period 1470 to 1536.(1) Some of these are individual flock accounts following the pattern of the shepherds' accounts of lay estates; others are brief lists of the flocks, the number of sheep in each and the type of sheep only being given. There are none of the normal sheep-reeve type of accounts, but a number do give some details of income and expenditure.

Very little data concerning wool is included in these accounts, but figures for the annual sale of wool have been found in the accounts of the Master of the Cellar. This was one of the most important monastic offices; the obedientiar's duties included the supervision of fifteen manors, including all those engaged in sheep farming, and his account rolls for the period 1450 to 1536 have been examined. In addition to details of the wool clip and prices, these rolls include details of receipts and expenses of the kind normally found in sheep-reeves' accounts, and an impression can be formed of the profits accruing from the Priory's flocks.

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(1) In the Cathedral Muniment Room. Saunders draws attention to the sheep accounts but gives only a few details from them; he gives figures for sheep in the flocks in 1515 but they are incorrect - he did not realise that the accountant was using the long hundred (p.36). Saunders mentions one account, for 1533, which was not to be found among the sheep accounts (p.36).

The rolls of one other obedientiar are of some value: among the items accounted for by the Cellarer are sales and purchases of sheep. This is another source of prices.

II.

Most of the monastery sheep in any year were accounted for by five or six large and constantly maintained flocks, with small numbers in several others. The flocks at Lathes,(1) Eton, Newton, Sedgeford and Hindringham appear in the accounts throughout the period, and five others make less frequent but important appearances.(2) The names of twenty-five other flocks also occur, but none was maintained for long and in many cases the Priory sheep seem to be cullet in a lay owner's flock. In the chief flocks, most of the sheep belonged to the Priory; but some - never more than 500 altogether - belonged to the Prior himself,(3) and a few others to the farmers of the manors.(4) At Lumnours,(5) the foldcourse itself was leased to Richard Yuttes in 1499 for £4 after appearing in

(1) This flock belonged to Monks Grange, the Priory property outside the city walls to the north of Norwich.
(2) See Appendix 3, Table 34.
(3) In 1490-91, for example, the Prior had 315 sheep in the flocks: 115 at Sedgeford, 37 at Eton, 54 at Lathes, 35 at Hindringham and 74 at Newton.
(4) In 1499-1500, for example, there were 238 such sheep: 60 at Hindringham, 60 at Sedgeford, 60 at Hemsby and 58 at Newton.
(5) In Sprowston; see infra, p. 270.

the Priory accounts for 13 years.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, three large flocks were run by the Priory for the first time - those at Gnatingdon[1] and the two at Thorpe. The former was an important wool-producing manor for the Priory in earlier centuries and must have been leased out until 1504. Some of the sheep at Thorpe belonged to the Cellarer and were being fattened for the kitchen at nearby Norwich.[2] The small numbers of sheep belonging to the Prior, the farmers and the Cellarer are all included in Table 34. For five years the foldcourse at Fring was leased from Sir Robert L'Strange, as recorded in the Camera Prioris Roll of 1501-1502.

Although the details of the flocks are not always complete in the accounts, it is clear that the total number of sheep increased from about 2,500 to about 8,500 over the period 1470 to 1520 (see Table 34). The type of sheep in the flocks remained constant for long periods although only in the case of the ewe flock at Lathes was it the same throughout the accounts. Of the other chief flocks, that at Eton comprised ewes for many years, was changed to wethers in 1500-1501, and reverted to ewes in 1515. At Newton, the wether flock was stocked with ewes after 1509-1510. At Sedgeford the sheep were wethers until 1493-1494, ewes until 1509-1510, and then young stock. Hindringham was always a lamb flock and was

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(1) In Sedgeford: a village now lost.
(2) See infra, p. 244 and Appendix 3, Table 36.

apparently the reservoir of lambs that has been seen in other groups of flocks:[1] lambs were received from the ewe flocks each year, and young sheep distributed to the others. At Lumnours, the flock was changed from ewes to wethers before it was leased, that at Gnatingdon was always a ewe flock, and at Thorpe there was a flock of each type until both were of wethers after 1515.

Ewes always exceeded wethers in these flocks. The sheep population of 1516-1517 was typical: ewes 3,987, wethers 2,788, lambs 1,687, hustards 82, riggons 64 and hoggs 28.

As with the lay accounts, there were often small numbers of sheep missing for which the shepherds were forced to pay; at Eton in 1495-1496, for example, 10 ewes "fuerunt in bosco dm ibm" and one was lost "in fossatu castr. nor. q. Ric. Brasier vice'er nor. seist & vendidit"; the moat of Norwich Castle also ensnared 10 sheep from Lumnours.[2]

III.

In many of the accounts it is impossible to ascertain the productivity of the ewe flocks in terms of lambs per ewe,

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(1) See supra, pp. 194, 207, et alia.

(2) It was illegal for anybody to keep sheep in the Castle ditch or on Castle Meadow, NCMR AB2/158d., 1535-36.

but this has been done in some cases for nine years between 1483 and 1509. In some of these accounts, the number of ewes giving birth to the increase of lambs is given, and it was always only slightly less than that of ewes in the flock at the beginning of the year. There had been few deaths of ewes and the fact that the rate of lambs per ewe never reached 1.0 was clearly due to sterility. This the accounts state explicitly, relating for instance that since only 100 lambs were born from 200 ewes, then 100 ewes were sterile.

The average rate for 21 flocks over the period 1483 to 1509 was 0.52 lambs per ewe. In five cases it exceeded 0.8, but in three flocks in 1495-1496 it descended to 0.3.

Most of the increase of lambs were kept for re-stocking, and of those sold some were called "draughts": these are the pucks and pockerells of other accounts,(1)

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(1) See supra, p.193 f.n. 1

fetching lower prices than other lambs. Marking lambs were sometimes given to the shepherds. Either the shepherds' inefficiency or the peculiarity of the animals caused some lambs to be wrongly identified ("male nominabantur") as to their sex.

A number of the sales of sheep are explicitly stated as having been to butchers: they were all of sheep - mostly wethers - from the flocks at Eton and Newton, near Norwich, and the customers were city butchers. In 1504-1505, Robert Bronn (a Norwich butcher) bought 122 wethers from Newton for £8.10.0., 240 from Eton for £16 and another 62 from Eton for £3.2.0.. Other Norwich butchers mentioned were William Grene, Thomas Deye and Thomas Leek.

The Priory kitchen was in part supplied from the Priory's own flocks, but the Cellarer's accounts include many references to external purchases of sheep, and one to the buying of sheep from a Priory flock (see Table 36). In addition to the animals bought for current consumption, others were kept and fattened in the flocks at Eton and Thorpe, and in several accounts the Cellarer includes charges for the hire of pasture in villages near the city. Having slaughtered his sheep, the Cellarer sold pelts(1) and wool to city men, and records the cost of having the animals washed and shorn.

One other interesting item appears in the Cellarer's accounts: while 15 manors were apportioned to the Master of the

(1) There were also sales of pelts from the flocks - see Appendix 3, Table 35.

Cellar, that at Great Cressingham in Breckland was accounted for by the Cellarer. From 1488 to 1508 he records a profit of £15 from this manor, but makes no mention of sheep, the foldcourse presumably being leased out. In 1508, the manor itself was leased to Sir Robert Southwell for £13.13.4. and for a term of 10 years; 1526 was the second of a 32-year lease to Christopher Jenney at the same rent.

IV.

The Master of the Cellar's accounts must be relied upon for most of the available data concerning wool; he records receipts for wool sold but although there is nothing to suggest that this was not the whole of the year's clip in any one case, there is nevertheless no certainty about this except when additional data is available for three years. Thus, the clips of the individual flocks are known for 1494 and 1502, and the totals tally with the wool recorded as sold in the Master of the Cellar's account; and in 1519, that obedientiar explicitly states that the 609 stones of wool sold was the clip of all the flocks that year with the previous year's clip from Hindringham.

For the two years 1494 and 1502, detailed accounts make it possible to calculate the fleece weights (see Appendix 3, Tables 37 and 38). The total clips were of about 500 stones; in 1494 the most prominent wool producer was the large mixed flock at Sedgeford, and in 1502 Sedgeford was surpassed only by the nearby Fring, leased to the Priory at this time.

Fleece weights show the usual variations between different kinds of sheep but there is not the consistency here that is found in most other accounts: wether fleeces are sometimes the heaviest - from 10 to 13 making up a stone of wool - but at Eton in 1502, for a reason not apparent in the accounts, 24 wether fleeces were needed for each stone; ewe fleeces were generally lighter - from 10 to 15 providing a stone - but the best weights in any flocks during these two years were achieved by the ewes at the leased Fring - about 7 to the stone. Apart from these two years, average fleece weights for the flocks as a whole can be found for the six years whose sheep accounts and Camera Prioris rolls have both survived; the figures are 14 fleeces to the stone in 1491, 11 in 1493, 12 in 1494, 16 in 1496, 12 in 1502 and 13 in 1510. It is here assumed that the wool sold was, in fact, the whole of the current year's clip.

There is little indication in the Camera Prioris rolls of the marketing of the Priory's wool. Some must have been sold in the city, but the only record is a small debt for wool from a butcher, Thomas Deye. On the eve of the Dissolution in 1535-36, all 263 stones were sold to the well known clothier, Thomas Spring of Lavenham ("Magro Spryng de Laueham in Com. Suff."), and one wonders how often the Priory ignored the local worsted industry in disposing of its wool.

V.

Unusually large numbers of cullet sheep were included in some of the Priory flocks, even exceeding 700 for two years at Sedgeford.(1) When the numbers were so large, one or two men usually supplied the bulk of the sheep: at Sedgeford, one man put in 669 of the 729 cullet sheep in 1487-88, and another 360 out of 708 in 1489-90; and at Cley in 1487-88, 325 of the 349 cullet animals belonged to only three men - with 80, 100 and 145 respectively.

Among the cullet sheep were those customarily fed, without charge, for the shepherds; they varied from 20 (at Catton in 1495-96) to 120 (at Sedgeford in 1489-90). At Lathes in 1495-96, the shepherd had a customary 50 sheep and paid 2d. each for another 15. Customary allowances of cullet were sometimes made also to the farmer of the manor and to the stockman ("staurarius").

Payments made for cullet sheep varied from flock to flock and with different kinds of sheep. Usually these sheep were in the flock for the whole year, but occasionally the period was three or six months and the charges were reduced. In the Thorpe flocks in 1504-05, 1d. per head was paid for 60 sheep kept in the flock for six months, ½d. for 96 for

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(1) For example: at Eton, 360 in 1475-76 and 380 in 1483-84; at Sedgeford, 480 in 1483-84, 729 in 1487-88 and 708 in 1489-90; at Cley, 349 in 1487-88.

six months, and 1d. for 120 for the whole year. The payment for lambs was usually smaller - ½d. as compared with 1d. for sheep at Eton in 1477-78. Charges were often 1d. or 2d. for a year's cullet, and occasionally higher - 1½d. for six months at Fring in 1499-1500 and 2½d. for a year at Eton in 1508-09.

Payments for tathing are frequently recorded, but in some cases tathing was carried out as a customary allowance without payment, usually for the farmer of the manor and also for the shepherd.(1) Where payment was made, it was usually 1s. or 2s. per acre and as in other accounts there were different charges for tathing at different seasons. At Sedgeford in 1496-97, ten acres tathed before autumn were rated at 1s. each and fifteen acres during the winter at 1s.4d.. The highest charge of 2s. per acre seems to have been for a special privilege: it was paid for 5a.3r. at Catton in 1495-96 which had been tathed twice ("duplicit. compostat.") Some of the soil in Catton may well have been in need of additional manuring: when the manor and foldcourses were farmed out, the Priory received a rent of £2.13.4. but in 1519 it dropped to £2 on account of the soil's infertility ("& non plus ob sterelitatem terr.ill.").

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(1) Examples of allowances to the farmer: at Eton, 20a. in 1477-78 and 30a. in 1484-85; at Lathes, 15a. - and 1a. for the shepherd - in 1483-84; at Sedgeford, 46a.3r. in 1508-09; at Newton, 80a. in 1508-09; and at Lathes 15a. were consistently tathed for the master of St. Magdalene's Hospital in lieu of 20s. rent for the farm of pasture for the flock.

VI.

Although there was - in 1508-09 at least - a supervisor of the monastery sheep, he seems to have made no accounts of the type presented by the lay lord's sheep-reeve. The manors were apportioned to the Master of the Cellar, and all receipts and expenses connected with the sheep were included in his accounts - the Camera Prioris rolls (see Appendix 3, Table 35). Receipts were for the sale of sheep, wool and skins, and it is clear that wool was the chief source of profit in most years. Profits from sheep sold increase in the 1500's, approaching and even surpassing those from wool, perhaps reflecting the increasing demand for mutton from the city of Norwich. A variety of items appear among the expenses.

Some interesting points are raised by the remuneration of the shepherds. In some years, only three shepherds' wages are recorded: some of the others were possibly, as at Newton in 1477-78, paid by the farmers of the manors. In other accounts, the wages of six or eight shepherds and of the stockman ("staurarius") are mentioned, and they were usually paid in quarter- or half-yearly instalments.(1) The "staurarius", or in earlier accounts the "estaurator", was presumably in the nature of a sheep-reeve or curator of all animals on the manors; both he and the shepherds were given

(1) For example, at Thorpe, 23s.4d. for half-year in 1504-05; at Lathes, the same; at Eton, 13s.4d. for quarter-year in 1504-05; and at Hindringham, 46s.8d. for the whole year in 1504-05.

an extra allowance for their livery ("liberatura"). Shepherds' wages were usually from £1 to £3 per annum.(1) Often, the shepherds were provided with corn ("mette corn", "metecorn"), presumably for sheep feed during the winter, or perhaps for their own use.(2) In some cases, the flock accounts are followed by a reckoning made between the Master of the Cellar and the shepherd: the payments due from the shepherd are noted, followed by the allowances due to him; for example,

Sedgeford. Reckoning between the M. of the C. and the shepherd, 28th November, 1509.

The shepherd seeks for his stipend for three terms to the 1st November, 1508	£2. 5. 0.
He seeks for his livery	5. 0.
He seeks for 600 balls of redding bought ("p Dc de Redyng balles")	1. 6.
He seeks for oil bought	1. 2.
Total sought	2.12. 8.
Less tathe and cullet payments due from him	2. 6.
Less an allowance for his rent	12. 5.
So remains	1.17. 9.

Paid.

Other labour charges involved the driving of sheep from flock to flock, the castration of lambs, washing and shearing the sheep(3) (including food for these men in 1452-53)

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(1) For example: in 1509-10, 4 shepherds got £2.13.4. and 3 got £3 each. The stockman and 8 shepherds had a total of £2 for their liveries.

(2) For example: in 1452-53, 3 shepherds received 7 quarters of barley each; in 1453-54 some rye was included, and in 1508-09 some meslin.

(3) Costs in 1477-78 were:
for 278 sheep, 1s.9d. for shearing, 1s.2d. for washing and 2d. for winding; at Eton, 2s.4d. and 1s.2d. for shearing and washing; at Lathes, 5s.2d. and 2s.2d.; and at Newton, 3s., 1s.4d. and 1d.

wool winding ("In wyndyng & twyn"), carrying wool from the flocks to Norwich (most of these entries concern Sedgeford whence the wool had to be carried the greatest distance), and marking the sheep ("signanc'm greges").

The usual materials used appear in the Master of the Cellar's accounts: tar,(1) pitch,(2) redding,(3) butter ("in butiro"), oil, wax ("pro cepo", "sepum"), grease ("gresse"); carriage of the goods was added to the price, a barrel of pitch costing 5s. at King's Lynn, for example, cost another 8d. for its carriage to Fring.(4) Another expense was for the manufacture and carriage of hurdles.(5) Some idea of the miscellaneous items of expenditure in a foldcourse is given by a reckoning made between the Master of the Cellar and Richard Crysp:

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(1) Costs of tar varied with the size of the barrels: in 1533-34, two barrels "maioris circuli" at 7s.2d. each. Other prices: 6s.8d. and 10s. in 1452-53, 6s. in 1462-63, 5s.8d. in 1468-69, and 4s.5d. in 1508-09. In 1493-94, a "lest" of tar cost £2.

(2) Prices: 10s. per barrel in 1452-53, 6s.8d. in 1468-69, 5s. in 1492-93, and 4s.8d. in 1493-94.

(3) Often bought in balls - at Fring in 1501-02, 1,600 "Redyng balles" cost 4s.4d.

(4) Also, in 1508-09 tar bought at Little Walsingham cost 4s.5d. and its carriage to Hindringham 1d.

(5) For example: a dozen cost 1s.6d. in 1462-63 and 1468-69, 1s.2d. in 1473-74 and 1501-02, and 1s.8d. in 1477-78 when five dozen bought at Norwich cost 4d. to be carried to Eton.

Sedgeford, 1504-05.

2 dozen hurdles against the clipping	3s.	4d.
For two men "to stoppe the Clowse ayenst the wasshyng"		6
For gelding lambs		4
1 barrel of pitch	4	0
1 barrel of tar	4	0
Carriage of the barrels from King's Lynn		8
1000 balls of redding ("a ml")	4	0
½ stone of "roope yarne to stoon wt the wulle"		5
8 dozen hurdles to West Manor	9	4
2 gallons of oil for Sedgeford and Gnatingdon flocks	2	4
1 "Spanyssh staff"	1	7
Total	1.10.	6.

For many years, rents for the hire of foldcourses, land and pasture are included among the expenses. The two foldcourses in Thorpe, for example, were leased to the Priory for £7 per annum and for 20 years by the Bishop of Norwich in 1504, and another was leased from the master of Magdalene College. Other lessors were content to receive the benefit of the Priory sheep: at Poswick in 1453-54, nothing was paid for the use of certain land by the flock "q. compostur satisfecit p. firma".

Legitimate methods of increasing pasturage were not always sufficient, it seems; the Prior of Norwich was reported by the 1517 commissioners[1] to have converted arable land to pasture in Martham, Hindringham, Thorpe and Postwick, and at the last named a plough was put down as a result.

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(1) See supra, pp. 183-5.

VII.

At the Dissolution the Priory estates were, of course, broken up and sold or leased; a number of the foldcourses may be traced in lay ownership later in the sixteenth century.

Martin Hastings owned Hindringham manor and foldcourse in 1541-42 when he was having difficulty with his tenants over an extension of the foldcourse. Interrogatories put to witnesses in this dispute mention the customary feeding of the sheep by the former Priory shepherd.(1)

The two foldcourses in Thorpe had been leased to the Priory by the Bishop of Norwich. They passed from Bishop Nicke to Bishop Rugge, and then, at the Dissolution, to the king; Edward VI then conveyed them to Thomas Paston and he to Edward Paston. Paston found himself defending his ownership of the foldcourses against Leonard Spencer who based his claim on a lease from Bishop Nicke.(2)

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(1) P.R.O. D.L.3/39; see supra, p. 37.
(2) P.R.O. C2/P6/6; see infra, pp. 275 et seq.

SIR RICHARD SOUTHWELL OF WOOD RISING, 1544-45, 1548-49, 1550-51 and 1561-62.

I.

The Southwell family[1] was among the largest estate owners in Norfolk; several of its members were prominent in local government and occupied administrative offices in London. Richard Southwell, the grandfather of the man whose sheep accounts we shall be considering, had been Escheator of Norfolk and Suffolk in 1459-60 and Marshall of the Exchequer in 1464-65; and in the latter year he had a grant of 20 marks per annum on the alnage of Suffolk. His grandson, Sir Richard Southwell (1504-1564),[2] completed his wardship with Sir Thomas Wyndham in 1525. In 1534-35 he was Sheriff of Norfolk, and in the following years was active in the proceedings against the monasteries, making great profits out of the surrenders. Sir Richard became Receiver to the Court of Augmentations in 1538, and Member of Parliament for Norfolk in 1539; he was one of the Privy Councillors, and was knighted in 1542. He attended Privy Council meetings regularly throughout Edward VI's reign but lost his seat on the accession of Elizabeth. Sir Richard's first wife, Thomasine, was the daughter of Sir Robert Darcy of Danbury in Essex; his two illegitimate sons by his second wife, Mary, occupied the Southwell households

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(1) The following details are taken from Blomefield, op.cit., X, 274-8, unless otherwise stated.
(2) D.N.B., volume 53 (1898), pp.292-3.

at Horsham St. Faiths (Richard) and Morton (Thomas).

Sir Richard's younger brother, Robert (d.1559),[1] also held important posts in London; he was Master of the Rolls, Master of Requests in 1541, and Chancellor of the court of Augmentations in 1542. He had previously been Solicitor of that Court in 1537, doing much surveying on its behalf, and was knighted in the same year. Like his brother, Robert profited greatly from his business about the suppression of the monasteries.

By the account of Ambrose Jermyn in 1545-46, Sir Richard was lord of manors in 22 Norfolk villages,[2] and owned other land outside the county. All but five of the Southwell flocks were going in right of these lordships; of those five, two were in manors which later came into the family's possession, and the remaining three were possibly acquired as a result of Southwell's activity in the suppression of Castle Acre, Walsingham and Shouldham Priories. Definite acquisitions at this time were the Priory of St. Faiths at Horsham, with its demesnes and the manors of Horsham and

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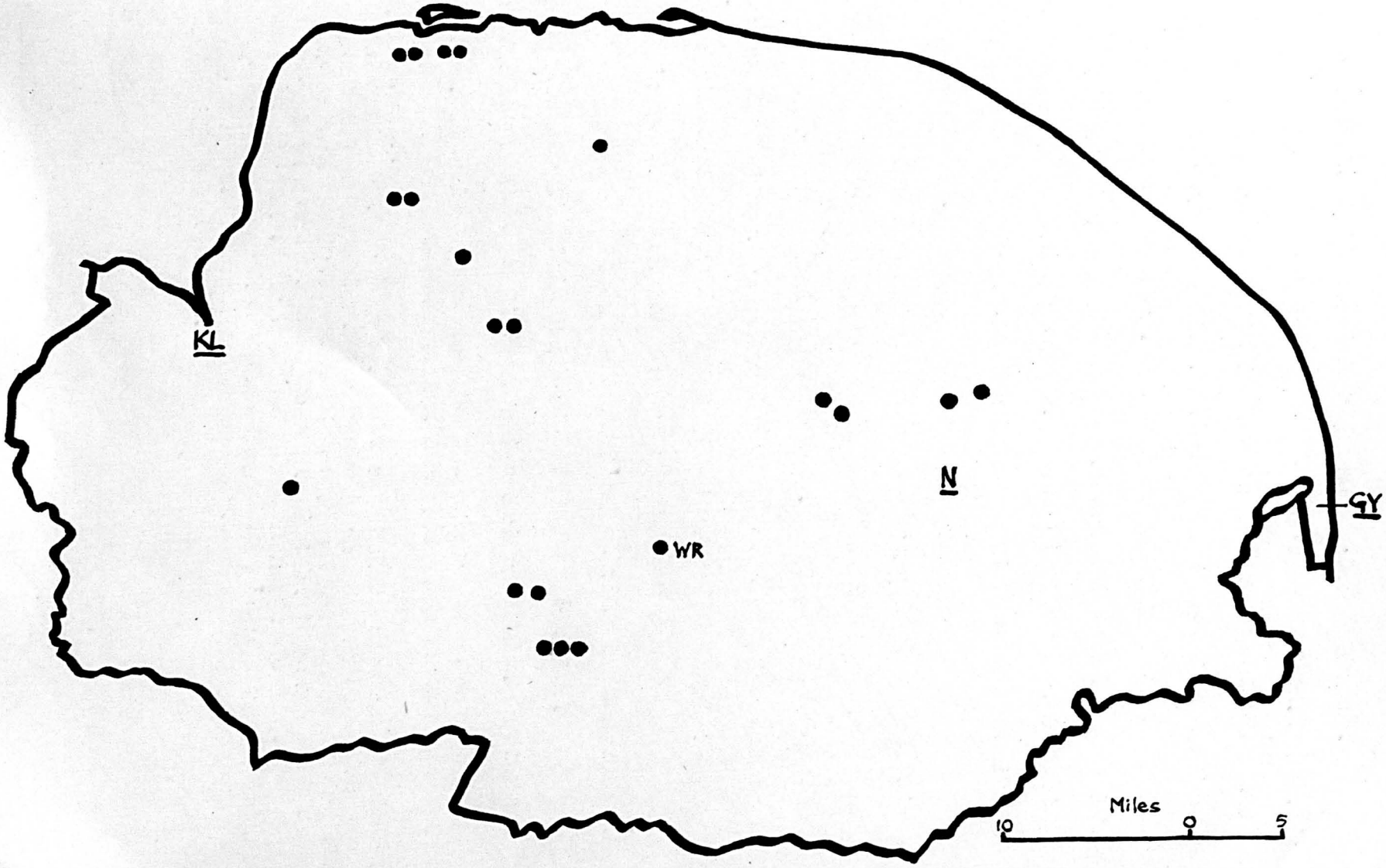
(1) Loc.cit..
(2) Wood Rising, Cranworth, Letton (Butlers manor), Whinburgh, Westfield, Scoulton, Carbrooke, Saham Toney, Little Cressingham, Tottington (Campsey and Mortimers manors), Threxton, Morton, West Rudham, Kipton, Bircham Tofts, Great Bircham, Burnham (Lexham's manor), Geyton, Brancastor, Burnham Thorpe (Wymondham's manor), Horsham St. Faiths, and Walsoken.
Blomefield, loc.cit..

LOCATION OF THE FLOCKS OF SIR RICHARD SOUTHWELL, 1544-1562.

MAP 13



West Rudham, and (in association with Sir Richard Gresham) the House, manor and rectory of the Preceptory at Carbrooke whose property included a foldcourse for 200 sheep.[1]

Accounts of Southwell's flocks are available for the years 1544-45,[2] 1548-49,[3] 1550-51[4] and 1561-62.[5] The first set is composed of detailed flock-by-flock accounts, together with those of the sheep-reeve. The 1548-49 accounts include no separate flock accounts but only the reckonings of the sheep-reeve. Flock accounts are included in both the remaining sets of accounts, followed in those of 1561-62 by the sheep-reeve's accounts. A final account[6] is un-dated and only limited use will be made of it. The documents of 1544-45 and 1561-62 are to be found in books comprising the accounts of all of Southwell's manorial officers: those of the bailiffs, shepherds, sheep-reeve and receiver. Thus there is a record of receipts and expenses of the whole Southwell estates, and it is possible to set the profits of the sheep against the background of Sir Richard Southwell's total income from his landed property.

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(1) V.C.H. Norfolk, Vol.II, pp. 348, 424-5.
(2) B.M. Stowe 775.
(3) N.P.L. N.R.S. 11310, 26B3.
(4) N.P.L. N.R.S. 12396, 27D1.
(5) B.M. Stowe 775.
(6) N.P.L. N.R.S. 12948, 27F2.

II.

In 1544-45, the Southwell flocks numbered 14 and the foldcourses were situated in 11 villages; three other flocks were leased out this year and two more were leased after the beginning of the period of these accounts. The number of flocks was reduced to 11 in 1548-49, but no doubt some were farmed out for a number of the missing ones re-appear in the accounts of 1550-51 when there were again 14. And by 1561-62 the number had increased to 18. In accordance with these changes, the total number of sheep varied from nearly ten to nearly eighteen thousands (see Appendix 3, Tables 39 to 42). The type of sheep in the different flocks showed little change over these 17 years, but there was an over-all decrease in the proportion of ewes to wethers.

Of the 14 flocks in 1544-45, seven were composed of ewes and contained roughly half of the total number of sheep. Three other flocks were of wethers, and this type also predominated in the two mixed flocks. Finally, there were two hogg flocks comprised mainly of ewe hoggs to be used for re-stocking; one of these was at Shouldham, but the foldcourse was leased out at the end of this year and does not appear in the later accounts (see Table 39).

The form of the 1548-49 accounts precludes any definite identification of the type of sheep in the flocks; however, the six flocks producing large numbers of lambs were presumably ewe flocks, four were probably of wethers, and the other - at Walsingham - was now the hogg flock and comprised

lambs drawn from the ewe flocks (see Table 40).

In 1550-51, ewes were again stocked in seven of the 14 flocks but they amounted to rather more than half of the total number of sheep - nearly 75% at the beginning of the year. Four were wether flocks, one was mixed, and that at Walsingham was again composed of young animals. This concentration on ewes resulted in an increase of over 5,000 lambs which must have been considerably in excess of the needs for re-stocking. There was no change in the flocks during the year but the total number of sheep increased substantially (see Table 41).

By 1560-61 there had been a shift in the high proportion of ewes in the flocks: even allowing for the ewes in the mixed flocks, whose exact composition is unknown, less than 50% of the total number of sheep were ewes. There were five ewe flocks, six of wethers, three mixed in type, two of hustards and two of hoggs. The decrease in the number of ewes was relative to that of other types, but there was no absolute decline and more lambs were produced than in 1550-51.

III.

The predominance of ewes in Sir Richard Southwell's flocks meant that his annual increase of lambs was a very large one; the increase was achieved not only by sheer weight of numbers of ewes but as the result of some high rates of lambs per ewe. In 1544-45, for example, the low lambing rates of the handful of ewes in one mixed flock and of the ewe flock at

Tottington reduced the average rate for all flocks no more than to 0.67: the big increases of lambs in four other flocks were at the high rates of between 0.65 and 0.80. These Southwell flocks well illustrate a point that will be borne out by a number of the sheep accounts under consideration: the best lambing rates were achieved in the largest ewe flocks, the poorest in the small - and especially the mixed - flocks. The most productive Southwell flocks were the large scale, specialised ventures (see Table 39).

No lambing rates can be deduced from the scanty data of the 1548-49 accounts, but the numbers of lambs sold show that the most productive flocks of 1544-45 were again predominant (see Table 40). The increase of lambs rose from 4,400 in 1544-45 to 5,200 in 1551-52, and the rate of lambs per ewe was up to an average for all flocks of 0.73; only the ewes going in the Tottington wether flock, and the small ewe flock at Horsham fell below this, and four flocks reached to around the 0.8 mark (see Table 41). In the 1561-62 accounts it is not possible to determine the number of ewes in the mixed flocks and so no average lambing rate can be given. But in the large ewe flocks the rates were high, ranging from 0.6 to 0.8 (see Table 42).

The profitable sale of good quality lambs was not the object, at least not the result, of this large-scale lamb production. A high proportion of the lambs were retained as fresh stock for the flocks, and of those sold most were the low-priced poults.[1] Of the 3,365 lambs recorded as 'sold'

(1) See supra, pp. 193, f.n.1.

in 1548-49, 2,495 went to other Southwell flocks for re-stocking: 1,099 were sent to the lamb flock at Walsingham to be held until needed elsewhere, 865 from one Tottington flock to another, and 531 - all poults - to the home flock at Wood Rising. The latter were presumably destined for the kitchen and for butchers. In 1561-62, 2,945 lambs (over half the increase) were set for stock in the flocks and provided the entire needs in this respect; a further 2,281 - mostly poults - were sold, and 48 went to the Southwell kitchen.

The pattern of lamb disposal in 1550-51 was typical of that in any of these four years; many of the lambs were sold, most of these being powts or poults, and the rest were set for stock, or held for future requirements in the Walsingham lamb "reservoir". Take, for example, the fate of the 970 lambs born and surviving at Bircham Tofts: 96 went to the rector in tithes, 5 were given to shepherds and 17 died; 469 were sold; 120 remained to stock the Tofts flock, 27 were drafted into another flock, and 240 joined the lambs at Walsingham. In the latter flock, store lambs were gathered from the ewe flocks, and were sent out whenever fresh animals were needed; it was a flock which was necessarily subject to great fluctuations in size. Peter Graie, the shepherd at Walsingham, began the year 1550-51 with only 31 sheep remaining from his previous account; of this year's increase he received 465 female lambs, 440 castrated (wether) lambs, and 137 uncastrated male lambs. The mortality following weaning was high, 450 dying before shearing and the remaining 610 (13 were

missing) were surprisingly subjected to shearing; this was an unusual procedure with lambs, which must have endangered their survival, and only highly profitable wool sales could have justified the snatching of the mere 25 stones. Having been clipped, 511 ewe and wether hoggs were sent out for stocking, but the total complement of the Walsingham flock was increased to 1,053 by the end of Graie's account by the receipt of more lambs from the ewe flocks.

The sale of full grown sheep largely concerned old or inferior stock, and Southwell appears to have sought little profit from the sale of prime animals. The out-going animals were powt lambs, crone ewes and some old wethers; most of them must have gone to butchers, but few high quality fat wethers or hoggs were specially raised for this market. In 1561-62, however, there are indications that sales of sheep were more important, but there is no specific reference to the mutton market. Over two-thirds of the wethers sold that year were for use in the Southwell households, by William Page, butcher at Wood Rising and by Anthony Southwell at Horsham St. Faiths. Above this number there were sales of 360 wethers and 618 ewes fetching high enough prices for them not to have been crone sheep.

The volume of pelts available for sale is shown in the Tables (39 to 42). Prices increased from 2½d. each in 1544-45 to 6d. each in 1548-49 and 1550-51, but fell to 3½d. in 1561-62; in 1550-51, 112 lamb skins fetched 8d. per dozen. In only one case is the customer identified - in 1561-62 all 747 pelts were bought by John fforeste, glover.

IV.

The neglect of the market for prime sheep (at least in the earlier of these accounts) and the shearing of lambs have suggested that wool production may have been the chief concern of Southwell's sheep farming. The accounts make it clear that wool clips were large and fleeces were heavy; and the receipts for wool sold figure prominently in the sheep-reeve's accounts.

There were notable variations in wool productivity between these four years. In 1544-45, over 11,000 sheep were shorn to give a clip of nearly 1,200 stones, and the average fleece weight was very high - only about 9 fleeces provided a stone of wool. Differences in fleece weights between ewes and wethers conform to the usual pattern but the most striking feature this year was the small range of this variation. By 1548-49, the weight of ewe fleeces was no longer comparable with that of wether fleeces and the average number of fleeces needed for a stone of wool had risen to 13; the total clip had fallen to a little over 700 stones.

In 1550-51, the clippers dealt with a number of sheep very close to that of 1544-45, but the sheep yielded about 400 stones of wool less and the average number of fleeces perstone was as many as 14. The very high proportion of ewes this year was largely responsible for this, but even the wether fleeces were lighter and only the wethers at Great Bircham lived up to the reputation of their kind. The lambs at Walsingham, clipped within a few months of birth,

yielded only one stone from every 24 "fleeces".

Over 14,000 sheep were shorn in 1561-62 giving the largest clip of these accounts - over 1,500 stones - and involving a return to the high average fleece weight of 1544-45. A higher proportion of the sheep this year were wethers, but even the ewe fleeces showed a marked improvement in weight. Such variations as these within a short period of years can be attributable only to the effect of weather conditions on the quality of pastures.

It appears that the whole of the clip was sold each year. The sheep-reeve's account of 1544-45 shows that 1,196 stones had been sold the previous year, and in 1544-45 itself most of the clip of 1,190 stones was sold to John Warner of Dedham in Essex; the price varied from 3s.2d. to 4s. per stone. For some unspecified reason the wool of the two Burnham flocks - both leased out - was said to have been worth 9s. per stone in 1544-45. The 1548-49 clip of 721 stones was sold in toto to John Warner again, and in the year of the un-dated account another Dedham man, John Web, took over 650 stones; the remainder of the latter year's clip was bought by John Savage. The prices for thesetwo years were 7s.4d. and 6s.8d. per stone respectively. In 1561-62, the whole clip of over 1,500 stones was sold to William Patricke, a Norfolk wool brogger, for 6s.8d. per

stone.(1) The sale of wool to Essex men may reflect the Southwell family connections with that county for Sir Richard's first wife had come from Danbury.

V.

Cullet sheep were a relatively unimportant source of income in the Southwell flocks. Receipts totalled only £3.11.0. in 1544-45, and in 1548-49 only one of the 11 flocks included any cullet sheep at all (John Elwyn paid 4d. each for 120 sheep at Wessenham North Hall). In 1550-51, 12 of the flocks were without any tenants' sheep, but four men put 92 into the flock at Tottington South Ground (40, 30, 12 and 10 at 4d. per head) and four tenants kept 362 in the Spixworth flock (240, 64, 40 and 20 at 4d. per head). There were no receipts for cullet sheep in any of the flocks in 1561-62.

Payments for tathing were more numerous, most of the foldcourses including some land of the tenants. These payments are of interest for the distinction between summer

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(1) An information was presented to the Exchequer concerning the sale of Southwell's wool this year as it was illegally sold outside Norfolk (see infra, pp. 453-5.) The informer named the offenders as William Patrick and John Watts of Mattishall and Richard Cooke of Little Barningham; he alleged that they had bought 600 stones of wool from Sir Richard Southwell at 5s.4d. per stone, and sold it to three Colchester clothiers and others. The wool broggers denied it but judgement was given against them. (P.R.O. E159/345/Trin.61)

and winter rates, with the latter always the higher. In most of the foldcourses the payments were 1s. per acre tathed in the summer and 1s.4d. per acre in the winter; in two of the Tottington foldcourses the rates were 6d. and 1s.

Two other small receipts were for heath or broom ("Jampnor" or "Jumpnor") sold and for the rent of certain lands. The broom was gathered on a number of the foldcourses and sold by the cart-load ("carrect.") or the horse-load ("equa"); in 1561-62, a cart-load fetched 4d. The lands rented out were not extensive: "new close" at Weasenham, "the shepe close" at Bircham Tofts, a close situated next to the foldcourse at Tottington Lodge Ground in 1548-49; and "Litill shepe closse" and "great shepes closse" at Weasenham; a close at Tottington, 19 acres in the foldcourse at Spixworth in 1550-51.

Finally, rents were received for leased foldcourses and flocks. In 1544-45 the two Burnham ewe flocks were leased out after the beginning of the year, both for £3.6.8. per 100 sheep giving a total rent of £62.10.0. The rent of three foldcourses leased out this year will have appeared in the bailiff's accounts. In 1548-49 the Burnham flocks were again in the hands of farmers, and at the same rents, but were in Southwell's own possession in both 1550-51 and 1561-62. Among the expenses were, of course, rents paid for foldcourses in farm from other men; in 1561-62, for instance, 140 sheep from Brancaster Marsh were delivered to Sir Christopher Heydon for the farm of the foldcourse at Threxton.

VI

In the accounts of 1544-45, 1548-49 and 1561-62, two important items of expenditure were concerned with the use and mis-use of the foldcourses. The first was the rent for the foldcourses and in most cases was made to the bailiff of the manor concerned. In each of the first two years this payment exceeded £100, and although it was excluded from the sheep-reeve's account in 1561-62, the bailiffs' accounts for that year show that it amounted to nearly £282. The second item was the recompense paid for damage done by the sheep to tenants' land lying in the foldcourses; there is no indication of such payments in any of the other sheep accounts under consideration in this Chapter. The most likely explanation of the damage is the destruction of growing corn on open-field parcels which were not liable to use as sheep feed in those particular years, and negligence by the shepherds may be implied. In 1548-49, the total payment was of nearly £20, the amount in individual foldcourses varying from 8s.8d. at Ringland to £5.3.0½ at Weasenham.(1)

Shepherds' wages were the next expense dealt with by the sheep-reeve. Wages varied, presumably with the size of the flocks: in 1548-49, two shepherds received £4 each,

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(1) Southwell does not appear to have increased his pastures by the conversion of arable land on any considerable scale: the 1517 commissioners reported only one effence by him - the conversion to sheep pasture of 80 acres at Weasenham.

three got £3.6.8., one £3, four £2.13.4. and the eleventh £2.6.8.[1] Each man received an additional 5s. for his livery ("liberatur"), and the total wage bill was £36.15.0. The stipend of the sheep-reeve involved another £5. Shepherds' wages had increased considerably by 1561-62 when 18 men received a total of £62.7.4., and the sheep-reeve received £20 ("ffeods. cum Regards.").

A number of other labour services were included among the expenses: washing and shearing, dragging the pastures and - in 1548-49 - repairing the wool house at Rudham.

The usual purchases of hurdles and of materials for use at clipping are recorded in these accounts. In 1548-49, 39 dozen hurdles were bought at 1s.4d. per dozen, and by 1561-62 the price had increased to 2s.6½d. for each of 85 dozens. Tar, pitch and redding were bought for use at the clipping and a further expense was necessary in some flocks for grease. In 1548-49, the price of a barrel of tar was usually 8s. (sometimes 6s.4d., 6s.8d. or 7s.); and pitch was bought at 1s.2d. or 1s.4d. per stone; redding cost 3s. per "cercino". By 1561-62, tar was costing 10s.5d. per barrel, pitch 9s.4d. per barrel and redding about 1s.4½d. per "Lood".

In a final section, the sheep-reeve lists the arrears due at the end of the account, and two items are of some

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(1) The shepherds of the two Burnham flocks were provided and paid by the farmers.

interest in the account of 1548-49. He records that 60 wethers were delivered to the lord's steward, William Bromefilde, "whereof he affirmeth xxix spent in the household and the rest to be taken by the rebells"; this was the year of Ket's rebellion. A second item shows that John Warner of Dedham in Essex, who had bought the whole of this year's wool clip, had not yet delivered any of this payment; Warner was also in arrears for his purchases of wool at the end of the 1544-45 account.

VII.

For three of the four years of these sheep accounts it is possible to compile a reckoning of the sheep-reeve's receipts and expenses (see Appendix 3, Tables 43, 45 and 46); no sheep-reeve's account is available for 1550-51. Of unique importance, however, are the books of accounts of 1544-45 and 1561-62 of which the sheep accounts form a part; they include the accounts of all Southwell's bailiffs, and finally those of his receivers (see Tables 44 and 47). The importance of the flocks in the total value of his estates emphasises Southwell's interest in sheep farming.

The final profit achieved by the sheep-reeve in 1544-45 amounted to £372.9.6. and, after allowances of just over £44 had been made, the sum of £328.8.10. was due to the receiver. Part of this sum was due from the sheep-reeve himself and part from the buyer of Southwell's wool this year - John Warner of Dedham. In the receiver's accounts, the

profits of the sheep take second place only to Southwell's inherited lands and possessions: the value of these - largely in rents for leased manors and lands - exceeded £540. Setting aside the substantial arrears from the previous year, foreign receipts take a poor third place with about £180. The profits of the sheep thus comprised nearly 25% of the gross receipts this year, and with most of his demesnes farmed out they represent Southwell's only direct exploitation of his estates.

In 1548-49, the sheep-reeve's profit was of much the same proportion as that of 1544-45: £379.9.1. Of this, over £325 was paid in to the receiver, leaving arrears of about £54 still owing.

The sheep-reeve's profits of 1561-62 were very much larger. His accounts show a surplus of £769.15.6¼ and the receiver recorded the sum of £760.0.11¼ as the profits of the sheep: there is no apparent explanation of this discrepancy. Again, the sheep were second only to Southwell's hereditaments in the receiver's accounts, and as in 1544-45, they provided nearly 25% of the gross receipts. But the profit of 1561-62 is not strictly comparable with those of 1544-45 and 1548-49 since, as we have seen, the rent of the foldcourses was included among the expenses in the two earlier years but not in the later year. The bailiffs' accounts of 1561-62, however, show that the rents amounted to nearly £282. They are thus included, under hereditaments, in the receiver's account but must be deducted from the sheep-reeve's profit if that item is to appear realistically.

JOHN CORBETT OF SPROWSTON, 1554-1557.

I.

Although his sheep farming was not on a scale comparable with that of the men previously considered, John Corbett[1] was typical of the landowners with half-a-dozen flocks and about 5,000 sheep. The Corbett estates were situated near the city of Norwich, several of the manors being in villages bordering on the great waste of Mousehold Heath; not only did Mousehold provide legitimate pasture for his foldcourses, but it tempted John's son, Miles, to increase his sheep feed at the expense of the commoners' rights.

Accounts of John Corbett's flocks have survived from the years 1554 to 1557,[2] during the last decade of his life; John - a lawyer - made his will in 1558 and was succeeded by Sir Miles Corbett (d.1609). Two of the seven foldcourses were in Sprowston; one of these had been granted to John in 1540, having previously belonged to the See of Norwich: it was probably Lumnours course which has already been seen in the sheep accounts of Norwich Cathedral Priory.[3] The other flock here was called Sprowston "alias Rakkey" foldcourse, and was probably situated towards the neighbouring village of Rackheath where Sir Miles Corbett received a grant of lands and pastures in 1605. Close by was Mawdelyn foldcourse, the

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(1) The details in this section are from Blomefield, op.cit., X, 459-60.
(2) N.P.L. N.R.S. 11313, 26B3.
(3) See supra, p.240 et seq.

name suggesting identity with Lathes course which was leased by the Priory from the master of Magdalen Hospital.(1) The Salhouse foldcourse was demised to John Corbett by Thomas Duke of Norfolk in 1554, and that at Woodbastwick was presumably held in right of his manor there; Earlham course may have been involved in a settlement made upon Corbett's daughter and her husband in 1551.

The shepherds' accounts are not accompanied by those of the sheep-reeve, but the latter officer - Robert Newman - helped the shepherds in making tallies of the sheep in the flocks.

II.

The total number of sheep in the seven flocks was between 5,000 and 5,500 during these three years; two of the flocks exceeded 1,000 head, one of them comprising the exceptionally large number of 2,400 sheep in 1554-55.(2) The not unusual negligence of the shepherd resulted in the loss of 20 sheep from Sprowston in 1556-57,(3) but there was also a frequent and surprising excess of sheep found by the tallies

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(1) See supra, p. 240 et seq.
(2) This was at Lumnours, a flock which had never contained so many sheep while in the possession of Norwich Cathedral Priory; see Appendix 3, Table 34.
(3) Losses of this kind were numerous, and other sheep were worried or killed by dogs; the proximity of Norwich may provide the explanation.

of the shepherds and sheep-reeve above the number actually accounted for. The excess reached 126 in 1556-57; either the shepherds were incompetent accountants, or the expansive Mousehold enabled ewes to lamb without being discovered by the shepherds.

Corbett's flocks were self-contained; two ewe flocks provided lambs to replenish both themselves and the three of wethers, and the young stock were held in reserve at Langley or in the hogg flock at Salhouse (see Appendix 3, Table 48). In 1556-57, the ewes of both flocks produced 864 lambs, and all but 48 were sent to Corbett's other flocks. The rate of lambs per ewe was very high at Earlham - 0.82 - but in the much larger Mawdelyn flock it was as low as 0.32.

III.

With practically all his lambs set for store in his own flocks, the sale of lambs was certainly a minor object of Corbett's sheep farming. These flocks were on the doorstep of Norwich and city butchers bought many fat muttons from the wether flocks: in 1554-55, Hubberd and Grene took 154 from Lumnours, and others were sold to one Willesy of Great Yarmouth; in 1555-56, 120 wethers from Lumnours went to "hubberd the Bocher"; and in 1556-57, two butchers - Worsley and House - bought 90 in all. And several lots of sheep sold to the Bishop of Norwich were no doubt intended for the kitchen. Other animals were taken for sale at Gissing Fair, but the numbers involved were very small. The extent to which wool production

rivalled the provision of mutton for the Norwich market as the chief concern of Corbett's sheep farming cannot be tested: no details concerning the wool clip are given in the accounts.

The skins of dead and slaughtered sheep were probably sold to Norwich glovers, but again the accounts are silent. In these three years, 548, 232 and 198 sheep died, and a further 65, 90 and 91 were used in the Corbett household.

IV.

With no sheep-reeve's accounts available, little can be said about the expenses of the flocks; but accounts made by Newman as bailiff of the Sprowston manor include a few items of this kind. In 1556, he recorded the payment of 4s.10d. for the washing of 2,640 sheep prior to shearing: this may represent the number of sheep shorn in the three flocks nearby - Mawdelyn, Sprowston and Lumnours. In 1554-55, Newman accounted for £1.2.2. paid for various carriages and sheep washing.

V.

The Corbett sheep did not escape the notice of informers eager to share the fines imposable on owners of more than 2,400 sheep;(1) Sir Miles was twice informed against

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(1) See infra, p. 312-7.

within eight years. In 1586, John Leeke, a London mercer and John Chambers, a London fishmonger, alleged that Corbett had 5,000 sheep in his possession.(1) This was denied and upon the failure of the informers to give their evidence in court the case was dismissed: perhaps Corbett had made it worth their while to keep silent for the allegation was probably correct. The second information was presented by a Norwich grocer, Edward Dennye, who asserted that Corbett had 7,200 sheep at Sprowston, Woodbastwick, Salhouse, "Hicham" and other places in Norfolk.(2) Dennye demanded the forfeiture of 3s.4d. for each of the excessive 4,800 sheep - a total of £800 - but Corbett denied the offence and there is no verdict available.

Both John and Miles Corbett were guilty of increasing their sheep pasturage by illegal means. An entry in the returns of the 1517 commissioners(3) concerning Woodbastwick most likely refers to John Corbett, although the surname is missing from the report: Corbett may well have used his local influence to have his name witheld.

> "Item Johannes (blank) miles tenet ad firmam de magistro Curson manerium suum in Bastwyke quod posuit ad pasturam ouium & quod fuit in cultura citra tempus commisionis predicte per quod vnum aratrum deletur."

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(1) P.R.O. E159/393/Mich. 254.
(2) P.R.O. E159/409/Mich. 280d.
(3) See supra, pp. 183-5.

Nearly 80 years later, Woodbastwick was again the scene of the deprival of tenants' rights when Sir Miles Corbett was attempting to extend the limits of his foldcourses on Mousehold Heath.

At the present day, Mousehold is small in extent - a mere 180 acres - and lies entirely within the boundary of the city of Norwich, but in 1600 the heath extended nearly seven miles beyond the city and its perimeter was over 22 miles long.(1) Important rights of commonage were enjoyed by the inhabitants of 16 villages, 12 of which bordered immediately upon the heath and in which lay several of the Corbett demesnes. Mousehold was shared by the animals of the commoners and by the flocks belonging to both Corbett and Sir Edward Paston, and in the last two decades of the sixteenth century these two gentlemen were concerned in a lengthy dispute with their tenants over the extent of their rights of pasturage on the heath. Corbett was lord of two manors in Woodbastwick and a third in Sprowston; Paston of manors in Blofield and Thorpe.

The first record of the dispute is the suit begun in 1585 against Corbett and Paston by the inhabitants of South Walsham;(2) they were apparently acting on behalf of all the commoners whose rights had been infringed. The Queen, as owner of the heath, ordered on 29th June, 1587 that a commission

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(1) Details given on the map of 1588-89.
(2) P.R.O. E134/28 and 29 Eliz./Mich.31.

should make a full report, and in the meanwhile that no lords should enjoy any "newe inclosaures norushement or improvement made of, in or upon the sayd wast or heath of free Mushold nor any warren of conyes there maynteyned or contynued which had their begynyng within the sayd tyme of twenty yeres last past..."; the commoners were to continue in their use of the heath, but four enclosures made by the lords were to be thrown open "by opening convenyent gappes and breches of the seid inclosures for free passage."(1)

Following the issue of the commission, a map of Mousehold was prepared together with a verbal description by the four men responsible.(2) Though carefully describing the rights of commonage and the various doles held in severalty, the commissioners refrained from distinguishing on the map the limits of towns and foldcourses upon the heath in order not to prejudice any man's interest while the dispute was in progress.

Witnesses from several of the bordering villages were called to confirm their customary privileges and the exactions of Corbett and Paston.(3) There was a general agreement among them that the Queen was reputed owner of the heath, and that her bailiff made drifts, impounded cattle and

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(1) P.R.O. E123/12/258d.
(2) The map - P.R.O. MR.52; the certificate - P.R.O. E178/7153, 1588-89.
(3) P.R.O. E178/7153, 1588-89.

appropriated waifs and strays; they agreed that all borderers upon Mousehold enjoyed commonage for great cattle at all times of the year, were accustomed to dig earth for brick-making, and to take flags, ling and brakes. Besides infringing upon these rights of the immediate borderers, Corbett and Paston had deprived South Walsham and North Burlingham of the driftways by which they reached the heath. Several witnesses make it clear that the commoners' cattle were being ousted by the demesne flocks; in defence of the inhabitants of Blofield it was alleged that they had always kept sheep and cattle on the heath, and that when in the past a flock of 500 sheep had been fed there the inhabitants had driven the sheep off and no such attempt had been made since - until Corbett and Paston began their present exactions. A similar defence was made on behalf of the inhabitants of Woodbastwick, and included some illuminating evidence by John Monforth, a husbandman of Horsford. He recalled that before John Corbett had been lord of the two manors in Woodbastwick, the flock had fed on large areas of open demesne lands as well as upon the heath: it was, in other words, a foldcourse of the usual constitution. But with John and then Miles Corbett as lords much of the demesne lands had been enclosed, and the sheep were accordingly fed to a far greater extent on Mousehold. Moreover, Monforth remembered that in the past the inhabitants of Woodbastwick had kept cullets of sheep on that part of Mousehold where the flock was going, but the Corbetts had reduced these rights. Another husbandman confirmed these assertions, adding that Corbett's

shepherd had driven the tenants' sheep off the heath and that Corbett had erected a rabbit warren there.

On behalf of Corbett and Paston, other witnesses claimed[1] that several parcels of Mousehold lay within the five manors of which they were lords; both gentlemen said that they had two foldcourses extending on to the heath, and that a number of several doles there belonged to the manors and provided them with annual rents. Not only the commoners' but the Queen's rights were thus being questioned by the two gentlemen, and in 1590 depositions were taken on her behalf.[2] The concensus of opinion among the witnesses was that Corbett had indeed maintained and leased to his tenants a number of doles, and that he had usurped the Queen's right of making drifts and impounding tenants' stray cattle.

Sir Miles Corbett was again disputing rights of sheep pasturage with men of South Walsham in 1600-1601.[3] He complained against Robert Browne and Henry Mitchell for attempting to deprive him of shack rights in part of the arable field of South Walsham where he had been feeding 300 sheep. The verdict was that Corbett should have possession of the feed unless the defendants could bring a successful action at common law.

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(1) P.R.O. E178/7153, 1588-89.
(2) P.R.O. E133/7/942, 1590.
(3) P.R.O. E123/28/64d.

In building up their pastures and flocks, the Corbetts had experienced opposition from tenants and other lords long before the period of these flock accounts, and much longer before the Mousehold dispute. Between 1529 and 1538, John Corbett the younger was complaining against Sir John Jermy about the deprival of shackage in Sprowston.(1) Corbett appears not to have been lord of the manor there at this time: he explained that he owned a messuage with 98 acres of land and pasture, and had leased to his tenants five messuages and 340 acres. Both he and these tenants enjoyed shackage in the open fields for their sheep and cattle, but now he alleged that Jermy had enclosed numerous parcels of the fields involving 163 acres in all, and had raised a new foldcourse for 600 sheep on field land that had not previously been subject to sheep feed. Corn and grass had been destroyed and Corbett and his tenants had been deprived of their own rights. Corbett himself may not have owned a foldcourse in Sprowston at this time, and was certainly granted one course there in 1540.(2) During the same period, 1529 to 1538, Corbett may have had a flock going in either Spixworth or Crostwick for he twice commenced actions against John Wrydok of Crostwick for allowing his dog to kill some of Corbett's sheep; Corbett was said to be "of Spixworth".(3)

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(1) P.R.O. C1/756/46.
(2) See supra, p.270.
(3) P.R.O. C1/917/46-49; C1/922/59.

HENRY BEDINGFELD OF OXBOROUGH, 1553-1557.

I

Oxborough, with the Bedingfeld's impressive hall, is situated at the north-western extremity of the Norfolk Breckland in what was as typical sheep-corn country as any in the county. Sir Thomas Tudenham's estates in and around Oxborough were inherited in the fifteenth century by his sister Margaret, widow of Edmund Bedingfeld of Bedingfield in Suffolk. The Bedingfeld estates were largely in the southern county: at her death in 1474, Margaret was in possession of 14 manors and other property in Suffolk, 1 in Cambridgeshire and 8 in Norfolk - Oxborough, Sechithe, Sparham Hall, Shingham, Caldecote, Foulden, Tyes and Aldenham in Weston.(1) Other manors had been added before Henry Bedingfeld (1509?-1583) succeeded to the estates in 1553.

Sir Henry sat in Parliament as a knight of the shire in 1553, 1554 and 1557. On the death of Edward VI, he was one of the very first to acknowledge Mary as queen and was rewarded with a place in the Privy Council in 1553. From 1553 to 1555, he was responsible for guarding Princess Elizabeth in the Tower of London, and after her accession he failed to reach Parliament again though forgiven for his rigorous jailership.(2)

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(1) Blomefield, op.cit.
(2) D.N.B., Vol.4 (1885), pp.113-5.

When the estates were inherited by Sir Henry Bedingfeld they included eight foldcourses in Norfolk: in all cases, they were presumably held in right of manorial lordships. Margaret Bedingfeld had inherited two of the manors - Oxborough and Shingham; Henry is known to have held a manor in Ickburgh in 1541; Caldecote had come to the family in or soon after 1461; and in Cley, they gained West Hall manor in 1541-2, East Hall in two parts in 1482-3 and 1541-2, and Langwade in 1519-20.(1) The conveyance of West Hall included three rights of foldcourse, and they - together with one belonging to East Hall - were probably the courses in Cley described in the sheep accounts; the fields of Langwade were part of Caldecote foldcourse.

Something of the exact nature of the foldcourses is revealed by an evaluation of the pasture that they provided, given in the sheep accounts. Each included an area of heath or common in addition to that of open-field arable:

Shingham, 52a.3r. of arable, the common heath and "le loyfeld".

Caldecote, 529a.2r. of arable, and the common ("Shortebrusshe")

Cley, Westhall, 100a.3½r. of arable, and the common heath and several pasture ("le Bronde").

Cley, Saundereves cum Bokenhams, 38a.2r. of arable, and the common heath.

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(1) Blomefield, op.cit.

Cley, Easthall, 116a.3r. of arable, and the common heath.
Cley, Hogling, 123a.1r. of arable, and the common heath ("hogling").
(No details are given of the Ickburgh and Oxborough foldcourses

The accounts of the Bedingfeld flocks[1] cover three years - 1553-4, 1555-6 and 1556-7. They consist of shepherds' accounts for the eight flocks, together with the summary accounts of the sheep-reeve.

II.

In all three years, Bedingfeld had between 5,000 and 5,500 sheep going in the eight flocks (see Appendix Three, Tables 48a, 48b and 48c). The constitution of these flocks was a familiar one: three ewe flocks provided lambs for re-stocking, as well as some for sale, a hogg flock held the store lambs until they were needed in the other flocks, and four wether flocks produced both saleable mutton and the heaviest fleeces. The ewes numbered a little over 2,400 each year, and there were about 700 lambs in the Oxborough flock.

The increase of lambs from the large ewe flocks amounted to between 1,400 and 1,800, rising over the three years with a rising rate of lambs per ewe: at their most productive, in 1556-7, the ewes provided nearly 0.8 lambs per head. A most interesting, unique feature of these accounts is the division of the lambs into good store animals and weak "Powkes":-

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(1) The account book is among the Bedingfeld Mss., still preserved at Oxborough Hall.

	1553-4		1555-6		1556-7	
	store	powks	store	powks	store	powks
Ickburgh	281	358	290	422	270	478
Caldecote	265	165	300	191	440	150
Cley, Westhall	216	166	243	231	309	170

What was it about the ewes or the pastures at Ickburgh which produced such large numbers of weak lambs? For the latter two years the accountant distinguished the sexes of the store lambs:-

	1555-6		1556-7	
	male	female	male	female
Ickburgh	180	110	180	90
Caldecote	180	120	227	213
Cley, Westhall	180	63	181	128

Of the weak lambs it is sufficient to say that all were sold in each of these years, and that they fetched only 1s.8d. per head as compared with 2s. for store lambs.

Apart from a small number kept as hoggs in the ewe flocks, the store lambs were sent to the Oxborough hogg flock - or occasionally delivered direct to other flocks in need of fresh stock. Only in 1556-7 was a small number of lambs, surplus to Bedingfeld's requirements, available for sale: all 182 disposed of were female lambs. The management of the hogg flock was simply concerned with receiving lambs from the ewe flocks during the summer, and dispatching one-shear ewes and wethers to the other flocks a year later.

The ewe flocks were clearly not regarded as a source of great profit from the sale of lambs, although the powks made a not inconsiderable contribution to Bedingfeld's receipts. Unsuitable for stocking purposes, the weak lambs

may have been destined for the butcher; but the accounts explain only that some were sold at Cowlinge and Kenninghall Fairs and that others were bought by a Huntingdonshire man. The production of mutton, however, was a prime object of the Oxborough sheep-farming: fat wethers, together with crone ewes, were sold in large numbers and at good prices (see Appendix Three, Tables 48d, 48e and 48f). In 1553-4, 360 wethers were driven to Reach and Newmarket Fairs, and 400 crones went to Cowlinge and Kenninghall; in 1555-6, 600 wethers were sold at Reach and Newmarket to men of Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire and 198 crones went mainly to a Godmanchester man; in 1556-7, the sales were of 370 wethers and 249 ewes. Apparently to facilitate his use of the fairs, Bedingfeld had pasture both in Suffolk and at Reach and in 1553-4 a number of wethers were sent to be kept there. The location of the markets and the provenance of the customers suggests that some at least of these sheep may have been destined for the London mutton market, but the accountant offers no confirmation.

The sale of pelts made a small contribution to the receipts (see Tables 48d, 48e and 48f); the prices were about 3d. per pelt in 1553-4, 6d. in 1555-6 and 4½d. (with a further 3s.4½d. on the whole deal) in 1556-7. Details of the deaths in 1556-7 show that January, March and May were the dangerous months; in the same year, the abnormally high mortality resulted from the death of nearly half of the hoggs at Oxborough.

III

Wool rivalled mutton as the major concern of Bedingfeld's sheep-farming (see Tables 48d, 48e and 48f). The annual clip of about 400 stones (see Tables 48a, 48b and 48c) was dependent upon some high average fleece weights: as usual, ewe were lighter than wether fleeces, but the overall averages were as high as 12, 10 and 11 fleeces per stone in the three years. These figures confirm, too, the variability in the weight of hogg fleeces.

The year's wool had not been sold by the end of 1556-7, but in the two earlier years the clip was sold in toto; like Sir Richard Southwell, Bedingfeld did not always make use of the wool-brogger's services,(1) for his wool was sold directly to the clothiers Richard and Robert Barker of Stoke-by-Nayland in Suffolk. It is uncertain which party would, in such cases, be responsible for the carriage of the wool, but it is suggestive that in 1556-7 the miscellaneous expenses should include 3s. towards the sheep-reeve's jourrney to Nayland about his master's business.(2) The price of Bedingfeld's wool rose from 3s.8d. per stone in 1553-4 to 7s. in 1555-6 and 1556-7.(3)

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(1) See infra, pp.362 et seq.
(2) At the beginning of this year, arrears of £28 were owing from Richard Barker for wool sold to him: this may possibly account for the sheep-reeve's journey to Nayland.
(3) Although the year's clip remained unsold in 1556-7, an odd $2\frac{1}{2}$ stones were sold (again to Barker) and the price was 7s. per stone.

IV

Bedingfeld's flocks included only very small numbers of other men's sheep and they tathed only small acreages of other men's lands. The sole cullet payment in these three years was of 3s.6d. for 14 sheep in one of the flocks in 1553-4. There were, however, customary allowances for the shepherds and the sheep-reeve to keep animals in the flocks: in 1556-7, for instance, they had 120 and 20 sheep respectively in seven flocks, and 60 and 20 in the eighth; and the farmer of the manor had 80 sheep going in the Shingham flock. In 1553-4, the parson of Ickburgh made no payment for 90 sheep in that flock since they were fed in right of his lands.

In three of the foldcourses in 1553-4 the land tathed was entirely Bedingfeld's own; in four others 59 acres were tathed for tenants, but in no case was there more than 18 acres in one course. In 1555-6, 68 acres were tathed in seven foldcourses, and in 1556-7, 83 acres in the same seven. The farmer of Shingham manor was allowed the benefit of the tathe there in both years. The payment taken by Bedingfeld was usually 1s. per acre tathed, but in 1556-7 - although most of the winter tathing was at that rate - several acres were tathed in winter for 8d. and several in summer for 6d.

The one remaining receipt accounted for comes under the heading of Foreign Receipts. In 1553-4, it amounted to £26.10.0. and was said to have been paid to the accountant by Bedingfeld and his wife; Lady Katherine similarly provided most of the £80.7.3. in the following year and most of the

£14.19.5. in 1556-7. These payments must be regarded as providing a working stock for Edward Grymston, the sheep-reeve, and as coming from a source external to Bedingfeld's sheep-farming.

V.

Among the normal items of expenditure, shepherds' wages formed the most substantial item. There was little variation in the individual wages during these three years, though all eight are given for the first year only; five of the shepherds received £3.0.0., one £3.5.0., one £3.6.8. and one £4.0.0.. Each was allowed 5s. for his livery. The sizes of the flocks do not explain the different rates of payment. The sheep-reeve himself received a stipend of £2.13.4. and other labour charges were for washing and shearing the sheep, castrating the lambs (a task with which one man was occupied for three days in 1553-4) and greasing them, and driving sheep; most of these items appear in the accounts as "various necessary expenses".

The usual materials for treating sheep appear here - tar (9s. or 8s.4d. per cask), pitch, redding (by the horseload) and oil. Hurdles were bought at 1s.4d., 1s., 1s.11d. or 2s. the dozen, and there was a spanish staff for the use of each shepherd. Some of these materials were bought from King's Lynn, perhaps by water for in 1553-4 the tar was carried not to Oxborough but to Oxborough Hithe.

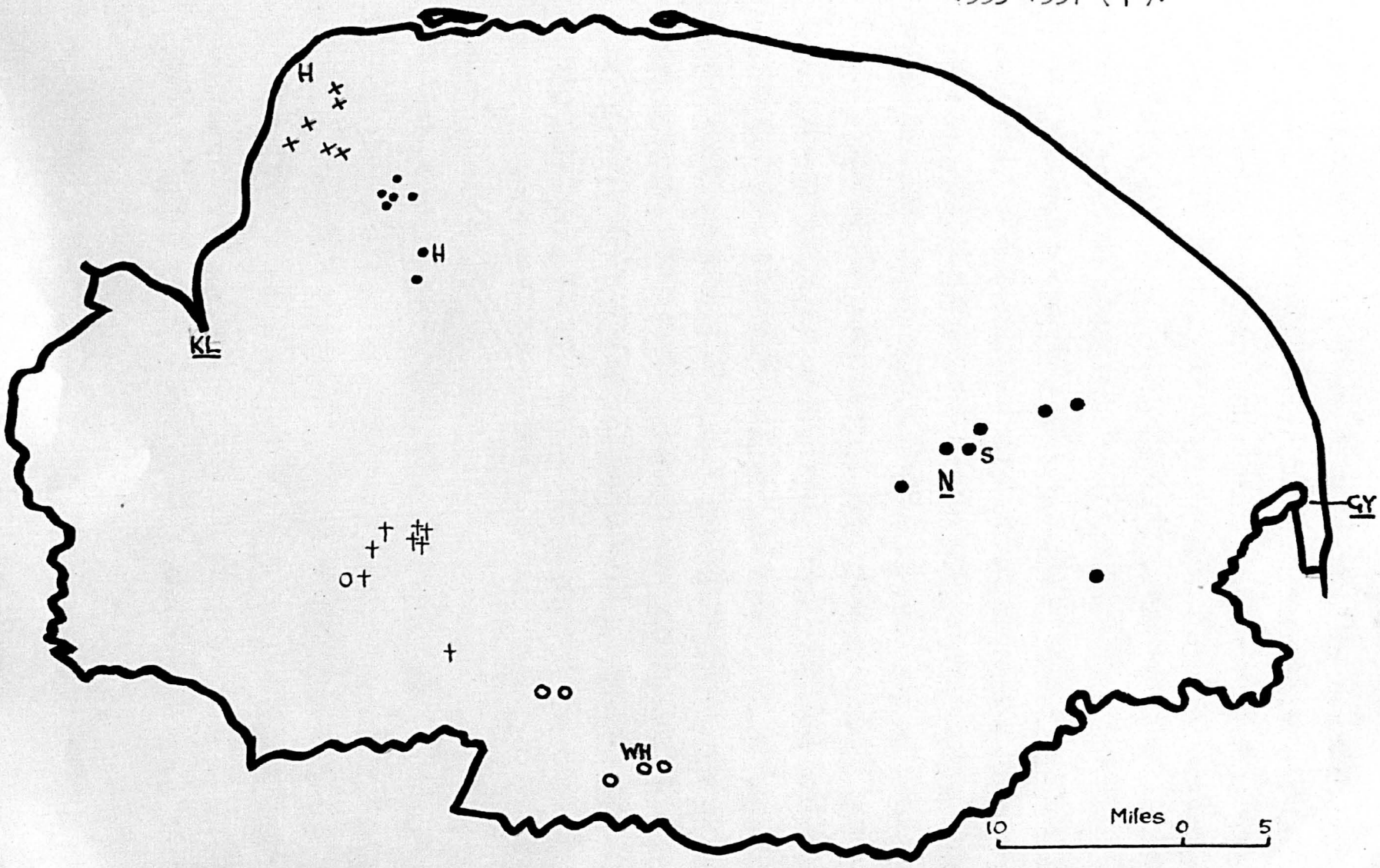
The increase of lambs in the ewe flocks was normally

sufficient, it seems, to meet Bedingfeld's needs for fresh stock; but in 1555-6 he found it necessary to buy 480 wethers from Thomas Tyndall, knight, for £120. The explanation may lie in the very large number of wethers sold that year, and the flocks were replenished with sheep bought at lower prices than his own fetched at the fairs.

Finally, although the sheep-reeve did not include the rent of the foldcourses among his expenses, the value of the pastures was in fact detailed in 1553-4. This amounted to £26.11.1½ and a similar sum must be allowed for to reach a realistic figure for the net profits of the second and third years of the accounts. The profits rose from over £150 in 1553-4 to about £375 in 1555-6, the great increase being due to the large number of sheep sold and to the almost doubled price of wool. The third year's profit was only a little short of £200 despite the fact that the wool remained unsold in the wool-house at the end of the year.

LOCATION OF THE FLOCKS OF JOHN CORBETT, 1554-1557 (●); FRAMLINGHAM GAWDY, 1650-1666 (o); THE WALPOLES, 1658-1726 (•); AND SIR ROGER L'STRANGE, 1693-1704 (×); AND HENRY BEDINGFELD, 1553-1557 (+).

MAP 14



BASSINGBOURNE AND FRAMLINGHAM GAWDY OF WEST HARLING, 1591 and 1635-1666.

I.

Bassingbourne Gawdy[1] inherited the family estates when his father died in 1569, and he became Sheriff of Norfolk in 1573, 1593 and 1601. His manors were in the villages of West Harling, Middle Harling, Harling Thorpe, Scarning and Gasthorpe, and his wife brought him the seven manors of the Framlingham estates in Suffolk. When she died, Bassingbourne was left as her father's sole heir.

These lordships explain the location of three of the flocks possessed by Gawdy in 1591 - West Harling, Gasthorpe and Crowshall in Suffolk. Three others were located in Bridgeham; Gawdy had bought a share of the lease of a manor there before it was farmed to him in 1594 for 30 years by Queen Elizabeth, and in 1609 James I granted the manor to Framlingham Gawdy. A further two and possibly three flocks were in Brettenham; Bassingbourne had bought Lady Knevett's right in a manor there, and it was held by the Gawdys until Framlingham sold it to Thomas Wright of Kilverstone[2] in 1606. The final flock was in West Walton where Bassingbourne had a slight interest in Lovell's manor through his marriage.

Sir Bassingbourne's eldest son, Framlingham (1589-1654)[3] succeeded to the estates in 1606. He was Sheriff of

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(1) Unless otherwise stated, the following details are taken from Blomefield, op.cit., I, 305-6.
(2) See supra, pp.164-5.
(3) Details from D.N.B. Vol.21 (1890), p.79.

Norfolk in 1627, later became deputy-lieutenant for the county, and sat as Member of Parliament for Thetford in 1620-21, 1623-24, 1625-26, 1640 and throughout the Long Parliament. His successor was Charles Gawdy.

Brief accounts of the flocks of Sir Bassingbourne Gawdy were found among the manuscripts of the Gawdy Collection by the Historical Manuscripts Commission in 1885; the account is dated 5th October, 1591 and the printed details are here relied upon.(1) More informative are accounts of 1635 to 1666 when the sheep were in the ownership of Framlingham and Thomas Gawdy.(2)

II.

The details of Bassingbourne's sheep are scanty and of only incidental interest. At the end of 1591, he had 4,498 sheep (670 more than at the end of the previous year's account); of these, 569 were in Suffolk, 498 in the Fenland village of West Walton, and the remainder in the flocks around Harling. In only four cases is mention made of the type of sheep in the flocks: three were of ewes and one of wethers.

A few of the printed family letters give some information about the sheep. Gawdy apparently experienced the theft of wool from his sheep, for in 1579 he was told that the

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(1) Reports of the Historical Manuscripts Commission, Vol.ii (1885), pp.35-36.
(2) B.M. Addit. 36,990.

"woolpullers" had been caught. Another letter informed him that the buyer of some of his lambs would not accept the animals before Lammas,[1] and this seems to indicate the length of time for which lambs needed to be kept before they were ready and acceptable for sale. Gawdy may have produced considerable numbers of lambs for sale for in 1590 an informer alleged that John Watts senior, of Mattishall had bought 1,000 lambs from "Barsabon Gawdy" and others at Islington in Middlesex.[2]

If nothing else, these details do indicate that the Gawdy family's interest in sheep farming extended far back from the period for which more detailed sheep accounts are available.

III.

The accounts of Framlingham Gawdy's sheep cover a 13-year period in some detail, with a few figures for the previous five years. They were compiled by neither shepherds nor sheep-reeve but consist of a series of roughly written notes by one of Gawdy's sons. These notes do, however, provide useful details of three flocks in the Harlings, and they record the establishment of two new flocks at

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(1) H.M.C. Vol.11, p.12
(2) P.R.O. E159/400/Hil.89. See infra, p.355, f.n.1.

West Wretham.[1] In Table 49 (Appendix 3), only the Harling flocks are considered, and although the accounts treat with the flocks separately they are taken together for the purposes of this Table.

The flocks at West Harling, Middle Harling and Harling Thorpe[2] were all comprised of ewes, with a total complement of 1,500 to 1,600 sheep between 1650 and 1666. A large increase of lambs - around 1,000 each year - was produced at a uniformly high rate of lambs per ewe: about 0.8 for the 12 years 1655-1666. A large number of the lambs were sold each year, these being, one supposes, the powts and the male lambs

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(1) These accounts were used by Spratt, op.cit., pp.261-272. He tabulates an analysis of the flocks for the period 1654-1661 only. Apart from several incorrect transcriptions of figures from the manuscript, two criticisms may be made of his treatment: he estimated the number of ewes which provided the increase of lambs each year by taking the number of ewes and rams at the end of the previous year's account and subtracting 50 to allow for the rams; this is a very liberal allowance for other records show that often only 1 ram, and at the most 3 or 4, were responsible for tupping a flock of ewes, and an allowance has been made for 3 rams in Table 49. This does not, however, effect any substantial alterations of Spratt's figures for the ewes' productivity. Secondly, Spratt uses the sheep remaining at the end of the year as the number of sheep shorn in the following year; but about three-quarters of the deaths in a flock occurred during the intervening winter, and allowance has been made for this in calculating the figures for Table 49.

(2) The three flocks are usually identified by the shepherds' names only.

not wanted for stock for Gawdy had no wether flocks. At the same time, the old crone ewes were removed from the flocks and sold - between 100 and 150 each year which were replaced by about 200 gimmer hoggs from Gawdy's own increase. This process of weeding-out and re-stocking and the sale of surplus lambs constituted the whole management of the flocks, for very few other sheep were sold and the only animals sent to butchers were the old or barren ewes.(1) Of the lambs sold, some at least were intended for re-stocking other flocks: in 1665, 229 wether hoggs were sold, probably for this purpose, and a further indication of the occasional sale of store hoggs is provided by a letter written in 1669 by Thomas Morris of Ipswich to Charles Gawdy. Charles was asked if he could furnish 100 good wether hoggs for Sir Robert Brooke of Nacton in Suffolk, and he endorsed the letter with the details of 52 lambs which he was presumably prepared to offer - 14 at 2s.10d. each, 30 at 2s.9d. and 8 at 2s.5d.(2)

In 1664, Gawdy set two new flocks at West Wretham, one of hoggs and the other of ewes. The latter contained over 1,000 sheep in the years 1664 to 1666 and added considerably to the annual increase of lambs; the hogg flock absorbed part of that increase, some of the lambs eventually being sold:

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(1) Only once is a butcher actually mentioned: he bought one barren ewe, one "Rix Lamb". Other notes refer to the sale of three "barage" ewes - is this barren?

(2) H.M.C. Vol.11, p.206.

229 in 1665, for example. None of the stock needed to set up the new flocks was provided by the Harling ewes.

Most of the lambs sold were sent to local sheep fairs. In 1654, for instance, 124 lambs went to Kenninghall Fair, 182 to Fransham, 374 to Gissing and 167 to Harleston; in addition, 65 crones were sent to the fair at Harleston, and a Banham man who bought 25 crones was to pay for them a fortnight after Buckenham Fair. The only other fair named in other years was that at Thetford. Gawdy's expenses always included charges incurred at the fairs.

IV.

Gawdy's chief objects in his flock management were the production of lambs and of wool. The annual wool clip is given in the accounts, but it has been necessary to estimate the number of sheep shorn. Fleece weights conform to the expected figures for ewes, varying from 11 to 19 fleeces per stone, and were highest in those years when the lambing rate was at its highest too; this seems to confirm the suggestion that productivity over relatively short periods varied with weather and pasturage conditions (see Table 49). In 1665 and 1666, the wool production of the two new flocks at Wretham was 70 and 66 stones respectively, but the data do not enable the weight of fleeces to be established.

A peculiarity of these accounts recalls the practice in Sir Roger Townshend's flocks in 1479-93 of taking the wool into the wool house at 15 pounds to the stone, and of selling

it at 14 to the stone. In 1658, Gawdy sold 107 stones to Mr. Smith - but the year's clip had been only 99½ stones (less tithes) and the wool was said to have "Encreased in ye weight since ye shearing" by 7½ stones. In 1659, 91 stones were sold to George Dewyn, and the increase was 6½ stones; in 1660, Ley Smith bought 97 stones, the increase being 4 stones There were two years' clips in the wool house in 1662 totalling 256½ stones, but John Porter bought 274 stones - an increase of 17½.

Clearly, Gawdy did not always sell the wool during the year when it was clipped, and when the sale did take place the same year there was an interval of several months before the wool broggers made their purchases. On 25th March, 1655, Robert Foister wrote from Harling to William Gawdy reporting that the wool chapmen had failed in paying; he was presumably referring to the sales made of 1654 wool. On March 27th Foister wrote that he expected the woolmen soon, and in the following year it was again March before he could report that he had sold the wool.(1)

V.

The brief nature of these accounts precludes any information concerning tathing or agistment; there is simply a note stating that in 1635 the flocks at West Harling and

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(1) H.M.C. Vol.11, pp.182, 184.

Harling Thorpe included in each case 40 sheep for the parson and 20 for the sheep-reeve. Similarly, no information is given about Gawdy's expenses beyond the mention of charges at the fairs, and an entry of £2.19.0. as the costs of washing and clipping in 1654. In one of the Gawdy letters is Charles Gawdy's account of wages paid at the sheep shearing; the payments have not been printed but the labourers were divided into washers, clippers, the thrower into the wash-pot, the carriers, the wool gatherers, the branders and the winders.(1)

THE WALPOLES OF HOUGHTON, 1658-1726.

I.

A long series of sheep accounts describe the flocks of Robert Walpole (1650-1700) and his son, Sir Robert, first Earl of Oxford (1676-1745), the famous statesman.(2) Robert the father had been Member of Parliament for Castle Rising in 1689, 1695 and 1698 and also Deputy Lieutenant for Norfolk. When his son succeeded to the estates they were considerably diminished from their extent in the reign of Elizabeth: in 1700 they comprised nine manors in Norfolk and one in Suffolk, as well as other lands, with a total rent-roll of £2,169 per annum. Sir Robert sat in Parliament for Castle Rising in

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(1) H.M.C. Vol.11, p.189.
(2) Details from D.N.B. Vol.59 (1899), pp. 178-207

1700 and 1701, and from 1702 until the end of his career in the House of Commons he was Member for King's Lynn. Sir Robert's income is said to have come from three sources: first, the sale of South Sea stock; second, official sources; and third, his landed estate. The rent-roll of the estate is computed to have risen from about £2,000 per annum when he succeeddd to it, to £5,000 to £8,000 in 1740.

The sheep accounts record flocks in five villages; in Houghton, Harpley, Great Bircham and Bircham Newton these flocks were no doubt going in right of Walpole's manors there, and in Bircham Tofts he may have possessed no more than the right of foldcourse.(1) Like so many documents of the later seventeenth century, these accounts are brief and disorderly compared with the detailed reckonings of ghe sixteenth century documents. But although many of the figures are uncertain, and much information is completely absent, a number of valuable details may be rescued from the untidy jottings of which much of the account book is comprised.(2) Figures for lambing rates and fleece weights, for example, enable comparison with earlier data.

The first pages of the account book deal with three flocks during the period 1658-1667. They are identified by their shepherds' names, and their location is not clear; it

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(1)Blomefield, op.cit.,VII, 108; VIII, 456; X,293, 290,286-7

(2) Cholmondeley (Houghton) mss., account book No.13 (Deposited in Cambridge University Library for ten years from 1951).

is very likely that Houghton itself was one of them (see Appendix 3, Table 50). The smallest of the three flocks contained 700 to 800 sheep, and in the largest, the number reached 1,000 in two years; the total number was between 2,500 and 3,000 in most years.

All three were ewe flocks and were producing considerable numbers of lambs - over 1,500 each year. The data are not sufficient for any definite conclusion to be reached concerning the objects of this lamb production, but it is clear that many were retained for re-stocking while others were sent to sheep fairs : Cowlinge ("Coolidge", "Coleg", "Coleng", "Celeg") and Kipton ("Cepen", "Copgen", "Coppen", "Ceppen") Fairs are mentioned. The ewes' productivity was highly variable: only in one flock did it reach 0.8 lambs per ewe and in this short ten year period it sometimes fell to 0.5 and even 0.3. Some correlation may be seen between the variations in the different flocks, and it would appear also that good lamb years were also good wool years (see Table 50).

Wool clips sometimes reached 200 stones for the three flocks, with the better years showing only 9 to 11 of these ewe fleeces making up a stone, and the poorer 15 to 17 - in one case 24. No details are available concerning the sale of the wool, but it was often laid up in wool houses at Siderstone and Houghton.

III.

Between 1670 and 1726, Walpole was running seven flocks, though not all continuously. That at Houghton was maintained throughout the period with a complement of about 800 sheep; hitherto ewes, the sheep were wethers in the 1720's. Another ever-present flock was probably that at Harpley though the numbers show a variation between 200 and 400; again a change from ewes to wethers took place, this time in 1692. The wether flock at Great Bircham (New Close) was unchanged throughout, increasing from about 400 to a constant 700 to 800 from 1682 onwards. Another wether flock of 500 to 700 head was often going at Bircham Tofts, and 500 to 600 wethers at Bircham Newton occur less frequently in the accounts. Finally, two additional flocks at Great Bircham occupied Leggs and Bilaughs foldcourses; both were usually of wethers, occasionally of ewes and together often exceeded 1,000 head. Very roughly, it may be said that Walpole's sheep sometimes numbered more than 4,000.

The predominant sheep were wethers, but for the ewe flocks the accounts give certain limited details indicating lambing rates.(1) At Houghton, 400 to 700 lambs were produced annually (see Appendix 3, Table 51). The rate of lambs per ewe was inconstant but often around 0.7 or 0.8: in 1679 and 1680

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(1) In two cases the number of rams in the ewe flocks are stated: at Houghton in 1685, 839 ewes and 3 rams; at Leggs in 1696, 512 and 2.

a rate of 0.9 was achieved - the highest recorded in any of the sheep accounts so far considered. The decade 1693 to 1703 well illustrates the annual variability of lamb production and the few figures available for the Harpley and Bircham ewes are of similar proportions (0.5 to 0.8). Sales of lambs(1) - and a few purchases of wether hoggs - were made at Kipton ("Kipping"), Swaffham, Norwich and Cowlinge Fairs.

Only meagre information concerning the wool clips is to be found in these accounts but it seems clear that the weight of fleeces was showing a real improvement on the figures for the sixteenth and earlier seventeenth centuries. At Houghton (see Table 51), ewes several times provided fleeces at only 8 or 9 to the stone of wool, and one or two remarks by the accountant confirm the reality of these calculations: at Houghton in 1689, he said that "ews woole above 11 stone ye hundred" had been shorn. In the wether flocks, several clips gave wool at only 6 or 7 fleeces per stone, and the accountant again gives confirmation: "woole with ye tith of both flockes (at Great Bircham) abt 20 stone ye C"; and "weathers woole this year in ye 3 flocks (at Great Bircham) 17 stone ye hundred one with another". Fuller information for 1674 shows the variations well:-

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(1) Including some of the poor quality lambs: at Houghton in 1685, the increase of 692 lambs included 3 "Puckrells".

Old Shaw's flock, wethers	8.56 fleeces per stone
Siderstone, hoggs	11.25
Houghton, Hoggs	20.0
Hawl's flock, ewes	11.71
Moniment's flock, ewes	14.55
Hensby's flock, ewes	13.87

IV.

Among the minor points of interest in these accounts are descriptions of the ear marks by which the sheep were identified. The usual method of marking was by applying redding to the fleece, marking either a distinctive part of the body or using some symbol: the three flocks at Sturston provide the best example, having redding on their backs, necks and flanks respectively.(1)

In the Walpole flocks, distinctive marks were made on the animals' ears; in 1681, for example, they were:

> At Houghton, "A Razor on ye near ear: & A hollow crop of the offer ear".
> At Great Bircham, "A hollow crop & A halfe penny of the near ear & A plaine crop of the offer ear".
> At Bircham Newton, "halfe taken of the off ear above & plaine Cropp On the near ear".

And in another flock, the marking was as at Houghton with the ears reversed.(2)

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(1) See supra, p. 36.
(2) Sheep at Tittleshall, 1555, distinguished by "earemarke", "yearemarke"; Holkham Mss., Tittleshall Books 19. Also mentioned in the Treatise on Foldcourses, B.M.

V.

Finally, the shepherds' wages are worthy of notice, making more liberal allowances than those of the earlier accounts. In 1681, the wages of five shepherds were:

At Bircham Newton, £3.0.0.
2 acres in a breck, ploughed for him.
his fireing carried.
the feed of a close.
60 ewes and 60 wethers going in the flock, his ewes being put in a fortnight after May Day.
2 fleeces for his bell wethers fleece.

At Houghton, £6.0.0.
3 acres in a breck.
4 marking lambs.
1 stone of wool for his bell wethers fleece.
160 sheep in the flock.

? At Great Bircham (1), £7.10.0.
3 acres in a breck
140 sheep in the flock
4 marking lambs
4 fleeces.

At Great Bircham (2), £8.0.0.
100 sheep in the flock, his ewes to be kept apart till May 14th.
6 bell wether fleeces.
12 combs of rye and 10 of oats.

? At Great Bircham (3), £8.0.0.
40 ewes and 40 wethers in the flock.
6 fleeces.
11 combs of rye and 10 of oats.

Another shepherd was to have 2 fleeces only "if he does well".

SIR ROGER L'STRANGE OF HUNSTANTON, 1693-1704.

I.

A family of ardent royalists in the seventeenth century, the L'Stranges[1] were lords of the manor in a number of villages around Hunstanton in the north-west of Norfolk. Sir Hamon L'Strange (d.1654) had been Sheriff for Norfolk in 1609, Member of Parliament for the county in 1630, and the royalist governor of King's Lynn in 1643; his estates passed to his sons Hamon (1605-1660) and Sir Roger (1616-1704).

The sheep accounts covering the years 1693-1704[2] describe flocks in six villages, in each of which L'Strange owned one or two manors: Great Ringstead, Heacham, Sedgeford, Holme, Fring and the now lost village of Barrett Ringstead.

II.

Three flocks - two in Great Ringstead and one in Barrett Ringstead - were maintained throughout the period of the accounts; those at Heacham and Sedgeford were going from 1693 to 1696; and in a second flock at Sedgeford and in that at Holme, L'Strange had cullet sheep only. While the five flocks were maintained, the total number of sheep reached 2,000 or 2,500, but from 1696 to 1703 the three flocks totalled only 1,000 to 1,500 head (see Appendix 3, Table 52). Of the three

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(1) Details from D.N.B. Vol. 33 (1893), pp.115-118.
(2) L'Strange Mss., N.R.

ever-present flocks, those at Great Ringstead were of wethers, and that at Barrett Ringstead of ewes; both the flocks disbanded in 1696 were composed of ewes.

At first 1,500 to 1,900, and later 600 to 700 lambs were produced annually. Productivity was highest in the first four years, although 1695-96 was a poor year in all three ewe flocks, owing to the high rates of lambs per ewe at Sedgeford and Heacham - rates of 0.8 each year. After these flocks were wound up, only the ewes at Barrett Ringstead remained, and there the rate was constantly between 0.6 and 0.7 lambs per ewe.

Roughly equal numbers of the new lambs were sold and kept to re-stock the flocks. His own increase rarely provided the whole of L'Strange's needs for fresh stock, both ewe and wether hoggs regularly being bought: most of these purchases were made at the sheep fairs - Thetford, Dunham, Swaffham. Many of the lambs sold were taken to the fairs - Cowlinge, Foulsham, Kipton, Fransham. L'Strange had no hogg flocks in which to keep lambs until they were needed to be set in the other flocks, and this partly explains why so many lambs were sold and at the same time so many hoggs bought. The weak and the "Fowl Lambs" were sent to the park at Hunstanton or into closes, together with any ewes weakened at lambing time and any ram lambs to be kept for tupping the ewes in future years. It is clear from these accounts that from one to ten rams were going with and serving the ewes of each flock, and the ratio

appears to have been about 100 or 150 ewes to a ram.(1)

In addition to the lambs, large numbers of wethers were sold from the Great Ringstead flocks and this seems to have been the chief purpose of L'Strange's sheep farming, with wool production subordinate. However, these accounts are all too brief and give no financial details.

III.

In very few cases are the wool clips of the flocks stated (See Table 53), but these scanty details suggest a considerable improvement in fleece weights. Between 10 and 12 ewe fleeces were providing one stone of wool, and there is nothing surprising about those figures; but of five figures for wether fleeces, three were around 6 or 7 to the stone, and one as low as 4.3.

There is no information available concerning the sale of L'Strange's wool, but one other point is of interest: for 1693, the accountant separates the clips of the ewe flocks at Barrett Ringstead and Heacham into long and short wool. At Ringstead, 25 stones were of long wool and 26 of short; at Heacham, 38 were long and 30 short. This is ample indication that different kinds of wool were often to be found within flocks and even within fleeces.

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(1) See infra, p. 320.

IV.

Finally, the shepherds' wages may be noted; they are very similar to those paid to Walpole's shepherds:[1]

Ringstead North Flock, £3.6.8.
3 acres in each breck in tilth
100 sheep in the flock
2 stones of wool for bell wethers fleeces
the use of a close.

Ringstead South Flock, £3.6.8.
3 acres in each breck in tilth
100 sheep in the flock
3 stonesof wool
the use of a close.

Barrett Ringstead Flock, £3.6.8.
2 acres in each breck in tilth
100 sheep in the flock

Heacham Flock, £8.0.0.
5 combs of rye and 5 of barley in lieu of land in the brecks
a 3-acre close of pasture in lieu of 2 cows going in the yards
400 sheep in the flock
2 fleeces
allowance of three weeks' board and wages for a boy at lambing time.

Sedgeford South Flock, £3.6.8.
6 combs of rye and 5 of barley in lieu of 2 acres in each breck
100 sheep in the flock
1 cow summering and wintering
1 marking lamb
1 fleece

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(1) See supra, pp.302.

CHAPTER SEVEN.

NORFOLK SHEEP FARMING: PROFITABILITY AND MARKETING.

I.

The customary regulations of the sheep-corn husbandry imposed strict limitations on a township's sheep population and controlled the numbers kept by peasant and landlord alike. The small tenant sheep owners never achieved any increase in the numbers allowed by their stints on the commons or by their cullet rights in the lords' flocks; indeed, there is much evidence that they were losing ground to the flock-owners,(1) and being illegally deprived of their pasturage in many villages.(2) Owners and farmers of foldcourses, on the other hand, were encouraged to increase their flocks not only by those factors which caused large-scale conversion of arable land to sheep pasture in other parts of England, but also by the ready methods of evading the restrictions of the peculiar Norfolk husbandry. The general factors played their part, though a small part, in Norfolk: the smaller labour force needed for sheep-farming in an era of declining population in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and the comparative profitability of growing wool rather than corn with the increasing and assured demand from the cloth export industry.(3) But these factors operated most effectively in those counties where they co-incided with

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(1) See supra, Chapter Three.
(2) See supra, Chapter Five.
(3) For the comparative price incentive see Appendix Five.

a possible change towards the optimum use of the land - where land that was equally or better suited to pasture could be converted from tillage, and where the mediaeval husbandry had precluded large-scale sheep-farming. This situation did not exist in the Sheep-Corn Region of Norfolk: given sheep-dunging, the light soils were excellent for corn growing (especially for barley) but rarely supported good pasture, having a natural cover of heathland that provided only rough grazing. Moreover, the sheep-corn husbandry enabled a profitable dual use of these soils in which sheep had long been necessarily complementary to tillage.(1)

While large-scale, permanent conversion of arable land to pasture was neither possible nor desirable in Norfolk, other methods of increasing sheep numbers were readily available. An easy divorce was possible between a landlord's sheep-farming and his tenants' corn-growing. By the sixteenth century, many manorial lords were leasing out their demesnes and taking little direct interest in corn production, but at the same time retaining their foldcourses and flocks. The temptation to increase their sheep numbers and to ignore the rights of tenants over whose open-field land the flocks fed was not resisted, and the mass of evidence for such oppression is incontrovertible. The Norfolk husbandry was so beset with customary regulations that steps to increase sheep numbers could rarely be taken legally.(2)

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(1) See supra, Chapter One; and Chapter Five, Section V.
(2) See supra, Chapter Five.

The establishment of new foldcourses was seldom possible: the arable and heath lands of a township were usually fully occupied by the foldcourses of several manors, and if this were not so the tenants cherished the customary right of feeding their animals there.(1) When landlords did attempt to set up new foldcourses, they infringed the rights of either peasants or rival flock-owners.(2) Similarly, there were customary limits to the numbers of sheep that could be kept in individual flocks: the feed of foldcourses was of a defined area and for a defined number of animals. The flock often did not reach that limit, especially in the fifteenth century, and there was here a safety margin for the landlord before his tenants could arraign him;(3) no doubt much of the year-to-year variability in the size of flocks described in the sheep accounts may be explained in this way.(4) Yet considerable numbers of landlords and foldcourse farmers ignored the regulations in every conceivable way, increasing

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(1) See supra, Chapter Two, Sections I and II.
(2) See supra, pp. 159-160.
(3) The flocks might be in excess of the limit after lambing but were then reduced by the end of the year. A foldcourse in West Rudham was for 600 sheep; in 1547-8 it was carrying 584 ewes but 160 of them had lambs by their sides. P.R.O. L.R. 2/255/50-59.
(4) The foldcourse at Fring was for 1200 sheep or more: P.R.O. C2/518/41 (1588). During five years when it was stocked by Norwich Cathedral Priory, the numbers varied from 1023 to 1405. See Appendix 3, Table 34.

the numbers of their sheep, extending their pastures, lengthening the periods when feed might be taken and excluding the participation of their tenants.(1)

The sheep accounts discussed in Chapter Six are not well suited to illustrate these increases: other evidence suggests that few of the men concerned were guilty of abusing the regulations on a large scale.(2) Neither the 1517 commissioners nor complainants to the Central Courts in London had much cause to indict the Townshend family, and in a comparison of their flocks over a long period (see Table 17) the most striking feature is the insignificant year-to-year variation in numbers. The only notable increases were in the South Creake and Barmer flocks in the late 1480's. The flocks of Norwich Cathedral Priory show the same normal variation, and again an increase in several of them around 1490; and a small but general increase may be discerned from 1505 to 1520 (see Appendix 3, Table 34). The 1517 enquiry shows that the prior was not always scrupulous in achieving these increases.(3) In the case of the Southwell flocks, there is no striking increase in numbers between 1544 and 1562 (see Table 18).

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(1) See supra, Chapter Five.
(2) More informative in this connection would be tha accounts of Thomas Thursby (supra, pp.180-1), Sir Christopher Heydon (supra,pp.101-4) or some of the other prominent oppressive landlords.
(3) See supra, p. 252.

A family less kindly disposed towards their tenants' rights was that of the Corbetts, and it is interesting to note that two of his foldcourses carried more sheep in the mid-sixteenth century than they had done when in the ownership of the Cathedral Priory.(1)

A tentative conclusion would be to suggest an increased popularity for sheep-farming in the 1480's and 1490's,(2) and this corresponds with a period of active conversion of arable land to pasture in other parts of the country. The decline of the Norfolk worsted industry had not then entered upon its most serious phase and a considerable demand for Norfolk wool was provided by the Essex and Suffolk cloth industries.(3) With the manufacture of the new draperies in Norfolk in the late sixteenth century, the local demand for wool and mutton was greatly increased and it was at this time that Miles Corbett was attempting to increase the size of his flocks near Norwich.(4)

During the seventeenth century, the re-organisation of land-use and the introduction of new crop rotations were

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(1)

Lathes				Lumnours			
N.C.P.		Corbett		N.C.P.		Corbett	
1494	856 sheep	1554	797 sheep	1494	781 sheep	1554	2400 shp
1495	788	1555	1443	1495	860	1555	1167
1496	775	1556	1338	1496	811	1556	1192

(2) Both sheep and wool prices in Norfolk were favourable during this period. See Appendix Five.
(3) See infra, pp. 391-2, 449 et seq.
(4) See supra, pp. 274-8.

threatening the traditional methods of sheep farming, and in their efforts to maintain the foldcourse system many landowners were forced to reduce the numbers of sheep in their flocks. The agricultural improvements effected in the later seventeenth century, and greatly increased in the eighteenth, laid great stress on tillage and on rotational methods of retaining soil fertility; sheep were less essential in the new husbandry and small flocks producing high quality mutton were replacing the large wool-producing flocks of the sixteenth century.(1) The Walpole sheep accounts to some extent indicate this decrease in sheep numbers (see Appendix 3, Tables 50 and 51), but one would like to see Coke's accounts and a longer series of those of the L'Strange flocks.

In addition to the customary restrictions of the sheep-corn husbandry, two statuteswere aimed at limiting the activity of the sixteenth century sheep farmer. In 1534, "An Acte conc'nyng Fermes & Shepe"(2) forbade any individual to keep more than 2400 sheep, except under certain conditions,(3) and ordered a fine of 3s.4d. for each animal

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(1) See supra, Chapter Two, section VI.
(2) Statute 25 Henry VIII, c.13.
(3) They were i) that lambs under one year old were to be excluded,
ii) that more than 2400 might be kept for private consumption,
iii) that temporal persons might keep any number of sheep if they were fed on inherited lands; but if 2400 or more were fed on such lands, then no others might be kept on rented lands,
and iv) that spiritual persons might keep their customary numbers of sheep.

	1479	1480	1481	1482	1485	1489	1545	1546	1547	1548	1565	1566	1637
Lucham	1447	1449	1431	1376	1488	1448							
West Rainham	964	841	1015	989	1534	972							
Helloughton	683	664	nil	nil	nil	898	-	-	-[a]	960			
Helloughton-with-Kipton							1320	1320	1320	1560			
Kipton										600	1456[b]	1622	1638
Sculthorpe	637	680	664	nil	nil	nil							
Dunton	1088	1086	1106	786	1000	1131							
South Creake	125	120	114	112	130	1258	1200	1200	1200	1200	1046	1289	1003
Barmer	240	236	251	138	nil	888	840				899	939	
East Rainham	767	622	693	611	690	782	720	720	720	720	666	736	
Tittleshall	308	nil	168	723	805	747							
Stibberd	1018	841	792	810	815	866							
Fulmodestone	1098	836	nil										
Shereford							720	720	720	720			641

a = In 1545-7 a total is given for Helloughton and Kipton combined (see next line)

b = The Kipton total for 1565-6 and 1637 probably includes Helloughton.

TABLE EIGHTEEN: THE FLOCKS OF SIR RICHARD SOUTHWELL, 1544-1562.

	1544	1548	1550	1551	1561	1562
Tottington Calcrosse	979	860	26	896	925	974
Tottington South Ground	717	850	419	812	613	681
Tottington Lodge Ground	1148	1180	1106	1138	844	954
West Rudham	1175	920	956	926	1030	1026
Threxton	1346				910	1110
Bircham Tofts	1649	1330	1287	1292	1309	1386
Great Bircham	711	720	643	704	729	776
Burnham Ewes	1572		1333	1292	1386	1450
Burnham Hoggs	842		651	612	715	755
Walsingham	1217	850	31	1053	1095	nil
Weasenham	1217	950[a]	1438	1549	1659	1766
Shouldham	1178					
Morton	828	660	243	538	889	724
Ringland	894	720	256	630	720	684

a = Together with 400 at Weasenham North Hall.

above that number. Although individual flocks sometimes exceeded 2400,[1] the act more particularly endangered those Norfolk sheep-masters with a number of flocks and sheep considerably in excess of that number. Another provision of this act concerned the peculiar husbandry of this county: foldcourse owners in Norfolk and Suffolk were to be obliged to allow tenants whose land was situated in the courses to feed their own animals on their own strips, and to put cullet sheep into the flocks. Many Norfolk peasants who had been deprived of shackage or cullet rights might have quoted the 1534 act in their defence.

Some of the Norfolk gentlemen, whose sheep certainly exceeded 2400 in number, do not appear to have been troubled by the informers who sought half the fine imposable by reporting upon offenders; but informers probably reaped even greater profits by allowing themselves to be bought off, and the informations against Norfolk sheep-farmers do not fully reflect the abuse of this statute.[2] It should be remembered in such cases as those of Townshend and Southwell, however, that their sheep were kept on inherited estates and so fell outside the scope of this regulation: the act was really aimed

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(1) See Appendix 3, Table 48 for example.
(2) The Memoranda Rolls (K.R.) of the Court of Exchequer have been exhaustively searched for informations against Norfolk men based on this and other statutes.

at those upstart sheep-masters who, consequent upon the conversion of arable land to pasture in many counties, were setting up new flocks - often on rented pastures. Seven Norfolk farmers were informed against:-

Name of farmer	Alleged number of sheep	Location of flocks	Date	
Henry Castyll	4,800	Egmere, Barwick, Witton	1552-3	(1)
John Wormeley	4,800	Mundford, etc.	1590	(2)
Miles Corbett	6,000	Hounslow (Middlesex)	1586	(3)
Miles Corbett	7,200	Sprowston, Woodbastwick, Salhouse, Hicham, etc.	1594	(4)
Robert Styleman	7,200	Field Dalling, Bale, Cley, Holt, Blakeney, Weston, Sharrington, Kelling, Weybourne, Saxlingham, Thornage, Letheringsett, Baconsthorpe	1593	(5)
William Parke	6,000	Runcton Holme, Waterden, Burnham Stathe, Tottenhill	1594	(6)
Robert Sack	-	Norfolk	1612	(7)

In most cases the offence was denied and no judgement is given but Miles Corbett's charge was dismissed in 1586 when the informers (a mercer and a fishmonger of London) failed to appear in court: no doubt he had made it worth their while to stay away. Most ironically, Wormeley was sent for trial at the

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(1) P.R.O. E159/331/Michaelmas 123.
(2) E159/407/Michaelmas 287.
(3) E159/393/Michaelmas 254.
(4) E159/409/Michaelmas 280d.
(5) E159/407/Michaelmas 255d.
(6) E159/409/Trinity 97d.
(7) E159/443/Hilary 142.

Norfolk Assizes where the twice-offending Corbett was to hear the case. It is possible that Wormeley was convicted of his offence for three years later he was reported to have sold 2,000 lambs and 1,000 sheep at Westminster[1] and may well have been reducing his stock as a result of his conviction. Whether Styleman was found guilty or not, he apparently took no such steps to reduce his flocks for at his death in 1610 he had 2,140 ewes and hoggs, 625 wethers and 920 lambs (3,685 in all) at Field Dalling, Kelling, Salthouse, Holt, Thornage and Burnham.[2]

The second statute, passed in 1555-6,[3] was intended to ensure that large-scale sheep-farming did not lead to the neglect of dairy-farming. For every 60 sheep that he owned, a sheep farmer was ordered to keep one milch cow, and for every 120 sheep, one calf.[4] Five informations were laid against Norfolk men for not complying with these instructions:-[5]

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(1) E159/407/Michaelmas 313. The offence was not his but that of several Norfolk men who bought and re-sold the animals without keeping them for an intermediate five weeks. See infra, pp.353-8.

(2) Bishop's Chapel, Norwich, inventories, Daniels 194. Styleman also had 40 stones of wool and 60 sheepskins. Sheep contributed £1087.6.8., corn and crops £448.15.0. and other animals £191.10.0. to his total inventory of £2626.17.4.

(3) Statute 2 and 3 Philip and Mary, c.3.

(4) Also, one cow was to be kept for every 10 oxen, and one calf for every two milch cows.

(5) See supra, p.7 f.n.1.

Name of farmer	Alleged number of sheep	Location	Date
John Wormeley	16,800	Mundford	1594(1)
William Adam (Saffron Walden, Essex, draper)	16,800	Norfolk	1594(2)
Thomas Lovell	16,800	Harling (Norfolk) and Redgrave (Suffolk)	1594(3)
Augustine Whall (Norwich grocer) and John Pettus (Norwich merchant)	480	Markshall	1594(4)
Thomas Bromewell	1,980	Lyng, etc.	1597(5)

Little comment on these allegations is needed; but it may be noted that in the first three cases the numbers of sheep quoted are clearly exaggerations and that John Wormeley seems to have been unable to escape from the informers' attentions, having been accused of keeping too many sheep four years earlier.

II.

Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the number of lambs and the amount of wool that a Norfolk sheep farmer might produce depended almost solely upon the number of

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(1) P.R.O. E159/409/Trinity 181d.
(2) E159/409/Trinity 183r.
(3) E159/409/Trinity 183d.
(4) E159/409/Michaelmas 280.
(5) E159/414/Easter 72.

animals in his flocks: in neither respect did the productivity of the sheep increase significantly.

The lambing rate never reached one lamb per ewe; at the present day,(1) of course, every ewe is expected to bear a lamb and twins bring the rate up to 1.5 lambs per ewe in many areas of arable-sheep farming.(2) Three factors are now reckoned as having the main influence on ewes' fertility:

1) The individuality of the ewe,
2) the breed, and
3) feed and management.

But the first two are concerned with whether a ewe produces one lamb or two: in Norfolk in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the issue was one or none at all and the all-important factor then was feed and management. Present-day productivity is the result of a degree of knowledge and care far advanced from that of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: pastures are now scientifically improved and controlled; ewes are built up by careful feeding in preparation for breeding; a low ratio of rams to ewes ensures that the former are not over-taxed; and careful supervision ensures that all the ewes are tupped - and at the height of their heat; breeds of rams and ewes are carefully selected; and at lambing time every effort is made to avoid mortality.

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(1) All present-day data are taken from Fraser, "Sheep Farming" (1937).

(2) On the Holt-Cromer Ridge (Norfolk) in the 1930's 1.25 to 1.5 lambs per ewe were produced in a Black Welsh ewe flock; Mosby, op.cit., p.202 (see also pp. 221 and 229)

To select only one aspect of the rudimentary management of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the ratio of rams to ewes was extremely high. Today, a mature ram is not allowed to go with more than 40 ewes in any one day[1] and all the ewes are ensured of service whenever they are ready for it. Even in the seventeenth century in some parts of England, only 30-50 ewes were allowed to each ram;[2] but in Norfolk one ram was turned into a flock of 100 or 200 ewes, and even the largest flocks were served by two or three rams.[3] The in-fertility of four ewes out of ten is not surprising.[4]

Lambing rates varied from flock to flock and from owner to owner and much must have depended on the chancy nature of tupping. Some attempt seems to have been made in a number of cases to increase the lambs dropped in the large, specialised ewe flocks.[5] Year-to-year variations in the

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(1) For present-day Norfolk practice in this respect see Mosby, op.cit. pp.221 and 229.

(2) "The Farming and Account Books of Henry Best" (East Riding of Yorkshire) edited C.B. Robinson, Surtees Society, Volume 33 (1857), p.4.

(3) Townshend sheep, 1480: a flock of 840 ewes contained 1 ram.
Tittleshall in the sixteenth century: 360 ewes, 1 ram.
L'Strange sheep, 1519: 6 rams bought "were putt to ye Flocke of Frynge", a flock of about 1000 sheep; Archaedl ogia, Volume 25 (1834), p.420.
L'Strange sheep, 1693-1704: 1-10 rams in each flock at 100-150 ewes per ram.
Gawdy sheep, 1664: 3 rams sent for a new flock of 1100 ewes.
Walpole sheep, 1685: one flock of 839 ewes contained 3 rams
" " , 1696: one flock - 512 ewes and 2 rams.

(4) For explicit statements regarding sterility see supra, p.243. Large numbers of lambs were also weak and useless for store purposes; see supra, p.193, f.n.1, et alia.

(5) See supra, pp.259.

same flocks no doubt depended on the influence of weather conditions on feed and there is some explicit evidence that bad winters brought the lambing rate down quite sharply.(1) The rate was usually between 0.6 and 0.8 lambs per ewe throughout these two centuries, though some improvement may be discerned towards 1700 when 0.9 was occasionally reached.(2) The improvement of commons and the introduction of root crops were probably beginning to take effect, but no change was as yet being made in the breed of sheep: the Norfolk breed had its advantages but they did not lie in this direction.(3)

The Norfolk breed reigned unchallenged in this county throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and it produced very lightweight fleeces - about one to two pounds each. This compares badly with most present-day breeds in Britain, only some of the upland sheep being so

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(1) See supra, pp. 194.
(2) See Appendix Three. Also Graph One below; the graph is intended to show the general level of lambing rates. The apparent trends are not reliable owing to great variations between the flocks of different owners.
(3) Marshall wrote that even in the eighteenth century Norfolk ewes in general brought only one lamb each; Rural Economy, Volume II, p. 149.

light-woolled.(1) There was a constant differentiation between the types of sheep in Norfolk flocks: almost invariably wethers produced the heaviest fleeces - from seven to ten making up a stone of wool; ten to fifteen ewe fleeces were needed to make up that weight.(2) These weights were inferior to those of other English breeds of the period: Hampshire and Sussex fleeces weighed from two to three pounds (five to seven per stone), Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Worcestershire fleeces, four to seven pounds (two to three-and-a-half per stone),(3) Berkshire fleeces, about three pounds (five per stone),(4) and East Riding of Yorkshire fleeces, two to three pounds (five to seven per stone).(5) Wethers' wool was, moreover, of better quality than ewes'.(6)

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(1) Some upland breeds - 2 to 7 lbs. per fleece,
The Down breeds - 4 to 6,
Romney Marsh - 8 to 9,
Leicester - 11 to 12,
Lincoln - 13 to 14,
Dartmoor - 14. (All greasy fleeces)
From Haigh H. and Newton B.A., "The Wools of Britain" (1952), pp. 64-67.

(2) See Appendix Three. Also Graph Two below; the graph is intended to show the general level of fleece weights and the different weights of ewe and wether fleeces. The apparent trends are not reliable owing to great variations between the flocks of different owners.

(3) Notestein, Relf and Simpson, "Commons Debates, 1621" (1935), Vol.VII, p.499; notes made by Sir Julius Caesar.

(4) Five wether and six ewe fleeces made up one stone of wool; "Robert Loder's Farm Accounts, 1610-1620", edited G.E. Fussell, Camden Society, Third Series, Vol.53 (1936), pp. xxii, xxviii.

(5) Average fleeces weighed six to the stone, very good ones five, and bad seven; Robinson (ed.), op.cit., p.24.

(6) Mascall, L., "On Cattell" (1587), p.217. Also supra, p.222.

Soil and feeding are the most important influences in determining fleece weights and wool types and it has been said that sheep moved, for instance, from Suffolk to Yorkshire today would show a change in wool characteristics within a few months.(1) In those counties where conversion of arable land to pasture in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries provided improved grassland feeding for the sheep, the predominantly short and fine mediaeval wool was gradually replaced by a longer, coarser type.(2) It was reckoned that the fleeces grew heavier, too, with such changes: in the fourteenth century, ten sheep fed on arable stubbles and on commons would produce a stone of wool, but in 1547 it was stated that improved pastures had reduced this to seven-and-a-half fleeces per stone.(3) Little improvement of pasture by the conversion of arable land took place in Norfolk, but it is noticeable that the sheep of the Fenland pastures produced heavier fleeces; and these sheep seem to have retained that

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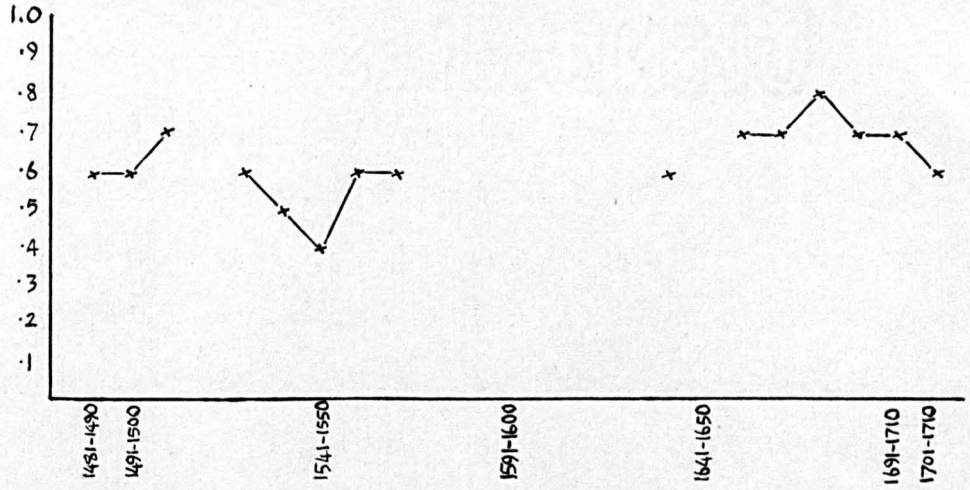
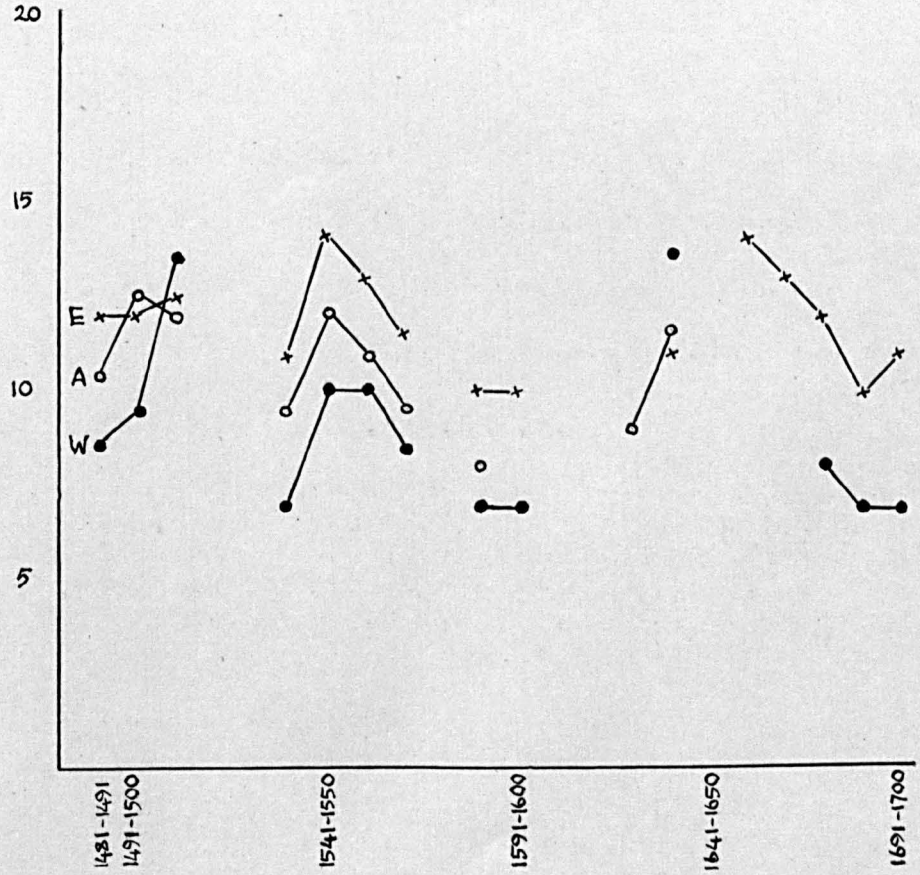
(1) Haigh and Newton, op.cit., p.5.
(2) For an elaboration of this change and an estimation of its effects on the English cloth industry, see Bowden, P., "The Internal Wool Trade in England during the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries", un-published Ph.D. thesis, University of Leeds (1952).
(3) Tawney and Power, op.cit., Vol.i, p.180.



GRAPH ONE: AVERAGE DECENNIAL LAMBING RATES, 1481-1710.
(Lambs per ewe)



GRAPH TWO: AVERAGE DECENNIAL FLEECE WEIGHTS, 1481-1700.
(Fleeces per stone)

characteristic at least for a time after being moved on to upland pastures. At Congham in the 1590's, six animals provided one stone of wool "for they were marsh shepe & well wolled".(1)

Some increase in the weight of Norfolk fleeces might have been expected as a result of the seventeenth century improvement in husbandry, and indeed some increase does seem to have taken place; but the persistence of the Norfolk breed of sheep precluded any striking change. The year-to-year variations throughout these centuries were, like those in lambing rates, the result of the effect of weather changes on quality of pastures.(2)

The Norfolk breed was prevalent throughout Upland Norfolk and may even have been the common stock of the Marshland district(3) though the pastures there will have modified its fleece. In Norfolk conditions, the breed had important advantages: the sheep were agile and mobile, able to make full use of extensive, poor quality heath pasture and

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(1) P.R.O. E134/40 Elizabeth/Easter 3. Also see infra, pp.325-6.
(2) For example, in 1480-81, 2,000 sheep died in the Townshend flocks and the small number of lambs was attributed by the accountant to the bad weather; and it was "an evell yere for wull", with the normal 10 fleeces per stone increased to 14; infra, pp.
(3) A Tilney man had 8 "norff. wether sherlings"; Norwich, Bishop's Chapel, inventories, Johnson 163.

of large areas of open-field shackage; and they were also very well suited to penning and folding, so essential in the sheep-corn husbandry.(1) The breed was, moreover, sufficiently well-liked in some quarters for Norfolk sheep to be sent to stock pastures in other counties.(2) It was able to hold its own to some extent against the increasing use of other breeds in Norfolk in the eighteenth century, especially since its mutton was of high quality.(3) Kent criticised the growing preference for Leicesters, for though he thought they might be profitable "in Marshland hundred, in parks, and in small rich enclosures in the vicinity of towns", he believed that no sheep could answer penning as well as the Norfolks.(4) Marshall was in agreement, and, incidentally, he described the Norfolk sheep as having a long and slender carcass, long black and mottled legs, a similarly coloured face, and a very

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(1) "They may be bred, and will thrive, upon heath and barren sheepwalks, where nine tenths of the breeds in the kingdom would starve: they stand the fold perfectly well: fat freely at two years old: bear the drift, remarkably well, to Smithfield, or other distant markets; and the superior flavor of the Norfolk mutton is universally acknowledged"; Marshall, "Rural Economy", I, p.365.

(2) John Dobbs, a Northamptonshire yeoman, bought 500 ewes and 500 lambs "of the beste sorte of Norff breede...to store & occupie his...grownds" from Ralph Waller of Gayton, Norfolk; P.R.O. Requ.2/198/32 (1557).

(3) The improved husbandry of the eighteenth century, with the use of turnips, rendered Norfolks "respectable and profitable in their return, and in as high estimation at Smithfield as any sheep whatever for no better mutton can be put upon a table; and though they produce but little wool, it is of good quality"; Kent, "On Norfolk Sheep", in Annals of Agriculture, Volume 22 (1793), p.30.

(4) Loc.Cit..

short and fine fleece.(1) But they were challenged by Arthur Young who thought the breed contemptible(2) and wanted a new one introduced into the county.(3) Thomas William Coke in fact followed Bakewell's advice to get rid of the Norfolks and greatly influenced other landowners by introducing the South Down breed; and he raised some merinos at Holkham.(4) The day of the Norfolks was over.

A general assessment of the profitability of sheep-farming must include some reference to the diseases which were likely to hit a farmer's flocks. The great mediaeval disease of murrain is never mentioned in sixteenth and seventeenth century documents, though it had certainly been severe in Norfolk at earlier periods.(5) One of the most important scourges was rot: marshes were dangerous on this account and it was believed that sheep kept on them should be given salt.(6)

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(1) "Rural Economy", I, pp.362, 364-7. Marshall described two varieties of the Norfolk breed: (1) the larger, 15-25 lbs. per quarter, and the common stock, and (2) the smaller, 10-15 lbs. per quarter, and chiefly kept on the Breckland heaths ("heath sheep"), with finer wool than the larger variety; op.cit., pp.364-5.
(2) Farmer's Tour, II (1771), p.161.
(3) General view of the Agriculture of Norfolk, preface.
(4) Riches, N., "The Agricultural Revolution in Norfolk" (1937)
(5) At Sedgeford in 1279, 991 sheep and lambs died - 619 of them from murrain; Saunders, H.W., History Teachers' Miscellany Vol.I (1922), p.32. At Heacham, murrain was more or less severe for 63 years after 1347; Harrod, H., Archaeologia, Vol.41, Part I (1866), pp.1-14.
(6) Mascall, op.cit., p.213.

Coastal marshes naturally possessed this antidote,[1] but shepherds bewared of inland marshes and wet commons;[2] rot would have been a costly disease among sheep kept mainly for wool production for one sign of its presence was loose wool. In the Norfolk sheep accounts, the only other disease frequently mentioned was not explicitly named: the sheep were said to be "dosey", or to have "labouring heads".[3] But many other diseases might occur and much depended on the care and good fortune of the shepherd whose remedies were often hazardous and based more on country lore than sound reasoning.[4]

III.

The sheep-reeves' accounts of the larger sheep farmers make it possible to estimate the profits which were gained from keeping large numbers of sheep and such estimates have been made and discussed in Chapter Six.[5] A reliable comparison of these total profits cannot be made, however,

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(1) The salt of New Marsh, Terrington was thought to preserve the sheep there from rot; P.R.O. E134/15 Jas.I/Easter 12 (1617-18).

(2) The shepherd at Hargham kept the sheep off the common at times during the summer on this account; P.R.O. E134/42-43 Elizabeth/Michaelmas 28 (1599). For details of the danger of rot, see Mascall, op.cit., pp.339-40; Fitzherbert, "The Book of Husbandry" of 1534, edited W.W. Skeat in English Dialect Society (1882), pp.50-52.

(3) See supra, pp. 227.

(4) Scabs, fever, choler, "the leafe", lice and maggots, blindness, foot-worm, pocks, "The blode", "The wode euyll" (Mascall, Fitzherbert)

(5) See supra, pp. 204-5, 213, 218-9, 224-5, 229-30, 268-9, 288.

since few of the sheep-reeves' accounts are complete: in most cases it is necessary to allow for the omission of one or more receipts or expenses. A more reliable guide to the increasing profitability of sheep farming is that provided by the sheep and wool prices contained, above all, in the sheep accounts; these prices will be fully considered in Appendix Five. Despite the incompleteness of the sheep-reeves' reckonings, it is possible, making allowances for omissions where necessary, to calculate answers to a number of questions suggested by the earlier sections of this chapter: what was the annual profit to be gained per sheep?, what was the margin between the profits from ewes and wethers?, and what advantage was there in keeping large flocks rather than small?.

Sir Richard Townshend's accounts of 1480-81 provide these answers with a minimum of allowances for the accountant's omissions. He did not take account of the rent or value of the foldcourses and this has been done using figures for rents paid for certain of the Norwich Cathedral Priory foldcourses at this time: thus, the rent amounts to about ¼d. per sheep in theTownshend flocks. The advantage of a large flock over a small is clearly borne out by Townshend's net profits: he gained about 3¼d. per ewe in the large Lucham flock but only about ¾d. in the small flock at Sculthorpe. The value of lambs more than offset the heavier fleeces of the wethers, and the profits from the latter were about 2¼d. in the large flock at Dunton and about 1¼d. in the small South Creake flock.

The relative profitability of the different kinds of stock remained much the same in Townshend's flocks in the mid-sixteenth century. In 1547-48, his net profits were about 7d. per ewe and 3d. per wether - both in large flocks. The profit made on wethers varied a great deal, of course, according to the extent of different farmers' dealing in the mutton market; in 1553-54, Bedingfeld made a profit of 7d. per ewe in a large flock - the same figure as that achieved by Townshend six years earlier - but a flock of wethers which provided 130 fat animals for the fairs brought a profit of 10d. per sheep. With the increasing emphasis on the fattening of wethers for the mutton market during the seventeenth century, the margin between the profits from ewes and wethers is likely to have been consistently in favour of the latter.

One final consideration: how did the rate of turn-over affect this question of the relative profitability of ewes and wethers? Ewes began to decline, and were sold as crones, after five or six years of lamb and fleece production.(1) A ewe in Bedingfeld's flocks, for example, might have given birth to five lambs, produced five pounds of wool, and then been sold for mutton - giving total receipts of nearly 6s.. On the same basis, a wether would have given total receipts of some 3s.4d.; but wethers kept for fattening were probably sold

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(1) Robinson (ed.), op.cit., p.2.

within two or three years of birth and the fat sheep, together with two fleeces, would have fetched about 4s. in that time. The rate of turn-over in wether flocks was greater still in the later seventeenth century when the use of root crops for winter feeding enabled a hogg to be fattened and sold within its first year.

The figures for Townshend's net profits in 1547-48 show how several farmers in Norfolk would have been taxed had the act of 1549 been enforced in this county.(1) It was proposed that ewes and wethers kept on enclosed pastures for most of the year should be chargeable at the rate of 3d. and 2d. each, respectively, and that all sheep kept on commons or unenclosed arable land should be chargeable at 1½d. each. Norfolk sheep must have come into the latter category so that perhaps a quarter of the annual profits on ewes and, until fattening for mutton became important, as much as half of those on wethers would have been payable in tax.

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(1) Statute 2 and 3 Edward VI, c.36. No returns for Norfolk have survived and indeed none may have been made. Beresford, M.W., "The Poll Tax and Census of Sheep, 1549", Agricultural History Review, Volumes 1 and 2 (1953 and 1954).

IV.

A constant and important charge upon the sheep farmer was that for labour; at critical times during the year, additional workers were required for a variety of jobs but most important, of course, was the traditionally small labour force of the shepherd and his dog.(1) Shepherds were usually hired annually, often at Michaelmas when most of the sheep accounts were begun;(2) their wages, which were sometimes paid biennially or quarterly, were very variable between the different estates and varied with the size of flocks within one estate.(3) An increase in average wages may be traced during these centuries but, though more numerous data are needed for definite conclusions, it does not seem to have kept pace with the sixteenth century price rise.(4) In most cases, a small additional payment was made for shepherds' liveries;(5)

(1) "The vnderstanding of these Shepherds dogs is very great, (especially in England) for the Shepherds wil there leaue their dogs alone with the flocks, and they are taught by custome, to keepe the sheep within the compasse of their pasture, and discern betwixt grasse and corn, for when they see the sheep fall vpon the corne, they run and driue them away from that forbidden fruit of their own accord..."; Topsell, E., "The Historie of Fovre-Footed Beastes" (1607), pp.158-160. (I am indebted to Captain Anthony Hamond for allowing me to see his copy of this book).

(2) In 1588, two Holkham shepherds were hired at Midsummer, and in 1589 one on 24th June; Holkham Mss., Tittleshall Books No.19. Agreements were binding for the whole year: a shepherd at Newton-next-Castle Acre was outlawed in 1456 for leaving his employment before the term expired; P.R.O. C47/70/8/299.

(3) See supra, Chapter Six.

(4) See Graph Three. The figure above and that below the general trend represent a single wage and are probably a-typical; the other figures represent averages of up to 40 wages. The data used are from the sheep accounts (see Chapter Six); Norfolk Archaeology, Vol.XIX (Walpole sheep); Archaeologia, Vol.25 (L'Strange sheep); Norfolk Antiquarian

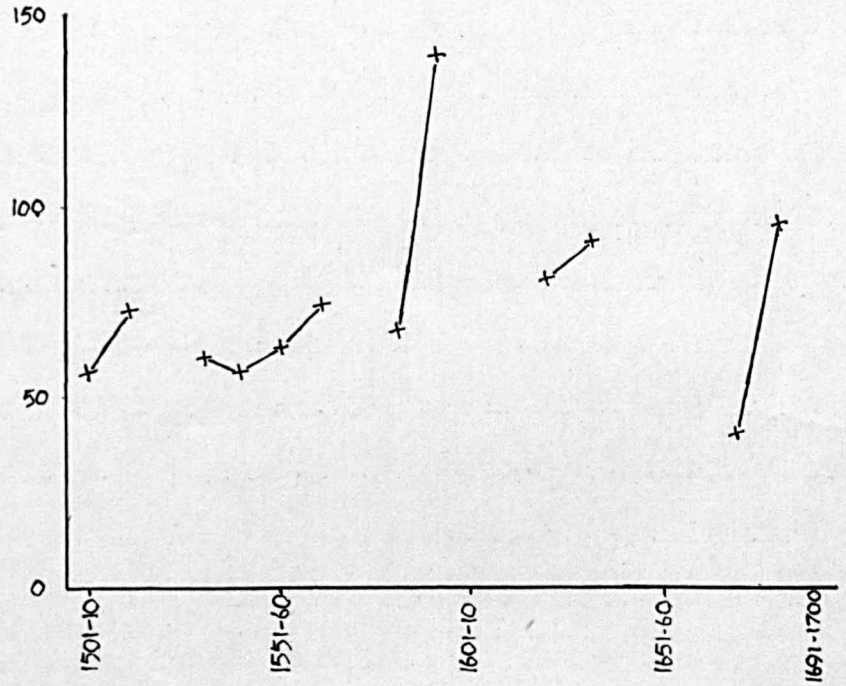
(continued overleaf)

f.n. (4) - continued
Miscellany, Vol.III (De Grey sheep); and documents in Captain Hamond's possession (D'Oyley sheep).

(5) See supra, Chapter Six.

Townshend had the clothes themselves made in his household.(1)

GRAPH THREE: AVERAGE DECENNIAL SHEPHERDS' WAGES, 1501-1700.



(1) See supra, p. 198.

The chief non-monetary allowance to shepherds was for the going of their sheep, without payment, in the lords' flocks;[1] others included gifts of lambs[2] and fleeces,[3] the benefit of receipts from tathing,[4] provision of corn,[5] and the chance of buying old hurdles cheaply for firewood.[6] Details of such customary allowances have been given in Chapter Six.[7] The shepherd's house was sometimes provided rent-free,[8] together with small acreages of field or enclosed ground for such cultivation as full-time shepherding permitted.[9]

There was, of course, great variation in the wealth and possessions of shepherds. In 1592, Gregory Barney of Burnham Deepdale died with goods worth only a little over £16;

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(1) See supra, Chapters Three (Section II) and Six.
(2) One or two lambs were given to the shepherd as a reward for marking the year's increase ("Markyn", "Le markinge", "marken" lambs); supra, Chapter Six.
(3) A "bell wethers fleece" was often given to the shepherd; supra, Chapter Six. Since the weight of a fleece was uncertain, one stone of wool was sometimes given instead; see Norfolk Antiquarian Miscellany, Volume III, p.95, for example.
(4) See supra, p. 212.
(5) See supra, Chapter Six.
(6) See supra, p. 211.
(7) See supra, pp. 212, 218, 224, 248, 250, 267, 286-7, 302, 306.
(8) In 1588, for example, one Holkham shepherd was provided with a house rent-free, another hired his for 13s.4d.; Holkham Mss., Tittleshall Books, No.19.
(9) See infra, inventories of shepherds.

he had no sheep, but two horses, two sows, one pig, one cow and some fowls; and his cultivations was represented by a plough, cart and some harvested corn.(1) In the same year, William Nutt of Mundford had possessions valued at nearly £47; his 140 sheep must have been fed with his master's flock, and his other stock comprised eight swine, two cows, one mare, one foal and some poultry; he took a greater interest in husbandry than Barney had done, having two acres of rye in the field, ten combs of rye and ten stones of hemp, and a plough, three pairs of harrows and a cart.(2) Two comparatively wealthy late seventeenth century shepherds were George Head of Heacham and Robert Wiseman of Cranwich. Head lived in an eight-roomed house and his inventory, drawn up in 1673, totalled nearly £82; he had 42 sheep and eleven lambs "in the flocke", eight other animals and some poultry; he had used "2 paire of clippers sheeres", six stones of wool remained unsold at his death, and corn worth £21.10.0. lay in the barn; the prisers found £23 in ready money, and 45 shillings were owing - but a 32nd part of a ship was considered a "desparet debt".(3) Wiseman died in 1678 worth

(1) Norwich, Bishop's Chapel, inventories, Skete 153.
(2) Ibid., Skete 139.
(3) Ibid., Frary 32.

nearly £56; his animals included 20 sheep and 53 couples of ewes and lambs; wheat, rye and barley were growing in the fields, and hemp had been partly harvested.(1)

Shepherds were a sheep farmer's only permanent employees unless his flocks were sufficiently numerous to warrant supervision by a sheep-reeve. This officer received a substantial stipend and enjoyed several of the privileges accorded to shepherds.(2) Occasional labour was needed for driving sheep from place to place, greasing hoggs,(3) assisting the shepherd at lambing times, in February,(4) gilding lambs, and so on.(5) Shearing time, however, brought a short period of great activity at the end of June and the beginning of July; sheep were washed(6) and clipped,(7)

(1) Ibid., Sussum 31.
(2) See supra, Chapter Six.
(3) Greasers were paid according to the number of animals treated: in 1600, D'Oyley paid them 9s. for every 120 hoggs, and 6 quarts of oil used on 392 hoggs cost 3s.; Ms. in Captain Hamond's possession. On the Yorkshire Wolds Henry Best paid his greasers 1d. per lamb and they treated 6 or 7 animals per day; Robinson (ed.), op.cit. p.69.
(4) Ewes were usually tupped at Michaelmas and were with lamb for 20 weeks; Robinson (ed.), op.cit., pp.3-4.
(5) For miscellaneous labour costs, see Chapter Six.
(6) "...the whiche shall be to the owner great profyte in the sale of his woll, and also to the clothe-maker"; Fitzherbert, op.cit., p.50. On the Yorkshire Wolds, Best paid his washers 3d. for each score of sheep they dealt with 6 score per day; Robinson (ed.), op.cit. p.18.
(7) Best's sheep were shorn two or three days after washing unless the wool had not risen sufficiently by then. He paid his clippers 4d. for each score of sheep; an average man dealt with 60-70 per day, a good man 80-90; Robinson (ed.), op.cit., p.21. Examples of the rates of payment in Norfolk are provided by an assessment of wages made by the Justices of the Peace in 1610. Paid by the day, a male clipper was to receive 7d. with, and 1s.2d. without meat and drink, and a female clipper 6d. and 1s. Paid "by the greate", 100 wethers were to be shorn for 1s. with and 2s. without meat and drink, 100 hoggs or ewes for 10d. and 1s.8d.; English Historical Review, Vol. 13 (1898), pp.522-527.

the wool prepared for sale or storage,(1) and the shorn animals annointed to prevent infection, and marked.(2) Details of the labour involved at the clipping have been given in Chapter Six,(3) but three further illustrations of the charges involved may be added here.

On 29th June, 1520, L'Strange disbursed 3s.4d. to eight men for washing his sheep at Fring, and drink for them cost him a further 8d.. Three other men received 8d. "for castyng inne ye shepe to ye wayshers". Four days later, 21 clippers were paid 9s.4d. and 1s.2d. went to seven men who had wound the wool and smeared the shorn sheep.(4) In 1600, Edward D'Oyley apparently had his sheep at Wells washed and shorn on the same day - the 30th of June. The draggers of the sheep received 2s.6d., the washers 10s., the clippers 24s., the lock gatherers 10d., the wool winders 4s.; two pecks of wheat, three cheeses and beer devoured by them involved another 9s.3d..(5) Finally, at William de Grey's

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(1) The fleeces were "wound": "let the wol be well folden or wounden with a woll-wynder, that can good skyll therof, the whiche shal do moche good in the sale of the same"; Fitzherbert, op.cit., p.50. When sold, the owner had the wool weighed: D'Oyley did so in February, 1600; Ms. in Captain Hamond's possession.

(2) Annointing and washing in salt water prevented scabbiness; Mascall, op.cit., p.218. For marking, either pitch, tar and redding were applied, or the ears were cut and notched; Fitzherbert, op.cit., p.50; and supra, p.301.

(3) See supra, pp. 203, 223-4, 250-2, 267, 273, 287, 296.

(4) Archaeologia, Volume 25 (1834), 437-438.

(5) Ms. in Captain Hamond's possession.

shearing at Merton in 1677, washers were paid 1s.6d. each, clippers 2s. for each hundred sheep shorn, wool winders 1s.6d. each, a sheep brander 1s.6d., and the draggers and other helpers 1s.6d. at the most according to their age.(1)

V.

The wool supply from the Norfolk flocks was the chief source of profit arising from the early need, and ever-present need, to provide dunging for the light soils of the county. Until the fifteenth century at least, the bulk of Norfolk's wool went to the local worsted industry for which it was peculiarly suited; then, as that industry declined during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, some of the Norfolk supply was drawn to the coarse broadcloth industry of Suffolk and Essex. The introduction of the new draperies restored the local demand but Norfolk wool was no longer sufficient in quantity for the Norwich industry and better quality wool was needed too. The wool supply will be examined in detail as an aspect of the worsted industry (Part Two), but it is necessary to consider here to what extent the production of mutton rivalled that of wool as an object of commercial sheep-farming in Norfolk during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

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(1) Norfolk Antiquarian Miscellany, Volume III (1887), p.94.

There was always, of course, a small demand for mutton from local butchers, and it was met by small and large sheep farmers alike with old crones, pock lambs and a few prime animals.(1) Of more importance was the larger urban market for which sheep weeded out of the flocks were insufficient, and wether flocks not only gave the best wool clips but provided fat wethers, hoggs and some ryxes for this growing market. The demand was probably small during the fifteenth century and the first half of the sixteenth: Norwich, though one of England's largest cities, had a population of only about 5,000(2) and could be supplied by the flocks in nearby districts; in the west of the county, King's Lynn - with perhaps 4,000 inhabitants(3) - could be easily supplied from no great distance; and London was only beginning to spread its net as far afield as Norfolk.

The big sheep farmers of west Norfolk were little concerned with mutton production at this time if Townshend and Fermor were typical representatives. Townshend made several substantial sales of wethers to King's Lynn butchers,

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(1) Supra, Chapter Six. From the flocks around Tittleshall and Holkham, numerous small sales were made to village butchers; Holkham Mss., Tittleshall Books No.19.

(2) Infra, p.436. Great Yarmouth added to the demand in east Norfolk.

(3) There were 3,217 payers of the poll tax in Lynn in 1377 and it was the eighth great town in England on this basis. (I am indebted to Mr. M.W. Beresford for this information).

but for the most part he despatched old and weak animals and gave most attention to wool production.(1) Fermor likewise sent a number of sheep to the fairs in 1521, and those sold at Newmarket may have been destined for Cambridge or even London butchers; but again the impression gained from the accounts is that this was the subsidiary of Fermor's objectives.(2) The flocks of Norwich Cathedral Priory provide good examples of the supply of mutton to Norwich. Those Priory flocks distant from the city were largely wool producers, but Norwich butchers bought considerable numbers of sheep from those near the city.(3)

By the mid-sixteenth century, however, sales of fat sheep were beginning to figure more prominently among the profits of the large-scale sheep farmers. Corbett, farming within sight of the city walls, naturally sent many wethers into Norwich in the 1550's;(4) and Townshend at this time was selling large numbers of both hoggs and wethers, many of them going to Newmarket and Cambridgeshire and others to Norwich.(5) On the other hand, Southwell in this period was more interested in the wool market.(6) The best

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(1) Supra, pp. 195-6.
(2) Supra, p. 234.
(3) Supra, p. 244. Also P.R.O. C1/425/47 (1515-1529).
(4) Supra, pp. 272-3.
(5) Supra, pp. 207-9.
(6) Supra, pp. 261-2.

example of production for butchers is provided by Bedingfeld: again in the 1550's, he was sending many wethers, as well as crone ewes, on the drift to Newmarket, Reach and Cowlinge, and the sale of muttons to men of the home counties suggests that Bedingfeld was getting into the London market.(1) The smaller sheep farmers, with one or two flocks, sometimes sold fat sheep, too,(2) but they could not well afford the long drive to distant markets and no doubt looked for most profit from the wool brogger coming to their doors. Evidence of the growing mutton market is provided by regulations for the prices of sheep and for maintaining their supply. In 1549, the price of wethers had been fixed at 4s. to 4s.4d. though butchers might charge a living wage above this; county Justices of the Peace were instructed to supervise the supply, and in years of shortage everybody having 500 or more sheep were to be obliged to send 5 per 100 to market.(3) Three years later, another proclamation fixed prices of sheep at 2s. to 5s.,(4) and the country Justices continually tried to fix the prices of this as well as other commodities.(5)

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(1) Supra, pp. 283-4.
(2) In 1535-6, 80 wethers were sent from Burgh Hall, Holkham, to Walsingham and to "howse the butcher"; Holkham Mss., Holkham Deeds, 9/255. House was a Norwich butcher; supra, p.272.
(3) Steele, R., "A Bibliography of Royal Proclamations of the Tudor and Stuart Sovereigns", Vol.I (1910), p.37.
(4) Op.cit., p.43.
(5) In 1552, for example, they priced best mutton at 1s.3d. per quarter, and second quality at 1s. at the most; C.B. 6/173.

In the later sixteenth century, the marked growth of the city of Norwich[1] gave an added incentive to Norfolk sheep farmers and constant attention was given to regulations aimed at the malpractices of farmers and butchers.[2] Both country and city butchers contributed to the supply,[3] those of the city numbering up to 30 in the 1570's,[4] and some idea of the numbers of sheep involved may be gained from the fact that in 1562 the tallow from the carcasses of 100 to 150 sheep was brought into Norwich market weekly.[5] By this

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(1) Infra, pp. 603-8.

(2) Ewes might not be brought to the city when in lamb (C.B. 2/169; 13/747; 14/227d.; A.B. 6/337) or if they had died at lambing time (C.B. 5/309); rotten sheep were similarly prohibited (C.B. 8/62-3); old sheep were not to be dressed to resemble lambs (A.B. 3/197); carcasses were not to be "stuffed blowen or Sette vppe by eny male engyne or disceyte" to make them seem bigger (A.B. 2/175d; C.B. 5/462); and all carcases were subject to detailed orders for dressing (A.B. 3/197, 6/11). An act of 1549-50 had forbidden butchers to buy and then re-sell sheep (and other animals) alive; Statute 3 and 4 Edward VI, c. 19.

(3) In 1574, country butchers were allowed to use slaughter houses in the city; A.B. 3/220.

(4) In 1576, 26 city butchers were bound not to kill or dress meat for sale until the last week of lent, and 61 inn-keepers and tiplers were not to allow flesh to be eaten in their houses; C.B. 10/82-3. In 1587, the numbers were 22 butchers and 71 inn-keppers, vintners and tiplers; C.B. 11/707. City butchers varied greatly in the scale of their business; in 1619, John Abell was worth only about £47 at his death, while in 1589, Richard Fassett had a total inventory of nearly £259 - with 90 lambs, 80 wethers and 20 sheep worth over £85; Norwich, Bishop's Chapel, inventories, Mason 115, Crickmer 30. A country butcher, John Cowper of Hingham, was worth over £533 in 1617 - he had sheep valued at over £65 and other animals at over £205; inventories, Johnson 119.

(5) C.B. 8/4d. etc..

time, too, the London octopus was certainly reaching out as far as Norfolk for its food supplies[1] and the drift of sheep andcattle to the metropolis was assuming fair proportions.[2]

Even in the second half of the century, the large sheep farmers took a varying interest in the mutton market: Southwell found it profitable in 1561[3] but Townshend gained little from it in 1565-7.[4] No doubt the supply of mutton varied a great deal from year to year so that accounts for longer periods are needed to assess accurately the importance of this market. Thus, fat sheep were important to Townshend in 1626[5] but not in 1637.[6] The growth of this demand probably increased the participation in the trade of the smaller sheep farmers.[7]

Although Gawdy gained his profit from the sale of lambs, not fat sheep (and indeed kept no wether flocks at all)[8]

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(1) See Fisher, "The Development of the London Food Market, 1540-1640", Economic History Review, Volume 5,No.2 (1935) pp. 46-64.
(2) Infra, pp. 354-8.
(3) Supra, p. 261.
(4) Supra, p. 216.
(5) Supra, p. 221.
(6) Supra, p. 227.
(7) The owners of Burgh Hall in Holkham were, by 1634, running a separate wether flock in the Danish "borough": 180 animals "fit for the Butcher" were fed there; Holkham Mss., Holkham Deeds, 13/639, quoted by Spratt, op.cit., p.225.
(8) Supra, p. 293.

the production of mutton became increasingly important during the seventeenth century and the new Norfolk husbandry emphasised the fattening aspect of sheep farming.(1) This was the chief interest that L'Strange(2) and Walpole took in their flocks; around 1700, Walpole was concentrating on buying hoggs in the autumn, wintering them on turnips, and selling the fat wethers in the spring in Cambridge or to butchers of King's Lynn and Norwich.(3) It was probably not until the demand for mutton had increased to its seventeenth century size that another method of production made its appearance. Nicholas Hamond of South Wootton is a particularly good example of the man who was not a big landowner and who did not maintain flocks of sheep for the whole of the year: his business was the fattening of sheep and cattle on good quality marsh pasture, some on his own account and some for re-sale to other men before the animals eventually reached the market.(4)

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(1) Supra, p.72.
(2) Supra, p.305.
(3) See Plumb, J.H., "Sir Robert Walpole and Norfolk Husbandry", Economic History Review, Second Series, Volume V, Number 1 (1952), pp. 86-89.
(4) This summary of Hamond's business is taken from a detailed account book covering the period 1663 to 1685 now in the possession of Captain Hamond of Norwich. In addition to his primary business of fattening beef and mutton, Hamond increased his profits by money-lending, providing agricultural materials, acting as a rentier and following several minor side-lines.

For these purposes, Hamond hired marshes[1] in five villages around King's Lynn and much expenditure was necessary to maintain banks against the sea. He bought large numbers of cattle at fairs in and beyond Norfolk, re-selling some after a short period but finishing most of them off to be sold at considerable profit.[2] Hamond's sheep exceeded his cattle in numbers though they involved a smaller capital turn-over; in the year ending at Michaelmas 1668, his stock included 160 Norfolk wethers, 52 ewes and 20 sheep; in the following year there were 530 sheep in all, and in 1670-1, 430. The chief customers for Hamond's fat sheep were butchers of King's Lynn and Norwich, William Raynesby being the most prominent of those in the city. Fat wethers were often sold at prices 50 per cent. greater than those at which he had bought them, and even allowing for his expenses the net profits were considerable: in 1667-8, for instance, over £237 was saved by fattening sheep and cattle and, deducting charges of over £177, the net profit was about £60. And further small profits were received for wool shorn from the stock, most of which went to King's Lynn merchants.

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(1) His rents amounted to £110 in the year ending at Michaelmas 1668.

(2) From 16th June, 1663 to 16th June, 1664, 150 cattle were bought for £501; at the end of the year, 46 had been sold for over £275 and the remaining 104 were valued at £460 - a gain of £229. In the following year, the gain was over £215, and in 1666-7, over £325. In 1668-9, the gain was only about £165 and, deducting charges, Hamond made a net loss of nearly £40.

Woolskins and pelts were merely incidental by-products of wool and mutton production, but the country glovers collected large numbers of fells and made a minor though not insignificant contribution to the wool supply.(1) Though obliged by the act of 1562-3(2) to tan their pelts after plucking the wool from them, Norfolk glovers were frequently content to sell the wool to broggers and the untanned pelts to larger dealers in the city.(3) Norwich butchers added to the glovers' supplies of skins(4) and the marketing of both pelts and fell wool in the city was strictly

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(1) Supra, Chapter Six. See the inventories of city and country glovers; a Carbrooke glover in 1615, for example, had £48-worth of woolskins and wool - over a quarter of his total inventory (Norwich, Bishop's Chapel, inventories Eldred 40); and in 1630, an Elsing glover's £80-worth of woolskins and wool comprised nearly a third of his inventory (Box 373, number 265) (also, Peck 99, Palmer 208, Mason 188, Daniels 83, Eldred 152, Johnson 107A, Frary 46, Wickham 63, Cobb 21, Abell 88, Box 153 No.160). A Great Yarmouth draper contracted to buy all the wool subsidiary to a Beccles glover's trade for one year; P.R.O. C1/121/7 (1485-1500).

(2) Statute 5 Elizabeth, c.22.

(3) Offenders against this act were sometimes accused by informers of dealing in 100's and even 1,000's of pelts; several country glovers were alleged to have sold their pelts untanned to Norwich men; P.R.O. E159/357/Trinity 164r & d., 165; 408/Hilary 73d.; 409/Trinity 130; 809/Michaelmas 234d., 235r & d., 236d.; 811/Michaelmas 290r.& d. (1567-1595).

(4) See C.B. 5/32 (1541-2), C.B. 18th February, 1568, quoted in H. and T., op.cit., II, 183; A.B. 2/73-4 (1512), 234d. (1553).

controlled.[1] Export of pelts from Norfolk was prohibited[2] but by the early seventeenth century, Norfolk sheep sold for the London mutton market were doubtless contributing to the export of pelts for which a patent had been granted.[3]

To reach a conclusion concerning the importance of mutton production, it seems clear that this became an increasingly prominent aspect of sheep farming in Norfolk as a result of both the growing markets for mutton and the declining position of Norfolk sheep in the worsted industry's wool supply. In the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, wool was still unrivalled as the chief marketable product of Norfolk sheep farmers. Mutton became increasingly profitable in the late sixteenth and throughout the seventeenth centuries[4] while the Norwich industry was gradually turning to the finer wools of other counties; and by the eighteenth century, mutton was probably the large sheep farmers' main concern.

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(1) As footnote 4 on previous page and also A.B. 2/169d. (1540); C.B. 3/197 (1540). Detailed orders were contained in the book of the Company of glovers, tawyers and pointmakers; A.B. 5/118d-120d (1593), 135 (1594), 158d. (1596). A prominent Norwich glover, Titus Norris (A.B. 3/177, 1579), found wool-dealing a profitable sideline: he was disenfranchised for complicity in the illegal dealings of his son who was fined £20 for refusing to take up his freedom; A.B. 5/134, 140d. (1594).

(2) Statute 5 Elizabeth, c.22.

(3) Details of this export are contained in a dispute over the patent; see P.R.O. E178/4105 (1609-11).

(4) For the relative prices of wool and wethers see Appendix Five.

VI.

An essential preliminary to the marketing of sheep and wool was the unpopular payment of tithes; whether the sheep farmer paid in kind or whether he compounded with the incumbent for a money payment,(1) this was a substantial deduction from his profits. The payment of a fixed rent in lieu of tithes allowed the farmer to increase his production without allowing an additional benefit to the clerk, and it was probably this consideration which prompted a new incumbent at South Creake to demand lambs and wool instead of the rent received by his predecessor.(2) This was only one of the ways in which efforts were made to avoid the payment of tithes. With flocks of sheep feeding in different parishes, as they frequently did, it was possible to deny the right to tithes claimed by at least one of the clerks concerned; the vicar of Terrington, in one such dispute, claimed that Thomas Gybbons, gent., had refused to pay tithe wool for his flock, and Gybbons' reply was that the sheep were fed for part of the year - and were shorn - in neighbouring Walpole.(3) Soon after, the same vicar was

(1) See, for example, supra, pp. 222, 260 . The shepherd and the owners of cullet sheep in a flock at Congham compounded for their tithes and made money payments; P.R.O. E134/40 Elizabeth/Easter 3. A foldcourse owner might pay a tithe rent for the whole flock: L'Strange, for example, paid £15 for the tithe of Holme foldcourse in 1522; Archaeologia, Vol. 25 (1834), p.476.

(2) P.R.O. C1/1368/14-17 (1553-8).

(3) P.R.O. C1/982/62-3 (1538-44). A frequent cause of dispute was doubt as to which church or chapel should receive the benefit of the tithes in question; there are many examples in "Norwich Consistory Court Depositions, 1499-1512 and 1518-1530", Norfolk Record Society, Vol. 10 (1938).

forced to claim the non-payment of tithes by a number of his parishioners, and among other demands he sought financial compensation for lambs and sheep sold in their wool.(1)

Both wool and lambs were regarded as small tithes;(2) and the payment of tithes - in kind or in money - was usually based on the year's increase and the year's clip: in most of the sheep accounts examined in Chapter Six, the tithes had already been despatched before the accountant's reckonings begin, and in the case of wool the tithes were removed even before the fleeces reached the wool-house.(3) The most detailed evidence available concerning tithes is provided by the account book of the benefice of Flitcham in 1567: lambs, wool and money were paid by the owners of two flocks, including the cullet animals in them, and amounted in all to 22 lambs, 1s.10d. for odd lambs, and 17 stones and 4 pounds of wool.(4)

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(1) P.R.O. C1/1118/40 (1544-53).
(2) See Rye, "North Erpingham", I, p.60 (Gimmingham, 1281). Also P.R.O. C1/775/22-8 (Gunthorpe, 1533-38). At Diss in 1610, ½d. was paid for each lamb under the number of 7, if there were 7 then one lamb was given and the vicar paid 1½d. to the owner for the missing 3, if there were 8 then one was given and 1d. returned, 9 then one was given and ½d. returned, and if 10 then simply one lamb was given;and each tenth pound of wool was given to the incumbent; Blomefield, op.cit., I, 19-20.
(3) In none of the accounts is there a description of the methods of selecting the tithe lambs and wool to compare with that given in Best's farming book; Robinson (ed.), op.cit., pp.24-25.
(4) N.P.L. Flitcham Mss., Bundle 8/358.

Apart from purely local dealing, many sales of sheep took place at markets and fairs without the assistance of middlemen. Norfolk fairs[1] often sufficed, but for distant sales it was usual for sheep to be sent to fairs outside the county[2] rather than for customers to come to Norfolk. And at the fairs, middlemen and informers mingled with men looking for stock. Sheep farmers incurred charges and toll payments both at the fairs[3] and on the roads to and from them; to reach the Suffolk, Essex and Cambridgeshire fairs, for example, sheep had to be taken across the Little Ouse - probably at Thetford or Brandon - where 4d. per score was paid for animals crossing the bridges in the reign of Henry VIII.[4]

Simple exchanges of sheep sometimes sufficed,[5]

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(1) Among them Gissing, Thetford, Kenninghall, Kipton Foulsham, Fransham, and Harleston.
(2) Among them Newmarket and Cowlinge (Suffolk), Reach (Cambridgeshire) and Thaxsted (Essex).
(3) Supra, p. 294. . In 1600, Edward D'Oyley paid 1s. in tolls when buying lambs at Foulsham fair; Ms. in Captain Hamond's possession.
(4) Blomefield, op.cit., II, 56.
(5) In 1587, a Gayton man arranged to let Thomas Cobb of East Walton have 34 second-shear sheep in exchange for 18 ewes and 12 lambs, the 34 to be delivered at the following Lammas and the 18 and 12 at the following Candlemas; P.R.O. Requ. 2/238/33.

but with few exceptions sales of sheep were made with credit allowed to one of the parties. When Thomas Jekeler contracted to buy 200 ewes from Great Massingham, he paid only 6s.8d. in cash and gave two bills of obligation for £14 each.(1) The absence of written evidence rendered such deals precarious,(2) for the executors often refused to honour the debts after a buyer had died and creditors frequently attempted to secure double payment of debts. Debtors were in many cases obliged to provide security for the payment of their debts, and again the lack of written evidence endangered the buyer: creditors sought the payment of the full bond on the pretence that the debt had not been satisfied.(3) Richard Dey went so far as to allow his lands to be mortgaged for £37 as surety for the payment of £18.13.4. when he bought some sheep; his creditor found some pretence under which to refuse payment and entered into the lands instead.(4)

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(1) P.R.O. C1/530/48 (1515-29).
(2) Richard Gryme could not prove that Nicholas Whale owed him 40s. for 24 sheep, P.R.O. C1/314/10 (1500-15); or John Fisher that his namesake owed him £10 for corn and sheep, C1/134/27 (1485-1500).
(3) Richard Barker bought 500 ewes from John Woodhouse for £80, giving a bond of £100 as surety; Barker claimed that this had been paid, but Woodhouse sued for the £100; P.R.O. C1/946/4 (1538-44).
(4) P.R.O. C1/980/27 (1538-44).

Where these small deals were not made at fairs but at the seller's home, provision was sometimes made for the buyer to pay for the sheeps' pasturage between the making of the contract and the delivery date. Thomas Jekeler, for instance, paid 26s.8d. for the feeding of 200 sheep that he bought at Great Massingham. This practice occasioned further uncertainty for in this particular case the creditors refused to honour the bargain and witheld the 26s.8d. as well as the instalments already paid and the obligations.(1) In other cases, sales were made in order that the buyer might fatten the sheep on his pastures and both parties shared the profits.(2)

It was normal for sheep to be sold by the long hundred, just as that measure was invariably used in the sheep accounts; but despite the use of the long hundred in Statute 25 Henry VIII, c.13,(3) it seems that this may not have been universal throughout England. When the owner of a flock of over 1,000 sheep at West Barsham (Norfolk) died, his brother, John Doddington of Corfe Castle (Dorset), sold

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(1) P.R.O. C1/530/48 (1515-29).
(2) John Miller sold 80 sheep, 55 lambs and 21 bullocks to Richard Foster to be fattened, and theywere to share the profits; when Foster died intestate, his executors refused to pay Miller; P.R.O. C1/1030/52-55 (1538-44).
(3) Supra, p.312.

the sheep to Thomas Athowe who had a foldcourse at Grimston (Norfolk). Doddington expected to deliver the sheep at five score to the hundred but Athowe pressed him to make up the "full Norfolk thousand" at six score to the hundred.(1) In Dorset, at least, the long hundred was presumably not used.

So much for the dealing carried out by sheep farmers themselves, with or without recourse to the fairs; but for the smaller farmers the expense and delay of visiting the fairs - even those in Norfolk - were too great and there was an ideal opportunity for the intervention of the middleman. Little is known about these men in Norfolk apart from the data associated with "An Acte againste Regratours Forestallers and Engrossers", passed in 1551-2;(2) but fortunately the informers who found Norfolk such a happy hunting ground for wool broggers, as a result of the act passed only five years earlier,(3) were kept almost as busy by the illegal sheep and cattle dealers. The act decreed that anybody who bought and re-sold live animals must keep them for an intermediate five weeks on his or their "owne Houses grounde ferme grounde, or els in suche grounds where

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(1) P.R.O. Requ.2/32/73.
(2) Statute 5 Edward VI, c.14.
(3) Statute 1 Edward VI, c.6. See infra, pp.453-4.

he or they have the herbage or comon of Pasture by graunte or p'scripcon..."; a penalty of double the valueof the animals made infringement unprofitable. The business of buying and re-selling animals at considerable and unjust profit was clearly too easy: no useful function could possibly be performed by men who intercepted animals on the way to market or bought them from farmers nearby and re-sold them either on the spot or at a very short distance. Not that this legislation was intended to hamper the beneficial work of anyone "knowen for a comen Drover or Drovers" who moved animals great distances and were truly indispensable; drovers were now to be licenced by three Justices of the Peace in their county of origin and were then free to buy cattle wherever they had been accustomed to do so and to sell them at reasonable prices in common fairs and markets at least 40 miles away "so that the same Cattall be not bought by way of forstalling".

The great majority of offences concerning Norfolk men were alleged to have taken place at Westminster - presumably at Smithfield market. Very large numbers of animals were reaching London from surrounding counties and Norfolk men amongst others were buying and immediately re-selling them there[1] and at another important market -

(1) For example, supra, p.317 ; many of the informations to be found in the Exchequer Memoranda Rolls concern cattle, or cattle and sheep.

Islington in Middlesex. Although some of those animals had been sent from Norfolk,(1) the majority came from elsewhere and of more interest here are the activities discovered within the county of Norfolk. In many cases, the middlemen were saving farmers the expense and trouble of taking lambs and crones to local markets themselves: in 1564, for instance, Thomas Porter of Ellingham was reported to have bought 500 lambs and 140 crones from Humphrey Beaupre and others at Wells in the north of the county and to have sold them at Kenninghall in south Norfolk.(2) No service at all was performed by the men who bought and re-sold sheep in the same Norfolk village,(3) but others put themselves to the trouble of driving the animals to Smithfield;(4) a further variant was to buy Norfolk sheep that had already made part of the journey to London and to take them the rest of the way.(5)

The Norfolk middleman whose activities were most frequently called into question was John Thory, a draper of

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(1) For example, in 1590 John Watts of Mattishall (better known as a wool brogger - infra, p.363) bought 1,000 lambs from Bassingbourne Gawdy (see supra, pp. 291) and others at Islington; P.R.O. E159/400/Hilary 89. A number of middlemen were informed upon as both wool and sheep dealers, including Thomas, John and Roger Watts, Richard Baldwin, Edward Hall, Peter Gage, Thomas Elvey (all of Mattishall) and Thomas Hall (of Mattishall Burgh).
(2) E159/350/Hilary 46.
(3) E159/421/Michaelmas 95 (West Walton, 1600), for example.
(4) E159/369/Michaelmas 182 (Beckham to Westminster, 1574), for example.
(5) For example, in 1577 Thomas Watts of Mattishall bought 1,000 lambs from Mr. Baxster of Stanway, Norfolk (Stanhoe?), at Royston in Hertfordshire and re-sold them at Islington; E159/374/Easter 42.

Burnham Market in north Norfolk. He took part in the buying and selling of 5,000 sheep and 5,000 lambs at Westminster in 1590,[1] 4,000 lambs there in 1591,[2] and 2,000 lambs and 1,000 sheep there in 1593;[3] three years later he was alleged to have dealt with 200 wethers and 1,000 lambs, again in London,[4] and in 1597 he and Roger Watts of Tuddenham profiteered with 500 sheep and 500 lambs there.[5] Edward Body's information against Thory prompted an interrogatory about his doings in 1594,[6] and another in 1595.[7] The second was put to John Younge of Great Bircham:[8] he agreed that Thory had bought sheep at Barsham and within three weeks sold them at various fairs: and he further accused him of being a common buyer and seller of corn.[9]

A similar interrogatory[10] revealed that Edward Monnforde, of Radwinter in Essex, was dealing in Norfolk. A husbandman and a labourer of Docking believed that he had

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(1) E159/401/Michaelmas 181.
(2) E159/403/Michaelmas 117.
(3) E159/407/Michaelmas 345.
(4) E159/409/Trinity 97.
(5) E159/415/Michaelmas 171d., 172.
(6) P.R.O. E178/126.
(7) P.R.O. E133/10/1598.
(8) Younge himself dealt in sheep at Westminster in 1590; E159/401/Michaelmas 407.
(9) P.R.O. E133/8/1213.
(10) P.R.O. E133/8/1152.

bought sheep from Calibut Walpole, or his sheep-reeve, at Syderstone, from Roger Carter of Docking, and from other Norfolk men. Some of the animals, they said, had been driven to Monnforde's home but the rest were sent - within five weeks - to Cowlinge fair; neither witness was sure how far that was from Syderstone, but one of them had heard 37 miles - just below the critical limit that would have brought Thory within the statutory exemption for drovers. It was in fact about 50 miles.

Another foreigner dealing in Norfolk was John Knight, a miller of Wortham in Suffolk. In answer to an interrogatory in 1594,(1) a Diss witness alleged that Knight had bought lambs at Diss and South Acre, selling most of them within five weeks. Some of the lambs had been bought from the witness himself and he was clearly interested in the case: the interrogatory suggested that he had sought to influence the course of justice by meeting the informer concerned (again Edward Body) at Gissing fair, and "praide him to be good to the saide John Knight". London informers clearly travelled widely in search of prey, but the £70.16.8. which would have been his half share of the fine in this case would have much more than offset Body's travelling expenses.

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(1) P.R.O. E133/8/1164

A little can be discovered of the profits made by these middlemen, if the informers are to be trusted. For driving sheep the 22 miles (as the crow flies) from Hunstanton to Fransham (Norfolk) in 1563, one man gained 2d. on each lamb and sheep.(1) In the following year, the 36-mile drive from Wells to Kenninghall (Norfolk) brought a profit of 4d. on each lamb and crone.(2) In 1564, too, a profit of 6d. was made on each 100 lambs driven from Norfolk to Cowlinge (Suffolk).(3) A more substantial gain was of 6d. for each wether bought and re-sold at the same Norfolk village in 1572,(4) and for lambs bought at Royston (Hertfordshire) and re-sold at Islington in 1577 the profit was nearly 4½d. each.(5) Profits of up to 15 per cent. were considerable, especially in view of the large numbers of animals involved and the frequency of a man's dealings.

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(1) E159/347/Easter 61.
(2) E159/350/Hilary 46.
(3) E159/350/Hilary 46.
(4) E159/365/Michaelmas 408.
(5) E159/374/Easter 42.

VII.

For the majority of sheep farmers the carriage of their wool to Norwich or to the country wool markets would have been costly and time-consuming; and the journey to the wool producing districts was equally impracticable for the worsted weavers, most of whom were poor craftsmen working on a small scale and needing only small amounts of wool at a time.(1) Middlemen were essential to the trade and a great variety of men, many with other means of livlihood, were attracted to take part in it.(2) The regulation of the wool broggers' activities and the demand of the worsted industry for their services are considered in later chapters dealing with the industry, but some attention will be given here to the composition of the class of middlemen working in this county and to the methods they adopted.

Bowden distinguished three broad classes of wool middlemen working in England in the period 1500-1560: the large local dealers or "woolmen" who might at the same time be graziers or general merchants in other products, the merchants of London and the larger provincial towns for whom

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(1) Infra, p.453.
(2) The identity of the middlemen engaged in the English internal wool trade is fully considered in Bowden, P.T., "The Internal Wool Trade in England in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries", unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Leeds, (1952), pp.114-133.

wool was but one aspect of their trade, and the smaller wool broggers who sometimes combined this business with agriculture or industry. The woolmen were almost solely to be found in the fine wool producing areas and were chiefly concerned with supplying the export merchants; with the declining export of wool they were losing their importance by the mid sixteenth century and eventually disappeared as a group, but there is, in any case, no evidence of their activities in Norfolk whose coarse wool never interested the Staplers.(1) Some representatives of the second group did participate in the Norfolk trade, among them merchants of Norwich who supplied the worsted industry(2) and merchants of King's Lynn who engaged in the illegal export of wool or transported it to other counties.(3)

By far the most important middlemen in this county, however, were the broggers; the unsuitability of Norfolk wool

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(1) Infra, p. 454.
(2) Though not until after the introduction of the new draperies; see below.
(3) A number of King's Lynn merchants were informed against for offences against the act of 1547 regulating the marketing of Norfolk wool; infra, pp. 456. For examples, see P.R.O. E159/350/Hilary 138; 348/Trinity 168, Michaelmas 367, 1563-4. William Style, a Lynn merchant, sent his apprentice into the country on horseback to fetch wool; P.R.O. C1/75/22 (1461-1485).

for the Staple export trade or for the fine broadcloth industry and the predominance of the small manufacturer in the worsted industry gave these broggers an unrivalled pre-eminence. Whenever national legislation threatened to deprive the worsted weavers of the broggers' services, it was recognised that in the Norfolk conditions these middlemen were essential; but their activities were always limited to dealing in Norfolk wool only.(1)

Although Norfolk wool had been sufficient in both quantity and quality for the old worsted industry, supplies from outside the county were needed by the expanding manufacture of the new draperies and then Norwich Stuffs in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The broggers were excluded from this new wool trade which was, in the first instance, in the hands of four Norwich aldermen and was later controlled by various city merchants. The smaller middlemen continued to supply Norfolk wool to the worsted weavers.(2) In England, generally, Bowden saw the entry of three new classes of middlemen into the wool trade after 1560: the Staplers who had lost their export trade and were turning to the supply of the home cloth industry, merchants and manufacturers engaged - or previously engaged - in the leather

(1) Infra, pp. 453-5.
(2) Infra, pp. 553 et seq.

industry, and the "brogging clothiers" who re-sold the wool they bought. The first and third of these groups do not seem to have entered into the Norfolk trade, and although glovers of other counties contributed to the supply of wool to Norwich, the sale of wool continued to be merely incidental to the proper trade of most Norfolk glovers.(1) At least one family of Norwich glovers did, however, contribute to the group of merchants who controlled the supply of Midlands wool to the city in the early seventeenth century.(2)

The trade in non-Norfolk wool, and the merchants who participated in it, will be dealt with in the relevant sections of Part Two; but as far as the marketing of wool by Norfolk farmers is concerned, attention must be focussed on the brogger.

A great variety of middlemen dealt in Norfolk wool: some appear to have gained their sole livlihood from the trade, others were part-time broggers otherwise engaged in a

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(1) In a few cases, Norfolk glovers did deal in wool; in 1564, William Wynne of Litcham bought wool at Burnham and re-sold it at Bury St. Edmunds (Suffolk); P.R.O. E159/351/Michaelmas 195d.. In 1578, a Hempton glover bought wool at Westminster; E159/379/Michaelmas 82.

(2) Infra, p. 347.

wide range of occupations,[1] and some were merchants dealing in numerous goods in addition to wool. The most illustrative gallery of middlemen is that provided by informations alleging breaches of the act of 1547;[2] some eighty men fell prey to informers between 1558 and 1619.[3] Many of these middlemen appear only once or twice in such informations, and no evidence of their work is to be found from other sources. But of much more interest is the group of wool broggers who dealt continually with Norfolk farmers, both legally and illegally: their names are not limited to the Memoranda Rolls but frequently occur in the Norwich Court Books and elsewhere[4] and if they were not full-time wool broggers then at least this was the business to which they devoted most of their time.

Among these well known broggers, the majority lived in a group of villages in central Norfolk near East Dereham, and especially in Mattishall and Mattishall Burgh. The Watts family was perhaps the most prominent of all. The reason for this concentration seems to be the simple one of geographical location: these villages lay between the Sheep-Corn Region of west Norfolk and the worsted weaving

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(1) Among these occupations were:- carrier, yeoman, hosier, merchant, merchant tailor, glover, fishmonger, draper. (P.R.O. E159).
(2) Infra, pp. 453-5.
(3) Found by a thorough search of the Memoranda Rolls (K.R.) of the Court of Exchequer.
(4) See Appendix Four.

district of East Norfolk, with its centre at Norwich. From Mattishall, Watts and his associates travelled throughout the wool producing region collecting supplies;[1] some of them had wool-houses in the west of the county as well as in their home villages[2] where they were well-placed to visit the Norwich market[3] - or to engage in illegal wool-running over the Suffolk border.[4]

Despite the notorious profitability of wool-brogging, it was fraught with difficulties. No doubt it made some men; it did not make Henry James of Briston who died in 1618 with household goods worth only £2.16.2.,[5] and it had been precarious for Francis Aylemer of Buxton who had little at his death in 1601 apart from hopeful and desperate debts amounting to £60.[6] Others certainly fared better. Edward Shepheard of Hempstead must have pursued an average trade before his neighbours valued his possessions at about

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(1) In 1558, Thomas Butts of Great Riburgh sold wool to Edward Watts; B.M. Addit.39221. In 1520, L'Strange of Hunstanton sold wool to Yorke "ye woolman of Tudnham (Tuddenham)"; Archaeologia, Vol.25 (1839), p.488. See also, Chapter Six, pp. 263-4,217.

(2) William Watts died in 1647 with £34-worth of wool in his wool-house at Mattishall,and "the woole lying at Guyton thorpe" accounted for another £43; Norwich, Bishop's Chapel inventories, number 149 in bundle 3 in a box of inventories of this date.

(3) Some, like Firmin Neve of Mattishall, had warehouses in the city; C.B. 10/538 (1580).

(4) Infra, p. 454.

(5) Nowich, Bishop's Chapel, inventories, Stamfer 231.

(6) Ibid., Snowden 2.

£63 in 1621; but the debts which credit dealing involved accounted for over £23 of that sum.(1) Two men who had prospered on the trade were Richard Rayner of Hevingham and William Watts, a member of the wool-brogging family of Mattishall: Rayner's inventory totalled £203,(2) and Watts's £456.(3) At his death, Watts had wool worth £77 in his wool-houses and £200 in ready money, but animals, corn and husbandry implements show that he maintained a certain interest in agriculture.

The difficulties confronting the wool middleman cannot be better described than by a full quotation from the letter written by Edward Newgate of Norwich to Sir Thomas Tresham in 1599.(4) Though Newgate may have been guilty of some exaggeration in this plea to one of his creditors, the difficulties which he had encountered were in principle those which any brogger might have met. He wrote:-

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(1) Ibid., Wickham 51.
(2) Inventories, Myles 292 (1593).
(3) Ibid., number 149 in bundle 3 in a box of inventories dated 1647.
(4) H.M.C., Various Collections, Volume III (1904), pp. 96-97.

"And by your worships favour I would make it known unto you:- first for my trade of buying of wool, because the statute of the land is against it, it hath cost me for licences since my occupying began at the least 200l., besides I have lost by Dutchmen decayed and gone away beyond the sea more than 100l., besides I have paid 50l. a year for interest money, these be grievous crosses for a poor chapman as I was, having nothing to live by but my travail and labour of my hands, and also being well known my beginning to be small, for I never had 30l. of ready money of any friend I had in all my life. And come to later time, I bought two years past on Mr. Tirrell's wool, dwelling about Stonye Stratfor, he having two years wool being much of it both tarry and rotten which I knew not until I had bought it. I was forced to put off ninety tod of the same wool that would not serve for Norwyche unto Peter Alen of Owndell by name, to sell it into Suffolk, to whom I was constrained to lose iijs. in every tod of that it cost me or else he could not have sold it; now this last year I bought Mr. Tiringames wool being two years wool at 23s.4d. the tod, besides it cost me twenty mark for the carraige to Norwyche. I was forced to sell all that wool for xvjs. the tod, some at Norwyche and some to send to Berye in Suffolk and both for xvjs. the tod, besides all this, of late time having wool coming out of Buckinghamshire by cart my sacks were ripped by the way by the carriers and stole out as much wool as came to xxxiijl. of money and the sacks cunningly sewed up again. Also of late time having wool coming by cart to Peterborowe, the water men through their negligence cast me a load of wool into the river at Peterborowe bridge, whereby the wool being spoiled I lost I know not what."

Newgate said he was willing to divide his goods and two or three tenements that he had between Tresham and his other creditors. Newgate had previously bought and sold wool at Norwich[1] and at Westminster[2] besides bringing wool to the

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(1) In 1591 it was alleged that Newgate bought 40,000 lbs. of fleece wool in St. Andrew's parish and re-sold it there; P.R.O. E159/403/Trinity 56.

(2) In 1590, he was informed upon for buying and selling 1,500 tods of fleece wool at Westminster; E159/401/Michaelmas 504. And in 1592 for dealing with 500 tods there; E159/404/Hilary 124.

city from Norfolk and elsewhere. The licences mentioned in his letter were needed to enable him to deal in non-Norfolk wool and Newgate appears to have been one of the group of Norwich men controlling the supply of such wool for the Norwich industry. Only a year before his plea to Tresham, Newgate had been in the company of four prominent Norwich middlemen-merchants in complaining against an alien wool comber for infringing the city's wool marketing regulations.(1)

The procedure adopted in dealings between wool growers and middlemen varied a great deal with the scale of both parties' activities.(2) Norfolk middlemen travelling in the county probably made many on-the-spot transactions with farmers, though there is little evidence for the nature of their deals and the sheep accounts do not help; but advance contracts for wool, which Bowden found to be equally common elsewhere in England, were used in this county, too. It is difficult to assess the importance of contract dealing in Norfolk for known cases are few: it was probably popular with the numerous small and medium growers, but men like Townshend could afford to hang on to their wool until prices

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(1) C.B. 13/232, see infra, p. 563.
(2) The purchase and sale of wool in England are fully described in Bowden, thesis cit., pp. 134-187. A full account is not attempted here, and the following pages describe wool dealing with reference to Norfolk evidence alone and attempt to isolate any peculiarities there may have been in the Norfolk middleman's methods.

suited them. For their part, the middlemen may not have regarded long-term contracts favourably: when dealing with the poor weavers and spinsters of the declining worsted industry in the sixteenth century, they could never have been quite sure of their market, though their other customers - the Suffolk clothiers - provided a more reliable demand. Moreover, since they lived so near the Norfolk wool growing region, these middlemen could be sure of their supplies without the aid of long-term contracts for several years' wool, and it would not be surprising if they made most use of the second kind of contract - that for a single delivery - and entered into agreements with farmers only a short time before shearing.(1)

Contracts for a regular supply of wool over a period of years were of two chief kinds. In the first, wool was to be provided at the current market price, and in the second either the total price or the price per stone was fixed. An example of the second variety was the contract made between a London dealer, Henry Pattmer, and the priors of Castle Acre; all the priory's wool for a period of ten years was involved, and the price was always to be 3s.4d. per stone.(2) A variant on this arrangement was that between

(1) For a probable example of this, see supra, pp. 227-8.
(2) P.R.O. C1/578/15 (1515-1529).

Richard Holden, gent., of the Middle Temple, and Francis Basterd of Norfolk: 80 stones of wool were to be delivered annually for ten years and the price was to be 7s. per stone in the first year and 5s.4d. thereafter.(1) In a third case, the total price was fixed; Thomas Wynde of South Wootton agreed in 1581 to sell all his wool to Roger Sedgewicke of St. Ives for three or four years until the supply reached the value of £119.7.0.(2)

Whatever their conditions, the fulfilment of long-term contracts was endangered by rapid rises in wool prices, when the grower would feel entitled to more than the agreed price, or by rapid decreases in prices, when the buyer would wish to be released from his contract. Furthermore, once they had secured a contract, farmers could easily practise deceits in preparing their wool - if not so easily get away with them. Wynde had agreed to supply his wool "well and also marchauntably dressed and trymmed upp" and he kept his word for the first year; but thereafter he delivered it with "great abus & deceipt" so that Sedgewicke had to re-sell it to his great loss. Basterd, too, tried to deceive the dealer who alleged that the wool had been very coarse, badly washed and mixed with flock and other rubbish: no

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(1) P.R.O. C1/1229/62-64 (1544-1553).
(2) P.R.O. Requ.2/122/32. The contract between the prior of Weybourne and Richard Odde of Thorpe Market also involved a fixed total payment: 200 stones of wool were to be provided at 60 stones annually, together with certain malt and barley and Odde was to pay £78 in all; P.R.O. C1/192/58 (1485-1500).

merchant would buy it from him. Non-delivery or the supply of poor quality wool were especially feared by those middlemen who made arrangements for the sale of the wool before they actually received it from the grower. William Feke and William Mathewe, two wool chapmen of Edgefield, contracted in 1544 to buy all the wool grown by Robert Longwade of Thorpe Market for seven years at 3s.4d. per stone; but after Longwade's death, his widow (admitting that the price of wool had risen) alleged that the agreed price had been 3s.10d. per stone and, moreover, refused to supply the final instalment of wool under the pretence that the contract had become void on her husband's death. The broggers had already sold the undelivered wool.(1)

Credit was involved in most transactions for the sale of wool; sometimes direct loans were made, repayable with interest, but more usually book credit was allowed. Creditors and debtors were to be found at all stages in the supply of wool and the manufacture of cloth, but it is probably true to say that in wool dealing, credit was most frequently granted by the seller to the buyer. There was, however, great variation between the attitudes to credit dealing of the different classes of wool growers. Small farmers needed regular supplies of cash for the payment of

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(1) P.R.O. C1/1122/8-9 (1544-1553).

rents and they naturally favoured immediate sales of wool for ready money; sometimes their needs prompted them to seek part of the payment in advance, with the rest due at delivery of the wool. The larger tenant farmers, who were represented by the many foldcourse lessees in Norfolk, were better able to give credit to the middlemen; and the large-scale sheep farmers were able to choose their methods of sale unhindered by the pressure of creditors - they could delay sale until market conditions were most favourable and they gave extensive credit to the wool broggers. One need look no further than the sheep accounts of Sir Roger Townshend for confirmation of this.(1) On the strength of their indebtedness to the wool growers, broggers could afford to place themselves in the position of creditors in their dealings with the cloth manufacturers; but it is likely the Norfolk broggers rarely took credit from the small weavers and spinsters of the worsted industry who bought wool in such small quantities.

The contracts already quoted provide adequate examples of the giving of credit.(2) Herry Pattmer, for instance, bought 270 stones of wool worth £45 from Castle Acre in one year, but paid only £20 on delivery of the wool: the

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(1) Supra, pp. 198-200.
(2) Also, see supra, pp. 198-200.

rest was to be rendered in instalments. Holden also paid his debt in instalments. Especially in the case of dealings with middlemen from distant counties,(1) creditors often demanded security from their debtors to safeguard them from non-payment and wool buyers provided bonds which almost always exceeded the debt. Sedgewicke contracted to buy wool from Wynde to the value of £119.7.0. but he gave a bond for £200.(2) In cases of even greater uncertainty, creditors might require such bonds to be underwritten by one or more sureties, and the surety might cover his own risks by taking a counter-bond from the debtor. Sureties were often wealthy men who could be relied upon to make payment if the debtor defaulted: thus, a North Walsham mercer was surety for John Bartylmewe when he bought wool from John Dalton.(3)

These, then, were the methods of procedure and the uncertainties of the wool middleman's business. What profits did he make from it? There is little evidence available for either the average profits or the amount of wool

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(1) Hesitancy in dealing with such middlemen was certainly justified: Anthony Oteway and James Keene of Compstocke in Devon bought £100-worth of wool in Norfolk - but they gave the names of Joanes and Payne in their obligations to avoid payment; Acts of the Privy Council, Calendar, 1588-89, p.151.

(2) Similar bonds were given by clothiers to wool broggers; John Bredstreete and Edward London of Suffolk gave two bonds - one of £50 for the payment of £30, another of £40 for £20 - to Thomas Cooke, a Norfolk wool chapman; P.R.O. Requ. 2/25/59.

(3) P.R.O. C1/751/36 (1529-1538).

dealt in annually by Norfolk middlemen. Several contemporary sources suggested to Bowden[1] that 1s. per stone was the average profit margin on wool sold at 11s. - 12s. per stone, and that this represented about 10 per cent. of the total cost of wool and transport. But these calculations referred to the substantial dealers - the Staplers, and the one source of Norfolk evidence concerned another large-scale middleman - Simon Bowde.[2] A fellow Northampton glover declared that when Thomas Adkins sold wool to Bowde, the latter always made a profit of 2s. per tod (1s. per stone); if he could not sell it at this profit, he either returned it to Adkins or decreased his payment to Adkins to allow for such profit. The profits of the small Norfolk middleman were no doubt extremely variable, but the only evidence available is that provided by informers[3] - and their allegations must always be treated warily: they were liable to be given half of the fine imposed and since that fine depended on the value of the offender's transactions, they may often have inflated the figures.

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(1) Thesis cit., pp.185-187.
(2) Infra, pp. 556 et seq.
(3) That is, informations laid against offenders against the act of 1547; see supra, p. 363 , infra, pp. 453-5.

Nevertheless, in only seven of the known informations did the informer pretend to know both the buying and selling prices of his victim; in these seven cases[1] the average profit was a little over 10d. per stone on wool sold at an average price of just over 6s.6d. per stone, or a little over 16 per cent. of the cost of the wool. The transport costs in these cases are not known but the highest rates of profit (20 per cent. and 40 per cent.) would probably have been considerably reduced by the cost of transport from Norfolk to Westminster; in four of the seven cases the wool was carried only as far as Suffolk. As regards the amount of wool dealt with annually by these middlemen, it is impossible to give even approximate figures.

The wool had been sold and weighed by the grower, packed and carried away by the middleman,[2] perhaps roughly sorted by him, and sold to the weavers, combers and spinsters of the Norfolk worsted industry, to the clothiers of Suffolk, or to customers in London. The nature of the demand for

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(1) P.R.O. E159/348/Trinity 144, Michaelmas 436 (1563); 350/Hilary 143 (1564); 351/Michaelmas 171, 195d. (1564); 357/Michaelmas 230 (1567); 358/Hilary 109 (1568).

(2) The grower rarely performed these duties. Edward Shepheard had "Three packinge Clothes & packing lines"; Richard Rayner had two "rod sadles", two "packe sadles wt bridles & packe clothes" and three horses, one mare and four colts; Francis Aylemer had pack cloths. Norwich, Bishop's Chapel, inventories, Wickham 51, Myles 292, Snowden 2.

Norfolk wool, the varying supply needed within Norfolk, and the consequent regulations of the middlemen's trade can be understood only by full reference to the development of the worsted industry during these two centuries. That development will be considered in Part Two where the supply of raw material may be examined in the light of the fundamental changes which the Norfolk worsted industry underwent between 1500 and 1700.