

THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC HISTORY OF THE EAST FEN

VILLAGE OF WRANGLE, 1603 - 1837.

Submitted for the degree of Ph.D.

in the University of Leicester,

December, 1966,

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FRONTISPIECE

The shores of the Wash, showing the position
of Wrangle.

(from J. Janssonius, Niewen Atlas, Vol. 4,
Amsterdam, 1659. Photographed from a
copy in the Maritiem Museum, Rotterdam.)

THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC HISTORY OF THE EAST FEN

VILLAGE OF WRANGLE 1603 - 1837.

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 ABBREVIATIONS

H.C.	-	House of Commons
L.A.O.	-	Lincoln Archives Office
L.R.S.	-	Lincoln Record Society
P.R.O.	-	Public Record Office

1. WRANGLE IN ITS SETTING

Physical background

The parish of Wrangle, some nine miles north-east of Boston, occupies an area mid-way between that town and Wainfleet. To the south-east lies the Wash and to the north-west the parish of Eastville which was formed in 1812 following the draining of the East Fen. The adjacent parish to the south-west is Leake, with which it has many affinities. Administratively, Wrangle belongs to the wapentake of Skirbeck and parts of Holland but it is a border parish and to the north-east lies Friskney in the wapentake of Candelshoe and parts of Lindsey.¹

The ancient road from Boston wound its way through the parishes of Benington, Leverton, Leake, Wrangle and Friskney and on to Wainfleet, passing by all the parish churches and keeping to the "high land" which, in fact, was only a few feet higher than the adjacent "low ground". This route, the only feasible one in the days when the East Fen was liable to inundation and the sea bank an inadequate defence, has now been straightened in many places for the convenience of the fast-moving traffic to Skegness, the re-aligned road leaving several of the parish churches to right or left.

The area of which Wrangle is the central parish was, until 160 years ago, a rather narrow strip of arable land and pasture some 18 miles long and from 3 to 5 miles wide between sea and fen. The sub-soil is stiff clay, overlaid on the coastal margin with silt brought

1. See Frontispiece and map following p. 14.

up by the tide from the destruction of the Yorkshire cliffs, while on the fenland side, the clay is overlaid with an uneven layer of peat.¹ Although the rainfall - less than 25 inches a year - is the lightest in England, the area has been threatened with flooding throughout recorded history, the chief reason being that the highest land of this very flat region is near the coast. Until effective means of discharging upland water into the sea were employed, it was retained in the saucer of impermeable clay which formed the East Fen. From the seaward side, a high tide accompanied by an easterly gale is a threat to the whole countryside. Negligence with the sea banks could still bring very severe penalties.

The July average temperature of 61°F. places Wrangle in the same category as Birmingham, Manchester and Cardiff but the average January temperature is below 38°F. which means that it is the coldest place in England during the depths of winter and on a par with Aberdeen. Visitors find that the absence of natural wind-breaks makes even the summer temperature feel less genial than the thermometer readings indicate. Arthur Young, in describing the area before the draining of the East Fen, summed it up in words which must have been true for many previous centuries,

"It is a region of fertility without beauty, in a climate not salubrious to the human constitution".²

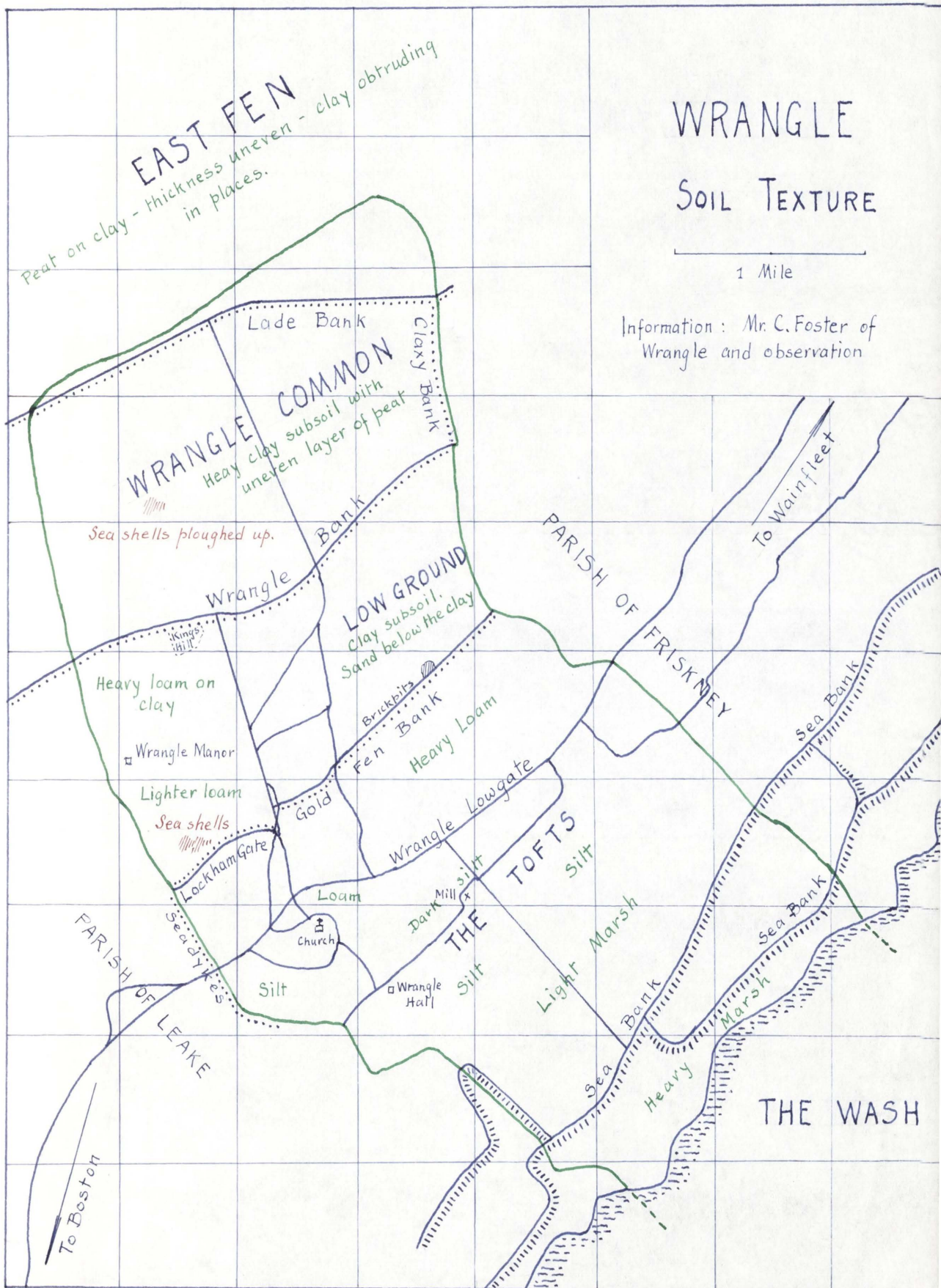
1. See map overleaf.

2. A. Young, General View of the Agriculture of Lincoln, London, 1799, p. 2.

WRANGLE
SOIL TEXTURE

1 Mile

Information: Mr. C. Foster of
Wrangle and observation



Pre-Norman settlement.

Concerning the earliest settlement of the area there has been far more conjecture than evidence as no remains have been found of a period earlier than that of the Roman occupation. After considering the evidence, M.W. Barley concludes,

"There is nothing to suggest that Lincolnshire was the home at this time of people as advanced economically or as highly organised politically as the Icini of East Anglia or the Brigantes of Yorkshire".^{1.}

However, the area was certainly settled, the evidence being some Roman pottery which was unearthed in a field near King's Hill in 1886.

There are also grounds for believing that a minor Roman road ran from Wainfleet to Skirbeck and that a mound known as the Ivorys, on the border of Wrangle and Friskney, was the foundation of a building which served some military purpose. Of the indigenous population there are no remains. Mr. Barley, recording this as one of the puzzles of Lincolnshire, conjectures that towards the end of the Roman period, a fall in the level of the land made life more difficult, transforming a rich farming area into the "wide waste" of St. Guthlac's time.^{2.}

Such a condition would certainly account for the fact that neither Angles nor Danes have left much behind them to enable us to fill a gap of some six centuries with more than reasonable conjectures. Students of the period are agreed that this was an area which the pioneers of the invading Angles would find unattractive as they pressed

1. & 2. M.W. Barley, Lincolnshire and the Fens, London, 1952, p. 32 and p. 123.

on into the interior and that it was a later expansion which settled the coastal strip between Skegness and Boston. It is also agreed that the Danes followed the same pattern in their invasions, pushing on beyond the fens to firmer and more salubrious ground and that it was a later backward infiltration into conquered territory which accounts for the occasional Danish place name in a region where English names predominate. One point which is certain is that Wrangle was sparsely populated up to and beyond the Norman Conquest. Domesday Book records that there were seven sokemen in the village with one plough and ten carucates of land. In Saxon England the manor had been held by Adestan who had two carucates of land. The final sentence is significant,

"Wido has it and it is waste on account of the flowing of the sea".¹
Wrangle was evidently in one of its periods of inundation.

Settlement after the Conquest.

In the Domesday record, Wrangle appears as 'Weranghe', the derivation of which is doubtful as it could come from either an old English or a Scandinavian word, both of them signifying 'bent' or 'crooked'. Professor E. Eckwall suggests that the name may refer to a stream which has since disappeared² but, as may be seen on the map overleaf, it could equally well refer to the shape of the haven.

Fortunately, the three centuries following the Norman Conquest have left considerable traces of man's activity on the land and a wealth of documentary evidence all of which has been thoroughly and

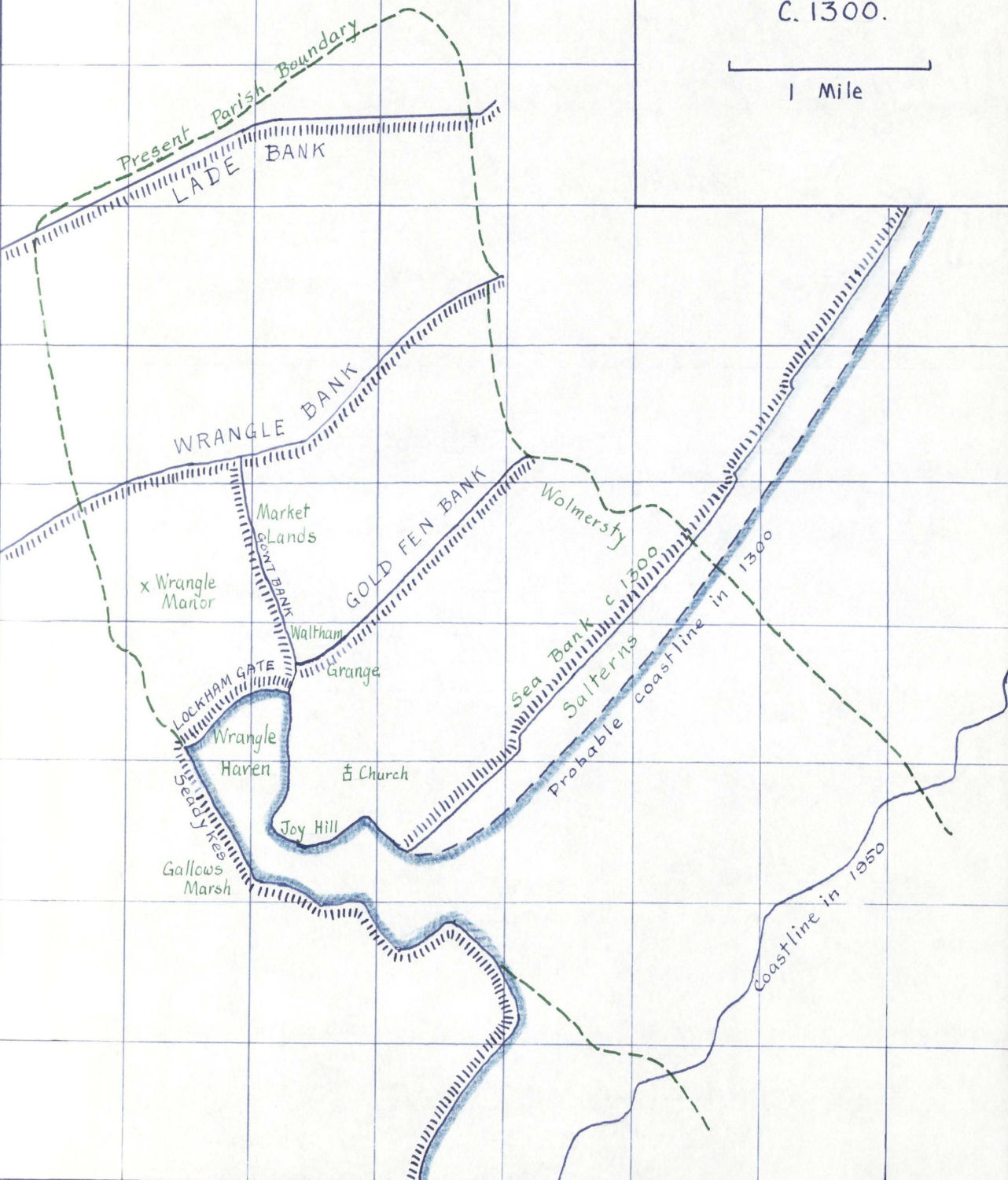
1. C.G. Smith, Domesday Book relating to Lincolnshire and Rutlandshire, London, 1870 p. 213.

2. E. Eckwall, Dictionary of English Place Names O.U.P., 1946 p. 512.

WRANGLE

C. 1300.

1 Mile



carefully evaluated by H.E. Hallam.¹ These were centuries of bustling activity. The harbour was busy and near by was a regularly held market. By 1201 a sea bank was built, the remains of which may still be traced and a continuous line of salterns stretched along the sea coast and part of the harbour.² In turn, the salterns called for extensive turbary for the pits and pasture for the oxen used as draft animals. Much of this activity was made possible because the times were favourable for expansion towards the East Fen. The documentary evidence makes it certain that enclosures for pasture and tillage went as far as Wrangle Bank and that there were some ditched enclosures as far out as Lade Bank. This enormous labour of ditching and building of fen banks could only have been undertaken in a period of prosperity when the pressure to expand was keenly felt. Numerous grants of land are recorded to the abbeys of Kirkstead and Waltham and while they cannot all be exactly located, among the holdings of Waltham were the Grange and the hamlet of Wolmersty which bordered on Friskney. As Waltham Abbey also provided a priest for Wrangle, it is reasonable to suppose that the abbot also undertook the building of the church which was certainly there late in the 12th century when Simon le Bret granted two crofts to the abbey "on the east side of Wrangle church". As Hallam rightly remarks, "It is a far cry from the Wrangle, Friskney and Wainfleet of 1086, poor undeveloped places, short

1. H.E. Hallam, Settlement and Society, C.U.P., 1965.

2. See map ~~overleaf~~ on p. 6.

of inhabitants, to the rich and settled townships of 1200". This was the period which saw the completion or enlargement of the string of fenland churches which bear witness to prosperity as well as to piety.

Wrangle did not long survive as a port. The harbour was shallow and the mounds left by the salt makers who moved ever nearer the sea and the continual layering of tidal silt effectively filled the Haven. Hakluyt records that in 1359 Wrangle contributed 1 ship and 8 men to the fleet of Edward III but there appears to be no evidence which carries the story beyond that date. Both Boston and Wainfleet had better harbours, capable of taking vessels of deeper draft and both had a more extensive hinterland for trade. Even if the harbour had not silted up, Wrangle could not have developed more than purely local trade as it had no river to link the port with places further inland.

The 14th to 16th centuries not only saw a halt to the advance to the East Fen but abandonment of positions once held as flooding from the fen rendered the enclosures useless. The consequence was that, with the exception of an area along the Friskney border, private ownership of land beyond Wrangle Bank was not maintained and a very extensive tract had reverted to common by 1600. In the coastal area it was a different story as the irregular but continuous silting up along the shore added many fertile acres to the reclaimed marshland which constituted some of the richest grazing land in England. Even by 1600 the "sea dyke", which still retains its name, was far inland.

The Manor of Wrangle.

From the Norman Conquest until 1294 the manor of Wrangle was in the possession of the Lacy family, the last of whom, Henry, Earl of Lincoln, had married Margaret, heiress to the Earl of Salisbury. In 1292, their only surviving child was a daughter, Alice, then aged 13, the heiress presumptive of both the Lincoln and Salisbury estates. As their combined annual value was rated at 10,000 marks, this was a prize which Edward 1 could not overlook and accordingly Alice was betrothed to Thomas of Lancaster, the king's nephew, the marriage being solemnised in 1294. For the present purpose, it was the marriage settlement which was important, the terms being wholly favourable to Edward I's family ambitions. The effect was that if Alice died without issue the estates would revert, not to her lawful heirs but to the descendants of Edmund of Lancaster, her father-in-law, or, failing them, to the king and his descendants.¹ Alice, in point of fact, outlived three husbands and died childless in 1348. Thus it was that the manor of Wrangle passed to the Duchy of Lancaster, becoming a royal manor administered by the duchy after the successful rebellion of Henry of Lancaster and his accession as Henry IV in 1399.

The history of ownership of the manor is not without its complications and, as the city of Leicester comes into the story,

1. History, Vol L, No. 169, June, 1965, K.B. McFarlane, 'Had Edward I a policy towards the earls?'.

the matter is worthy of mention. The heir of Alice Lacy by the marriage settlement was her nephew, Henry of Lancaster, who held the manor until his death in 1361. By his will, Henry passed the manor to his son-in-law, John, Earl of Richmond. However, there is an unresolved question of ownership as on 6th March 1361, nine days before Henry made his will, John of Gaunt is recorded as having given the manor to the city of Leicester.^{1.}

As far as Wrangle was concerned, ownership was less important than administration, which was in the hands of a steward or bailiff. Unfortunately, little is known of the management of the estate except that in October of each year the auditors came down from Pontefract and took up residence at Bolingbroke while the stewards of the Lincolnshire manors of the duchy brought in their accounts. Sir Robert Somerville warns would-be students of the manors that their story cannot be pieced together from the records of the duchy:

"It might be thought that the chancellor had some jurisdiction over the Duke's records. He certainly had many in his charge, not only registers but also inquisitions. But the care of records was not his prerogative, Local officers kept their own and accounts were largely in the hands of auditors."

As though to emphasise the point in the case of Wrangle, a footnote to this page records a "chest bought for court rolls and other evidences at Wrangle, 1396/7".^{2.}

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1. Robert Somerville, History of the Duchy of Lancaster, London 1953. p. 47/8 and p. 54 Vol 1.
 2. Ibid. p. 117.

If the contents of that chest have been preserved and ever come to light, much that can at present be no more than conjecture may become certainty.

However, some definite information is available for the 16th century when John Stephenson, "farmer of the demesne lands of Her Highness's Mannor of Wrangle", wrote a letter to Sir Francis Walsingham, Chancellor of the Duchy. The first point which emerges is that Stephenson was not a steward but a lessee as his predecessors had been in the reign of Elizabeth I. The second point is that among the normal profits of the manor were those of "a certain pasture and pischary called the mere and the sea and the fisheries of Fossett", "the profite turbarye", "the graseing of her parkes" and "brovage and agistment". The third and most important point was that "John Goodricke, John Woodrofe, John Hobson and Simon Wattson have of late entered into the same, pretending title to their claiming the same by color of common, and have not only themselves entered therein, but also by certain practices confederating themselves together, with divers others have stirred the rest of the inhabitants of the said toune of Wrangle to enter into the same, and to claim the same as common belonging to the said toune".¹ Stephenson prayed that Sir Francis Walsingham would summon the four offenders to the duchy court to answer his complaint, alleging that not only was he losing the profit to which he was entitled but that if the trespasses on this part of the manor were not checked, the

1. W. Marrat, The History of Lincolnshire, Boston, 1814, Vol. II, p. 127.

queen was "likely to be disinherited of the same for ever".

Stephenson did not mention the more substantial profits of his lease, accruing from rents of the arable and pasture on the demesne land, as these were not matters of complaint. Later information makes it clear that he obtained no redress with regard to the trespass, the inhabitants still asserting and exercising their claim of common in the reign of James I.¹ The most powerful and wealthy local family was that of the Reeds who lived at Wrangle Hall. For at least three centuries they had increased in importance - but they appear to have given no support to Stephenson and his successors. While no great credence can be attached to the "tradition" (which Marrat recorded in 1814,) that the John Reed buried in 1503 "was a great outlaw and robber", certain it is that Sir John Read, Sheriff of the county in 1609, far from checking the trespasses of others, had for years grazed his sheep on the outmarsh belonging to the manor without paying rent of any kind.² When enjoyment of rights depended not on assertion but the ability to enforce, the lessees of the royal manor were in a weak position with such troublesome and determined neighbours.

The impact of the Dissolution.

The Lincolnshire Rising of 1536 showed that there was passionate support for the monasteries in the Horncastle area but Wrangle and the neighbouring parishes, cut off by the East Fen from the main areas of ferment and lacking the lead of any great religious house, remained

1. P.R.O. D.L. 42/119.

2. P.R.O. 4086 E.178, 21 Jas. I.

unmoved. The defeat of the rising and of the more serious Pilgrimage of Grace hastened the end of the religious communities which, in Wrangle, chiefly resulted in changes in ownership. Most of the lands which, in past centuries, had been granted to the abbeys of Waltham and Kirkstead were purchased by the Hambie (or Hanbie) family. A map of 1606 shows how intermingled were these holdings with other ownerships¹ but an expanse of land to the north-east of the parish formed the greater part of the estate and, after it had passed to the Chaplins, was still known as Wrangle Waltham. As the owners of this land were impropiators of the great tithes, they received an award of 292 acres at the Enclosure.²

The brief reign of Philip and Mary, with the restoration of Roman Catholicism, led in Leake and Wrangle to the foundation of their most notable charity, founded in 1555 by Thomas Alenson, the last of Wrangle's celibate Catholic priests.³ Furthermore, Mary's piety in disgorging some of the gild lands held by the crown had its minor repercussion in Wrangle when about 60 acres were committed to the care of the corporation of Boston for the upkeep of a bridge, the Grammar School and for other charitable uses.⁴

1. See map following p. 83.

2. Sir Thomas White, Gazeteer and Directory of Lincolnshire, 1856, p. 328

3. See Chapter 8.

4. Lincs. Archives Committee. Archivist's Report No. 9, p. 42.

These items are recorded since land ownership played its part in later events in the parish. In the following pages, however, in recording the history of the parish for 250 years the aim has been to look at the lives of the ordinary residents of the parish - their work, their homes and family life, their religious beliefs and institutions, their conduct and, as far as can be discovered, their thoughts and feelings. Wrangle was a remote parish, away from the main highways and far from centres where ancient learning was preserved or new ideas fermented - and in this respect it was typical of the majority of English villages. In studying and attempting to reconstruct the history of the parish, the writer had had some apposite words of William Barry continually in mind:

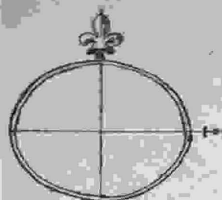
"These too had their sorrows, their heavy task, ere they passed into the unknown. Remember that they were like unto thee as thou art like unto them".¹

1. W. Barry, The Papacy and Modern Times, London, 1911, p. 30.

THE EAST AND
WEST FENS 1661.

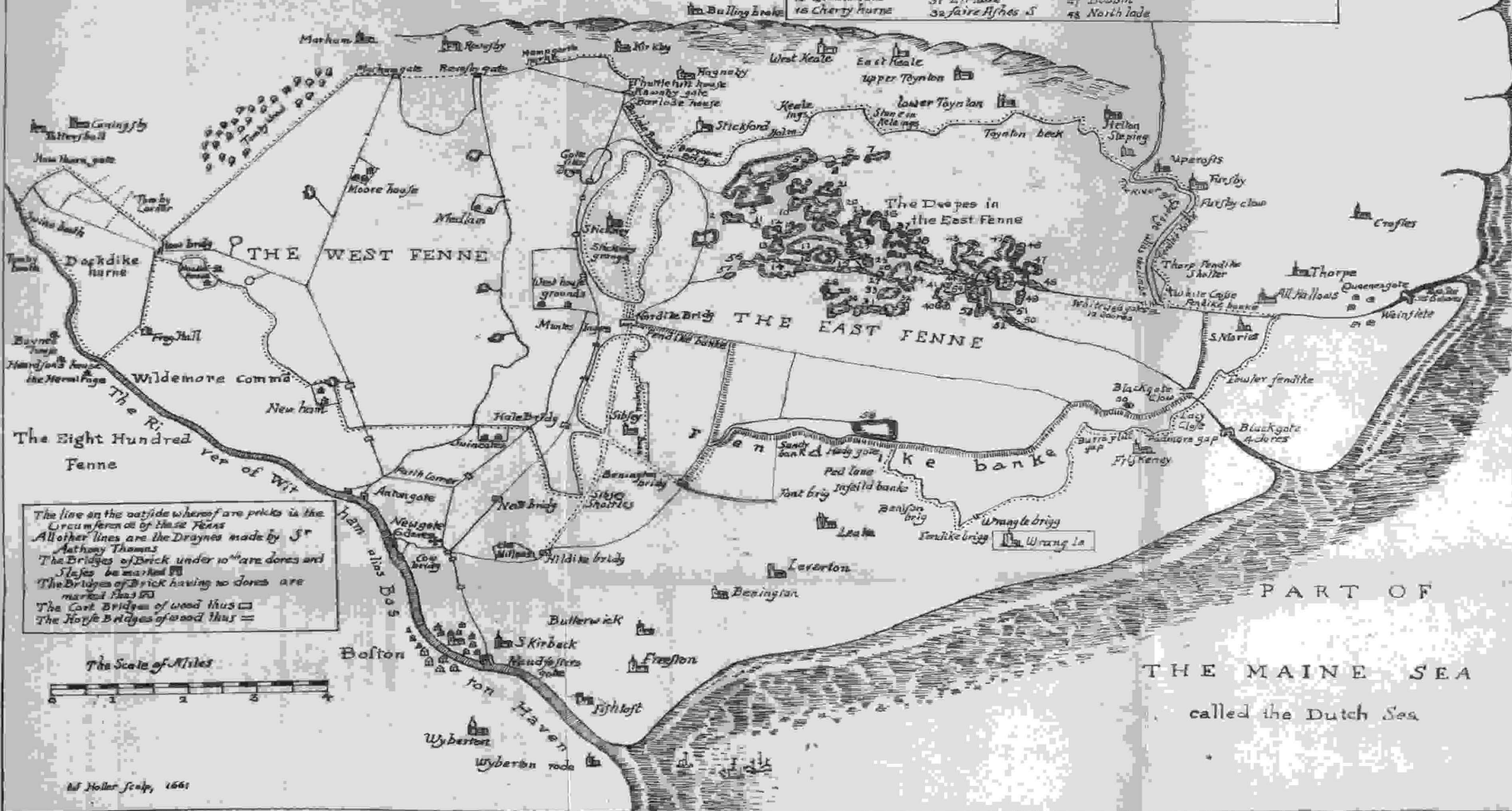
*From W. Dugdale,
History of Imbanking
and Drayning, (1662),
facing p. 422.*

A Map of the EAST AND WEST FENNE



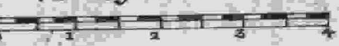
The names of all such Deepes in the East Fenne as containe any quantitie of water.

- | | | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| 1 Stock Water | 17 Long Water | 33 Faire Bykes N | 49 Lashwater |
| 2 Groupe | 18 Brightley | 34 Easholme | 50 Kings fishing |
| 3 Neale's fike | 19 Bamb wate | 35 Thunne fere | 51 Smith nuke |
| 4 Strickford fike | 20 Silver pit | 36 Neale offes W | 52 South lade |
| 5 Ronger | 21 Coot mouth hole | 37 Neale dikes E | 53 Billwater |
| 6 Purple poole | 22 Moft Bellock | 38 Swinham lade | 54 Billwater Clifton |
| 7 Neale Haven | 23 Harle Booe | 39 Danle | 55 Mughill lader |
| 8 Neale Water | 24 Gikborne nuke | 40 Mal lade | 56 Goodin droughs |
| 9 Swanne Water | 25 Grouple | 41 Mal lade filons | 57 Beang fike |
| 10 Fisher bind hole | 26 Darnmouth | 42 Jewell wader | 58 Leake meare |
| 11 Little park cist | 27 Saller gate | 43 The Skines | 59 Starrgate |
| 12 Great park cist | 28 Gofp Water | 44 Caw mouth | 60 Ryme pits |
| 13 Muggill | 29 Burnt meare | 45 Robb water | 61 Small pits not |
| 14 Great Goodin | 30 Burnt meare holes | 46 Middle water | conferable |
| 15 Girdle Gate | 31 Ell lade | 47 Dobbin | |
| 16 Cherry Horne | 32 Faire Bykes S | 48 North lade | |



The line on the outside whereof are prickes is the Circumference of these Fens
 All other lines are the Draynes made by Sir Anthony Thonnes
 The Bridges of Brick under 10th are doted and
 Slates be marked
 The Bridges of Brick having no dotes are
 marked
 The Cart Bridges of wood thus
 The Hayle Bridges of wood thus

The Scale of Miles



2. THE PARISH AND ITS GOVERNMENT

The bases of authority

The records of the parish, though incomplete, clearly illustrate the various strands which were intertwined to compose its government. In the early part of the period, while the manor was still part of the Duchy of Lancaster, the indications are that the normal customs of a manor were observed and the regular officers appointed. After the manor was sold, during the Commonwealth period, Wrangle had a series of non-resident lords of the manor and the holding of manorial courts, at first irregular, had died out by the end of the 18th century. Thereafter, the manor counted for little in the field of government. The second authority, whose influence is in evidence throughout the period, was ecclesiastical, the jurisdiction of the Lord Bishop including many matters which are now considered as entirely secular. However, the most dominant and persistent authority was that of the justices of the peace who were empowered to appoint many of the local officers and to call them to account for any failure in their duties. The central government was, of course, responsible for the laws which the justices administered but rarely intervened in purely local matters, though national policy had its impact on the remotest village. Finally, there were the local officers themselves who were increasing in importance until almost the end of the period. Theirs was the authority most nearly felt by the ordinary inhabitants.

The manor.

The manorial records which have survived are mainly surveys, made by officials of the Duchy, which enable us to say, fairly definitely, that between 1600 and 1650 the parish contained some 75 families or from 300 to 350 inhabitants. Unfortunately, the records of the manorial court are missing so that it is impossible to discover how well it worked and by what stages the vestry meeting took over its functions. Stray references in the Bede accounts - a fine for a trespass of the Bede kine in 1683, relief for a transfer of land in 1706 and essoins paid at various times until 1745 - indicate that the court was held until well on into the 18th century. However, by 1820, there had clearly been no session for many years and as the vestry was dubious about its authority to appoint pinders, it begged the lord of the manor to hold a court for the purpose, promising to pay the expense. After considerable delay, the court was held and the appointment made but no similar request was ever made again. In 1824 a pound breach led to a trial at quarter sessions and to minimise the risk of future breaches, the vestry decided to build a pinder's cottage near the pound. Without reference to the manorial court, a meeting of parishioners, summoned by the vestry, passed the plans for the house and, when it was built, appointed John Bloom as pinder to occupy it, the property being vested in the overseers of the poor. The vestry minute adds, as a kind of after-thought, "that the said house is to pay 1/- a year to the Lord of the Manor". There are no further references to manorial authority.

The church.

Ecclesiastical authority, at the beginning of the period and for a long time afterwards, was no mere matter of voluntary submission to "spiritual pastors and masters". In 1600, the church was "by law established" and for 40 years the Elizabethan Prayer Book had contained the only authorised services permitted by the Act of Uniformity of 1559. The enforcing authority was the bishop, with the sanctions of civil and ecclesiastical courts to support him. In his parish, the vicar was not only the servant of God but an instrument of the civil power, by his daily office praying for "godly and quiet government" and by his example and precepts from The Book of Homilies instilling respect and obedience in his parishioners to the king "and all who are set in authority under him". The history of the next fifty years showed that there were many clergy who were not prepared to accept this position but the vicars of Wrangle did so without demur.

The bishops, not without reason, did not entirely trust the vicars and used the churchwardens to check and report upon their conduct. Even routine returns, such as copies of the register and terriers relating to the vicarage and glebe land, were not complete until they had been countersigned by the two churchwardens. In addition, from time to time, the churchwardens were called upon to make their own presentments, reporting on the conduct of the vicar and the morality of the parishioners. For Wrangle, the series of presentments which has survived runs from 1663 to 1822.¹ For the main part, the churchwardens had little to report other than cases of

1. L.A.O. Churchwardens' presentments.

swearing, adultery, fornication and non-attendance at church and never, at any time, was there even the mildest criticism of a Wrangle vicar. The most interesting of the series came in 1709 when the bishop issued a long questionnaire with 52 sections covering many aspects of church and civil life. The churchwardens, John Moody and Hammond Underwood, both husbandmen, took the matter very seriously, answering the questions fully and carefully. In general, all matters relating to the church, its fittings, furniture and books were in good order, the only item of interest being that in 1705 "the steeple was from a wooden spire converted into a stone tower for the preservation of the same". In their reply as to whether there were any Feasts, Church Ales or Drinkings held in the church or churchyard, the churchwardens appear to have been rather shocked at the thought, answering that "both church and churchyard are kept free from these and all such prophane uses". Of the vicar, Rev. Richard Bailey, they spoke in the highest terms. The services of the church were held regularly and were conducted according to the canons and rubrics, the vicar at all times wearing his surplice and, although he lacked one at the time of the enquiry, "a hood will be provided at a convenient opportunity". The vicar preached a sermon every Sunday and took communion services both at festivals and on other occasions so that every parishioner had ample opportunity of taking communion three times a year. He had been regularly instituted and inducted, was not suspected of having obtained his Orders by "simoniacal compact", was resident in his parish and held no other benefice. He was diligent and attentive to such

offices as baptism, the teaching of the catechism and preparation for confirmation and "on all occasions" was "very careful to visit the sick". Of his character they reported, "Our minister is a man of a sober, peaceable and exemplary life, in all things behaving himself agreeable and as becoming a minister of the gospel". This however, was the same Rev. Richard Bailey who was responsible, in some measure, for riots when the coming of Methodism threatened his authority forty years later.¹

In the eyes of the churchwardens, the parish was a model village. Upon oath, they declared that they knew of no adulterers, drunkards, blasphemers or profaners of the Lord's Day. No one refused to attend divine service except the few dissenters who attended their own services. All who were of the communion of the Church of England regularly sent their servants and children to the services and there were none "who are capable of receiving the sacrament which do neglect so pious a duty". They knew of no couples who were unlawfully married, no mothers who had refused churching and no parishioners of any sort who refused to pay their Easter offerings. To their knowledge, all wills and testaments had been submitted to probate - which was a matter of some importance to the bishop, as the fees replenished the episcopal exchequer.

1. See Chapter 6.

The answers to the questions may well have been less satisfactory and more interesting in other parishes but, for the present purpose, the main point is that the questions illustrate the control exercised by the bishop which, in many respects, was both salutary and necessary. In Wrangle, the vicars, churchwardens, overseers of the poor and trustees of the various charities appear to have carried out their duties reasonably well, the series of terriers revealing no cases of peculation or malversation. It may well be that the men selected for these offices would have acted honourably in any case but the knowledge that they had to give an account of their stewardship undoubtedly conduced to their faithfulness.

The jurisdiction of the bishop was, and still is, exercised through a number of officials, the most important being the archdeacons and the chancellor. Among the functions retained by the archdeacon are the oversight of the fabric of churches and visual inspection of the vessels used at the communion service. Although the abuse of power noted by Chaucer and railed upon by Wycliffe had largely passed by 1600, archdeacons were rarely popular figures; yet the preservation of many of our parish churches owes much to their vigilance and intervention. Wrangle was a case in point.

By 1818, the condition of the church was thoroughly unsatisfactory. Part of the roof was leaky and the timbers supporting it were rotten. The tower had developed cracks, the pinnacles were insecure and the bell-frames dangerous. The vestry arranged to deal competently

with the leaking roof but decided just to patch up the tower. At this stage, the archdeacon intervened very firmly, sending his apparitor to deliver his monition in person to one of the churchwardens. A vestry meeting held in November considered the matter but could not put the work in hand until the following Lady Day when a rate could be levied. In March, two meetings were held, the first of which proceeded no further than to order the re-casting of a cracked bell. However, the second meeting got to grips with the matter of the tower and, apparently still hoping that things were not as bad as they appeared, asked John Hayward, a Lincoln architect, to give them a report which, when received, afforded them no comfort. The tower must be dismantled and rebuilt and entirely new bell frames must be erected. The work of restoration proceeded in leisurely fashion, the whole of the repairs taking four years. This, however, was just as fast as the parish could pay by levying successive extra rates of 6d. in the £., the total raised being £850, the rebuilding of the tower alone costing £510. The timely exercise of the archdeacon's authority meant that the church was in a sound condition for over a century before other major repairs were necessary - this time to counter the ravages of the death-watch beetle.

The Justices of the Peace.

Wrangle had no resident justice of the peace between 1600 and 1850 but the records clearly indicate the pervasive authority which the justices exercised. The quarter sessions records are preserved

only from 1673 and before that date the local records contain only occasional references to the justices but from that time onwards, the authority of the magistrates, quite apart from court cases, can be illustrated by many examples.

At the beginning of the period, the overseers of the poor and the surveyors of the highways were the only parish officers appointed by the justices, the constables being appointed by the court leet and the dikereeves by the Court of Sewers, but by 1662 so many manorial courts had fallen into desuetude that an act was passed enabling any two justices to appoint the constables "until the lord of the manor should hold his leet".¹ In Skirbeck hundred the justices made the appointments throughout the period of the records.

In practice, it was quite impossible for the justices to know of men who were fit for the various offices in every parish, the usual custom being for the vestry to submit a list of those eligible and for the justices to "select" the first two persons named. It did not really matter who selected the men for office as the choice was so limited that every eligible man had to take his turn. However, once appointed, he was answerable to the justices for the faithful discharge of his duties.

Compared with other parishes, Wrangle had a good record. There were defaulters, of course, such as Thomas Goodrick and William Reeson, constables, who in 1707 were fined 16/- each for failure to

1. 13 and 14 Chas 11 1662.

attend the Highway Sessions, Robert Morris, constable, who in 1715 was found guilty of "negligence in his duty", William Atkin, grand jurymen and the two constables, John Winters and Christopher Jessop, who absented themselves from the Quarter Sessions in 1741 and Absalom Coupland, who was fined 20/- in 1818 "for not attending in due time to be sworn on the grand jury". These, however, were small matters and the most vulnerable of the officers were the surveyors who had the almost impossible task of keeping fenland roads in good order.

In the last quarter of the 18th century, Rev. John Shaw, D.D., one of the justices, made it his business to travel throughout Holland and "present" any parish whose roads did not satisfy him. In 1778 it was Wrangle's turn. George Gask, one of the surveyors, answered the summons to the Summer Sessions and admitted that the two miles of road from Wrangle church to the Friskney boundary were in poor condition. A fine of £50 was imposed upon the inhabitants but suspended until the next sessions. George Gask duly appeared at the Michaelmas Sessions "and proof having been made that the highways being out of repair" were "now sufficiently repaired", the court remitted the penalty.

In 1812, the inhabitants were again summoned for allowing one mile of the same road to be out of order. The court imposed a suspended fine of £250 and the justices ordered the overseers to levy an extra highway rate of $1/6$ to put the road in order. In some measure, Wrangle was unfortunate. In November 1810 the sea had burst the sea banks at many points between Wainfleet and Spalding and the

floods had caused havoc. Wrangle had completed the task of draining the land and raising the sea bank but had neglected the road which, indeed, must have been nearly impassable. As we have the surveyors' accounts as well as the sessions record, we can follow the steps which were taken to comply with the justices' order.

At first, the surveyors bought up all the builders' rubble they could, either locally or in Boston, but the quantity available was not nearly enough for the work. Next they advertised for shingle and they were successful in finding a supplier. Nine flat-bottomed boats brought 1,182 tons of shingle from Boston, being beached on the sea bank at high tide and unloaded before the next high tide. Unloading was an operation which called for strength and speed. Ten men spent 47 days between them over the work and as the pay was 6/- a day, it is certain that each brought his own horse and sled. The next stage was to move the shingle over the unmade sea road to the highway. For this work 3-horse carts were needed. The overseers had no option but to call upon local farmers to provide them at 9/- a day as part of their statute labour. Fourteen teams were engaged for a total of 30 days, William Evison, one of the surveyors, setting a good example by using one of his own teams for 11 days. Before the shingle could be spread over the whole mile, some of the drainage tunnels under the road had to be completely re-made. For this purpose, the overseers bought 141,523 bricks from the local brickmaker, William Royle. The bricks cost only £120 5s. 6d. - or less than a farthing a brick - but there was an excise duty of £31 15s. 6½d. to pay.

This appeared to the overseers as so unjust that they engaged Mr. Francis Thirkill, a Boston attorney, in a fruitless appeal, which cost a further £4 9s. 6d. The bricklayers who built the tunnels and the carpenters who made the hand-rails were paid 2/6 or 3/- a day but the labourers who spread the shingle and rammed it down received only 1/6 a day. Ten men were employed for a total of 1,131 days on this work, Stephen Edwards with 287 days and John Dickinson with 249 being engaged almost continuously for the greater part of a year. The whole operation cost £904 13s. 9d. or rather more than £1 a yard. Possibly further refinements were needed as the fine was not remitted until October 1815 when two justices, A. Duggan and J. Linton, certified to the court that the road was at last in good repair. It is not surprising that in 1831 the mere threat of being presented brought a flurry of activity to the parish.

A study of the cases at the sessions gives the impression that not only Wrangle, but Holland as a whole, was remarkably free of serious crime, until it is remembered that crime detection was the responsibility of untrained, part-time constables. While Wrangle may have been a very law-abiding place, there is the probability that much petty pilfering went undetected and that the constables were not over anxious to bring their neighbours to court. Whatever the reason, the fact remains that most of the Wrangle cases involving residents of long standing were those of common assault, breach of the peace or bastardy in which an aggrieved party could take out a summons while most of the cases of crime, brought by the constables, involved labourers who were new to the parish.

Before noting a few cases involving Wrangle residents it is worth observing that in some 30 per cent of cases the accused were found not guilty by the justices or by the juries, presumably because the prosecution case was poorly presented or the weight of evidence was insufficient. Another point which emerges is that the penalty for common assault was the comparatively light fine of 1/- while theft, even of trivial items, invariably led to prison sentences with public or private whippings. A second conviction for theft or a number of charges proved at the same sessions always led to a sentence of transportation.

The earliest recorded Wrangle theft came in 1792 when Ann Clarke, widow, found guilty of stealing a hempen sheet, valued at 10d., was imprisoned for two months, the first at hard labour and the second in solitary confinement. In 1819, John Gray and Charles Smith, labourers new to the parish, pleaded guilty to three separate charges of stealing clothing. Of the first charge they were severally sentenced to be transported for 7 years, no sentence being passed on the other two charges. Six years later, William Jackson, another labourer, was found guilty of stealing one piece of silver, this being his first offence. He was committed to prison for two months with solitary confinement in alternate weeks and was to be twice privately whipped. In 1839, William Harrup, William Johnson and John Linton, all newcomers to the parish, clumsily raided the three local shops, collecting 30 pairs of boots, 4 pairs of shoes, a coat and 2 waistcoats. In this case, detection was easy and it is no

cause for surprise that with three admitted charges against them, they were sentenced to be transported for 10 years.

The value placed on stolen property was often quite nominal, with the intention of avoiding a capital charge at the assizes. In 1831, John Hoyles, a farmer's son, served a prison sentence for a theft from the vicarage. Eleven years later he was found guilty "for having on 10th July 1842 at Wrangle feloniously stolen 28 lbs. weight of coal of the value of 1d. of the goods and chattels of Thomas Orrey". He was sentenced to be transported for 7 years but if he had not come of an old, respectable Wrangle family, he might well have been committed to the assizes with the true value of the coal indicated and an additional charge of breaking and entering preferred against him.

Surprisingly, only two cases, widely separated in time, relate to poaching which, if local tradition is to be believed, was widely practised. In 1692 Robert Stephenson was before the court for keeping a greyhound to chase hares, which his social position did not entitle him to do. The next recorded case was in 1836 when William Taylor, a youth of 16, was fined £1 with £1 costs or alternatively committed to prison for 2 months for trespassing on the lands of John Salisbury in search of game. At the same time, for a similar offence on the lands of John Alford, he was fined a further £2 with £1 costs, again with the alternative of 2 months in prison. Taylor must have been caught owing to his inexperience and probably went to prison; but he would not lose caste as poaching was

not considered a crime by those who enjoyed its profits, pleasures and hazards - and local tradition has it that some of the constables were as skilful with the snare and the gun as anyone in the village.

However, Wrangle was continually reminded of the existence of the justices even when no parishioner was called upon to appear before them in answer to summons or upon warrant. Four times a year two petty jurors, one or two grand jurors and the constables had to attend the sessions and brought back news of the workings of the law, doubtless causing the parishioners to reflect very seriously on the tremendous authority which was vested in the magistrates.

By comparison, the authority of the central government was remote and shadowy, even though everyone was aware that it was the law of the land which the justices administered and that dues such as Ship Money, Hearth Tax, Window Tax, Excise duties and the Land Tax were imposed by the central government. Only occasionally did parliament call for action, as in 1642 when males over the age of 15 took an oath protesting their loyalty to king and parliament or in 1715 when clergy and office-holders took another oath in accordance with an act "for the further Security of His Majesty's Person and Government and the Succession of the Crown in the Heirs of the late Princess Sophia being Protestants and for Extinguishing the hopes of the pretended Prince of Wales and his open and secret Abettors". (The vicar of Wrangle, Richard Baily the elder, took this oath on the first day it was administered. Others followed more leisurely.) Even the Napoleonic Wars caused little disturbance in the parish

which supplied its quota of recruits to the army mainly by providing substitutes from other areas. In the 19th century, returns were asked for by the central government - about crops, the population and church attendance - and towards the end of the period there was a searching enquiry into the administration of charities - but these matters affected comparatively few people. The crux of the matter was that parliament had to rely on local officials to administer its statutes and that remote villages never saw a civil servant. However, in 1845 a coastguard station was established in Wrangle, with a complement of men from distant parts. At last, servants of the crown were settled in the parish and if there had been any smuggling in former times, they were there to see that it came to an end.

The parish officers.

The parochial officers were the churchwardens, the overseers of the poor, the surveyors of the highways, the dikereeve and the constables. While it is not possible to compile a complete list of the holders of these offices it is clear, even from an incomplete list, that until 1750 every yeoman, husbandman and craftsman who lived long enough could expect to serve in all of them. Except the churchwardens, who remained in office for two or three years, all appointments were for one year but it would be wrong to assume that in a close-knit community such appointment necessarily made for inefficiency or lack of continuity. Most of the officers,

after an interval of a year or two, took a turn at another office. Even men who had completed their turn of duty as churchwardens were retained until the next election as sidesmen, ready to step back into office if death or incapacity overtook their successor. As these men met one another frequently in connection with their work, their pleasures and in the practice of their faith, it can be taken for granted that they discussed the affairs of the village and the duties of their respective offices. The idea that men took up office in complete ignorance of what was expected of them is not supported by what we know of life as it is ordinarily conducted either at the present or at any other time.¹ In any case, local government had evolved from a realisation of what was necessary to the well-being of the community - and of such needs, every substantial parishioner was well aware.

The church, as an abiding and enduring institution, was the keystone of the community. The vicar was responsible for the spiritual aspects of its work but the churchwardens had charge of its temporalities and the morals of the community. The overseers, important at the beginning of the period, became increasingly so as economic changes and increase of population brought wider duties and greater numbers requiring their care. Highways and drainage needed at least a minimum of attention if the parish was to be able to work and conduct its social life, while the maintenance of peace and

1. S. and B. Webb, English Local Government, London, 1924, Pp. 65 & 66 gives an opposite point of view but mainly in relation to larger towns.

orderly life required not only the existence of distant courts but the presence of constables, vested with sufficient authority. To the parishioners, it mattered little whether the offices had evolved from the church, the manor, the Court of Sewers or had been created by act of parliament; the crux of the matter was that it was generally accepted that if the community was to continue in peace, security and with reasonable prospect of making a living, these officers were necessary and they must be provided with both means and authority to carry out their duties. The only changes in election were that from the middle of the 18th century the churchwardens were re-elected for lengthy periods and at the beginning of the 19th century the same thing happened in the case of the constables. With the exception of John Slator, schoolmaster, who was churchwarden from 1819 to 1828, the men selected for this office were farmers of substance, while the constables were drawn from the middle range of society - the wheelwrights, millers and blacksmiths.

Evidence of the work of the officers is fragmentary but enough has survived to indicate that they were sober, responsible and competent men who carried into their voluntary offices the same diligence which they practised in their private affairs. Of course, failure and inadequacy, common to all human institutions, were revealed from time to time and cases have already been given of occasions when the justices or the archdeacons exercised their over-riding authority. Such interventions make interesting parochial history but they were rare and it is equally important to note that

for long periods the parish officers carried out their duties satisfactorily - or, at least, without rebuke or reproof from outside authorities.

The officers, however, were not free from criticism and direction at the parochial level. Though the vestry records have survived only for the period from 1807 to 1832, they show that a vigorous, though narrowly based, parish assembly was well established with meetings held about 12 times a year. The year began on Lady Day when the overseers of the poor, the constables and the dikereeve were appointed, to take office at Easter after confirmation of their appointments. The year for the surveyors of the highways began at Michaelmas, a meeting for their election being held early in September when the accounts were also examined.

The pattern for the collection of rates was simple and convenient. The poor rate was collected on the four quarter days, following meetings at which the overseers had brought their recommendations for consideration. As this rate constituted the heaviest burden, it was well for payment to be spread over the year. The church rate which was usually a small item and the dikereeves' rate which varied considerably according to the drainage work to be undertaken fell due at Lady Day while the highway rate was payable at Michaelmas. No separate rate was levied for the constables who presented their statements to the overseers quarterly and the accounts, after scrutiny at a vestry meeting, were settled from the poor rate.

Examination of the accounts was much more than an arithmetical check, the vestry members keeping a very wary eye on items of expenditure. In 1819 a rather large item led them to pass the resolution "that all charge-bearers assessed at £30 and upwards should be liable to serve on a coroner's inquest at their own expense". Six months later, when they found that their resolution was ultra vires, they imposed a maximum allowance of 3/- a day for each juror. In 1822 the constables had made a charge for their periodic visits to public houses and in 1827 an overseer charged for visits of inspection to the poor house. Both were disallowed on the grounds that these were routine duties. All accounts, except the church-wardens', were also examined by the justices' clerk before being passed by the justices themselves but long before that stage was reached they had been scanned very critically by the charge-bearers.

The vestry, however, had a very positive side to its work, mainly routine, but occasionally in coping with new and difficult situations. One of its constant cares was the welfare of pauper children who were 'put out' to foster parents. Care was taken in selecting good homes for these children and in May of each year one meeting was held on a Saturday afternoon so that the children and their clothing could be inspected. Foster parents did not receive their final quarter's payment until it was established that the child in their care was in good condition. Equally important was management of the poor house which was ill-equipped and delapidated in 1816 but had then been completely re-furnished, great care being

exercised in selecting a competent master to supervise it. Not until 1831 when Susannah Francis, widow of a former master, was left in charge, were there any complaints of ill-treatment by the inmates. The vestry stepped in promptly to investigate both the complaints and the counter charges of Susannah that some of the inmates were "awkward and unmanageable". The vestry minute makes it clear that there was some very plain speaking, with the result that there were no further complaints from either side.

In 1822, Wrangle, in accordance with the terms of Sturges Bourne Act of 1819,¹ appointed a Select Vestry to help and advise the overseers. The intention of this act was not that the new body should supersede the open vestry but that it should ease and render more efficient the work of the overseers. In Wrangle, this was exactly how the two vestries operated. Members of the Select Vestry took an active part in the administration of the poor law, many of them, in their turn, becoming overseers. Parish policy continued to be the concern of the open vestry, as did such matters as the state of the roads, stocking limits on the roadside, appeals against assessments, settlement cases, re-valuations of the parish, the state of the church fabric, the appointment and conditions of the workhouse master and cases of hardship which were not within the discretion of the overseer.

1. 59 Geo. III C. 12,

At times, the vestry entered upon discussions which were of more than local significance. Between 1817 and 1826 there were experiments in the parish ownership of houses for the poorer inhabitants while in 1830 there was a motion "to take into consideration the propriety of allowing the poor of the parish to occupy the lands bequeathed for their benefit". The experiment in parish ownership of property was premature and, as shown in later pages, only partially successful but the allotment movement, which was initiated by the debate of 1830 was fully operative when the charity commissioners reported in 1839. Any labouring man who wished to could cultivate or graze an allotment of from one to three roods. This provision is the more noteworthy as labourers did not normally attend the vestry meetings to make their needs and wishes known.

Our picture of parish government is reasonably complete only for the first 35 years of the 19th century but the information suggests that, far from being inefficient or corrupt, it was vigorous, intelligent and compassionate. The vestry and the officers had no easy task. They were often faced with new and difficult problems; they had no full-time salaried staff; and at times they were not certain of their legal position. Despite the need for the occasional intervention of over-riding authorities, the vestry and officers, with their limited resources, dealt competently with the day-to-day running of the highways, the school, the drainage system, relief of the poor, the rating system, the maintenance of law and order and the laity's share of responsibility for the church. However, this

nascent system of parochial self-government was completely dismantled by the mid-19th century. The church rate was abolished and administration of the poor laws, the police, the highways and the drainage system passed into the control of larger groupings. There is no doubt that the reforms made for greater efficiency but equally there is no doubt that they also largely destroyed interest and initiative in village affairs. Wrangle never had difficulty in finding men to serve the parish as long as they could take decisions and act upon them. The passing of the local vestry has led to one of the unsolved problems of village life - that of arousing and maintaining interest in parish affairs when, after full discussion, decisions arrived at may not be acted upon but must be passed to a higher stage of authority to be considered again and balanced against the needs and interests of other parishes.

3. THE PEOPLE OF WRANGLE.

1. 1597 - 1642

Sources of information.

The main source of information about the people of Wrangle during this period is the bishop's transcript of the parish register.^{1.} Unfortunately, there are gaps in the records for the years 1629/30 and 1635/8 and the register ends at Lady Day, 1641. Additional information of various kinds is provided by wills and probate inventories,^{2.} while the list of persons taking the parliamentary protestation oath of 1642, preserved in ^{the} Record Office of the House of Lords is very valuable as it gives the names of all males over the age of 15 years who were living in the parish during the month of March that year.

Tendency to a decline in population.

The evidence of the register is that, despite normal fertility of the marriages solemnised during this period, there would have been a declining population if the inflow of people had not been greater than the outflow. When the records of the 40 available years before the outbreak of the Civil War are examined, it is found that in 16 years there was an excess of baptisms over burials, in 4 the numbers were equal and in 20 the burials exceeded the baptisms. At first sight, this would appear a fairly even balance but several of the years saw a very high mortality - 32 in 1610 and 1616, 40 in 1631, 54 in 1638 and 42 in 1639. The final excess of burials over

1. and 2. L.A.O. Transcripts, wills and inventories are all catalogued.

baptisms was 121, which is very high, even over a period of 40 years, in a community which could not have exceeded 600. The year by year gains and losses and the cumulative result are shown in the table and graph of Appendix 1.

Explanation of the tendency.

For a population to maintain itself, the first essential is a sufficient number of live births. During these 40 years, the average was slightly in excess of 18 a year, which for a village of 600 would give a rate of 30 per 1,000 or only a little below the national rate for the 19th century, during which time the population was trebled. The explanation does not, therefore involve any question of fertility. The facts are that the median age of women at a first marriage was 23 and of men $25\frac{1}{2}$ and that the great majority of marriages showed normal fertility.

The second essential, however, is that a sufficient number of the children should survive to maturity and, in turn, marry and rear children. This is what did not happen in Wrangle. The records show a total of 722 baptisms. A torn page robs us of the Christian names of 5 of them, whose subsequent careers we are therefore unable to follow. Of the remaining 717, the subsequent deaths are recorded in 356 cases, or nearly 50%. Of the rest, 38 are mentioned later, indicating that they had survived childhood, while 322, partly owing to gaps in the records totalling 16 years, are not again mentioned. When we examine the length of life, measured from baptism to burial, of the 356 whose fate is known, we find the following:

Length of life of 356 children born between 1597 and 1641.

Less than 1 year	175
Between 1 and 2 years	25
" 2 " 3 "	12
" 3 " 4 "	5
" 4 " 5 "	10
" 5 " 10 "	27
" 10 " 20 "	35
" 20 " 30 "	15
" 30 " 40 "	10
" 40 " 50 "	14
" 50 " 60 "	16
" 60 " 70 "	7
Over 70 years	5

In effect, nearly half of these children died within their first year of life and considerably less than a third survived to reach 10 years of age. Even if we made the wild assumption that all the children of whom we have no information survived for 20 years, we should still have the following very high mortality rates:

Dead within 1 year of baptism	..	244	per 1,000
" " 5 years " "	..	316	" "
" " 10 " " "	..	354	" "
" " 20 " " "	..	403	" "

One of the chief reasons, therefore, for the tendency to a decline in population was Wrangle's failure to rear its children, though other factors, such as the high adult mortality of plague years and departures from the parish, were also operative.

Length of married life and size of family.

Although most of the marriages of which we have records produced children within a year or two, large families were rare, not only on account of the high mortality rate of children but of the parents also. In short, most marriages were too brief to

produce large families. Of the 32 cases where it can be determined, the median duration was 9 years and the average 12. The death of one or other partner terminated the marriage before the fifth year in 10 cases and before the tenth year in 18. Only 3 of the 32 couples survived to celebrate their silver weddings, with marriages of 26, 30 and 39 years respectively. The compilers of the Prayer Book of 1662 had only too much justification for prefacing the Office of The Communion of the Sick with the rubric, "Forasmuch as all mortal men be subject to many sudden perils, diseases and sicknesses, and ever uncertain what time they shall depart out of this life". It is not surprising, therefore, that during a period of 30 years, there are records of only 36 families of 5 or more children, the table reading:

	Number of children					
	10	9	8	7	6	5
Parental couples	2	1	4	6	13	10

The number of children of these families surviving beyond the age of 10 corresponds to the pattern already indicated. In both of the families of 10 children it was 4 and in the family of 9 it was 3. The full table is set out below.

Survival of children of large families.

Children in family	Number of families	Total children	Survived age of 10 years
10	2	20	8
9	1	9	3
8	4	32	16
7	6	42	16
6	13	78	46
5	10	50	29
	<u>36</u>	<u>231</u>	<u>118</u>

All the marriages examined for the purpose of compiling this table took place between 1596 and 1627, as the gaps in the records and their cessation in 1641 would make later evidence so incomplete as to be valueless. It should be stated that the table presents the position with regard to survival in its most favourable light, the assumption being that as the families remained in the village, the absence of a record of burial is evidence of a child's survival. These families were those of yeomen, husbandmen and labourers with settlement in the parish over a period of years, presumably with home conditions superior to those of the casual labourer. Even so, the survival rate of children beyond the age of 10 was only 51%. Appendix 2. gives a list of the heads of these families and indicates whether they had descendants in the parish in later centuries.

Examples of families.

The examples given below are (a) the only instance in the records in which all children outlived both their parents, though the youngest was only 4 years old at the time, (b) an average family in which 4 of the 7 children lived to become adults, (c) a family in which only one child in 7 lived beyond the age of 6 years. Only in a technical sense was this a large family as at no time were there more than two children in the home.

- (a) William Lawis, Householder, bu. 1639
 Ann Lawis Wife bu. 1639
 Richard son, bapt. 1623
 William son, " 1626
 twins { John son, " 1628
 Mary dau., " 1628
 Elizabeth dau., " 1632
 Ann dau., " 1635
- (b) William Hammond, Blacksmith, m. Agnes Strange, 1598
 bu. 1617
 Agnes Hammond Wife m. 1598 bu. 1632
 Susanna dau., bapt. 1599, bu. 1599
 Anne dau., " 1601
 William son, " 1603
 Mary dau., " 1605
 Mildred dau., " 1607 bu. 1611
 John son, " 1609 " 1609
 Thomas son, " 1610 " 1619
 Richard son, " 1613
- (c) Peter Benn, Householder, m. Elizabeth Richardson,
 1617
 Elizabeth Benn Wife m. 1617
 Richard son, bapt. 1618 bu. 1625
 William son, " 1621 " 1622
 Martha dau., " 1622 " 1623
 Peter son, " 1624 " 1624
 Elizabeth dau., " 1625
 Anthony son, " 1633 " 1633
 Peter son, ---- " 1640

(Peter was probably baptised during the years 1635/8,
 for which the records are missing.)

Some results of the high rate of mortality.

Although the records of the later years of this period are incomplete, inspection of what is available shows that, with the heavy death roll of the years 1638 and 1639, they were no more favourable to survival. Mortality was high among children and adults alike. During those two years, 28 householders and 15 wives were among the dead, making it likely that a third of the families in the

village suffered the loss of one or both parents. Inevitably at such times the number of marriages rose sharply. In the first place, young widowers and widows with children would wish to marry again, if they could find suitable partners. Quite apart from their natural instincts, widowers needed someone to care for the children and widows a breadwinner. Many such second marriages took place within three months of the burial of a former partner. Again, the death of a more mature householder frequently led to a vacant holding and a home only partly occupied. Such a death was frequently followed by the marriage of a grown son or daughter which may well have taken place a year or two later in any case but was brought forward as the home and holding were available. Finally, where both parents died, as William and Ann Lawis did in example (a) above, the children presumably moved to relatives or into the care of the overseers of the poor and the house was vacant. The inflow of newcomers into the parish indicates that such houses were not vacant for long. These points are well illustrated by an examination of the 21 marriages recorded during the years 1639 and 1640, when there were rather more than 50% more marriages than the average. Examination of information relating to the parties shows the following:

Origin of partners to marriages 1639-40.

Bachelors of known Wrangle families	7
Wrangle widowers	6
Men with surnames new to the parish	6
Origin uncertain	2
Spinsters of known Wrangle families	8
Wrangle widows	6
Women with surnames new to the parish	7

Ebb and flow of new-comers to the parish.

One of the striking things revealed by an inspection of the registers is the extraordinarily large number of surnames entered in this brief period of just over 40 years. When an index is made, it is realised that of the 387 names, 169 occur only once in the register, or twice in the case of infants whose burial followed hard upon baptism. Of such entries, 19 relate to baptisms, 93 to marriages and 57 to burials.

The single entries relating to baptisms fall into three main groups. Six of the children were illegitimate, three of them being buried soon after baptism. As the mother's name does not appear again in the register in any of the cases, it is safe to assume that they did not continue to reside in the parish. Probably these were maidservants who were packed off home as soon as possible after the confinement. In 9 cases the births were legitimate, the name of the father being given but it is clear that their residence in the parish was brief. The fathers may well have been casual labourers. Three of the baptisms were of visitors to the parish, two from the

neighbouring parish of Leake and the third, Magdalen Ogle, was grand-daughter of Wrangle's wealthiest land-owner, Sir John Read. One baptism lacks the information which would permit classification.

The entries with regard to marriage are more complicated. Among the number were 19 men who married local girls in the parish and then apparently returned to their own parishes to set up the matrimonial home. There were, however, 11 couples of whom both parties bore names which were new to the parish register. As at least one of the parties had to reside in the parish to claim the rite of marriage in it, it is certain that one, or possibly both, of the parties worked in the parish, the men as labourers and the women as maidservants. As their names do not again appear in the register, it is clear that their residence in the parish was not prolonged. The largest group was the 52 women who married Wrangle men. As 15 of the men and their wives are not heard of again, it is likely that these women came from neighbouring parishes to which they returned with their husbands. The remaining 37 women settled in the parish. A few of them are entered in the register as maidservants at the time of marriage but others, not specified, were doubtless daughters of neighbouring yeomen and husbandmen. Most of them bore children and brought fresh blood into the parish.

To account for the burials of the 57 persons whose names occur only once in the register, conjecture as well as evidence is needed. Some of them are easily explained. Richard Browder of Butterwick and John Page of Wainfleet may well have been on business visits to

the parish, while William Holford died while serving as curate. William Shearwood the thatcher was probably peripatetic and Thomas Steward, a "traveller" was either a gipsy or a tramp. Of the remainder, 7 were widows and though some of them died towards the end of the period, there is no evidence that their former husbands had lived in the parish. They had probably been engaged in domestic work. Three were wives of men, possibly casual labourers, who left the parish shortly afterwards. Six of the remainder are described in the register, two as menservants, two as maidservants and two as bedewomen. The others - 19 men and 17 women - cannot be accounted for with any certainty. It was not the custom, at this period, to enter the occupation of a man in the register, though a few of the parish clerks or vicars did so. A few of the men may have been newly arrived to take over a holding but it is probable that the majority were labourers. The 16 girls were almost certainly maidservants. Though the numbers appear large, they are inconsiderable when it is remembered that they are spread over 40 years.

Evidence of the Protestation return.

In March of 1642, all males over the age of 15 were required to take an oath of protestation of loyalty to king and parliament and in Wrangle, the vicar, churchwardens and overseers of the poor vouched for the fact that everyone had done so. When the list is examined, it is found that of the 110 persons named,

- 71 were previously mentioned in the register,
- 23 were not mentioned personally, though families with the same surname were recorded, while
- 16 bore surnames which were entirely new to the parish.

The registers had been suspended only a year before so that here again is evidence of considerable movement of people. While it cannot be assumed that the last group of 16 had moved into the parish during the intervening twelve months, it is clear that their sojourn there had not been very long.

It is an interesting exercise to take the names in the three groups to see if they occur again in the resumed registers from 1653 to 1700, during which time any male who was over 15 in 1642 would be likely to be mentioned if he resided in the parish. Of the first group of 71 persons,

- 44 are mentioned again,
- 20 are not mentioned again, though members of the family still reside in the parish,
- 7 are not mentioned again, nor any other person of the same surname.

The corresponding figures for the group of 23 are 9, 10 and 4; and for the group of 16, 3, 1 and 12. Taking the groups together, we find that of the 110 who took the oath in 1642, 56 remained in the parish while 54 had either died between 1642 and 1653 or had left the parish; and, moreover, in 23 cases there was not even a person of the same surname left there. The cumulative evidence of the constant movement of people, though perhaps over no very great distance, appears to be overwhelming.

Surnames suggestive of origin.

A side-line which is interesting, though perhaps not very important or profitable, is a study of surnames in a register. On looking through the index for the period 1597 to 1641, one cannot but be struck by the large number which are suggestive of the place of origin of the family, probably five or six generations earlier. A few of the families named below settled in reasonable comfort in Wrangle for two or three generations but the majority appeared for a single generation. The length of the list, for a small village in less than half a century, suggests that considerable movement had been taking place for some two centuries. The list is given alphabetically under county headings.

Lincolnshire. Baston, Baumber, Boston, Brocklesby, Brough, Broxholme, Caistor, Crosby, Dalby, Deeping, Donnington, Freiston, Friskney, Halton, Immingham, Keelby, Kirkby, Laughton, Leake, Linwood, Newton, Norton, Pinchbeck, Thimbleby, Thorpe and Waltham.

Yorkshire. Beverley, Crathorne, Cundale, Harwood, Heaton, Lockwood, Pickering, Scarbrough, Tinsley and Wadsley.

Nottinghamshire. Arnold, Gunthorpe, Nottingham, Radcliffe and Sherwood.

Leicestershire. Leicester, Melton and Pickwell.

Derbyshire. Cresswell, Derby and Glossop.

Lancashire. Kirkham and Lancaster.

Rutland. Clipsham.

Other names from farther afield are Bath, Dover, Huntingdon, Kennington and Lewes. We might also include the names Fleming, German and Wales. An interesting name which occurs in the weddings

of 1604 is that of Peter Vanderliew, which is certainly suggestive of Dutch origin. Although the family did not at first settle in Wrangle, it must have done so nearby as in 1729 a Peter Vamplew married and settled in the village, where his progeny remained continuously until the census of 1851.

Social framework of the parish.

So far, the emphasis in this section has been on the factors making for instability in society, such as the ebb and flow of the population and the brevity of human life, but there was, of course, a pattern of society into which both householders and sojourners fitted and a sufficient number of men lived long enough to exercise control and to see that the ancient landmarks were observed, both literally and metaphorically.

The wealthiest and most important member of the community was Sir John Read, who received his knighthood in 1597. His family had lived in Wrangle for two centuries at least and had prospered. In the nature of things, Sir John was less concerned with local than with county matters - he was Sheriff in 1609 - but as the largest local landowner, he doubtless exerted considerable influence. He died in 1626 at the age of 65, but his widow, Dame Ann, who was considerably younger than Sir John (she bore him a daughter in 1619), continued to live in Wrangle until 1652. Dame Ann, who was the daughter of Sir John Garret, Lord Mayor of London, spared no expense in raising a monument to her husband, whose recumbent figure is clad in the armour of the Tudor period, while her own lies alongside. It

seems a pity that a better poet was not found than the one who composed the lines:

A worthy gentleman of much good parts,
 As had of rich and pore the love and hearts,
 Hath here his corpse, the case and outward side,
 His soul in heaven, with Xt. who for him died.
 Foul-mouthed base envy, say what it can,
 He was a worthy, honest, right good man;
 Whom love did link, and naught but death dissever,
 Well may they be conjoined and lye together.
 Like turtle doves they lived, chast pure in mind.
 Few, O too few, such couples we shall find.
 Example they have left for after times,
 To shun, of marriage state, the common crimes.

The suggestion conveyed in the last four lines that marital fidelity was extremely rare may be no more than a darkening of the background to display more brightly the virtues of Sir John.

Sir John's heir was his son, Thomas, who took the oath of protestation in Wrangle in 1642, though he probably lived in Leake, as his name appears in the Subsidy Roll for that parish. He attended the funeral service of his step-mother, Dame Ann, in 1652 and died soon afterwards. Registers were not kept at this time but the accounts of Boston Corporation of this year show that 36 acres of corporation land in Wrangle were rented by Bridget, "the widow of Thomas Reed". With the death of Thomas, the male line of the Reads died out and, apart from one later benefaction, the interest of the family in the parish.¹

1. P. Thompson, The History and Antiquities of Boston, Boston, 1856, p. 604, 'The Rede or Read Family.'

As these were days when wealth and influence marched hand in hand, it is profitable to examine the inventories of the personal estates of deceased householders to discover, failing other evidence, who were the men of importance. Excluding Sir John, whose Wrangle estate alone was worth £1,187. 10s. 2d., there were 19 during the period who left property valued at more than £100, falling into the following categories:

£500	to	£1,000	..	4
£200	to	£500	..	6
£100	to	£200	..	9

Details are given in Appendix 3 but here it must briefly be stated that though they provided the solid background to the social pattern in their day, occupying the local offices and giving evidence at commissions of enquiry, only three founded families which remained in Wrangle beyond the end of the century, and even of those three, the last male descendent in Wrangle was buried in 1725.

Next in order of importance was the vicar of the parish, who, from 1574 until 1624, was Nicholas Francis. He was twice married, his first wife, Helena, dying in 1597 and his second, Anne, in 1611. His will indicates that he was childless. His records were well kept and on two occasions, in 1610 and 1613, he was one of the team of appraisers who compiled inventories. After his death, the parish appears to have been served by curates until 1639, when Richard Baily - the first of three of that name - became vicar, remaining as such until well into the Commonwealth period, his probate inventory being dated 15th June, 1648. Apparently he had been of

Puritan disposition or able so to trim his sails as to remain in office.

In later times, the bedehouse schoolmaster was a figure of considerable importance in the village, but Lawrence Chapman, first mentioned as schoolmaster in 1604 and buried in 1617, seems to have been of the type envisaged by the founder of the bede fifty years earlier - a poor and needy man with just enough education to teach the catechism and the offices of the church. If he was unmarried, as seems likely since the records make no mention of a wife or family, he was probably one of the last to be restricted in this way by the will of the founder. However, the present point is that he was a figure of little importance in the village, serving neither as churchwarden nor as appraiser at a valuation.

During the first half of the 17th century there were some 80 families established in Wrangle and, apart from their daily work, members of practically all of them took some part in the witnessing of wills, acting as executors or overseers of executors and valuers of the estates of their deceased friends. The bulk of this work, however, as well as serving the office of churchwarden, and probably the other offices of which information is lacking, fell on less than 40 families. These families formed the core of the parish during this period and though about a third of them either failed in the male line or left the parish, descendants of the remainder served the parish for several generations.¹

1. See Appendix 4.

2. 1642 - 1851General considerations.

The only reason for a break in this section is that during the twelve years during which registration ceased there is little factual evidence to consider. However, there is every reason to believe that conditions of life did not change materially and that the conclusion reached by Miss Hipkin with regard to the parts of Holland as a whole was equally true of Wrangle:

" The history of Holland in the years between 1640 and 1660 is remarkably little different from its history in the earlier years of the century Its main theme is the continuity of the life which the inhabitants of the district were living before the war began. So much attention has been paid to the military history of these years that it is very difficult to realise that whilst the battles of Edgehill, Charlgrove Field, Marston Moor and Naseby were being fought, men were living their normal lives exactly as if the government were peacefully and securely established at Westminster. From one point of view it is a disappointing and a prosaic story, but it is none the less an important one: for it presents to us the reverse side of a picture to which we have perhaps accustomed ourselves too long. " ¹.

It is well to remember, however, that normal conditions of life were hard, that very little of the land surface was reasonably dry at all seasons of the year and that the threat of inundation was

1. Lincs. Arch. & Arch. Soc. Reports and Papers, Vol. 40, Pt. 2, p. 256. Gladys M. Hipkin, M.A., B.Litt., 'Social & Economic Conditions in the Holland Division of Lincolnshire from 1640 to 1660.'

always present, both from the sea and from the East Fen, where the drainage system of the Adventurers had been destroyed in 1642. Though the rainfall of Lincolnshire is light, at all times except in frosty weather, there was stagnant water, a humid atmosphere and conditions favourable for the breeding of disease-carrying insects. Practically all the houses were of "mud and stud", that is, timber framed with earthen walls and floors and though rebuilding with brick was begun in the early years of the 18th century, when the vicarage was rebuilt, it did not extend to the smaller houses until the 19th. Even if these houses provided reasonable comfort inside, they lacked two of the amenities which are vital to a healthy community, namely an adequate supply of pure water and an efficient system for the disposal of garbage. Apart from the rain-water butt, the main source of water was the well and it is the deep well, with its greater depth of soil filtration, which supplies the purest water. In Wrangle, water could be found almost anywhere at a depth of three or four feet. The usual system of garbage disposal of these times has survived in remote country districts until the present. The privvy, only a few yards from the house, was cleared periodically by the burial of waste in the garden nearby. This was uncongenial work even to the strong and healthy. The elderly, infirm or lazy disposed of the waste simply by adding it to the dung-hill. It is not surprising that so much was heard of the ague of the fens and of the use of opium, derived from local poppies, to deaden its effects. No doubt homes varied in the degree of comfort

they afforded, but it was doubtful if any of them were really warm in the bleak winters of the Lincolnshire coast. Coal was not generally used until well into the 18th century, the earlier inventories mentioning only dythes, hassocks and old wood. It was a harsh world in which to be born and it is not surprising that of the 1,857 children born between 1653 and 1753, more than a quarter died in their first year, that less than half survived to the age of 20 and less than a quarter to the age of 30.¹ These figures are more closely studied at a later stage.

Movement of population.

Reference has already been made to the comings and goings of people of the fenland area. One of the outstanding facts revealed by an examination of the registers of this period is that there was a vast amount of movement continually taking place, despite the settlement provisions of the Poor Law Act of 1662, which were not repealed until the passing of the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834. For the later part of the period, there is conclusive evidence of this movement from the census returns of 1841 and 1851 but for the earlier part there is ample evidence from the registers alone. For example, of the 2,242 persons baptised in Wrangle between 1653 and 1773, only 1,167 were also buried there, leaving a total of 1,075 who were buried elsewhere. As the Wrangle burials included practically all those who died in childhood, the figures are more striking than appears at first sight, as the extra-parochial burials

1. See Appendix 5.

must have been mainly of adults. The interpretation must be that for every adult who lived out his life in Wrangle there were two or three who had been living elsewhere just prior to death.

Much of this movement can be simply and reasonably explained. Very many young people of both sexes left after marriage with partners from other parishes to set up their homes in those parishes. Again, fathers of young families died and if the widow did not, within a reasonably short time, marry again within the parish, she and her children left, possibly for marriage in another parish or to live with relatives. Some of the yeomen and husbandmen had holdings in two or more parishes and it seems clear that there was movement from parish to parish, possibly by the attraction of a better house or to build up a larger holding in one of the parishes, and certainly there was a steady drift of the local gentry to healthier or more picturesque parts of the country. However, perhaps the greatest drain on the parish was the departure of boys and girls at about the age of 13, presumably for work of whatever kind they could get, wherever they could find it. Some of them returned in later life but, for the main part, their departure was final. This feature is clearly shown at the end of the period, when the census returns can be compared with the register but calculations with the figures in the register show that it was no new feature.

Movement was not all away from Wrangle. There was a steady flow into the parish, partly of casual labourers, the only record of whose brief residence may be a single entry relating to the

baptism or burial of a child - and for each one thus recorded, there were, doubtless, others whose children did not die or who were bachelors. Part of the stream, however, was of people who settled in the parish and were followed by several generations of their offspring. As in the early period reviewed, if the numbers coming in had not exceeded the numbers going out, at least until the middle of the 18th century, there would have been a steadily shrinking population as until this time there was a serious excess of burials over baptisms.¹ While there was a continual addition of new families, frequently with new surnames, to the parish, the flow was at its strongest after periods of high mortality.

Periods of heavy death rate.

As exceptionally high death rate afflicted Wrangle during the four periods 1656-9, 1666-9, 1719-21 and 1780-2. Statistically, the effects are clearly illustrated in the diagrams of appendix 6. It may well be that the causes will never be known with certainty but from the information available it seems likely that the first two (103 and 147 deaths respectively) were visitations of the plague, that the third (105 deaths) was caused by what was known at the time as famine fever, while the last (113) was almost certainly an influenza epidemic. In all four cases the malady was either infectious or contagious, affecting young and old alike and running through whole families. As the 'normal' population numbered some 600 throughout the time of these calamities, these losses were serious

1. See Appendix 6. Diagrams 1 and 2.

and, as we must assume that many who were afflicted survived, these must have been exceptionally difficult days for the parish. The present purpose, however, is to account for the inflow of new families and one certainty is that these four periods left empty homes and holdings for others to occupy.

Infantile mortality.

More serious because it was persistent and general, affecting gentry, yeomen and labourers alike, was the loss by death of children below the age of one year. At present, an infantile mortality rate of 24 per 1,000 live births is considered a high figure.¹ It has already been noted that in the period 1597 to 1641 in Wrangle, it was at least 244 per 1,000. For practically a century there was no improvement; indeed, for the 10 year period 1704-13, the loss was 278 per 1,000. During the years 1734 to 1844 the rate, though still high, declined not only considerably but quite abruptly. Instead of one child in four dying during the first year of life, it was now one in six.²

It is always easier to account for a sharp rise in the mortality rate, such as that of the four periods already noted, than to account for a sharp fall, such as that which occurred in the infantile mortality rate during the decade beginning in 1734. It is true that living conditions were improving and that a period of better harvests lay ahead but these factors would tend to produce a

1. On the State of the Public Health. H.M.S.O., 1962, p. 28.
The rate for 1951 was 27.6, for 1961 21.4, for 1962 21.7.

2. See Appendix 7.

gradual rather than a sudden improvement. The only external factor which could account for the change was the improved drainage of the East Fen which took place in 1735 and 1736. Though this operation did not provide a final solution to the flooding of the fen, it afforded considerable alleviation for a long time and may have been the decisive factor in assuring healthier conditions in the parish.

The span of life.

An examination of the span of life of all children born in Wrangle from 1653 to 1753 reveals the truly staggering answer that the average was a mere 14. When we remember that a quarter died in the first year, we realise that the answer is bound to be a low figure. If we base expectation of life on the average age at death of the survivors of each age group, we discover that a child who survived the first year had a further expectation of life of 23 years; at 10, another 23 years; at 20, another 14; at 30, another 12; at 40, another 8 and at 50 another 3.

This comparatively brief span of life had its inevitable consequences in domestic and social conditions. So many men and women died during the course of what is now regarded as the normal sexual life that large families were uncommon. Always there were young or middle-aged widows and widowers with children to care for and provide for. Very frequently a father died leaving his children too young to take over his farm or small holding. The fears and anxieties of such parents are clearly reflected in the wills of the period. Many men showed concern for the future welfare of their

wives but more showed an even greater concern for the welfare of their children. It was generally accepted that the widow would re-marry; the fear being that as a result of such a marriage, the testator's children would somehow be robbed of their legacies or inheritance. In some cases, the testator devised elaborate precautions against such a possibility. The most extreme example of this apprehension was that of John Anthony, who in 1602, wrote the following into his will:

"Provided always that if my wife or hee that shall marie her after my death shall not bring up my son John Anthonie at school or do not mainteine him with sufficient meate drink and clothing and all other things most convenient and necessarie in manner and forme aforesaid or shall abuse him anie way by the judgement of honest neighbours or by the judgement and discretion of my overseers I will that my wife and hee that shall marie her shall no longer have the education of my said son nor the setting and lettings profits and commodities of his lands tenements hereditaments to kepe and mainteine him in manner aforesaid"

That these thoughts were not the fears of a man just at the point of death is shown by the fact that a codicile was added 2½ years later when provision was made for depriving his widow of her functions as executrix and passing them into the hands of the supervisors:

" the said executrix shall put in good securitie by bonds unto Nicholas Francis and Edward Aldye or either of them for the payment of the said legacies and if the said executrix shall refuse or do not upon request within one year after his decease make such surance unto

the said Nicholas Francis and Edward Aldye or eyther of them
 then upon and after such deniall the said Nicholas
 Francis and Edward Aldye shall have full power and authorities
 to take into his or their hands by way of action or
 otherwise the said legacies by this will belonging to the
 said John Anthonie."¹

It would be interesting to work out the end of this story but only
 part can be told. Within six months of her husband's death, Joane
 Anthony married John Emerye in Wrangle parish church. Probably they
 did not live within the parish as there is no record of children of
 the union, but both were buried there, John in 1624 and Joane in 1634.
 It is unlikely that John Anthony junior, long enjoyed his inheritance
 as he is nowhere mentioned in the local Wrangle records.²

However, it was not only wealthy yeomen but also poor
 labourers who made provision to safeguard their children's interests.
 Entering into bonds was one of the normal ways of conducting business
 and it is no surprise to find that some of them employed this method
 to secure the faithful carrying out of the provisions of their wills.
 Typical of these was Richard Pickle who, in 1671, left £6 to his son
 John, aged 11, £5 to his daughter Ann, aged 3 and £3 to his daughter
 Mary, only a few months old. If his wife re-married - as she did,
 ten months after her husband's death - the children's money was to
 be put out at interest for their benefit or, alternatively, his
 widow was to enter into a bond with the supervisors of the will for

1. L.A.O. Wills 1606.2.167.

2. He is mentioned in a survey of 1608 (P.R.O. DL. 42/119) as the
 owner of one messuage and 19 acres of freehold land.

payment to the children when they attained their lawful ages.¹

A side-light on the conditions of the times was that in five of the wills of the 17th century a legacy is devised for a child as yet unborn. It is a pity that the only women who could bequeath property were spinsters and widows. If we had the wills of wives to set alongside those of husbands, we might well have known of their fears and apprehensions also.

Improving conditions.

It has already been noted that improved conditions had, by the middle of the 18th century, led to a marked fall in the rate of infantile mortality. Clearly, these same conditions led to a generally increased span of life. An examination of the ages of all persons buried in Wrangle between 1801 and 1830 shows that the average length of life was 22 years, which, though still pitifully brief, was a 50% increase within the century. Moreover, a child who survived the first year could now expect to reach 40, at 10 to reach 51, at 20 to reach 55, at 30 reach 60, at 40 to reach 65 and at 50 to reach 70. As more adults were now living to the limit of their reproductive lives, there was a great increase in the number of large families, with more of the children surviving. In turn, this led to an even greater drift of young people from the parish, which could not provide employment, either in quantity or variety, for the children born within its borders. This aspect, however, receives fuller consideration at a later stage.

Causes of death.

The registers rarely give any indication of a cause of death and

when they do, it would seem that the parish clerk was moved by the unusual circumstances. Twice in 1758 the word 'slain' follows an entry, in one case that of a girl of 16 and in the other, that of a married man between 30 and 40. In 1790, Matthew Rhodes "died suddenly through excessive drink" and Richard Jackson, a pauper aged 74, was "drowned in a state of intoxication". There are also instances of the drowning and burning to death of young children. Among the baptisms of 1805 occurs a note that the mother of the child "died in childbed". An examination of the register shows that this is a comment which could have been made over and over again. Very many women died while still of child-bearing age and quite a high proportion were buried soon after the baptism of a child: indeed, of 18 such cases taken at random between 1657 and 1797, in 4 instances the baptism of the child and the burial of the mother took place on the same day.

While there is no direct evidence as to the ravages of tuberculosis in Wrangle, the high proportion of deaths which occurred among young people between the ages of 15 and 30 suggests that it was a common cause of death. The fact is that of all children born between 1654 and 1753, only half lived to reach the age of 15 and of that half, a quarter were dead before they were 30. Even in the second half of the 18th century and the first half of the 19th, when there were more survivors at the age of 15, the death rate of young people in this age group continued to be high. From 1741 to 1760 it was 156 per 1,000 of all deaths and for the four subsequent

periods of 20 years it was 130, 131, 105 and 140.

Two other scourges which swept through the country were smallpox and fevers of various kinds. The registers do not mention smallpox but there is reference in the bede records to a visitation in 1741 and doubtless there were others. In 1805, John Wainby, a servant, is entered in the register as having died of typhus fever. This would nowadays almost certainly have been diagnosed as typhoid and it is extremely likely that a village with a water supply so liable to contamination would have many other deaths due to the same cause.

How far malnutrition or starvation was responsible for the very high death rate it is impossible to say. That the condition of the poor was on the hearts and consciences of the wealthier inhabitants is clear from the large number of bequests of food and money made in the wills of testators from 1600 to 1750. Yet the families of the clergy, gentry and yeomen, who were presumably well fed, were in no better case with regard to span of life than were the families of labourers. One can only conclude that if, as seems likely, malnutrition shortened the days of the poor, the effect is masked statistically by the diseases and infections which spared neither rich nor poor.

The marriage register.

The resumed registers add a little to the information derived from this source in the pre-commonwealth period. Some things were unchanged. The median age of men at a first marriage remained

fairly constant at 25 and that of women at 22. Most of the marriages in which one or both of the parties were exceptionally young were hastened by the pregnancy of the bride, though, as is shown later, this was by no means an uncommon feature of other marriages.

The majority of parishioners married a partner from outside. Taking the period 1678 to 1773, 85 men and 113 women who had been baptised in the parish were also married in it. In only 27 cases were both parties Wrangle-born, which means that for each Wrangle man who chose a partner from the parish, two did not; and for each woman whose husband came from the parish, three had husbands from elsewhere. This was inevitably so. During this century the annual average of births was less than 20, of whom only 8 survived to reach marriagable age, by which time, probably as many as 4 had left the parish. As this diminished number included both sexes and all the social strata from gentry to labourer, it is clear that a much wider area than a small parish was needed for young people to find suitable partners. There was no change in this respect when a higher birth-rate with a higher proportion of survivors presented a wider choice. During the half-century from 1774 to 1823, 52 men and 83 women baptised in Wrangle were married there; but in only 8 cases were both parties Wrangle-born. It is clear that the idea once held that there was persistent in-breeding in the villages is not borne out by the facts as far as Wrangle is concerned and that for social, domestic and employment purposes, the horizon was not that of the parish boundary.

The marriage records shed considerable light on the movement of people into the parish. During the whole period 1678 to 1823 there were 758 marriages. In 35 cases both parties, in 302 cases one of the parties and in 421 neither of the parties were Wrangle-born. Of course, not all these people settled in the parish; in many cases, the record of the marriage is the only record of their existence, but as at least one of the parties had to be resident at the time of marriage, the evidence of movement is undeniable.¹

An inspection of second and subsequent marriages leaves little to add to what has already been said - that there were always young widows and widowers with families who were led to a second marriage as much by prudence as affection. The one new, or almost new, feature was the increasing number of quite elderly people, especially widowers, who married for a second time. This was one of the inevitable by-products of longevity.

A few records.

A few instances of much-married people are worth recording. Elizabeth Bernard married Thomas Nicholls in 1692, Richard Wakefield in 1699, William Gosling in 1702 and Abraham Holmes in 1731, by which time she was well over 50. She bore children to her first three husbands. Richard Walls, with marriages in 1661, 1669, 1673 and 1677 had 4 brides in 16 years, only the first and last of whom bore him children. Eclipsing these and all others was William Fiddling, a labourer whose family fortunes had declined. He was married five

1. See Appendix 9,

times - in 1668, 1669, 1683, 1689 and 1692 - and all his brides bore him one or more children. There must have been something fascinating about this man. In 1701 he even prevailed upon the Bede trustees to admit him to the benefits of membership without the necessary qualifications and without the disagreeable obligation of living in. He died in 1704, being upwards of 60.

Fertility.

There is ample evidence of the fertility of most marriages in the register of baptisms, though there appears to have been a small minority of parents who objected to baptism of infants and, in such cases, the only evidence is that of burials. However, the largest group of dissenters, that of the Methodists, who established a society in 1751, continued to have their children baptised in the parish church at least until the end of the century. There is, therefore, no dearth of evidence for a study of the family and what emerges is both interesting and valuable. Spread over the two centuries after 1654 but with a concentration in the 18th and 19th centuries, were 66 families of 8 or more children by the same mother, the size of the families being as follows:

	Number of children							
	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	17
Number of families	19	16	9	7	8	2	4	1

A survey of these families, showing the span of the woman's child-bearing period, is given in Appendix 8. The very clear inference is that the female reproductive period lasted at least until the age of 42 but rarely beyond the age of 45, the interval between births

being normally about 18 months, though 12 to 14 months were not uncommon. A woman of outstanding fertility and vitality was Mary Carden (c.1660 - 1728). She first married Thomas Atkin in 1680, bearing him 9 children between 1681 and 1690, when Thomas died. The following year she married Joseph Pearson, by whom she had a further 7 children between the years 1692 and 1700. Joseph died in 1702 and Mary had a wait of 3 years before marrying John Cock, a widower who was father of 7 children. She bore him one child in 1705 and this may well have been the end of her child-bearing in any case. However, there can be no finality in the matter as John Cock died in 1707 and may well have been ill for a considerable time. As it is, Mary gave birth to 17 children between the years 1681 and 1705.

Evidence as to the duration of the male sexual life is provided by a whole range of marriages but in particular by the cases in which a man married more than once, the second or third wife being considerably younger than the husband. Appendix 8a lists the large families of from 10 to 19 children with one father but more than one mother, the conclusion from this and other available evidence being that it was unusual for a male to father a child beyond the age of about 57.

One point which emerges very clearly from the length and variety of surnames in Appendices 8 and 8a is that there was abundant fertility in all classes of society in the village.

Examples from the lists.

It is, perhaps, appropriate to give rather more details of some of the families in the lists. In the 17th century, the largest families were those of John Wilby, gentleman and John Moody, weaver. The Wilby family had held land in Wrangle as early as 1606 but did not become resident until the Commonwealth period. The family prospered materially and a succession of John Wilbys occupied the parish offices until the male line died out in 1798. The John Wilby of Appendix 8, the father of 12 children between 1672 and 1691 is described both as gentleman and grazier. Five of his children, including a pair of twins, died in childhood but seven passed beyond adolescence.

The Moody family also settled in Wrangle during the Commonwealth period, remaining there for four generations, which included yeomen, labourers and an inn-keeper; but none was as prolific as John the weaver and his wife, Mary, though of their 12 children, only 4 survived childhood.

In the 18th century, families of 10 or more were so common that it is possible to mention only a few. The Cooks were another family to arrive in the Commonwealth period and members of it were still there at the census of 1841. For the main part they were smallholders or labourers and in the 19th century provided a full quota of those requiring parish relief. It was a prolific family, John, a labourer who was also the sexton, having one child by his first wife in 1695 and then 14 by his second between 1704 and 1723. His son, Paul,

followed by having 12 children by the same wife between 1741 and 1762. Whereas 11 of John's children died in childhood, 9 of Paul's 12 lived to reach adult life.

The restless schoolmaster, William Langhorne, referred to more fully in another section, was father of 11 children by his wife Mary between 1722 and 1737. Among his first 9 children were only two sons, both dying in babyhood and his loss may have been a contributory factor to his waspish temper. A contemporary who comes into his story, Reverend Skinner Bailey, vicar of Leake, had all his 13 children baptised in Wrangle by his cousin, Reverend Richard Bailey, between the years 1735 and 1755. One of them, Jacob, had the distinction in 1795 of being "slain by a fall from his horse" at the age of 46. His mother, one of the few long-lived women of the period, had not been worn out by her child-bearing, dying in 1797 at the age of 83.

Smith is so common a name that it is difficult, with the gaps in the registers, to determine when they settled in Wrangle. The Smiths were there in Elizabeth's reign but a continuous connection cannot be established. However, Robert Smith, labourer and his wife, Mary had nine children between 1736 and 1757 and although this is not a large number, it is remarkable in that all were boys, six of them surviving to manhood.

John Whitelamb, labourer, who was the father of 12 children between 1720 and 1740, was only a second-generation resident of Wrangle. For the last 20 of the 72 years of his life he was

regularly described as "pauper", being one of the first to be so described. After his death in 1761, his mantle fell upon Francis Kelk, a first-generation resident, who, after fathering 13 children between 1787 and 1807, became a chronic invalid and, as he had acquired a settlement in the parish, regularly drew a 'collection' of 6/- a week until his death in 1827 at the age of 63. His wife, Sarah, had died 15 years earlier at the age of 48, five years after the birth of the last of her 13 children, 10 of whom died in babyhood.

The largest family of one husband and wife was that of Thomas Needham, variously described as labourer and cottager, and his wife Elizabeth. Thomas's father and mother were new-comers to Wrangle, where they were married in 1787. There were 7 children by 1803, of whom Thomas was the 6th, born in 1799. There were no more children, as John, the father, was accidentally drowned in 1805. In due time, Thomas at the age of 23, married Elizabeth Orrey, who was new to the parish, and between 1825 and 1849 she bore him 17 children, 6 of whom died in the first or second year of life. The George Needham whose name appears in the appendix with a family of 11 children was an elder brother of the record-holding Thomas.

The record for legitimate children by more than one wife is shared between Robert Smith, grazier and the writer's great grandfather, John West, an inn-keeper, each with a tally of 19. Robert was married twice, his first wife bearing him 14 children and his second 5, the whole number being between the years 1785 and 1819, by which time he was 62, which gave him another distinction - that

of being one of the few men in the records to father a child after the age of 60. His total of children was really 20 as he fathered an illegitimate child during his widowerhood in 1805. John West's first wife bore him 5 children before dying of tuberculosis and his second 14. His distinction was that both his brides were pregnant when he took them to the altar. All the children were born between the years 1806 and 1837, John being 57 when the last child was born. He retired from business at the age of 70, celebrating the event by taking a walk to Horncastle, 20 miles away, to see his younger brother. Thereafter, he had a further 19 years of retirement before he died.

Illegitimacy.

While it is quite impossible to speak of the moral tone of a society from a study of its statistical records, it is quite possible to establish certain facts such as the numbers of bastard children baptised at different stages. Even this, however, does not tell the whole story as some children were buried before receiving the rite of baptism and it is not always easy to distinguish whether they were legitimate or not. Then again, there were always miscarriages and abortions which it is quite impossible to estimate. For the purpose of this survey, notice will be taken only of the illegitimate births of which there can be no doubt.

Before 1750, the number of bastard children was inconsiderable, forming just less than 1% of the total, but from 1751 to 1800 there were 86 out of a total of 1,045, which gives a rate of 82 per 1,000,

while the figures for the period 1801 to 1837 were 107 out of 1,237, the rate being 85 per 1,000. The earliest year for which the national rate is known is 1842, when it was 67 per 1,000 so that it may well be that there was nothing exceptional about the Wrangle figures. In only a few cases was an illegitimate birth followed by the marriage of the parents, though frequently illegitimacy had been narrowly averted by a timely marriage.

Among the many interesting cases, the career of Ann Halgate is outstanding. In 1756, at the age of 19, she formed an irregular union with a married man, Augustine Bussham, and during the next four years bore him three illegitimate children. In 1761, Augustine was free to marry Ann and did so, five legitimate children being born during the next ten years. What happened to Augustine at this stage is not clear; he may have died away from home or have decamped but his burial is certainly not recorded at Wrangle. However, Ann now formed another irregular union with William Standaloft, a newcomer to the parish, and between 1773 and 1781 bore him five illegitimate children before he, too, disappeared from the parish. Ann remained in the village until 1810, when she died at the respectable old age of 73.

A curious case is that of John Evison, miller and in later life, constable of the parish. On Christmas Eve, 1796, his illegitimate son by Judith Taylor was baptised but it was not until the following

February that John married Judith, who bore him two more sons before her death in 1800 at the age of 26. John, now a widower, repeated his performance. In August, 1801 an illegitimate son by Jane Chapman was baptised but he did not marry Jane until the following November. There were no more children, though both were under 30 at the time of their marriage.

Certainly the most reprehensible case in the records is that of George Gooderson, twice a widower, who in 1689 married Mary Scales, a widow with two daughters, Mary aged 15 and Elizabeth aged 11. George, who had had six children by his first two wives, had no more by his third, but in 1698, his step-daughter Elizabeth, now aged 20, bore an illegitimate child of which he was the reputed father. At the Easter Quarter Sessions he was summoned to Kirton when an affiliation order was made and at the following Midsummer sessions a further order was made against him in respect of a bastard child born to Maria Jackson, who was not a Wrangle girl. He died three years later, leaving the children chargeable to the parish but in 1709 his widow was fortunate enough to secure a vacancy in the bedehouse.

It is difficult to imagine so small a place as Wrangle with regular prostitutes but there were a number of villages within easy reach. However, in 1672, Ann Tooley was described in the burial register as "a town's wench", an ambiguous phrase which may have meant nothing more than that she was illegitimate but in 1744 the feoffees of the bede admonished Rose Marginson, then aged 70, for

"wilfully harbouring a woman of ill-fame and after various rebukes, suffering her to lodge with her". There may, after all, have been prostitutes who, like other vagrants, had their regular rounds.

Pregnancy of brides.

One of the astonishing things in the records is the tremendous increase in the number and proportion of pregnant brides from about 1750 onwards, even though it is not possible, at this distance of time, to discover all cases, as a delayed baptism would conceal a case from all but contemporaries. For the present purpose, as children were not usually baptised until they were from 4 to 6 weeks old, the bride is counted as pregnant if the first child was baptised within 7 months of the marriage ceremony. The increase appears clearly from the following table.

<u>Period</u>	<u>Marriages with issue</u>	<u>Brides presumed pregnant</u>	<u>% of total</u>
1653-1700	147	10	6.8
1701-1750	152	8	5.3
1751-1800	141	38	27.0
1801-1837	113	22	19.5

The change may have been due to a change in moral attitudes but it has already been shown that about 1750 there occurred an improvement in physical well-being and it seems possible that both the increase in the number of illegitimate births and the number of pregnant brides were manifestations of it. Suffice it to say that it became a fairly common feature of the marriages, not only of the labouring classes, but of the tradespeople and small farmers. Even John Slator,

the highly-respected schoolmaster, who married for a second time in 1828, took his child for baptism only $4\frac{1}{2}$ months after the ceremony.

In point of fact, in some of the cases recorded, with a very brief interval between the marriage and the baptism, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the child had already been born and that there was some clerical connivance to avoid the stigma of bastardy. Two cases appear to be beyond dispute. On 1st December, 1768, Edward Hales and Ann Birch arrived at the church to be married and afterwards remained behind for the baptism of their son Anthony. This feat was repeated on 7th November, 1788 by George Hewis and Elizabeth Warrington.

The Census returns of 1841 and 1851.¹

Although the registers provide valuable and unmistakable evidence as to general trends, they do not afford information as to the composition of the population at any particular time. The census returns provide this information and, as there appears to have been no marked change in habits and conditions, help us to discover with more certainty what had been happening over the preceding half-century.

The census of 1841 relates to persons who were in Wrangle on the night of 7th June, while the census of 1851 was taken on 30th March so that the age groups do not exactly correspond. Such slight differences do not, however, affect the conclusions to be drawn from

1. P.R.O. H.O. 107/612 and 107/2098.

analyses of the returns. With respect to the 1841 census, the first enquiry was to discover the degree of movement which had taken place relating to all persons who had been baptised in Wrangle since 1782. The list of persons was then divided, in age groups, into the categories (a) those who had been buried in Wrangle, (b) those still living there and (c) those who had left. Appendix 10 gives the figures resulting from this enquiry, the persons concerned being arranged in 5-year age groups. It is, of course, no cause for surprise that of the 1,834 persons baptised in Wrangle during the previous 60 years, 468 (25.5%) were already dead and buried: in fact the figure and percentage must have been much higher, as many who had left the village had, doubtless, also died. What is surprising is that only 434 (23.6%) were still alive and living in Wrangle. As this number included a high proportion of children it necessarily meant that in the higher age ranges a relatively small number had remained in their birthplace. The number no longer in Wrangle was 932 or 50.8%. As we should expect, in the three age groups below the age of 15, where in the majority of cases, removal from the parish depended upon the decision of parents, there were still more in Wrangle than had left, but only 174 as against 154; but in the next three age groups of children in their 'teens and young people up to the age of 30, the picture is entirely different as only 95 remained as against 329 who had left. Examination of the yearly totals shows clearly that the critical age was 13. From that age upwards, the drift away from the parish was persistent and impressively large.

Though this enquiry does not cover the whole population but only the 80% who had been baptised, the conclusions are valid. With respect to the incidence of death and the search for employment there was unlikely to be any difference between those who were baptised and those who were not.

The next enquiry, in view of the very large exodus from the parish, was to discover the actual age structure in 1841 when there were 1,132 inhabitants and in 1851 when there were 1,196. As will be seen in the table below, the percentages of the age groups in the two returns agree very closely, the outstanding fact being that half the population consisted of children and young people below the age of 20.

Population of Wrangle in 10-year age groups.

				Census 1841 %	Census 1851 %
Below 10 years		29.3	27.3
10 - 19 years		20.8	22.0
20 - 29 "		15.5	13.6
30 - 39 "		11.4	10.7
40 - 49 "		9.4	9.7
50 - 59 "		5.5	6.8
60 - 69 "		4.5	5.5
70 - 79 "		3.1	3.0
Over 80 "5	1.4

An examination of the surnames in the census of 1841 showed that many of them were new to Wrangle. However, in this year, inhabitants were not required to give their place of birth but merely

to state whether they had been born in the same county. In Wrangle, only 9 stated that they had been born outside Lincolnshire while 18 did not, or could not, answer. However, in 1851, they were specifically asked to state the place of their birth and the answers given have been analysed in Appendix 11, which shows that of the 1,196 persons then resident in Wrangle, 622 had been born in the parish and 574 elsewhere. As the number born in the parish included 339 below the age of 15, it meant that in practically all other age groups there were more residents born outside the parish boundary than within it. A reconstruction of the 1841 census, using the information given in the parish register and the 1851 census gives practically the same result - that only about half the residents were born in the parish.

Naturally, the next enquiry was as to the place of origin of those who had settled from outside. The answer amply justified the tentative conclusion which had been reached from other evidence - that fenlanders paid little regard to parish boundaries in their search for work, regarding the whole area as quite properly open to them. In 1851, only 43 persons had been born outside Lincolnshire and this included 18 forming the families of the three coastguards who had been drafted in to man a new station from Cornwall, Pembroke and Northumberland. A list of the places of origin, in widening circles around Wrangle, is given in Appendix 12, but here it can briefly be said that 403 of the 529 concerned came from places within walking distance - 218 from villages within 5 miles and a further 185 from villages 5 to 10 miles away. As a further 81 came from

villages less than 20 miles away, it left comparatively few with a longer journey. In a few instances, the place of birth is only part of the story, the story of a man's wanderings being filled out by the birthplace of his wife and children. Thus, John Taylor, master cordwainer, was born at Butterwick, married a wife born at Coningsby, had a child of 7 born at Bolingbroke, another of 4 born at Skirbeck and a baby of 4 months born at Wrangle, while Richard Lee, a journeyman carpenter, could not say where he had been born but he had married a wife born at Chester and his children had been born at Toynnton, Miningsby, Mumby and Thorp. These, however, were the exceptions, mainly limited to craftsmen; agricultural workers did not move either so far or so often.

The question which largely remains unanswered is what happened to the 932 men and women, born in Wrangle between 1782 and 1841, who had left their homes. Even a cursory glance at the census returns for the neighbouring villages gives part of the answer but no amount of 'musical chairs' played by the populations of neighbouring villages could provide for the steadily increasing population, which, in the case of Wrangle alone, amounted to some 20 males a year. The number of male persons in employment of all kinds was 337 in 1841 and 330 in 1851, with no prospect of expansion. As the neighbouring villages were in similar case, with no new avenues of employment opening up locally, the provisional answer to the question must be that many must have moved much further afield. What is clear is that if Wrangle had ever been a self-contained village with a closely-knit

community, it was ceasing to be so by the 17th century and by the 18th had become one of those small reservoirs of human beings flowing over into the developing towns and the growing industrial life of the country.

4. FARMING IN WRANGLE

1. 1600 - 1660

The coastal area.

By a fortunate chance, material has survived which permits us to fix, with reasonable certainty, the sea-ward limit of the parish at the beginning and end of this period. In 1606, a boundary dispute concerning part of the foreshore entailed the construction of a map showing the whole of the Wrangle coastline. The positions of roads, drains and houses agree very closely with the positions of the same features on later Ordnance Survey maps, indicating that the land was measured and delineated with great accuracy. The map gives no suggestion of a sea bank but there are two dotted lines of importance. The first marks the limit where land holdings give place to salt marsh and the second, where salt marsh merges into sand. It is reasonable to surmise that the tide regularly flowed over the sand but over the salt marsh only at seasonal high tides.¹ In fact, the surmise is amply confirmed by the evidence given at a commission held in 1624, when James 1., searching around for money, laid claim to all land given up by the sea. Two Wrangle yeomen described the Wrangle foreshore at the enquiry, the evidence of one of them reading as follows:

"Edward Gough threescore and fower yeares olde sworn and examined sayeth that there is noe Banke to defende the Sea agaynste the towne of Wrangle but certaine salt coatt

1. P.R.O. M.81 A drawing of the map follows page 83.

hills which doe save the tyde from runninge into the cuntrye from which salt coatt hills there be certayne salte marshes adjoyninge to the hills that the Sea doth overflowe at some tymes and are now in the tenure or occupation of Sir John Reade, Knight and James Wheeler, James Hudson, William Lowice, M..... Bryson and Simon Chamberlen. All which said occupants doe paye noe rente for the sayd marshes only they paye certayne rente to divers Lords, some to the Kinge and some to the Lords of the Mannor, for their hills and every acre of the hills are worth twelve pence by the acre p. annum and every acre of the salte marshes are worthe one pennye the acre p. annum. And the inhabitants doe goe their perambulation on the sandes when the tyde will give them leave and when the tyde is over the marshes then they goe not at all."¹.

The shore was silting up at this time along the whole coastline from Wainfleet to Leverton and about 1642 the owners of the land fronting on the salt marsh combined to embank it. Three Wrangle residents gave evidence at a commission held in 1688 and although the enquiry related specifically to Wainfleet and Friskney, it is reasonable to suppose that the sea bank ran along the whole of the north-east side of the Wash. At this enquiry, Anthony Hart testified that the bank had been constructed 45 years earlier, that it had been built "as neare the sea sandes as conveniently it could be", that another salt marsh was building up beyond the bank and that he believed that "the said salt marsh is now higher than the

1. P.R.O. 4086. E.178, 21 Jas. 1.

THE COASTAL AREA
OF WRANGLE IN 1606.

Drawn from M81. in the
Public Record Office.

A True and perfect Plott of the Sea Coast of the severall Mannors belonging to the Kings Maiestie, and to William Hanbye Esquier within the towne of Wrangle in the Countie of Lincolne, Measured after y^e rate of Sixteene foot & a halfe to the Perche or pole Anno Domini 1606.

The Towne of Frilney salt marsh and Sandes



perches

0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100	110	120	130	140	150
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16

furlongs

John Malyn Surveyr for the playntiffs
Richard Smith surveior for y^e defend^t

said embanked marsh".¹ As far as Wrangle was concerned, the embanked marsh added some 600 acres to its enclosures, the necessary drains being used to mark the bounds of the various holdings.

The parish and the manor.

The map of 1606 not only shows the king's manor but also clearly marks "Mr. Hanbies mannor", the two appearing to be surprisingly intermingled until it is remembered that in earlier times gifts of land had been made to the Abbeys of Kirkstead and Waltham and that when these had come into the market at the same time as the dissolution, the land had been acquired by the Hanby family. However, despite the wording on the map, the Hanby estate did not constitute a manor, though the Chaplins, who later came into the estate, claimed it as one. The evidence on the point appears to be incontrovertible. In 1610, Ralph Treswell took a survey of all the Lincolnshire manors in the Duchy of Lancaster and, in answer to one of a series of questions, the Wrangle jurors replied "that there are not, nor heretofore hath ben, within any of our memories, any castles or other mantion or mannor house or other demesne lands" within the parish.² The Hanby estate was, however, considerable and it becomes clear that the royal manor did not cover more than about two-thirds of the parish.

1. P.R.O. E. 3 Jas. 11, Mich. 41.

2. P.R.O. D.L. 42/119, pages 212 - 234.

Treswell's instructions were to ascertain whether the king was being defrauded of any of his dues and this was Treswell's uppermost thought when he conducted the enquiry and made his report. He omitted no item of rent but, unfortunately, in 8 of the 65 grants of freehold land he did not state the acreage. In two of the cases, those of the feoffees of the Bede and the Corporation of Boston, the area is known from other sources and, judging from the out-rents due, it is possible to estimate the 8 taken together at 500 acres. The following, therefore, gives the approximate extent of the manor, which included 65 acres in Leake.

	ac.	r.
Demesne land	551	2
Copyhold	11	1
Freehold	1,472	1
	<hr/> 2,035	<hr/> 0

The jurors admitted that there were also some 400 acres of common or marsh but on their oaths affirmed that "there is not, neither hath been heretofore, any enclosures or encroachments upon his majesties common or waste or in or upon any of his majesties grounds". After enumerating the various areas of common and salt marsh, all of which they claimed as "belonging to the towne of Wrangle", they continued, "there can be no reservacon of any of the said common unto his majestie by reason the said towne of Wrangle is so sudjourned with many poore people". It occasions no surprise, on the other hand, to read that Ralph Treswell dutifully certified that the commons belonged to the manor and that the salt marshes,

containing "three hundred and forty acres or thereabouts", worth 6d. an acre did "wholy belong to his majestie and not to the said inhabitants".

Land use on the manor.

In his report, Treswell clearly designated the use of copyhold and demesne, but as freeholders could make what use of the land they wished, he frequently entered these holdings simply as "land" with a messuage or cottage. In making an analysis, therefore, it is possible to include only demesne and copyhold land, treating it as a sample. The result is as follows:

Table 1. Land use in the manor of Wrangle, 1610.

	<u>Wrangle</u>		<u>Leake</u>		<u>Total</u>	
	ac.	r.	ac.	r.	ac.	r.
Arable	70	2	-	-	70	2
Pasture & Arable	15	0	-	-	15	0
Pasture	240	3	10	1	251	0
Meadow	13	0	-	-	13	0
Low Ground	158	2	55	0	213	2
Totals	<u>497</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>65</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>563</u>	<u>0</u>

The amount of meadow is inconsiderable and as it is designated as "reedy ground", presumably it was fit for nothing else. Before considering arable and pasture, a comment must be made about the low ground. In April, 1609, Robert Stephenson, bailiff of the manor, died and Edward Aldie, nominated in his will as his successor for the remainder of the lease, took over. The following month he empanelled a jury of 15 yeomen to survey the demesne land. Among

other things, they reported that the low ground in Wrangle and Leake, amounting to $213\frac{1}{2}$ acres, was surrounded by water and "almost of no value".¹ At Treswell's inspection, made 18 months later, the jurors made exactly the same comment. It would appear, therefore, that at the beginning of this period, flooding was a regular feature of the low ground, rendering it useless for any kind of farming. Of the land regularly in use, there was roughly four times as much pasture as arable. From the information gathered from the inventories, probably the same proportions prevailed over the whole parish.

It seems likely that the low ground, designated as pasture, remained in its waterlogged condition until 1633. At a Court of Sewers held in Boston in 1631 it was reported that practically the whole of the East and West Fens were overwhelmed by water. Failure by the contiguous parishes to take action led to a concession to Sir Miles Thomas and his group of adventurers of 16,300 acres in consideration of undertaking the work of drainage. In 1634 the work was adjudged complete and the land "fitt for arable or meadowe or pasture".² As the East Fen water no longer flooded over, the low ground would now be fit for use as summer pasture. Even the destruction of the sluices by the resentful fenmen who forcibly retook possession of the land during the disturbed conditions of 1641 does not seem to have led to the inundations of the earlier years. However, nearly two centuries were to pass before any of it was fit for more than pasture or meadow.

1. P.R.O. D.L. 43 6/41.

2. H.C. Darby, The Draining of the Fens, C.U.P., 1956, P. 46.

Holdings and houses.

Treswell's survey named 82 landowners, whose holdings, with estimates for the few whose acreage is not stated, were as follows:

Table 2. Land holdings, Wrangle manor, 1610.

<u>Acre</u> s	<u>Number of holdings.</u>
Below 1	7
1 - 3	22
3 - 5	8
5 - 10	13
10 - 20	12
20 - 30	7
30 - 60	7
60 - 100	3
100 - 200	2
Over 200	1

The table, however, does not include the entire parish, as the estate of William Hanby¹ spread over its whole extent and many of the freeholders who paid out-rent to the king's bailiff also rented land from the Hanby estate. A few examples appear on the map of 1606, which covers only a small part of the parish. Even so, Sir John Read, Edward Hanby, John Sallet and Vaughan are seen as holding land from both sources. This situation was certainly repeated all over the parish. When Edward Aldie had made his survey of the demesne lands, he had defined the situation of its 81 lots in relation to the land of 46 other owners. In 15 of these cases, one of the other owners was William Hanby. It is also clear that many

1. The name appears in a variety of forms but Burke's 'Peerage etc.' has settled for Hanby.

of the farms and cottages were on Hanby land, five, indeed being shown on the map of 1606. All the evidence of parish register, probate inventories and the above table of holdings (allowing for absentee landlords) indicates that there were at least 70 houses in the parish at this time. As Treswell's report instances only 17 messuages, 8 cottages and 2 squatters' homes on the common, the inference is that more than half of the houses in the parish were on the Hanby estate.

Table 2 is likely to be reasonably accurate for the 50 holdings of less than 10 acres but it is almost certain that the larger farmers held considerably more than can be indicated. It is worth noting that Sir John Read, who is known to have held 272 of freehold land and whose out-rent for an unspecified area means that at least another 150 acres must be added, also rented ground from William Hanby. In effect, he was farming about one eighth of the available land in the parish.

The probate inventories.

A very important source of information about farming and its subsidiary activities is the collection of 101 probate inventories of the period in the Lincoln Archives Office. Fortunately, it forms a very good sample as it includes 81 families bearing 77 surnames. It would appear that, despite the movement of families in and out of the parish, their number remained fairly constant for a century. In 1563, the archdeacon's return had given their number as 76 while the protestation return of 1642 included 77 surnames. The value of

the inventories is, therefore, apparent as they represent practically all the families in the parish. The wealthiest inhabitant was Sir John Read, whose Wrangle estate alone was valued at £1,187. 10s. 2d. and the poorest was George Row, a glover, whose possessions were worth £10. 16s. 6d. but who left debts amounting to £12. 13s. 4d. Between these two extremes are inventories denoting varying degrees of affluence, comfort and poverty. Among the deceased were gentlemen, yeomen, husbandmen and labourers but there were also three vicars and a number of craftsmen - all, however, closely concerned with agriculture. From the inventories as a whole we can obtain a reasonably clear picture of the various aspects of farming - the stock on the pasture, the crops on the arable, the seasons of sowing and harvesting, methods of storage and the implements in use.

Distribution of wealth and stock.

As it was ownership of stock, beyond all other considerations, which indicated a person's wealth, it is not surprising to find that the table below, showing the distribution of wealth during the period, corresponds very closely to Table 2, which shows the extent of holdings. To avoid duplication, estates of widows have been omitted from the table if the estates of their husbands have been included.

Table 3.Estates of Wrangle testators, 1600 - 1660.

<u>Value in £.</u>	<u>Number of testators.</u>
Less than 5	6
5 - 15	23
15 - 25	14
25 - 50	16
50 - 100	16
100 - 150	6
150 - 300	9
300 - 500	1
500 - 1000	4
Over 1000	1

One thing which emerges from a study of the inventories is that the Wrangle farmer was considerably poorer than his counterpart in the fenland as a whole. Mr. M.W. Barley, working on a sample of 200 inventories, has determined the wealth of the median peasant farmer in Lincolnshire in the 1630s as £55. 5s. 4d.¹. The median for the Wrangle inventories for substantially the same period is £30. 3s. 2d. The difference, largely accounted for by the large number of very small holdings in Wrangle, is further illustrated by a consideration of the median numbers of stock held by fenland farmers in general and those of Wrangle. For the first group, the figures have been worked out by Dr. Joan Thirsk as follows: ².

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1. The Lincolnshire Historian, Spring, 1951, p. 250.
M.W. Barley, 'The Lincolnshire Village and its Buildings.'
 2. Dr. Joan Thirsk, English Peasant Farming, London, 1957, Table 24, p. 139. 2.

Cattle	Horses	Pigs	Sheep
7	4	1	24

The corresponding figures for Wrangle are:

Cattle	Horses	Pigs	Sheep
6	2	2	12

The really significant difference lies in the number of sheep which, for the fenland as a whole, constituted the chief source of wealth.

Even allowing for the flooded areas of the parish, there were some 4,000 acres available, of which more than 3,000 were pasture and this, together with the commons and marshes, would seem sufficient for far more sheep than is represented by a median of 12. The fact is that the sheep were there, but until 1626, largely in the hands of a single owner, Sir John Read, who died possessed of 1,254, all pastured in Wrangle, as well as 113 head of cattle, 36 horses and 67 pigs. This large flock raises the average number of sheep per holding to 49. However, the outstanding position of Sir John is realised by comparing his holding of stock with that of the next wealthiest man in the parish, Edward Gough, who died in 1625 leaving 270 sheep, 50 cattle, 12 horses and 40 pigs. Only two other testators had considerable flocks, William Lawis leaving 280 sheep in 1639 and Martin Brooks 300 in 1640 - both of them more than a dozen years after the death of Sir John.

A study of the inventories indicates the increasing importance of sheep, relative to horses and cattle as the half-century passed. In 1602, Richard Goodrick had 25 cattle and in 1604, John Anthony had 47 but thereafter until 1660 only 10 other farmers had more than 20.

Many farmers were breeding on a small scale but seem to have been content, for the main part, with little more than the numbers required to provide their own dairy produce and replacements for future years. Much the same position applied to horses. As they were needed for transport and work on the farms, practically every holder except the labourer had one or more but throughout the period only 5 persons died possessed of more than a dozen.

Most of the stock mentioned in the inventories was pastured within the parish boundary, though only occasionally is the exact location indicated. In 1621, Anthony Hart had 32 sheep at Ingoldmells but in the other few instances recorded they were no further away than the neighbouring parishes of Leake and Friskney.

Cropping.

To garner information about cropping it is important to note the season of the year when the inventory was taken. The valuers did their work within a week of the funeral of the testator, and, at first sight, it would seem that we should have a very clear picture of the cropping position at different seasons of the year as the incidence of death was spread very evenly over the four quarters. However, two considerations prevent an absolutely unequivocal statement from being made. One is that only four of the inventories of wealthier farmers were taken during the months from May to August, when they yield most information about crops on the ground. The second is that the appraisers frequently lumped crops together under a single heading. Some of the crops may, indeed,

have been grown together, such as Robert Sleight's $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres of corn and beans, John Sallet's $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres of wheat and barley and Edward Gough's $4\frac{1}{2}$ acres of wheat and rye; but it is certain that other crops could not have been grown together, such as William Dover's acre of corn and hemp, Margaret Claxon's 4 acres of wheat, rye and beans or William Lawis's 12 acres of wheat, rye, barley, beans and oats.

For what they are worth, the figures in acres of separate crops are: wheat 21, barley 20, beans $14\frac{1}{2}$, peas $2\frac{1}{2}$, hemp $28\frac{1}{2}$. Oats and rye do not appear as separate crops while the figure for hemp is swollen by the inclusion of many small items of the smaller farmers. It may well be that a truer picture of the cropping proportions is provided by the single inventory of Edward Gough, taken in 1625, which shows: wheat and rye, $4\frac{1}{2}$ acres, barley 14 acres, beans 9 acres, hemp and oats, $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres. Peas which, in earlier times, had been an important crop, had given place almost completely to beans. John Sallet had $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres under pease in 1609 and Margaret Claxon had half a seam in store in 1631 but in no other inventory are they even mentioned. The only autumn sown crop was wheat, which is mentioned as being on the ground throughout the winter months. For the remainder, the normal sowing time was March or early April, depending on the state of the land, and the normal harvest time was August or September.

It would be tedious to review in detail the items given in the inventories but these facts clearly emerge: beans and barley were

outstandingly the most important crops and second to them came wheat, rye and oats. Hemp, in demand by the ropemakers of Boston, appears to have been grown in excess of domestic requirements and was probably a 'money' crop - and, in the case of the poor, possibly their only saleable commodity apart from their wool and bodily labour. No inventory mentions flax as a crop on the ground but it was certainly widely grown as many mention it as being in store and practically every household had its linen wheel.

Barley remained an important crop throughout the period - understandably, as all the larger farmers brewed their own beer and it was a common bread-making grain. In the later years, the increasing amount of wheat grown supports the view that it was becoming more popular for making bread. Oats were, of course, fed to horses, but the number of oatmeal stocks mentioned in the inventories indicates that part of it was grown for human consumption.

Ample confirmation of the cropping position is provided by the inventories of those farmers who died after the gathering of the harvest but before it was sold or consumed. Thus, the value of Anthony Hart's crops in 1621 were: barley £15, wheat £4, and beans £6; while the corresponding figures for Sir John Read in 1626 were: barley £40, wheat £4, and beans £13. 6s. 8d. In 1643, John Ranson left barley £15, beans £13. 6s. 8d., rye, wheat and barley £4. 2s. Od., and oatmeal, oats and hempseed £2. 4s. Od. The smaller farmers grew much the same crops in about the same proportions except that greater emphasis was placed upon hemp.

Farm tools and equipment.

A study of the inventories brings a realisation of the paucity of equipment of the farmer of three centuries ago and how much depended upon his bodily exertion. For the poorer inhabitants, farming consisted partly of labouring for their wealthier neighbours and partly of caring for their own stock, with spade cultivation of the part of the holding nearest their home, some of the inventories mentioning that a crop is 'by the house'. This not only made for convenience of working but minimised the amount of carrying at harvest time. Only a quarter of the Wrangle farmers owned a cart and only 7 a harvest wain. The poorer had sleds and wheelbarrows but it is likely that, as in the Faroes to this day, the poorer farmer carried in his harvest on the backs of himself and his family. For him, the essential tools of husbandry for preparing his land, laying his grips, scouring his ditches and gathering his crops were the spade, fork, shovel, scythe and rake - and many farmers had little else, though practically all had frames, or light pyramids of wood, upon which crops could be spread out to dry.

Storage of crops presented a difficulty to the small farmer. Until the end of autumn, much seems to have been stacked in the yard, though some farmers had a hovel or 'belfry' which afforded cover from weather if not from vermin. Thrashing was certainly carried out by use of the flail, though none is mentioned in the inventories, possibly because they were easily made and of no great value. However, the riddles which were used when winnowing, are frequently

mentioned. After thrashing, grain crops and beans were moved indoors, into a chamber, if there was one, but frequently into the hall or kitchen. Hemp, until it was 'pilled' or stripped down to the fibre, was kept outdoors, but when it was prepared for use, that was brought indoors also. Hay was stacked in the field where it was grown but was immediately fenced round as sheep and cattle would still be grazing on the eddish.

The capital value of the equipment of even the wealthiest farmer was small. Sir John Read's 2 ploughs, sets of harrows, 2 wains, 2 carts and 2 dung carts were valued by the appraisers at only £5, which was less than the price of one good nag. The inventories contain no surprises regarding equipment, the only unusual things being Roger Julian's horse mill in 1616 and the occasional mention that harrows were of iron, though iron harrows were not unusual at this time. For the rest, the extent of the heavier equipment in the parish is shown in the table below.

Table 4.

Farm equipment, Wrangle, 1600 - 1660.

	Owners of -			
	1	2	3	4
Ploughs	20	6	-	-
Carts	12	8	-	1
Wains	6	1	-	-
Harrows	-	18	2	-

Subsidiary activities.

Poultry keeping was general, even labourers keeping from 4 to 6 hens. There were not, however, the great days of Lincolnshire poultry keeping and in only 5 cases did the value of the birds reach £1. Geese are mentioned in 18 inventories, ducks in 12 but turkeys only once. An interesting entry occurs in the record of the estate of Edward Gough, who succeeded Edward Aldie as bailiff of the manor:

"His swan mark & all his swans, white & grey ... £10. 0. 0."
When Aldie had died 14 years earlier the swans and swan mark had been valued at only £1. 6s. 8d.

Very little evidence is provided of other subsidiary activities. Turf-cutting is represented by a modest number of occasions upon which 'hassocks' are listed as fuel but the evidence relating to fishing and fowling is very slight. In 1602, Richard Gough had herrings in his larder and in 1629, Matthew Marshall, a tailor, had a boat, 5 herring nets and 2 pairs of panniers. Other owners of boats were Francis Gough with 2 in 1614 and Richard Blisbury and Richard Thimbleby with 1 each in 1630 and 1634. Thimbleby, who kept some stock on the East Fen, also possessed 3 poles and a net. In 1602, Richard Goodrick had a fowling piece; in 1621, Anthony Hart had two guns; while in 1631, Walter Cock had "fowling gears and fishing nets" valued at 5/-. These slight gleanings are all that can be found to remind us that the parish lay between the Wash and the East Fen.

Fruit is mentioned only three times and apples are the only fruit specified. In November 1611, Edward Aldie had 10/- worth in his apple chamber and in 1621, Anthony Hart had 3/4 worth of what must have been a good keeping variety as late as February. William Lawis, whose inventory was taken in August, 1629, had unspecified fruit in his orchard valued at £1. From other sources it is known that the vicar and schoolmaster had fruit trees and it is extremely likely that there were many other persons with small orchards. Unfortunately for our purpose, fruit trees were not classed as personal estate and the absence of the produce from the inventory may well mean that it had already been consumed or that the quantity in store was too small to be worth recording.

It appears that there were few bee-keepers in the village, the records showing Anthony Hart with 4 stocks, Edward Aldie with 3 and Edward Gough with 2. As a stock was a valuable possession, worth from 5/- to 6/8, it is unlikely that appraisers would have overlooked others had they been there.

Craftsmen.

In times when villages were largely self-supporting, it was necessary to have some local craftsmen, most of whom also engaged in agriculture. Unfortunately, the inventories yield only scanty information about the local craftsmen. All that indicates that Richard Curtis in 1626 really was a "webster" is that he had a loom - but even with the addition of old wood about the yard, it was worth only 10/-. However, in 1629, Matthew Marshall, who was a fisherman

as well as a weaver, had two looms which, with all their gear, were valued at £3. 6s. 8d., while ten years later, Thomas Lyngard's two looms were worth £2. The evidence from other inventories of material in store suggests that men with two looms used one for weaving wool and the other for weaving linen. Three leather workers are mentioned: George Row who, in 1603, had 26 calf skins, 12 sheep skins and 1 young bullock's skin "in the pits"; Christopher Shaw, a shoemaker who, in 1623, had hob nails, leather, laces, gloves and one pair of boots in stock; and Richard Blisbury who apparently combined his craft with fishing and of whom we have the scanty information that his leather and working tools were together worth 10/-. There is only one carpenter's inventory during this period. Robert Penson who died in 1611 had already given his working tools, worth £1. 10s. Od., to his son, though for some reason he had kept his grindstone, valued at 2/-. At the time of his death he had completed a wheelbarrow and two pairs of cart wheels and had shaped the wood for making a cart.

On the whole, it would appear that Wrangle did not, during this period, have more than the bare minimum of craftsmen and that most of the inhabitants were fully engaged in the arduous work of farming,-fishing and fowling adding merely occasional bounty to those with the skill and enterprise.

FARMING IN WRANGLE.2. 1660 - 1740The inventories examined.

The Commonwealth period caused an interruption in the taking of inventories and when the practice was resumed, either it was carried out with less diligence or less care has been taken in preserving the documents. Whereas there were 101 inventories for the 60 years from 1601 to 1660, there are only 74 for the 80 years from 1661 to 1740. An inspection of the parish register shows that there were 439 adult parishioners who were buried within this period, for whom inventories might well have been prepared. Of this number, 90 were widows and 349 adult males. There are 7 inventories in respect of widows but for the present purpose, these are of small importance as information about farming is derived mainly from the inventories of male testators. These number 67, which means, in effect, that we have information about rather less than 20% of the adult male population. To determine the validity of the data, information relating to the status of the deceased persons has been gathered together from the registers, the inventories and wills, to see how many inventories have survived for each social category. The table overleaf gives the result of this enquiry.

Table 1. Deceased Adult Males in Wrangle, 1661 - 1740.

<u>Category.</u>	<u>Number of -</u>	
	1. <u>Deceased</u>	2. <u>Inventories</u>
Gentlemen	11	0
Clergy	2	2
Yeomen & husbandmen	116	45
Schoolmasters	3	1
Millers	4	0
Publicans	3	1
Butchers	2	1
Carpenters & thatchers	10	2
Tailors, weavers & shoemakers	16	3
Labourers	80	10
Menservants	24	1
Not specified	78	1

One outstanding point about the table is that while there is a very good representation of yeomen and husbandmen, labourers are under-represented and there are no inventories of gentlemen. However, of the seven families who claimed the title, the Pickerings, the Whartons and the Herons had died out by 1682, while Anthony Hart, who died in 1689, came of a family which both before and after his time was entered in the parish register as yeomen, while the later Stephensons were also content to be called yeomen. Only the Baileys and the Wilbys continued to class themselves as gentlemen, the two families inter-marrying from time to time, many of the Baileys taking Holy Orders, while the Wilbys were the wealthiest family resident in the parish. For the present purpose, the position of these families is well represented by the inventories of the wealthier yeomen.

A large number of the 78 whose category is not specified, entered in the register as 'bachelor' or without comment, possibly as many as a half, were the sons of yeomen or husbandmen who were presumably working with their fathers, but if we counted all of them as labourers, it would still mean that during this period, only half the men of Wrangle were in this category. This necessarily leads to the conclusion that if a number of the larger farmers employed as many as half a dozen labourers, there were many more smaller farmers who employed none at all, depending entirely upon their own labours and what assistance they could get from members of their families.

The labourers.

As there were comparatively few labourers whose property was assessed, it is, perhaps, worth while to examine them somewhat closely. The register shows that all were married men - indeed, John Oulsby had been married 3 times and had 7 children and Edward Green had been married 4 times and had 10. Seven of the ten appear to have lived in 2-roomed houses, 4 having a dairy in addition, while the wealthiest, Edward Green, had 3 rooms, one of which was chambered over. This can be accepted as the typical accommodation of the labourer. All, except the poorest, William West, had sheep, cattle and pigs of their own, and all appear to have grown small quantities of corn, beans and hemp. Seven of them kept poultry, varying in number from 4 to 20, three at least keeping ducks and geese as well as hens. Probably all had profitable side-lines.

Certainly Richard Pickle, Samuel Blisbury, James Brough and George Leach had fishing gear, while Richard Pickle and Edward Green had fowling pieces, the latter also possessing a supply of leather and leather-working tools. The exception to the general pattern, William West, apparently grew no crops and kept just one cow for milk; but he had a couple of mares and a cart with all the harness and gear. It was clearly his choice to work for money rather than to support his family by his own tillage or stock-keeping. At the time of his death he was the poorest of the group, though during his lifetime he may well have enjoyed a higher weekly income than the rest of the labourers.¹

Yeomen and husbandmen.

The distinction between yeomen and husbandmen became very blurred during this period, members of the same family being described as either one or the other indifferently, though the size of holding was often a decisive factor. A few families, however, were consistently given the designation of yeomen even when they fell on hard times, but as will be seen from Appendix 14, generally speaking, the yeomen were still the wealthiest of the farmers. Taking the two categories together, we cannot but be struck by the very wide range in the value of their estates, the poorest being no better off than the wealthier labourers, while the richest, John Stephenson, who was

1. See Appendix 13.

also a butcher, left estate valued at £1,024. 19s. 11d., only slightly less than that left by Sir John Read in the earlier period. The medians of the four categories shown in appendix 14 are: yeomen, £247; craftsmen £120; husbandmen £97; labourers £37, while the median of the whole group, including the clergy, the widows and the manservant (who owned 7 sheep) is £101. However, as labourers are under-represented in the total number, a figure of £80 would be much nearer the true median. Even so, this compares very favourably with the £30 of the earlier period.

Increasing prosperity.

Although the rise in prices over the intervening years must be considered in comparing the value of worldly possessions in the two periods, yet the inventories bear ample testimony to the greatly improved position of the Wrangle householder, both in the furnishing of his home and in his possession of livestock. The great increase in his holding of stock is clearly seen in the table below.

Table 2. Median numbers of stock held by Wrangle farmers.

	<u>Sheep</u>	<u>Cattle</u>	<u>Horses</u>	<u>Pigs</u>
1600 - 1650	12	6	2	2
1660 - 1740	42	16	4	4

The figures given for the second period are very close to those given by Dr. Thirsk for the fenland as a whole during the 1660s and 1690s,¹ indicating that the Wrangle farmer was no longer in worse

1. Joan Thirsk, English Peasant Farming, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1957, p. 139, Table 24. They are :
 1660s Sheep 50; Cattle 10; Horses 4; Pigs 1.
 1690s Sheep 62; Cattle 14; Horses 7; Pigs 2.

case than his neighbours. With the population remaining fairly steady, the improvement could have resulted only from an increase of the amount of land in use or its more intensive use, or, more probably, a combination of the two. In the first place, it was during this period, that the salt marsh, formerly open to the flowing of the tides, was embanked, adding at least 600 acres to the area of good pasture land. While the death of Sir John Read and the removal of his family from Wrangle added nothing to the total acreage, the disappearance of his large flock, with a virtual monopoly of the marsh, meant that a greater number of farmers were using the marsh for grazing ground - a fact amply borne out by the inventories. It is worth noting that Wrangle Hall and farm, towards the end of the 17th century had been acquired by John Watt, who by his will of 1698, bequeathed the hall and its 240 acres to St. Bartholomew's Hospital and that for the next century it became the home of the Wilby family.¹ As the coastal strip beyond the bank was continually silting up, this, in turn, became the salt marsh, providing additional pasture.

Another extension of land in use appears to have been the Low Grounds, an area to the east and north of the older enclosures, bounded on its southern side by Gold Fen Bank and on its western side by the embanked Bull Drove to the common. In general, it lies about four feet below the level of the 'high' land of the old enclosures and though it had been used intermittently for grazing

1. I am indebted to Dr. N.J.M. Kerling, Archivist of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, for this information.

for centuries, it was always liable to inundation by 'upland' water, which surged across the East Fen and the common. Its comparative value was fully recognised by the Terrier of 1708, wherein the agreement on tithes puts the position that "the inhabitants pay twelve pence an acre or more for high ground and always four pence an acre for low ground". It would have been quite impracticable to build houses and farm buildings on the low ground itself but a rating return indicates that by 1807 there were five on the surrounding banks and some of these may have been there for a considerable time. Towards the end of the 17th century, there were two unrelated John Wests in Wrangle, both married and fathering children of the same Christian names. To distinguish them, the parish clerk designated one, "John West, Labourer" and the other, "John West of the Low Grounds". He is unlikely to have used the latter description unless a home, as well as a holding, was on the low ground.

The pasture of the low ground was far more suited to cattle than to sheep or horses, which preferred the close cropping of the finer grasses of the tofts and marshes and it therefore seems likely that the increase in numbers of cattle coincided with a more intensive use of the low ground. Even by 1810, when corn growing was being pushed to its limits, the records of the rating officer, John Slator, show that the low ground was still mainly pasture and meadow.

Drainage.

Land drainage is an essential aspect of English agriculture wherever it is conducted. As far as Wrangle was concerned, there were two authorities who could call upon the land owners or occupiers for rates for this work. In the parish itself was the dikereeve, nominally elected by the Court of Sewers, but in practice, appointed by the manorial court and in later times by the vestry. It is known from the Bede accounts that there was no lapse in the office throughout this period, and from the names of the dikereeves given, that the choice always fell upon a substantial and experienced man. Between 1671 and 1746, the period of the first of these account books, the rate varied between 2d. and 2/- an acre. There has been a tendency to belittle and deride the services of these unpaid local officers but such a view entirely ignores the points that those who held the office were substantial and experienced farmers and that at all times farmers expect value for money. It is not possible to compile a complete list of the dikereeves but among the names which occur are all the important local landowners - the Baileys, the Wilbys and the Stephenson's - as well as the more numerous farmers of modest means - the Thompsons, Sergeants, Robins, Hoyles, Ashalls, Hills, Wainwrights and Wests.

The value of the dikereeve's work, which, until the present century, was commonly let out by contract annually at a local inn, depended upon two other considerations. First, there was the individual farmer, whose ditches found an outlet into the parish drain.

While we have no means of knowing how effectively the owners or lessees carried out this work, there is no reason to believe that they were less diligent or attentive individually than they were when acting collectively as feoffees of the Bede, and fortunately we know what a strain on their resources was the cost of ditching, scouring, banking and gripping the Bede land. Gripping was the forerunner of drainage by the porous drainpipe. A trench, normally about two spades deep, was laid across a field with a fall leading to a ditch. In the early part of this period, the trench then received a layer of 'kids', which were bundles of thorns, and after they had been lightly trodden down, the trench was filled in with the spoil. Such a grip, well laid, would be an effective drain for some twenty years. Later, when waste from the brick kilns became common, this was used, either in conjunction with, or instead of, the kids.

However, the work of the most diligent farmer and most efficient dikereeve was of little avail if there was neglect beyond the parish border, where lay the second authority. About a third of the acreage of Wrangle was drained directly into the Wash and for this, the farmers and dikereeve were entirely responsible; but the remaining two-thirds, inland from the line of the tofts, was drained by the parish drains into those of the Court of Sewers and so into the river Witham. It would appear that this authority remained inactive for lengthy periods. The Bede feoffees had been called upon to pay 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. an acre in 1689 and 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. an acre in 1717 but nothing thereafter

until 1735, when, following a complaint from all the East Fen parishes, some major work was undertaken, for which, during the years 1735 to 1737, the owners had to pay $4\frac{1}{6}$ d. an acre. This work, however, came right at the end of the period of the present review and its very magnitude is evidence that the condition of the land had been deteriorating, despite the efforts of individual farmers and the dikereeve.

Cropping changes.

Consideration of cropping during the period suffers from the serious disadvantage that very many of the inventories were taken during the winter months, when the only crops on the ground were wheat or rye, or a combination of the two. There is, however, ample evidence that barley was declining in popularity at the expense of oats, which, together with beans, was becoming extensively used as winter fodder for horses. Barley is a crop not really suited to the soil of Wrangle, even at the present time, as too much of the nurture goes into the plant and not enough into the head of corn. It is not so profitable a crop as oats and when this is coupled with increased demand for oats as a fodder crop, it is easy to understand that a change in cropping was inevitable, though the table overleaf is based on so small a sample that its validity is doubtful.

Table 3.Crops indicated by inventories 1661 - 1740.

	<u>Acres.</u>	<u>%</u>
Wheat and rye	32 $\frac{3}{4}$	31.6
Oats	35	33.0
Beans	14 $\frac{1}{2}$	13.7
Beans and barley ..	18 $\frac{1}{2}$	17.5
Hemp	4 $\frac{1}{2}$	4.2
	<u>105$\frac{1}{4}$</u>	<u>100.0</u>

Throughout the period, decreasing amounts of hemp appear to have been grown or to have been considered worth inclusion in the inventory.

The last considerable grower, though some of his store may have been garnered from tithes, was the vicar, Henry Conington who, at the time of his death in 1671, had hemp in store to the value of £24. Thereafter, the only testator with more than a very modest quantity was his successor as vicar, William Erskine who, in 1705, left "certain rough hemp pilled" valued at £2. Hemp is not again mentioned in any inventory either as a crop on the ground or as a commodity in store.

Farm equipment.

There was no great improvement in the quality of farm equipment, though there was more of it and it was more widespread, almost all farmers owning, or sharing ownership of, ploughs, harrows and carts. About a quarter had wains in addition. The fundamental processes and methods of agriculture remained unchanged. There was no rotation of crops, except that grain was commonly grown after fallow. Ploughs and harrows went down to a depth of not much more than three inches;

sowing was broadcast, by hand; mowing was a laborious business with scythe or sickle; binding into sheaves and stooking were women's work; pitching on to the wain, leading and stacking were dusty, laborious tasks which only in the present century have been either mechanised or eliminated. There could be no great increase in farm wealth or the productivity derived from crops, as long as the hard pan of sub-soil remained unbroken and so much human endeavour was needed to gather even a scanty harvest.

How long there had been a mill in Wrangle is not known. A post mill is clearly shown on the map of 1606 and it probably had predecessors. However, the days when the Lord of the Manor could insist that corn should be ground at his mill had long since passed and it is likely that only the larger farmers needed its services. The number of querns in the inventories indicates that the small holder, whose corn was grown for domestic consumption, occupied the winter days in thrashing with the flail, leaving the work of grinding to the female members of his family.

Stock.

With regard to farm animals it is a different story, as there was a notable increase in holdings of horses, cattle and sheep. Although the numerical increase was greatest in the case of sheep and cattle, perhaps the most significant increase was that of horses. During the period, oxen, as draught animals, went right out of favour, the last mention of them coming in 1666, when Anthony Ward had a team of six. Although the horse was not necessarily stronger

than the ox, it was lighter and speedier and that seems to have settled the issue. Moreover, this was a period of far greater mobility, even for a small farmer. Of the 73 testators whose inventories have come down to us, 69 owned at least one horse and of the 4 who did not, 3 were widows and the fourth a manservant. Ownership of a horse became so much a part of ordinary life that it affected the mode of drawing up an inventory. Hitherto, the usual way had been to begin with "His purse and apparel", passing on to the goods within the house. For the first time, in 1692, the second item was "His riding mare, saddle and bridle", and this became the recognised way of setting out an inventory. In other words, it had become a habit of mind to regard the riding mare or horse just as much necessary and personal to the testator as his purse and apparel - so much so, indeed, that by the beginning of the 18th century it was common enough to group them all together as the first item.

It is significant that more than half the testators died possessed of far more horses than they could possibly have required for their farm work, although there were no breeders on a large scale, the largest holding being 39. The inference is that horses were in so great a demand throughout the country that it was profitable to breed on however small a scale. The great horse fair at Horncastle was only 20 miles away.

Ownership of cattle was practically as widespread in the village as ownership of horses, 68 of the testators owning at least one,

though the largest herd was a mere 60. It has already been noted that every labourer whose inventory has come down to us possessed at least one. The explanation is simply that the cost of maintenance was slight, as, for the greater part of the year, the cow would be on the common and during the winter months would graze on the eddish of the close, with a supplement of hay or whatever the cottager could gather. This was a fairly cheap way of obtaining milk, butter and cheese. There was always the danger of complete loss, as cattle disease was rife, but the Bede accounts show that in each generation there were two or three men who were knowledgeable about diseases and could prescribe cures, mainly drinks with a basis of beer, and could treat such common ailments as cuts, sores and tender udders. For the main part, they were successful with the Bede cattle, which were in no way different from the cattle of the rest of the villagers. It is worth noting that though the Wrangle cattle mixed promiscuously on the common, they were not exposed to the dangers of pasturage on the East Fen.

The Bede trustees bought and sold at the Boston market and it seems likely that the villagers did the same. Although there had been a significant increase in the number of cattle in the parish as a whole, there was no single grazier with a herd so large that he needed to look further afield to market his surplus.

Sheep, of the heavy Lincolnshire fen variety, for they had not yet been crossed with the lighter variety from Leicestershire or the wolds, remained the mainstay of the Wrangle farmer throughout the

period, both for carcase and wool. Undoubtedly the greater part were sold at the local market at Boston, though in 1703 John Robbin was due to receive £62. 11s. 11d. for sheep sold in London. However, he was a wealthy man, able to choose his market, whereas smaller farmers needed their money as soon as they could get it. The selling of wool was equally expeditious, the inventories showing that, apart from small amounts required for domestic use, no small farmer had any in store at all. Doubtless it was sold either at, or soon after, shearing day. Even of the well-to-do farmers, only four had more than £20 worth on the premises at the time of their death. The inventory of Nathaniel West shows that he had sold his wool to Samuel Smith, a dealer, for £34. 12s. Od., the account for which was still owing. The importance of wool in the economy of the fenland farmer is readily understood when it is seen that Nathaniel's whole estate was valued at £272. 7s. 6d. and that this one sale represented one-twelfth of the whole. A study of prices given in the inventories shows that the value of wool remained remarkably steady. The price per stone was 6/8 in 1673, 7/- in 1697, 6/7 in 1706 and 8/- in 1728. Variations in quality could sufficiently account for the minor fluctuations in price.

Tithing customs.

The Terrier of 1708 throws a little light on the common practice with regard to tithes. In Holland, lambing time was usually in the first two weeks of March, which is rather later than in many parts of the country. A count of lambs for the purpose of tithe, was made

by the vicar on 10th May, when the lambs were two months old and could be expected to survive. When the number to be handed over to the vicar had been agreed upon, the actual lambs were selected, the owner first choosing two and then the vicar one until the total was reached. These lambs were then marked but remained with the ewe, being reared at the owner's expense until Lammas time (1st August), when they were handed over to the vicar. Provision had to be made for what was common practice where the ewes had been tupped in one parish, the lambs had been born in another and were being pastured in a third. The Terrier explains that "there are three parts in a lamb" and in such cases the ministers of the three parishes took equal shares. Tithes were also due on the sale of sheep. If the sale was between members of the parish, the buyer paid his tithe of lambs and wool in the ordinary way but if the vendor sold his sheep beyond the parish border, which was commonly the case, he was liable for a tithe of 2d. per sheep. The simplest way of paying tithe wool would have been to pay over every tenth fleece and probably this was the custom in earlier times. However, the vicar could too easily be cheated by this method and now that the steelyard was in common use upon farms, the vicar took every tenth todd (28 lbs.) stone or pound.¹

1. See Appendix 15.

Decoys.

Decoys have been so fully described, both in contemporary and recent writings that it is necessary only to state that their great hey-day was the 18th century, when there were ten of them in the immediate neighbourhood, one in Leake, three in Wrangle, five in Friskney and one in Wainfleet. The birds lured into the decoys were mainly duck, widgeon and teal, Edmund Oldfield recording that "in one season, a few winters prior to the inclosure of the fens" the ten decoys "furnished the astonishing number of 31,200 for the markets of the metropolis".¹.

The first mention of a decoy in Wrangle occurs in the Terrier of 1708, which records "a yearly composition (not specified) for a decoy and forty acres of low ground on which it stands". A footnote adds, "There is one other decoy within the parish of Wrangle already finished and preparations made for another but unfinished". Later terriers of 1759, 1768 and 1771 state that the composition fee for tithe in respect of each decoy was 24/-.

The sites of the three decoys were, as we should expect, as near to the deeps of the East Fen as the parish boundary would permit. Two of them were just below Lade Bank and the third not more than a quarter of a mile away. Their most successful period spread over the second half of the present review into the first half of the next

1. Edmund Oldfield, Account of Wainfleet, London 1829, p. 180.

but it is convenient to complete their story in the present section. It is clear that by the time of enclosure in 1807, their years of prosperity had passed. For some years before that time, two of them had been operated by Thomas and John Williams and the third by Richard Alford,¹ but they were not sufficiently important or profitable to be retained when the common was enclosed. The rate book of 1808 shows that Richard Alford remained in the parish, holding the same land but that the decoy had been filled in and ploughed over. The names of Thomas and James Williams do not appear in the rate book but the decoys they had occupied were also filled in. By 1829, there were only three decoys left in the whole area, two in Friskney and one in Wainfleet and it was clear that with the draining of the East Fen and the turning of the surrounding commons into arable land, their days were numbered. Edmund Oldfield, who deplored the change, commented sadly that in the 1820s the decoymen considered 5,000 birds as a good season.

Subsidiary activities.

The very existence of the decoys is a sure indication that fowling and fishing continued to be fringe activities of the men of Wrangle. Though some equipment was required for fowling, success depended far more upon skill and ingenuity. The inventories, therefore, give hints and suggestions rather than firm evidence such as is given

1. J.S. Padley, Fens and Floods of Mid-Lincolnshire, Lincoln, 1882.

for agricultural activities, properly so called. There is no local record of the stratagems employed, but there is a contemporary account, based on operations in Bedfordshire, where the conditions were similar, clearly indicating the simple nature of the equipment and the high degree of skill and ingenuity required.

"How does the fowler seek to catch his game
 By divers means! all which one cannot name -
 His guns, his nets, his lime twigs, light and bell:
 He creeps, he goes, he stands; yea, who can tell
 Of all his postures? Yet there's none of these
 Will make him master of what fowls he please,
 Yea, he must pipe and whistle to catch this,
 Yet, if he does so, that bird will he miss."

Of the arts and equipment of the fenland fisherman, the same writer remarks:

"You see the ways the fisherman doth take
 To catch the fish; what engines doth he make!
 Behold how he engageth all his wits;
 Also his snares, lines, angles, hooks and nets;
 Yet fish there be that neither hook nor line,
 Nor snare, nor net, nor engine can make thine:
 They must be groped for, and be tickled too,
 Or they will not be caughted, whate'er you do."¹

One other fact which emerges clearly from the inventories is the great increase in poultry-farming, especially the rearing of geese, for which Holland as a whole later became famous, though in this

1. John Bunyan, The Author's Apology to The Pilgrim's Progress, 1675.

period the greatest number recorded was Richard Parkin's 100 in 1731. There is also evidence, both in the inventories and terriers, of more extensive bee-keeping and fruit growing. Among the wild vegetation of the district were cranberries which grew profusely on the edge of the fen and samphire which covered the sea banks. They were there for all to take and doubtless formed the basis of many a childhood expedition. Equally certain it is that then, as in later times, although the non-resident lords of the manor had their game-keepers, the elders carried on their poaching with impunity, especially of hares and rabbits, though pheasants and partridges were, and still are, common in the district. The Quarter Sessions records show that only one Wrangle resident was brought before the court for poaching, though at the sessions held at Kirton at Easter, 1692, Robert Stephenson was indicted for keeping a greyhound for the pursuit of hares, not being of the quality to keep such a hound. There was no gentleman's seat in, or near, Wrangle and, in such cases, game-keepers were less diligent.

The inventories are disappointing in that they yield very little evidence of domestic industry, apart from the necessary ones of spinning, brewing and butter-making. However, in the inventory of the Rev. William Erskine, whose thought for the poor is shown by benefactions recorded in another section, we find the following:

"Certain linen cloth, bleached and unbleached;
certain linen yarn as the product of the manufacture
managed by him amongst the poor of the parish £13. 10. Od,"

How far such industry was general or was necessary, we have no means of knowing. Compared with the period already reviewed, this was certainly one of greater general prosperity, though the register tells us of an increasing number of the poor who did not share in it, while the wills and terriers indicate that numbers of the more prosperous were still making some provision to alleviate the worst of the distress.

FARMING IN WRANGLE

3. 1740 - 1851

The century surveyed in this section, particularly the second half, saw very great changes both in land use and techniques of farming. Hitherto, the prosperity of the district had been based upon the sale of wool and livestock, while arable land had been little more than the minimum required to provide food for the inhabitants and a little extra money by the sale of flax and hemp. By the end of the period, grazing was of secondary importance, two-thirds of the land being tilled with a well-established system of rotation.

Years of little change.

The probate inventories, still an important source of information until the end of the 18th century, convey the impression that there was very little change during these years. Between 1748 and 1801 there were 9 testators whose personal estates amounted to more than £200. All of them grew oats, wheat and barley but the quantities in store and the acres under the crops do not suggest that much more was grown than could be consumed in the parish. Their wealth consisted of their livestock, the average of the 9 being 161 sheep, 16 cattle and 9 horses.

As these proportions remained reasonably constant, it is possible to make a fairly accurate estimate of the stock carried by the parish. From May 1746 occurred the outbreak of serious distemper among the cattle of South Lincolnshire and at the end of the year the magistrates

called upon the petty constables to make returns showing the extent of the disaster in their respective parishes. Skirbeck hundred had lost 33.4% of its 4,201 cattle, while Kirton hundred, more heavily stocked, had lost 56% of its 11,867. Wrangle had escaped lightly by comparison, the return being as follows:

Table 1. Distemper in Cattle, Wrangle 1746.¹

	<u>Number</u>	<u>%</u>
Died or killed	306	29.7
Recovered	140	13.6
Alive and well	585	56.7
Totals	<u>1,031</u>	<u>100.0</u>

For the present purpose, the return would indicate the normal stock carried by the parish as being about 10,500 sheep, 1,030 cattle and 650 horses, which accords well with the pasture available and the customary stocking rate per acre.

As only about a quarter of the land in Wrangle was arable until the end of the century, it is not surprising that the cultivation of potatoes and turnips made slow headway. That both had been grown by 1768 is almost certain, as a terrier of that year contains the item:

"Tithe is also due - turnips by the acre, potatoes by the acre or in kind."

In other words, the vicar was willing to accept potatoes but required

1. Boston Public Library, Notes relating to Boston and the Fens, Folder No. 2, Item 45.

a composition payment for turnips, which were probably left on the ground to be eaten off by sheep. Further information about both crops is lacking until nearly the end of the century, neither being mentioned in any inventory. However, in 1799, Arthur Young was gathering materials for his survey of agriculture in Lincolnshire and though he did not visit Wrangle, he spent some time at Freiston, which is only six miles away. His host there, a Mr. Linton, informed him that he had given up growing potatoes owing to "the uncertainty of the sale and the extraordinary attention they demand". He then volunteered some information which Young appears to have embellished:

"At Leake and Wrangle there are some wastes, which the cottagers sometimes take in, and cultivate potatoes; but they have no right, and are rather a lawless set; and the practice is productive, under these circumstances, of some evils."¹

It is surprising that Linton did not mention that there were also Wrangle farmers who were growing a few acres, as the crop return for Wrangle, only two years later, shows the following:

1. A. Young, General View of the Agriculture of the County of Lincoln, London, 1799, p. 146.

Table 2.Crop Return, Wrangle, 1801.^{1.}

	<u>Acres</u>	<u>% of total</u>
Wheat	196	22.4
Barley	99	11.7
Oats	423	48.5
Peas & Beans	12	1.4
Turnips & Rape	60	6.9
Rye	--	---
Potatoes	80	9.1
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Totals	870	100.0
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

Mr. D. Grigg's analysis of the returns for the whole of South Lincolnshire indicates that Skirbeck hundred, with 4.8% of all arable land under potatoes, was far ahead of other areas and the table shows that Wrangle, with 9.1%, was one of the parishes leading the way. It is more difficult to be definite about turnips as they were linked with rape in the return. For Skirbeck as a whole, the two together occupied 10.9% of the arable but in Wrangle only 6.9%.^{2.} In truth, neither potatoes nor turnips were of real importance at this time as the area devoted to their cultivation was only 140 acres, compared with 618 acres under cereals. Of these grain crops, little need be said at this point except that Boston provided a ready market for surplus oats, that wheat had almost completely replaced barley for bread-making, that fenland barley was mainly a fodder crop and that rye was just a memory of the past.

1. P.R.O., H.O. 67, Acreage Returns, Wrangle.

2. D. Grigg, The Agricultural Revolution in South Lincolnshire, C.U.P., 1966, Table 13, p. 98.

Pasture, meadow and arable.

In 1799, Young had estimated that about a third of the land in Skirbeck hundred was in tillage. This may well have been true of the hundred as a whole but the estimate was too high for Wrangle, since the return of 1801 shows only 870 of the 4,582 acres enclosed at that time to have been under crops. It would need a very generous allowance of fallow land to bring the proportion as high as a third. During the next six years there came a steady but significant change. A survey of the parish made in 1807 gives details of every field - acreage, rent per acre and use. Ignoring the 41 acres entered as arable and pasture and 28 as arable and meadow, we arrive at the following totals:

Table 3.

Land Use in Wrangle, 1807.

	<u>Acres</u>	<u>% of total</u>
Arable	1,316	29.2
Pasture	1,974	43.7
Meadow	<u>1,223</u>	<u>27.1</u>
Totals	<u>4,513</u>	<u>100.0</u>

The distribution of these fields is shown on Map 1 in the Appendix.

If we follow the practice of contemporary writers of beginning at the coast and working inland, it is noticed that all the outmarsh and the newly-embanked marsh was pasture, which helps to explain the large total. Further inland was the old marsh, merging into the higher band of tofts and here was the highest proportion of arable. Between Gold Fen Bank and the common lay the low ground, which was

predominantly meadow, while the L-shaped area of the parish to the south and west of it had all three types of land intermingled.

Young divided the grassland into three grades according to quality and use. The best pasture was stocked with shearing¹ lambs, bought at the spring market at Boston and, after two shearings, sold in the autumn of the following year. On some of this pasture young beasts were fattened in the summer, the majority being sold in the early autumn, while a few were kept on the eddish of the meadows until late autumn. Horses being prepared for sale also normally grazed on the best pasture. The second grade of pasture was used by cattle, working horses and young horses. The grass, however, was of good quality and these animals needed no supplementary food during the summer months. The third grade was meadow which produced hay to the value of 35/- an acre, sheep and cattle being turned on to the eddish after the hay had been mown and stacked. Young was of opinion that meadow land brought very little profit to the farmer and that it would bring him a far higher yield if converted to arable. He was undoubtedly right but there were good reasons in Wrangle why the change-over to arable did not gather strength until 1807.

The delayed conversion to arable.

The men who had been born and bred in the area were primarily stockmen with their specialised skills with animals and no desire to engage further in tillage than their needs demanded. Graziers and breeders were men with pride in their work, well able to make a good

living and with no incentive to change. From about 1780, however, there had been a trickle of farmers from other parishes - the Couplands, the Rinders and the Gasks - who were more adaptable but there was no great change until these had pioneered the way.

Another factor which undoubtedly retarded change was the system of tenure. Very few large farmers owned all the land they farmed, most of which was rented on a yearly basis, the use of each field being clearly stated. Instances recorded in the Bede accounts indicate that it was quite impossible for a tenant to convert land from one use to another without the consent of the owner and that until the end of the 18th century, such consent was not lightly given. This obstacle remained until it became clear to owners that rents from arable were higher than rents from meadow.

The third really important consideration was the condition of the East Fen, whose surplus waters, despite temporary alleviations, were still liable to spill over the common and low ground.¹ As long as Maud Foster was the main drain, this was bound to continue, as the bottom of the deeps was $1\frac{1}{2}$ feet lower than the Maud Foster outlet. The solution, provided by the engineer Sir John Rennie, was two-fold. The first part was to cut a new drain from the fen to Hob Hole, $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles lower down the Witham than Maud Foster, where the outfall was 3 feet lower than the bottom of the deeps. This new cut, together with side branches, was completed in 1806. The second part was to prevent upland water from reaching the fen by making a catchwater

1. See Appendix 16.

drain skirting the high land to the north and west, falling ultimately into the Witham through a re-aligned Maud Foster. This work was completed in 1807. An auxiliary measure was to deepen and embank the Steeping river leading to Wainfleet Haven, which thus acted as a second catchwater, protecting the fen from an inflow of water from the north-east.¹

The changes after 1807.

In 1799 Arthur Young had discussed the condition of the land around the East Fen with Sir Joseph Banks, whose opinion was quite definite:

" Till a catchwater drain is made and a proper outfall provided to carry hill waters separately to the sea the land can never be considered as safe winter land, neither can it be thought advisable to divide and enclose it".²

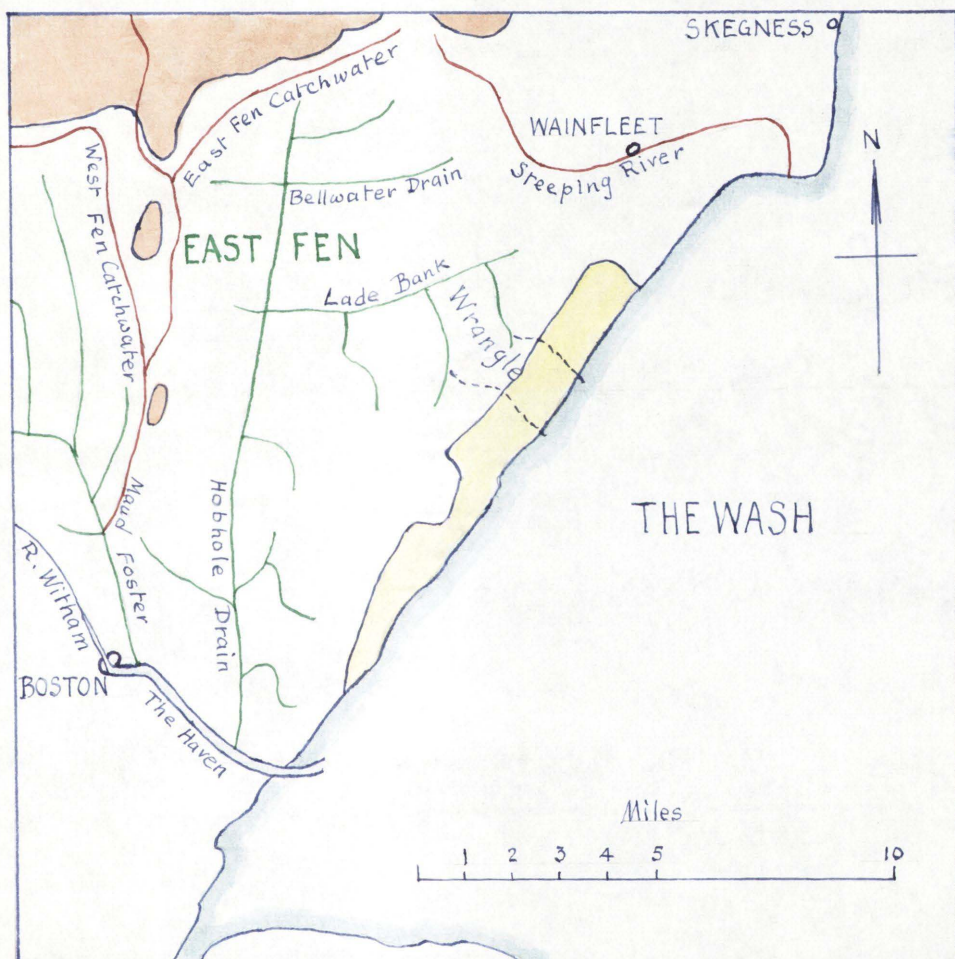
It was, therefore, no accident or coincidence which brought the Wrangle Enclosure Act to the statute book in 1807, as this was the earliest opportune time. Within a year of the completion of the Rennie scheme, the parish drains were re-aligned, scoured and connected with the main drainage system at Lade Bank while the area falling from the tofts to the Wash also had its drains improved and the sea bank strengthened. For the first time in its history, the whole of the parish could be considered as "safe winter land".

1. See map overleaf.

2. A. Young, General View of the Agriculture of the County of Lincoln, London, 1799, p. 225.

THE DRAINAGE OF THE EAST FEN

The Rennie Plan - completed 1807.



Channels for upland water



Channels for fen water



Land above Spring Tide level



Area of direct sea drainage



There occurred a temporary set-back in November, 1810, when a combination of gale and high tide breached the banks in many places between Wainfleet and Spalding, bringing disastrous floods to many parishes. Apparently the Wrangle bank held firm, as a contemporary account records breaches at Friskney to the north and Leverton and Freiston to the south but makes no mention of Wrangle.¹ This view is confirmed by the very lengthy and detailed report of the commissioners of the Court of Sewers, whose recommendations amount to little more than that the drains need re-scouring, that their banks should be raked more obliquely, that the sea bank should be raised by two feet and that the outfalls through it should be enlarged.² The work on the seaward side of the tofts was the responsibility of the occupiers and a brief note in one of the parish books relates that it was carried out by Robert Chapman, a tenant farmer, who in 1811 was authorised to levy a rate on the adjacent properties to reimburse himself. For the rest of the parish, the responsibility was on the dikereeves, who appear to have made good the damage without delay.

By this time, the work of the enclosure commissioners had been completed, the common and waste enclosed and divided and the whole parish re-assessed. The rents fixed for the land on the common,

1. Boston Gazette, 13th November, 1810.

2. Lincoln Archives Office, Court of Sewers, Findings, Wrangle, 1811.

shown on the map over page, were higher than had hitherto been paid for the best land in the parish but were justified by prevailing prices. Other rents were brought into line by an increase of some 50% so that the assessed value of the parish was increased from £3,450 to £8,300. It was expected that the whole of the common and a great deal of the meadow would be converted to arable as corn prices ensured a good profit and a later parish survey shows that this is exactly what happened.

Table 4. Land use in Wrangle, 1826 - 1830.

	<u>Acres</u>	<u>% of total</u>
Arable	3,983	63.9
Pasture	1,898	30.4
Meadow	350	5.7
Totals	<u>6,231</u>	<u>100.0</u>

A comparison with Table 3 shows that in 20 years the amount of arable land had trebled, that pasture was substantially the same and that three-quarters of the meadow had been ploughed up.

Cropping after enclosure.

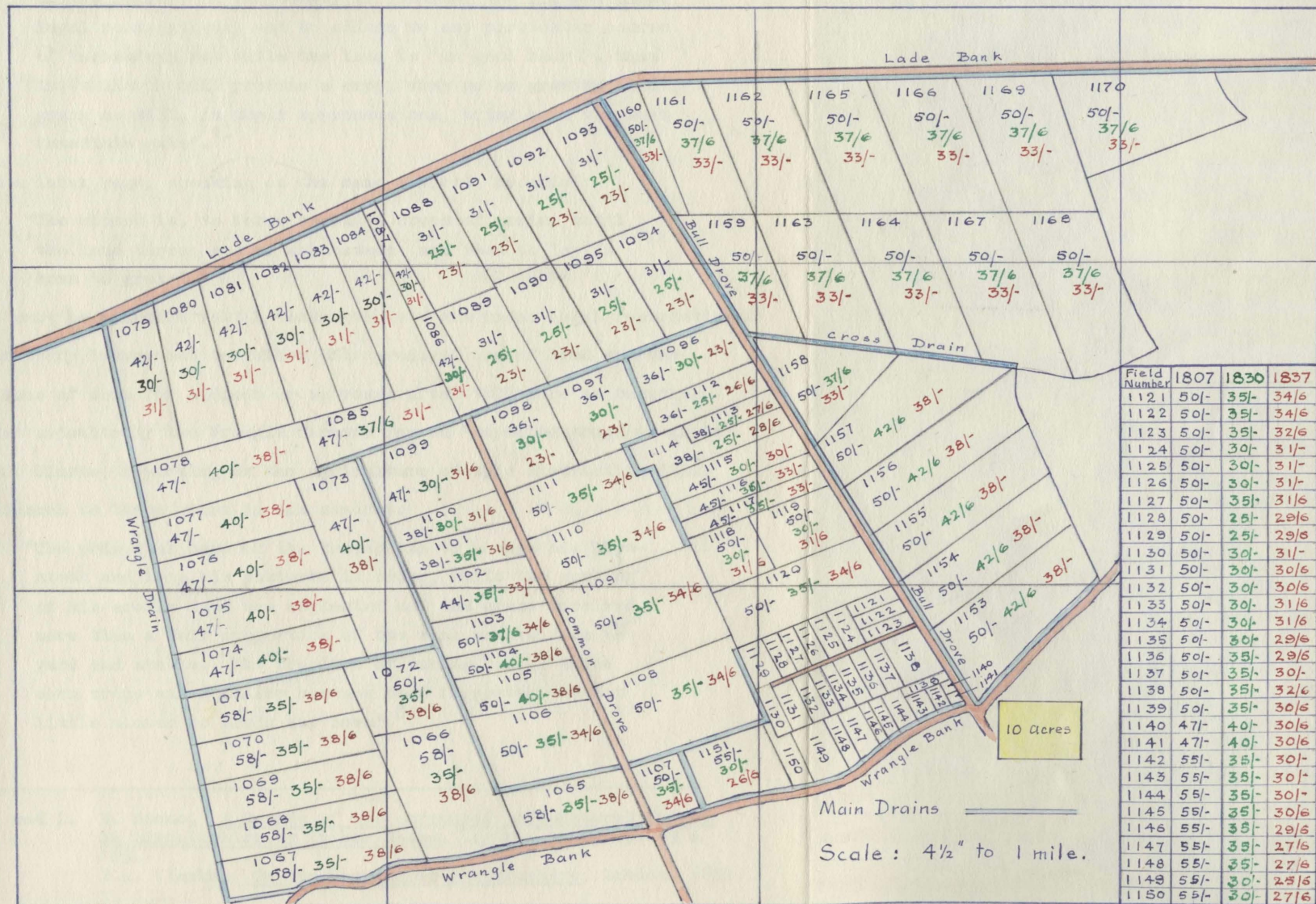
In 1799, Young had claimed to see systems of rotation in various parts of Lincolnshire. Thomas Stone, who was certainly better acquainted with the county, was contemptuous of much that Young had written and in this particular, asserted that he had been taken in by tavern talk. His own observation led him to declare bluntly:

WRANGLE COMMON

Variations in rent per acre at Enclosure in 1807
and at the revaluations of 1830 and 1837.

WRANGLE COMMON

Variations in rent per acre at Enclosure in 1807 (figures in blue),
and at the revaluations of 1830 (green) and 1837 (red).



"To give the undisguised truth, it is the general practice of the farmers in the county of Lincoln, who are not under legal restrictions, not to adhere to any particular course of husbandry; but while the land is 'in good heart', that is, while it will produce a crop, they go on growing such grain as will, in their apprehensions, bring home the most immediate gain".^{1.}

On a later page, speaking on the same subject, he added:

"The object is, to force repeated crops of grain, until the land tires, and is exhausted: and then to lay it down to grass".^{2.}

It must be conceded that a tenant who was not under legal restrictions had every inducement to follow this prodigal use of land and the prices of corn for a dozen or so years after 1807 were so tempting that undoubtedly the Wrangle farmers forced "repeated crops of grain". J.A. Clarke, reporting on the agriculture of this district in 1852, referred to these years in his comment:

"The principal care of the farmer was to manage his live-stock and keep his pastures in order, while the working of his arable land was neglected and the grass received more than a fair proportion of the weak manure from the yard and stable. The practice of taking two or three corn crops and a fallow has not been forgotten and but little clover or seeds are sown".^{3.}

1. and 2. T. Stone, A Review of the corrected Agricultural Survey of Lincolnshire by Arthur Young, London, 1800, Pp. 83 & 105.

3. J.A. Clarke, On the Farming of Lincolnshire, London, 1852. p. 130.

John Leaf, a man from the next village with more local knowledge than Clarke, went further by admitting that until about 1820, agriculture in the area was in a very low condition, mainly owing to "the general ignorance about improvements which prevailed among the undertakers". He freely admitted mis-use of the land in by-gone years, regretting that "the soils have been impoverished by undue cropping, it being once the practice to take as many as ten crops of corn in succession without any intervening green crop or fallow".¹ As far as Wrangle was concerned, the high prices of the war years were coming to an end just as the soil was becoming exhausted.

Comment and criticism about this period came mainly in later years. W. Marrat, who wrote in 1814, mentioned the variety of soils in the parish, adding that "part of the land is very rich and is fit for either corn or grazing".² His criticism was not to the manner in which tillage was being conducted but of the wholesale change to arable which was taking place. Speaking of the whole area, he made his point very clearly:

"Nothing but a sudden and pressing demand for an increased production of corn could ever occasion any additional quantity of this land being brought into cultivation. For taking the whole kingdom as one large farm (and for the real and permanent interest of the nation it ought to be cultivated as such) the natural apportionment of this whole level is to pasturage and feeding."³

1. P. Thompson, The History and Antiquities of Boston, Boston, 1856. Chapter by J. Leaf, 'Agricultural View of the Hundred of Skirbeck' p.691.
2. W. Marrat, The History of Lincolnshire, Boston, 1814. Vol. 2. P. 127
3. Vol. 2, p. 88.

In 1829, E. Oldfield looked back on this period and remarked, somewhat sourly:

"In no part of England has there been less improvement in the mode of cultivation. This may possibly be attributed to the natural fertility of the soil: the truth of the observation being incontrovertable, that where nature has been most bountiful of her gifts, the exertions of man in the cultivation of the soil are generally the least conspicuous."¹.

However, he had some improvements to report. Many farmers were following a rotation of turnips, oats and wheat, while others had introduced beans between the two corn crops. Prejudice against the bean drill was disappearing and where it was used, it provided an excellent opportunity to clean the land, with the result that the wheat crop was more valuable, as it was no longer adulterated with oats left on the land from the previous crop.

Revaluations of the land.

The inevitable result of exhaustion of the land, coming, as it did, at a time of falling prices, was an insistant demand for a review of rents. Two such reviews took place, one in 1830 and the other in 1837, both being conducted in the same manner. A group of 20 experienced farmers was divided into four teams and each team spent 4 days inspecting every field in the parish, subsequently comparing their findings and arriving at an agreed figure. The first

1. E. Oldfield, Account of Wainfleet, London, 1829, p. 302.

revaluation resulted in drastic reductions as it had been agreed in advance that the highest rent to be paid for any land was 45/- an acre, while in 1808, some of the better land even on the common had been assessed at 58/- an acre. Apart from the low ground, for which the previous rents had been less than the true value, there was a general reduction of about 25%, the rateable value of the parish falling from £8,300 to £6,760. The review of 1837 showed a further loss in value of the land on the common but for the rest of the parish there were only minor adjustments.¹

Years of improvement, 1830 - 1851.

For this period, the two main authorities are James Algernon Clarke, whose prize essay on farming in Lincolnshire, written in 1852, is a valuable document relating to the whole county and John Leaf of Friskney who wrote an account of agriculture in the hundred of Skirbeck for P. Thompson's history of Boston, published in 1856.²

Both writers stress the importance of drainage, pointing out that however well the main drains are maintained, they are of no value to the farmer who neglects his own ditches or who does not under-drain his land. The grips of former times, which were, at most, two spades deep, had given place to drainage tiles at a greater depth. Clarke went no further than to say that "under-draining has been commenced" but Leaf claimed that it had been in common use for 20 years

1. See Appendix 17. and map p. 133.

2. J.A. Clarke, On the Farming of Lincolnshire, London 1852.
P. Thompson, The History of Boston, Boston, 1856, p. 691,
J. Leaf, 'Agricultural View of the Hundred of Skirbeck'.

and that the beneficial effects were so well recognised that "the present supply of drain tiles is not equal to the demand".

With regard to crop rotation, Clarke merely mentions that oats, wheat, turnips and coleseed were grown, while Leaf speaks specifically of a 'five field system' on the impoverished lands, regretfully admitting that "even with the improved mode of cultivation, the lands are not capable of yielding near the quantity of produce which was obtained from them when they were freshly broken up". Unfortunately, Leaf did not make clear the details of this five field rotation though in a later passage he added, "Wheat, which was formerly sown after a fallow, is now sown after turnips, clover, peas or beans. Dead fallow has now been wholly superseded by turnip cropping, which though once very precarious, is now brought to something like perfection". It may well be that there was no strict system of rotation, the important points being that wheat was grown on any one field only once in five years and that it did not follow another grain crop. Clarke did not have so high an opinion of the turnip yield. Reporting that swedes formed the principal roots grown, he added that "the chief improvement to be made here is in the bulk per acre rather than in the acres per farm".

Leaf spoke enthusiastically of the use of artificial manures, "the best and most productive of which are ground bones dissolved with sulphuric acid", which in effect, was superphosphate of lime. At this time, bones were being imported from many places for the

production of this manure, cargoes being discharged at the East coast ports from as far away as the Faroes.¹ It is a pity, however, that Leaf did not name any other artificial manures in general use.

Despite the very considerable conversion of pasture to arable, grazing was by no means negligible at the mid century. Of the sheep, Clarke merely says that "they produce a great quantity of meat and fleeces of great weight", but Leaf, with far greater local knowledge, gives very valuable detail:

"The sheep bred are of the old Lincolnshire stock, made finer in their offal, and better adapted to fatten, by crosses with the Leicestershire breed. The mixture has long been so general, that not a single flock remains in the district of the original 'old, heavy, flag-skinned' Lincolnshire variety. Improvements during the last few years have been introduced into the present description of stock by Mr. Charles Swain of Wrangle, whose successful system of crossing has produced a breed of sheep more than usually suitable to the district. They are not so fine in quality as the sheep bred in the higher parts of the county; but they have the advantage of having coats better suited to the bleakness of the neighbourhood. They are further noticeable as being alike admirable for the size of carcass to which they attain, and for the weight and general excellency of their fleeces."

The only points of flock management made by Leaf are that grazing land should be kept reasonably dry, that where natural shelter is lacking, hurdles should be provided and that, in winter, though the

1. I am indebted to Mr. J.F. West of Nottingham for this information.

sheep graze contentedly on the turnip fields, in most seasons they also require a little oil cake. An interesting point noticed by Clarke was that the summer stocking rate was 8 or 9 sheep to the acre, which was considerably higher than that of half a century earlier.

There was no corresponding improvement in the breeding of cattle - in fact, the policy was to fatten for market rather than to breed. Clarke observed that the Lincolnshire breed predominated but that Scotch and Hereford cattle were bought at Boston May Fair and sold fat in autumn. Any that were kept over winter had oil cake to supplement their diet. In general, Leaf endorsed these comments, stating that "the cattle are of nearly all varieties and very little regard is paid to purity of breed" and though improvement had been effected on some of the larger farms, "bulk and the prospective weight of the animal are more regarded than the fineness or elegance of its parts". There were no dairy herds, milk cows being kept only in sufficient number to supply purely local needs of milk, butter and cheese. Even near-by Boston had to rely on Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire for its dairy produce.

Horse breeding had never been a major undertaking in the district but in earlier times, when both land and roads were wet and heavy, the sturdy, black, shaggy-legged cart horses of the district had been in great demand and there were many small-scale breeders. Improved conditions had led to a preference for a lighter animal for work both on the farms and roads. Demand for the riding horse had also declined as farmers were preferring the light carriage or trap, drawn by cobs

"with strength of bone and muscle, ensuring a safe-going and long-continuing trotting pace". The few breeders who continued in business were catering for the types suited to the changed conditions.

Clarke did not comment on the use of machinery with particular reference to this district but Leaf, in his opening paragraph, affirmed that "all the larger occupiers have, for a long time past, availed themselves freely of the scientific aids to agriculture, both as regards the use of artificial manures and the employment of improved implements". The implements mentioned in the course of his account are the turnip chopper, the seed drill, the water drill, the clod crusher, improved iron harrows, the broad-share plough (fitted with four or five shares for paring and chipping) and the steam thrashing machine.

The people engaged in agriculture.

Fortunately, two parish books have survived which enable us to learn of the holdings of all ratepayers from 1794 to 1834. These are the High Way and Poor Law accounts, whose overlapping from 1815 to 1827 shows agreement except that some very small properties were assessed for the Poor Law but not for the High Way rate. The information given in the books is all the more important as it covers the 13 years before and the 26 years after enclosure.¹

Before enclosure, the parish was essentially one of small farmers. The average number of ratepayers was 120, of whom more than half held property assessed at less than £20, which can be interpreted as a

1. See Appendix 18.

homestead with anything up to 17 acres and rights on the common. These years were marked by considerable stability. Of course, there were arrivals and departures and ratepayers occasionally increased or diminished their holdings but the majority of tenancies, though on an annual basis, continued unchanged until the death or retirement of the holder.

Enclosure brought its distresses to Wrangle owing to loss of rights of common and loss of ownership to those whose encroachments were not confirmed but there were no evictions. In 1807/8, the last complete year before enclosure, there were 124 ratepayers and in 1809/10, the first complete year afterwards, 118 of them were still there, with the same or increased holdings. Of the six who were no longer ratepayers, Thomas Huggard (£5) was 77 and had, presumably, retired; John Page (£3) was a sick man on parish relief who died three years later at the age of 55; Thomas Sivill (£2) was unfit for regular work and he was not called upon for rates during the remaining 7 years of his life; Sarah Vaughan (£1) had lived in her small cottage since her husband's death in 1803 but in 1808 went to spend the last three years of her life with a married daughter at Leverton; while William Smith (£8) and Thomas Santom (£2) left the parish. These were casualties which could have happened in any year and the conclusion must surely be that, though enclosure undoubtedly affected many people for good or ill, it robbed nobody of his home or livelihood.

The records show that there was remarkably little change in the list of ratepayers immediately after enclosure. The 24 named for the first time included 5 Wrangle young men who began to farm on their own account, 3 tradesmen whose services were needed in the expanding village, 6 newcomers with small holdings, 3 with large holdings and 7 labourers with nothing but a cottage and small garden.

The extra acres were, in fact, mainly taken over by farmers already operating in the parish. Before 1807, the number of farmers with more than 100 acres was never more than 7 but Map 4 shows that after enclosure the number rose to 18, between them farming 3,240 acres, or 53.3% of the parish. The table below includes all the farmers named on the map and four others with large holdings. In reading the table it must be remembered that by 1809/10 the assessments had been increased by some 50% but, even so, the figures reveal many greatly increased holdings.

Table 5. Assessments before and after enclosure.

	<u>1807/8</u>	<u>1809/10</u>
	£.	£.
Richard Alford	32	90
Robert Chapman	126	313
James Clark	54	126
Joseph Clark	147	260
Absalom Coupland	88	171
Robert Cousins	45	145
William Evison	53	120
William Fawsitt	153	543
George Gask	223	604
William Gask	87	205
Thomas Gilbert	75	155
John Gilson	81	411
Francis Gooderick	76	138
John Harrison	79	168
Richard Hunn	52	169
Mark Kitching	70	115
Luke P. Mawer	36	130
Eland Paul	50	110
William Porter	72	135
Benjamin & John Rinder	213	462
Robert Smith	197	295
Mary Ward	58	114

The large farm became a settled feature of the parish. By 1831, there were 19 such farms but, as shown on Map 6, they covered 4,144 acres or 67% of the parish. The census of 1851 shows that the position had not radically altered. Only 16 farms exceeded 100 acres, but Charles Swain, who had held 329 acres in 1831, now held 1,017

while Joseph Rinder, who had been the largest farmer with 583 acres, had increased only modestly to 650.

One of the beneficial results commonly attributed to enclosure is the emergence of a series of compact farms, more economically managed from its nucleus of farm buildings, entailing a minimum loss of time in going from field to field. This may well have happened where the three field system had been in operation but it did not apply to Wrangle. In the nature of the case, a parish of freeholders makes for a scattered village and when centuries of inheritance and sale have added their complications, the resulting pattern of ownership becomes a confusing patchwork. The enclosure act had authorised exchanges of land which could have led to ownership of compact areas but very little use was made of the opportunity. Ownership of more than 100 acres in 1808 and 1831 is indicated on Maps 3 and 5. The scatter they reveal was the root of the matter as far as the tenant farmer was concerned. The records show that most farmers rented their land from a single owner and that very few had dealings with as many as three. If ownership was scattered, so was the farm.

However, the compact farm was emerging in two areas. The common was rented to farmers whose previous occupancy had been in other parts of the parish and it was inevitable that such farmers should move to their main holdings. Five new farm houses with ancillary buildings were soon erected on the common, three of which still bear the names of their first occupants - Rinder, Gask and Welsh. These

farms were compact, though the tenants also continued to operate in other parts of the parish.

The second area showed elongated, rather than compact, farms. For two centuries, the owners of land fronting on the Wash had been able to add to their holdings as the outmarsh silted up, dried out and was embanked. Nearly half this area, from the old main road to the sea, was owned by Mrs. Elizabeth Chaplin but the same pattern of letting prevailed over the whole area, which was to include portions of toft, old marsh, new marsh and outmarsh in fairly narrow parallel strips. Such farms, with this variety of land, were just as convenient to work and manage as were the compact farms.

The small holder, whether freeholder or tenant, had a desperate struggle for survival after enclosure but the majority clung to their way of life with grim tenacity. Appendix 18 shows that the number of assessments between £20 and £100 remained remarkably constant for 20 years after enclosure. Even in 1851, there were still 10 farms between 50 and 100 acres, 7 between 20 and 50 acres and 13 between 5 and 20 acres. Of the 20 who farmed less than 50 acres, 14 were still freeholders. In 1856, John Leaf accounted for their survival, after speaking of the use of artificial manures and machinery on the larger farms:

"Though upon the smaller holdings (which are numerous) these advantages, from want of capital, have not been proportionally used, such holdings have partaken of the common improvement from the greater labour bestowed upon their culture, and the better system of cropping which has been introduced."

Below the status of the small-holder but above that of the labourer, was the cottager, usually with one or two acres, part of which was under spade cultivation. Normally, he also did odd-jobbing work in the village and seasonal work on the larger farms. Young had a high opinion of the Lincolnshire cottager and hoped to see the system "preserved in its greatest extent". Stone had derided his attitude as mere sentimentalism, holding that the cottage system led to stagnation in agriculture when the times demanded large farms with labourers taking their orders from the farmer. If the labourer kept a cow and tended a potato patch, he was bound to be consuming energy at the expense of his job for which he was paid. As Stone could see no prospect of recruiting a sufficiently large labour force other than by squeezing out the cottager, his conclusion was:

"The 'cottage' system must be so far limited as not to destroy the labourer's energy when working for the farmer, or by any means make him independent of that farmer for his daily support."

The loss of rights of common pressed hard on the Wrangle cottager and by 1851 he had been practically squeezed out, as Stone wished him to be. True, the census return of that year shows that there were still 8 of them, but 4 were over 70 and only 2, Richard Evison (84) and Anthony Hales (77) were genuine cottagers as George Horton (72) was a retired builder and Martin Greenfield (71) a retired wheelwright. The only younger cottagers were Thomas Bontoft (48), who had inherited $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres from his father, Joseph Frow (41),

the son of a small-holder who was also a shop-keeper, Simon Waterman (36), a newcomer to the parish and Thomas Horton (29), son of the retired builder.

John Leaf regretfully realised that the dice were heavily loaded against both the small freeholder and the cottager:

"Formerly a great proportion of the farmers were freeholders, and the number of cottagers, also freeholders, occupying a few acres of land, was very considerable. But the freeholders of neither class, though still a considerable number, are by no means so numerous as they once were; for, as the land has come into the market, a great deal of it has been absorbed by the larger farms In nine cases out of ten, where even a small farm becomes vacant, a larger farmer is almost certain to apply for it and add it to his already overgrown occupancy."

The enlargement of farms after enclosure combined with the increase in the amount of arable meant that extra labourers were required and to accommodate them there followed 40 years of house-building at a rate which Wrangle had not known before. The rate accounts for 1807 show that there were then 141 houses of all kinds. By 1838, 18 of these had been demolished and 90 others built, bringing the total to 213. The census return of 1841 gives a total of 225 houses and that of 1851, 246. By this time, the needs of the parish had been met and further building was largely the replacement in brick of old mud and stud houses.

The position with respect to the number of labourers can be stated quite simply. After enclosure, the need was for an immediate increase in the adult labour force and labourers flowed into the parish. However, once the farms were supplied no more labourers were required. The census return of 1841 showed 256 male persons engaged in agriculture and in 1851 the figure was practically unchanged at 260. This meant, of course, that as the children of either old or new inhabitants reached working age, very few of them could find employment in their own parish. A comparison of the census returns of 1841 and 1851 reveals that of the 567 persons under the age of 20 in 1841, 356 had left Wrangle in 1851, 23 had died and only 188, mainly below working age, still remained in Wrangle.

Information about the condition of the labourers comes from a variety of sources. The Bede accounts show that by the 19th century, wages had risen to 12/- a week; the Poor Law accounts show that while this was just about enough for weekly housekeeping, it left no margin for such inevitable occasions as births, illnesses and deaths; while the Vestry book indicates that the newer houses had insufficient ground for the labourer to grow his own vegetables. The indications are that at least half the population was living at, or just below the poverty line. Unfortunately, practically all our information about labourers comes from those who were not themselves in that category. There is no reason to doubt that when Philip Pusey M.P. described the condition of the Lincolnshire labourer in 1843, he was

speaking honestly and sincerely, though his argument amounts to little more than that in Lincolnshire the labourer was better off than in other parts of the country:

"Enclosures, it is said, injure the poor. Now Lincolnshire is one new enclosure from Cambridgeshire up to the Humber: yet I know no county where the labourer is better provided for. His wages vary from 10s. to 12s. and 15s. a week: he obtains a great deal of taskwork, for more labour is thus paid here than elsewhere - filling dungcarts, for instance at 2d. a load, and the harvest waggon at 1s. per acre, which diffuses activity through the whole operation. Good hands are earning at this moment at taskwork from 15s. to 18s. weekly. His cottage - unlike the hovels of Northumberland and Scotland, where one room on the ground holds the family, however numerous, by day and night - is neat and cheerful. Many labourers have allotments and some even cows. So far from injury accruing to the labourer by enclosures, it is clear in theory, as it is proved by the practical contrast of Lincolnshire with Dorset, or of Derbyshire with South Wales, that where the demand for labour is stationary, wages must be low, but that they will be raised wherever the plough breaks up new fields of employment. The Lincolnshire labourer living among new enclosures is well-paid, clothed, and also, I must mention, well fed, sometimes with fresh meat. The consequence is that being better fed, they are able to work harder than other labourers; and thus the farmers are repaid for their expenditure upon their men as well as upon their land."¹

1. Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society, Vol. 4, London, 1843, P. 315: Philip Pusey, M.P. 'On the Agricultural Improvements of Lincolnshire.'

The effect of the changes in the first half of the 19th century was that society had become stratified, with very little prospect to the labourer that he could rise any higher in the social and economic scale. This was an aspect which troubled John Leaf, who saw clearly that the elimination of small farms and small-holdings was inevitably leading to a position where "the small farmer must sink into the labourer, and the labourer be chained to a condition which affords him neither hope nor grounds for aspiration".

As about 60 of the Wrangle labourers - a third of the total - were young men 'living in', a brief word is necessary about their conditions. They were provided with food and shelter but were required to clothe themselves. They were hired by the year, their wages being settled at the Sessions of Statutes held in the neighbouring villages on or about Old May Day and duly recorded in the records of the Quarter Sessions. These show that a boy could expect £2. 10s. as a beginner and that as he increased in strength and experience he could rise to £7 or £8. As foreman or waggoner, he could earn as much as £12. 12s. The writer has known many men, including his father, who were trained for agriculture under this system between 1870 and 1900. Though conditions varied greatly from farm to farm, none recalled the life with much pleasure and most remembered the monotonous diet, the poor accommodation, the long hours, the many restrictions and, frequently, the overbearing attitude of the farmer and his wife with undiminished aversion. It is highly improbable that conditions were any better 30 or 40 years

earlier. After seven or eight years of yearly hirings, most farm servants married and became labourers attached to one farm, living in a cottage provided by the farmer.

Conclusion.

Taking the country as a whole, the period from Waterloo to the accession of Queen Victoria was described by Lord Ernle as "one of the blackest periods of British farming". Typical of his chapter recording the distresses of these years are the following extracts:

"Farms were thrown up; notices to quit poured in: numbers of tenants absconded. Large tracts of land were untenanted and often uncultivated. In 1815 three thousand acres in a small district of Huntingdonshire were abandoned, and nineteen farms in the Isle of Ely were without tenants Farmhouses were full of Sheriff's officers. Many large farmers lost everything and became applicants for pauper allowances."¹.

"Even as late as 1833, it was stated that, in spite of rent reductions, which in Sussex amounted to 53%, there was scarcely a solvent tenant in the Wealds of Sussex and Kent, and that many farmers, having lost all they had, were working on the roads."².

By comparison, Wrangle weathered the storm extremely well. The rate books show that every farm and small-holding was continuously occupied from 1794 to 1834 and that, apart from a few labourers,

1. and 2. Lord Ernle, English Farming Past and Present, Sixth Edition, London, 1961, Pp. 322 and 324.

the occupants were able to pay their rates. Reference to the parish register reveals that it was death which caused the great majority of the changes of tenancy. The accounts of the overseers of the poor, discussed in another section, reveal that there was very real poverty in Wrangle but nothing like the abject penury experienced in other parts of the country and at no time was there an exceptional increase in the amount to be raised for the relief of the poor. The re-assessments of 1830 and 1837 were clear indications that Wrangle was not immune from the effects of the depression but, all things taken together, this was a fortunate parish.

5. ENCLOSURE AT WRANGLE

General considerations.

The arguments, for and against enclosure, have been so fully considered in so many places, that it is unnecessary to repeat them. For the present purpose it is sufficient to say that at the beginning of the 19th century, in the East and West Fens and the commons adjoining, were some 29,000 acres of unenclosed land, of which, about 1,250 acres, bordering on the East Fen, fell within or belonged to the parish of Wrangle. The substantial benefits which had accrued as a result of enclosure to landowners in other parts of the country were sufficiently known to make it inevitable that enclosure would follow in the 47 parishes with commons on the East, West and Wildmore Fens as soon as conditions were favourable. As far as Wrangle was concerned, such conditions obtained by 1806, first because the General Act of 1801,¹ relating to enclosure, had considerably reduced the costs of obtaining and administering private acts, and secondly, because in 1801 an Act had been passed for the more effective drainage of the East Fen,² and as the work was well in hand by 1806, Wrangle Common would be less liable to seasonal inundation and therefore profitable for tillage.

Preliminary steps.

Clearly there had been private consultations among the wealthier landowners by the summer of 1806, as they had engaged the services

1. 41 Geo. III Cap. 109.

2. 41 Geo. III Cap. 35.

of Messrs. Thirkill and Tunnard, solicitors of Boston, who, on 23rd September, prepared the following advertisement, which was printed in the "Lincoln, Rutland and Stamford Mercury" on 3rd and 10th October:

Notice is hereby given,

That a Meeting will be held at the Peacock Inn in Boston, in the said county of Lincoln, on Friday the Seventeenth day of October next, at Eleven o'clock in the forenoon, to take into consideration the expediency of Dividing, Allotting, Embanking and Enclosing the Fen, Open Fields, Common, Ings, Marshes and Waste Grounds, within or belonging to the parish of Wrangle, in the county of Lincoln, and the better and more effectively Draining and Improving the Lands and Grounds within the said parish, and of discharging their waters by their antient Drainage through the parish of Leake; at which time and place all persons interested are particularly requested to attend, by themselves or their agents.

By order of several of the Proprietors	Fra. Thirkill
Boston	Sam. Tunnard
23rd Sept. 1806.	

It is certain that a decision to proceed in the matter had already been taken, but it was necessary to have this decision confirmed. Following the meeting, two further steps were taken, the first, to engage the services of Mr. Bower, a surveyor, to report on the means and charges involved, in improving the drainage of the parish and second, to appoint a chairman with authority to summon another meeting to consider the estimate when it was received.

Mr. Bower set about his work with a will, as he had completed his survey and prepared his estimate in time for the chairman, unnamed, to issue a notice on 3rd December, summoning a further meeting, also at the Peacock Inn, on Tuesday, 23rd December, of "the

Proprietors interested in the Drainage and Enclosure for the further prosecution of the business". The report of Mr. Bower was so satisfactory that a decision was taken to promote a private bill forthwith.

Promotion of the bill.

The proprietors of Wrangle were fortunate in having a good friend in the House of Commons, Mr. Charles Chaplin, a cousin of the deceased husband of Mrs. Elizabeth Chaplin, the proprietor with the largest estate in Wrangle. He had been Member for the county of Lincoln since 1802 and in 1807 was returned at the head of the poll as a firm, though inarticulate supporter of the administration. Although it was said of him that his "ignorance on all political subjects was wonderful", he was also described as "an honourable, virtuous and benevolent man".¹ He was eminently suitable to pilot the Wrangle bill through parliament. The promoters certainly wasted no time, their petition to bring in the bill being referred to "Mr. Joddrell, Mr. Ellison and others" on 23rd February, 1807,² and on the same day, the motion was passed:

"That leave be given to bring in a Bill pursuant to the prayer of the said Petition; and that Mr. Chaplin, Mr. Fydeall and Mr. Maddocks do prepare and bring in the same".³

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1. I am indebted to Mr. B.D. Murphy of the History of Parliament Trust for this information.
 2. House of Commons Journal, W.C. 57. p. 152.
 3. House of Commons Journal, W.C. 62. p. 153.

Mr. John Maddocks was an old parliamentary hand and a barrister with a very flourishing practice, whom Boswell described as "a sensible but a wondrous dull man". Mr. Fydell was a worthy alderman of Boston, who was returned as Member for that borough in 1807. The Corporation of Boston had held "erection land" in Wrangle since the reign of Queen Mary and Mr. Fydell, prompted by the Mayor, could be relied upon to see that the interests of Boston were not overlooked. There was, in fact, a petition from the Mayor and burgesses of Boston, which was pleaded by counsel, but the substance could not have been very impressive, as on 22nd April, Sir Gilbert Heathcote, chairman of the committee of the House to whom the bill had been referred, reported that the committee had heard counsel both for the petition and the bill and that they were satisfied that Standing Orders had been complied with. He also reported that there were:

		£.	s.	d.
In favour of the bill.	Owners of Land Tax at	270.	0.	0.
Against.	" " " " "	25.	6.	4.
Neuter.	" " " " "	25.	4.	0.

It was therefore ordered that the bill with amendments be engrossed.¹

It may well be, however, that the Boston petition was not entirely unfruitful, as the borough later received a generous allotment of $9\frac{1}{2}$ acres on Wrangle Common.

1. House of Commons Journal, W.C. 62 p. 153

It was now just a matter of routine and waiting for parliamentary time to be available. After an interval of two months, the petition of the owners was read in the House and it was ordered "that leave be given to bring in a Bill, pursuant to the prayer of the said petition; and that Mr. Chaplin and Mr. Charles Anderson Pelham do prepare and bring in the same".¹ The bill, was, of course, already prepared and two days later, on 29th June, Mr. Chaplin presented the bill, which was read a first time.² As a matter of interest, it is worth noting that on the same day he presented similar bills for the Lincolnshire parishes of Yarburgh and Waithe. As far as Wrangle was concerned, the parliamentary machine worked so smoothly that on 25th July the bill had passed through all its stages and received the Royal Assent.³ Thus, well within a year of the first public notice, the enclosure, drainage, and division of 1,250 acres of common and 150 acres of commonable and waste grounds became enforceable at law. A copy of the Act was deposited and still remains in the church at Wrangle.

Lordship of the Manor.

The act begins with a reference to the lordship of the manor, the claim to which was in dispute. On the one hand were John Rooper and the heirs of William Wright, a group consisting of the

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1. House of Commons Journal, W.C. 62. p. 565
 2. House of Commons Journal, W.C. 62. p. 585
 3. House of Commons Journal, W.C. 62. p. 776

Rev. William Wright, Mrs. Ann Plummer, Miss Jane Wright, John Balderston, Edward Wright and Miss Mary Wright, and on the other, Mrs. Elizabeth Chaplin, widow, impropiator of the great tithes.

It was a dispute without substance, relating merely to title. A map of 1606¹ shows that there were two 'manors' in Wrangle, one held by the king as part of the Duchy of Lancaster and the other the former holding of Waltham Abbey, in the possession of Mr. William Hanbie. The first had passed by a series of sales to William Wright and the second by descent through the female line to the Chaplins. Both had been officially recognised in 1715 when gamekeepers had been registered at the Quarter Sessions, the first being entered as the manor "in" Wrangle and the second as the manor of Wrangle Waltham.² This dispute, for what it was worth, did not prevent the parties from combining with other large landowners in the promotion of the bill and the administration of the act as the ultimate benefits accruing to them would be considerable and even the immediate outlay was to be repaid, "together with lawful interest for the same", out of "the first monies to be raised" by virtue of the act.

Administration.

The Act continues with a series of provisions relating to administration. The commissioners appointed were the experienced John Burcham of Coningsby and William Whitlock of Brotherton, Yorkshire.

1. P.R.O. SR. 10. M.P.C. 81. A reproduction follows page 83 Ch. 4. 1.
 2. L.A.O. Holland Quarter Sessions Records, Easter & Xmas, 1715.

Their payment was to be settled at a meeting of owners, according to a majority vote according to the value of land holding. The commissioners were empowered to engage and pay a clerk. In case of disagreement or dispute between them, William Porter of Freiston, conveniently near at hand, was to act as umpire at a fee of two guineas for each day of his engagement. The public notices required by law were to be printed in the "Lincoln, Rutland and Stamford Mercury". Other meetings to be summoned by the commissioners required seven days' notice, which could be given either orally in the parish church after divine worship or by a written notice affixed to the main church door. Such meetings could be held either in Wrangle or within nine miles of its boundary, which conveniently allowed the continued use of the Peacock Inn at Boston. There was to be neither payment nor allowance for expenses to anyone who attended such meetings.

Powers of the commissioners.

The commissioners had very wide powers. They could arbitrate on disputes between owners in all cases except with respect to title, and having announced their decision, could award costs, to be secured, if necessary by Distress and Sale. An aggrieved party had the right of Appeal to the Quarter Sessions within two months of a judgment of the commissioners, but an examination of the Quarter Sessions records shows that no such appeal was made. Authority was given to the commissioners to divert or terminate any public roads, pathways or footways and to sell the land of any such ways to augment the

common fund. Similarly, they were empowered to maintain or divert ancient drains and order new ones to be cut, not only across the land to be enclosed but any in the parish, compensating the owners of land so used. Subject to the provisions of acts still in force for the drainage of the Witham Valley and the East and West Fens,¹ they could lay down responsibility for the future maintenance of such drains. For the maintenance of roads they could allot up to two acres to the Surveyors of the Highways for the extraction of sand and gravel.

However, the really important part of their work was the re-allocation of land within the parish. Some items were straightforward enough, as they were written into the act. Thus, the lord of the manor was to receive 35 acres as compensation for the extinction of his rights of soil and allotments were to be made, equal to one-ninth of the total to be enclosed, to Mrs. Elizabeth Chaplin and the Rev. Richard Wright as compensation for their loss of the great and small tithes respectively. A more difficult problem was the allocation of the remaining land, half of which was to be divided among the owners of houses, or of toftlands where houses formerly stood, provided that such owners had been entitled to rights of common. The other half presented less difficulty as it was to be divided amongst all landowners, in proportion to the value of their holdings.

1. The acts were of the years 2 George III, 41 George III and 43 George III.

Extinction of tithes.

Tithes would not be payable on the land newly enclosed, as an allocation of land to the impropriator and vicar would have carried exemption. It was certain, however, that there would be some owners of old enclosures whose allocation would be too small for the commutation of the tithe and, as tithes were to be extinguished throughout the parish, other arrangements had to be made. In such cases, a proportion of the value of the old enclosure - for arable land, one-fifth and for meadow or pasture, two-seventeenths - was to be surrendered to the commissioners, who had authority to enforce payment by Distress and Sale, if necessary. To avoid this unpleasant process, if an owner could not pay on demand, provision was made for him to raise a loan on his holding by mortgage or other deed to provide the funds to discharge his obligation.

Encroachments.

If an encroachment had subsisted for more than sixty years, the holder was left in undisturbed possession but encroachments made upon the common or waste land within the previous twenty years were to revert to the common, as part of the land to be divided without any compensation to the holder or occupier. If the encroachment had been made between twenty and sixty years before, the commissioners could place a price on the value of the land, excluding houses and other buildings, upon payment of which, the encroachment became the absolute property of the holder. Failure or refusal to pay within three months on the part of any holder, entitled the commissioners

to sell the whole of the property and pass the money obtained into the general fund for the administration of the act. If, however, the holder was entitled to an allotment of land to be divided, he could take his encroachment as part of his share. There was one exception to this provision. If a previous landowner was now impeded in access to his land by any encroachment, he could, with the consent of the commissioners, buy the encroachment, paying to them the purchase price of the land and to the occupier, the value of his buildings and improvements, but not including any dwelling house actually occupied by the holder. Disputes as to the length of time encroachments had subsisted or as to their extent were to be determined by the commissioners.

Miscellaneous provisions.

A number of provisions may conveniently be summarised. Exchanges of land within the parish or land within the parish for that in an adjoining parish could be arranged with the sanction of the commissioners, provided that such exchanges did not extend to the revocation of a will or deed, or prejudice any person's claim of right. Allotments on the common were to be of the same tenure as the land in respect of which they were made, except that all leases at rack rent were to be terminated, with compensation to the lessees where necessary. The owners of land on the common or waste were empowered to sell their allotments before the final award was executed. Persons entitled to quit rents and similar payments were to receive shares on the common equal to the value of those rents.

Meanwhile, rights of common were to be extinguished, a notice affixed to the church door to be a good and sufficient indication; thereafter, turf-cutting was forbidden, under a penalty of £5, half of which would go to an informer and half to the overseers of the poor. To provide for the costs of administration, the commissioners were given authority to sell whatever part of the common and waste "they shall judge sufficient and most proper for that purpose". Any surplus was to be divided amongst the owners and any deficiency made good by them, in proportion to their holdings.

The act ends with some tidying-up clauses. The auditor of the commissioners' accounts is to be Henry Boulton, of Cottingham, Northants.; the award is to be enrolled with the Clerk of the Peace for the parts of Holland and then deposited in the church at Wrangle; except in such matters as the act empowers the commissioners to make a binding decision, aggrieved parties may lodge an appeal at Quarter Sessions within four months of a complaint; finally, the rights of the king, the lords and ladies of the manor, corporate bodies and private persons, unless expressly extinguished by the act, are to be fully maintained and safeguarded.

Documents relating to the award.

As far as is known, the award was never deposited in the church at Wrangle. Extraordinary as it seems, it is quite possible that it was never formally executed. In 1839, James Sedgwick, one of the commissioners appointed under an act of 1837 "to continue the enquiries concerning Charities in England and Wales" had decided to separate two Wrangle charities which had been operated as though they were one.

He concluded,

"The endowment derived under the gifts of Alanson and Erskine having been blended together, an allotment of fen land was made in respect of both, as one property. It became, therefore, desirable to ascertain to how much of the allotment each charity was entitled; but the award not having been yet formally executed, that point could not be determined; but when it can, the allotment ought to be distinguished."¹.

In brief, for 30 years, people had been buying and selling, bequeathing and inheriting, land for which there was no documentary legal title and - to the present purpose - the award is not available.² However, the award map, drawn to the scale of 8.8" to the mile by Mr. R. Gee, the surveyor, in 1807, has recently been deposited in the Lincoln Archives Offices and this, together with books and documents in Wrangle church, enable us to form a reasonably clear picture of what happened at the time of enclosure.

It is certain that the appointed commissioners did, in fact, administer the act. John Burcham created so favourable an impression that five years later he was engaged by the bede trustees to value their property in Leake. The clerks appointed by the commissioners were William Rodgersson and Henry Rogers, solicitors, the evidence being a printed letter relating to quit rents and an advertisement relating to a sale of land. In turn, the clerks employed John Slator,

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1. Report of Commissioners appointed under 5 & 6 William IV, c. 71, 32 Part IV, Lincolnshire, Wrangle. 1839.
 2. Enquiry having been made of the Clerk of the Peace for Holland, the L.A.O. and P.R.O. and diligent search carried out at Wrangle.

the local schoolmaster, as their scribe to do the day-to-day clerical work. It is largely as a result of the preservation of the latter's carefully-kept book that it is possible to reconstruct the main outlines of the award. This book, with its valuable sketch maps,^{1.} shows the extent of common and waste enclosed, records the encroachments, indicates allotments, sales and exchanges and, as it relates to a period some six months later than Gee's map, which names the owner at the time of the award, enables us to discover which owners sold their allotment almost immediately. Further, the two seaward drainage areas are clearly defined, together with the land whose owners or occupiers are charged with their upkeep.^{2.} Fortunately, the overseers of the highways also employed John Slator to keep the fair copy of their accounts from 1794 to 1831, and as an annual statement of rates is included, we are able to judge the degree of disturbance which took place as a result of enclosure.

Administration. 1. Salary of commissioners.

Four days after the royal assent to the bill, a notice was prepared, appearing in the Lincoln, Rutland and Stamford Mercury on 7th August, 1807, calling a meeting of proprietors of estates in the parish of Wrangle, "for the purpose of settling and agreeing upon the sum and sums of money to be paid to the commissioners named and appointed for their trouble, and for the expenses which

1. There are six maps. A reproduction of No. 3 of the series is given the page following.
2. See Map 2.

JOHN SLATOR'S SKETCH

MAP N^o 3.

This is one of a series of 6 maps, based on R. Gee's Enclosure Map, showing the road and drainage systems of the parish as well as the common and waste which were enclosed and divided.

Sketch No 3 of the series prepared by John Slater, Schoolmaster, for the Vestry based on the Enclosure Map of 1808.

Roads
Drains

Drains

Common or waste enclosed.

See Sketch 4.



See Sketch 5.

they shall incur in surveying, admeasuring, planning and valuing the common, commonable lands and waste grounds and all the other lands within the said parish, and also in carrying the directions and provisions of the said act into execution".

Administration.

2. Sales of land.

The salary agreed upon is not known but one of the first actions of the commissioners was to raise a sizeable sum of money. On 21st September, the clerks issued the notice of a sale of 135 acres of common land by an auction at the Peacock Inn on 21st October.¹

Lots 1 to 6 were of 10 acres each and lots 7 to 11 of 15 acres each. Apparently another lot of 15 acres was added before the day of sale as John Slator records that 150 acres were sold, 100 of which fell to John Bellamy and J.P. Hollway - the latter being a Boston solicitor - and 10 to John Lilley, a local resident who owned 13 acres in the parish.

A second sale was held over a year later, on 7th December, 1808 and it is clear from the numbering of the lots actually bought that about a third were not taken and that another sale would be necessary. It is not clear how much was offered but it seems to have been about 40 acres, as 26 acres were sold to 14 small owners, including 4 cottagers, in 21 lots out of a total of 30 or more. The third sale was a very small affair when only $10\frac{1}{2}$ acres were sold in 12 lots to 10 small owners, including six cottagers. All can be identified

1. Lincoln, Rutland and Stamford Mercury, 16th October, 1807.

on John Slator's sketch maps. For the main part, they were small pieces of waste land alongside the roads, though a few were encroachments with houses standing upon them. It is worth remarking that most of these small pieces were still in the possession either of the purchaser or a member of his family a generation later. However, even the third sale did not completely clear all that was on offer. In the parish at the present time are several small pieces of land, known locally as "God's forgotten acres", which have no legal owners.¹ It may well be that these were the small items left over from the third sale and either ignored or forgotten. A final word about these sales is that the costs of administration consumed the value of 13.2% of the land which was enclosed.

Administration.

3. Allotments.

The really large awards were those for the extinction of tithes, Mrs. E. Chaplin, as impropriator of the great tithes receiving 292 acres and the vicar, for the small tithes, 437 $\frac{1}{4}$. It is stated in the act that the total area to be enclosed was 1,400 acres, which was a reasonably close estimate, as the following table of what actually took place reveals.

1. I am indebted to Mr. C. Foster, farmer and churchwarden of Wrangle for this information.

	Ac.	r.	p.
Common enclosed and allotted	1,068	3	27
Common enclosed and sold	150	0	00
Waste land allotted	42	1	13
Waste land sold	35	0	11
Encroachments	93	1	36
	<hr/>		
Total	1,389	3	07
	<hr/>		

It is pertinent to note that the land sold for the administration of the act together with the awards for the extinction of tithes amounted to $916\frac{1}{4}$ acres, leaving only some $473\frac{1}{2}$ acres for division among all other owners of which Mrs. Chaplin received a further $232\frac{3}{4}$. The heirs of William Wright, as lords and ladies of the manor, had an absolute claim to 35 acres for loss of rights of soil. The claim was met by an allocation of 14 ac. 1 r. 36 p. on Wrangle Common and 9 ac. 3 r. 14 p. of Old Hawes Common, both of which were adjacent to the manorial estate. An allowance was also due to the same persons in lieu of quit rents. In this case, a surviving letter dated 29th January, 1808, addressed to the vicar as trustee for the lands bequeathed to the Poor of Wrangle, explains how the allocation was made. At the time of enclosure, the land in the name of the Poor was some 30 acres. Through the clerks, the lords of the manor claimed that this was equivalent to an annual payment to them of 3s. $3\frac{1}{2}$ d., and informed the vicar that unless he showed sufficient cause to the contrary, the commissioners would allow the claim at their next meeting at the Peacock Inn, to be held on 26th February. They would then deduct, from the allotment to be made to the Poor,

"such Parcel or Parcels of Land as shall in the Judgment of the said Commissioners be an Equivalent for such Quit Rent". As the letters were printed, it may fairly be assumed that every owner of land liable to pay quit rent received a copy and that the allotment of 7 ac. 1 r. 16 p. represented the sum total of the items.

In the nature of the case, other allocations on the common could not be large and from the evidence available, it is a reasonable surmise that a former right of common entitled the householder to about $1\frac{1}{2}$ acres and that any allocation in excess of this included the allotment made in respect of the previous holding. It is clear that even the larger landowners did not gain considerably by enclosure, the largest awards being as follow:

	ac.	r.	p.
John Rooper	12	2	08
Boston Corporation	9	1	37
Wrangle Poor	8	2	10 (on surrender of 2. 0. 3. to John Wilby's heirs)
John Broughton	7	3	10
Wrangle Bede	7	0	19 (on surrender of 1. 3. 00. to John Wilby's heirs)
Rimington Atkin	7	2	26
Robert Rinder	7	0	08
William Kirk	6	0	33
Theo. Buckworth's heirs.	5	1	38

All of these received their allocation on the common. In the case of those landowners whose allocation was on the waste, it is not so easy to identify the award though it can be assumed that it was

comparable. In his acre book, John Slator invariably uses the word "encroachment" only when referring to smallholders and cottagers. For the more considerably landowners, the word "intake" frequently occurs. If this is a euphemism for the same thing, there is no problem as it would be clear that such owners received their allocations by being confirmed in the ownership of their intakes.

There were five householders who received allotments of between 3 and 5 acres on the common and 26 who received less than 2 acres.¹ One of the complaints made of earlier enclosures was that the little men received their allotments in remote or almost inaccessible parts of the parish. There could be no such complaint in Wrangle as the small allotments were made on the part of the common nearest to the village centre, with an access road, later known as China Street, leading through the midst of them.

Concerning encroachments, it may briefly be said that the acre book and rate book taken together indicate that 26 owners had their encroachments - in some cases as little as 10 perches - confirmed to them as having subsisted for more than 60 years.

Administration.

4. Drainage.

One of the points emphasised from the beginning by the promoters was the improvement of drainage and this was certainly achieved. At the present time there is no seaward drainage, all drains leading to Lade Bank and thence by Hob Hole Drain to the Witham. However,

1. Appendix 19 gives the list.

comparison of the various maps of the period with the modern Ordnance Survey maps shows that, with the exception of these seaward drainage areas to the south-east of the higher land known as tofts, the system devised by Mr. Bower and carried out under the direction of the commissioners is substantially that of the present day. The chief changes have been in the depth of the drains and the height of the sea bank. It was, perhaps, fortunate that the system was put to an early test. On 10th November, 1810 a combination of a high tide and driving east wind overwhelmed the sea banks from Wainfleet to Spalding and it was necessary for the Court of Sewers to step in to make findings and issue directions to the parishes concerned. The findings with regard to Wrangle¹ show that there was nothing seriously wrong with the drainage system. All that was required was that some drains should be scoured and others widened and deepened, with sufficient rake on the sides to minimise erosion. The sea bank had to be raised by two feet and the outfalls to the sea to be widened to allow of a 3-foot waterway. All that need be added is that the commissioners duly laid down responsibility for the upkeep of the seaward drainage areas, the extent of the two areas being indicated on Map 2.

Administration.

5. Roads.

There is little to be said about roads. The old droves which meandered across the common and were as wide as the cattle chose to make them were straightened, flanked with drains and reduced to

1. L.A.O. Boston Court of Sewers, Findings, Wrangle, 1810.
In a box not yet catalogued.

uniform width. A few roads which were considered unnecessary were discontinued or reduced to footpaths, while others which had become unduly wide where carters had wheeled to avoid boggy places were reduced to a standard 20 or 30 feet, according to the traffic they were expected to carry. Generally speaking, the road system could not be disturbed as the old roads were dotted with house frontages. The main road from Boston to Wainfleet still made a long loop to pass the church and Angel Inn and continued to do so until the 20th century need to get to Skegness with all speed caused a road to be cut across the loop.

Administration.

6. Exchanges.

Very little use was made of the provision in the act which allowed exchanges to be made, only some half dozen being recorded. However, there were some small exchanges with the parish of Leake which led to a more satisfactory boundary between the parishes. For the main part, the boundary now ran along drains and roads, only occasionally skirting fields across open country.

Some results of enclosure.

As the changes consequent upon enclosure relating to agriculture are considered in another chapter, all that need be said here are the two points that the more progressive farmers of Wrangle, which had lagged behind the more progressive areas, steadily made up the leeway and that dispersal of the village had taken place long before enclosure, which merely accentuated the existing position. There was an increase in the building of farms and cottages all over the

parish but it was the area of the common which provided the greatest opportunities, so much so that there developed a second nucleus to the parish, with its shops, carpenter's and blacksmith's businesses, a public house, a Methodist chapel and a Church of England school, used for worship on Sundays and discontinued as a school only in 1965. As the cluster of new houses was some 3 miles by road from the old village centre, this was a development which was not only inevitable but positively beneficial.

Enclosure brought no violent reactions in Wrangle. An examination of the Quarter Sessions records shows that there were no appeals from the decisions of the commissioners nor were any persons charged with impeding or obstructing them. Of course, the householders lost their right of common, in most cases receiving an inadequate allowance of land in compensation, so that, in future, stock-keeping was largely limited to pigs and poultry. On the other hand, it was a positive gain that tithes were extinguished and the improved drainage meant that Wrangle was a healthier place in which to live.

There is no reason to doubt that the act was implemented with scrupulous fairness, but there is equally no doubt that the main ones to benefit were Mrs. Elizabeth Chaplin and the vicar. Even if the latter now received no more in rents than he had previously received in tithes, he was relieved of a great deal of administrative and accounting work and no longer had any bad debts. As for Mrs. Chaplin, she took some of her profits immediately. Before the

next year's rate book was compiled she had sold 246 acres of her allotment on the common to John Rooper who was steadily building up his holding. For the rest, few landowners received more than five or six acres, and as Appendix 20 shows, at least one year's rent was consumed in the expenses imposed by the Act.

A point which must not be overlooked is the increase in funds available for local government. Enclosure resulted in an increase in the rateable value of the parish from £3,595 in 1807/8 to £8,447 in 1809/10. It has, of course, been argued that increased expenditure on the poor rate was one of the results of enclosure but there is no evidence of this in Wrangle.¹

Of the whole operation one cannot help reflecting that if Mr. Charles Chaplin's "ignorance on all political subjects was wonderful", so also was his instinct for the interests of his family.

1. See Chapter 7.

6. CONFORMITY AND DISSENT IN WRANGLE.

Wrangle is only nine miles from Boston, the market town and local religious centre. It would have been strange if, not only the clergy, but also the farmers and stockmen who frequented the markets, had not been influenced by the wave of puritanism which marked Boston, in common with the other large towns of the eastern counties, in the 16th and 17th centuries. Yet there are no means of measuring this influence apart from studying the affirmations of faith which introduce the majority of wills of the period and noting the mention of a bible or religious book in the inventories. During the reigns of Elizabeth I and James I, the Anglican faith and forms of worship seem to have been accepted without any open form of dissent, possibly due to the influence of the Read family and the Reverend Nicholas Francis, who was vicar from 1574 until his death in 1624. How far the vicar was influenced by the extreme puritanism of the divines of Boston is not known, except that he did not follow the example of some of them in refusing to administer infant baptism; but if the expressions of faith in the wills echo his teaching, then certainly he was of their school, however mildly. It is not known whether he signed the Millenary Petition. But if he did, he did not feel sufficiently strongly about the breakdown of the Hampton Court Conference to resign his living. Certainly there were no recusants in his parish, the only reference to Roman Catholicism coming in

1611 in the Will of Edward Aldye, gent., who was old enough to have been brought up in that faith, but was now sure of salvation,

"thorow the only meritts of Jesus Christ by his pretious death and passion, utterly renouncing all the superstitious traditions of the antichristian Church of Roome".^{1.}

After the death of Nicholas Francis, whose close relationship with the Read family is shown by his nomination of Sir John as his residuary legatee, the vicar was Thomas Atkinson, who appears to have been the only post-reformation incumbent who was non-resident, the parish being served by curates during these years (1625-38). Thereafter came Richard Baylye, B.A., who was inducted on 23rd August, 1638, his father, John Baylye, gent. being patron of the living. The fact that he remained in office until his death in 1648 shows that he was not only favourable to the parliamentary cause but that he had been examined by the assembly of divines and been found "godlie and orthodox", in that he had kept his flock from malignancy. Certainly, in 1642, he, with his churchwardens and overseers of the poor, had taken the oath of protestation of loyalty to king and parliament and had then administered it to others, finally certifying, "there is not one man in the Towne of Wrangle above the age of fifeteen yeares but hath made the same protestation".^{2.} Richard Baylye's neighbour of Friskney, Rev. Hammond Bawtree, was dispossessed in 1647 for his attachment to episcopacy and the royalist cause, and had been compelled to compound for his temporal

1. L.A.O. Wills, 1611.1.270.

2. House of Lords Record Office. Protestations, 1642.

estate by a fine of £148.12.3d., so that it was not by neglect or oversight that Richard Baylye was left in undisturbed possession of his parish. As his name does not appear in the Minutes of the Parliamentary Committee of Plundered Ministers ^{1.} and there is no mention of any resident of Wrangle who had to compound for his estates ^{2.} we must assume that Baylye's conduct and doctrine were acceptable to the authorities and that his parishioners were discreet.

After his death, William Hawling was nominated to the vacancy by the puritan divines in December, 1648, ^{3.} but there is no evidence that he accepted the position. In his stead came Thomas Chappelow, a Yorkshireman who had been sizer at Corpus Christi, Cambridge from Easter, 1639, being admitted to the degree of B.A. in 1642/3 and M.A. in 1646. ^{4.} There are few written records of this period but there is overwhelming evidence that he was in physical possession as his burial is entered in the 'register's' records and the inventory of his goods has survived, showing clearly that he occupied the same house as his predecessors, Nicholas Francis and Richard Baylye, with exactly the same rooms mentioned - hall, parlour, chamber over the hall, study, stair chamber (buttery), kitchen and dairy. One of the valuers of the estate of Thomas Chappelow was Anthony Ward,

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1. W.E. Foster, The Plundered Ministers of Lincolnshire, Guildford, 1900.
 2. E. Oldfield, Account of Wainfleet, London, 1829, p. 187.
 3. Shaw, History of the English Church, vol. 2 p. 363.
 4. J. & J.A. Venn, Alumni Cantabrigienses, pt. 1 to 1751, C.U.P. 1922.

yeoman, who had acted in a similar capacity for the estate of Richard Baylye ten years earlier, and who as a former churchwarden, was probably quite familiar with the vicarage.

The Commonwealth period.

Officially, the episcopal system of church government was dismantled. Anglican forms of worship were discontinued and each church became a 'gathered' church rather than a parochial one. But as far as the Civil War was concerned, Wrangle was a quiet backwater and at its conclusion gave the authorities no cause for anxiety. A note pinned into the parish register when it was resumed at the Restoration reads :

"This is to certifie that Richard, the sonne of Richard Parker, was baptised June the 4th 1656 and was baptised by Mary the wife of William Stephenson, gent., the said Richard beeing borne just five weekes after James the sonne of Robert Stephenson."

This appears to be sufficient evidence that private infant baptisms were continued; and as Dame Anne Read, the widow of Sir John, had a private chapel at Wrangle Hall, it is almost certain that Anglican forms of worship, to which many people were by now genuinely attached, were continued there clandestinely. However, such pockets of opposition as may have existed to the changes imposed by parliament were of insufficient importance to attract the attention of the authorities and, outwardly at least, Wrangle conformed.

The parish register was discontinued after Lady Day of 1641 but in 1653 parliament passed an act for the compilation of a

civil register. This was to be an entirely secular book, in which marriages and burials would be recorded as heretofore but, instead of baptisms, the actual date of birth of a child would be recorded. Each town was required to call a public meeting, at which the official in charge, confusingly to be known as the "register", was to be elected. Wrangle duly held its meeting and appointed John Goodrick, whose register was well kept until his death in 1657. A further town's meeting was held to elect a successor, the choice falling to John's 29 year old son, George, who continued the register with scrupulous care until the Restoration. The choice of the "register" was not, of course, entirely in the hands of the public meeting, as the elected person had to receive the approval of the Commonwealth Justices of the Peace. In the case of Wrangle we are fortunate in having the following note neatly written on the back cover of the register :

"George Goodrick being elected Register in the Rome of his Father John Goodrick late of Wrangle deceased I doe approve of as fitting for the said office & have accordingly administered on oath unto hym for the faithfull discharge of the trust reposed in hym.

The 12 day of May 1657

John Whiting."

It would seem that there were no hard feelings in Wrangle at the Restoration. The living was still vacant so that there was no one to be dispossessed and the patron, Richard Baylye, Esquire nominated Henry Conington, who quietly took possession.

The events at the Restoration.

As soon as Henry Conington was in the vicarage, George Gooderick surrendered to him the civil register, and as it had many unused pages, with due economy it was continued as the parish register. In return, the vicar and churchwardens, in conjunction with their colleagues of Leake, appointed George as member of the Bede and master of the school, a post which he occupied until shortly before his death in 1696.

Henry Conington, the son of a Rutlandshire yeoman, had been admitted as sizer at St. John's College, Cambridge in 1639 at the age of 18. He was admitted to the degree of B.A. in 1642/3 and M.A. in 1646. He was, in fact, a contemporary of Thomas Chappelow, and may have been a friend, as he came into the district in the same year. When Chappelow took the ministry of Wrangle in 1648, Conington came to the neighbouring parish of Leake, apparently ministering there during the remainder of the Commonwealth period.^{1.} If the parish register is to be believed, Henry Conington, as yet unordained even as deacon, was carrying out the duties of a priest within a week of the Declaration of Breda (4th April, 1660), or six weeks before Charles II arrived in England to claim his inheritance.

The episcopal system could not of course be restored overnight and Henry Conington continued in office for two years before his ordination. Then came his turn for an intensive few days with the

1. J. & J.A. Venn, Alumni Cantabrigiensis, C.U.P., 1922, pt. 1, to 1751.

Rt. Rev. Robert Sanderson, Bishop of Lincoln, at Buckden palace,
the main events of which were :

- 13 Aug. 1662. Henry Conington subscribed as rector
of Wrangle, declaring himself to be M.A.
- 20 Aug. 1662. Henry Conington ordained deacon and given
preaching licence.
- 22 Aug. 1662. Henry Conington ordained priest.^{1.}

By now, the revised Book of Common Prayer had been published and on his return to the parish, on 19th October, the new vicar declared his "unfeigned assent and consent to all and every-thinge contayned and prescribed in and by the booke intituled the booke of common prayer and the Administration of the Sacraments and other rites and ceremonies of the Church accordinge to the use of the Church of England" . Among the eleven men who signed as witnesses of this declaration was George Goodrick, who, in turn, made no difficulty about his own declaration in accordance with the Test Act. To the majority of the inhabitants, the precise form of Christianity to be practised was probably a matter of indifference. The Commonwealth unlicensed preacher and "register" had come to terms with the new regime and life continued much as before. For a few years, the authority of the Church of England was unchallenged.

1. I am indebted for these details to Rev. Ewan Davies, Chaplain of Pembroke College, Oxford, who is working on a life of Bishop Sanderson.

Dissent: the Quakers.

Wrangle was too small a place to be a centre of religious ferment and activity such as were Boston and Spalding, where dissenters established their communities as early as 1662. Unfortunately, the Holland Quarter Sessions records date only from 1673 so that for nearly 10 years we have no reliable information as to how far the Clarendon Code was enforced. While illegal conventicles could not be tolerated by the authorities, neither could they be suppressed as long as passionate belief and a sense of injustice led men to risk attending them. Yet however cautious were the members, there was always the danger that ultimately an informer would lay a complaint before the magistrates. This is what happened at Spalding, where a magistrate, Henry Burrell, acting "on information received", presented a memorandum, ¹.

"that a conventicle was held on 23rd September, 1683, in Monks House, Spalding, where Thomas Lawson preached against the Act for preventing seditious conventicles. There were present John Hunter, mercer, William Bates, brazier, John Atkin, bricklayer, Luke Copeland, labourer, all of Spalding and about 20 more."

In the villages, where dissenters were few, it was possible to hold small gatherings with little risk of detection, though the members laid themselves open to the penalties of the Act of Uniformity if they absented themselves from the services of the parish church and

1. L.A.O. Holland Sessions Bundle 1683/1/215.

there were very few clergy as enlightened as Philip Tallance, vicar of Moulton, who was reported to have said that

"it was against his judgment that any should, against their wills, be compelled to come to church and that compulsion in such nature was not used to any in our saviour Christ's and his apostles' times and further said that when it pleased God to touch such absentees' hearts, they would come to their church without compulsion." ¹.

Philip Tallance had refused to allow the serving of a warrant for the levying of a fine of 12d. per Sunday upon those not attending the parish church. He was prosecuted by his own churchwardens, a true bill being found by the Grand Jury, and he was bound over in the sum of £20 to answer the charge at the next sessions. Incomplete records do not give us the end of the case.

It would seem that there were very many clergy who, either from indolence, indifference or sympathy, refrained from taking action against their dissenters, as the number of cases recorded is remarkably few. However, there were two Wrangle parishioners who obstinately refused to attend their parish church and at the Kirton Christmas Sessions, 1684, Joseph Brittain and James Knighton were summoned to answer the charge. Whether more important cases crowded out the hearings, or whether the justices were not anxious to hear the cases,

1. L.A.O. Holland Sessions Bundles 1683/4/16 and 1684/5/43.

or were unable to proceed in the absence of presecution witnesses, is not clear, but the fact is that they were adjourned from sessions to sessions until the midsummer of 1686, when probably as a result of James II's Declaration of Indulgence, they disappeared from the charge sheet. ^{1.}

These two were members of the Society of Friends, whose numbers had been steadily growing in the Leake and Wrangle area, so much so that when at last the Toleration Act was passed in 1689, they were immediately able to establish an official local meeting. The location of their first licensed meeting house is not known, but in 1703 it was the farmhouse of John Brittain, ^{2.} This local meeting sent delegates to the Monthly Meeting held first at Wainfleet and later at Mumby and it was the Monthly Meeting which kept the records of the Society. Ten Wrangle families can be identified as contributing members, though only three, with the surnames Pearson, Robins and Skirme, had been long resident in the parish. ^{3.}

Though the doctrinal position of the Society of Friends has changed little with the passage of time, as Margaret James has pointed out, "the political quietism which made this sect innocuous during its later stages was not so conspicuous at the beginning". ^{4.} The particular political

1. L.A.O. Holland Sessions Records, 1684 - 1686.

2. By his Will of 1748, Joseph Franklin, tailors of Wrangle, left "ten shillings towards repairing the Quakers' Meeting House in the parish of Leake" which means that a separate building was in use.

3. L.A.O. Records of the Mumby & Wainfleet Monthly Meetings of the Society of Friends.

4. Margaret James, 'The political importance of the tithes controversy in the English Revolution, 1640 - 1660' in History, June 1941, p.15.

issue in which they were involved, striking at the roots of the rights of property, was the controversy over the payment of tithes. On this issue, the Quakers were recalcitrant, and therefore dangerous to the established order, as they made non-payment one of the main points of their programme. As George Fox had taught them, they believed that these exactions were iniquitous and were prepared to go to prison rather than pay them.

There is no evidence that anyone in Wrangle ever went to prison. The usual procedure was that employed for the recovery of civil debts, the aggrieved party - in these cases, the impropriator or vicar - laying a complaint before two magistrates, obtaining a warrant for Distress and Sale, and calling upon the village constables, who were substantial yeomen who had paid their tithes and saw no good reason why their neighbours should not do the same, to execute the warrant. Typical of this procedure is that recorded in the Friends' Sufferings of 1705 :

"Taken from John Skirm of Wrangle for arrears of Tythe by Francis Goodrick and Edward Francis, Constables Wrangle, by virtue of a levy granted by Robert Long and Richard Whittingham, Justices, for the use of William Cooper, priest of Friskney, one pair of beasts worth £8.5.0 for the demand of £1.10.0. Taken more from the sd. John Skirme for tythe and steeplehouse sessment, pretended to be due to John Wilby, Steeplehouse Warden and executor of the late priest, the living being vacant, as also 2d an acre cut of grass pretended to be due to widow Bailey aforesd, by virtue of a levy granted by Robert Long and Richard Whittingham aforesaid, the

constables (that is) Francis Gooderick and Edward Francis took from the said John Skirm 2 pairs of beasts worth £15 for the demand of £9.8.8d. tythe, £3.6.8d steeplehouse sessment, 9s.6d. cut of grass."

The "sufferings" are recorded quite unemotionally, though it is clear that, in every case, the value of the property taken far exceeded the amount to be recovered, as, in the nature of things, it was bound to be, since it had to cover the legal costs, the expenses of the constables and whatever was involved in the sale of the property.

When we consider the purely religious side of the movement, there is no doubt that members of the Society were distinguished by very high standards of sanctity of life and probity of conduct. Not all who were admitted could maintain those standards and one Wrangle member who attended the Leake meeting was expelled in 1694 for good and sufficient reasons :

"Whereas James Robbins of Leake was educated and hath made profession with us the People called Quakers; but for want of a due regard to the principles we make profession of, and to the repeated advice of his friends: he hath long continued in the practice of frequenting public houses and drinking to excess, also having made use of fraudulent and collusive means to extort money and contract debts without a probability of paying the same, which hath brought trouble and reproach upon himself and the society he made profession with, a practice highly unbecoming that uprightness which ought to appear in every member of our religious society; therefore we think it our incumbent duty to declare our disapprobation and disunity therewith as altogether inconsistent with the truth we make

profession of, and do hereby disown the said James Robins to be no longer a member of our Society."

Another distinguishing feature of the society was a return to the apostolic practice of settling differences between members by "telling it to the church". This was usually effective, but in the few cases in which it was not, the Society carried out literally the injunction,

"but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican".

This last resort was threatened in the case of one Wrangle member, as the following extracts indicate :

"21.12.1745. William Robins making complaint that Samuel Ashall delays paying him a just debt and desiring the meeting's advice, they are both desired to be at the next meeting."

Samuel Ashall did not attend the next meeting - or the following two, the next entry reading :

"16.3.1746. This meeting agreed that Samuel Ashall of Wrangle be wrote to, to let him know the mind thereof that if he don't agree with his Brother in Law, William Robins, in two weeks' time, that the said William Robins has leave from this meeting to recover his right by a legal Method, if he think fit to do so."

For the main part, the Quakers attracted those who were devout, educated, determined and well-to-do. They had their poor, for whom they provided handsomely, but these were mainly the widows and children of deceased male members of the society. The evidence shows that they were a self-contained community, completely divorced from the

parochial system and exercising a very democratic system of church government. In the nature of things, they were bound to be a minority movement though they were firmly established in the Leake and Wrangle area throughout the 18th century. The John Skirm whose cattle were seized, died in 1710, directing in his will that he be buried decently, "among the Lord's people" at Wainfleet, which was the nearest Friends' burial ground. By 1720, however, they were sufficiently numerous to establish a further burial ground on the borders of Leake and Wrangle, where there were interments of 60 of their local members by the time it was discontinued in 1835.

Methodism.

The older dissenting bodies, the Independents and the Baptists, who were active in the Boston and Spilsby areas, seem to have made little impact on the villages of the East Fen, but by the middle of the 18th century, the powerful influence of the Methodist societies was felt throughout the area. So much has already been written about John Wesley's conversion and assurance of salvation that all that need be stated here is that it took place on 24th May 1738 and that it was followed by a burning determination to bring to others the same experiences. After just a dozen years Wrangle, a remote and unimportant village, had its passions stirred to the depths as a result of this determination.

The first reference to Methodism occurs in the parish register in 1750. By the August of 1751 we learn of seven heads of families

who were professing Methodists. All were in fairly humble circumstances. John Bloom and Robert Yarber were carpenters, Joshua Dickinson was a small-holder, William Randall a gardener, Thomas Parker a grazier in a small way, while William Jessop and James Francis were labourers. There may have been others, as we have information only of families which happened to have had a birth or a death recorded at the time. Although there was no Methodist society in Wrangle in 1750, there were societies in some neighbouring villages and there is evidence that men of Wrangle walked over and caught some of the fervour of Wesley's field preachers. It is not surprising, therefore, that arrangements should have been made for a visit of a travelling preacher to hold a series of field meetings in the parish.

The man selected for this evangelistic work was the 24 year old Thomas Mitchell, a native of Bingley, in Yorkshire, who, at the age of 14, had been apprenticed to a stone mason. However, during the rebellion of 1745 he had enlisted in the Yorkshire Blues and fell under the influence of a deeply religious fellow soldier. Upon the collapse of the rebellion he was discharged in 1746 and promptly joined a Methodist Society. By 1751, he was considered sufficiently experienced to undertake this mission to Wrangle.^{1.}

There were disturbances at several of the meetings which spread

1. T. Jackson, Lives of Early Methodist Preachers, Vol 1., London, 1871.

over the months of July and August. On 7th July there was rioting, when the preacher and some of his supporters were assaulted and beaten. The climax, however, came on Sunday, 4th August. As usual, Thomas Mitchell began his field meeting at 5 a.m. and, for an hour, all went well. He was then arrested by the village constables and taken to the Angel Inn, where he was detained in custody until 4 p.m., by which time, evensong, attended by the majority of the villagers, was just ending. At this stage, one of the constables went out, saying that he would ask the minister whether they might now release him. On his return, Mitchell was released - but right into the hands of the waiting mob. He was taken to a pond nearby and repeatedly ducked until some of his tormentors relented, restrained the others and allowed him to escape to the house where he had been lodging. His host promptly put him to bed.

Within an hour, some of the mob were outside the house, howling for Mitchell. When he did not appear, they burst open the door of the house and then of the bedroom and dragged him out, half-naked. Four of them then frog-marched him to a deep, railed-in pond and, after swinging him backwards and forwards several times, flung him over the rails and into the pond. Some of his friends fished him out with a long pole and for some time he lay on the ground exhausted and apparently unconscious. He was taken to another cottage and again put to bed but again he was not left in peace. Some of the

mob again burst into his room, dragged him from bed and pursued him, still half-naked, to the parish boundary. He staggered on some three miles before he reached a cottage where he received hospitality and could sleep in peace. ^{1.} It was fortunate for Thomas Mitchell - and for his tormentors - that he was young and tough enough to survive his treatment.

Mitchell was not the only sufferer. Some of his known supporters had also been beaten, daubed with paint and thrown into ponds, the violence of this August Sunday, however, going far beyond all that had happened before. Some of the victims appealed to a Justice of the Peace for protection but the gentry and clergy were of one mind with regard to Methodism and the complainants were roughly told that this treatment was good enough for them and that if they persisted, they could expect the same again. ^{2.}

Clearly, it was a state of affairs which could not be allowed to continue. At this time, John Wesley was in London. At first one and then two others of the Wrangle victims made the journey to London to report these happenings to him and seek his advice. On 15th August, John Wesley wrote a very restrained and dignified letter of protest to Rev. Richard Bailey, setting out the facts as reported to him and making it clear that the vicar had been "very nearly concerned" in the disturbances. He continued :

1. John Wesley, Journal, London 1960, Vol.iv, p.16

2. Ibid, Vol.iii, p.533

"I allow some of these people might behave with passion or ill-manners. But if they did, was there any proportion at all between the fault and the punishment? Or, whatever punishment is due, does the law direct that a riotous mob should be the inflictors of it?"

Herein lies a plain hint that the attacks were not entirely unprovoked and that Mitchell's preaching of the gospel had included criticism of the teaching and practice of the established church, possibly with scathing references to the vicar. Lest there should be any doubt in the matter, Wesley continued with a statement of the tenets of Methodism and the conditions necessary to restore the peace :

"The sum of our doctrine, with regard to inward religion (so far as I understand it) is comprised in two points: the loving God with all our hearts, and the loving our neighbour as ourselves. And, with regard to outward religion, in two more: the doing all to the glory of God, and the doing to all what we would desire, in like circumstances, should be done to us. I believe that no one will easily confute this by Scripture and sound reason, or prove that we preach or hold any other doctrine as necessary to salvation.

I thought it my duty, sir, though a stranger to you, to say thus much, and to request two things of you:

- (1) that the damage these poor people may have sustained be repaired; and
- (2) that they may, for the time to come, be allowed to enjoy the privilege of Englishmen - to serve God according to the dictates of their own conscience.^{1.}

1. John Wesley, Journal, London 1960. Vol.iv. p.304

At some later time, Wesley added the tart footnote

"Mr. B..... was not so wise as to take my advice. So the sufferers applied to the Court of the King's Bench, and after it had cost him a large sum, he was glad to let them worship God in their own way."

John Wesley entertained a poor opinion of the inhabitants of the Boston area, more than once commenting upon their boorishness. However, he had determined to pay an early visit to Wrangle himself to see what effect the appeal to the law had had. Within a year the opportunity came and a brief note indicates his satisfaction :

"1752. Mon. 20 Apr. I rode by Hainton to Coningsby. The next day I preached at Wrangle, where we expected some disturbance but found none. The light punishment inflicted on the late rioters (though their expense was not great, as they submitted before the trial) has secured peace ever since. Such a mercy it is to execute the penalty of the law on those who will not regard its precepts!" ¹.

If by "peace" Wesley meant merely freedom from physical violence, he was probably right, but the passions and prejudices roused by a riot and a threatened court action could not easily or quickly be dispelled. Certainly he himself never forgot the incident. Nearly 30 years later, in recording a final visit to Boston, he wrote :

"Fri. 16th June, 1780 ... At six, the house contained the congregation, all of whom behaved in the most decent manner. How different from those wild beasts with whom Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Mather had to do!" ².

1. John Wesley, Journal, London 1960, Vol.iv, p.20.

2. Ibid. Vol.vi, p.285.

Meanwhile, a Methodist society had been formed in Wrangle, holding the allegiance of at least a dozen families. The parish register shows that one of them, John Shaw, became a Methodist preacher and was buried in the churchyard as such as early as 1763. In later years, some seven or eight local Methodists received brief obituaries in the national Wesleyan Methodist Magazine but as they were written mainly for the encouragement and edification of the brethren, they contain very little factual information except of spiritual experiences almost as alien to modern Methodism as to Anglicanism.

However, John Gilbert, who died in 1801 at the age of 75, received a full-length notice, perhaps the most interesting part of which is its romantic opening :

"His first concern about divine things was occasioned by reading a religious book. At that time there were no Methodist Societies in the neighbourhood; but he went to Coningsby to hear a preacher and was much struck with what he heard. In his return home, he and his companion lost their way; but observing a light at a distance, they went towards it, and found a cottage where they stayed all night. The people were Methodists. They sat up the greatest part of the night, singing, praying and conversing about divine things. The circumstances of this journey left a lasting impression on his mind, which issued in his true conversion to God."

Though the rest of the obituary is written mainly in the spirit of exhortation, these facts do emerge: Gilbert had witnessed the riots of fifty years earlier and firmly believed that it was the Rev.

Richard Bailey who had incited the mob. Indeed, the local tradition was "that he had enjoyed the sight of these vile proceedings from the steeple just by", and that John Wesley was mistaken in thinking that the threatened action before the King's Bench had "secured peace".

Thomas Blanchard, the writer of the obituary continued :

"As this case did not comprehend all their former sufferings, so neither did it entirely remedy them for the future: it being the common opinion in the neighbourhood, that it was no crime to injure or abuse the schismatics, as they were called, as they could obtain no redress. From such a licence as this idea afforded to all evil-minded persons, their sufferings were daily very great; but they were easier borne than could at first be imagined, while their hearts overflowed with that love which beareth and endureth all things. To this our venerable friend often bore his testimony, declaring that such was the mutual love which reigned amongst them, that the very sight of each other, or a few words of religious conversation together, revived their heart-felt union and encouraged them to endure whatever trials they might meet with."

There is, in fact, no evidence that there was any further persecution of Methodists in Wrangle, though they would certainly be exposed to the open and silent pressures of the countryside to conform to majority views.

As for John Gilbert, he was a powerful local preacher who frequently made tours with the regular travelling preachers. More than once, John Wesley offered him a circuit, but as he had a farm of 45 acres to attend to, he preferred to operate in his own locality. After a lapse from grace of a vague, unspecified nature, he not only

led a blameless life but worked with redoubled zeal as preacher, class-leader and host to the travelling preachers. Finally, he paid for the building of the Wesleyan Chapel, though he did not live to see it completed, licensed and in use. At the time of his death in 1801, he had been a Methodist for nearly 50 years. ¹.

The chapel was ready in 1804 and at that time it was still necessary for protestant dissenters to have their places of worship certified by the bishop of the diocese. Though a request for a licence required only two signatures, it was common practice to enhance the impressiveness of the application by the addition of others. In the case of the Wrangle request, there were eight, which allows us to look at some of the leading members of the Methodist Chapel at the beginning of the 19th century. ².

Among the number was Ann Gilbert, the widow of John. She had been his second wife and was considerably his junior. Later in the year she married Edward Bond, a farmer who lived outside the parish but rented some $4\frac{1}{2}$ acres inside it. Incidentally, John's son by his first marriage, Joseph, became a Doctor of Divinity and served in the ministry of the Independants, ending his days at Friar Lane Chapel, Nottingham, as one of the leading preachers of the denomination. Of the other signatories, William Atkin, William Evison and Edward Hales were all farmers, reasonably well-to-do, each with some 50 to 60 acres.

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1. Methodist Magazine, Vol.25, 1802, London; Thomas Blanchard, 'A short account of the Life and Death of Mr. John Gilbert, of Wrangle, Lincolnshire.'
 2. L.A.O. Dissenters' Certificates, 1804, No.15.

All came of long-established local families. Samuel Botts was a small-holder with 3 acres, while David Wright was a labourer whose house and small garden had a rateable value of only £1. All that is known of John Wells is that he was a young man who had married a servant girl two years earlier. It is likely that he, too, was a labourer who moved on to some other parish soon after the opening of the chapel.

Such were the members of the society which warmed the heart of John Gilbert and led him to make his generous gift. By this time there were no gentry resident in Wrangle but there were some half-dozen very wealthy farmers. These remained members of the Church of England. Of the middle group of farmers, with holdings of between 50 and 100 acres, it seems that anything up to a quarter were drawn into the Methodist society; while of the small-holders and labourers, a rather higher proportion of those who were spiritually minded were attracted by the fervency and directness of the preaching, the congregational hymn-singing, the simpler form of service and the warmth of welcome which was a distinguishing feature of the society.

A brief note relating to the chapel, written in 1814., reads as follows :

"A little past the Bede houses, on the road to Wrangle, is a neat Methodists' Chapel, which was built by the late Mr. John Gilbert for the use of Dissenters of that Denomination." ^{1.}

1. W. Marrat, The History of Lincolnshire, Topographical, Historical and Descriptive, Boston, 1814, Vol. ii, p. 127.

Within a generation, this chapel proved too small for the growing number of worshippers, the site being now occupied by a medium-sized house in which some of the chapel walls appear to have been incorporated. In 1842, a larger chapel was built about a mile further along the road leading to Wainfleet on land belonging to William Evison, one of the signatories to the request of 1804. With the prospect of a further increase in numbers, the new building provided for 200 sittings and was of sufficient height to admit the later addition of a gallery, which, however, has never been required. At the religious census taken in 1851, the morning congregation numbered 89 and the evening 36, while 41 children attended the morning Sunday School. As the day of the census, 30th March, happened to be very cold and wet - and in the middle of the lambing season - the attendance at this and other churches in the area was well below the average. James Hill, farmer and chapel steward, estimated the normal congregation as 120 in the morning and 80 in the evening.¹

It was one of the tragedies of the Methodism that the movement led to a proliferation of connexions, doctrinally indistinguishable but differing in matters of organisation and government. In the Wrangle area the Primitive Methodists seized the initiative in the early years of the 19th century and although the Wesleyans had built a chapel at New Leake in 1826, on what had been the East Fen, thereafter it was the Primitive Methodists whose fiery zeal continued the

1. P.R.O. Ecclesiastical Returns, H.O. 129.425.2.6.12.

work of evangelism, mainly among the labouring classes. In 1838, after meeting in the farm of Edward Mossom for 17 years, they built a chapel at Wrangle Bank, which served the rapidly developing area of Wrangle Common, and in 1839, another chapel at Fold Hill, just over the Wrangle boundary in the parish of Leake. At Wrangle Bank on the day of the census, 56 attended the afternoon and 28 the evening service, while 44 children had attended the morning Sunday School. At Fold Hill, 71 worshippers had attended in the morning and 64 in the evening. It is worth commenting that at the time of Methodist union in 1932, the sharp decline in church attendance made Fold Hill redundant and it is now a carpenter's shop, while Wrangle Bank, still a centre of population and nearly three miles by road from other places of worship, has been retained.¹

The Parish Church.

The religious census of 1851 included the established as well as the dissenting communions and it is clear that the parish church had retained the allegiance of the majority of the parishioners, as 57 had attended mattins and 217 the afternoon evensong, the vicar pointing out that owing to the scattered nature of the parish, few attended both services.²

It would be a mistake to assume that it was merely inertia which kept the majority faithful to their parish church. Wrangle was fortunate, and probably exceptional, in having a long succession of

1. P.R.O. Ecclesiastical Returns, H.O. 129.425.2.6.13 & 2.7.16

2. Do. 425.2.6.11.

vicars who were not only resident in their parish but faithful in their ministry and, judging by the available evidence, actively concerned in the life of the community. An excellent example had been set by Thomas Alenson who had established the Bede House and School in 1555 and it is clear that his successors faithfully administered the trust he had endowed. The pastorate of Nicholas Francis, stretching over half a century, ending with his death in 1624, had been purposeful and diligent, as the wills of the period, with their professions of faith and their many gifts to the church and the poor, amply demonstrate. He followed his precepts by himself leaving money for the benefit of the poor and funds for tiling the aisles of the church.

Henry Conington's chief contribution, from 1661 to 1671, was to exercise a wise tolerance during the Restoration period and to reconcile all the puritans except the Quakers to the established church. William Erskine who followed from 1674 to 1705 augmented the endowments of the bede and the poor and his inventory shows that during his lifetime he had helped the poor by putting out his tithe wool and flax for spinning. Richard Bailey, whose long pastorate from 1705 to 1755 was marred by his intemperate zeal in connection with the riots of 1751, has already been noticed. A faithful, if misguided minister, he was succeeded by his son, another Richard Bailey, who was vicar from 1755 to 1775, a man of milder disposition but no less zeal. After paying due attention to Dr. Johnson's^s caution that "in lapidary inscriptions a man is not upon oath", he seems to have deserved the lines on his mural in the chancel:

"A heart to feel the pleadings of distress,
An eye to pity and a hand to bless."

In addition to good works during his lifetime, he left $2\frac{1}{4}$ acres of land, the rents of which were to be devoted to the relief of the poor. After a few years he was followed by his nephew, Richard Wright, whose long ministry stretched from 1784 to 1826.^{1.} In turn he was succeeded by his son, Thomas Bailey Wright, who held the living for the next 30 years, being in office at the time of the religious census. In this series of long pastorates, by men who were faithful to their calling and intimately concerned in the life of the parish, lies the reason for the attachment of the majority of the parishioners to their church.

The church of the 17th century had little equipment, the congregation learning the responses of mattins and evensong by heart, and for the psalms, following the lead given by the clerk, who shared his prayer-book with the vicar. An inventory of 1708 shows that the only books in the church were a folio Bible, dated 1630, Bishop Jewel's "Apology for the Church of England" of 1570, two volumes of "The Book of Homilies", reprinted in 1673 and a new Book of Common Prayer, dated 1704. The chancel was exceedingly plain, the only soft furnishings being coverings for the communion table, a green woollen cloth for general use and a white linen cloth for use during the communion service. For festival days there was the silver "Wrangle Cup" dated 1569,

1. L.A.O. Wills 1776, Richard Bailey was the last male of his line. In his desire to keep the living in the family he left £400. for the education in divinity of Richard Wright, "son of Thomas Wright of Boston, apothecary", with a view to his ordination. Meanwhile, Rev. Richard Shepherd of Friskney would hold the living on the understanding that he would resign when Richard Wright could be inducted.

weighing $11\frac{3}{4}$ ounces, with a cover weighing $4\frac{3}{4}$ ounces and a silver patten to match, weighing $13\frac{1}{2}$ ounces; but for ordinary occasions, there was a set of pewter vessels.

During the 18th and 19th centuries, the wealthier ladies of the parish - mainly members of the vicar's family or of the Wilbys - improved the appearance of the chancel. Thus, by 1850, the communion table had a covering of blue cloth, embroidered with yellow silk, while the area within the communion rails was carpeted all over. There were embroidered cushions to serve as kneelers for the communicants, while for the vicar there was a crimson velvet cushion. In addition to the linen cloth, there was also a napkin for wiping the cup after use by each communicant. The ancient silver chalice and patten were still there but the pewter service had been replaced by a handsome silver set of vessels, inscribed with the word "Glory", the gift of Rev. Richard Wright in 1812, the bill for which still survives in the parish chest, showing that he paid £45.5.1d. to Rundall, Bridge and Rundall, of Ludgate Hill, Goldsmiths and Jewellers to Their Majesties, for his generous gift. In the chancel was also a new quarto Book of Common Prayer, "handsomely bound in morocco", while the nave had a folio Bible and Prayer Book for the vicar and a quarto Prayer Book for the clerk. There were no books for the congregation, these being still the days when those who wished to use a book during the service brought their own.

Music seems to have played little part in the services of the church until the middle of the 18th century when it was sufficiently

established for Francis Goodrick, in 1778, to provide a gallery at the west end of the church for the accommodation of a small choir and one or more instrumentalists. This served the church until 1827, when the vicar, Thomas Bailey Wright, had the gallery removed to provide space for an organ, made by G.M. Holdich of London, which he presented to the church. This organ, after restoration by his family and friends in 1870, when it was removed to the chancel, remained in service until 1947. Hymn singing had played no part in the services of country churches before the dissenting bodies had popularised it, the only provision for singing in the 1662 prayer book being the rubric that the psalms could be "said or sung" and the well-known one following the collects, "In Quires and Places where they sing here followeth the Anthem" - but country churches could not rise to an anthem.

One great influence of the early puritans, strengthened by the Methodist societies concerned "the preaching of the Word", which had been discouraged by the authorities of church and state at the time of the time of the Elizabethan Settlement and again in 1662. However, all the Wrangle vicars of the post-Restoration period were licenced to preach and there is evidence that sermons formed part of the church services from the 17th century onwards.^{1.} Quite a number of testators made provision in their wills for sermons to be preached at their funerals, which they would scarcely have done unless

1. L.A.O. The churchwardens' presentment of 1709 stated that a sermon was preached every Sunday.

they had already heard sermons and approved of their content and quality.

The main ingredients - and to many, the attractions - of the Methodist services were the hymn singing, the preaching and the extempore prayers. In the first two of these, it would appear that the vicars of Wrangle kept pace with the Methodists sufficiently to keep their services attractive and enjoyable to their parishioners.

Such, then, was the church which continued to hold the allegiance of some 70% of the parishioners and, if we look at the census figures for 1851, we realise that this allegiance was by no means nominal. There were, in the village, 727 persons over the age of 15, of whom about 500 can be presumed to have been members of the Church of England. On the day of census more than half had attended one of the services at their parish church. By any standards, this was a high proportion.

While, therefore, there were vigorous dissenting bodies in Wrangle, there was also a considerable body of inhabitants who continued to accept the teaching of the Church of England, to join in its worship and to die in its faith. As Wrangle had no resident lord of the manor throughout the period of this review, there was no Sir Roger de Coverley to shepherd the flock into the fold and the conclusion must be that the people remained in the church because its faith and practice were found to be satisfactory. The majority of them had learnt the rudiments of their religion at the bede school and a series of vicars, with long pastorates, appear to have confirmed that early teaching by their life and doctrine.

7. THE POOR

The Christian attitude.

"The poor ye have always with you", said Jesus on a very important occasion - and any consideration of the treatment of the poor which neglects the impact of these words on the Christian community during the period of the present survey is omitting one of the vital factors. It may well be that Jesus was speaking only to his own contemporaries but this was not the interpretation of Christian England, whether Catholic, Anglican or Puritan. Until quite recently it was accepted as a divine ordinance that the poor should inevitably form a considerable proportion of the community.

However, the parable of Dives and Lazarus drove home to the rich that they must not just abandon the poor to their poverty, as, equally inevitably, there was a day of reckoning and the rubrics of successive Prayer Books repeated the admonition. Nowadays at an Anglican Communion Service, immediately before the offertory, it is customary to hear the sentence,

"Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

The alternatives, much more to the point, were probably far more frequently used when the need for their admonition was more deeply felt. There could be no doubt as to the meaning and purpose of the following :

"Charge them who are rich in this world, that they be ready to give, and glad to distribute; laying up in store for themselves

a good foundation against the time to come, that they may attain eternal life."

"Give alms of thy goods, and never turn thy face from any poor man; and then the face of the Lord shall not be turned away from thee."

"Blessed be the man that provideth for the sick and needy; the Lord shall deliver him in the time of trouble."

It was while these sentences were being read that the "fit person" appointed for the purpose received the alms for the poor. In similar vein the rubrics for The Visitation of the Sick required the minister first to attend to the spiritual health of the sick person, then to urge him to attend to the disposal of his worldly estate and finally, since it might well be the last opportunity, "the minister should not omit earnestly to move such sick persons as are of ability to be liberal to the poor".

Whether the ministers used the services of the church as set down we have no means of knowing ¹, but they certainly represented its teaching which is reflected in the Wrangle wills until well into the middle of the 18th century. Not only the wealthy but many of those of very modest means made provision for the poor after their decease, perhaps the outstanding example being Richard Pearsall, a serving man, who in 1688, out of an estate of £16.11.6 left no less than £3 for the poor of the parish.

The Wrangle charities in 1674.

The earliest surviving list of charities involving annual

1. L.A.O. The churchwardens' presentment of 1709 stated that they did.

payments either in money or kind was made in 1674. An examination of this document ^{1.}, of which there are two slightly different versions, reveals that though the benefactions were being faithfully administered and the names of the benefactors known, no written record was kept of the date of the charity or whether it was by deed or will. For the present purpose it is sufficient to say that additional charities were established during the 17th century so that by 1797 28 acres were administered for the benefit of the poor, the annual income of the trustees from all sources being £22.8.6. In 1808, after an enclosure award of $9\frac{1}{2}$ acres and other small bequests, the trustees held $39\frac{3}{4}$ acres with a rental of £75. Meantime, the rent per acre had risen from 15/- to 35/- or 40/-.

Until the third decade of the 18th century, the annual charities, eked out with the collections taken at the Communion service and the stream of single sums given by will ^{2.}, may well have been almost sufficient to meet the needs of the most necessitous poor. ^{3.} The earliest Bede accounts, running from 1671 to 1747 and given in great detail, record only very occasional payments to the overseers either of Wrangle or Leake. Certainly the Wrangle register records only two burials in the 17th century which could be considered as pauper funerals, one in 1663 and the other in 1665, both entries relating to 'poor maids'.

1. See appendix 21.

2. See appendix 22.

3. Some of the administration accounts of deceased persons' estates (in the L.A.O.) include items for the poor rate. The items are all small.

Pauperism and the Poor Rate.

Though we have no means of knowing the numbers of Wrangle inhabitants in the 18th century who were paupers during their lifetime, the table below shows the number, by decades, of those who were buried as such.

Table 1. Pauper burials in Wrangle.

1701 - 1710 -	1
1711 - 1720 -	4
1721 - 1730 -	6
1731 - 1740 -	9
1741 - 1750 -	14
1751 - 1760 -	9
1761 - 1770 -	12
1771 - 1780 -	9
1781 - 1790 -	25
1791 - 1800 -	18

An examination of the 20 cases included in the list before 1740 gives the following categories :

Old men	2
Widows	4
Unmarried mothers	..			3
Other women		7
Orphans	2
Children of pauper parents				2

These were the unfortunates whom we should expect to find requiring assistance and it is not until 1740 that we learn of comparatively young married men who were paupers, the first two being John Whitelamb and Henry Beadal. John Whitelamb remained a pauper until his death in 1761. What happened to John Beadal is not known, as he was not buried in Wrangle, but Elizabeth, his widow, was buried as a pauper in 1785 at the age of 86.

It would appear that until the end of the 18th century the poor presented no insuperable problem to the community. Even in the second half of the century the burial rate of paupers was only 1.5 a year, which does not indicate a very large number of families drawing relief at any one time. Support for this impression comes from Rev. J. Gilbert, who was born in Wrangle in 1779 and spent his youth there. After mentioning that he was accustomed to enter freely into the snug cottages of what appeared to him as happy people, he continues :

"Well do I remember how peaceful and contented they seemed to be; nor can I forget how often I heard them, in familiar intercourse with each other, rejoicing in their independence, and confidently maintaining that none but the idle and dissolute need fear to become paupers, work upon the roads or seek shelter in the workhouse." ¹.

There is no reason to doubt the general truth of this comment, though the account book of the Surveyors of the Highways, which dates back to 1794, shows that there were always five or six men, by no means idle or dissolute, who were anxious to add to their resources by a few days' work upon the roads.

Unfortunately the only evidence relating to the Poor Rate before 1815 comes from the Bede accounts and as the Bede was not regularly assessed until 1798 there are considerable gaps in our

1. P. Thompson, History & Antiquities of Boston, Boston, 1856, p. 607, quoting from Rev. J. Gilbert, 'Memoirs,' p.7.

information. It is abundantly clear, however, that during the 18th century the needs of the poor had far outstripped what could be provided by private charity, though the amount to be raised was by no means crippling. Between 1798 and 1808, the rate was never more than $2/9$ in the £1, but the assessed value of the parish was very low at 10/- an acre. From the High Way accounts it is known that the total rateable value of the parish stood around £3,500, during these years so that the annual amount raised for poor relief averaged £485 annually. In 1808, following enclosure, the parish was re-assessed at £8,250, averaging £1 an acre and the rate was reduced to $1/9$, the annual amount required having risen to £750. It was not until the end of the Napoleonic Wars that a further large increase was necessary, in 1815 the rate being $2/3$ and the amount raised £939.

Persons seeking relief 1807 - 1811.

A Vestry record for the years 1807 to 1811 gives a very full account of relief granted during the very important years immediately following enclosure and as practically all the persons named appear also in the parish register, we know the ages and family relationships of the applicants for relief as well as what was granted to them. This information is very important as it helps to find answers to the question whether the increased calls on the poor law during this period were the result of (a) the repeal of the workhouse test in 1796, which allowed "an industrious poor person" to receive "such occasional relief as is best suited to his peculiar case" or

(b) the effects of enclosure or a combination of the two. An analysis of the cases during these four years shows the following :

Table 2. Persons receiving relief 1807-1811.

Men	7
Widows	14
Spinsters	4
Fatherless children	14+
Motherless children	3
Illegitimate children	13
Occasional relief (3 men, 1 woman)	4
Removed from Poor House and housed	1 family

An examination of the cases reveals that of the 7 pauper men, one was over 80, four others were over 70, one was over 60 (but, with his wife, caring for three motherless children while their father was serving in the army) and the other a dying man of 55 who drew relief only for the few weeks before his death. Of the 14 widows, five were elderly and four the mothers of young children. Two of the spinsters were old and one apparently chronically ill, as she died ten years later, still on relief, at the age of 45. Children formed the largest category of paupers, the 14 or more fatherless children being in the care of their widowed mothers. The three motherless children were all with their grandparents, while the 13 illegitimate children were cared for in a variety of ways - but none was lodged in the Poor House. The occasional relief was 20 pecks of potatoes to William West, the quantity indicating that they were intended for planting; a guinea towards the rent of Eleanor Crofts, a widow; £7 to Robert Lawrence, a labourer, to settle a doctor's bill;

and 2 guineas to John Toyn, another labourer, to help clothe his family.

It is worth noting that the men of Wrangle did not flock to the colours during the Napoleonic Wars, the greater part of the quota being supplied by substitutes from other parishes. Thus, William Wallis of Northampton served in place of Joseph Young, Thomas Haughton of Nottingham for Thomas Bartrop, Paul Cook of the East Riding of Yorkshire for John Vaughan and Richard Sellers of Lindsey for an unnamed Wrangle man. The overseers of Wrangle had to re-imburse the officers of the parishes of these serving soldiers for the relief given to their wives and children. ¹.

It is quite clear that these items, together with the costs of the Poor House, which at this time appears to have been used to provide temporary accommodation pending resettlement of families, could easily account for the £750 a year which the overseers expended. That the amount required had increased was undeniable but the increase was caused neither by the repeal of the workhouse test nor by hardship following upon enclosure. It was, in fact, the result, paradoxically, of improved conditions. A larger number of labourers were living beyond the limit of their working lives; others who died during their working lives had lived long enough to produce a family of children; and finally, whether due to a decay in morals or an improvement in

1. L.A.O. Quarter Sessions Records, Holland. 1808 et seq.

vitality, there was a remarkable increase in the number of illegitimate children.

The Operation of the Poor Law 1815 - 1834.

For the 20 years prior to the passing of the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834, it is possible to visualise the poor laws in operation in the parish as the Vestry Books record major policy decisions and the details of the annual boardings-out, while the Account Book of the overseers gives details of their day-to-day operations.

The Account Book deserves a brief description. It is not in the handwriting of the various overseers but, until his death in 1831, in that of John Slator, the schoolmaster, clearly being a fair copy of the rough books kept by the overseers. The book is orderly, beautifully written, clear in its detail and with each page of accounts accurately cast. Every year begins with a completely re-written list of rate-payers, divided into residents and 'out-dwellers', showing their assessments and the amounts paid, these sums, of course, forming the bulk of the overseers' income, though there were a few miscellaneous items, especially amounts recovered from putative fathers for the upkeep of their illegitimate children. The following pages show disbursements throughout the year and at the end are the names of the vestry members who examined the accounts, the certificate of audit by the justices' clerk and the signatures of the justices who passed the accounts.

The outstanding feature of the annual amounts raised and disbursed during these years, as shown in the table following, is

the extreme steadiness of the requirements, with the exception of the year 1831/2, when extensive repairs were required at the poor house.

Table 3. Details of Poor Rate 1815/6 - 1833/4.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Rateable Value. £.</u>	<u>Rate in £.</u>	<u>Raised by Rate. £.</u>	<u>Amount Disbursed</u>	<u>Number of weeks.</u>
1815/6	8245	2/3	939	919	49
1816/7	8240	2/2	892	872	51
1817/8	8240	2/10	1167	1171	52
1818/9	8247	2/8	1100	1149	52
1819/20	8252	2/5	996	1031	52
1820/1	8256	2/5	998	1124	52
1821/2	8254	2/6	1032	1048	52
1822/3	8254	2/7	1066	1042	52
1823/4	8235	2/5	995	1033	52
1824/5	8256	2/6	1032	1037	52
1825/6	8262	2/6	1033	1045	52
1826/7	8260	2/9	1136	1146	52
1827/8	8222	2/9	1131	1174	52
1828/9	8222	2/9	1130	1132	52
1829/30	8211	2/8	1095	1131	52
After re-valuation of the parish :					
1830/1	6756	3/4	1126	1178	52
1831/2	6758	4/-	1352	1432	52
1832/3	6761	3/4	1127	1121	52
1833/4	6770	3/6	1185	1218	52

Two points which emerge from the table are that the properties were continuously occupied and that, with negligible exceptions, the occupiers paid their rates. Far from there being general pauperisation, the tenant farmers, small-holders and cottagers were making a living and paying their way. A third point, equally important, is

that the actual amounts disbursed, in relation to the population, were not great, the census figures covering these years being as follows :

1811	843
1821	995
1831	1030
1841	1132

With the exception of 1831/2, disbursements under the poor law were little more than £1 per head of population a year and the increase during the period was certainly no greater than could have been reasonably expected as a result of the increase in population.

To enable a satisfactory survey of money laid out to be made, the accounts have been completely re-written and the items arranged under the following headings :

1. Relief in various forms -
 - (a) Money or goods to persons named.
 - (b) Money or goods to persons not named.
 - (c) Medical benefits.
 - (d) Death and funeral benefits.
 - (e) Rents paid for poor persons.
 - (f) Repairs to property of poor persons.
 - (g) Costs of voluntary removals.
2. Costs of maintaining the Poor House.
3. Administrative costs -
 - (a) General.
 - (b) Legal, general expenses.
 - (c) Legal, resulting from Act of Settlement.
4. The Constable's account.
5. The County Rate.

Unfortunately, it is not always possible to arrange items under these headings, particularly in the later years when an increasing

number are merely entered "as per bill", though the recipient is always named and he was usually a clothier or shoemaker providing goods for the poor, or a carpenter or builder doing repairs. However, the general picture emerges quite clearly.

Perhaps the most important point is that the accounts make it perfectly clear that there was no Speenhamland Scale in operation in Wrangle. Such payments as were made to able-bodied men covered periods of sickness or, in the case of casual labourers, periods of hard weather when work was difficult to come by. For the rest, relief was given mainly to the categories already mentioned: the aged and infirm, widows and their children, elderly spinsters, orphans, illegitimate children and the physically or mentally handicapped who were unable to earn a living. Very few apart from those of the labouring classes made any call on parish relief and the underlying cause was that the low rates of labourers' wages made it impossible for them to make provision for the normal events and hazards of life - births and deaths, sickness, repairs to property, the death of a pig, or removal from one house to another.

The duties of the overseer.

In "Tess of the D'Urbervilles", Thomas Hardy classifies parishes of this period into three categories: the village of the resident squire and his tenantry, cared for by its Lord; the village of free- or copy-holders, cared for by itself; and the village of the absentee owner, uncared for, either by its lord or itself. Wrangle was certainly a village of mainly absentee landlords

but uncared for it certainly was not. The overseer was usually a tenant farmer, already busily engaged with his own affairs and it is worth while to see what his duties were and how he performed them.¹ His office was the living room at his farm, his board room the church vestry; he had no clerical assistance until the end of the year when his accounts were re-written in a presentable form by the schoolmaster; he had no paid official to whom he could delegate any of his duties; and his only training for office was his previous membership of the vestry. For success in his work he needed persistence and a variety of talents. When he took up office on Lady Day, a quarter's rate had already been laid. The first duty of the overseer was to go round and collect the amounts due; and for the next four quarters he and his colleague had to estimate and recommend to the vestry the amount needed for each quarter's needs. Table 3 shows that the excess or deficiency from year to year was very small and that this aspect of the work was carried out very skilfully.

Immediately he was in office, the overseer would have to distribute the regular 'collections' granted by the vestry. Though many of the recipients called at his house for their money, he needed to make a weekly tour of the village to pay the aged and infirm. He also had to pay visits to deal with emergency cases until such time as they could be brought before the vestry. There were,

1. See Appendix 23.

however, many other occasional duties. We find overseers attempting to save the parish from greater expense by attending an enforced sale of a parishioner who was being sold up and 'buying-in' his furniture. Others redeemed a parishioner's furniture from pawn or went to Boston to buy furniture for the destitute. Frequently overseers had to saddle their mares and set out for Boston or Benington to bring a doctor to an emergency case. Fractured bones presented more difficulty as, for a long time, the nearest bonesetter was Mr. Wright Mason of Coningsby. On several occasions we find an overseer making arrangements for a child with one of his parents to be taken by carrier to Boston, there to be met by horse and cart to continue the journey to Coningsby. Meanwhile, the overseer himself had ridden to Mr. Mason's on horseback to make the arrangements, meet the party and settle the account. More than once the village ran short of coal and there was none for the poor people who were entitled to receive it. At such time it was the overseer who went to the docks at Boston to negotiate for a supply, on one occasion spending two days to get it and a further two days in hiring horses and carts to bring it to Wrangle. During the early years of the accounts, when there was no coal merchant at Wrangle, the coal for the poor was stacked in the churchyard and it was the duty of the overseers to measure it out to those entitled to receive it and to arrange for cartage. The overseers also paid periodic visits to Boston to buy bedding and furniture for the poor house,

while once a year the pauper children were loaded into a cart to be taken to Boston to be furnished with boots and clothing. The duties of the overseers relating to illegitimate children and sojourners who were caught up in the meshes of the Act of Settlement are considered more fully in a later section but enough has been said to justify the arrangement by which the overseers undertook the major part of the work in alternate quarters, though they were never off duty and frequently had to help one another out.

The Poor House.

The Poor House was the concern of the whole parish but it was the overseers, together with the vicar and churchwardens, who were responsible for its management. Until 1815, there was no master or matron in charge and it seems to have been used as a temporary refuge by families subsequently housed elsewhere, such families meanwhile taking care of children for whom no better arrangements had yet been made. The house was a large one with a paddock of nearly a quarter of an acre, containing a pig-sty and a cow shed. The walls were of mud and stud, the roof of thatch and the interior in thoroughly bad repair. Not surprisingly, as no one was really in charge, its condition steadily deteriorated.

The first recorded attempt to improve conditions came in November, 1815 when the vestry agreed "to put out the Poor House to James Francis, the Overseers to pay him 3/6 per Head for every Person put into the Poor House per Week, so long as they shall stay

therein; the Workhouse Man to find Paupers therein Meat and Work and take their Wages: and the Workhouse man to be allowed for any Girl who shall come to lye-in: the Overseers to pay Physicians, Apothecaries and Midwife: this agreement until New May Day next."

This was an expedient which might have worked had James Francis been a suitable choice for the post. However, it is evident that he was not as his agreement was not renewed and for the remaining 14 years of his life he himself was a pauper receiving out-relief. The vestry minutes make no mention of an appointment during the next two years and the condition of the house went bad to worse until even the strong stomachs of the Wrangle parishioners could stand it no longer. A minute of 28th February, 1818 reads :

"Notice of this Meeting and of the Purposes thereof having been given on Sunday last: It was agreed by us whose Names are underwritten, that it is expedient and absolutely necessary that the Poor House in this Parish be cleared of the Families now therein, and be furnished at the Expence of the Parish, and that the said Poor House be put out to some Person or Persons, at so much per Head or otherwise as a Vestry to be hereafter called may let the same. And that the present Overseers be empowered to take such a Number of Houses for the Reception of those now in the Poor House as may be thought necessary."

The house was duly cleared and a later vestry appointed Martin Greenfield, carpenter and wheelwright, to be the master. The vestry did not make the same mistake twice. Martin Greenfield was of sterner material than James Francis and, after his year of office,

was regularly appointed parish constable. While the house was cleared, Greenfield carried out repairs to the value of £12.6.8. In the mastership of his successors he also carried out repairs, usually to the value of £3. or £4 a year. By 1820 the mud walls were crumbling and 5,500 bricks were bought to rebuild them, a further 3,500 being needed in 1831. For this work, Randal Royle, a skilled bricklayer, was engaged, whose bills for labour - £16.15.11 in 1820 and £12.4.9. in 1831 - show that the work was considerable. In 1820, part of the house was also re-roofed with tiles and in 1827 a further portion was tiled, when 8 sky-lights were included, doubtless to give light to the chambers. In 1831, the thatched part was re-thatched by Thomas Bradshaw, who worked for nine days for £1.7.0., the straw costing £2.7.0. Interior repairs were in the hands of Martin Greenfield but the only item specified is repair to the staircase. The only mention of paint occurs in 1832, when 1/6 was expended, and the house was also insured at a yearly premium of £1.2.6. In 1820 the vestry had agreed "that the Overseers shall, at the Expence of the Parish, build and erect, upon the Yard belonging to the Poor House, a Cow House, Pig Sty and Necessary, to be built of bricks and covered with tiles". The accounts show that £8.5.0 was spent on bricks for these items and £6.8.3. on lime, hair and tiles. James Francis was paid 8/- for pulling down the old pig-stye and Martin Greenfield £1.15.0 for erecting the new one.

As far as furniture and interior fittings were concerned, it appears that in 1818 there was a complete clear-out of bedding and furniture as the accounts show considerable re-stocking during the next few years. Beds, mattresses and blankets were bought and sheeting by the yard, presumably for the women to make up themselves. Instead of forms, chairs and stools were provided. For the rest, cooking and washing utensils were such as we should expect and there were three or four woollen wheels which were doubtless used in the poor house long after other women in the parish had discarded them. For the bed rooms warming pans and bed mats, hand basins and chamber ewers were provided, while in 1829 the amenities were improved by the addition of a night chair and pan. In brief, it seems that the inmates of this small workhouse were not worse equipped than they would have been in their own homes, particularly as they were permitted to bring with them such of their furniture as they wished.

In the Vestry minute books are copies of the agreements between the Overseers, Churchwardens and parishioners on the one part and the master in charge of the Poor House on the other each year from 1818 to 1827 and thereafter a summary until 1833, repeating the agreement of 1827. The essential difference between these agreements and that of 1815 was that, in addition to the capitation allowance for inmates, the master was to receive a salary. From 1818 to 1820 it was £50; in 1821 it was reduced to £40 and in 1821 to £35; in 1823 it was increased to £42, in 1824 to £52 and in 1827 to £62, at which it

remained for the next six years.

The allowance for the maintenance of the poor people seems to have been meagre, though we must remember that any wages earned by them had to be handed to the master to help in their upkeep. In 1818 the allowance was 2/6 a week, which was about the same as the amount paid for a boarded-out child but in 1821 the allowance was reduced to 1/9 and was never increased. The provisions relating to food were simply that it should be "good, sufficient and proper" and that it should not include "bread made wholly of barley meal". Coal was provided in slightly varying quantities in the different agreements, with occasionally a grant of money in lieu of coal. The allowance for a confinement in the Poor House was £1.11.6 but this covered the residence of the mother and a child for a month. The master received 2/- for a journey to Boston or 1/- for a journey to Benington to summon a doctor or procure medicines but such journeys had to be authorised by one of the overseers. Until 1821, no obligation was laid on the master to live on the premises but thereafter it was repeated in each agreement. The master had to find all cleaning materials himself and to ensure that all windows were in good repair at the end of his year. He was required to enter into a bond with a penal sum of £300 to "leave everything which belongs or shall belong to the said parish, in good and proper condition, the use of the said furniture and utensils properly considered". From 1820 onwards, he was required to find "two sufficient sureties" for the penal sum of £300. Until 1821, supervision of the poor house was restricted to the overseers, who

had a right to inspect any part of the premises "during daylight hours" but in the agreements after that date the same right was conferred on the vicar and churchwardens.

An examination of the accounts reveals that until 1830 the number of inmates varied between 5 and 8, that between 1830 and 1832 they varied between 10 and 13 and that in 1833 the number was 7.

We have no record of the inmates of the Poor House but as expenses were sometimes incurred in their removal, we have the names of some 20 individuals or families, probably forming a good sample of the whole. Jane Baumber, Elizabeth Carrot, Anne Lilley, Frances Toynton and Sarah Young were in temporary residence following the birth of their illegitimate children. Susannah Dawson, Anne Maidens and Anne Woods were middle-aged spinsters unable to maintain themselves. Elizabeth Huggard was a widow of 68 on her admission in 1826. She had previously been receiving out-relief and as her name does not again appear in the list, presumably she spent the last six years of her life in the poor house. Sarah Simpson, admitted in 1821 with her two daughters aged 10 and 8, may well have been deserted by her husband Charles. The children were soon boarded out but Sarah seems to have remained in the poor house. Among the men, John Baker, John Todd and Thomas West and their families appear to have had nothing more than temporary shelter until they could rent a cottage, while Robert Smith, admitted in 1832, died the following year.

Experiments in parish ownership of property.

The vestry did everything possible to keep parishioners out of the poor house and to leave them in enjoyment of their own homes. A quite exceptional effort was made in 1817, when the following statement was signed by eleven members :

"At a Meeting held in the Vestry aforesaid this Day, (11th April) we, the Undersigned, Parishioners and Charge-bearers of Wrangle aforesaid, do nominate, constitute and appoint John Slator, schoolmaster of Wrangle (our Vestry Clerk) a Trustee for the said Parish of Wrangle to purchase, take and receive the Houses, Goods, Chattels, Gardens and Effects of the several Persons in this Parish requiring relief with Authority to let unto the said several Persons requiring Relief their respective Houses, Gardens, Goods, Chattels and Household Furniture at such Rents as the said John Slator shall agree with the several Persons for, to be paid and payable at such times and in such Manner as he shall appoint, and for the Use of the said Parish of Wrangle."

The argument in favour of the resolution is clear. Some families receiving relief were heavily in debt. Unless something could be done for them, they would inevitably be sold up and become eligible for admission to the poor house, which at this time was neither fit enough nor commodious enough to receive them. A practicable alternative was for the vestry to buy up the properties and their contents, thereby enabling the occupiers to discharge their debts and at the same time accepting the former owners as tenants, paying what rents they could.

The experiment does not appear to have been successful except in keeping the families out of the poor house. The overseers' accounts

show an expenditure of eight guineas for the valuation of eight cottages but as ownership had to be vested in John Slator on behalf of the parish, it seems likely that the purchase price of the property came from the Church rate. Judging from what appears in a later section, it seems improbable that John Slator received anything for rents. As far as the parish was concerned, the position was, therefore, that it possessed property on which there was a continual outlay for repairs and no financial return. A private landlord could evict his tenants for non-payment but if the parish took this step, it was likely to lead to even heavier expenditure. Only one other course was open, which was, to give back the properties to their former owners, thereby relieving the parish of the costs of upkeep and repair. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that the venture was abandoned after 18 months, when the following resolution was passed by 13 members, including 8 who had signed the original resolution:

"2nd October, 1818. It was agreed to give up the House and Garden in tenure of Richard Bucknell; the House &c. in tenure of Thomas Stephenson; the House in tenure of Thomas Overton, junr.; the House &c. in tenure of Thomas Brocklesby; to give up the House in tenure of Joseph Hobster; the House &c. in tenure of Edward Williams; and the House &c. in tenure of Thomas Hilton; and also, if the House &c. in tenure of John Leake be tenanted by the Parish, it also be given up."

The failure of this experiment did not deter the vestry from continuing its efforts to prevent wholesale removals to the poor house. A variant came in 1822 when John Barton agreed with the

overseers that in consideration of five shillings a week to be paid to himself and his wife, Sarah, during their joint lives and two shillings and sixpence weekly to the survivor for life, the overseers would take possession, after the deaths of both, of the house and garden, containing 237 square yards, for and on behalf of the parish.

During 1822 and 1823 there were three other such agreements: between the overseers and Robert and Mary Smith, William and Elizabeth Hasting and Mary Cuppleditch, widow, whose allowance was to be three shillings a week. Another hand has added below each of these agreements, "59 Geo.3. chap.12. sect 24", which indicates the procedure to be followed when the property fell to the parish if any occupier refused to quit or deliver up possession.

These transactions were calculated to be of greater benefit both to the poor and to the parish than were the previous outright purchases. The poor people were assured of their homes and a weekly income which, for a married couple, was half a labourer's wage. The parish ultimately acquired property by paying no more than it would probably have needed to provide as relief - and as the properties would be acquired at different dates, there would be no great difficulty in selling them. The persons most likely to disapprove of the agreements would be the heirs of the poor persons as they might well find that there was little or nothing to inherit.

Another experiment in parish property-holding, proposed and considered in 1826, was that the parish should build tenements to let to poor people. The proposal was not carried, on the grounds that it

might prove more expensive than the current practice of paying the rents of the poor, but the fact that it was considered at all illustrates the determination of the overseers and vestry in general to keep families out of the workhouse if at all possible.

Payment of rents.

One of the instructions given by the Commissioners appointed under the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 was that in future relief was not to be given by payment, or allowance towards payment, of house rents. However salutary this measure may have been in the long run, there can be no doubt that it imposed very great hardship until wages became adjusted to the changed circumstances. The custom of paying house rents had certainly been an outstanding feature of relief in Wrangle for the 20 years before the passing of the Act and probably for many years earlier still. Before 1815 there were occasional vestry decisions to allow such payments, sometimes with the hope expressed that the recipient would "repay what he can". By 1815 rents were paid to a total of £67.13.6 on behalf of 15 persons. From that time the amount paid rose steadily until 1831, when £163.1.0 was paid on behalf of 49 persons. This was nearly 12% of the total expenditure of the year, as against 7% for 1815. Throughout the 20 years, only two people are recorded as having repaid anything to the overseers. In 1827 and 1828, Edward Dickenson repaid £5.5.0 each year, which was the whole of his rent, while in 1831, William Bycroft, who from 1816 had been a regular recipient of relief in all forms, repaid £1.10.0. The full list of payments of rent is given on the following page.

Table 4. Rents paid on behalf of poor persons.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Persons</u>	<u>Total paid</u>
		£. s. d.
1815/6	15	67.13. 6.
1816/7	17	62.15. 6.
1817/8	23	88.18. 6.
1818/9	23	99. 8. 3.
1819/20	20	80. 5. 0.
1820/1	25	88. 9. 6.
1821/2	23	93. 3. 0.
1822/3	28	110.15. 0.
1823/4	31	114.14. 0.
1824/5	33	122.17. 6.
1825/6	32	117. 8. 6.
1826/7	33	128.14. 0.
1827/8	35	131.11. 0.
1828/9	31	115.18. 0.
1829/30	33	124. 2. 0.
1830/1	41	136. 9.10.
1831/2	49	164.11. 0.
1832/3	35	115.10. 0.
1833/4	40	140. 2. 6.

Though the peak year of 1831/2 was followed by a reduction both in the numbers receiving this relief and in the amount involved, at the end of the period there were still 40 people having their rents paid in whole or in part and the amount expended still formed 12% of the total bill for poor relief.

No single pattern emerges from an examination of the circumstances of those who received this form of relief. For some tenants, the full amount of rent was paid by the overseers every year and though these

were mainly the sick, who received other forms of relief, there were a number who received no other form of relief. For other tenants who were regularly in the list, never more than part of the rent was paid. Others, again, occur occasionally in the list, having paid themselves for some years but failing to do so from time to time. Inevitably those labourers who had to apply for other forms of relief during periods of illness also had to ask for the payment of their rents.

It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that, in some cases, failure to pay rent was a spreading disease, with an accepted opinion that no great effort to pay need be made, as, in the last resort, the overseers would have to come to the rescue. On the other hand, this was a small community of little more than 200 households ^{1.}, and it is unlikely that the circumstances of those seeking this form of relief were not perfectly well known by the overseers and wealthier men who composed the select vestry. On one occasion a determined effort was made to stem the tide, payment of rents being withheld until the last possible minute. Finally, the select vestry was compelled to yield as the overseers could not possibly provide for a large number of evicted families. The fact that nearly 20% of the inhabitants could not, or did not, pay their rents seems to indicate that the underlying cause was lack of means.

1. The census return of 1841 showed 222 inhabited houses.

Forms of practical assistance.

Vestries and overseers of the period before the passing of the Act of 1834 have incurred a great deal of criticism on the ground that much of their work was palliative and little of it constructive. In the nature of the case, this was bound to be so as a general rise in wages, which was the real solution of their problems, was not within their competence to apply. However, it would be quite wrong to assume that nothing constructive was done in Wrangle. One of the ways by which labourers could supplement their resources was by growing some of their own food and by keeping a pig. Many had gardens big enough for their needs, but for twelve who had not, allotments on the 'poor's land' were provided in 1820, the first year's rent, amounting to £15.15.3, being paid for them. The system was later extended to include many more labourers.

The keeping of a pig was almost universal among the labourers. A young one was bought in spring, fattened up during the year and killed just before Christmas. If the pig died, it was a disaster for the family concerned. In the accounts are nine recorded instances of the replacement of a lost pig by the overseers. On two occasions even a cow was replaced and on another a cow was redeemed from pawn, while there are half-a-dozen cases of the purchase of hay to keep stock alive during the winter.

Other examples of practical help given by the overseers are spread throughout the accounts. For six years, William Bycroft was too ill to dig his garden, though he could manage to plant it. Each

year there occurs an item for ploughing, and sometimes for harrowing and rolling, his garden. John Bloom was a tinker for whom there was never enough work in the district to make a living. In 1821, he was supplied with 4 ferrets and 3 dogs, presumably to catch rabbits. He still could not make ends meet and finally he was made the village pinder and provided with a cottage. Edward Mitchell was an illegitimate youth, possibly of low intelligence. In 1823 the overseers bought him a candy barrow for £1.10.0 and spent a further £1 to furnish his stall. In 1831 John Butler received a grant 'to start him a fisherman' and though he still needed relief, the amounts were small. A very unusual grant was made to Thomas Motley in 1833, when the overseers allowed him £10 towards his fare to America. During the last three years of the accounts there is an item of 4/- a year for taking up Joseph Dickinson's potatoes. Apparently he had strength enough to plant them but not to lift them. He died in 1834 at the age of 38.

Medical and funeral benefits.

A service for which there was a steady call upon the overseers was that of medical attention. From 1815 to 1818, Mr. Gibb, apothecary, was engaged at an annual salary of 16 guineas, to apply his skill for the benefit of the pauper members of the parish. Thereafter, his salary was reduced to 10 guineas and in 1820 he disappears from the records. For the next 14 years, Dr. Richard Cammack was the parish doctor at an annual salary of 15 guineas. Both practised not only at the poor house but widely over the parish. The sovereign remedies in the days of Mr. Gibb were wine, rum and gin. In 1818 he

prescribed black beer and brandy for a child. These delectable remedies were continued by Dr. Cammack in a decreasing number of cases and in a few years were finally abandoned. Mr. Gibb, however, is mentioned as conducting the first inoculation in 1817, when John Wray's three children were inoculated, probably against smallpox, at a charge of 5/- each. The following year he inoculated 41 persons at the same charge.

Mr. Dawson, surgeon, is mentioned several times in the accounts but the payments made to him were so small that he could have conducted only minor operations. The journeys to Mr. Wright Mason, the bone-setter of Coningsby, have already been mentioned but during the last ten years of the accounts a Mr. Trolley had a practice in Boston and there were numerous payments to him for 'righting' ankles, knees, wrists, elbows and shoulders.

A regular call on the overseers was for home nursing. Married men were nursed by their wives but if the wife herself was ill, some other woman in the parish was paid a small weekly sum to look after one or both of the patients. This applied in all cases where there was no woman in a house capable of doing the nursing. In a special category were confinements. The salary of the parish doctor did not cover the delivery of children and the overseers were frequently called upon to settle the doctor's bill for 15/-, which, to labourers, was more than a week's wages and unlikely to be laid by for the occasion.

The total cost of these medical services was not great. Excluding the wine consumed by patients, the average cost was £35, the highest

amount paid in any one year being £52. However, among the factors which led to a reduction of infantile mortality during these years, as well as to a general prolongation of life, the improvement in medical attention provided by the poor law must be rated as one of the most important.

Side by side with medical benefits were death and funeral benefits, though the accounts clearly reveal the reluctance which most families felt at having a member buried entirely at the expense of the parish. However, the costs were high. For an adult, "laying out" cost 15/-, a coffin 21/-, the bell and grave 4/-, while bearers or a horse and cart to take the body to church cost anything between 4/- and 12/-. For children, the charges were less, but even so, the coffin alone cost more than a week's earnings. It seems certain that friends and neighbours helped one another out on these occasions as there were very few cases where the whole cost of the funeral was borne by the parish. In the whole 19 years the payments under this heading amounted to only £153.15.0, an average of only slightly more than £8 a year. It was a necessary provision, though the parishioners were reluctant to take advantage of it.

Illegitimate children.

Before the 19th century, illegitimacy had been no great problem in Wrangle but during the 19 years of the overseers' accounts 54 illegitimate children were baptised in Wrangle while there were 23 other children named in the accounts who had been born before 1815. However, for about a third of the illegitimate births there was no call

on public funds as some of the mothers were members of well-to-do local families who accepted and cared for the child, while others, such as Susannah Cole who bore four illegitimate children in 12 years and Ann Codd who bore three in 5 years, had formed irregular but permanent unions. In 9 cases the child who died before a claim could be made but in 52 others it survived and became the concern of the overseers.

An illegitimate birth which was likely to lead to a claim for relief involved the overseers in considerable work. As soon as pregnancy was certain, the woman was summoned to Boston to swear to the paternity of the child. In so small a community as Wrangle, usually the whole village knew who was the father but it was necessary to have the information on oath to enable the overseers to proceed against the putative father to recover the costs incurred at the birth and to provide for the child. Most of the women obeyed the summons without demur and correctly named their partner. However, in 1816, Anne Lilley lent herself to a piece of gross deception by exonerating a young man who could afford to pay and naming his pauper father instead, being subsequently committed to prison for perjury. If the man admitted paternity, an order was made at petty sessions but if he denied it, the case was tried at Quarter Sessions. Obtaining the order was often the least of the overseer's troubles. Some of the reputed fathers, of course, such as Dr. Adam Dodds of Boston and Eliakim Kirkham, Francis Goodrick and Robert Shipley of good local

families, paid up honourably and were never in arrears. In other cases, the reputed fathers just decamped.¹

The trouble caused to the overseers was considerable. In 1815 warrants were issued for Richard Evans and William York, against both of whom orders had been obtained. It is not known what steps were taken to find Richard Evans but the overseers and constable spent two days scouring the countryside for William York. Neither was seen again and the search was abandoned as the children died in infancy and ceased to be a charge on the parish. These cases could be matched by several others in which men evaded their responsibilities by disappearing from the parish.

Not all succeeded in escaping. In 1818 the search for John Palmer was pressed to a successful conclusion at a cost to the parish of £4.4.3½ and although Palmer paid only £3.8.0 during that year, he paid later sums of £6.10.0 and £8.2.0 before he made another - and final - disappearance. An interesting case is that of John Leachman, who duly paid £7.16.0 in 1820 and 1821 but was hauled off to prison as a defaulter during each of the following ten years. Thomas Scaman paid £6.10.0 in 1818 and £3.50 and thereupon disappeared. Three years later he was recognised and arrested at Horncastle. Though he was brought back, he paid no more and was regularly committed to prison in

1. Some married men also decamped. See Appendix 24.

default. John Leake was more cunning. He never disappeared after the first occasion in 1820 when he was brought back and committed to prison. The next year he paid 12/-, which was all he ever paid. His tactic was to become a pauper himself, never for a large amount but for something every year, thereby demonstrating his lack of means to pay.

The overseers were ill-equipped to deal with enforcement and it would be easy to pass scathing comments about the system they had to use; but each of the types outlined above is well known to the courts today. A determined man who does not mind moving freely about the country or spending short periods in gaol, can still evade payment, despite the improved machinery for enforcement.

It is necessary, however, to return to the child, who, unless otherwise provided for, remained at the charges of the parish for 13 years. If it was practicable, the child was boarded out to its mother or grandparents; otherwise it went to foster parents. A very few children, for whom no homes could be found, had to be accommodated in the poor house, though every effort appears to have been made to make their stay there as brief as possible. The amount paid to foster parents varied from 2/- to 3/6 in 1815 but there was a scaling down of the higher amounts during the next 20 years and in 1834 the scale was uniform at 2/- a week. Each child was provided with clothing when it entered the home of its foster parents but thereafter the weekly payment covered food, clothing and shelter. To ensure that the children were properly clothed, the last quarter's payment was withheld until the

annual inspection of the children by the parishioners. The children in the poor house had an annual outing to Boston for new clothes and doubtless they enjoyed some other small treat as the accounts frequently show an item of a shilling or two under the heading, "Expenses of the Poor House Children at Boston". At the end of 13 years, a few of the boys were apprenticed to tradesmen but most of them worked on the land. The girls received a final clothing allowance, usually of £1 for their "going out", which meant entering domestic service.

The Webbs and Hammonds found little kindness or humanity in the operation of the poor law of this period. Yet in Wrangle, not only most of the children but most of the elderly were accommodated, not in the poor house, but in homes. Those who took them in were mainly poor themselves and while every addition to a small budget would be welcome, it could hardly have been profitable to care for a growing child or an elderly person for 2/- a week.

Settlement cases.

The Act of 1662, usually known as the Act of Settlement brought a great deal of distress to poor people and a great deal of trouble to churchwardens and overseers. The Act recited that people wandered from parish to parish, endeavouring "to settle themselves where there is the best stock, the largest commons or wastes to build cottages, and the most woods for them to burn and destroy". The overseers and churchwardens of Wrangle took the matter seriously from the start. Even the bede schoolmasters were required to produce official documents from their place of settlement and when parishioners of Leake were

admitted as bede members, the vicar and churchwardens of Leake were required to state in writing that such persons were legally settled in Leake and that they accepted liability if any became chargeable to the rates.

Before 1815 we have records only of the few disputed cases which went to the Quarter Sessions but thereafter the Vestry minutes show that there was a steady trickle of removals, though the numbers involved were never great. In point of fact, during the 19 years of the overseers' accounts, only 50 persons were summoned to Boston to swear to their settlement and only 26 of these were actually removed. A few were able to satisfy the magistrates that they were legally settled in Wrangle while others were allowed to remain on a suspended order. The Act of 1662 had authorised the removal to his birthplace of any person "likely to become chargeable to the parish" but in 1795 a tardy amending act prohibited the removal of any person until he had actually become chargeable. The instances of which we have records were taken according to the terms of the amending act.

The process of law was quite simple. If anyone whose legal settlement was in doubt fell on hard times and had to apply for relief, he was granted a shilling and summoned to appear before the magistrates to swear to his settlement. Reasonable expenses were allowed for the journey to Boston and for the loss of a day's pay. If he satisfied the magistrates that his legal settlement was Wrangle, he continued to draw

relief according to the scale in force. If he admitted that he had some other settlement, the overseers obtained authority to remove him to it. The order could, however, be suspended and, as far as Wrangle was concerned, it would appear that persons of good character - the sick, the elderly and labourers temporarily in need - were not removed. Understandably, the overseers were only too anxious to deport the wastrels or the feckless who had settled in their midst, to do which they had first to notify their counterparts in the parishes concerned and, if liability was admitted, take them there.

For the main part, the distances involved in the removals were not great, all but three of the persons removed having settlements in Leake, Benington, Frieston, Fishtoft, Kirton, Frampton, Friskney, Wainfleet, Steeping, Carrington, Linwood, Orby, West Ashby and Ruskington in Lincolnshire, while one man came from Barnack in Northamptonshire. Even the three more distant removals were not expensive ones. In 1819, William Curtis and his family were taken by horse and cart to Swineshead where they were put on the coach to Lincoln. On arrival there, the overseer, William Mastin, hired a gig to take them to Broxholm. The whole operation took four days and the total cost was £5.2.2.¹/₂, the overseer's share being £1.6.3. for expenses and £1 for loss of earnings.

The second of the more distant removals was more expensive. In 1827, widow Tonge had applied for relief and received the customary shilling. An order for her removal was obtained but suspended.

However, for some reason a further order was applied for, which Mrs. Tonge contested. The order was granted but legal expenses of £9.7.0 had been incurred in obtaining it. Mrs. Tonge seems to have been a determined character as the overseer incurred a further expense of 8/- for "taking Mrs. Tonge to my house and keeping her all night", presumably to ensure that she did not evade removal. The incoming overseer, John Dickinson, had the duty of removing Mrs. Tonge and her family to Boston by horse and cart, to Lincoln by coach and finally to Broughton by horse and cart. This time, only three days were taken, the whole cost being £5, of which the overseer's share was a modest £1.3.0, including 12/- for three days' loss of earnings.

The third case was very similar. In 1830, Thomas Rodgers had received relief amounting to 10/6 when it was proved that his settlement was at Chatteris in Cambridgeshire. There was no dispute about the matter and the legal costs came only to 12/-. William Lilley, the overseer, took four days over the return journey to Chatteris, travelling by Boston and Wisbech. He charged only 3/- a day for his loss of earnings and the whole operation cost only £6.

Few people made any resistance to removal to their place of settlement as the most they could hope for was a delaying action. One such case was that of Maria Cant who in 1820 was removed to the neighbouring parish of Friskney. It had cost the overseers considerable time, effort and persistence to get her away. The story, pieced together from the Quarter Sessions' records and the overseers' accounts, tells of an interesting struggle between an obdurate woman and

determined overseers. Maria had answered a summons to appear before the magistrates at Boston, but having been conveyed there and dined well - her dinner and that of the constable cost 4/2 - she gave the place of her settlement as Revesby. An order for her removal there was obtained but as the overseers of Revesby had no difficulty in disproving her statement the order was quashed. She next claimed Leake as her place of settlement and a further order was obtained but this, too, was quashed. The overseers would not acknowledge defeat and a little detective work convinced them that her real place of settlement was Friskney but to prove their case they needed witnesses, including a relative, from Teynton. However, the witnesses were unwilling to give evidence and sub-poenas had to be obtained. The case was heard at Quarter Sessions, proved, and an order obtained, whereupon Maria was carted away to the neighbouring parish. The records indicate that Maria never budged unless she was provided with transport, though it is only fair to say that her home on the common was 10 miles from Boston. By her contumacy she delayed her removal by well over a year and had cost the overseers more than £10.

The overseers were not hard-hearted men but they were bound to consider the interests of the ratepayers whom they served and as long as relief was purely a parochial affair this shuffling about of paupers from parish to parish was inevitable. However, there was no wholesale or expensive removal of paupers from Wrangle. For the 19 years of the records, the costs averaged 7 guineas a year or about .7% of the total of the poor law costs.

Costs of administration.

The costs of general administration were surprisingly small, consisting of insignificant items for stationery and postage, larger amounts for necessary journeys to Boston and minor items for valuations and surveying. Each year small sums were expended on the repair of property, mainly in the ownership of labourers, and smaller sums to pay for removals from one house to another. A fairly regular payment was made for coal used in the church vestry, which was the normal place for business. It is surprising to find the Vestry Clerk's salary of 5 guineas charged to the poor rate rather than the church rate and more surprising still to find the poor rate providing 3 guineas a year for turning the church organ. In common with other landowners the overseers had to pay their Land Tax, which was 3 guineas a year until 1820 and 5 guineas thereafter. A few of the items should, more properly, have been charges on the central government. It is difficult to see in what way the taking of the census came to be a charge on the poor law. Nonetheless we find in 1821 :

	£.	s.	d.
Book for the population return	2.	6.	
Taking the population; 4 days @ 10/-	2.	0.	0.
Journey to Boston to carry it in	5.	0.	

and in 1831

Mr. Willoughby Fowler and John Evison for taking the population	3.	0.	0.
Journey to Boston to carry the schedule in	5.	0.	

Even some of the local costs of the General Election of 1832 were paid from the poor rate, as the following items reveal :

	£.	s.	d.
Election notices &c. 		1.	0.
Attending the office 		5.	0.
Schedules for the church door ..		2.	6.
The Freeholders' list signing ..		6.	0.
Journey to Boston, attending barristers with lists of voters and expenses thereon	10.	0.	
Paid Mr. Noble for printing 50 lists for voters 		12.	0.
Attendances, making out the lists &c.	1.	0.	0.

The Constables' account.

The Constables' account was a very light item. During the 19 years of the account, Martin Greenfield, wheelwright, was the constable who presented the accounts to the overseers, his assistant being John Evison, miller. In Wrangle, the office of Constable was still held in high esteem; in earlier times, the office had been by landowners and yeomen and it still retained some of its former lustre. Unfortunately, the accounts themselves have not been preserved but the totals recorded in the overseers' accounts reveal that law and order were maintained in Wrangle at an average cost of 15/- a week. As we should expect, when the overseers required the services of a constable, they paid for his loss of time and out of pocket expenses from their own account, but these items were very modest. It is a little surprising to find that on two occasions, constable's staffs at 6/- and pairs of handcuffs at 12/- were charged against the poor accounts and not included in the constables' own accounts.

Legal Charges.

Inevitably, amateurs who had to conduct so complicated a matter as the poor law often needed legal advice and from time to time the services of an attorney. The charges were heavy. In 1815, Mr. Thirkill of Boston was paid three accounts of £14.8.0., £10.14.0., and £6.6.0 - more than £30 from one small parish. Afterwards, the legal advisor was Mr. Hollway, whose charges for the next nine years were £10.16.8., £28.5.4., £25.2.11., £21.5.1., £5.16.0., £8.12.11., £4.5.8., £14.8.9., and £1.16.0. For the next eight years the overseers incurred no further expense but in 1833³/₄, expenses in law cases cost £15 and the Sessions bill £17.9.5¹/₂. Compared with these items, the pickings of the justices were very small though they took all that was allowed by law or custom. Each quarter they charged 2/- for signing the rate; for the first four years of signing the select vestry list they charged 1/- and thereafter 2/-; at the same time the charge for confirming the appointment of an overseer was raised from 2/- to 3/-. For signing the Lunatic return the charge was 3/- and for the Jury List 6/-. As the jurisdiction of the magistrates covered the hundreds of Skirbeck and Kirton, the appointment was by no means unprofitable. The Justice's clerk received 6/6 a year, raised to 8/- in 1821 for issuing the summons for audit and the actual work involved. For some parishes, this may have been hard-earned money, but in the case of Wrangle, his task was easy. The rough books of the overseers had been written out in the schoolmaster's clear,

neat writing and each page was accurately cast; moreover, the accounts had already been carefully scrutinised by members of the vestry, whose main interest had been to see that no unauthorised amounts were included.

The overseers.

The overseers themselves received nothing but £1.5.0 for the work involved in collecting the rates. They were, of course, entitled to out-of-pocket expenses for their journeys and an allowance for loss of earnings. Doubtless they contrived to transact private as well as public business on their many journeys to Boston but this was a very small reward for an arduous year. As for the poor, a study of the minute books together with the accounts gives the very firm impression that those who suffered from illness, bereavement, misfortune or calamity were treated with genuine sympathy and kindness but that the overseers set their faces against the idle and dissolute who had nothing to hope for beyond the bare minimum provided by the law.

8. THE BEDEHOUSE AND SCHOOL AT WRANGLE.

The foundation of the charity

Thomas Alenson, vicar of Wrangle and a celibate Roman Catholic priest, completed and signed his will on 1st August, 1555, during the brief reign of Philip and Mary. The will is a lengthy document, repetitive in its phraseology but very clear in intent. The testator devised the following property to endow a small lay religious community: ^{1.}

1. His house and outbuildings at Joy Hill in Wrangle.
2. Six separate pasture enclosures in Wrangle, amounting together to 18 acres 3 roods.
3. Five separate pasture enclosures in Leake, amounting together to 27 acres.

The purpose of the bequest was the "sustaining, relieving and maintaining" as "daily orators to Almighty God", three "honest, discreet and well-disposed poor men" and "two poor women". One of the poor men was always to be a man "learned that can read plainly and distinctly English and Latin" who would be schoolmaster for the two parishes. The testator's brother, Richard Alenson, was to be one of the first bedemen for life and he may well have been the first schoolmaster as he would certainly possess the necessary qualifications.

The income of the charity was to be the rents derived from the pasture closes, which were to be let on a yearly tenancy. The feoffees of the trust, with "full strength, power and authority" were to be the vicars of Wrangle and Leake, together with their

1. L.A.O. Wills, 1555. There is a copy in the church at Wrangle, which was printed in S. Lewin, Lincolnshire Churches, Boston, 1843.

respective churchwardens. The first charge on the funds was to be payment to the bede members, sixpence to every man and fivepence to every woman, to be disbursed at Wrangle Church every Sunday before 10 a.m. The next charge was that, at Christmas, each member was to receive an overgown, made with five yards of white woollen cloth at 1/- a yard and marked with a red cross. After these charges had been met, the remainder was to be divided into two "moieties", one going to the schoolmaster and the other to a variety of purposes - in charitable gifts to the poor people of Wrangle and Leake, for the repair of the "high path footway" between the churches of the two parishes, for funds to "repair, maintain, uphold and renew" the property and, finally, to provide three milch kine for the benefit and use of the bede members. The feoffees had the duty, in the event of the death, resignation or expulsion of any member, to make a replacement of the same sex within six days.

It must be emphasised that the thought uppermost in the mind of the testator was that there should be a daily volume of prayer to Almighty God for "all things that shall be to his divinely pleasure and beneficial to Christian souls and bodies". It was, therefore, no life of ease which was proposed for the bede members; indeed, if they carried out their duties faithfully, they would have little time left over for the ordinary affairs of life. The oratory at Joy Hill occupied a central, even focal position, separating the male from the female quarters. There at 6 o'clock every morning (an hour later in the winter months), they were to assemble and, kneeling together, read a sentence from holy

Scripture, and recite the general confession, the creed and various prayers. After breakfast, they were to repair to Wrangle and Leake churches on alternate mornings and there spend three hours "saying and oft repeating" the Lord's Prayer and a series of other prayers. The schoolmaster, who had other duties, was exempt from this exercise but at 1 p.m., presumably after a mid-day meal, all were again to assemble in the oratory to repeat the spiritual exercise of the early morning. While the schoolmaster was at his afternoon duties, the other four members were to return to church for further devotional exercises lasting two hours.

The schoolmaster, except on Sundays and Feast Days, when he was to accompany the other four members to church, was to "apply and endeavour himself to the utmost of his wit and power" to teach the reading of English and Latin to the children "and other persons" resident in Wrangle or Leake who should resort to him, "not requiring or demanding any more benefit or worldly profit for his pains". Although he was in a privileged position with regard to salary, the schoolmaster had just the same status and was subject to the same conditions as the other bede members. With them, he was to help in the repair and maintenance of the property; like them, he was liable to a fine of $\frac{1}{2}$ d. (to be devoted to the repair of the pathway) for absence, without due cause, from any of the services; like them also, he was liable to expulsion if he changed his "virtue into vice and ungodliness", persisting after the feoffees had given him "three several times, reasonable admonition and warning".

Two provisions of the will are worth noting, the first being that the feoffees were to grant priority to any person named Alenson who applied either for membership of the bede or to rent bede property; the second was that if any law or statute of the land should at any time prevent the will from continuing "in full force and effect", the property was to revert to the testator's next of kin. In point of fact, two of the schoolmasters appointed later were surnamed Alenson - indeed, of the second, Cornelius Margison Alenson, a mural in the church claims on his behalf that he was a lineal descendant of the celibate priest who founded the charity.¹ Of the second provision it merely needs to be stated that Thomas Alenson had lived through the religious changes of the reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI and Mary and realised how insecure a religious foundation could be,

Inevitable variations.

It is plain to those who can look back over 400 years that the charity could not long operate on the precise terms designed by the founder and that although there would continue to be a religious basis to the foundation - and until the present century the members received their payments in church after attending the Sunday morning service - it would undoubtedly become a general charity for the relief of poverty and that the link with the school would become more and more tenuous with the passage of time.

1. See Appendix 25.

From the time of the Elizabethan settlement, it was unlikely that there would be vicars in Wrangle and Leake who would enforce, or even permit, the type of devotional life devised by the founder. No doubt Thomas Alenson drew up his plan with piety and reverence to operate "as long as the world shall endure" but conditions were changing so rapidly that it was not long before the feoffees had to interpret the terms of the will in the light of those conditions. In particular, the supply of celibate or widower poor scholars willing to accept membership of the bede on the terms of the will was unlikely to continue for long and the feoffees would have to make the best bargain they could, bearing in mind the qualifications of the applicant and the benefits to be obtained from comparable posts. They were, however, in a strong position as the rise in rents of land meant that the 'moiety' for the schoolmaster compared very favourably with what could be obtained elsewhere and was sufficient to provide for a married man with a family.

The two fixed monetary items mentioned in the will inevitably lost in value. For the first 160 years the male members continued to receive 6d. a week and the female members 5d. Then, in 1705, another vicar, William Erskine, left a further 9 acres of land to augment the stipends to 1/- a week for men and women alike. With the passage of time, the advantage which accrued to the schoolmaster as rents and prices rose did not extend to the other members. The founder would more certainly have achieved his object if the stipends of the bede members had been settled as some part of the rents or had been varied according to the wage of a labourer. Similarly, it would have been better for

later members of the bede if Thomas Alenson had merely stipulated that they were to receive new woollen cloaks at Christmas. His very anxiety to ensure that they should be good ones defeated its purpose as he stipulated that each should consist of 5 yards of white woollen cloth "at 1/- a yard". The last occasion on which cloaks were presented was in 1674, by which time the cloth cost 1/8 a yard. For the next 8 years the feoffees conveniently forgot all about the cloaks but in 1683 occurs the item :

"Paid to the 5 poor people to buy gowns .. £1.5.0".

Gowns continued to be mentioned in this way until 1730 but thereafter the entry became, "Paid the 5 members at Xtmass as usual", while a century later it was merely "The Christmas gift to the Bede members".

One of the defects of the provisions of the will was the implied instruction to dispose completely of each year's income. The testator apparently did not foresee that the time would come when there would have to be major capital expenditure on the property and that the feoffees would lack the means to put the work in hand. In point of fact, the will is so vaguely worded that it would have been quite in order to set aside a sum annually for delapidations. However, the feoffees did not realise this until 1828, when £15 was deposited in Wainfleet Savings Bank to form a fund for the rebuilding of a house on bede property. Until this time, when a large capital outlay was required, a loan had been raised and the capital, with interest, repaid over a series of years.

Other minor points may be noted. Part of each year's "overplus"

was to be given "in charity unto poor people inhabiting in Wrangle and Leake" or used in "repairing the high path foot-way" between the two parish churches. Something may have been spent under these heads in the very early years but both were speedily forgotten as the feoffees rarely had any money to spare for such purposes. The poor of Wrangle and Leake soon had more certain sources of relief, not only by the operation of the Elizabethan Poor Law, but from the many testamentary benefactions of the 17th century. The highway became the responsibility of the surveyor¹. and the only pathway kept in order by the feoffees was the one leading from Joy Hill to the highway.

Administration of the bede.

Very little is known of the administration of the charity during the first 100 years. The record of the burials of the bede members in the registers of Wrangle and Leake shows that the charity was in full operation and it seems certain that Nicholas Francis, who was vicar of Wrangle from 1574 to 1624, would be as businesslike in bede affairs as he was in other matters. There is a record that Lawrence Chapman was schoolmaster in 1604.² and he may have been in office for some years previously. He was buried in Wrangle in 1617 and though his successor cannot be named with certainty, it is reasonable to surmise that it was John Goodrick who arrived in the parish soon after Chapman's death. He was continuously in the parish until 1652, when as a result of the legislation of "Barebones" parliament, he was elected 'register',

1. 2 & 3 Philip and Mary c.8.

2. L.R.S. The State of the Church. Vol 23. 1926, p 406.

his book being extremely well-kept. The next schoolmaster was certainly his son, George, who had succeeded him as 'register' in 1657. It seems likely that these two, father and son, continued in office during the Commonwealth period, though George was not officially appointed by vicars and churchwardens until 1661.

The feoffees had, at an early stage, decided that one of their number should be 'bursar', taking charge of the accounts and convening meetings. As churchwardens were in office for only two or three years, inevitably it was the vicars who acted as bursars and by the time of the first account book which has come down to us, covering the period 1671 to 1747, the custom had been established by which the vicars of Wrangle and Leake were bursars in alternate years. Fortunately, from our point of view, they used one end of their book for accounts and the other for recording election of members and important decisions.

Living quarters of the members.

Each of the ordinary members of the bede had a small apartment with a fireplace, though the charity made no provision for a supply of fuel, which many of the members were too old to gather and too poor to buy. The oratory was retained, and presumably, used, as in 1743 John Pickle made a gift of 25/- for its restoration. The school was a single room with one door opening on to the road and another to the schoolmaster's house. At first it was reed-thatched, earth-walled and brick-floored, with one window and a firegrate. The furniture consisted of one oak table with forms, a second table being purchased in 1695. We have to wait until the 19th century before we hear of expenditure on

books, writing materials or apparatus of any kind.

Originally, the schoolmaster's 'house' consisted of two rooms on the ground floor, one a sleeping room and the other a parlour. He had the use of two chambers or store rooms, one of which was over his sleeping room and part of the school and the other over the entry and dairy. A little garden adjoined the house, which, in effect, appears to have been a wing of the main building. The earlier schoolmasters were content with this accommodation but later there were considerable changes. Until 1725, the schoolmaster or his wife did the cooking in "an old Hovell near adjoyning to the dwelling house of the schoolmaster", an amenity which was shared with the other bede members. It seems extraordinary that the schoolmasters had to wait until 1832 before they had a kitchen of their own but in 1725 the feoffees were very proud of the new building which replaced the hovel, five of them signing a minute in which they did

"for themselves and their Successours, appoint, declare and enact that the said Back house is for the mutual Benefit & Use of all and Singular the present and future Members of the said Beadhouse for ever not only to bake in, but likewise if they shall now or at any time hereafter (with the consent of the feoffees for the time being) unanimously agree to Brew or make any other needful Use of the said Building, it may and shall and is hereby decreed to be so lawful."

The feoffees were optimistic in their estimate of the durability of this structure, which was timber framed, with earthen walls and a straw-thatched roof. Only the floor and a few courses supporting the timber

frame were of brick. In 1791, John Palmer, a labourer, was paid 3/- for taking it down. As there were substantial repairs to the dairy at the same time, it is presumed that it was converted into a kitchen.

Bede members.

The bede records, together with the parish registers, provide a complete list of the ordinary bede members from the end of the 16th century. At an early stage the feoffees had decided that, in fairness to both parishes, there should always be one man and one woman from each, replacements after a death, resignation or expulsion being of the same sex and parish. Some of the members were in residence for very lengthy periods: Ursula Claxon from 1669 to 1705; John Lion from 1658 to 1683 and then, after a short married life of 3 years, from 1686 until his death in 1701; Ward Snaith was a member from 1745 to 1790 and Rose Marginson from 1728 to 1761. On the other hand, some of the members were already old when admitted but residence at Joy Hill certainly did nothing to shorten their days. The list below, of Wrangle members, shows longevity beyond the average of the times.

<u>Member</u>	<u>Period of Residence</u>	<u>Age at death.</u>
John Kirby	1672 - 1701	74
John Fletcher	1714 - 1719	80
John Pickle	1719 - 1731	71
Ward Snaith	1745 - 1790	70
Edward Skinner	1790 - 1795	84
John Sleight	1802 - 1828	81
John Hoyles	1828 - 1840	80

<u>Member.</u>	<u>Period of Residence</u>	<u>Age at death.</u>
Ursula Claxon	1669 - 1705	at least 70
Abigail Beck	1714 - 1728	78
Rose Marginson	1728 - 1761	87
Mary Bridge	- 1789	90
Sarah Lidgett	1805 - 1812	85
Sarah Matson	1813 - 1829	75

Ostensibly, the feoffees paid great respect to "the will of the Founder", keeping a copy always in their possession, though it is doubtful whether they studied it very closely. However, in 1674 and again in 1726 they secured fresh copies from Lincoln, the second of which is still in the parish chest. Whenever a new member was admitted the conditions were stated as being "for and during such Time as he (she) shall continue Sole and lead his life according to the Direction of the Founder's Will". It is quite certain, however, that the directions, as given in the earlier part of this chapter, were neither followed nor even explained to the new members. It is perhaps for this reason that towards the end of the 18th century the formula was changed to, "and behave according to the Will of the Founder". The accounts indicate that the morning and afternoon attendances had been abandoned by 1671 as able-bodied bede members were regularly engaged in the work of hedging, ditching, gripping, fence-repairing and patching up the premises and it is reasonable to suppose that the feoffees allowed them to take any other employment they could find to eke out their small stipends.

As might be expected from mainly elderly people, selected for

their previous good behaviour, the bursar had very little trouble in their management, but what little there was has been recorded in the form of admonitions. In 1711 and again in 1712, Henry Pinchbeck was admonished for stealing fuel from a fellow member and for invading his apartment to sit by his fire. Of great interest because of its matter is another memorandum :

"Whereas John Toll having wilfully refused to deliver up his daughter to Christopher Jessop to whom she was put out by the Parish and kept her at his own Room in the Beadhouse where he is a member under the heavy Affliction of the small Pox to the very great Detriment of the School thereto belonging, It was thought proper and requisite by us the Feoffees of the said Beadhouse or Hospital according to the Directions of the Founder to give him this his First Admonition."

This is the only mention of smallpox in the parish records and the point about "great detriment to the school" could mean one of several things, the most likely being that the infection had already spread to the children or that school attendance was suspended for fear of such a spread. Four years later, Rose Marginson, over 70 at the time, received her first admonition "for wilfully harbouring a Woman of Ill Fame and after various Rebukes, suffering her to lodge with her". This completes the recorded list of admonitions, though there were other troubles and sad occasions such as that of 1819, when Letitia Burman, widow of a former schoolmaster, was "removed out of the Bede House into Leake Poor House on Account of Insanity".

The schoolmaster's salary.

Before turning from the ordinary members of the bede to the series of schoolmasters, it is perhaps as well to consider the emoluments of the appointment.

In common with other members, the schoolmaster was entitled to free accommodation and a share of the milk of the bedehouse cows and, in cash, sixpence a week until 1705 when the amount was increased to a shilling, five shillings at Christmas to buy a gown and a share, amounting to a maximum of five shillings, of the proceeds of the sale of the "aftergrass". Far more important, however, was his special position of receiving half the proceeds of the rents after the deduction of the necessary charges. The main part of the schoolmaster's salary varied, therefore, according to the value of the rents, the charges to be deducted and, to some extent, the method of accounting adopted by the bursar, as there were differing views as to what were charges.

Over the years, the amount received in rents varied tremendously. Before the Erskine gift of 1705, the variation was from £19.13.0. in 1674 to £26.4.0 in the years from 1698 to 1704. After that gift, the fluctuation was from £28.6.0 in 1711 to £36.14.0 in 1717 and several years following. Owing to inundations, this level was not maintained and by 1747 the rents had fallen to £32.4.0. Later, the increases were spectacular - to £48.8.0 in 1786, to £63.4.0 in 1800, to £142.5.0 in 1815 and £133.11.0 after a re-assessment of the parish in 1830. These increases and occasional downward fluctuations were all reflected in the schoolmaster's salary.

An uncovenanted additional bonus to the schoolmaster is worthy of note. The accounts for 1672 contain the item :

£. s. d.

"Allowed to the schoolmaster
for incouragement 00.04.00"

In 1674 he received 10s. under the same heading and in 1678, 15s. Thereafter, with exceptions noted later, he received something of this nature until the end of the 18th century.

It was a national event - the Glorious Revolution of 1688 - which led to the first big reduction in the schoolmaster's salary. In that year, the bursar was called upon to pay a tax of 18s. 8d. and a subsidy of 12s., while in 1690 he had to pay a further tax of £2. The only way the bursar could meet this unexpected expenditure was to cut down on "encouragement" paid to the schoolmaster. The year before the crisis, he had received £2.15.0 but the next year he had to be content with 5s. 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. Unfortunately for him, this was also a period of falling rents and his salary from all sources, which had reached a peak of £11.4.5 $\frac{1}{2}$ in 1682, was reduced to £7.6.6 $\frac{3}{4}$ in 1690. By 1722, the position was largely restored; in that year the schoolmaster's salary from all sources being £17.12.2 $\frac{1}{2}$, which, even with rising prices, meant that he was comfortably placed. Now, however, came a crisis much nearer home. During the next 12 years not only was the East Fen almost continuously flooded but so also was much of the pasture of the surrounding villages. During this period, the bursar's rents fell from £36.14.0 to £31.6.6. This was not his only trouble. The Boston

Court of Sewers, stirred into action by a petition of ten of the villages, undertook major drainage works, the bursar's share of the costs being £13.15.2 $\frac{1}{4}$. Again he was compelled to put a moratorium on payments for "encouragement" and this, together with the fall in rents, meant that in 1734, the schoolmaster received only £11.15.7 $\frac{1}{2}$, which was about $\frac{2}{3}$ of his salary of twelve years earlier. At this time, a labourer, fully employed, would earn £15.12.0 a year and a carpenter or bricklayer twice as much.

There were two factors which operated very much to the advantage of the schoolmasters of the 19th century. The first and most important was the very great increase in the yield from rents and the second, the interpretation placed by the feoffees on the Erskine will of 1705, the relevant passage of which reads as follows :

"Item. Nine acres of pasture which I purchased of John Fenby and Jane Burton, widow, and lying between the lands belonging to the Bedehouse so called in Wrangle and the lands of Samuel Woodcock on the south and the lands of Richard Fyrm and the said Samuel Woodcock on the north abutting upon a common lane called the Seadikes towards the west, I give and devise unto the before named John Wilby and his heirs for ever for the sole use and behoof of the present five members in the Bede House aforesaid and their successors for ever, for and towards the augmentation and making up their present weekly salary and stipends twelve pence apiece and further it is my will that the said nine acres of pasture last mentioned shall be forever set and let and the rents and profits thereof to the uses aforesaid by the present feoffees, trustees and governors of the said bedehouse and their successors in their said places and offices for ever." 1.

There is no preposition between the words 'stipends' and 'twelve pence' in the sixth line from the end so that it is not clear whether William Erskine intended that the stipends should be augmented 'to' or 'by' twelve pence. However, the matter was settled by the amount of rent obtained from the 9 acres, which was £7. The annual bill for stipends at the old rate was £6.1.4 and at 1s. a week per member it would be £13. The extra £7 was just enough to bridge the gap and so 1s. per member became the weekly stipend. At the time, this was a correct interpretation but as the yield increased, the second part, directing that "the rents and profits" should be "disposed of to the uses aforesaid" should have become operative. In the early 19th century, the land was letting at 40s. to 45 s. an acre, yielding some £20 a year but as the gift was administered as though it were part of the original charity, the benefit was shared between the general purposes of the feoffees and the schoolmaster. Again the intention of a testator was defeated by his stating of a specific figure. It would have been far better if he had merely stated that he wished the profits from his gift to be equally divided among the five members. This was certainly the interpretation placed on the will by the commissioner appointed in pursuance of the Act of 1837 and he ordered that, in future, a separate account must be kept of the Erskine bequest and that the profits should be so shared among the members.¹

It only needs to be added that the enhanced value of land at the turn of the 19th century worked greatly in the favour of the schoolmaster.

1. 5 & 6 William IV. c.71. Report of Commissioners, 32, Part iv, Lincolnshire, Wrangle. 1839.

His total salary, which in 1786 was £17.7.6¹/₄, rose to £28.17.0 in 1800, to £55.19.3¹/₂ in 1815 and to £68.15.0 in 1830.

The schoolmasters.

There is some information - though in some cases, only a little - of all the masters who served in the school from 1661. George Goodrick, the first of this line, was in office for 35 years when in 1696 he was "deprived of the said office by reason of several infirmities attending old age utterly disabling him from doing his duty any longer there". He died seven months later at the age of 68. He was twice married and in 1709 his surviving widow was admitted as a member of the bede, returning to Joy Hill for the remaining five years of her life.

The next master, from 1696 until his death in 1708, was Robert Simpson, at the time of his appointment a young bachelor from Frieston. He was by no means a "poor scholar" - in fact, in his will he described himself as a yeoman.¹ It is clear that he owned small parcels of land in Wrangle and Leake and that the purchase of a cottage with an acre of pasture and hemp ground had been a transaction with James Taylor, one of Wrangle's wealthiest yeomen who had held all the important parish offices and was a grand juryman.² Robert had fixed his affections on James Taylor's daughter, Anne, but for some reason James objected to the match and, as long as he was alive, managed to prevent it, though Anne was of age. He even carried his objection as far as his will,

1. L.A.O. Wills. 1708. 210.

2. L.A.O. Holland Quarter Sessions Records, 1683.

one of the terms of which ran as follows : 1.

"Item. I give unto my daughter Anne the sum of five pounds to be paid to her within two months next after my decease.
Item. I give unto my said daughter Anne forty pounds to be paid her within six months next after she shall marry unto any person excepting Robert Simpson, present Schoolmaster of Wrangle aforesaid, for my mind and will is that if my said daughter Anne shall marry unto the said Robert Simpson that then the forty pounds hereby given shall be and remain unto my executor and that she shall have no more than the said five pounds."

James Taylor was buried on 17th January, 1700, his personal estate amounting to over £320. It is clear that the rest of the family did not share his dislike as one of the appraisers was Robert Simpson. 2.
It is worth recording that Anne and Robert sacrificed the £40 and were married the following April. There were four children of the marriage, Anne, born in 1701 but surviving only a few days and then followed by in 1702, a second Anne in 1703 and Robert in 1704. The mother did not recover after this last birth and was buried six weeks later. Robert did not re-marry so that it is almost certain that with three children under the age of 4, he would need a housekeeper. How he conducted his school is not clear, but it is likely that there was some neglect, as, within a week of his own death three years later, the feoffees had appointed his successor, as they were bound to do under the terms of the Alenson will, and had drawn up stringent conditions.

1. L.A.O. Wills. 1700.164.
2. L.A.O. Inventories 194/89.

The remainder of the story as far as Robert Simpson is concerned is worth telling as it is illustrative of much of the domestic history of the period. By his will, he divided his real estate very fairly among his surviving children, directing that his personal estate should devolve on his "well-beloved friend, William Matson", together with the rents from his land, to pay for the bringing up and education of his children until they severally attained the age of 21.¹ The inventory of Robert Simpson's personal estate is unique among the Wrangle records in that it gives the actual prices paid for his goods at a sale.² Although some of his property went at absurdly low prices, the sale realised £70 and he had £30 out on loan. William Matson was, therefore, well supplied with funds for the discharge of his duties as foster parent. Unfortunately, he did not survive to see the children come to age, he and his wife Susanna being buried together on 13th January, 1717, leaving five children of their own, as well as Robert Simpson's three. Evely Simpson lived to enter her inheritance, though not to enjoy it for long, as she was buried in 1725 at the age of 23. There is no record of her brother and sister.

If Simpson had been negligent in his teaching duties, the feoffees were taking no chances with his successor, John Richardson, who was appointed on 12th August, 1708 and called upon to sign an agreement that his tenure was

"upon these conditions only (vizlt.) that I neither neglect giving attendance 8 hours on every Munday Tuesday, Wed:

1. L.A.O. Wills, 1708, 210.

2. L.A.O. Inventories 201/160.

& Fryday & 6 hours on every Thursday and 4 hours on every Satterday - except such days happen to be either Fasting or Festivall according to the usage of the Ch; of England by Law established or within the compass of the three most common vacations of the yeare (vizlt) - Christmas, Easter & Whitsunday in order to teach and instruct the Inhabitants young and old to read English and Latin & also such Children of Each Parish as are maintained by Charity to teach to write and understand the Common Rules of Arithmetic gratis nor Frequent Market, Tavern or Alehouse during the sd. hours of Schoolltime nor otherwise misbehave myself as unbecoming a good Christian and all and every of the beforemencioned condicions I Freely Submitt to, and them hereby promise to perform and keep to the utmost of my power and ability, upon paine of Expulsion, deprivation or other pecuniary punishment at the discretion of the Bursar for the time being to be inflicted and in confirmation of all wch. I subscribe my name the day and yeare above written."

This impressive document was witnessed by the vicars of Wrangle and Leake and three of the four churchwardens. Upon taking up his office, John Richardson found another injunction in force, though, as he survived only a year, it did not affect him :

"Feb. 5th 1708.

Memoranded that it was then decreed by the Feoffees that the three men in and of the Bedehouse or their Deputys Shall by turn according to seniority in their places provide a Bull for the Cows as often as they have need upon pain of two Shillings for every neglect.

Witness our hands

Jacob Conington, Vicar of Leake

Richard Bailye, Vicar of Wrangle."

This imposition upon the bedemen was quite irregular, though it is difficult to see what redress was open to them if it were enforced. Under the terms of the will, it was clearly the responsibility of the feoffees to provide cows which were in milk.

On 20th October, 1709, John Thornley, of Wainfleet All Saints, was appointed upon almost the same conditions as John Richardson, except that this time the reference to "Market, Tavern or Alehouse" was omitted. We learn very little about Thornley's eight years in the school, except that he tended and fenced "his little garden", that he was a useful 'odd-job' man and that he had the disagreeable duty of reading an expulsion order to one of the bedemen :

"Memoranded that on 3rd November, 1713 Hen: Pinchbeck read. for stealing wood and other misdemeanours his third and last admonition in writing audibly read to him by Mr. Thornley."

The miscreant did not, in fact, pay the penalty. He was too ill to be removed from the bedehouse and died there three months later.

In his will, Thornley described himself as "gentleman" and he certainly seems to have had some standing in his birthplace as he directed that he should be buried, "if it conveniently may be, within the Quire of William of Wainfleet, in the parish church of Wainfleet All Saints." ¹.

John Thornley was succeeded in office on 24th June, 1717 by William Spelkes, "late a teacher of children at Trusthorpe in the County of Lincoln, but indeed an Inhabitant last legally settled in

1. L.A.O. Wills 1718.1.114.

Mumby Chappel in the County aforesd", who was also required to sign a contractual undertaking upon appointment, the conditions of which were considerably more stringent, as may be seen from the concluding paragraph :

"I hereby faithfully & sincerely promis to quit possession of the said Beadhouse & relinquish all further right to any profitts thereof upon request or command of the Bursar thereof for the Time being if I the said William Spelke at any time hereafter shall become nonresident in and upon the said Beadhouse or contract matrimony or frequent Alehouse without leave and licence first had and obtained of and from the said Bursar or shall become notoriously immoral, or neglect teaching any person resorting as aforesaid or neglecting to imprint all Such twice every week in the Church Catechism or neglect bringing them duely to Church as often as a Bell shall be toll'd for such purpose or refuse to officiate for the Parish Clerk when absent or if, within three months after the date hereof, I do not bring or cause to be brought to the Churchwardens of Wrangle aforesd, a Certificate from the officers of Mumby Chappel aforesd. duely executed."

The signature of William Spelkes was witnessed by the full number of feoffees. Much of the agreement was strictly in accord with the will of the founder, though the items about deputising for the parish clerk and taking the whole school to church whenever the bell tolled were completely unwarranted. It would appear that the settlement provisions of the Poor Relief Act of 1662 were beginning to trouble the churchwardens of Wrangle, in whose parish William Spelkes would reside. In course of time, he would become legally settled in Wrangle and, if he then became a pauper, the parish would have to support him. As the school

operated for the joint benefit of Wrangle and Leake, it seemed only fair and right that the two parishes should share the risk. Accordingly, after witnessing the signature of William Spelkes, the feoffees, in their capacities as vicars and churchwardens, signed the following :

"Memoranded that we the said Feoffees for ourselves and successors do mutually promise to each other that if the said Mr.WM. Spelk hereafter become unable to teach schoole as aforesd by any manner of means, that the Parishioners of the two said parishes shall equally joyn at the charge of his maintenance. Witness our hands the day & year above menciond."

The occasion did not arise. Although, during his first year, he received the unusually large sum of £3.7.1 "for encouragement", bringing his total salary to £16.1.5 $\frac{1}{2}$, which was more than twice as much as George Goodrick had received 40 years earlier, William Spelkes steadfastly, refused to live in the schoolmaster's house. Accordingly, the annual meeting of the feoffees at the following Candlemas produced the following :

"Mem: Feb.2d.1718 that Willm.Spelks was then admonished a 1st Time for non-residence upon the Schole as Scholemaster - which he obstinately refused contrary to the Orders of the Founder."

It was pointless to wait for second and third admonitions and Spelkes just gave up the post. He may well have had considerable justification in taking his stand and refusing to live on the premises as the evidence is that both house and school were considerably in need of repair.

The feoffees were certainly stirred into activity, as the next year's accounts include the following items :

	£. s. d
"Pd. Jonathan Chantry for Lime and Work done by him at the Beedhouse	04.00.00
Pd. Ad: Waddingham for Wood and Work done there 24.2. together with 6d. for leading their hay & for a 7 foot Stoop & Mortissing & setting down, in all	04.08.00
Pd. Will Anton for thatching & Labourers work	00.12.06
Pd. George Edmunds for 8 days a labourer ..	00.08.00
Pd. Nath: Brotherton for New Glass & repaining the old	00.12.00
Pd. Mr. Metheringham for a Lock & Sneck for the Schooldoor	00.04.04
Pd. Mr. Jac: Conington for 5500 of Brick &c.	00.13.08
Pd. Jno. Lee for a days Labour & leading a 100 & $\frac{1}{2}$ of thatch for the Beadhouse	00.01.06
Pd. Will Elvidge for a Gate at the School & other Iron Work	00.09.00
Pd. Will Anton for Walling Earth making & rigging the Schoolhouse	00.03.00"

The plain meaning of all this is that the walls were crumbling, the roof was leaking, the windows were broken, the fireplace was useless and the premises could not be secured. It seems that William Spelkes did his successors a good turn by refusing to accept conditions as they were.

After his departure, the figure of Mr. Joseph Roebuck flits across the stage, the only reference to his tenure of office of less than a year, apart from the record of his burial on February 24th, being the following :

"Memorandum that Joseph Roebuck our late Schole master died Feb. 22d 1719/20 & Willm. Langhorn was admitted by Submission Bond dated April 15th 1720." ^{1.}

1. He witnessed - and probably wrote - two or three wills.

Mr. William Langhorne, who always signed his name with the final 'e' which everyone else omitted, was a man of resource, initiative and determination. His submission bond is not recorded but it is clear that, after looking at his house, he determined on extensive changes. In his first year we find in the accounts :

	£.	s.	d.
"Given the Schoolmaster towards the building of his new room"	02.15.	00.	$\frac{1}{2}$ "

and in the following year :

"Given the Schoolmaster in further Consideration of his Charge in Building his new Room & by way of Encouragement"	05.04.	10.	
--	--------	-----	--

In the three following years he received items of £3.6.1, £3.16.0 $\frac{1}{2}$ and £2 "for encouragement".

William Langhorne was an able and competent man but he was a stormy petrel and in his school, a martinet. Within two years he had received his first admonition, signed by all the feoffees :

"Feb. 12th 1721/2 Memorandum that William Langhorn, Schoolmaster, was then admonish'd a first time for not only being over rigorous to some of the Children coming to the said School but likewise being negligent in the Performance of his Duty in teaching the said Children."

He was a young, newly-married man and it is not difficult to imagine him neglecting his school during the building of his new room. No doubt the children thoroughly enjoyed themselves in his absence and paid a heavy price when he returned. For ten years there was calm, while meanwhile William had become the father of seven children, one son and six daughters - the son and two of the daughters dying in infancy.

Meanwhile, the accounts show him to have been a man of restless energy - renting land for grazing, making deals in hay, repairing the bedehouse, mending fences and taking journeys to Lincoln to transcribe the two wills. Doubtless there were many other activities, as the record includes only such items as were paid for by the bursar. But all was not well. The children were not being well taught and were still being unduly punished. The dissatisfaction of individual parents led to concerted action in the two parishes, which is revealed in the following memorandum :

"Lincoln, Wrangle. Feb. 2, 1731.

By virtue of a Petition this day humbly presented unto us the Trustees of the School & Beadhouse of Wrangle & Leake by Several Inhabitants of the said Parishes as by the said Petition may more fully appear wherein various Complaints Neglects and Abuses were made, Alleg'd & Prov'd against W.Langhorn present member & School-master of the said House, Wee therefore the said Trustees have judg'd it proper and necessary that the said W.Langhorn be admonish'd & we do hereby declare him actually admonish'd a second time the Day & Year first above written."

Unfortunately, the petition itself has not survived. The previous year, Langhorne had received £3.2.7½ over and above his salary, "towards Repair of his House and other necessaries". This year he received 10s., which was just the same as the other four members. In fairness to the bursar, it should be said that owing to inundations, he had received £3 less in rents. It may be that Langhorne turned bitter at what he considered a slight. Certain it is that he spread malicious rumours that Rev. Richard Bailey, vicar of Wrangle, who had been bursar continuously for

14 years while Leake was served by a curate, had been fraudulently converting the funds of the bedehouse to his own use. In 1731, the Rev. Skynner Bailey, nephew of the vicar of Wrangle, became vicar of Leake and it was not long before the ugly rumours reached his ears. Mr. Langhorne had not mended his ways as a schoolmaster and at the following Candlemas meeting, the full strength of the feoffees assembled to deal with him. It is clear that Langhorne maintained his charge against the vicar and the other five feoffees were put to the unwelcome trouble of enquiring into the matter. In the findings below, the word 'defence' has been substituted for the original word 'examination' in the third line from the end. All five signed the memorandum.

"Memorandum Feb. 8 1732.

That we whose names are hereunder written the present feoffees of the Beadhouse of Wrangle did assemble together & for all other neglects and abuses committed by Wm. Langhorn present Schoolmaster from Candlemass 1731 to 1732 but more especially amongst other gross faults for scandalously charging Ric: Baily, Clk. the present bursar with having been unfaithful in his Trust as Bursar in concealing 60 li. in his hands of wch upon his Defence he was found entirely innocent, do admonish the said Schoolmaster a 3rd time in congruity to the Founders will as witness our hands the Day & Year above written.

Skynner Baily, Vic. of Leake

Josh. Westland Thomas West (Leake)

Joseph Pearson Richard Watson (Wrangle)"

It is a matter for surprise that after so whole-hearted and unanimous a condemnation Langhorne was not immediately dismissed. It is true that his wife was pregnant with his eighth child, which was baptised on

9th August, but the birth was not imminent and it is unlikely that this consideration influenced the feoffees. Yet there was an interval of eleven months before Langhorne tendered his resignation. It is clear that his agreement did not follow the pattern of 1709, which spoke of expulsion and deprivation, but the milder version of 1717, in which William Spelkes promised "to quit possession of the said Bedehouse upon the request or command of the Burser thereof". The serious omission in the latter agreement is any mention of a period of time within which the quitting must take place. There may also have been a legal difficulty as to who was the owner of the room which Langhorne had been allowed and helped to build. Whatever the cause, it was not until the following January that Langhorne signed the following prepared statement, his bold, firm signature hinting at a final fling of defiance :

"William Langhorn's Resignation to the School &c. of Wrangle.

This may Certifie whom it may concern that I, Wm. Langhorn, member & Schoolmaster of the Beadhouse & School of Wrangle in the County of Lincoln for divers good reasons me thereunto moving have freely fully and absolutely quit claim to, given up resign'd and by these presents for ever freely, fully & absolutely quit claim to, give up & resign to Richd. Baily, Clk & present Burser of the said Beadhouse & John Wilby, Gent., junr. & the rest of the Feoffees all Right, Title, Privilege & Prerogative wch I, the said Wm. have or ever had to any of the Houses, Buildings, Gifts, Profits, Emoluments or Appurtenances whatsoever or wheresoever by any manner of means belonging or appertaining to the said Beadhouse or School of Wrangle aforesaid.

In confirmation of which I have hereunto set my hand this
Second day of January in the year of our Id. 1733.

Wm. Langhorne."

The signature was witnessed by Skinner Bailey and four churchwardens, three of whom were new appointments since the troubles of the previous year.

The only reasonable explanation of the delay, which is certainly hinted at in the resignation, is that Langhorne made his terms before tendering his resignation. Although he had received various items towards the cost of his room, he was himself considerably out of pocket and insisted on being re-imbursed before he resigned. Meanwhile, he was entitled to, and received, the stipend of his office. It is clear that the feoffees refused to pay him for his outlay and so the position dragged on, no doubt disastrously for the school, until a solution, satisfactory to both parties, was arrived at. Langhorne would get his money but the feoffees would not pay it - it would come from the salary of his successor who would enjoy the convenience of the new room. A month after the meeting at which the resignation was received came the annual Candlemas meeting, when the following statement was agreed upon :

"Memorandum further that upon Mr. Langhorn's Resignation of the School &c. as in his said Resignation is more particularly Specified: it was then agreed & determined by the Feoffees whose Names are hereunto Subscrib'd that the next successor shall allow the said Mr. Langhorn Twelve Pounds Ten shillings for the Expenses he has been at in erecting a new Room & other Conveniences in & belonging to the Dwelling House & Garden of the said Schoolmaster wch said Twelve Pounds 10s. we determine to be paid as follows viz. four pounds one moiety thereof at Candlemass next, four pounds another part thereof at Candlemass 1735 and the remainder £4.10s at Candlemass 1736 unless his Successour shall think fit to pay it Sooner or as Party and Party can agree."

The candidate for the vacancy was John Alenson, who, in addition to his submission, agreed to accept the terms outlined above, empowering the bursar to deduct the amounts named from his salary and pay them to Langhorne. William had, in fact, played his cards shrewdly. In addition to receiving these sums from his successor, he received a final cash payment of £4 from the bursar "upon his resignation", which could hardly have been paid willingly. He remained in the district, occasionally doing work of some kind for the bede. He duly received his payments at the times appointed, giving his final discharge in full at the Candlemas meeting of 1736.

In his 'submission', John Alenson described himself as "late a teacher of children at Conisby in the County of Lincoln but indeed an Inhabitant legally settled at Skipton in the County of York." He was, of course, required to obtain a certificate recognising his settlement from the officers of Skipton but there was an important modification in the agreement he signed in that he was not required to deputise for the parish clerk whenever the latter was absent but only "as Party and Party may agree", which was a considerable concession. For the first six years of his service, John Alenson was a bachelor but in 1739 he married the daughter of a local tailor and husbandman, Joyce Marginson, who by 1749 had borne him three sons and two daughters.

For ten years, all seems to have gone well with him. There is little or no information about the school in the account book, but Alenson was clearly part of the community, buying cows for the bede, carrying

out small deals in hay and thorns, taking a hand at mowing and dikeing and sometimes earning quite large sums for services of which we know nothing. Unfortunately, as the years pass, the account book becomes less and less informative. The first mention of receipts or acquittances occurs in 1688 but until 1712 there is always a statement as to the goods which have been bought or the work which has been done. Thereafter, it is no uncommon thing to find items such as "Paid Mr. Alenson, by Bill and Rect. £4.710". As this item came in 1744, we can only say that whatever it was, it was the equivalent of some four months' salary. His tenure of office was not without blemish. The parents of Wrangle and Leake appear to have laid some store by the education and treatment of their children, wishing them to learn without being too severely punished for their misdemeanours. Whatever happened in a village school soon became common knowledge and it is clear from the following entry that Alenson had considerably overstepped the mark of what could be tolerated.

"Memorandum Feb.2d 1743. Whereas various Complaints have been lately made to Richard Baily the present Burser & others of the present Feoffees of the Beadhouse of Wrangle & Leake against John Alenson the present Schoolmaster of the same for his neglect in teaching the Children of the said Parishes & particularly for his unkind and barbarous Usage of Several of the said Children to that Degree as to oblige their Parents to Send them to other Persons for better Instruction & milder Usage, For these and the like Abuses it was thought requisite to give him this his First Admonition for the same as Witness our hands."

The first account book ends four years later and there are no further entries relating to the school. It would appear that John Alenson was more diplomatic than his predecessor and continued to be in favour after his rebuke. There is a missing account book which covers the next forty years but the parish register shows that he was still in Wrangle in 1750 and it is almost certain that he remained in office until 1755.

The Bishop of Lincoln's register of licences to schoolmasters includes some extremely florid testimonials as to the character, orthodoxy, learning and experience of the teacher whose appointment is requested. Among them is one which is brief almost to the point of curtness:

"July 7th 1755.

We whose names are hereunder written having a right of Nominating and Appointing a master to Teach our Free School in the Parish of Wrangle Do hereby Nominate Martin Pinchbeck to Teach the same.

Witness our hands -

Richard Baily, Vicar

Skinner Baily, Vicar of Leak

John Wilby	}	Churchwardens
Richard Harwood		
Francis Atkin	}	Churchwardens"
Edward Francis		

1.

While this is an excellent document in that it shows that these free-born Englishmen are well aware of their rights and are determined to exercise

their authority without truckling and without interference, it is a pity that it does not tell us a little more about Martin Pinchbeck. As it is, all that is known about him is that at the time of his appointment he was about 35, that five months later he married Ann Nottingham, who was not a local girl, that his wife bore him a daughter in each of the following two years and that he died the next year. His widow resided in the parish until her own death 33 years later.

There follows a gap from 1758 to 1761 of which nothing is known. The parish register records that William Heaford, who was buried in 1807 at the age of 86 was "formerly schoolmaster" but if he did occupy the post during these years, he must have retired or have been dismissed at a comparatively early age. However, the schoolmaster in 1761 was certainly George Langley, whose submission to the terms of the Test Act is filed at Lincoln.¹ He held the post for 21 years until his death in 1782 at the age of 52. All that is known of him is that he married a widow, Ann Smith, in 1780, that a son was born in 1781, and that in 1782, which was one of the years of high mortality, all three died, the child being buried on 26th January, the wife on 8th February and George himself on 19th April.

Langley was almost certainly succeeded by William P. Burman, though there is no mention of him in any parish records until 1786, when he was one of the appraisers at an inventory valuation. As the second of the bede account books runs from 1786 to 1834, there is again more

1. L.A.O. Subs.Vlll/81, 1761.

certain information of its affairs. His salary in 1786 was still in the modest range of earlier times, the total from all sources being £17.7.6 $\frac{1}{4}$, of which £3.1.9 $\frac{1}{2}$ was an 'allowance', the word 'encouragement' being no longer used. It appears that it was still expected of the schoolmaster that he should take the cows to market when they were no longer in milk, as he is shown as handing over £4.3.6 for a cow sold. As his weekly income was only 6s.9d. a week, he was doubtless glad enough to make what extras he could. He died in 1787, the accounts for that year containing the item :

"Paid Mr. Burman & the Present Master £11.8.8 $\frac{3}{4}$ "

It seems likely that Burman died early in the year, as he received only 19s.7 $\frac{3}{4}$ as 'allowance', while his successor's share was £3.7.7 $\frac{1}{4}$.

The new master was John Slator, the most important of all the schoolmasters, who for 44 years, until his death on 5th August, 1831, both served the school well and provided an element of stability in a parish which was having its share of the upheavals of the times. Fortunately, there are many records of this period but if we had to rely only on entries in the parish register, we should form no very high opinion of him. They are just three :

"John Dickenson, illegitimate son of John Slator by Anne Dickenson, buried August 7th, 1799"

"John Slator, widower, married Mary Plant, spinster, 20th July, 1828."

"John Edward, son of John Slator and his wife Mary, baptised 7th December, 1828."

Whatever his sexual peccadilloes, he was a man of real worth, which was quickly recognised in the parish. His name

appears in several sections of this survey but it is not inappropriate at this point to give a summary of his many activities. He appears to have been vestry clerk from the time of his appointment as schoolmaster and much of our knowledge of local government in the parish at this time springs from the brief minutes which he kept. The surveyors of the highways and the overseers of the poor relied upon him almost completely for their book-keeping and it was he who prepared the rate book each year from 1794 to 1831. From 1798 until his death he was 'de facto' bursar of the bede. For some years he had kept the accounts for the vicars of Wrangle and Leake who were officially bursars, but from this date onwards the annual statement of accounts is headed, "The Trustees of Leake and Wrangle Bede in account with John Slator". At the time of enclosure in 1807, Slator was the scribe who did the day-to-day work of the official clerk and it is his records of ownership and occupancy, together with his six sketch maps of the parish, which make it possible to trace the changing conditions in the parish. He was the inevitable choice as scribe at the re-assessment of the parish in 1830. His dominance in the vestry is attested by a resolution of 1817 when he was appointed "a trustee ... to purchase, take and receive the Houses ... of the several Persons in this Parish requiring Relief, with authority to let unto the said several Persons ... their respective Houses ... at such Rents as the said John Slator shall agree with the said several Persons." The custom of appointing churchwardens for a period of two years from all adult males above the status of labourer had died out after 1750. Until 1818, the choice had fallen on the most substantial

men of the parish who served for lengthy periods. However, in view of all his other services to the parish, it comes as no surprise to find that John Slator was chosen in 1819 and that he was annually re-appointed until 1827. In a very real sense, the opportunity produced the man. In the absence of a resident Lord of the Manor, the Wilby family had been the dominant force in parish affairs from the time of the Restoration. However, the male line died out in 1798, leaving no obvious successors. By this time, John Slator had been in the parish for ten years and it was his ability and willingness to serve which made the village schoolmaster the most important figure in the parish for the next thirty years.

The last of the schoolmasters for consideration was Cornelius Margison Alenson, elected on 15th August, 1831, subject to 'his production of satisfactory testimonials from the Parishioners of Friskney, where he now resides'. Presumably these were satisfactory as his salary was paid from the day of John Slator's death. Slator had regularly ordered writing materials for the school but now came the first recorded purchase of books :

"Books for the school procured from the Society
for Promoting Christian Knowledge £3.0.0."

Slator had managed to get rid of the old oak tables and forms, the local carpenter making desks with seats and he had kept the school in good condition. Alenson, who had served in schools built much later than the bede, carried through a whole series of improvements, including an extra window for the schoolroom. Hard upon these improvements came the building of a kitchen for the headmaster's house. Alenson had

wasted no time in making his wishes known, as the building was completed within a year of his appointment. It must have been a substantial and commodious kitchen as the cost was £52.6.1 $\frac{1}{2}$ at a time when a whole cottage could be built for £60 or £70. Of course, the bursar had no funds in hand to meet the bill and there is a footnote to the accounts for the year :

"To meet these Expenses & leave a Balance in the hands of the Treasurer, it was resolved to borrow of Mr. Alenson £42 bearing interest at 4% per ann. from Oct.11 1832."

Alenson did not himself become bursar but he had most of the day-to-day administration in his hands. He attended to the tradespeople who did work for the bedehouse, paid the various rates as they fell due and each Sunday morning handed out to the other members of the bede the stipends due to them. The account book shows that in many cases he acted as banker for the bede, being reimbursed later by the bursar.

Report of the Charity Commissioner.

In 1839 the report of the commissioners appointed two years earlier to enquire into the operation of charities was published, giving us our first real insight into the conditions of the school. ^{1.}

The schoolroom had been re-built on its original site sixty years earlier, during the period covered by the lost account book. The indications are that, though it was better constructed, bricks and tiles replacing earth and thatch, it was substantially the same room. As far as curriculum was concerned, Latin had been discarded for a

1. 5 & 6 William IV. C71. Report of Commissioners, 1839, 32 Part Iv, Lincolnshire, Wrangle.

very long time, the feoffees having decided that as the foundation dated from Mary's reign, its original purpose "was merely to enable the children to respond in Latin to the priest". The subjects taught were arithmetic, mathematics and the various branches of English. Reading was taught without charge but for the other subjects, including writing, the fee was 8/- a quarter, with a further charge of 1/- a year for fuel. The master had a supply of books and stationery which he sold to the children as they needed them. The school hours and holidays were the same "as usually adopted in schools of this description", which means that the school day ran from about 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. with a break of about $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours at mid-day and there were from eight to ten weeks' holiday a year. Attendance was voluntary but the school served two parishes and the numbers were small - from 30 to 40 in the summer, when many of the older children were at work, and from 60 to 70 during the winter. Possibly the introduction of fees into this "free" school had limited the numbers. By this time the wealthier farmers were sending their sons to grammar schools and the bede school was no longer the school of the community, the commissioner remarking that "the children belong chiefly to the labouring agricultural class". The age range, from 3 to 12 or 13, must have made the task of teaching a very difficult one.

As the charges for tuition and fuel do not appear in the bede accounts, presumably they were the perquisite of the master who, however, was responsible for the heating of the school. As there is no note of ^{any} decision of the feoffees relating to fees, we have no

knowledge as to the length of time they had been in force but it seems that the feoffees were taking, or permitting the master to take, a narrowly exact interpretation of Thomas Alenson's will. It is true that the founder had stated that the schoolmaster was to teach "children and other persons to read English and Latin" without charge, but as Latin was no longer taught and the master was very well paid, the commissioner, James Sedgwick, was amply justified in making his recommendation :

"Taking into consideration the change of time and circumstances, the benefit derived by the master, and the progress of the public mind, I recommend that the master should instruct the children of the two parishes in reading, writing and arithmetic, without charge, requiring the parents to supply books and stationery, or otherwise provide the same at a moderate charge; to this the master and trustees readily acceded, and notice of the intended change will be forthwith given to the parishioners."

Estimates of the school's success.

In the widest sense, the success of a school cannot be measured, as its influence often reaches into many aspects of the adult life of its former pupils - but it is only one of many influences. On the narrower basis of literacy, it would certainly seem that the school had some success to its credit. This was predominantly an area of the small peasant farmer and, until 1750, it is likely that most of those who received any formal education at all, received it at the bede school. Until this time, the two parishes had the custom of changing their churchwardens, who automatically became feoffees of the bede, every

two or three years. Apart from the Wilbys, the Stephensons and such relatives of the clergy as served the office, all were yeomen, graziers, husbandmen, carpenters and the like. The names of more than 120 of them are recorded in the first account book which ran from 1671 to 1747. Of this number, all except 28 could write their names, only 8 of this number occurring after 1700. One further indication comes from the Marriage Register from 1754 onwards, when parties to a wedding and the witnesses were required to sign their names or make their marks. Among the native inhabitants there was a high percentage who were sufficiently literate to write their names. However, the best tribute to the school comes from the private papers of the Rev. Isaac Elsom, a Methodist minister whose mother attended the school at the time of the visit of the commissioner and for some years afterwards. After reviewing the careers of his mother and her numerous brothers and sisters, born between the years 1806 and 1837, he concludes :

"They have been a credit to their parents, their training and their native village. As far as I know, there has not been a profane or intemperate, or dishonest or lazy person among them. In addition to home influences they have had the advantage of a good elementary Church of England School under a good master and mistress, by whom the boys were grounded in reading, writing and arithmetic; and the girls, in addition, were taught plain sewing. The Bible was one of their chief lesson books." ¹.

No doubt this tribute contains elements of filial piety and family pride,

1. Rev. Isaac Elsom. The Elsoms of Lincolnshire, 1922. I am indebted to Miss Grace Elsom of Spalding for allowing me to take a copy of her father's MS.

though it is largely a factual statement. There can be no doubt that for four centuries after its foundation, the bede school exercised a civilising influence in an area where such influences were sorely needed. Wrangle has had good reason to be grateful to the Rev Thomas Alenson.

9. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGES 1600 - 1851.

1. Conditions from 1600 to 1660.

During these years the extent of the village would have been difficult for a stranger to delimit as its 70 to 80 houses were widely scattered over 4 square miles and it was contiguous with the two similar villages of Leake and Friskney. Even for the parishioners, "beating the bounds" or making "the perambulation" was essential to the establishment of the boundary. Of the houses within the parish, only two - the Manor House and Wrangle Hall - were large even by fenland standards; 14, including the vicarage, were of moderate size; while the remaining 60 or so, the homes of small-holders, craftsmen and labourers, were small by any standard.

As no house of the period is still standing, it is possible to speak of construction only from records. A terrier of 1605 describes the vicarage as "conteyning five small bayes whereof three of them are chambered over and all the house is covered with reed".¹ Although the walls are not mentioned, later evidence shows that they were of earth, as were those of all other houses with the possible exceptions of the Manor and the Hall. The records of the bede house show that regularly from 1672 different walls were "groundselled"² and re-built with earth. In earlier times, the timber framework had been constructed on the ground without any foundations but as bricks became

1. There were no gutters and downspouts. Shakespeare was thinking of such houses when he said of Gonzalo :

'His tears run down his beard, like winter's drops
From eaves of reeds'. The Tempest, Act V. Sc. 1.

2. The groundsell was the timber at ground level. As it rotted the wall above it crumbled.

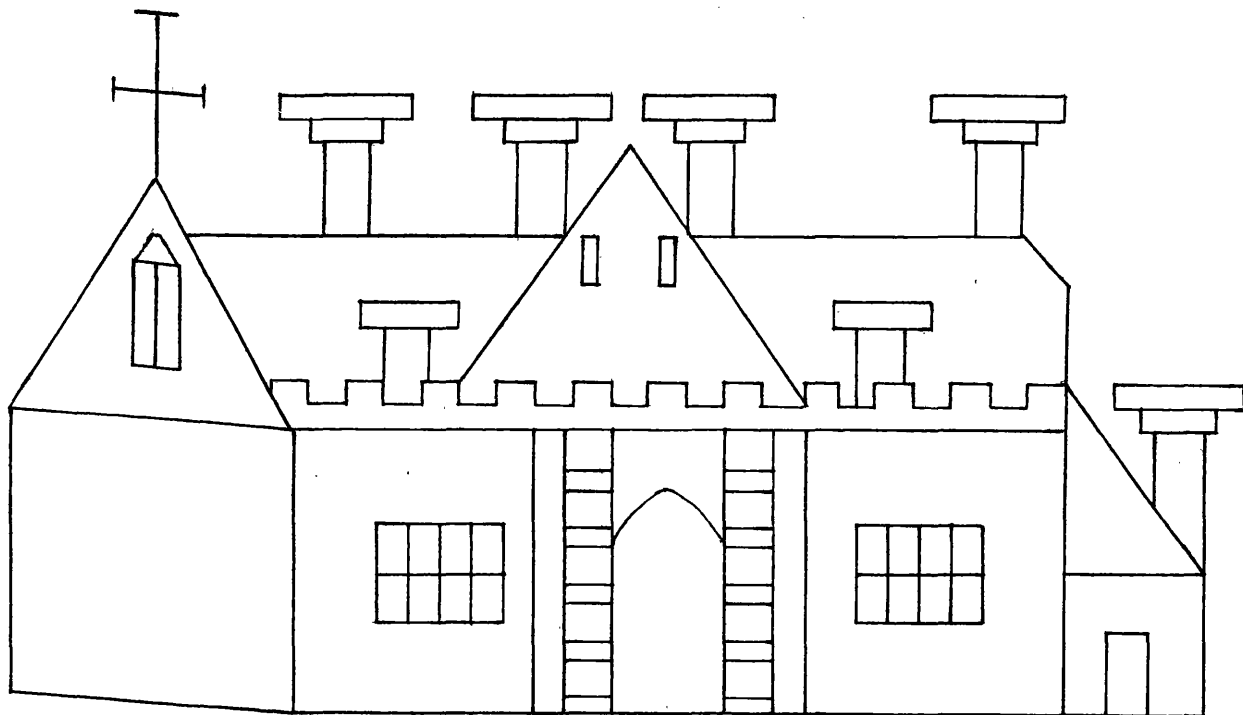
available it was usual to lay the groundsell on a few courses. ^{1.}

Floors were similar to walls in that they consisted of earth, puddled together with hair and straw, but it was common to include ox blood in the mixture as this made for a hard, shiny surface.

Wrangle Hall is the only house for which any drawing has survived, the reproduction on the following page, enlarged 16 times, giving an impression of its appearance. ^{2.} The colour and markings on the original suggest that the gable ends, the turret and the chimneys were of brick, the remaining walls of earth and that the roof was tiled. Sir John Read's inventory ^{3.} shows that the hall housed a fairly large community. In his own chamber was a four-poster bed, valued at £6.13.4d. while in one of the guest chambers, evidently reserved for distinguished visitors, was another valued at £15. The childrens' chamber contained 4 beds for the daughters still at home and a cradle, no longer required, was stored in the gate-house chamber. Rooms and beds were provided for a bailiff, three servingmen, a coachman and boy, three ploughmen, two dairymaids and six other women, presumably cooks and housemaids. After Sir John's death in 1626, Dame Anne continued to live at the hall but with a considerably reduced establishment. Neighbours were allowed to store their surplus furniture in its empty rooms.

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1. A terrier of 1708 describes the vicarage barn as "built on wood with a clay wall which is ground seald with brick".
 2. P.R.O. M.P.C. 81.
 3. L.A.O. Inventories 136/502.

WRANGLE HALL - 1606.



(Enlarged 16 times from drawing on MPC.81 in P.R.O.)

The Probate inventory of Sir John Read, 1626. (L.A.O. 136/502) lists the following rooms:

Ground floor: Hall, Dining Parlour, Low Parlour, Bailiff's Parlour, Plowmen's Parlour, Kitchen, Buttery, Larder, Brewhouse and Dairy.

First floor: Sir John's lodging, the chamber next to it, Great chamber over the Low Parlour, Children's chamber, Servingmen's chamber, Dairymaids' chamber, Chamber over kitchen, Chamber over dairy, Pastry chamber, Hemp chamber, Chamber by buttery.

Outbuildings: Gatehouse (containing barouche), with Parlour and Chamber.
Garner and chamber (malt, beans and barley).
Barns (unthreshed barley and wheat).

The inventories of Edward Aldie and Edward Gough, ^{1.} successive farmers of the royal manor, give a clear idea of the extent of the manor house. On the ground floor were the hall, dining parlour, parlour next the buttery, parlour by the chimney, west parlour, maids' parlour, kitchen, dairy, brew-house, buttery next the hall, the far butteries and the new house. Chambers were over the dining parlour, the west parlour, the kitchen and the new house and at the stair-head while there were also a cheese chamber and an apple chamber. The farmers of the manor had nothing like the extensive flocks of Sir John Read, apparently relying largely on the rents of land and profits from rights of fishing and turbary. However, like everyone else in the parish, they had to produce the bulk of their own food and reserved 77 acres of demesne land for their own arable and pasture. ^{2.}

The vicarage was rebuilt in brick in 1705 but as there are inventories of 1624, 1648, 1658 and 1671 ^{3.} relating to its previous condition, we have a clear picture of what it was like. On the ground floor were the hall, parlour (divided about 1650 into 'great' and 'small'), kitchen, dairy and buttery. Until the parlour was partitioned, both it and the hall were bedrooms but later the 'great' parlour became a sitting room. The three chambers were the study, the maid's bedroom and the "cheese" chamber, where much besides cheese was stored. As the best bed was invariably in the study, that is

1. L.A.O. Inventories 111/206a and 130/83.

2. P.R.O. D.L. 42/119

3. L.A.O. Inventories 128/316, 154/254, 160/254, 220/360.

probably where the vicar slept while his manservant almost certainly slept in the hall.

Some 13 other houses in the parish, the homes of gentlemen and yeomen, afforded similar accommodation, having 3 main rooms on the ground floor in addition to kitchen, dairy and brewhouse. Most of them were chambered over but the best bed was usually in the parlour on the ground floor.

Most of the inhabitants - the husbandmen, craftsmen and labourers - lived in much smaller houses. An analysis of the inventories, omitting obvious duplications, reveals the following :

Table 1. The small houses of Wrangle 1600 - 1660.

Single-roomed houses	13
Single-roomed house with back-end	1
Hall + parlour + one addition	16
Hall + parlour + two additions	9
Hall + parlour (or kitchen)	20
						—
						59
						—

The additions were usually a kitchen, a milkhouse or a buttery. In these smaller houses, chambering over had only just begun; 45 had no chambers, 13 had one and only 1 had two.

From highest to lowest, the furnishing of Wrangle homes was strictly utilitarian, the difference in contents being in quality and not nature. The bare essentials were cooking utensils, beds and receptacles for storage. In very many cases, when these items are subtracted from the list, little else is left.

Cooking was performed on an open fire with a spit for roasted joints and a gallows-tree with a hanging pot for stews. Most homes also had an array of iron or copper pots, pans and kettles and the wealthier always had a chafing-dish. The poorer families still had wooden trenchers but most of the table-ware was pewter. Earthen vessels were found only in the dairy. The wealthier inhabitants had some silver ware, mainly spoons, but even Sir John Read's collection, including a silver-gilt cup weighing 100 ounces, was worth only £25.

Every house had one or two tables with forms, stools and a few chairs but there was little else apart from trunks, boxes, hutches or arks for storage. The wealthier homes had livery cupboards but other cupboards mentioned were in the kitchen and were more commonly called dish-benches. Not a single house had an oil-lamp, candles being the only means of lighting in use. Three or four homes had wall-hangings of 'painted cloth' but there were no pictures, no ornaments and no clocks. Apart from the vicarage and manor house, the only floor covering before 1640 was Isabel Fynn's "little green rug", though small carpets to cover tables and chests were quite common. Books were rare, only the clergy and a few yeomen having any at all. The only mirrors in the village were at the hall, the manor house and the home of Anthony Hart, a well-to-do yeoman. Even the four vicars of the period managed to get along without one. No house had a bath specifically designed as such and the only close-stool was at the manor house. An item which stands quite alone is the "vyolyn or instrument of musick", valued at

6/8, the property of John Cock in 1631.

No military equipment is mentioned in Sir John Read's inventory but in 1603 Richard Gooderick kept his corselet, pike and gauntlets in the hall, while in 1611 Edward Aldie had his halberd "in the chamber next the kitchen" and his two corselets with their furniture in the barn. In 1622 Anthony Hart's caliver and horseman's pistol were at hand in the best parlour but his corselet was among the lumber "in the chamber over the hall". Apart from fowling pieces, the only other weapon mentioned was the "watching bill" (valued at 4d.) of Walter Cock in 1631.

Of the quality and nature of life, apart from work, evidence is scanty. Despite the condition of the roads in winter, the register gives definite information that the villagers managed to get to church for christenings and burials and from this it can be inferred that those who did not brew at home also managed to get to the ale house. Fishing and fowling were not sports but part of the very serious business of replenishing the larder. Families had to provide the bulk of their own food as there were no shops in Wrangle and while there were always farmers with surpluses, labourers had little money to spare for anything beyond the bare essentials. No doubt there were times of enjoyment but no traditional games, dances or sports have emanated from this part of the country.

One of the stiking things which even a casual reading of the inventories reveals is the chronic shortage of ready money in the village. Apart from Sir John Read who had £150 in the house and

Edward Gough who had £100, the remainder had very little. The table below shows the value placed by the appraisers on the money, purse and apparel of 94 deceased persons :

Table 2. Value of money, purse and apparel.

<u>Value</u>	<u>Number</u>
Below £1	45
Between £1 and £2	19
" £2 " £5	12
" £5 " £10	14
" £10 " £20	4

On the other hand, there were very few inventories or wills which did not list items, sometimes very small, which were owed by or to the testators.¹ Most of the debts were "with specialty" which meant that a bond existed for repayment at a stated date, this being a normal method of conducting business. Throughout the period there were wealthy yeomen who acted as local bankers, lending money to those of good repute who could offer security. Thus, in 1622 Anthony Hart had £170 out on loan to 22 borrowers, all of them local except "the King's Majesty" whose debt of £10 might well be classed as "desperate". In 1639 William Lawis had £122.16.8d. out "upon specialty" to 8 borrowers and £2.6.8d. "without specialty" to 2 others. Apparently it was easier for a man of substance to raise a large sum than it was for a poor man to raise a small one. Even if he had good security, he had difficulty in finding a lender. For this reason, by his will in 1624 Rev. Nicholas Francis left "five pounds to be lett out yearlie by the vicar and churchwardens of the parish to five of the poorest men of the

1. The office of 'The Visitation of the Sick' in the Prayer Book of 1662 contains the rubric, "...let him then be admonished to make his Will and to declare his Debts, what he oweth and what is owing unto him..."

parish entering into sufficient bond with sufficient sureties with them for payment thereof". The interest was to be 1/4 in the £1 to enable the 10 poorest people in the parish to receive a gift of 8d. on Good Friday. ¹.

The poverty of labourers and shortage of ready money with many others led to tremendous importance being attached to personal and domestic articles which would have to be bought if they could not be inherited. Shakespeare was uttering nothing but a well-understood commonplace when he mentioned "his youthful hose, well saved", for this was part of a prudent economy. Wills and inventories contain many records of beds, pots and pans, cupboards and dishshelves, jerkins, buskins, doublets, hats and shoes, and a wide range of female garments passed on to friends and relatives, not as mementoes but for their intrinsic worth. Such bequests were made by rich and poor alike. In 1621, the wealthy widower, Anthony Hart, left to his daughter Jane, "her mother's best hat, her taffety apron, her best smock, two of her best gorgietts, one stammel petticoate, a new violett savegard which her grandfather gave her mother, two gowns" and so on through items of furniture to "two pewter candlesticks and one bason".

One of the great difficulties of writing of this period is that of catching the authentic voice of the inhabitants. There were two occasions when this appears to be possible. The first was in 1610 when Robert Treswell made a survey of the manor when the jury of free

1. L.A.O. Wills 1624.70.

tenants, the "true and lawful men", spoke their minds with complete independence:

"To the tenth article we answer that ther is not neither hath ther been heretofore any enclosure or encroachments upon his majesties common or waste or in or upon any of his majesties grounds. But we say ther is a little common called the Old Hawes containing by estimacion 8 acres or thereabouts belonging to the town of Wrangle and that ther is belonging to the towns of Leake and Wrangle a certen common lying between two seadikes from a place called Downes Toft unto a certen place called Leakes Toft containing 12 acres or thereabouts and that ther are other commons belonging to the said towns of Wrangle and Leak called Gallows Marsh, Butts Marsh, the Floors and Firebeacon Marsh containing by estimacion forescore acres or thereabouts. And that ther are divers parcells of ground beneath the bank, to the number of 300 acres or thereabouts, not pasturable but marish ground belonging to the said towne of Wrangle as common, and that ther can be no reservacion of any of the said common unto his majesty by reason the said town of Wrangle is so sudjourned with many poore people. On which said commons belonging to Wrangle ther is two little cottages builded by two poor men called Robert Muggle and Richard Hobster for them and their families to inhabit, for which cottages they pay no rent neither are they able to pay any." ¹.

These "village Hampdens" won the day. They not only claimed these places as common but they and their successors continued to use them as such.

The second occasion bears on the sense of fair-dealing which was certainly the spirit of the community. In 1647 Nicholas Benn made his will by word of mouth before two witnesses. As he had no sons he left

his staff and articles of clothing to his friends. But he had two daughters, one by a previous wife and one by his present wife and to these he proposed to leave twelve pence apiece. His friends thought that this was fair enough for the younger girl, as she would inherit more from her mother but one of them, Reginall Waltham "tould him it was too little to give his own daughter (i.e. the elder) but twelve pence". However, Nicholas had thought the whole matter out: "and he answered Reginall againe his wife had brought him a good estate and that she had payd for him £25 or £23 which was his debts; for the rest of his means he said his wife was worthy to have it and soe did give her all the rest of his goods for he was sure he should not leave her halfe soe much as he had with her and he also desired that his owne daughter should have her dwelling in his owne house during her life and he said in case his wife should marry from it, if she stood need, that she should come peaceably to it again." ¹. Nicholas Benn, a poor labourer whose personal estate was worth only £10.17.4, showed so much forethought and fair-mindedness in what he had to say that Reginald Waltham had no answer.

Of the inevitable animosities, disputes and quarrels which are inescapable in village life there are faint echoes in a few of the wills but other evidence is lacking. Generally speaking, the picture which emerges from the scanty records is of an ordered and settled society in which the really important influence was what John Anthony called "the judgement of honest neighbours". ².

1. L.A.O. Wills 1647/8 249.

2. L.A.O. Wills 1704.2 167.

2. Conditions from 1660 to 1740.

Changes in country villages take place so slowly that only by looking at fairly lengthy periods can they be seen at all. The home, whose lack of amenities has been considered in an earlier chapter,¹ did, however, receive minor improvements. One of these was an increased use of brick in construction which must be attributed to an improved supply of small coal to fire the clamps. The bede-house floor was re-laid with earth for the last time in 1689. Thereafter, all parts of the premises were given brick floors and it is likely that the feoffees were only doing for the bede-house what they had already done for their own homes. Occasionally earth was still used to repair walls but brick was clearly the building material of the future.

It was during this period that the vicarage was completely rebuilt, a start being made during William Erskine's last illness. By his will he left all the materials, "as brick, loam, sand, timber, deal, wood, iron and reed for and towards the erecting of my vicarage house in Wrangle aforesaid upon the foundation by me already laid" to his successor, provided that his executors were not called upon to pay for delapidations.² His probate inventory lists the materials as follows:

	£.	s.	d.
200,000 of bricks or thereabouts	150.	0.	0.
10,000 of reed or thereabout	20.	0.	0.
Certain oak and fir timber, deals, doorsteads and window frames	130.	0.	0.

1. See Chap. 3 p.53.

2. L.A.O. Wills 1705.

3. L.A.O. Inventories 199/151.

Few inhabitants could rebuild on this scale but with bricks at 15/- per 1,000 (or 2/- per 100 for small quantities) it was cheaper to repair with brick than with earth.

Another improvement in the bede-house was the insertion of additional or larger window-frames. Throughout the period glaziers were resident either in Wrangle or Leake and, with a group of villages to serve, there was plenty of work for them.

The chief change inside the house was the addition of the oven though the older equipment of spits, gallowstrees and rackon hooks was by no means out-moded. The Hearth Tax return of 1671 shows that most of the houses - 48 out of 69 - still had only one hearth and only 10 had 3 or more.¹ The inventories indicate that obtaining fuel was an even greater problem than paying the tax.

Chambering over was practically completed in all but the smallest houses by 1740 and many of the chambers were no longer mere store-rooms as many of the best beds were now to be found in "the best chamber". In many inventories the word "hall" has been replaced by the term "keeping-room" and this room no longer contained a bed though the parlour still had one or two. It was the keeping room which revealed improving standards of comfort. In it were the best tables and chairs while dressers, cupboards and glass-cases were replacing the trunks and hutches of former times.

Improved lighting was rare. The inventories which have survived show that Robert Stephenson in 1673, Thomas Wainfleet in 1685 and Robert

1. P.R.O. E. 179 140/791 See appendix 26.

Simpson in 1708 had oil-lamps but all the rest of the inhabitants still used candles. However, mirrors were becoming quite common while a clock may have been a mark of affluence. The first owner of a clock was Rev. Henry Conington (1671) and during the next 50 years there were only 3 more, Francis Hinman (1695), John Stephenson (1700) and Anthony Hart (1712). Though they were fairly common later on, clocks were still precious possessions. In 1732 Robert Dodds gave his (overlooked by his appraisers) special mention in his will. He bequeathed it to his son but directed that "my wife shall keep my said clock whilst my son John either marries or goes to house-keeping". These were also the years when the warming-pan changed from a luxury to a necessity. In the earlier period they were mentioned only in the inventories of the wealthy - Anthony Hart (1621), Edward Gough (1625), Sir John Read (1626) and Richard Bailey (1648) but during this period practically every yeoman and husbandman had one. For the housewife, in addition to the oven there was the smoothing iron, first mentioned in the inventory of a widow, Margaret Kendall, in 1672 but thereafter becoming part of the normal equipment of the better-class home.

Of life as normally lived, the main evidence lies in the inventories, wills and parish register, with occasional side-lights from other records. Thus, when Valerius Ketton was admitted to the Bede in 1723, the condition was that he should lead a "decent, orderly, Christian life" which was the ideal, not only of the feoffees but of the whole parish. The

Quarter Sessions records of bastardy, assault and breaches of the peace reveal occasional lapses from that standard but their sparsity is ample evidence that many inhabitants were striving to attain it. By the same process of deduction, the only evidence (apart from the law relating to it) that the men of Wrangle carried out the duties of night-watch conscientiously is the single charge brought against William Horne in 1677 for failure to report. He is unlikely to have been summoned for a single lapse but the inference is that other parishioners performed their duties reasonably well.

Farming is tedious and often solitary work - which may well explain the drinking habits of the countryside. The ale-house was a social centre with a many-sided appeal.. Even to those whose visits were infrequent, weddings, christenings and burials provided a break from routine with an invariable adjournment from church to public house. Normally, executors provided the drinks at funerals but in 1673, Robert Stephenson, a jolly bachelor, was taking no risk that there should be any niggardliness. "My Will is that my executors should provide for my funeral one barrell of beare one kilderkin of ayle tenn dossen of white bread and tenn dossen of cakes at 1/6 and tenn dossen at 2/- per dossen and tenn dossen at 3/- per dossen." With 54 gallons of liquor to consume, the mourners could not have found the occasion entirely gloomy. No doubt there were many merry nights at The Angel and that the indulgent constables allowed matters to go a long way before a case was brought to court. However, in 1683 Peregrine Banister, the

licensee, was before the Court because "in his house they drank, tippled, quarrelled and fought for a long time continuing". Unfortunately, the charge but not the verdict is recorded.

The publican who succeeded Peregrine was John Snarth whose inventory of 1729 shows that he was a considerable farmer as well as an "ale-draper". He brewed his own beer and had an ample supply of malt and hops ready for the next brewing. His "cellar" consisted of 6 hogsheads and 5 half-hogsheads of beer and 6 hogsheads of ale - 783 gallons in all - which is more than many well-patronised houses of today carry. He also had a small supply of pipes and tobacco.

Pipes and tobacco are mentioned in no other inventory, presumably because clay pipes and tobacco were of little value. However, Richard Pearsall who was so poor that everything he had is included, is credited with a tobacco box in 1688 and there is reason to believe that smoking was quite common. The feoffees of the Bede, who were the vicars and churchwardens of Wrangle and Leake, met at The Angel every Candlemas to pass the previous year's accounts. A meal was provided which, from 1672 to 1674, they charged against their income. There was also an additional item, "To ale and tobacco then", which in those years cost 1/6, 2/3 and 3/4. After 1674 these costs were met by "earnests" or "entering pennies" and did not appear in the accounts but there is every reason to believe that "ale and tobacco then" continued.

Perhaps the greatest boon to the inhabitants of this period was John Hardy's shop which was opened about 1720. A village shop could not yet provide a good living and Hardy was also a grazier in a modest way. However, he had a fair range of commodities for sale. A

householder could buy pitch, tar, oil, nails, rushrope, saltpeter, powder and shot or a stove for his house and his wife could obtain supplies of soap, starch, earthenware, buckets, linen, pins, thread, laces and handkerchiefs, while consumables included cheese, currants, rice, French barley, green tea, sugar, salt, pepper and ginger. A shop is not merely a place where things are bought; it is a place where women can meet to exchange their news and gossip and, in this way, the first village shop was a landmark in parish history.

When we turn to the Quarter Sessions records we find among the less common cases those of Alfred Taylor (1673) who kept a servant without reporting the fact to the chief constable; John Emerson (1673) who slandered Thomas Bawtree, a drainage contractor, by saying that he "did offer workmen to sign him acquittances amounting to 40/- more than their wages came to"; William Walls (1674) for engrossing on a cow which he sold within 56 days of its purchase; John Goodbard (1677) for undertaking work for John Darby, gentleman, and refusing to complete it; Alfred Taylor (1685) for not repairing his fences and ditches fronting on the King's Highway; Francis Tinsley (1699) for breaching the common sewer and Elizabeth Oulsby (1712) and William Goodrick (1733) for selling ale without a licence. Some of these offences smack of an age which was passing but the prize must go to Hugh Torry and John Thorne of Leake, labourers, who were caught one dark night in 1733 "committing a nuisance by digging a pit in the common highway in Wrangle". It would be interesting to know the full story of this escapade.

Two points about wills are worth noticing. The first is that

by the end of this period they no longer begin with a profession of the Christian Faith and an expressed hope of immortality with sins forgiven. The second is that gifts to the poor from people of modest means die out during the period. There may be no connection whatever between these points. As for the very poor, there were now regular paupers in the parish whose needs could no longer be met by private charity. It seems certain that the overseers were calling for a regular poor rate and it was this which caused the drying up of the stream of benefactions.

3. Conditions from 1740 to 1851.

The major changes of these years - the upsurge of vitality, the population increase, the impact of Methodism, fen drainage, enclosure and the change from arable to pasture - have all been considered in other chapters. All that remains is to illustrate some of the effects and introduce other points which have not already been considered.

Map 2 in the appendix shows the sites of farms and houses built before and after 1808. The outburst of building after enclosure merely accelerated a process which had been going on for at least 60 years. The 90 to 100 houses of 1740 had increased to 141 by 1808 and to 222 by 1841. The census return ^{1.} of that year shows that there was no serious overcrowding, the average number of inhabitants per house being 5.1 : but if we exclude the vicarage, 18 large farms with labourers living in and 2 lodging houses, the figure is reduced to 4.7. A few homes contained large families of young children but they were exceptions - and very few houses contained more than one family.

1. P.R.O. H.O. 107/612.

Table 3. Inhabitants per house 1841.

Inhabitants	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Houses containing	4	26	33	42	35	20	15	18	4	2	1

Generally speaking, housing had kept pace with the increase in population.

The new cottages were no longer single-storeyed houses which could be chambered over but were built with two storeys. When Arthur Young was at Freiston in 1799, Mr. Linton showed him two pairs of cottages which he had built, one pair in mud and stud for £40 and the other in brick for £60.¹ Such cottages became the typical labourers' homes of the area. Meanwhile, chambering over in the older houses took on a more permanent form. The Bede accounts show that in 1799 a carpenter and his son were paid 3/- for a day's work in nailing down the loose planks of the chamber and, no doubt, the same thing happened at many other houses.

At the larger farms, as at the vicarage, there was need for improved or additional out-buildings. A terrier of 1771 showed the vicar's outbuildings as being a barn and a back-house. By 1845, the barn, no longer needed for tithes, had been converted into "a stable, wash-house, carriage-house and coal-house under the same roof, partly thatched and partly tiled" while there were also pig-styes, a tiled stable and a tiled cow-house. After enclosure the change over to arable farming led to a great increase in the number of barns of substantial structure, some of which are still standing. The specification for the Bede barn on the common has been preserved, showing that it was 24 feet long, 14 feet wide and 10 feet from the floor to the top of the side walls. It was

1. See Appendix 27.

built at a cost of £51.9s. and was typical of many of this period.^{1.}

Of the furnishing of homes the inventories are less informative - understandably so, as the value of the contents of the best-furnished homes was a very small proportion of the testator's estate. Thus, when John Lightfoot died in 1790 worth £1,062, his furniture and utensils were worth only £24.10s. while he had wool in the house valued at £111.15s. However, items mentioned include couches, chests of drawers, mahogany tables, tea-kettles, china and Delft ware which indicate a rising standard among the wealthy - and by 1819 even the poor house had bed mats and warming-pans.

Perhaps the greatest change in the parish followed the dying out of the male lines of the Baileys (1775) and the Wilbys (1798) - the last of the gentry to be resident in Wrangle. True, in 1783 Richard Bailey's nephew, Richard Wright, took the living - but he was the son of a Boston apothecary. He established himself firmly in time but meanwhile the vestry of tenant farmers, led by the schoolmaster, John Slator, had taken control of the parish. The vicar attended the meetings only when the business directly concerned the church.

Some of the problems which faced the vestry have already been considered but there were many others, one of which resulted from enclosure. In his memoirs, Rev. Joseph Gilbert stated that in addition to the common there had formerly been "lanes and occupation roads, then of great width and extent, which abounded in good, wholesome food for sheep, horses and cattle" and that small-holders "reaped no small

1. See appendix 28.

relief and comfort from this advantage".^{1.} At enclosure, some of these lanes were discontinued and the rest were narrowed to 20 or 30 feet. But the cottagers could not, or would not, change the habits of a lifetime and cluttered up the roads with their livestock. The vestry hoped that time would relieve the situation but by 1827 was forced to make strict regulations, excluding from road-side stocking the 57 inhabitants rated at more than £30 and imposing a sliding scale for the 106 rated at less. The regulations were evaded and two years later a meeting of parishioners was called "to take into consideration the impounding of stock off the roads and by what means the roads are to be cleared". A solution was found and the matter was not raised again until 1832 - but this time for a different reason. In 1830 there had been a downward re-assessment of the parish and many who had been previously excluded were now within the £30 limit. For the future, the upper limit was to be an assessment of £20. The minute also indicates the solution to the problem of clearance, naming pinders for the six areas of the parish.^{2.} It is worth noting that of the 16 parishioners who passed the regulations, 11 were well above the £30 limit, 1 was excluded by the reduction from £30 to £20, 2 were rated between £10 and £20 and 2 below £10.

For the very poorest inhabitants, the greatest blow came in the mid-century when the reaping machine was introduced. The trouble was the horse-rake. From time immemorial widows and others had replenished

1. P. Thompson, History of Boston, Boston, 1856, p.607.

2. See Appendix 29.

their stores of food by gleaning after harvest. Hitherto, farmers had accepted the spirit of the injunction of Leviticus 23. 22, "Thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleaning of thy harvest: thou shalt leave them unto the poor".¹ The new rule was that gleaners were not admitted to the field until the horse-rake had been round. The bitterness caused by the change has passed by oral tradition through three generations.

By the end of the 18th century the village had several shops where the whole range of household goods could be bought. The hazards of retail trade are illustrated by one local example. The apparently prosperous Ambrose Frow grazed 28 acres and kept the largest shop in the village. When he died in 1812, his friends, William Dixon and John Brown took an inventory of his goods, recording his assets as £674.16s. On this evidence the attorney, John Waite, informed the widow, Ann Frow, that it was in order to pay out a legacy of £15 to her married step-daughter, Ann Young, and to hand over a share of household goods. But the claims of wholesalers and suppliers then poured in and by April 1814 it was revealed that Ambrose's debts amounted to £1,187.0.9½ and Ann was summoned to appear before the Surrogate of the diocese to give an explanation. Not only were Ambrose's affairs in a state of chaos; Dixon and Brown were not 'sworn appraisers' when they took the

1. The Bede accounts show that the feoffees never used the profits of the "aftergrass" (the second crop after mowing) for their own purposes but always gave them to the members.

inventory and had made no enquiry as to the deceased's debts; and John Waite who had acted for the widow in 1812 was now acting for the creditors. Ann Frow, considerably younger than her departed husband, had escaped from her sorrows by marrying George Horton, a local builder, within ten weeks of the funeral and bore him seven children at intervals until 1829. It is unlikely that the creditors received more than 10/- in the £.

Of sports and pastimes the evidence is slight but a revealing gleam appeared in the 'Lincoln, Rutland and Stamford Mercury' on 31st January 1794 when a cock-fight was announced, to be held at the Angel Inn. This was to be no mere village matter but a rendez-vous for the nobility and gentry of the county though the outer fringe of spectators would be composed of locals. However, the point is that the Angel would not have been chosen for the main (the term 'cock-fight' was never used) unless the facilities were available and the sport traditional in the area. ¹.

Even at the end of the period, Wrangle was a remote village though, as earlier chapters have shown, movement of people in and out had been on a considerable scale for 250 years. Yet Wrangle never had a turnpike road nor had the children the joy of seeing a mail coach come swinging down the road to draw up at the Angel. For pleasure or business the wealthier inhabitants had their horses and, later, their ponies and traps. Poorer people could go by carrier to Boston from the end of

1. See appendix 30.

the 18th century but it is doubtful whether many did. John Gilbert who walked to Coningsby to hear a preacher and John West who, a century later, walked to Horncastle to see his brother were typical of their age.

However, a new age was dawning. In 1926, Frederick West, the youngest child of the John West just mentioned, died at Louth at the age of 89. His obituary notice contains the remark, "He could well remember, as a boy, climbing a haystack at Wrangle to watch the first railway train rumble its way across the Fens from Boston to Grimsby". This was just before the mid century.¹ Wrangle never had a station of its own but Old Leake and Eastville stations were within a mile of the parish boundary and it was a short haul to their sidings and a short walk to their platforms. From Boston to Grimsby there were connecting lines to nearly all parts of the Kingdom.

1. The line was opened in November, 1847 by the East Lincolnshire Railway Company which amalgamated with the Great Northern in the following year.

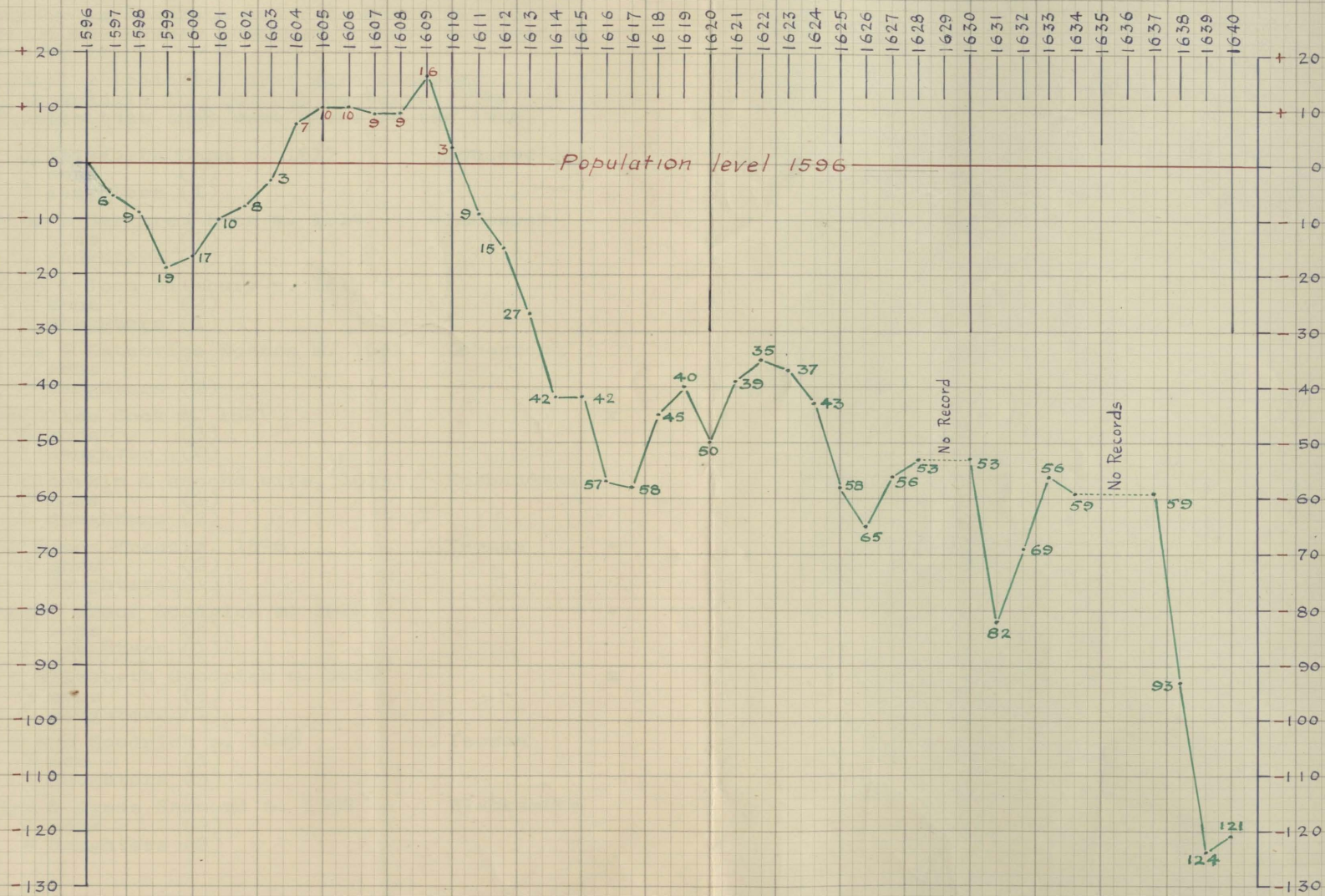
Appendix 1. Marriages, Baptisms and Burials in
Wrangle from Lady Day 1597 to Lady
Day 1641.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Marriages</u>	<u>Baptisms</u>	<u>Burials</u>	<u>Difference between</u> <u>Baptisms & Burials</u>			
				<u>Annual</u>		<u>Cumulative</u>	
				<u>+</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>+</u>	<u>-</u>
1597	2	13	19		6		6
1598	8	18	21		3		9
1599	4	16	26		10		19
1600	6	13	11	2			17
1601	2	17	10	7			10
1602	3	10	8	2			8
1603	3	21	16	5			3
1604	10	25	15	10		7	
1605	6	20	17	3		10	
1606	6	21	21	0		10	
1607	3	18	19		1	9	
1608	10	22	22	0		9	
1609	3	27	20	7		16	
1610	3	19	32		13	3	
1611	10	13	25		12		9
1612	5	9	15		6		15
1613	9	12	24		12		27
1614	5	15	30		15		42
1615	6	18	18		0		42
1616	4	17	32		15		57
1617	8	17	18		1		58
1618	9	23	10	13			45
1619	6	20	15	5			40
1620	4	16	26		10		50
1621	11	26	15	11			39
1622	7	21	17	4			35
1623	2	18	20		2		37
1624	6	19	25		6		43
1625	7	14	29		15		58
1626	12	16	23		7		65
1627	8	19	10	9			56
1628	5	24	21	3			53
1629	----	no records	----				
1630	8	21	21	0			53
1631	10	11	40		29		82
1632	10	25	12	13			69
1633	4	25	12	13			56
1634	3	15	18		3		59
1635/7	----	no records	----				
1638	7	20	54		34		93
1639	9	11	42		31		124
1640	12	17	14	3			121
Total				Average			
" Baptisms				722		18.05	
" Burials				843		21.08	
" Marriages				258		6.45	

Appendix 1.

Cumulative differences in the numbers
of baptisms and burials recorded in
Wrangle from Lady Day 1597 to
Lady Day 1641.

Appendix 1 Cumulative differences in the numbers of baptisms and burials recorded in Wrangle from Lady Day 1597 to Lady Day 1641.



Appendix 2. Wrangle families of more than 5
children 1597 - 1641.

The date of marriage is given where known. In other cases the date relates to the birth of the first child.

The number in brackets after sons and daughters indicates the number presumed to have survived to the age of 10.

The symbol x indicates that male descendants were still in Wrangle in the 18th century. The symbol + indicates that they were there in the 19th.

Peter & Elizabeth Benn m. 1617	Householder	
5 sons (0)		
2 daughters (1)		
Nicholas & Margaret Benn m. 1614	Labourer	
2 sons (1)		
4 daughters (2)		
Nicholas & Joan Blisbury m. 1619		
2 sons (2)		
3 daughters (1)		
Nicholas & Katherine Boston m. 1631	Labourer	
2 sons (0)		
3 daughters (2)		
John & Ellen Cock m. 1621		x
5 sons (3)		
1 daughter (0)		
Henry Elderkin & second wife. 1613	Husbandman	
3 sons (2)		
2 daughters (2)		
John & Agnes Francis. 1596	Yeoman	+
4 sons (2)		
2 daughters (1)		
William & Grace Goodrick m. 1622		+
4 sons (4)		
2 daughters (1)		
John & Elizabeth Goodrick m. 1627		x
3 sons (3)		
2 daughters (1)		
John & Ann Goodrick m. 1603	Yeoman	
1 son (1)		
4 daughters (3)		
William & Agnes Hammond m. 1598	Blacksmith	
4 sons (2)		
4 daughters (2)		

Nicholas & Susan Harrison. 1596	Labourer	
5 sons (2)		
5 daughters (2)		
Thomas & Isabel Hastler m. 1606		
1 son (0)		
4 daughters (2)		
Anthony & Ann Hart. 1600	Yeoman	
2 sons (0)		
5 daughters (2)		
William & Elizabeth Hart. 1624	Yeoman	+
4 sons (3)		
1 daughter (1)		
Robert & Amie Hill. 1600	Husbandman	+
6 sons (2)		
Anthony & Elizabeth Knipe m. 1625		
4 sons (2)		
2 daughters (0)		
William & Anne Lawis. 1621	Yeoman	+
3 sons (3)		
3 daughters (3)		
Matthew & Bridget Marshall m. 1605		
4 sons (1)		
6 daughters (3)		
George & Elizabeth Parker. 1617		
4 sons (3)		
4 daughters (3)		
Thomas & Jane Pickering m. 1608	Yeoman	
3 sons (1)		
4 daughters (3)		
Edward & Ann Pickle m. 1623	Husbandman	
1 son (1)		
5 daughters (2)		
Peter & Joan Pishey m. 1609	Yeoman	
3 sons (1)		
4 daughters (2)		
John & Mary Ranyard. 1605	Yeoman	
3 sons (0)		
4 daughters (2)		
William & Elizabeth Richardson m. 1603		
4 sons (3)		
2 daughters (1)		
Thomas & Katherine Richardson. 1616	Labourer	
2 sons (0)		
3 daughters (1)		

John & Alice Scholer m. 1617	Labourer
4 sons (0)	
2 daughters (2)	
John & Elizabeth Scupholme m. 1612	
3 sons (2)	
4 daughters (2)	
Valentine & Marie Smith m. 1616	
3 sons (3)	
5 daughters (2)	
Richard & Elizabeth Smith. 1619	
2 sons (1)	
3 daughters (1)	
Richard Taylor and wife. 1611	Labourer
4 sons (4)	
2 daughters (1)	
Thomas & Mary Ward. 1602	Yeoman
3 sons (2)	
3 daughters (3)	
John & Elizabeth Watson m. 1601	Labourer
2 sons (0)	
7 daughters (3)	
Samuel & Mildred Watson m. 1613	
4 sons (1)	
3 daughters (2)	
William & Isabel Wilson. 1621	Labourer
4 sons (0)	
4 daughters (1)	
Thomas & Isabel Wright m. 1615	
1 son (0)	
4 daughters (3)	

Appendix 3. Men of Wealth in Wrangle 1600 - 1650.

Only 5 of the wealthiest men of this period left male issue in Wrangle whose names occur in the registers after the Restoration. In only 3 cases was there male issue in Wrangle in the first quarter of the 18th century. Thereafter there was none.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Estate</u> (nearest £.)	<u>Year of</u> <u>death</u>	<u>Last mention</u> <u>of male</u> <u>issue</u>
Sir John Read, Kt.	1,188	1626	
Edward Gough (Manor farmer)	612	1625	
Anthony Hart	525	1621	1725
William Lawis	516	1639	1708
Edward Aldie (Manor farmer)	507	1611	
Martin Brooks	471	1640	1715
Nicholas Francis (Vicar)	283	1624	
Richard Marsh	268	1647	
Walter Hobster	256	1639	
John Ranson	203	1643	
Francis Gough	200	1614	
Simon Chamberlain	189	1640	
Richard Mareholme	183	1650	1679
John Ranyard	172	1638	
John Anthony	153	1604	
Thomas Pickering	144	1628	1666
Richard Benn	140	1617	
Roger Julyan	133	1616	
Samuel Oresby	111	1629	
Richard Baily (Vicar)	104	1648	

Appendix 4. Parishioners active in local
administration 1597 - 1650.

The parish offices were those of churchwarden, overseer of the poor, surveyor of the highways, dikereeve and constable. Later practice indicates that a man selected as churchwarden had usually served in some of the other offices. Though the only complete list available is that of churchwardens, it includes the majority of those who were active in local administration.

An important function was that of acting as appraiser at the valuation of the estates of deceased persons. The number of known appearances of each parishioner in this capacity is indicated.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Quality where known</u>	<u>Service as churchwarden</u>	<u>Number of valuations</u>
Benn, Peter (1)	Yeoman	1602-4,1607-8	1
Benn, Richard	Yeoman	1611-12	6
Benn, Peter (2)		1625-26,1635-36	10
Blinkhorn, George		1617-18	2
Brookes, Martin	Yeoman	1616-17,1627-28	15
Brookes, John		1642-43	1
Carden, Thomas	Yeoman	1621-22,1629-30	6
Carden, John	Yeoman	1635-36	2
Chamberlain, Simon	Gent.	1627-28	6
Clark, Robert		1606-7	-
Dandison, Nicholas		1606-7	2
Fell, John		1620-21	-
Gell, Thomas		1604-5	3
Goodrick, Richard	Yeoman	1598-99,1599-1601	-
Goodrick, John	Yeoman	1605-6,1613-14, 1619-20	13
Goodrick, William	Householder	1622-23	2
Gooderson, James		1605-6	1
Gough, Edward	Gent.	1596-98,1612-13 1618-19,1624-25	1
Grimscoft, William		12

<u>Name</u>	<u>Quality where known</u>	<u>Service as churchwarden</u>	<u>Number of valuations</u>
Hart, Anthony	Yeoman	1604-5,1616-17	6
Hart, William (1)	Gent.	1609-10,1613-14	4
Hart, William (2)	Gent.	1624-25,1633-34	7
Hill, John		1609-10	-
Hill, Robert	Husbandman	1642-43	3
Hinman, Francis		1632-33	3
Hobster, Walter	Yeoman	1608-9,1631-32	1
Hobster, Richard		1619-20	3
Holland, Thomas		1628-29	-
Hynd, Thomas		1612-13,1628-29	2
Johnson, Thomas		1621-22,1640-41	2
Lawis, William	Yeoman	1626-27	6
Mareholm, William	Yeoman	6
Mareholm, Richard		5
Mawson, William		1625-26	-
Orkin, Robert		1622-23	2
Parker, John	Householder	1602-4	8
Partridge, Anthony		1634-35	6
Pickering, Thomas	Yeoman	1617-18	6
Pickle, John	Husbandman	1633-34	-
Ranson, John	Yeoman	1628-29,1639-40	4
Ranyard, John	Yeoman	1608-9,1614-15, 1620-21,1623-24	19
Richardson, William		1600-1,1607-8, 1615-16,1623-24	5
Sallet, John	Yeoman	1596-98	1
Tompson, Thomas		1629-30	2
Turpin, Simon		1601-2, 1610-11	1
Ward, Thomas	Yeoman	1601-2,1610-11, 1618-19	4
Ward, Anthony		1632-3	-
Watson, Abraham		8
Wheeler, Francis	Yeoman	1638-39	3
Willdye, Francis	Gent.	1615-16	3

Appendix 5. Age at death of children baptised
in Wrangle 1653 - 1753.

1. The total number baptised was 1,857. This number falls into 3 categories:
 - (a) In 1,104 cases the age at death is known as subsequent death is recorded. These cases are given in column 2 below.
 - (b) In 615 cases the date of burial is not known but an age at which each person was still alive, e.g. by a date of marriage, has been calculated. Probable further survival has been determined on the basis of column 1 and the figures interpolated in column 3(a).
 - (c) In 138 cases the date of death is not known nor any date of earlier survival. They have been distributed in the same proportions as the totals given in columns 2 and 3(a). Their inclusion does not, therefore, affect the rate per 1,000.
2. This table has been used in calculating the expectation of life of children born during this period.

1.	2.	3.-----		4.-----	5.	6.
Age at death. (Years)	Buried in Wrangle	Buried elsewhere (a)	(b)	Total of cols. 2. 3(a) & 3(b)	Rate per 1000	Cumulative rate per 1000
Below 1	442	-	55	497	268	268
1 - 5	196	11	25	232	125	393
5 - 10	88	29	11	128	69	462
10 - 20	104	135	14	253	136	598
20 - 30	75	110	9	194	104	702
30 - 40	61	96	7	164	88	790
40 - 50	46	77	6	129	70	860
50 - 60	39	66	5	110	59	919
60 - 70	26	45	3	74	40	959
Over 70	27	46	3	76	41	1000
Totals	1,104	615	138	1,857	1,000	-

Appendix 6. Diagram 1.

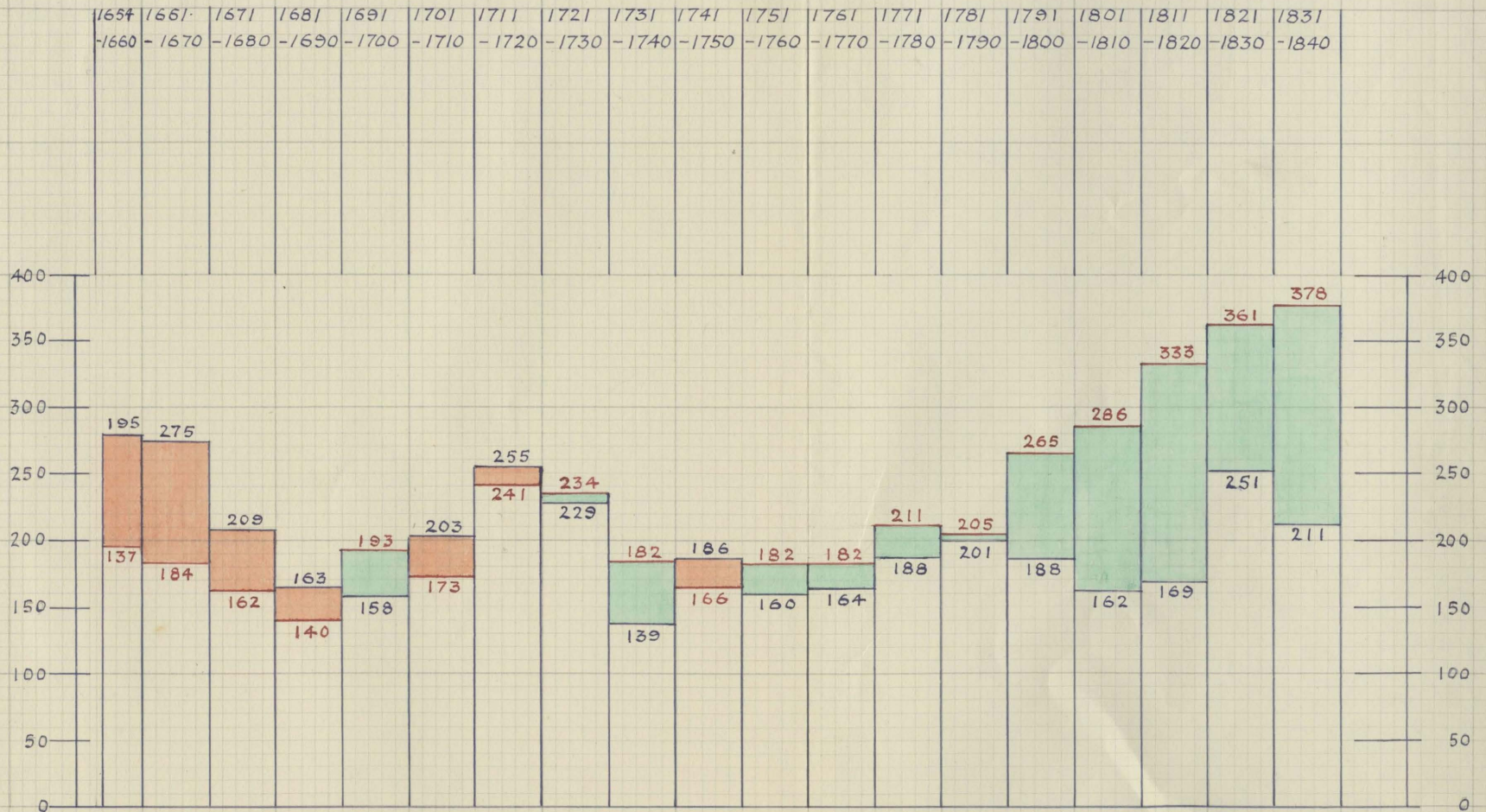
Baptisms and burials recorded
in Wrangle, 1654 - 1840,
in 10-year periods.

Baptisms and burials in Wrangle 1654-1840 in 10-year periods.

Excess of baptisms over burials.

Excess of burials over baptisms.

Figures relating to baptisms in *red*; to burials in black.



Appendix 6. Diagram 2.

Cumulative differences in the numbers
of baptisms and burials recorded in
Wrangle 1654 - 1840, summed in
10-year periods.

+550-

+500-

+450-

+400-

+350-

+300-

+250-

+200-

+150-

+100-

+ 50-

0-

- 50-

-100-

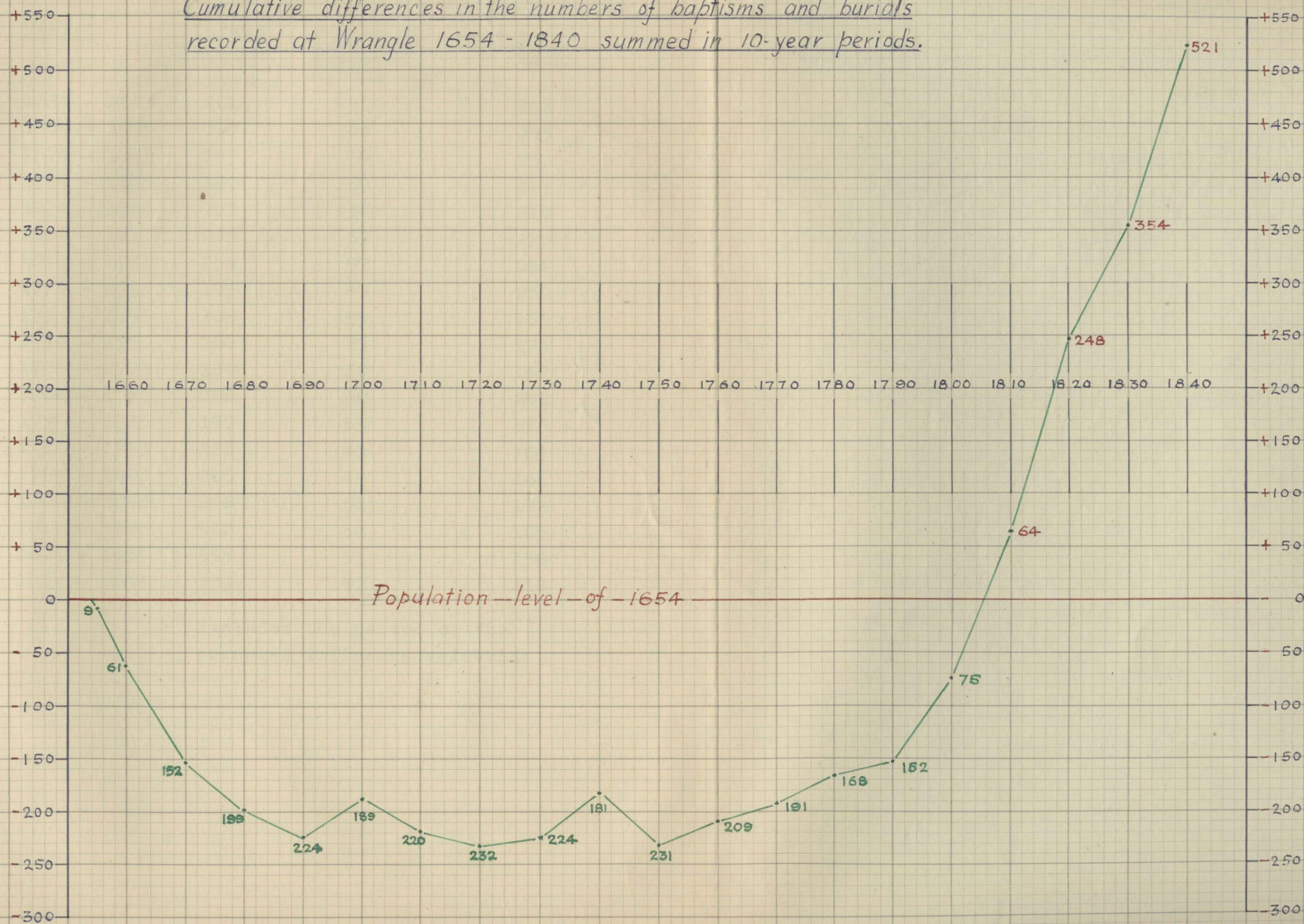
-150-

-200-

-250-

-300-

Cumulative differences in the numbers of baptisms and burials
recorded at Wrangle 1654 - 1840 summed in 10-year periods.



Appendix 7. Infantile mortality rates in Wrangle
in 10-year periods from 1654 to 1844.

<u>Period</u>	<u>Infant</u> <u>Baptisms</u>	<u>Deaths of</u> <u>children</u> <u>below 1 yr.</u>	<u>Rate per 1,000</u> <u>births</u>
1654 - 1663	201	52	258
1664 - 1673	167	44	265
1674 - 1683	153	39	253
1684 - 1693	160	39	243
1694 - 1703	172	36	210
1704 - 1713	205	57	278
1714 - 1723	254	67	264
1724 - 1733	195	49	250
1734 - 1743	182	30	165
1744 - 1753	166	29	175
1754 - 1763	180	30	167
1764 - 1773	206	50	242
1774 - 1783	197	63	318 +
1784 - 1793	223	41	184
1794 - 1803	265	44	166
1804 - 1813	296	51	172
1814 - 1823	362	38	105
1824 - 1833	353	55	156
1834 - 1843	399	47	118

+ Includes the period of the
presumed influenza epidemic.

Appendix 8. Families of 8 or more children by one mother 1654 - 1849.

Married persons, with style or occupation of husband, if known.	Year of marriage	Number of children	Year of first and last child
Robert & Frances Stephenson - Gentleman	----	8	1654 - 1666
Anthony & Mary Hart - Gentleman	----	8	1654 - 1667
Thomas & Ann Swift	1655	8	1656 - 1669
Edward & Mary Pickett - Householder	1657	9	1657 - 1675
John & Mary Moody - Weaver	1672	12	1672 - 1688
John & Mary Wilby - Gentleman	----	12	1672 - 1691
William & Abigail Beck - Bellman	1673	9	1673 - 1691
John & Ruth Goodbarn - Labourer	1674	8	1674 - 1688
John & Elizabeth Marginson - Householder	----	8	1682 - 1696
John & Sarah Robins - Yeoman	----	9	1687 - 1700
John & Mary Wharton - Labourer	----	8	1690 - 1704
Anthony & Mary Hart - Householder	----	10	1691 - 1711
Edward & Anne Lilley - Labourer	1696	9	1696 - 1716
Obadiah & Dorothy Hart - Householder	----	8	1696 - 1709
James & Rebecca Skelton - Labourer	1697	8	1697 - 1712
George & Hannah Leach - Weaver	----	12	1698 - 1717
William & Susannah Matson - Householder	1699	9	1699 - 1717
John & Anne Cock - Sexton	1703	14	1704 - 1723

Francis & Ann Tinsley - Yeoman	1704	9	1706 - 1717
John & Mary Stephenson - Yeoman	1710	10	1710 - 1721
William & Bridget Cant - Yeoman	1712	10	1713 - 1727
John & Mary Whitelamb - Labourer	1717	12	1720 - 1740
Richard & Mary Dawson - Weaver	1719	12	1720 - 1740
Francis & Joyce Hoyles - Householder	1720	8	1721 - 1736
John & Elizabeth Blackey - Householder	1721	8	1722 - 1734
William & Mary Langhorne - Schoolmaster	-----	11	1722 - 1737
Zachary & Mary Halgate - Labourer	1722	8	1722 - 1740
Richard & Hannah Watson - Yeoman	1727	11	1727 - 1745
Thomas & Susan Matson - Yeoman	-----	8	1727 - 1742
John & Esther Gunson - Carpenter	-----	8	1732 - 1753
John & Mary Dickinson - Yeoman	1731	9	1733 - 1756
William & Mary Clark - Grazier	1734	10	1734 - 1754
Skinner & Ellen Bailey - Clerk	-----	13	1735 - 1755
Robert & Mary Smith - Labourer	1734	9	1736 - 1757
Joshua & Hannah Dickinson - Householder	1738	10	1739 - 1752
Paul & Elizabeth Cook - Farmer	-----	12	1741 - 1762
George & Mary Hews - Yeoman	1750	8	1752 - 1769
John & Joanna West - Yeoman	1758	10	1760 - 1783
Robert & Mary Green - Labourer	1759	9	1761 - 1781

Robert & Frances Yarborough - Carpenter	----	14	1763 - 1787
John & Susan Sharp - Farmer	1763	12	1764 - 1781
Randal & Anne Royle - Bricklayer	----	9	1767 - 1781
John & Anne Edwards	1763	8	1768 - 1781
John & Elizabeth Jessop - Labourer	----	8	1771 - 1785
William & Anne Francis	1772	11	1773 - 1794
Richard & Anne Hunn - Farmer	1785	9	1786 - 1804
Francis & Sarah Kelk - Labourer	----	13	1787 - 1807
John & Mary Gilson - Farmer	1787	9	1788 - 1802
William & Susannah Dawson - Labourer	----	9	1788 - 1804
George & Elizabeth Hewis - Farmer	1788	11	1788 - 1811
George & Sarah Gask - Farmer	1788	11	1789 - 1806
James & Selina Sleight - Labourer	----	9	1791 - 1803
John & Anne Dickinson	----	8	1792 - 1810
Richard & Elizabeth Bucknell - Labourer	1792	11	1792 - 1811
William & Anne Francis - Labourer	----	12	1798 - 1816
Joseph & Susannah Sylvester - Labourer	1800	9	1801 - 1824
William & Elizabeth Chapman - Farmer	1804	14	1805 - 1826
James & Elizabeth Bycroft - Labourer	----	8	1809 - 1822
John & Elizabeth Lumb - Grocer	----	10	1812 - 1828
Joseph & Mary Clark - Farmer	1813	14	1813 - 1832

John & Jane Donner - Farmer	-----	10	1813 - 1825
John & Frances Dunham - Farmer	-----	9	1814 - 1826
William & Sarah Evison - Parish Clerk	1814	10	1815 - 1836
George & Sarah Truepenney - Labourer	1812	8	1817 - 1834
George & Elizabeth Needham - Farmer	1821	11	1822 - 1845
Thomas & Elizabeth Needham - Labourer	1823	17	1825 - 1849

Appendix 8a. Families of 10 or more children by more than one mother 1654 - 1849.

Husband, with style or occupation	Christian names of wives	Year of Marriage	No. of children	Year of first & last	Total in family
Edward Green Labourer	Prudence Bridget Mary Elizabeth	----- 1658 1660 1675	- 1 8 1	----- 1659 1661 1673 1676	
					10
James Jessop Labourer	Mary Alice	----- -----	6 8	1674 1689 1694 1711	
					14
Robert Skelton	Isabel Jane Ann	1684 1694 1702	3 4 5	1685 1693 1695 1700 1703 1711	
					12
Richard Parker Yeoman	Ann Elizabeth	1684 1707	7 7	1687 1697 1707 1715	
					14
Thomas Green Householder	Martha Esther Abigail	1698 1706 1721	3 9 1	1699 1704 1707 1719 1722	
					13
Thomas Hatforth Thatcher	Dorothy Dorothy Rebecca	----- ----- 1734	5 1 4	1721 1729 1732 1735 1741	
					10
William Dalton Woolwinder	Elizabeth Sarah Ann	1703 ----- 1721	1 8 4	1704 1708 1719 1722 1739	
					13

Nathaniel West Grazier	Grace	----	6	1710	1718	15
	Mary	----	1	1721		
	Ann	----	6	1722	1730	
	Isabel	----	2	1733	1735	
Peter Robins Yeoman	Rose	1715	7	1716	1728	11
	Susan	1731	4	1733	1741	
Andrew Robins Householder	Elizabeth	1740	3	1746	1750	12
	Dorothy	----	9	1758	1771	
Thomas Hildred Farmer	Anne	----	2	1752	1753	11
	Sarah	----	9	1758	1772	
	Anne	1783	-			
John Matson Parish Clerk	Mary	1761	6	1762	1771	11
	Sarah	1783	5	1784	1794	
William Parker	Mary	1765	8	1769	1780	14
	Prudence	1781	3	1782	1784	
	Ann	1785	3	1786	1792	
Robert Smith Grazier	Mary	1784	14	1785	1805	19
	Mary	1806	5	1807	1819	
Isaac Hoyles Farmer	Ann	1793	8	1793	1808	17
	Lydia	1809	4	1810	1816	
	Ann	1819	5	1820	1827	
John West Innkeeper	Jane	1806	5	1806	1813	19
	Elizabeth	1816	14	1816	1837	
Timothy Edwards Farmer	Ann	1807	4	1808	1811	12
	Sarah	1815	8	1815	1831	

Appendix 9. Marriage and settlement in the parish.

In the 17th century a marriage was usually followed by settlement in the parish - probably to avoid travel or transport after the ceremony. In the 18th century there were still 7 couples out of 10 who settled in the parish where they had been married. With the vastly changed conditions of the 19th century, less than half did so.

<u>Period</u>	<u>Marriages</u>	<u>Settled in Wrangle</u>	<u>%</u> —	<u>Left Wrangle</u>	<u>%</u> —
1653 - 1700	231	190	82.3	41	17.7
1701 - 1750	256	184	71.9	72	28.1
1751 - 1800	253	177	70.0	76	30.0
1801 - 1836	262	129	49.3	133	50.7

Appendix 10. Survey of persons baptised in Wrangle between 1782 and 1841, showing the numbers, in 5-year age groups, of those who remained in the parish, had died, or had left the parish by the time of the Census of 7.6.1841.

<u>Period</u>	<u>Persons baptised</u>	<u>Age by 1841</u>	<u>Buried by 7.6.1841</u>	<u>Still in Wrangle</u>	<u>Left Wrangle</u>
1837-1841	189	Below 5	30	116	43
1832-1836	176	5 - 9	26	90	60
1827-1831	166	10 - 14	47	68	51
1822-1826	195	15 - 19	45	46	104
1817-1821	178	20 - 24	35	35	108
1812-1816	163	25 - 29	30	16	117
1807-1811	148	30 - 34	50	13	85
1802-1806	149	35 - 39	42	16	91
1797-1801	121	40 - 44	41	13	67
1792-1796	141	45 - 49	54	9	78
1787-1791	129	50 - 54	42	8	79
1782-1786	79	55 - 59	26	4	49
1782-1841	1,834	Below 60	468	434	932

The number who had left Wrangle, 932, forms 50.8% of the 1,834 who were baptised there.

The corresponding number of those who remained is obtained by adding the number alive at the time of the census (434) to the number who were buried in Wrangle (468). The resulting figure of 902 is 49.2 % of the total number baptised.

It must be noticed that of the 434 remaining in Wrangle, 274 were under the age of 15.

Appendix 11. The Census return of 1851, showing the numbers, in 5-year age groups, of those born inside and outside the parish of Wrangle.

<u>Age Group</u>	<u>Born in Wrangle</u>			<u>Born elsewhere</u>			<u>Total of age group</u>
	<u>M.</u>	<u>F.</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>M.</u>	<u>F.</u>	<u>Total</u>	
0 - 5	67	69	136	23	16	39	175
5 - 10	46	51	97	26	27	53	150
10 - 15	63	43	106	19	19	38	144
15 - 20	34	42	66	25	26	51	117
20 - 25	18	19	37	19	20	39	76
25 - 30	19	21	40	22	27	49	89
30 - 35	19	10	29	16	22	38	67
35 - 40	9	5	14	22	25	47	61
40 - 45	11	7	18	18	20	38	56
45 - 50	15	8	23	10	28	38	61
50 - 55	8	4	12	13	14	27	39
55 - 60	6	5	11	15	16	31	42
60 - 65	7	3	10	16	15	31	41
65 - 70	2	4	6	8	11	19	25
70 - 75	4	-	4	6	6	12	16
75 - 80	1	4	5	8	7	15	20
80 - 85	5	3	8	2	5	7	15
85 - 90	-	-	-	1	-	1	1
90 - 95	-	-	-	-	1	1	1
Totals	334	288	622	269	305	574	1,196

Although there were 622 Wrangle-born inhabitants as against 574 born elsewhere, it is worthy of note that 339 of the Wrangle-born were below the age of 15. In all age groups of the normal working life there were more born outside than inside Wrangle.

Appendix 12. Places of birth of Wrangle inhabitants
of 1851 born in other parishes.

The number following the parish indicates the number who were born there.

1. Lincolnshire parishes.

(a) Within 5 miles.

Leake, 103; Friskney, 37; Sibsey, 28; Benington, 16; Leverton, 14; Butterwick, 14; Eastville, 4; Midville, 2.

Total 218

(b) Within 5 to 10 miles.

Boston, 23; Freiston, 21; Wainfleet, 20; Toynton, 12; Stickney, 10; Old Bolingbroke, 10; East Kirkby, 9; Thorpe, 8; Skirbeck, 8; Croft, 6; Frithville, 6; Burgh, 5; East Keal, 5; Spilsby, 4; Ireby, 4; Halton, 4; Fishtoft, 4; Holbeach, 3; Hagnaby, 4; Stickford, 3; Wyberton, 2; Wigtoft, 2; Hundleby, 3; Frithbank, 2; Bratoft, 1; Fosdyke, 1; Holland Fen, 1; Westville, 1; Brothertoft, 1;

Total 183

(c) Within 10 to 15 miles.

Kirton, 6; Tattershall, 5; Coningsby, 4; Algarkirk, 4; Sloothby, 2; Enderby, 2; Sutterton, 2; N. & S.Kyme, 2; Skegness, 2; Greetham, 1; Well, 1; Mareham le Fen, 1; Skendlesby, 1; Winthorpe, 1; Hareby, 1; Winceby, 1.

Total 36

(d) Within 15 to 20 miles.

Donington, 6; Horncastle, 6; Gosberton, 7; Baumber, 4; West Ashby, 3; Thoresby, 3; Surfleet, 2; Hogsthorpe, 2; Mumby, 2; Fleet, 1; Stixwould, 1; Scamblesby, 1; Bucknall, 1; Woodhall, 1; Quadring, 1; Kirkstead, 1; Langton, 1; Tupholme, 1; Miningsby, 1.

Total 45

(e) Within 20 to 30 miles.

Spalding, 2; Goulceby, 2; Skellingthorpe, 2; Bourne, 2; Aswarby, 1; Walcot, 1; Bardney, 1; Pointon, 1; Horbling, 1; Metheringham, 1; Scopwick, 1; Horsington, 1; Osbournby, 1; Edenham, 1; Yarborough, 1; Linwood, 1; Dunholme, 1; Spridlington, 1.

Total 22

(f) <u>Within 30 to 40 miles.</u>		
Nettleham, 2; Grantham, 1; Market Deeping, 1; Auburn, 1; Grimsby, 1; Nettleton, 1.		
	Total	7
(g) <u>Within 40 to 50 miles.</u>		
Hatcliffe, 1; Haxey, 1; Stockwith, 1.		
	Total	3
(h) <u>Places not identified</u>		
Ailby, 1; Hornsby, 1; Saby, 1; Omringham, 1; Susby, 1.		
	Total	5
2.	<u>Other English counties.</u>	
Cornwall, 6; Norfolk, 6; Northumberland, 3; Durham, 3; Cheshire, 3; Rutland, 2; Warwicks., 1; Worcestershire, 1; Cambridge, 1; Lancashire, 1; Bedfordshire, 1; Essex, 1; Sussex, 1; Middlesex, 1; Buckinghamshire, 1; Derbyshire, 1.		
	Total	33
3.	<u>Other parts of the United Kingdom.</u>	
Wales, 5; Ireland, 3; Scotland, 1.		
	Total	9
4.	<u>Overseas</u>	
Canada, 1.		
	Total	1
5.	<u>Not known</u>	12
Total with birthplace other than Wrangle		<hr/> 574 <hr/>

Appendix 13. Analysis of the estates of 10 labourers.

<u>Testator and date</u>	<u>Value £.</u>	<u>S h e e p</u>	<u>C a t t l e</u>	<u>H o r s e s</u>	<u>P i g s</u>	<u>Poultry</u>	<u>Crops in store</u>	<u>Other matters</u>
Samuel Blisbury Oct. 1662	24	3	7	2	2	Geese & ducks 10/-	Beans Barley Hemp	2 boats & fishing nets.
Simon Smith Mar. 1671	42	42	8	2		Pullen 2/-	Corn Hemp	Bacon. in store.
Richard Pickle Nov. 1671	53	8	15	3	2	Geese & poultry 13/4	Barley Corn Wheat	Fowling piece. ½ boat.
William West Mar. 1673	6	-	1	2	-	None	None	Cart & gears.
Robert Collingwood Dec. 1675	36	3	9	2	1	None	Barley Hemp	
Edward Green Nov. 1679	58	16	17	3	2	Pullen 10/-	None	Fowling piece. Leather.
George Leach Mar. 1697	39	6	18	2	5	Pullen 6/8	None	An old boat.
James Brough Apr. 1688	48	36	4	3	1	Ducks Geese Hens 6/8	Corn	Fishing tackle
Simon Clarke Feb. 1694	21	6	4	1	1	Pullen 2/6	Corn	
John Oulsby Jul. 1697	26	18	6	2	2	Pullen 10/-	None	

Appendix 14. Estates of Yeomen, Husbandmen, Tradesmen
and Labourers, 1660 - 1740.

<u>Yeomen</u>			<u>Husbandmen</u>		
<u>Name</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>£.</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>£.</u>
J. Stephenson	1700	1023			
W. Carden	1666	626			
J. Robbin	1703	624	F. Hynman	1695	600
J. Cobb	1730	479			
J. West	1718	353			
W. Gosling	1728	326			
J. Taylor	1700	321			
N. West	1735	272			
J. Stephenson	1692	264			
J. Taylor	1703	247			
W. Marholme	1679	222	W. Walls	1698	217
W. Thompson	1669	201	T. Wainfleet	1685	209
E. Bawtree (Wid.)	1665	199			
H. Sargeant	1739	176			
O. Hart	1714	174	J. Brittain	1704	177
A. Hart	1712	169	J. Wainfleet	1684	177
T. Moody	1721	168	T. Brooks	1698	165
			R. Clark	1679	148
			J. West	1672	128
			F. Atkin	1715	127
			A. Ward	1666	109
J. Little	1728	97	J. Moody	1707	99
			R. Wakefield	1700	88
			R. Dickinson	1677	88
			W. Wilson	1666	84
			T. Miteinge	1681	77
			E. Porter	1665	76
			J. Emerson	1676	65
			J. Houlmes	1669	59
R. Wharton	1675	57	J. Davie	1680	58
W. Hinde	1667	57	W. Robson	1685	57
R. Parkin	1731	57	J. Francis	1706	54
			T. Hickson	1665	51
			R. Dodds	1732	49
			J. Francis	1679	38
			J. Hinde	1667	38
			M. Kendall (Wid.)	1672	31

<u>Tradesmen</u>			<u>Labourers</u>		
<u>Name</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>£.</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>£.</u>
T. Matson	1698	167			
J. Snarth	1729	147			
N. Hilton	1695	147			
W. Smart	1706	136			
W. Woods	1702	120			
N. Wingod	1669	66			
N. Penner	1669	57	E. Green	1679	58
D. Stamp	1702	54	W. Fox	1670	54
			R. Pickle	1671	53
			J. Brough	1688	48
			S. Smith	1672	42
			G. Leach	1697	39
			R. Collingwood	1675	36
			S. Blisbury	1662	26
			J. Oulsby	1695	26
			S. Clark	1695	21
			S. Knipe	1687	7
			W. West	1674	6

Appendix 15. Wrangle Terrier of 1708, section 4,
"concerning things titheable and customs
in tithing".

First the sheep. For every sheep Sold out of the Parish between Candlemass and Sheer Day is paid two pence, but for every sheep sold from one to another within the Parish, the Buyer pays tithe in kind. If sheep are bought into the Parish betwixt Candlemass and Clipping time then tithe is paid proportionable to the tithe or its worth's fleece at the Hundred.

Of Wool. Tithe wool is due at Sheer Day, and paid generally by weight as every tenth Todd or Stone or Pound.
Of Lambs. An account of Lambs is taken Yearly the tenth of May; the owner choosing two and then the Minister one &c. which are marked and kept with the dams by the owner until Lammas. One lamb is due at ten or at seven, returning an halfpenny for so many as there wants of ten and taking an halfpenny for every one under seven or for any number betwixt ten and seventeen &c. There are three parts in a lamb; one which belongs to the Minister of the Parish where they are tupp'd; another to the Minister of the Parish where they are lambed; another part to the Minister of the Parish where the Lambs are fed after they are lambed.

Tithe is paid for Rape in seed, as every twelfth Peck or Strike or Bushell. In like manner the tithe of Mustard seed is payable. Tithe in kind is paid for Hemp and Flax as every tenth bunch. For Apples and Pears every tenth peck. For Bees every tenth swarm or for Honey every tenth pound. A yearly composition for a Decoy and forty acres of low ground on which it stands. The tithe for Pigs is paid at ten or seven as for lambs and at about three weeks old. Tithe geese are paid at ten or seven as of lambs and are taken after Michaelmass. Tithe Ducks and Chickens paid before Michaelmass or Christmass. Eggs are gathered the week before Easter. Due likewise at Easter for every Milch Cow one penny halfpenny; for every fole one penny and for every Firehearth in every family one penny halfpenny.

Appendix 16. The flooding of the East Fen.

The map of the Rennie scheme clearly illustrates the solution to the problem of the East Fen inundations but it does not indicate the extent of the problem which was solved.

Written statements abound but the best evidence is provided by the map drawn in 1774 by John Grundy, engineer of Spalding, who had previous experience of drainage work in the Wisbech area. His plan for drainage of the fen was not practical as he adhered to the old idea of using Wainfleet Haven. His map, though lacking the accuracy of an O.S. map, is valuable as it marks the deeps, the low ground liable to flooding and the relatively high land.

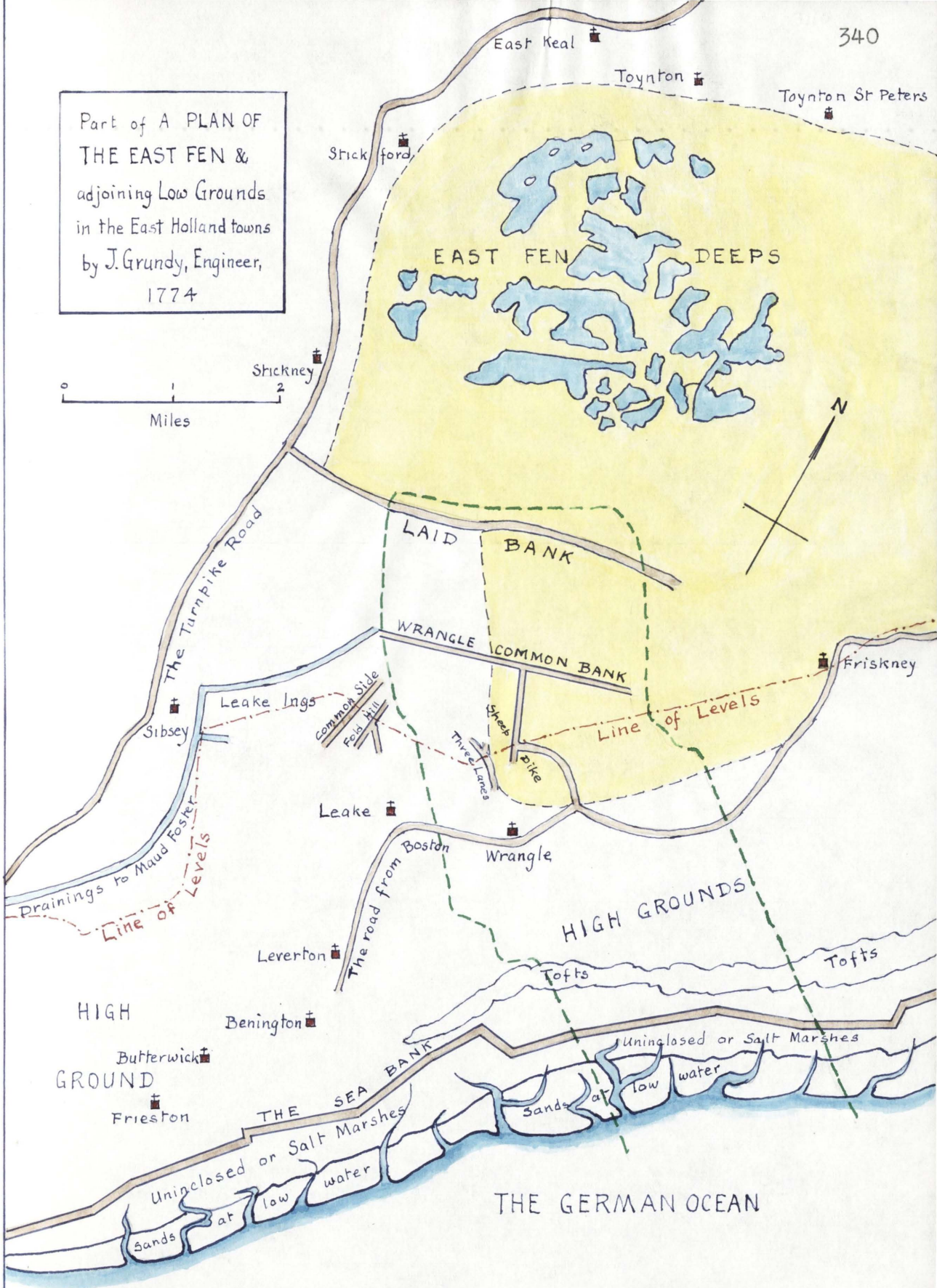
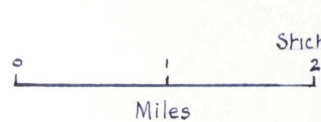
The distinguishing feature of his map is what he called a "line of levels" which his scale indicates as a contour line 10 feet above sea level. The accuracy of this aspect of his work is proved by a bench mark at Sea Dyke Farm, near his line, which is 11 feet above sea level. (O.S. map, Lincs. Pts. of Holland C.1.9.).

On the map overleaf the area liable to flooding has been tinted and the present boundary of Wrangle marked. It is seen that the north-east part of the parish, as far as Gold Fen Bank, was subject to flooding.

It is worth observing that the bench mark on Wrangle Church, on the high ground, shows 15.2 feet, while that on Wrangle Hall, on the edge of the tofts, shows 17.4 feet. Such were the margins which distinguished 'high' and 'low' ground.

The map overleaf is drawn from a photographed copy of an original in Lincoln Public Library.

Part of A PLAN OF
THE EAST FEN &
adjoining Low Grounds
in the East Holland towns
by J. Grundy, Engineer,
1774



Appendix 17. Variations in rent per acre in 1807,
1830 and 1837.

1. The Out Marsh

<u>Field No.</u>	<u>1807</u>	<u>1830</u>	<u>1837</u>
824	10/-	--	33/6
855	10/-	--	12/-
856	10/-	--	32/-
888	10/-	--	7/-
889	10/-	--	7/-
930	10/-	--	6/6
980	10/-	--	6/-
1022	10/-	--	6/6
1064	12/-	25/-	26/-

Some fields were still under water at high tide while others had become firm pasture.

2. Low Ground Meadow

<u>Field No.</u>	<u>1807</u>	<u>1830</u>	<u>1837</u>
81	30/-	35/-	30/6
82	30/-	35/-	31/-
83	30/-	35/-	32/6
84	30/-	30/-	31/-
85	30/-	30/-	34/-
87	30/-	35/-	28/6
88	30/-	35/-	28/6
90	30/-	30/-	30/-
91	30/-	30/-	30/-
92	30/-	30/-	30/-
93	30/-	35/-	31/-
95	30/-	30/-	28/-
96	30/-	30/-	27/-
97	30/-	30/-	27/-
98	30/-	30/-	25/-
99	30/-	30/-	25/-
100	30/-	30/-	26/6
101	30/-	30/-	26/6

This clay meadow land had held its value fairly well.

3. Toft Arable

<u>Field No.</u>	<u>1807</u>	<u>1830</u>	<u>1837</u>
830	40/-	--	33/6
804	38/-	--	33/6
809	35/-	--	33/6
810	35/-	--	33/6
811	35/-	--	33/6
813	35/-	--	33/6
815	35/-	--	33/6
816	35/-	--	33/6
829	35/-	--	29/-
830	35/-	--	29/-
831	35/-	--	29/-
832	40/-	--	34/6
860	35/-	--	27/6
861	35/-	--	27/6
862	35/-	--	27/6
863	35/-	--	27/6
921	35/-	--	28/-
925	35/-	--	28/-

It is clear that not all farmers had exhausted the soil by overcropping.

4. New Marsh Pasture

<u>Field No.</u>	<u>1807</u>	<u>1830</u>	<u>1837</u>
820	45/-	--	34/6
821	45/-	--	34/6
822	45/-	--	34/6
823	45/-	--	34/6
826	45/-	--	33/6
827	45/-	--	29/-
828	45/-	--	29/-
857	45/-	--	33/6
858	45/-	--	33/6
887	45/-	--	33/-
890	45/-	35/-	33/6
891	45/-	35/-	33/6
892	45/-	35/-	33/6
929	45/-	--	33/-
931	45/-	--	31/6

This excellent pasture had been exhausted as arable.

Appendix 18. Classification of the Ratepayers of Wrangle
1794/5 to 1833/4.

Information: 1794/5 - 1826/7 - High Way Accounts.
 1827/8 - 1833/4 - Poor Law Accounts.

1. The period before Enclosure.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Below</u> £5.	<u>£5-</u> £10.	<u>£10-</u> £20.	<u>£20-</u> £50.	<u>£50-</u> £100.	<u>£100-</u> £200.	<u>£200-</u> £400.	<u>Over</u> £400	<u>Total</u>
1794	25	24	15	23	18	2	1	1	109
1795	27	23	18	24	16	2	1	1	112
1796	31	24	19	23	13	5	1	1	117
1797	35	19	18	27	13	9	2	-	123
1798	35	19	16	30	11	9	2	-	122
1799	37	19	18	26	15	6	1	-	122
1800	34	21	17	23	15	6	1	-	118
1801	34	21	13	28	18	5	1	-	120
1802	37	22	14	27	17	5	1	-	123
1803	41	18	14	27	16	6	1	-	123
1804	42	19	14	26	14	6	1	-	122
1805	37	20	15	22	16	6	1	-	117
1806	35	22	15	24	16	6	1	-	117
1807	39	22	15	24	17	5	2	-	124

2. The year of Enclosure. Half a year was at the old assessment and half at the new.

1808	25	32	14	21	23	8	4	2	129
------	----	----	----	----	----	---	---	---	-----

3. After Enclosure and before the re-assessment of 1830.

1809	23	26	23	24	18	17	8	3	142
1810	18	24	24	25	16	16	8	4	135
1811	17	25	25	24	19	16	7	3	136
1812	14	28	24	29	17	16	7	3	138
1813	17	24	22	32	17	17	7	3	139
1814	22	23	19	30	17	17	7	3	138
1815	22	26	19	29	14	17	8	3	138
1816	15	24	17	30	13	12	9	3	123
1817	17	28	17	28	14	15	6	4	129
1818	24	26	18	29	14	16	7	3	137
1819	21	25	17	32	12	18	7	3	135
1820	15	28	19	27	11	20	8	3	131
1821	19	27	20	27	13	17	7	3	133
1822	17	29	20	27	12	17	9	3	134
1823	15	24	21	28	14	16	7	3	128
1824	16	26	22	27	11	16	9	3	130
1825	21	25	24	27	11	18	6	3	135
1826	17	29	24	27	12	17	6	3	135
1827	46	31	21	24	13	18	8	2	163
1828	52	32	21	23	12	16	9	2	167
1829	50	32	19	27	10	18	6	3	165

4. After the reduced assessment of 1830.

<u>Year</u>	Below £5.	£5- £10.	£10- £20.	£20- £50.	£50- £100.	£100- £200.	£200- £400.	Over £400.	<u>Total</u>
1830	55	32	20	20	15	17	4	2	165
1831	49	33	19	23	16	13	5	2	160
1832	47	33	19	23	16	13	5	2	158
1833	50	32	18	25	16	13	5	2	161

Appendix 19. Allotments on Wrangle Common shown on
R.Gee's Enclosure Map, with added
information from J.Slator's rough book.

<u>Field Number</u>	<u>Ac.r. p.</u>	<u>Awarded to -</u>	<u>Notes</u>
1065) to) 1087)	383.1.16	Wrangle Vicar	In lieu of tithes.
1088) to) 1095)	115.2.24	Chaplin, Mrs.E.	Sold to J.Rooper in 1808.
1096) to) 1098)	37.0.34	Wrangle Vicar	In lieu of tithes.
1099	16.3.02	" "	" " " "
1100	7.0.19	Wrangle Bede	(Part on surrender of other land.
1101	8.2.10	Wrangle Poor	
1102	7.0.08	Rinder, Robert	
1103	10.0.00	Lilley, John	Bought at Sale 1.
1104) 1105) 1106) to) 1111)	20.0.00	Holway, J.P.	Bought at Sale 1.
	102.2.08	Rooper, John.	(100 acres bought at Sale 1.
1111a	7.2.26	Atkinson, Rimington	
1112	7.1.16	Wright, Wm's heirs	In lieu of Quit rents.
1113	3.1.04	Evison, Richard	
1114	9.1.37	Boston Corporation	Part on surrender of other land.
1115	7.3.10	Broughton, John	
1116	6.0.33	Kirk, William	
1117	4.0.22	Wilkinson, John	
1118) 1119)	20.0.00	Bellamy, John	Bought at Sale 1.
1120	20.0.00	Rooper, John	
1121	1.0.26	Hobson, George	Sold to J.Rooper in 1808.
1122	1.0.36	Fowler, Robert	
1123	1.1.15	Godfrey, Jane	
1124	1.2.34	Brabins, Jane	
1125	1.3.11	Edwards, Stephen	Sold to J.Mossam in 1808.
1126	1.3.09	Hollom, George	
1127	1.3.13	Hales, Edward	
1128	1.3.26	Robins, Andrew	
1129	1.3.10	Mells, Thomas	
1130	1.3.11	Bousfield, William	

<u>Field Number</u>	<u>Ac.r. p.</u>	<u>Awarded to -</u>	<u>Notes</u>
1131	1.3.25	Evison, John Dorr	
1132	1.3.05	Fowler, Robert	
1133	1.2.14	Francis, John	Sold to R.Harr in 1808.
1134	1.3.02	Hardy, John's heirs	
1135	1.3.30	Hoyles, Francis	
1136	1.3.14	Linton, John	
1137	1.2.17	Page, William	
1138	3.0.36	English, Susannah	
1139	1.3.04	Reckitt, Thomas	Sold to Sarah Rix in 1808.
1140	1.3.01	Greenfield, John	
1141	1.20	Hewis, William	
1142	1.i.25	Hallam, John	
1143	1.1.30	Mitchell, William	
1144	1.2.15	Royle, Randall	
1145	1.3.24	Queenborough, Mrs.	Sold to William Overton in 1808.
1146	1.2.08	Westland & Hanson	
1147	3.1.38	Buttery, Mary	
1148	1.0.00	Reeson, David	
1149	5.1.38	Buckworth, Theo's heirs	
1150	3.3.20	Stephenson, Jn's heirs	
1151	14.1.36	Wright, Wm's heirs	Part of 35 acres for loss of rights of soil.
1152) to) 1158)	130.1.12	Chaplin, Mrs.E.	No.1158, 13ac.3 r. 26 p. sold to R.Linton and all the rest to John Rooper in 1808.
1159) to) 1170)	278.2.39	Chaplin, Mrs.E.	

Appendix 20. Costs falling upon an owner following
the Enclosure Award.

An indication of the costs involved in taking over an award on the common is provided by the Bede accounts. The main drains were provided by the commissioners from the common fund but each owner had to provide his own grips and ditches. The cost of gripping the allotment to the Bede was £3.13.9d. Each owner was also required to enclose his land with a hedge of "good thriving Quicksets" and a fence of "substantial Posts and Rails" with entrance by "a good and substantial Gate". The following extracts from the accounts for 1810 show some of the costs of enclosing some 7 acres:

	£.	s.	d.
2,000 quick at 8/-		16.	0
60 rods of quick setting at 1½d.		7.	6
500 quick		6.	0
G.Gask for fencing the allotment	6.	7.	0
Mr.Coupland for fencing	2.	8.	3

Ditching is not specified but there follow payments of 16/- and 7/2 to William West and William Matson who are known to have undertaken such work. Altogether, the trustees incurred an outlay of about £2 an acre which was the equivalent of a year's rent.

The small individual owners probably did most of the work themselves but they would still have to buy the posts, rails, gate and quicksets. It is clear that they overcame their difficulties as the majority of them, or their heirs, were still in possession in 1830.

Appendix 21. Wrangle Charities 1674.

(From the copy in Wrangle Church.)

Lincoln, A True & Perfect Account of the concerns of
Holland, the Poor and other things within the parish
Wrangle. of Wrangle taken Anno Domini 1674.

Imprimis, we say there is belonging to the Vicarage of Wrangle, three acres of pasture ground lying under or between the lands of Sir Francis Chaplain on the south & the lands of John Conington on the north and the lands of the foresaid Francis Chaplain on the east, and abutteth on the high way on the west; of which three acres there is now one missing.

Item, we say that Richard Bailye, Esq. is our patron.

Item, we say that there is neither house nor ground (to our knowledge) belonging to the parsonage.

Item, we say there is an Annuity of six shillings eightpence given to the poor of Wrangle for ever (out of a Close containing by estimation nine acres) by Richard Dandyson & Francis Goodrick, both sometime of Wrangle, the which foresaid nine acres close is at present in the possession of Edmund Hart of Wrangle aforesaid.

(The Bishop's copy adds, "which said Edmund Hart denies payment".)

Item, we say that of eighteen pounds given (by Thomas Taylor, alias Smith, sometime of Leak) for the use of the poor of Wrangle, there are fifteen pounds laid out in a purchase of lands for the use and benefit of the poor aforesaid - so there remains the sum of three pounds out of the said eighteen pounds to the use and benefit of the poor aforesaid.

Item, we say there is given to the town of Wrangle the sum of five pounds by Francis Chamberlain late of Bullingbroke for the yearly payment of five shillings to be distributed and given to the poor of Wrangle upon every Good Friday by the Churchwardens for the time being.

Item, there is a gift of twenty shillings yearly given to the poor of Wrangle by the last Will and Testament of Francis Read, late of Wrangle, Gent.

Item, we say Thomas Alenson, late Vicar of Wrangle, did give one Capital Messuage with the buildings and grounds lying under it called Joy Hill and one little pingle lying unto the northside of the said Messuage containing six acres, two acres of land lying by Lockham Gate; one pasture of six acres lying between the lands of our Sovereign Lord the King on the south, and upon the lands of John Brooks on the north, and

five roods of pasture called Ball Ings, one piece of pasture called Fenthorpe Lands containing two acres, one piece of pasture called High Crofts, by estimation one acre and an half and three acres of pasture lying in the low fields, abutting on the town's pasture to the south and upon the lands of Sir Francis Chaplain as well on the west as on the north and upon the lands of Charles Read, Esq. on the east, lying and being in Wrangle aforesaid - and four pieces of pasture and land arable called Bryholm, lying together in Leak in the County aforesaid, containing by estimation twenty three acres, and also one piece of pasture lying in a field called Skipmarsh, containing by estimation four acres - and also one piece of pasture more lying in Leak aforesaid in a place there called Cundale Leak Ings on the north side of containing by estimation three acres - and three milch kine, towards the maintaining and relieving of three poor men and two poor women in Leak and Wrangle, one of the said poor men to be a man learned to instruct and teach children; and to other charitable uses so long as the world shall endure.

Item, we say that there is three acres and three roods of pasture ground belonging to the town given by John Dandyson to the use of the poor of Wrangle for ever, lying between the lands of our Sovereign Lord the King on the east and the lands of the heirs of Joseph Greathead on the west, and abutteth upon the lands of Sir Francis Chaplain on the north and upon a common way on the south.

Item, there is purchased by the town of Wrangle for the use of the poor of the parish aforesaid, one Messuage with two acres of pasture ground lying under the said Messuage, be the same more or less, lying near Fendike bridge; and half an acre of pasture ground called the Platt, be the same more or less abutting upon Crackmire gate, late Nicholas Boston Lands.

Item, we say that there is no other Catechism taught by our Minister but that which is expressed in the Book of Common Prayer.

George Bruce, Vicar

John Wainfleet }
William Marram } Church Wardens

John Stephenson

Appendix 22. Bequests to the poor in Wrangle Wills
1600 - 1750.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Testator</u>	<u>To Wrangle poor</u>	<u>To others</u>
1611	Thomas Gell	6s.8d.	
1611	Edward Aldye	1 qr. barley	
1612	John Carden	$\frac{1}{2}$ qr. barley	$\frac{1}{2}$ qr. barley Leake
1617	Simon Turpin	2s.0d.	
1617	Richard Benn	2s.6d.	
1621	Anthony Hart	£1.0.0.	
1622	Robert Oresby	6s.8d.	
1624	Nicholas Francis	£6.13.4.	10s. each to Friskney & Leake
1626	James Hodgson	13s.4d.	
1629	Thomas Pickering	6s.8d.	
1629	Sir John Read	10s.0d annually	
1630	William Watson	3s.4d.	
1640	Martin Brookes	£1.0.0.	
1640	Simon Chamberlain	2 qrs. barley	
1639	Walter Hobster	1 stand barley	10s. Leake
1648	Richard Bailly	10s.0d.	
1666	William Carden	2 seam barley	
1667	Lawrence Pickering	£2.0.0.	£2.0.0. Leake
1667	John Stephenson	£2.0.0.	
1679	John Mareholme	1 seam barley 1 seam beans	
1680	Andrew Robin	£1.0.0.	£1.0.0. Leake
1680	Jane Carden	£1.0.0.	
1684	John Wainfleet	£1.0.0.	
1685	Thomas Wainfleet	5s.0d.	
1688	Richard Pearsall	£3.0.0.	
1692	John Stephenson	£10.0.0.	
1695	Margaret West	£1.0.0.	
1697	Thomas Matson	1 seam barley	
1698	William Walls	5s.0d.	
1699	James Taylor	£1.0.0.	
1702	James Hinman	£2.0.0.	

1703	John Robin	£1.0.0.	
1706	William Smart		Whole estate to widows & orphans of Waltham nr. Grimsby.
1710	John Skirm		£5 to poor Friends of Mumby monthly meeting.
1718	Thomas Marginson	5s.0d.	
1719	Sarah Robins	10s.0d.	
1720	Thomas Skelton	6s.0d.	
1728	John Moody		In case of previous death of named beneficiaries, £30 to minister and churchwardens to build a house "upon the ground where the town's houses were lately burnt down".
1739	Leonard Bell		£4 to poor Friends of Mumby monthly meeting.

Footnote.

There were numerous bequests to individual poor persons who were named in the wills.

It is impossible to assess the amount of charity given to the poor by persons during their lifetime. The following inscription from the tomb of John Reed (1503) impresses on its readers the lesson that it is far better, for hope of salvation, to do so than to leave money to be distributed by executors.

They for man when ye winde blows
make the mill grind
and ever thine own soul
have thou in mind.
That thou givest with thy hand
that shalt thou find
and yt thou levys thy Executors
comys far behind.
Do for yourself while ye have space
to pray Jesu of mcy and grace
in heven to have a place.

Appendix 23. The Overseers of the Poor of Wrangle
1815 - 1834.

All the overseers were farmers with the exception of John Lumb (1815), who was a shopkeeper.

Among their number were the wealthiest inhabitants such as Joseph Rinder (1815), William Gask (1823), and Charles Swain (1832) but there were many who were little more than small-holders.

A rough guide to the acreage farmed is to deduct £5 from the assessment for the farmhouse and buildings and count the remainder as acres.

<u>Year</u> <u>appointed</u>	<u>Overseer</u>	<u>During year of office:</u>			
		<u>Assessment</u>			<u>Rate paid</u>
		£.	s.	d.	£. s. d.
1815	Joseph Rinder	471.	10.	0	53. 0. 10½
	John Lumb	10.	0.	0	1. 2. 6
1816	Robert Smith, Jnr.	295.	0.	0	31. 19. 2
	Eland Paul	244.	5.	0	24. 5. 10½
1817	Absalom Coupland	295.	5.	0	41. 16. 6½
	John Elliff	115.	15.	0	16. 7. 11½
1818	James Dixon	237.	0.	0	31. 12. 0
	Richard Mastin	172.	10.	0	23. 0. 0
1819	John Pearson	128.	10.	0	15. 10. 6½
	George Waite	70.	0.	0	8. 9. 2
1820	John Needham	70.	0.	0	8. 9. 2
	William Newton	92.	0.	0	11. 2. 4
1821	William Harrison	63.	15.	0	7. 19. 4½
	John Westmoreland	155.	0.	0	19. 7. 6
1822	John Brown	100.	15.	0	13. 0. 3¼
	Samuel Mossom (a joint tenancy with his brother)	47.	0.	0	6. 1. 5
1823	William Taylor	145.	10.	0	17. 11. 7½
	William Gask, Snr.	385.	15.	0	43. 6. 11½
1824	Robert Chapman, Snr.	161.	0.	0	20. 2. 6
	William Bartrop	105.	10.	0	13. 3. 9
1825	John Harrison, Jnr.	76.	15.	0	9. 11. 10½
	David Kitching	157.	10.	0	19. 13. 9
1826	William Lambert	295.	0.	0	40. 11. 3
	William Evison, Snr.	155.	10.	0	21. 7. 7½

<u>Year appointed</u>	<u>Overseer</u>	<u>During year of office:</u>	
		<u>Assessment</u>	<u>Rate paid</u>
		£. s. d.	£. s. d.
1827	Joseph Dickenson	135. 5. 0	18.11.11 $\frac{1}{4}$
	Robert Chapman, Jnr.	57.10. 0	7.18. 1 $\frac{1}{2}$
1828	Charles Hobson	30. 0. 0	4. 2. 6
	Joseph Smith	33.15. 0	4.12. 9 $\frac{3}{4}$
1829	Absalom Coupland, Jnr.	279.15. 0	37. 6. 0
	(a joint tenancy with his brother.)		
	Robert Gask	195. 0. 0	26. 0. 0
1830	William Gask, Snr.	277.10. 0	46. 5. 0
	William Lilley, Jnr.	78.10. 0	13. 1. 8
1831	Willoughby Fowler	159. 5. 0	31.17. 0
	Joseph Gask	105. 5. 0	21. 1. 0
1832	Charles Swain	333.15. 0	56.12. 6
	Oldham Keal	88. 5. 0	14.14. 2
1833	Edward Ward	91. 0. 0	15.18. 6
	Richard Whiting	59. 0. 0	10. 6. 6

Appendix 24. Absconding husbands.

1. The following advertisement appeared in "The Lincoln, Rutland and Stamford Mercury" on 4th July, 1800.

Absconded and left his family chargeable to the Parish of Wrangle, near Boston, Lincs.

RICHARD PARKER, Labourer.

Whoever will apprehend him and lodge him in one of H.M. jails and give notice thereof to the Overseers of the Poor of Wrangle aforesaid, shall receive a reward of Two Guineas.

The above Richard Parker is about 5ft. 4 or 5 inches, red hair, baldheaded and has an uncommon impediment in his speech. If the said Richard Parker will return to his family and endeavour to support them, his past conduct will be forgiven.

Richard did return. His son Isaac was baptised 13.5.1801 and his daughter Susannah on 7.1.1803. However, he appears to have decamped once more as an entry in the baptismal register for 22.5.1805 reads:

"Isaac, illegitimate son of Esther Parker, a married woman, by William Mitchell."

2. The following is extracted from the records of the Holland Quarter Sessions for 31st March, 1836.
Charles Hooton, aged 32, was convicted as a rogue and vagabond in that he did abscond from the parish of Wrangle in the pts. of Holland and leave his wife chargeable thereto. Committed to prison for the space of 3 calendar months by Rev. William Roy, D.D., J.P.

Appendix 25. Mural in Wrangle Church.

TO THE GLORY OF GOD AND IN SACRED MEMORY

Cornelius Margison Alenson

Master of the Bede School in this Parish
who died August 5th 1862, aged 67 years.

Also Eliza, his wife,
who died March 22nd 1863, aged 65 years.

Interred in Friskney Churchyard.

A Lineal Descendant of Thomas Alenson
of the Bede Charity.

Appendix 26. The Hearth Tax Return of 25th Apr. 1671.

The return is filed in the P.R.O. as E.179 140/791.
It has been re-arranged in alphabetical order with
notes added relating to the style and burial of each
householder who was buried in Wrangle.

<u>Householder</u>	<u>Hearths</u>	<u>Arrears</u>	<u>Style</u>	<u>Buried</u>
Archer, John		1	---	----
Armitage, John		1	Weaver	1694
Banister, Perigrin	1		Publican	----
Breach, Edward	1		---	----
Blackie, Richard	2		---	----
Boston, Nicholas	1		Labourer	----
Brittaine, Joseph	2		Yeoman	1704
Cardon, Thomas	2		Husbandman	1671
Cardon, Jane	2		Wid. of Y.	1680
Cawdwell, Mr.	1		Gentleman	----
Clipsham, Richard		3	Gentleman	----
Cods, Robert	2		---	----
Collingwood, Robert	1		Labourer	1675
Connington, Mr. Henry	4		Clerk	1671
Cooke, Edward		1	Labourer	1694
Dandison, Thomas	2		Husbandman	1671
Dant, Richard	1		---	----
Dent, William	1		Tailor	1677
Dickinson, John	1		Labourer	1692
Emerson, John	1		Husbandman	1676
Fenby, Robert	1		---	1678
Fisher, Mr.	6		Gentleman	----
Fox, Martha	1		Wid. of L.	----
Francis, James	1		Husbandman	1679
Francis, William	1		Husbandman	1677
Goodrick, Edward	1		Labourer	1692
Goodricke, Thomas	2	1	Carpenter	1676
Gotherick, William	1		---	----
Greene, Edward	1		Labourer	1679
Gubarn, William	1		---	----
Hamby, Sir John	3		Gentleman	----
Harrison, Richard	2		---	1697
Hart, Edmund	2		Yeoman	1680
Hassall, James		1	---	----
Hind, Thomas	1		Husbandman	1678
Inman, Francis	1		Husbandman	1695
Jessupp, John		1	Husbandman	1720
Kerby, John		1	Labourer	1702
(K)nipe, Symon		1	Labourer	1689
Lawson, John	1		---	----
Legge, William	4		---	----
Marchant, William	1		Labourer	1691
Marginton, William		1	Husbandman	1690
Martin, Thomas	1		---	----
Martyn, Mr. William	8		Gentleman	----

<u>Householder</u>	<u>Hearths</u>	<u>Arrears</u>	<u>Style</u>	<u>Buried</u>
Matson, Thomas	1		Carpenter	1698
Orkin, Anthony	1		Labourer	----
Peckill, Richard	1		Labourer	1671
Petit, Edward	1		---	----
Skelton, Richard		2	---	----
Smith, Thomas	1		---	----
Smyth, Symon	1		Labourer	1672
Stephenson, John	4		Yeoman	1700
Stephenson, Mr. William	3		Gentleman	1680
Stephenson, John	1		Bachelor	1692
Stephenson, Robert	1		Bachelor	1673
Taylor, Francis		1	Labourer	1674
Thorpe, Anthony	2		---	----
Walker, William	1		Labourer	1680
Ward, Anthony	1		Husbandman	1712
Ward, John	1		---	----
Wales, William	1		Labourer	1698
Wainfleet, John	1		Husbandman	1684
Welby, John		3	Gentleman	1704
West, John	1		Husbandman	1672
West, William	1		Labourer	1674
Wharton, Robert	4		Gentleman	1675
Wharton, Thomas	1		Labourer	1672
Wright, Robert	1		---	----

Seen sealed and allowed by us his Majesty's
Justices of the Peace within these pts of Holland
in the County of Lincoln this xxv day of April
Anno Dom. 1671.

Henry Burrell
John Humfrie.

Analysis of the above return.

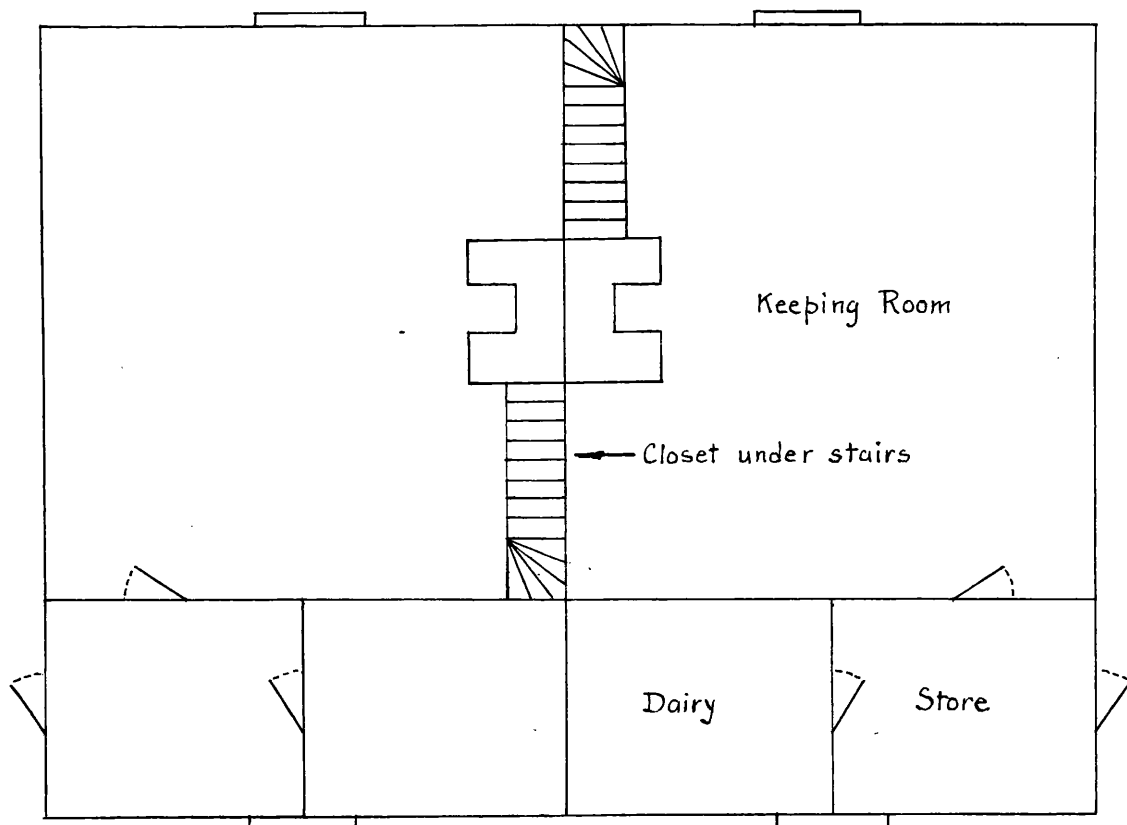
	<u>Number of Hearths</u>						<u>Totals</u>
	<u>8</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	
Gentlemen	1	1	1	4	-	1	8
Clerk	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Yeomen	-	-	1	-	3	2	6
Husbandmen	-	-	-	-	2	10	12
Tradesmen	-	-	-	1	-	4	5
Labourers	-	-	-	-	-	18	18
Not known	-	-	1	-	5	13	19
<u>Totals</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>48</u>	<u>69</u>

Appendix 27. Labourers' cottages at Freiston.

A.Young, General View of Agriculture in the County of Lincoln, London, 1799 p.35.

'They will, at Freiston, build a cottage of stud and mud for £30. Mr.Linton showed me four he had built, two-and-two; one set of mud and stud and thatch; the other of brick and tile; the former cost £40 and the latter £60. Each cottage consists of a room below and a room above, the entrance is into a small room for washing anything, a kind of common open store room by this means the keeping room is much warmer than if the house door opened directly into it; the other room is a little dairy in which also the beer is kept. By the staircase being reversed, as in the plan, each cottage has a closet under his neighbour's staircase.'

Young's plan has been enlarged 3 times and the stairs modified to conform with what was common practice. Those shown by Young were impracticable as they ended at a wall.



Appendix 28. A Barn on Wrangle Common.Extract from the Bede records.

17th June 1822. At a meeting held this Day to consider the Propriety of building a Barn upon the Allotment made unto the Bede in Wrangle Common; we whose names are underwritten, Trustees of the said Bede, do think it expedient to build the said Barn; and we hereby agree with Wm. Dawson to complete the Barn, according to the following Specifications, for the Sum of Fifty Pounds: and it is further agreed to take up, upon Interest, the Sum of Forty Pounds of the Rev. Mrs. Wright, for and towards paying the said Expende, & to be paid off by Installments, annually at Ten Pounds per Annum.

Richard Wright, Vicar of Wrangle
 William Welsh, Churchwarden, Leake
 John Slator, Churchwarden, Wrangle.

An Estimate for a Barn in Wrangle Common.

	£.	s.	d.
1100 Bricks at 28/-	15.	8.	0
3 Chaldrons of Lime at 16/-	2.	8.	0
Ridge and Pan Tiles	4.	0.	0
18 Pair of Spars at 3/-	2.	14.	0
4 14-Ft. double Deals for Plates at 9/3 ..	1.	17.	0
1 16 Ft. double Deal for End Balks ..	10.	8.	
2 middle Balks, 16 Feet long - 8 by 6 ..	1.	12.	0
2 Rack Spars	5.	4.	
Laths for the Tiles	10.	0.	
1 Door Frame, 5 Feet by 7, 1 Do. 4 Feet by 7,			
1 Do. 4 Feet by 4, all Oak. Total, 94 at 10d.	3.	18.	4
11 14-Feet inch Deals, for Doors at 3/- ..	1.	13.	0
Iron Work complete and nails	2.	7.	6
About 14 Rods of Brick work at 5/6 ..	3.	17.	0
Carpenter's Work, about	3.	3.	0
Barn Floor, about	6.	0.	0
	<hr/>		
	50.	4.	0
	<hr/>		

Footnote

In looking at the above Estimate it will appear that there was nothing put in for the Tiles pointing; which cost £1.5s. and was afterwards allowed Mr. Dawson.

Appendix 29. Stocking on the roads.

Vestry, Wrangle, September 22nd, 1832.

It was resolved by the Parishioners then assembled that each Person owning or occupying not exceeding 20 Pounds per Annum in the Parish Book, is allowed to stock the Roads under the following limitation as to time, viz. from the First Day of May to the Last Day of October when the Roads shall be cleared and under the following Stint as to Quantity, viz. One Horse or One Beast, or not more than Six Sheep and their Lambs until the 1st Day of September when the Lambs will be accounted as Sheep, and if not removed, then impounded.

Also 2 Pigs may be allowed to run on the Road according to the aforesaid Time and Stint.

And the said Stock to be the actual property of each so stocking. Any person stocking above the Stint agreed upon shall pay double Poundage for the said Stock.

No Person shall be allowed to stock the Roads unless their Stock be branded with a Brand which will be provided by the Pinder, thus ∇ to be kept by the Pinder, he keeping an account of whose stock he brands.

Also it is agreed that all Geese trespassing on the Roads shall be impounded. Farmers' Geese going from Pasture to Pasture not common trespass shall not be impounded.

All Persons renting under £10 per annum shall be allowed to run 1 Beast and 1 Horse, or 1 Beast and 6 Sheep, or 1 Horse and 6 Sheep or to be allowed 2 Beast or 2 Horses.

Also the following Impoundage was agreed upon:

For every Beast in our own Parish	- 1/- a Drift.
" " Horse " " " "	- 1/- a Drift.
" Sheep in our own Parish	- 1/- a Drift.
Out-Dweller's Beast or Horse	- 1/- per Head.
" " Sheep	- 2/- a Drift.

Asses to be allowed to run in our own Parish.

Out-Dwellers' asses to be impounded at 1/- per Head.

All Geese trespassing on the Roads 1/- a Drift;
Out-Dwellers 2/-.

All Pigs trespassers on the road above the Stint
1/- a Drift and 2/- for Out-Dwellers.

For Boars or Tupps - 2/6 a Drift and Double for
Out-Dwellers.

All Bulls, Stallions, rig Sheep or rig Horses - 2/6
a Drift and double for Out-Dwellers.

Pinders: William Sleight - Old Haws
Thomas Bontoft - Lowgate
John Kyme - Seadykes
John Heldred - Common
Thomas Bradshaw - Workhouse End
William Bycroft - Claxey Bank

The minute was signed by the following parishioners.
In brackets is given the assessment of each, as
recorded in the Poor Rate accounts.

James Dixon	- Farmer	(£185.10s.)
William Taylor	- Farmer	(£ 73. 5s.)
Edward Ward	- Smallholder	(£14.15s.)
David Kitching	- Farmer	(£123.10s.)
Robert Gask	- Farmer	(£141.10s.)
George C. Emery	- Doctor	(£ 18.15s.)
Chas. Hobson	- Smallholder	(£ 25. 0s.)
Charles Swain	- Farmer	(£339.15s.)
Oldham Keal	- Farmer	(£ 85. 5s.)
Robert Chapman	- Butcher	(£ 61.10s.)
William Evison	- Farmer	(£125. 5s.)
William Gask, Jn.	- Farmer	(£277.10s.)
William Gask, Sn.	- Farmer	(£185. 0s.)
George Kime	- Smallholder	(£ 8.10s.)
Robert Chapman	- Farmer	(£117.15s.)
Martin Greenfield		
	- Wheelwright	(£ 8.10s.)

Appendix 30. Cock-fighting at Wrangle.

The following advertisement appeared in "The Lincoln, Rutland and Stamford Mercury" on 31st January 1794.

To be fought for, at Wrangle in Lincolnshire,
on Tuesday the Twenty-fifth of February, 1794,
by a Welch Main of Sixteen Cocks

A LARGE FAT OX

allowed to be the best four-year old ox in
the County.

Each subscriber to pay Five Guineas.

No cock to exceed Four pounds ten ounces; and
to fight the nearest in weight throughout the
Main - To be shown and weighed on the Twenty-
fourth, at the Angel Inn, in Wrangle.

The first cock to be in the scale at Ten o'clock;
and to fight with fair Hackles and fair reputed
Silver Weapons.

The Owner of the Ox to pay the second-best Cock
Ten Pounds.

And on the Twenty-sixth will be given to the
said subscribers, Ten Pounds, free for Sixteen
Cocks, subject to the above way of fighting.

Note: Cock-fighting was legal until 1835.

MAP I.LAND USE 1810.

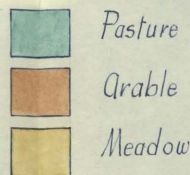
The data for this map
(taken from an acre book)
relates to the period
before Enclosure. It shows

	<u>Acres</u>	<u>%</u>
Arable	1,316	29.2
Pasture	1,974	43.7
Meadow	1,223	27.1

EASTVILLE

WRANGLE

Land use in 1810 according to the Rate Book



The land not indicated was mainly newly-enclosed common and properties in process of sale.

FRISKNEY

Old Leake

Primary Church

Moat House

Leake House

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MAP 2.CHANGES FOLLOWINGENCLOSURE 1808.

This map indicates :

1. The common and waste enclosed.
2. Roads retained.
3. The inland drainage system.
4. The sea-drainage areas.
5. Houses and farms built
 - (a) before 1808.
 - (b) between 1808 & 1838.

Reduced to Scale 1:21,120 or 3 inches to 1 mile.

Links 40 50 60 70 80

E A S T V I L L E

W R A N G L E

following the Enclosure Act of 1807.

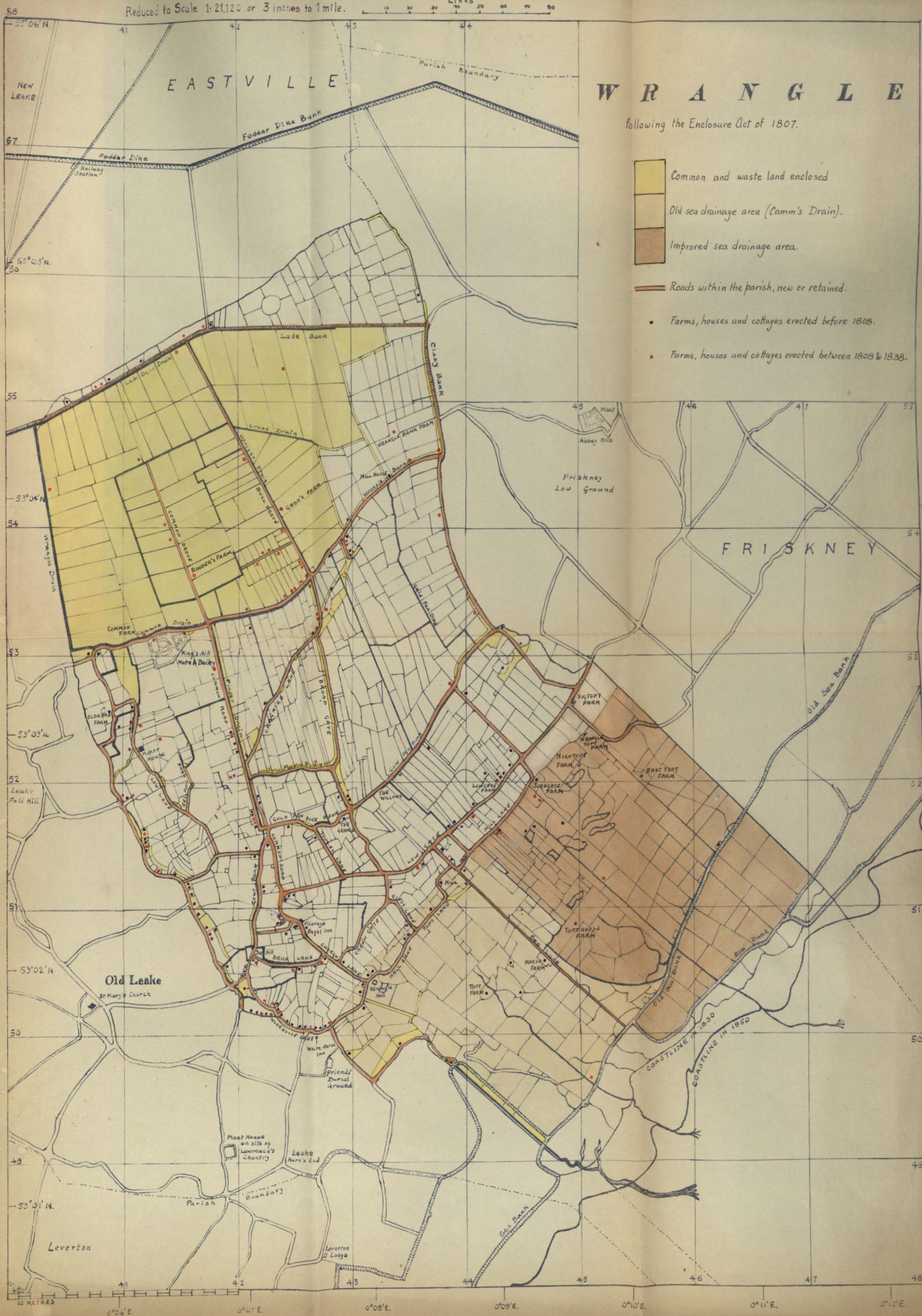
Common and waste land enclosed

Old sea drainage area (Camm's Drain).

Improved sea drainage area.

 Roads within the parish, new or retained.

- Farms, houses and cottages erected before 1808.
- Farms, houses and cottages erected between 1808 & 1838.



MAP 3.OWNERS OF OVER100 ACRES 1808.

After Enclosure there were 111 land owners in Wrangle - of whom 15 held more than 100 acres totalling 4,919 acres, or 78.8% of the land in the parish.

Outlines from ORDNANCE SURVEY Sheets TF 45 NW & others.

Reduced to Scale 1:21,120 or 3 inches to 1 mile.

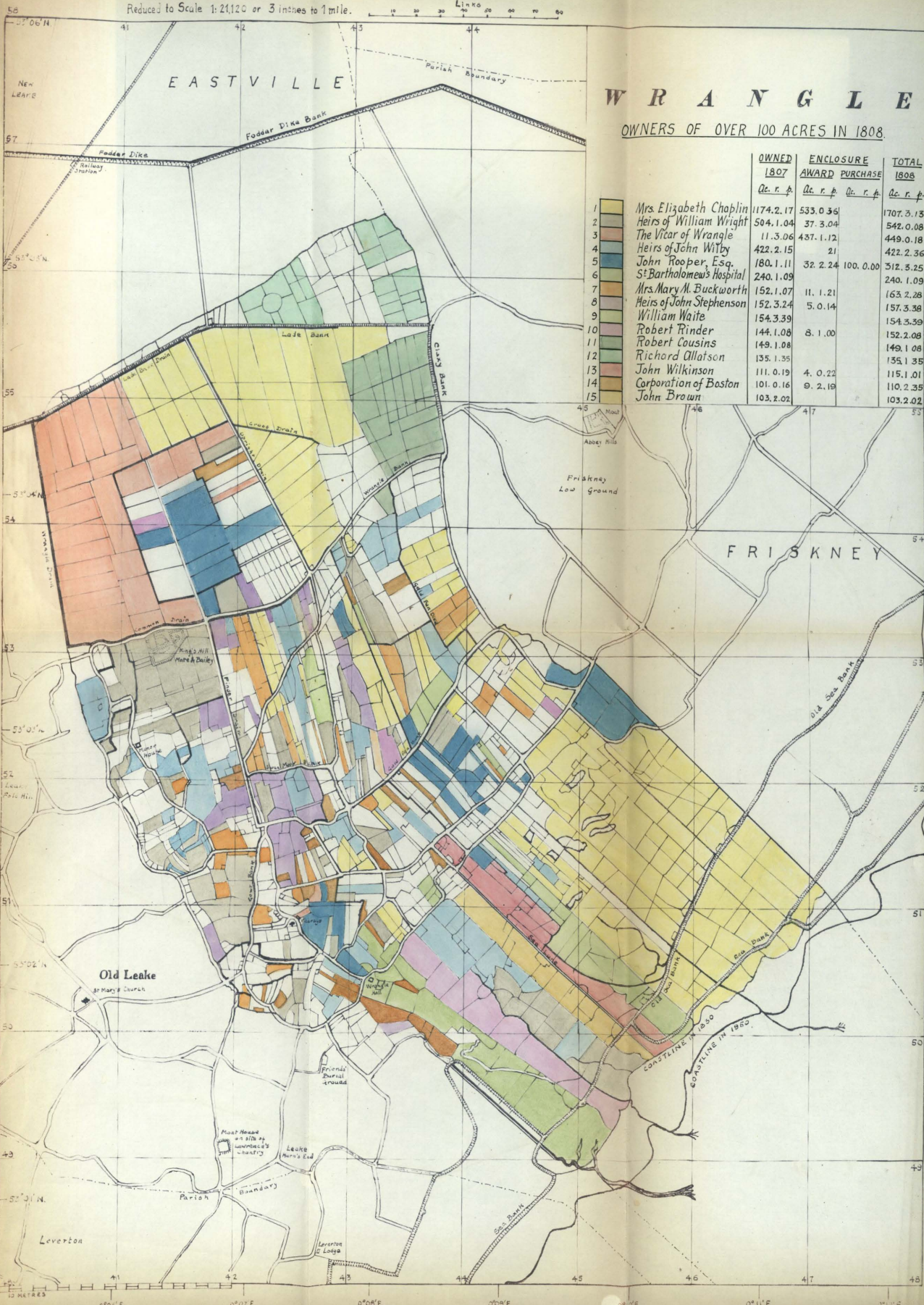
Link

EASTVILLE

WRANGLE

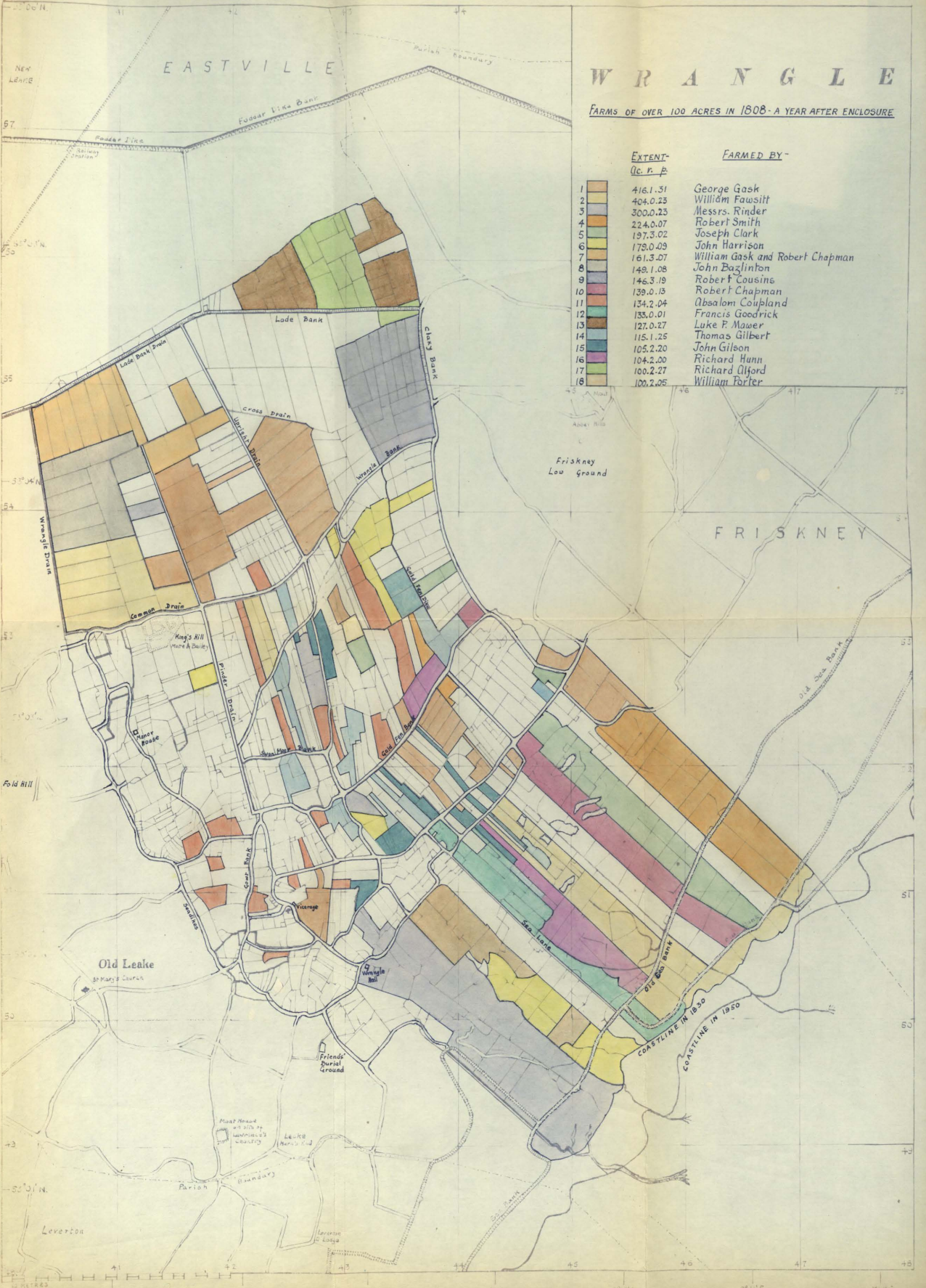
OWNERS OF OVER 100 ACRES IN 1808

	OWNED 1807	ENCLOSURE		TOTAL 1808
		AWARD	PURCHASE	
	Ac. r. p.	Ac. r. p.	Ac. r. p.	Ac. r. p.
1 Mrs Elizabeth Chaplin	1174.2.17	533.0.36		1707.3.13
2 Heirs of William Wright	504.1.04	37.3.04		542.0.08
3 The Vicar of Wrangle	11.3.06	437.1.12		449.0.18
4 Heirs of John Wilby	422.2.15	21		422.2.36
5 John Rooper, Esq.	180.1.11	32.2.24	100.0.00	312.5.25
6 St Bartholomew's Hospital	240.1.09			240.1.09
7 Mrs Mary M. Buckworth	152.1.07	11.1.21		163.2.28
8 Heirs of John Stephenson	152.3.24	5.0.14		157.3.38
9 William Waite	154.3.39			154.3.39
10 Robert Rinder	144.1.08	8.1.00		152.2.08
11 Robert Cousins	149.1.08			149.1.08
12 Richard Allatson	135.1.35			135.1.35
13 John Wilkinson	111.0.19	4.0.22		115.1.01
14 Corporation of Boston	101.0.16	9.2.19		110.2.35
15 John Brown	103.2.02			103.2.02



MAP 4.FARMS OF OVER100 ACRES 1808.

After Enclosure, the number of farms of more than 100 acres rose from 7 to 18, between them covering 3,240 acres, or 53.3% of the parish.



WRANGLE

FARMS OF OVER 100 ACRES IN 1808 - A YEAR AFTER ENCLOSURE

EXTENT Ac. R. P.	FARMED BY
1 416.1.31	George Gask
2 404.0.23	William Fawsitt
3 300.0.23	Messrs. Rinder
4 224.0.07	Robert Smith
5 197.3.02	Joseph Clark
6 179.0.09	John Harrison
7 161.3.07	William Gask and Robert Chapman
8 149.1.08	John Bazlinton
9 146.3.19	Robert Cousins
10 139.0.13	Robert Chapman
11 134.2.04	Abraham Coupland
12 133.0.01	Francis Goodrick
13 127.0.27	Luke P. Mawer
14 115.1.26	Thomas Gilbert
15 105.2.20	John Gilson
16 104.2.00	Richard Hann
17 100.2.27	Richard Alford
18 100.2.06	William Porter

MAP 5.

OWNERS OF OVER

100 ACRES IN 1830.

Twenty-two years after Enclosure there were 112 land owners in Wrangle, of whom 14 held more than 100 acres, totalling 4,861 acres or 76% of the land in the parish. Of these large owners, only the vicar and John Rinder were resident.

Outlines from ORDNANCE SURVEY Sheets TF 45 NW & others.

Reduced to Scale 1:21,120 or 3 inches to 1 mile.

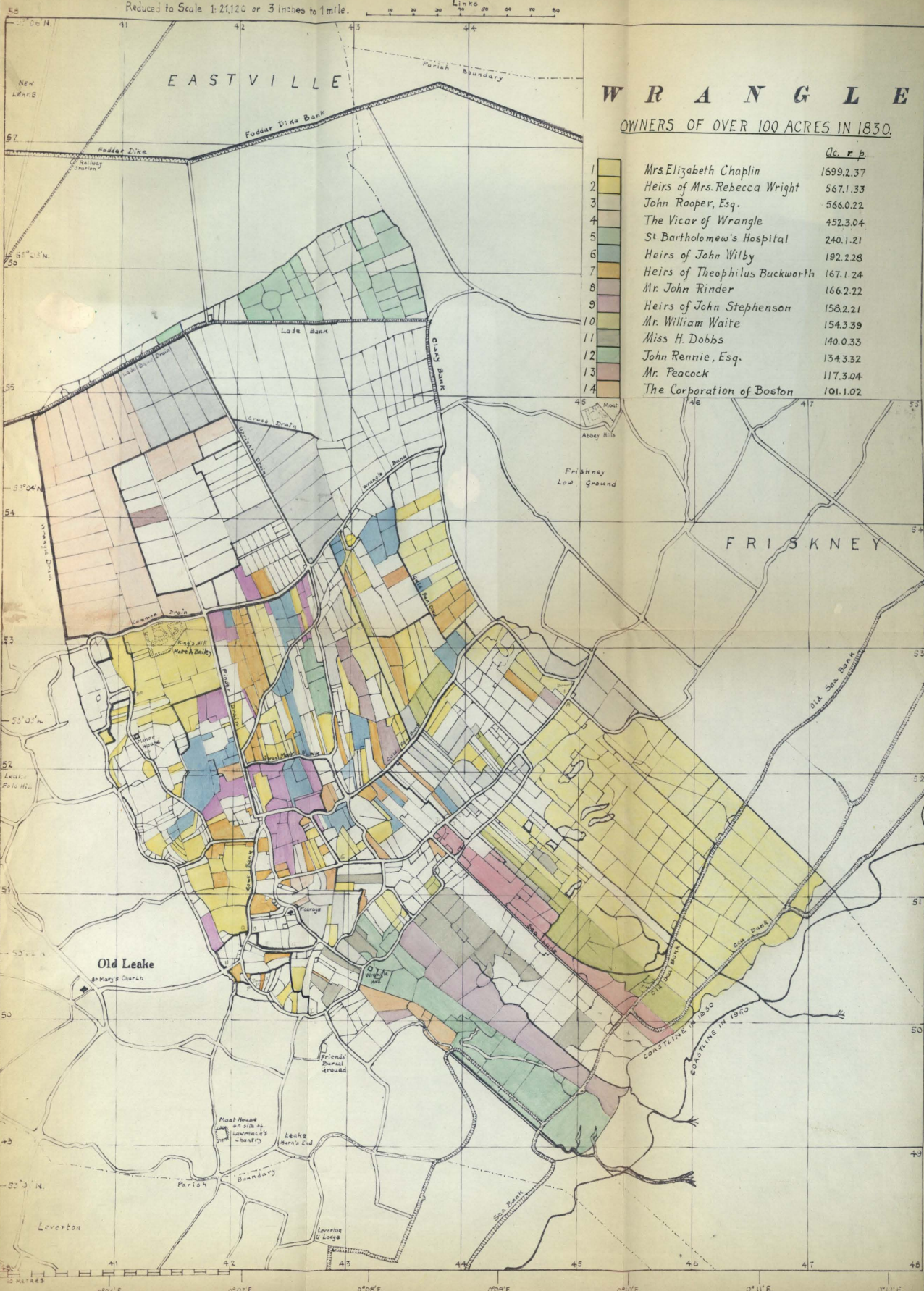
Links

EASTVILLE

WRANGLE

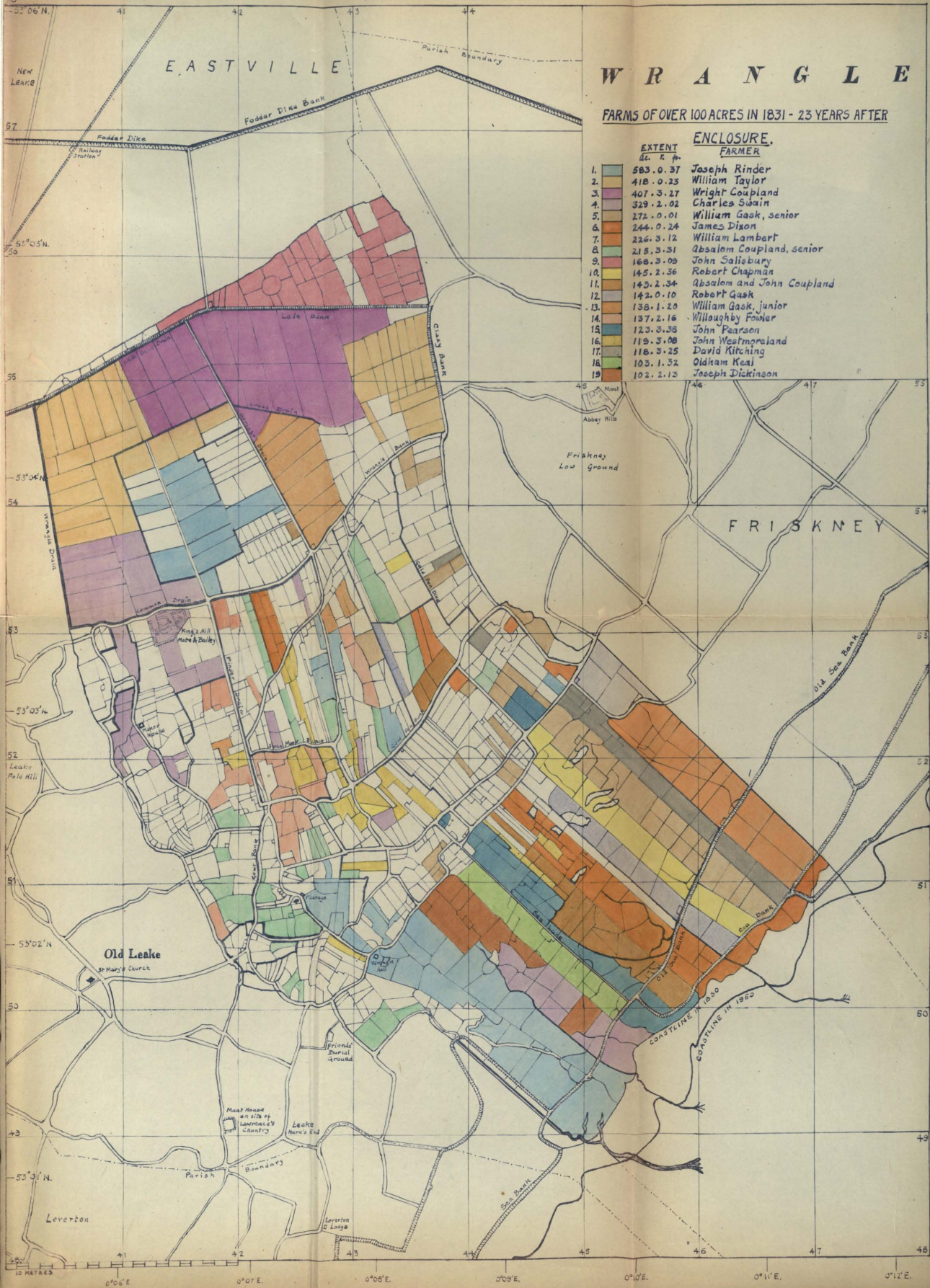
OWNERS OF OVER 100 ACRES IN 1830.

	<i>Ac. r. p.</i>
1 Mrs. Elizabeth Chaplin	1699.2.37
2 Heirs of Mrs. Rebecca Wright	567.1.33
3 John Rooper, Esq.	566.0.22
4 The Vicar of Wrangle	452.3.04
5 St Bartholomew's Hospital	240.1.21
6 Heirs of John Wilby	192.2.28
7 Heirs of Theophilus Buckworth	167.1.24
8 Mr. John Rinder	166.2.22
9 Heirs of John Stephenson	158.2.21
10 Mr. William Waite	154.3.39
11 Miss H. Dobbs	140.0.35
12 John Rennie, Esq.	134.3.32
13 Mr. Peacock	117.3.04
14 The Corporation of Boston	101.1.02



MAP 6.FARMS OF OVER100 ACRES 1831.

By 1831 there were 19 farms of more than 100 acres, totalling 4,144 acres, or 66.5% of the parish. All the farmers were tenants except that Absalom Coupland owned 46 of his 216 acres and Joseph Rinder 22 of his 583.



Wrangle - from photographs c. 1920.



The Church. Late 12th century, when the living was appropriated to Waltham Abbey. It is chiefly Perpendicular but the chancel is Decorated.



The Vicarage. As built in 1705 except that roofing tiles have replaced the original reed.

Wrangle - from photographs c. 1920.



The Bede House. The foundation was 1555 but this building dates only from mid 19th century.



Common Road - leading to the East Fen, was originally the embanked limit of the demesne land of the manor.

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 The Lincolnshire Historian.
 Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society.
 Lincolnshire Notes & Queries.
 The East Midland Geographer.
 The Amateur Historian.
 History.

The principal unpublished sources used:

1. At Wrangle Church.

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 The Bede Account books from 1671 to 1747 and
 from 1787 to 1834.
 The High Way Book 1794 to 1827.
 The Enclosure Act 1807.
 Acre Book relating to the years 1808 to 1815.
 Rough work book for 1830 to 1837, containing 6
 sketch maps of the parish and details of
 the revaluations of 1830 and 1837.
 The Poor Law Accounts 1815 to 1834.
 Vestry Minute Books 1807 to 1823 and 1823 to 1832.
 Separate documents, including the will of Thomas
 Alenson (1555), other wills, terriers and receipts.

2. At Lincoln Archives Office.

Copy of Charter of Philip and Mary (1554) granting
 land in Wrangle to the Corporation of Boston.
 Presentations to the living 1572 to 1826.
 The Churchwardens' Presentments 1663 to 1833.
 Bishop's Transcripts of the Registers 1596 to 1820.
 Wrangle Probate Inventories 1600 to 1814.
 Wrangle Wills 1600 to 1750.
 Administration Accounts 1600 to 1700.
 Holland Quarter Sessions Records 1673 to 1850.
 Records of the Mumby and Wainfleet monthly meetings
 of the Society of Friends.
 Interments at the Friends' Burial Ground, Leake,
 1720 to 1835.
 Schoolmasters' Licences and Submissions.
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 R.Gee's Enclosure Map of 1807.
 Records of the Boston Court of Sewers 1600 to 1812.
 Wrangle Terriers 1579 - 1859.

3. At the Public Record Office.

Map M.81 of 1606.
 Terrar of Wrangle Manor, DL 43 6/41 of 1609
 Survey of Wrangle Manor by R.Treswell, DL 42/119
 of 1610.
 Exchequer Special Commissions:
 E.178 4086 of 1624
 E.134 41 of 1688
 Hearth Tax Returns: E.179 140/754 of 1666.
 E.179 140/791 of 1671.
 Acreage Returns for Wrangle & Leake HO.67 (Lincs)
 of 1801.
 Census Return for Wrangle 1841. HO.107/612.
 " " " " 1851. H.O.107/2098.
 Ecclesiastical Returns 1851:
 Wrangle HO. 129 425.2.6 11,12 & 13.
 Leake HO. 129 425 2.7 15,16 7 17.

The Social and Economic History of the East Fen village of Wrangle.

Submitted for the degree of Ph.D. by F.West, 1966.

Summary

Wrangle, whose manor formed part of the Duchy of Lancaster until the Commonwealth period, lies mid-way along the coastal strip between Boston and Wainfleet. To the north-west lay the East Fen, a continual menace until its drainage in 1807.

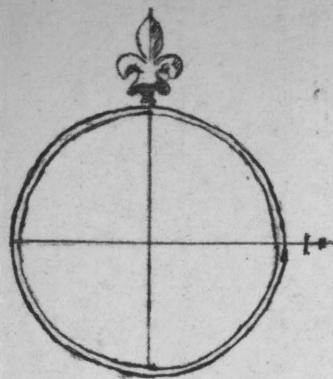
Throughout the period, farming was the main concern of the inhabitants, the fen and the Wash, as sources of food, being of only marginal importance. Until the later stages of the Napoleonic Wars when the stimulus of high grain prices led to the drainage of the fen and the enclosure of the commons, the emphasis was upon grazing. After conversion to tillage, successive grain crops led to soil-exhaustion, which was being remedied by a 5-year system of rotation only at the end of the period. The agricultural depression which ruined many areas touched Wrangle only lightly.

Despite the settlement provisions of the act of 1662, considerable movement of people continued. Wrangle's population was far from stagnant, few families settling for more than 3 generations. Until the mid-18th century, mortality was so high that the population was maintained only by an inflow of people from outside. A century later, the position was reversed. Improved conditions had led to longer marriages, larger families and a higher proportion of survivors beyond childhood. The village could not provide employment for its adolescents, three-quarters of whom were compelled to leave home.

As far as evidence is available, the study surveys various aspects of the life of the community - the daily life and work of the people, their homes and belongings,

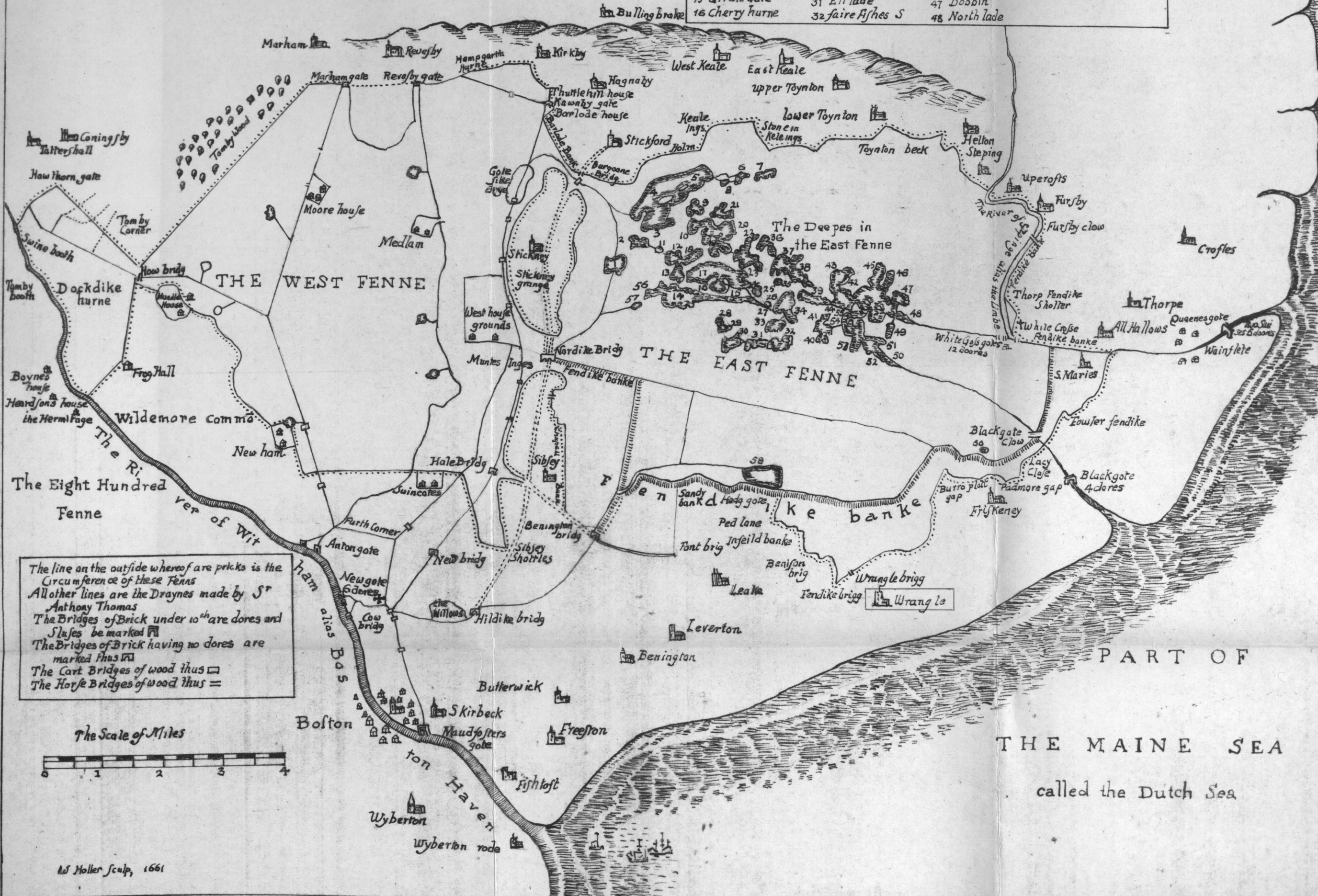
their beliefs, their government and their conduct. Separate sections deal with the parish church and the dissenting bodies, the administration of the bede school and charity, the operation of the Poor Laws, the enclosure of the commons and the changes in social conditions.

A Map of the EAST AND WEST FENNE

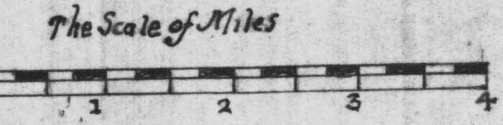


The names of all such Deepes in the East Fenne as containe any quantities of water.

- | | | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 Stock Water | 17 Long Water | 33 Faire Fishes N | 49 lackwater |
| 2 Groope | 18 Brightey | 34 Emholme | 50 Kings fishing |
| 3 Kealecote fikes | 19 Bamb weare | 35 Thow fare | 51 Smith nuke |
| 4 Stickford fikes | 20 Silver pitt | 36 Keale dikes w | 52 South lade |
| 5 Rogger | 21 Coot mouth hole | 37 Keale dikes E | 53 Billwater |
| 6 Popple poole | 22 Wash Ballock | 38 Swinham lade | 54 Billwater Clotton |
| 7 Keale Haven | 23 Harts Booze | 39 Domine | 55 Madghill water |
| 8 Moje Water | 24 Gibburne nuke | 40 Matlade | 56 Goodin draughts |
| 9 Steven Water | 25 Gowple | 41 Matlade flottons | 57 Beane sike |
| 10 Fisher bind hole | 26 Durtmouth | 42 Jewell water | 58 Leake meere |
| 11 Little park croft | 27 Salter gate | 43 The Skires | 59 Starrgate |
| 12 Great park croft | 28 Gasp Water | 44 Cow mouth | 60 Kyme pits |
| 13 Muggill | 29 Burnt meere | 45 Robb water | 61 Small pits not considerable |
| 14 Great Goodin | 30 Burnt meere holes | 46 Middle water | |
| 15 Girdle Gate | 31 Ell lade | 47 Dobbin | |
| 16 Cherry hurne | 32 faire Fishes S | 48 North lade | |



The line on the outside whereof are prickts is the Circumference of these Fens
 All other lines are the Draynes made by S^r Anthony Thomas
 The Bridges of Brick under 10th are doores and Sluses be marked
 The Bridges of Brick having no doores are marked thus
 The Cart Bridges of wood thus
 The Horse Bridges of wood thus





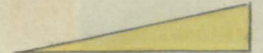
A True and perfect Plott of the Sea Coast of the
 severall Mannors belonging to the Kings Maiestie,
 and to William Hanbeye Esquier within the towne
 of Wrangle in the Countie of Lincolne, Measured
 after y^e rate of Sixteene foot & a halfe to the Perche or
 pole Anno Domini 1606.

The Towne of Frilney salt marsh and Sandes



WRANGLE

Sketch No 3 of the series prepared by
John Slater, Schoolmaster, for the Vestry
based on the Enclosure Map of 1808.

 Roads
 Drains
 Common or waste enclosed.
See Sketch 4.



See Sketch 2.

See Sketch 5.

Reduced to Scale 1: 21,120 or 3 inches to 1 mile.

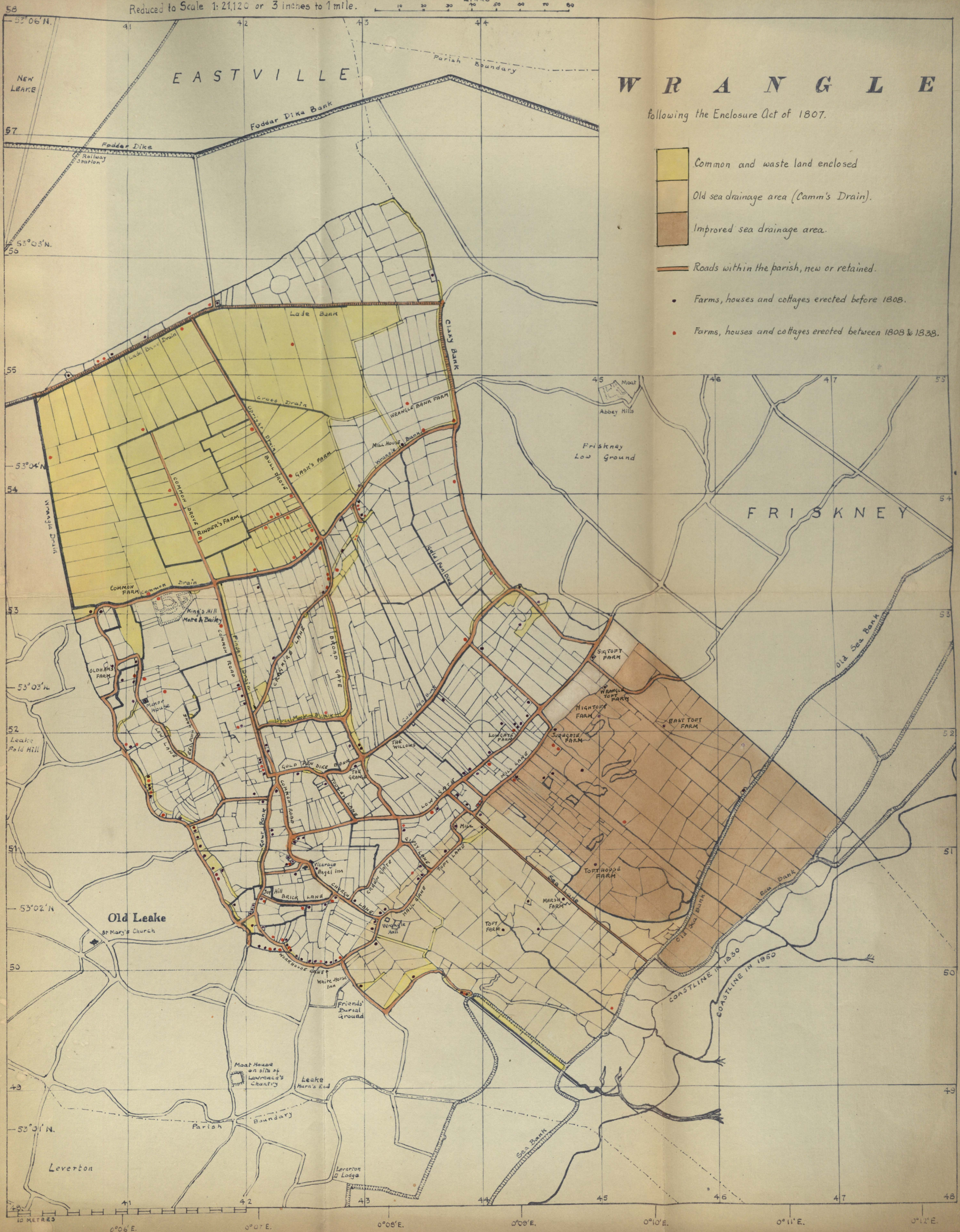
Links
70 50 00 70 80



Outlines from ORDNANCE SURVEY Sheets TF 45 NW & others.

Reduced to Scale 1:21,120 or 3 inches to 1 mile.

Links 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80



Outlines from ORDNANCE SURVEY Sheets TF 45 NW & others.

Reduced to Scale 1:21,120 or 3 inches to 1 mile.

Links 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80

EASTVILLE

WRANGLE

OWNERS OF OVER 100 ACRES IN 1808.

<u>OWNED</u>	<u>ENCLOSURE</u>		<u>TOTAL</u>
<u>1807</u>	<u>AWARD</u>	<u>PURCHASE</u>	<u>1808</u>
<u>Ac. r. p.</u>	<u>Ac. r. p.</u>	<u>Ac. r. p.</u>	<u>Ac. r. p.</u>
1174.2.17	533.0.36		1707.3.13
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149.1.08			149.1.08
135.1.35			135.1.35
111.0.19	4.0.22		115.1.01
101.0.16	9.2.19		110.2.35
103.2.02			103.2.02

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2 Heirs of William Wright
3 The Vicar of Wrangle
4 Heirs of John Wilby
5 John Rooper, Esq.
6 St. Bartholomew's Hospital
7 Mrs. Mary M. Buckworth
8 Heirs of John Stephenson
9 William Waite
10 Robert Rinder
11 Robert Cousins
12 Richard Allatson
13 John Wilkinson
14 Corporation of Boston
15 John Brown

FRISKNEY

Old Leake

St. Mary's Church

Friends' Burial ground

Moat House on site of Lawrence's Wharf

Leake Hall

Leake Hall

Leventon

0°06'E

0°07'E

0°08'E

0°09'E

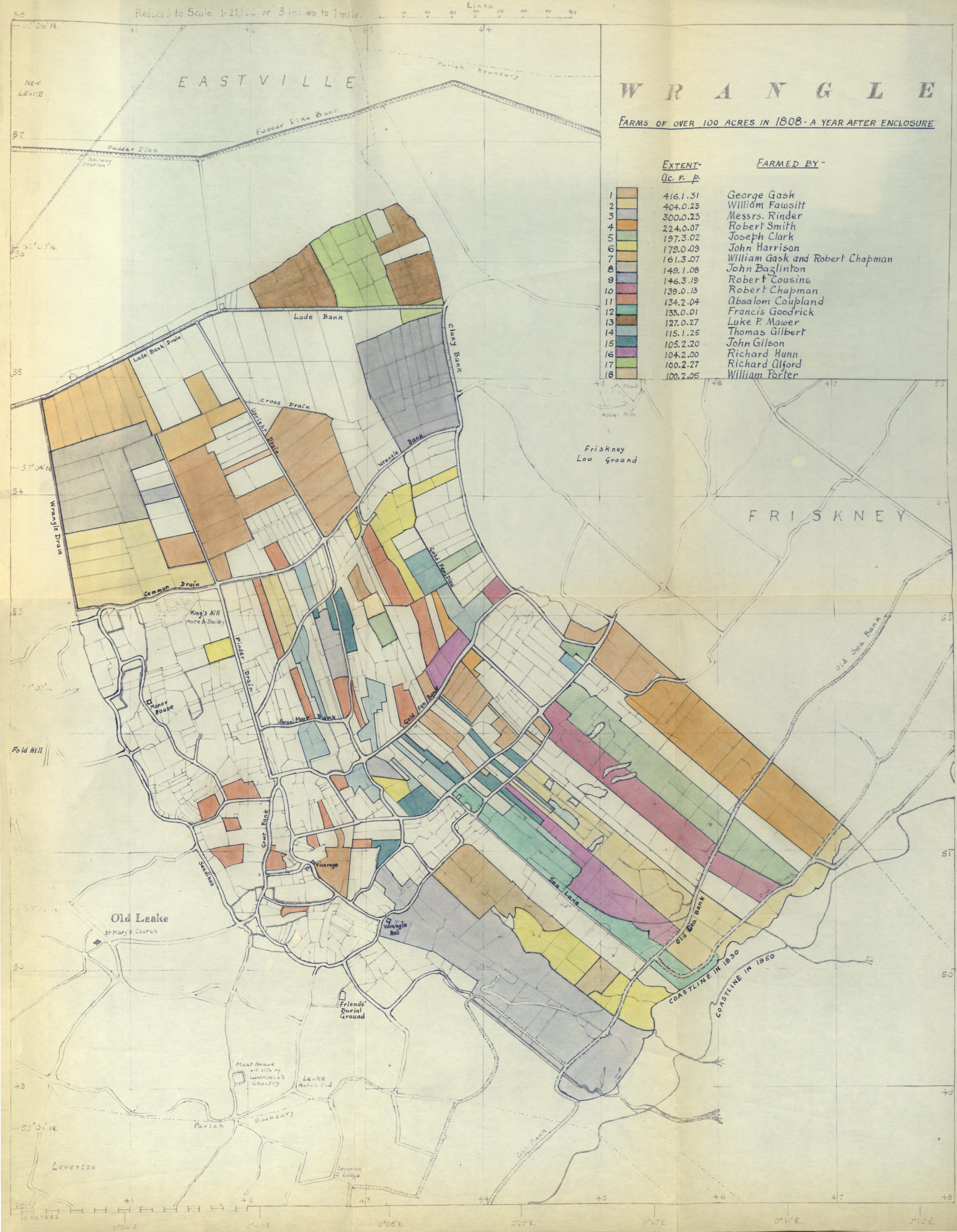
0°10'E

0°11'E

0°12'E

Reduced to Scale 1: 21,120 or 3 inches to 1 mile.

Links



Outlines from ORDNANCE SURVEY Sheets TF 45 NW & others.

Reduced to Scale 1:21,120 or 3 inches to 1 mile.

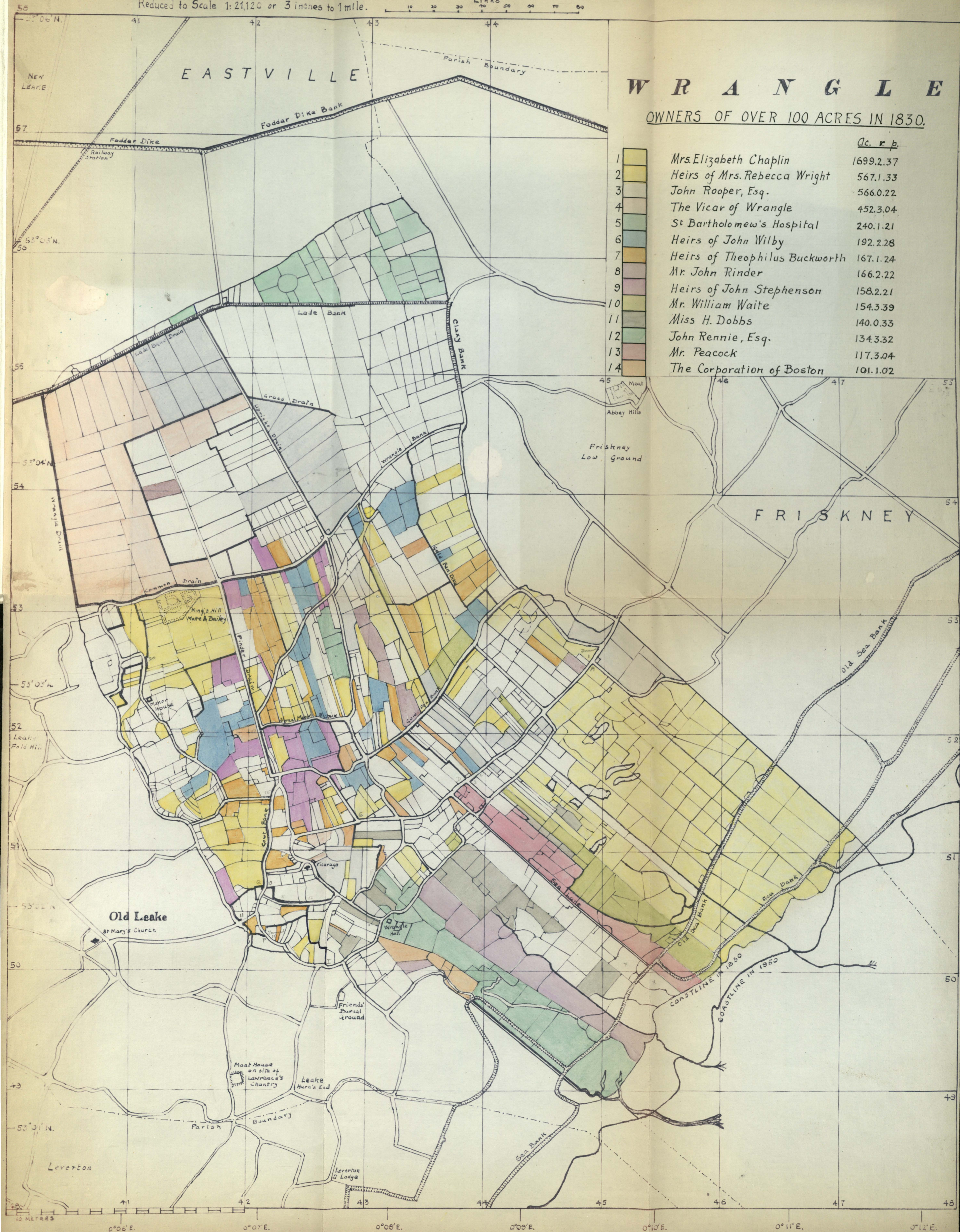
Links 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80

EASTVILLE

WRANGLE

OWNERS OF OVER 100 ACRES IN 1830.

	<i>Ac. r. p.</i>
1 Mrs. Elizabeth Chaplin	1699.2.37
2 Heirs of Mrs. Rebecca Wright	567.1.33
3 John Rooper, Esq.	566.0.22
4 The Vicar of Wrangle	452.3.04
5 St Bartholomew's Hospital	240.1.21
6 Heirs of John Wilby	192.2.28
7 Heirs of Theophilus Buckworth	167.1.24
8 Mr. John Rinder	166.2.22
9 Heirs of John Stephenson	158.2.21
10 Mr. William Waite	154.3.39
11 Miss H. Dobbs	140.0.33
12 John Rennie, Esq.	134.3.32
13 Mr. Peacock	117.3.04
14 The Corporation of Boston	101.1.02



Reduced to Scale 1:21,120 or 3 inches to 1 mile.

