

GENERAL VIEW OF AGRICULTURE - OXFORDSHIRE.

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CARRIED OUT IN 1807; PUBLISHED IN 1813.

Bampton and its hamlets of Haddon, Weald, Cote, Aston, Lew, Chimney and Shifford contain about 6000 acres of arable and 4000 acres of grass. Rich, deep, brown loam on gravel; part of it clay on the hills, but the vale exceeding fine land, from 30s to 40s an acre. Much of it is thrown up into broad arched lands, and too high for the quality of the soil. Gravel seems to be under all the country from Whelford and Lechlade to Bampton.

CHIMNEY - good loam on gravel; excellent. Enclosed; no fallow.

Many cottages in Bampton, etc. have gardens; rent from nothing to £3: others pay 1/- a week.

RENTS: Bampton from 12s to 15s an acre. An enclosure here would treble the Earl of Coventry's rents; perhaps quadruple them. They have a common of 2000 acres of greensward which enclosed would be famous land.

TITHES: Tithe at Bampton taken in kind; when compounded 3/- per acre arable and 2/- grass. They were offered for 3/8 and refused by the farmers who were surely no conjurers for 4/- were given to gather.

RATES: Year ending Easter, 1803.

PARISH.	Total raised, by Door Rate and other Rates.	Rate in £
Aston & Cote	672. 11. 8.	5s.8d.
Bampton & Weald.	995. 7. 4 $\frac{1}{2}$	6s.0d.
Chimney.	36. 7. 9.	1s.9d.
Lew.	232. 13. 3.	6s.4 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.
Shifford.	31. 9. 2.	1s.0d.
Curbridge.	520. 16. 8.	15s.0d.
Burford.	1300. 7. 3 $\frac{3}{4}$.	15s.0d.
Brize Norton.	463. 5. 10 $\frac{1}{2}$.	1s.6d.
Witney.	1887. 3. 4 $\frac{1}{2}$.	13s.6d.
Clanfield.	289. 11. 0.	4s.0d.

Oxon Notes: 1803.

38 places in the county maintained a poorhouse, and 1131 people were maintained in poorhouses at a total cost of £12124.8s.8 $\frac{3}{4}$ d., an average cost of £10.14s.4 $\frac{3}{4}$ d.. The number of ex-workhouse persons relieved was 20394 plus 2800 'who were not parishioners': probably vagrants. Excluding vagrants the total number receiving relief was 21525 and it is reckoned cost £4. 4s.7d per head. In 1801 the population of Oxon was 109620 so that it would appear that about 20% were in receipt of some form of relief.

AVERAGE TITHE CHARGE IN 1807. 6s. per acre.

THRASHING MILLS: Mr. Miller of Bampton has one made by the millwright of Stony Stratford: it is said not to work as clean as it ought to do.

TILLAGE: On Bean Land - Bampton Field.

1. Fallow.
2. Wheat.
3. Beans.
4. Barley.

They practise however what in Oxon is called 'hitching' the field; that is introducing variations by consent, and it is now proposed to substitute turnips on half the beanland, then to have barley and clover as a preparation for wheat.

Young criticises Oxon farmers for following beans so often with barley: he claimed that beans prepared the land for wheat in the same

way that turnips prepared for barley.

DRILLING: Mr. Singleton of Bampton drills his wheat at nine or ten inches, hoes it and succeeds greatly. He much approves this husbandry. Generally speaking, according to Young, Oxon farmers were not keen about drilling, and were slow to adopt it.

WHEAT: In Bampton field they break the fallows for wheat as soon as the barley is in, giving four earths in all, and ploughing in the seed on broad ridges.

In Bampton field, the soil a rich deep loam wheat seed is sown about Michaelmas which is full a month sooner than thirty years ago. Seed: On the rich deep loam of Bampton much white cone; also painted lady which has white straw, red grain and reddish chaff. They sow old wheat and do not steep; but after Michaelmas sow new. Cone wheat is not so liable to smut as other sorts. It is subject however to mildew, but early cowing a great preventative.....as hand-hoed wheat is more liable to it all intended to be hoed should be the earlier sown. Average harvest in Oxon about 4 quarters.

BEANS: Mr. Singleton and other good farmers plough the land only once, and that before Christmas; set the corn across the ridges in rows sixteen inches apart. They are thought to put in too much seed (from three to five in a hole). Mr. Singleton thinks that one is better: always hoes twice and has done it thrice. They never spread dung for them. Mr. Singleton approved the plan, and thinks that it would be better to dung for them than for wheat which is often bad practice, forcing the crop too much and renders it apt to lodge.

TARES: Mr. Singleton is a great friend to winter vetches, putting them in on a barley stubble in September, and beginning to feed them towards the end of May. Feeds his horses on them in the stable and raises by this means much manure. Sows wheat after them which is as good as after a fallow, and often better; nor do they loosen the soil too much for wheat.

CATTLE: Mr. Singleton, who grazes largely, buys Hereford oxen in the spring, and some in the autumn: the former are turned to grass, and in November to hay and bean meal, or that of barley, but beans better: gives half a peck twice a day, hay at the same time. When beans are 7s or 8s a bushel or barley at 6s he would not give either. He thinks cake at £14 or 15 per 1000 too high, but at £13 uses it. He considers cake at £13 and beans at 6/9 about on a par, but that if there be a difference, the beans are the cheaper food: the beasts, however, come on faster on cake. ~~The~~ These articles of food will not answer without the expectation of 1d per lb. rise in the market price of beef. Many of his own oxen are of a size that demands such feeding as large beasts will not fatten as soon as smaller. The largest beasts will fatten on good hay, but they take more time, in which they eat each two cwt and a half per week, but if they have cake or meal less; beans save hay more than cake. I viewed his numerous yards and stalls with pleasure, and the haystacks well disposed for feeding without trouble or waste. He ties up some, and has others (especially the larger beasts) loose in open stalls in the Hereford system, and these he prefers as the beasts travel better; they are attended with less trouble, and they do rather better. Oxen tied up make a load of dung per month. Upon inquiring the value he thought 10s. too high. Observing a small dunghill squared up by itself, and inquiring concerning the beasts that made it, it seemed to result that a beast made near a cubical yard rotten per week, which does not agree with the former idea of a load of long per month, or the quantity decreasing in about ten or twelve months, three-fourths. With plenty of litter would make much more. He has yards for four or five beasts, but objects to them as there will be always a master that thrives better than the rest. Cows are better to tie up, from the fall of the urine being clear of the bed. In hay-feeding they find that such as heated in the stack loses much of its proof.

The short-horned cows Mr. Singleton considers as much more tender

than others; their thin skins expose them to flies in the summer, and to the cold in winter. In all stall-feeding Mr Singleton has no doubt that keeping the beasts hot is bad; they should not, however, be cold only cool.

LABOUR: At Bamptn: thrashing wheat 5d to 7d a bushel: barley 1/6 to 1/8 per quarter: beans 1/6 ditto: reaping wheat 5s to 10s; mowing barley 1/3; mowing beans 1/-. Mow all and carry loose. Day work in winter 1/6; in summer 1/8 and beer; in harvest 15/- per week and beer.