

**PARLIAMENTARY ENCLOSURE OF ASLOCKTON
AND SCARRINGTON IN 1781 AND ITS EFFECTS ON
THE TWO VILLAGES**



Cranmer Local History Group

'Rediscovering the Past'



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PREFACE

This version does not include any Appendices.
It will be updated to include the original Appendices, Bibliography and a full index

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Introduction.

The type of farming in England was, for many years, the open-field system which was replaced by enclosure in many areas. The purpose of this study is to examine how Aslockton and Scarrington were enclosed and what effect this had on the two villages. The first chapter deals with a brief inspection of the open-field system, with the problems to be found with the system. The middle chapter looks at the way land was enclosed, especially the Parliamentary enclosure, and then looks at the actual enclosure act, award and map for Aslockton and Scarrington. The third chapter then analyses the affects the enclosure had on this area, both for the county and for the two villages.

Before commencing with the study it may be helpful to give a brief outline of the two villages. From the Ordnance Survey map we can see that Aslockton is close to the A.52 road to Grantham and lies some twelve miles from Nottingham. The village of Scarrington is just beyond. Aslockton is on the main Nottingham to Grantham Railway line and, as a result of this, modern Aslockton is a commuter village with people living in the village and working in Nottingham. Scarrington is more remote, without even a regular bus route, although it is within walking distance of Aslockton. Aslockton still has a farming aspect and there are one or two large farms, but very few of the population now work on the land. In Scarrington it is different, because of its lack of public transport, most of the inhabitants are farmers or farm labourers.

Chapter One .

The Open Field System Before Enclosure.

The open-field system was not the only system of farming which existed in England, it was not practiced in the north and north west or along the Welsh borderⁱ. In the midlands, which is the area under study, it was more usual. The open-field system dates back as far as the Domesday Book and the period during which the Feudal system was activated. The open-field system was, as the term suggests, open. Ground was cleared almost completely for cultivation and for the upkeep of stock, which was usually on the land that was left, which was not put under the plough. There were no fields as we know them today " surrounded by walls, fences or hedges, but, probably three of four fields covering the whole of the area around the village. This system was originally based on subsistence, not producing food for market. The villagers were working to feed themselves and their families, and were not concerned with making profit. However, during the years, especially during the thirteenth centuryⁱⁱ the farmers became more interested in selling goods and, therefore, further reclamation of land and waste ground continued. Although Orwin claims that during this time there was no division of village community into categories, either socially or economically; and that these have evolved since,ⁱⁱⁱ it seems more likely that the lands were allotted according to status, for example the Lord of the Manor, who was the head of the manorial system would have the first choice of lands and would hold several strips of arable land, whereas the villein who was much more humble would make do with small strips of land on the edge of the cleared land which he received in return for working on land belonging to the Landowner. The fortunate would, perhaps, work only one day a week, but others could do as much as three^{iv} Those of higher status would pay rent for their land to the Landowner. Tate claims there were three main necessities obtainable from the land, "bread, vegetables and meat"^v. Therefore the farmers needed pasture for stock in the summer and meadow for growing hay as a supply of food in winter for cattle. Cereals and vegetables were also important so arable land was also needed. These needs meant the lands of the village were usually divided into arable fields, pasture or common and meadow, depending on the type of farming land. In the Derbyshire dales the pasture and meadow would be more important, for the farming land was not very fertile. In the two villages under study the arable fields were more prominent~ as can be seen from the open conjectural field map.^{vi} However, there was also an important need for meadow and pasture. Often the arable fields were divided into two or three large fields and farmed in rotation. From an early date the farmers recognized the need to rest the soil, so usually the village community had more ploughland than was necessary, some fields could be left fallow while the rest were under crop. The fallow field would then be left open for pasture and every landholder had the right to turn his beasts onto this until the land was ploughed in readiness for the next year's crop. Ploughing was the principal occupation on a Manorial farm and this called for more labour on the part of man and his beast at this time of the year than any other.^{vii} In the autumn some of the land had to be ploughed for winter seed. In spring other land had to be prepared for Zenten sowing and fallow ground had to be ploughed twice during the year. The first ploughing was to turn under the stubble and weeds of the erop of the year before. The second ploughing was to prepare the land for sowing. On the manorial land few peasants could afford ploughs, so they had to co-operate in the use of the one or two they owned between them, for example, one person may have owned the plough, whilst another owned the beast to pull it, and, therefore, co-operation was needed.

Co-operation was the essential need for open-field farming, for example; the land had to be ploughed at roughly the same time, otherwise the late farmer could ruin the newly planted crops of his neighbour, for there were no boundaries between the strips. Sometimes they were divided by a grass balk, but later, as more land was used, the strips were separated by double furrows. However, difficulties arose in maintaining these boundaries, as every plough strip needed to be plainly identified, sometimes stones and stakes would be used, but these could often be displaced^{viii} and had to be reset, normally by a jury of neighbours.

There was no distinction between which fields belonged to Aslockton and which to Scarrington: boundaries were not made until the enclosure. The villages had nine arable fields between them, there were three large fields, Bradmore, Mill and Thorn with six smaller fields, Cliffe, Spellow, Stannilands, Carr, Rye and West hill^{ix} but all these fields would not be used at the same time. The land would be farmed in regular rotation, part for use for crops and the rest in fallow.

There were two main types of systems used for farming, the two field system and the three field system. The first system meant that the farmer's holdings were divided equally between two parts of ploughland. In other words he would hold some of his land in the part that was to be cultivated and the rest in the land which was to be left fallow.^x In the two field system the land on which crops were to be grown would also be divided into half. One half would hold autumn corn, wheat, winter beans or rye and the other half spring corn, barley, oats, spring beans or peas.

The arrangement of the two field system meant an exhaustive demand on the land and there were obvious advantages to be seen in the three field system. This involved the land being divided into three sections, autumn crops would occupy one part, spring crops the second and fallow the third. Similar to the two field system, but the land was divided into thirds instead of in half. This was probably what happened in practice with the two field system, for example; they would work across one half of the land set aside for corn in the autumn and the other half in the spring.

The difference was that the three field system was more economical in the use of land in that there was less fallow. Whether a community would operate the two field system instead of three depended on the nature of the soil and its powers of recovery.

In Aslockton and Scarrington the soil is fertile and it is likely that the second type of system was carried out, even more so as we know that in the Belvoir district the three field system was normal, wheat or barley was grown in one field, beans in another and the third was fallow,^{xi} In most places however, it seemed a cross between the two was usually found. The two field system was wasteful on land, with only half in productive use, but when land was plentiful this was not important, but as more land was being used the three field system became more established

The crops, both winter and spring, needed to be protected from straying stock from the commons, and it was usually the duty of the men whose land was near to a road or common way to fence this off by joining his fence to that of his neighbours. This also served to keep the animals in the field when it was fallow. Orwin^{xii} identifies four main features of open-field farming, firstly the arable fields were usually large and often ran into hundreds of acres. This was true of the villages of Scarrington and Aslockton. Bradmore field was approximately four hundred and fifty acres which was one of the largest fields. This is only a rough estimate, based on a comparison between the two maps.^{xiii} The smallest field was Spellow, which was approximately sixty two acres, therefore one of the main features is identified in these two townships.

Secondly, Orwin states that holdings were scattered in small strips throughout the fields and, thirdly fields lay fallow every second or third year and, fourthly that grazing rights were exercised on the common and also in the arable fields. Although these identify the system of open field farming, lack of evidence makes it impossible to determine whether these final three features applied in Aslockton and Scarrington.

If this system was carried out in Aslockton and Scarrington, then sowing in the large fields would have had to be carried out at the same time, because the stock would remain on the land until it was time for sowing and there were no fences within the arable field. There would be no point in sowing until all the beasts were driven off. The same thing was true for reaping the corn for the land would serve as common immediately afterwards.

The rest of the year when animals were not on the arable fields they were kept on the land known as common or waste, which was the land that had not been taken for cultivation. Most villages had a thin belt of woodland and waste, which afforded rough pasture for flocks and herds, or sometimes land was set aside for pasture. In Aslockton the latter was observed and a large part, known as the cow pasture, was set aside for this purpose, there was also a large piece of pasture next to Scarrington and mill field. This shows the importance that was placed on feeding of stock as well as the growing of crops. There was also waste land that could be used as pasture; this can be seen on the open-field map.

The two townships had quite a considerable amount of waste land provided by the Moor and Hardhills, where early enclosures had first been made, such as those held by John Musters and the Duke of Portland. The common may either have been carefully allotted, or open to anyone who cared to turn animals onto it. An example of the former could have been when land was set aside for plough, cattle, sand and gravel pits or for turf cutting.

Finally, the meadow was very important for this meant growing hay for the purpose of feeding the livestock during the winter. The quantity of meadow was strictly limited in the two townships. There were three pieces of land, Long Meadow, Welling Meadow and Carr Meadow. All of which are on the very edge of the boundaries, This land was valuable and usually subjected to annual reallocation, This meant that every year men would have to claim a new piece of land on the meadow which would be divided by lot, pegged out and distributed among the owners of the strips. However, after haysel (when the hay was gathered in) then the meadow would be open to all as common land.

To enable open fields to function well there had to be ways of access to the fields for ploughs, carts and teams, also droveways for cattle on their way to pasture and footpaths. Every village would be concerned to maintain and keep them free from obstructions and the villagers would have to be constrained to use them and not take short cuts when crops would be damaged.

The main idea of the open-field system seems to have been to give a rough equity and a desire to give each proprietor some good land and some bad, some wet and some dry, then whatever the weather was like during the year each person would be assured of a subsistence level. It seems though that the open-field system of farming was not perfect, for if it was, there would have been no need for the change which came in the form of enclosure. There were several reasons why the open-field system was imperfect, firstly, it did not lend itself to agricultural experiment and progress. When several farmers were working the same piece of land it was very difficult for one farmer to try a new crop because he had to grow the same as the rest in the field he could not try a new drainage system because it would affect other peoples' land and even though he may have persuaded some that his new ideas would work, there were those who resisted change and would not listen. Secondly, this

system could be uneconomic in labour and time, for example if a farmer felt he could get his crop in earlier in the year he would not be able to because his neighbour cattle were still grazing. Because there were so many farmers on one field it was impossible for one to go his own way. Thirdly, this system was wasteful on the land, for in the large fields there were pieces of land of irregular sizes called gores^{xiv} which were left uncultivated because they could not fit into a furlong, and there were also patches of unploughed land. As a result of these disadvantages those farmers who sought better production for more profits also desired a new way of farming and this was the argument which favoured enclosure. Those farmers then began to look for various ways of enclosing land that could be to their own advantage.

Chapter 2.

Development of Enclosure in Aslockton and Scarrington.

Medieval farming had a system of tenure which was firmly established by law. This was the condition of service by which the land was held. The Manorial system involved lands being given out to tenants in return for money, but more often payment was in kind, which usually involved a percentage of the farmers' crops, or return of labour, for example, a tenant would receive land for working on the Lord's estate, for some this would be a day, or to those who were not so fortunate, this could be three days^{xv}. However, the time that was spent on the Lord's land probably would not amount to that total because a set amount of work would be involved and once the worker had finished he would be free to go about his own business.

The Lord of the Manor owned the land under the Crown. Some of the estate the Lord kept for himself, these were known as the demesne lands, but other parts may have been held by farmers and others held direct from the landlord.^{xvi} The creation of freehold estates was very common under the manorial system.

Freeholders owed suit and services to the Lord which took the form, ultimately, of a token payment of rent. The freeholders enjoyed the property of the land for farming and could even sell it if they wished. Unfortunately, for the two villages under study, there are no surviving lists of freeholders for the date before enclosure. The award refers only to one freeholder, Sarah Peake, who received 35 acres 4 roods and 6 perches in view of her freehold rights to lands. It is unlikely that this woman was the only freeholder out of the two villages. Indeed, on the enclosure map^{xvii} another freeholder is mentioned, the Reverend Graham Chappell. The tenants held land from the Lord or the freeholder the conditions of which varied from one manor to another, but most leasehold involved labour service. The lease for these could be for a term of years or for life, or for two or more lives. Because these leases were recognized by law, enclosure could only be brought about in three main ways, 2 by custom, unity of possession or by agreement.^{xviii}

Enclosure by custom as Kerridge refers to it, usually happened where common land was plentiful and the Lords held the right to enclose portions of waste or common. The Lord could make enclosures on land that was not needed by the rest of the Parish. This usually involved land of Turbary and Estover, these were parts of the common set aside for the cutting of turf or the taking of wood. It could also apply to pasture land. This type of enclosure meant there would be less land for the peasant. As long as the waste land was large and the landlord did not take too much land, no hardship was suffered, but if more than one owner decided to enclose, problems would arise. To protect the ordinary peasant the Statute of Merton was passed in 1235 which stated that the Lord was to leave "sufficient pasture"^{xix} for his free tenants for common rights were very important. The villager's right of common was linked with the number of acres held in the common fields.

The Statute of Merton, however, was not satisfactory because it did not give any details on how much pasture was to be left for the peasant. It also provided only protection for the freeman not the ordinary tenants. This led to the passing of a second Statute in 1285, which was also inadequate in that it brought in the peasants who had previously had rights of common, but still made no mention of how much land should be left.

These types of enclosures took place in Aslockton and Scarrington. It is not clear when these enclosures were made, but as they are referred to in the award as 'ancient enclosures' it is clear they were made at a much earlier period than the Parliamentary enclosure. The table below gives a good example of the fact that ancient enclosures were made on land that was classed as waste. All these enclosures were made on Scarrington

Moor or Aslockton Moor.

Table 1 Payments to be Made by Proprietors of Ancient Enclosures in Discharge of Tythes.^{xx}

Name and Place of Enclosure	Acres	Roods	Perch
Overseers of Poor Entitled to land.	4	0	27
Duke of Portland, Lord of the Manor, Aslockton, Aslockton Moor and Hardhills	4	1	17
Duchess of Kingston for Manors in Scarrington and Aslockton, Aslockton Moor	12	1	23
John Musters, Lord of Manor, Aslockton, Aslockton Moor	0	2	34
Reverend Francis Wotton as Lord of Manor, Aslockton, Aslockton Moor	1	0	14

It is possible to see from the table that usually these ancient enclosures were not large, the largest one was held by the Duchess of Kingston at 12 acres. These enclosures were usually made by the larger landowners or the Lords of the Manor, as can be seen from the table, although the overseers of the poor were also given land.

It seems that the commoner had little rights to stop these enclosures, after the Statutes came into force the lords exercised more power and the peasants slowly lost their land. The only way they could fight the landowner was to try and prove that the land left was insufficient for their needs, making the enclosure contrary to customs and statutes.

The second form of enclosure was by unity of possession. This happened when farmers had no estates and the demesnes or other freeholds were let in halves and thirds, or the tenancies were merely annual. The landlords then only had to wait until the end of the year to have all the land at their immediate disposal, when it could be enclosed without asking leave of anyone, because all the land was his own. Unity of possession on occasion came about through engrossment, which was the purchase of the whole estate. Unfortunately Kerridge gives no example of this.^{xxi}

The most usual form of enclosure was by agreement, which applied to the enclosure of Aslockton and Scarrington. Some agreements were piecemeal in that lands might be taken at will, provided they were thrown open at Lammas (1st of August, the feast of fruits) after harvest. It was permissible to keep such enclosures in severalty throughout the year, if the encloser surrendered all rights to common and gained his neighbours' consent. Usually enclosure by agreement took two forms, composition and commission. Enclosure by composition was arranged^{xxii} through the consent of the common field farmers to the enclosure of demesne lands or part of the waste proportionate to the rights of the common enjoyed by demesne. Enclosure of this kind meant agreed exchanges between Lord and tenants.

By far the most important of enclosure by agreement was by Commission called this, because two or more contradicting parties commissioned disinterested parties to supervise the division and award of allotments. It was a multilateral agreement for the extinction of commons, fields and wastes by those who had freehold estates in the Parish. These enclosures were conducted in the same manner through the period from the sixteenth century to the nineteenth century. This type of enclosure was carried out in Aslockton and Scarrington was later in this period. The Act was made between 1779 and 1780, but the actual enclosure was carried out in 1781.^{xxiii}

Kerridge^{xxiv} suggests that whoever made the first move for the enclosure, whether it was the chief landowner, a group of landowners or farmers, the advocates of enclosure 'drew into communication' making speeches for the agreement of a change of system. The meeting was held between the advocates of enclosure and other landholders after notice was made for five Sundays on the Church door. After the meeting a petition was sent to

the House of Commons. The petition was drafted with the support of the Lord of the Manor and the principal proprietors. It was not essential to list all the proprietors, there were only three quarters of those needed, whose lands were affected. Most important were the Lord of the Manor, Tithe owners and large landowners. In the Midlands a request for the commutation of tithes was made, as with this enclosure. The next stage was the ordering and reading of the Bill. After the first reading of the Bill a committee was appointed to look into the circumstances. Petitions could be made against the Bill, but unless they were large landowners, little notice was taken. The Bill was then reported with or without amendments for the third reading. The House of Lords usually passed the Bill on the third reading as it stood or made minor alterations. The Commissioners were then appointed to carry out the provisions of the Act.^{xxv}

There is no evidence to suggest that there were disagreement or oppositions to the enclosure of the two villages of Aslockton and Scarrington, but that does not necessarily mean that there was no opposition, indeed it is more likely that there was some form of opposition. It seems unlikely that a change of this size would go smoothly. It was usually the large landowners who favoured enclosure and the small leaseholders were the ones who would not do so well in this transaction, for they may not have been able to afford the cost of enclosing their land. In this case the large landowners, and the most important, are mentioned in the Enclosure Act.^{xxvi}

Evelyn, late Duke of Kingston, John Musters, Esq and Reverend Francis Wotton. - Claim separate and distinct Manors within Scarrington and Aslockton

Dean and Chapter of Lincoln and Patrons of Scarrington Church - Entitled to Glebe lands in possession of Reverend Graham Chappell and Reverend William Oddie, Orston.

John Hewitt. Patron of Whatton Church which includes Aslockton

Sarah Peake, Widow. Freeholder.

William Bilbie Esq. and Alexander Eaton, Gentleman. William Blagg.

Reverend John Dixon of Hawksworth.

Elizabeth Turner, Widow and John Brough are Patrons of Hawksworth. Although these are the only ones mentioned in the Act, from the enclosure map we can see large landowners, also included are John and Thomas Wright, Kings Cliff School and Ann Flower. As there is a lack of information to suggest who were the freeholders; it may be reasonable to suggest that besides Sarah Peake these would also have included: John Musters, William Bilbie, Reverend Graham Chappell, Alexander Eaton, William Blagg, Elizabeth Turner and John Brough. Of course, the list is incomplete, but we know allotments were awarded in proportion to former holdings and interests, and as these people were awarded generous lands after enclosure, it is reasonable to suggest they had good holdings before.

The enclosure of Aslockton and Scarrington we know involved several proprietors and therefore it would be difficult to divide the lands to the advantage of everyone, which was why the Commissioners were appointed.

The Act states:

"Lands and grounds belonging to several proprietors in the open fields and meadows be intermixed and dispersed and it would be advantageous to the several proprietors of and persons entitled to and interested in the said open fields, meadows, commons and waste to have the same divided and enclosed yet it cannot be rendered effectual to answer the intentions of the parties without the aid and authority of Parliament"^{xxvii}

The two townships were enclosed by act of Parliament in 1781 and Commissioners who held no property and, therefore, had nothing to gain, were appointed. The Act suggests that these should be William Jepson of Lincoln, Thomas Oldknow of Nottingham and George Kelk of Carlton^{xxviii} who were probably Surveyors. Their responsibility was to divide and allot the open fields, common and waste in Aslockton and Scarrington as fairly as possible. They were responsible for putting the Act into execution. Before they were looked upon as Commissioners they had to take an oath set down in the Act:

"I do swear that I will faithfully, impartially and honestly according to the best of my skill and judgement execute the trusts reposed in me as a commissioner by virtue of an act for dividing, and inclosing the open fields, meadows common pastures and waste grounds in the townships of Scarrington and Aslockton in the county of Nottingham without favour or affection to any person whatsoever, so help me God."^{xxix}

A quite impressive piece of language, but it seems likely that the Commissioners were not adverse to accepting a few bribes now and again, as the Thoroton Transactions infer. Although they were generally selected from the most trustworthy people, they were not kindly looked upon and sometimes described as "Vested with despotic power" or as having the poor "Entirely at their mercy" or "Able to gratify every passion of resentment and prejudice" and often accused of not carrying out their job properly.^{xxx} In Aslockton and Scarrington there is no evidence to suggest that anyone received more favourable plots than others

In order to divide the fields properly, a surveyor had to be appointed and, in this case, it was William Attenburrow, again he was impartial. His role was to make a survey of all the lands, calculating how many acres the land consisted of and how much belonged to each proprietor in the open fields, common, pasture, waste and the ancient enclosures. Ancient enclosures are mentioned several times in the Enclosure Act, but they are not shown on the conjectural open-field map. It is known from information earlier in this chapter that these were on the waste land of the villages, rather than in the open fields, which is where most of the early enclosure took place. The Surveyor had to take everything into account, and, like the Commissioners, had to take an oath promising to make an accurate and true survey.

The Commissioners and the Surveyor were given full authority to carry out the Act and for this purpose they had permission to "Enter into, survey, examine, value and admeasure"(1)

the open-fields, common, pasture etc: They were also authorised to set out private and public roads, ways, drains and also a piece of ground that was to be set aside for the purpose of getting materials to repair them. They also had to appoint lands to the Dean and Chapter of Zincoln Cathedral and their successors, also Graham Chappell, their lessee for glebe. These were normally substantial allotments, as can be seen from the table below

Table 2 Show the Amount of Land Given as Glebe in Aslockton And Scarrington.

Holder	Field/Common/Pasture	Acre	Rood	Perch
Dean and Chapter, Lincoln	Aslockton, Cliffe Field and Long Meadow	29	1	4
Lessee Graham Chappell	Cliffe and Cow Pasture	3	0	13
Lessee Jayne Molyneaux	Cliffe Field	3	1	29
William Bilbie Esq, and Alexander Eaton	Aslockton Thorn Field	1	1	29
Reverend John Dixon, Hawkesworth	Scarrington, Stannilands Field	0	0	32

Glebe lands were usually held by the Church, but sometimes they could be held by other owners, as can be seen in the case of William Bilbie and Alexander Eaton. Non-secular ownership of Glebe lands was common,

landowners either bought land from the Church or it could have been taken away from them for various reasons, such as; during the reign of Henry VIII when many Church lands were confiscated. The Commissioners also dealt with tithes, which were a kind of tax paid for the upkeep of the church. The Enclosure Act ended this form of tax by giving owners of tithes land, which then could then rent out. These rents were to be paid by one yearly payment on the 10th of October every year.

Table 3 Show Amount of Land Received for Tithes in Aslockton And Scarrington.

Holder	Field/Common/Pasture	Acre	Rood	Perch
Dean and Chapter of Lincoln	Scarrington, Firth Pasture, Mill Field, Thorn Field and Moor	57	1	29
	Thorn Field	18	0	1
	Moor and Hardhills	39	2	11
Vicar of Orston	Aslockton, Spellow field, Cliffe field and Long Meadow	34	0	17
	Common	0	0	23
	Cliffe field	0	0	19
	Bradmore Field	0	0	27
Sarah Peake	Aslockton, Spellow Field	0	1	2
		59	2	38
W. Bilbie & A Eaton	Aslockton, Thorn Field	33	3	24
		31	2	30
William Blagg	Aslockton, Mill Field	3	1	28
Vicar of Whatton	Aslockton, Thorn Field,	6		5
		34		28
	Cliffe Field	3	2	16
Rector of Hawkesworth	Scarrington, Stannilands Fields	3	0	20

It is possible to see from this table that the tithes did not always belong to the Church, probably because landowners bought glebe land, therefore they also received the tithes that went with the land. There were larger tithes and smaller ones, for example, the Dean and Chapter of Lincoln received over one hundred acres of land. The smaller ones belonged to the Vicars of the local Parish such as the Vicar of Orston and the Rector of Hawkesworth.

Other taxes, Parliamentary and otherwise, were also paid on the 10th October, after the stopping of the tithes. Therefore, the owners of the lands were to receive their tithes in the form of rents. If the new type of rents remained unpaid thirty days after the date stated above, then it was possible for the owner to enter the lands and seize them. These lands were allotted first along with those belonging to the Lords of the Manor, who were given one eighteenth of all common which was not known to be the property of anyone. The Glebe land allotments were to be enclosed by other proprietors. After this was done the rest of the land was allotted to the other proprietors.

After the allotments had been drawn up, the Award was to be made. This was to show the quantity in statute measure and to whom the lands were awarded. It states in the Act that the Commissioners^{xxxii} were to regard the quality of land as well as the quantity, and also to take into account the situation of the land to try and make the land as near to the homesteads as possible. If any differences or disputes arose the Commissioners were to decide the outcome. It would be a mistake, however, to believe that all farmers were given convenient fields by the Award^{xxxiii} Farmhouses on the edge of the village might be given much of their land nearby, but this could not always be done for holdings with homes in the centre. This can be seen when looking at the enclosure map, one example is Thomas Blagg^{xxxiii} who had land near the village of Aslockton in Bradmore field, and some the other end near Scarrington. A partial solution to this was to permit exchanges, for example:

John and Thomas Wright to the Vicar of Orston 0 acres 3 roods 3 perches in Hawksworth for 0 acres 2 roods 19 perches in Aslockton Cliffe field.

John Marsh to Vicar of Orston 0 acres 0 roods 39 perches in Hawksworth for 0 acres 1 rood 2 perches in Bradmore field. Reverend Graham Chappell to John Musters 'Nillow Brigg Close 2 acres 3 roods 4 perches for allotment in Scarrington 5 acres 2 roods 8 perches.^{xxxiv} This shows that if people did exchange, especially as in the last case, the person exchanging may have lost or gained a quantity of land. Graham Chappell gained just under 3 acres of land, but the quality may have deteriorated. It also shows that you cannot calculate how much land the residents in Aslockton and Scarrington held, because they probably owned land elsewhere. In this case John and Thomas Wright owned land in Hawksworth which they exchanged in return for some in Aslockton. Therefore, it would be very difficult to work out the effect of enclosures on the amount of land that was held by farmers and whether it declined or increased.

The Commissioners were also to set out roads, both public and private. These roads were wide and straight, a usual indication that they were constructed after or during enclosure. They also constructed ditches, drains and banks. Only those mentioned in the Act were to be used. A clause was put in the Act stating that grazing or keeping cattle on the roads or ways which had been set out was unlawful.^{xxxv}

Roads included in Aslockton: Bingham Road, Aslockton to Scarrington, Turnpike Road, Orston Road, Thoroton Road, Screveton Footways, Carr Colston, Bingham, to Poor House. Roads included in Scarrington:

Scarrington Church to John Hall homestead, Hawksworth Road, Carr Colston Road, Orston Road, Scarrington Road to Aslockton and Bingham Road.^{xxxvi}

Because the open-field map is only conjectural it is not possible to see whether the roads were all old, or whether any new ones were built. The distinction between Aslockton roads and Scarrington roads shows the setting up of boundaries between the two townships. We can see from the open-field map that boundaries between the two did not exist before enclosure, i.e. Bradmore field stretches from Aslockton to Scarrington and is mentioned both in the list for the division of Aslockton and that of Scarrington. The enclosure map, however, shows clearly the boundary between the two townships with a line of circles more prominent than the field boundaries. The hedges on the boundaries and the side of the roads were to be set up by the new owners and to be repaired by them, but the commission stated that openings were to be left in these for the passage of cattle, cart: or carriages. It seemed then that, although the land was enclosed, and allotments were awarded, Farmers had no power to keep cattle belonging to other people off their piece of enclosed land. Another injustice occurred if a certain person was allotted a piece of land on which a tree stood, because he would have to pay the previous owner for that privilege, even if he did not want it.

If the allotments were not set out before the 29th September 1780, then the Act says that it would be:

"Unlawful for the several owners and proprietors of them to plough his tillage and to reap the crops"^{xxxvii}

This shows the awareness for the farming year, for if the farmer: could not sow in September, they would lose their winter wheat. This would be disastrous for a small village, and the standard of living would then decline. It also stated that no other lands were to be ploughed other than those already cultivated. This was to protect land which was previously pasture and to make sure the farmers with animals had somewhere to graze them. If the allotments were made before the 25th March 1781, then the new owners of them were "To make satisfaction" this meant that the new owners could not claim the land and the old farmers'

harvest as well. They had to make some compensation by either paying for the crop in money or kind, or by letting the previous farmer harve his crop, whatever it was.

In any event the person who was entitled to the allotments was required to accept within six months, otherwise they faced exclusion. Trustees and guardians etc. were allowed to accept for those who were incapable, i.e. infants, handicapped, mentally and physically or, in the event of death the heirs were able to claim. For example, in the award and on the map of enclosure, the co-heirs of William Marsh are mentioned, inheriting land in Stannilands and Bradmore field.

When land was previously shared, as in the case of William Bilbie and Alexander Eaton, then the Commissioners were given the right to partition land, with the agreement of the two parties, this agreement was given in the form of a letter from them, which read as follows:

"We William Bilbie Esq. and Alexander Eaton Gentleman, do hereby consent and request that the said Commissioners or any two of them may make division and partition of the lands by their award allotted or intended to be allotted and awarded to us in lieu of and satisfaction for our Glebe and Tythes of land in the said townships or in either of them between us in the manner following (Vizt) 33 acres and 19 perches in that part of Thorn field within the township=of Aslockton which lies on the north side of Turnpike road leading from Bingham to Grantham to the said William Bilbie and his heirs to be held in severalty and 33 acres 3 roods and 24 perches in trat part of the said Thorn field within the township of Aslockton which lies on the south side of the said Turnpike road leading from Bingham to Grantham to the said Alexander Eaton and his heirs in severalty. As witness our hands the 20th Day of February one thousand seven hundred and eighty one

Witness:

John Massey.

W. Bilbie

A. Eaton (2)

We can see from the enclosure map that the two men were given the pieces of land they had requested in their letter.

The 1781 enclosure map^{xxxviii} shows how the commission, with the aid of the Surveyors, proceeded. The North and South Boundaries were easy to define, to the north the boundary was made by the Carr Dyke, used for drainage and dug long before enclosure, and still there today. The south boundary ran parallel with the River Smite, the course of which has since been changed, but the old course of the river can still be seen. To the east there was no landmark to define a boundary as such, but to the west the boundary mainly lies along the Bingham ditch which is now the main A.52 road. During the surveying and allotting of land, therefore, the Carr Dyke, the River Smite and the Bingham ditch made convenient boundaries to work from.

The plots or allotments varied greatly in size from anything between 212 acres 3 roods 29 perches belonging to the Duke of Portland^{xxxix} incidentally, this was one continuous piece of land not the whole amount the Duke owned, and 12 perches owned by John Oliver. This shows just how many people were involved in the enclosure act. There seems to be no regular pattern for the allotments, the most regular is the division of Bradmore field where the plots take on regular shapes, which is normal in Parliamentary enclosure, even though they vary in size. This is probably to do with the landscape and different quality of land which the act took great care to mention. No attempt seems to have been made to give proprietors pasture land as well as field, or vice versa, so

as it states in the Act that only land that was previously ploughed can be used for that purpose, the Commissioner would have to take into account which farmers needed pasture.

After the open-field system in Aslockton and Scarrington, the enclosure of these two parishes brought about many changes in the way the land was divided and in the system of farming.

Chapter 3.

Results of Enclosure in Aslockton and Scarrington.

So far we have examined how the open-field system functioned before enclosure and also the changes that the act of enclosure brought about in the two townships of Aslockton and Scarrington. The open-field system had been satisfactory for the sustenance of families and the needs of the villagers, but times changed, especially in the eighteenth century. The expansion of industry meant people were flocking into towns for work and the towns had to be provided with food, therefore, farming itself was becoming an industry. There was no call for self contained production or a system of co-operation, instead the competition for market was strengthening and the open-field system was no longer efficient.

In order to look at the effects of enclosure, especially on the two townships of Aslockton and Scarrington, it is necessary to look at some of the aims of enclosure and see if these were realized. Addy states four aims, firstly to make efficient farming by building compact and large farms with a balance of arable and pasture. Secondly to convert old arable land, commons, rough hill grazing and wastes to a more profitable use by ploughing, marling and adopting a suitable crop rotation. Thirdly to expand the area of lands by bringing commons and waste; under cultivation in unproductive and lightly cultivated areas. Finally to improve efficiency by getting rid of tithes.^{xl} These aims varied according to the different areas of land, and different quality of land. Some of the aims were realized in Aslockton and Scarrington and some were not.

Farms were not always compact although the Commissioners tried to put land near to the homesteads. This was not always possible for they had to take into account the quality of land. After all, it would have been unfair to give one person a compact farm on rich arable land and another a farm on dry waste. Large farms were apparent after enclosure, but then so were the small farms. As will be seen later, there was no attempt to abolish small farms. A balance of arable and pasture was achieved, for it clearly states in the Enclosure Act that pasture land must not be ploughed.^{xli} The second aim was probably started before enclosure, but enclosure made it easier for the farmer to use his own methods. The third does not really apply to the two villages, for there was little waste except for the Moor and Hardhills, although these would probably be cultivated. The fourth aim, which did affect the villages in the Enclosure Act, was the clause to abolish tithes by exchanging the payments for pieces of land with the owner of the tithes, who could then let the land to tenants for rent, for example, the Vicar of Orston let out his land to two tenants in 1782: Reverend M. Folks and Thomas Bran^{xlii}

To examine how enclosure affected the villages of Aslockton and Scarrington there are several important issues to identify, such as rents, farm size, type of husbandry expected to take place improved efficiency and terms of tenure. With the advent of enclosure it was expected that farmers would become: "Free from the constraints of the open-field systems and customs"^{xliii}

He no longer had to go along with the rest of the farmers in the same field, but had: "Much greater freedom of choice with regard to the type of farming; he practiced"^{xliiv}

Of course, this had limitations for the Enclosure Act clearly stated that only land previously ploughed could be used for crops, therefore no meadows or pasture could be cultivated. Nottinghamshire remained fundamentally unchanged, as it had done throughout the rest of the eighteenth century, the type of soil influenced the rents, for example, the higher the quality of soil the higher the rents. These were most noticeable during the Napoleonic

wars period, about the same time as Aslockton and Scarrington were enclosed. It was not until 1830 that rents returned to a more realistic level.

"The largest single increases in rents were to be found in the high quality grassland parishes of the Trent Valley and parishes there a large proportion of unenclosed land had given rise to below average rents in early and mid-eighteenth century"^{xlv}

As the townships of Aslockton and Scarrington are very close to the Trent Valley, it is reasonable to assume that rents here would be high during the period described by Fawkes. The increase in rents was not linked with enclosure. Many rents went up before land was enclosed. From the Land Tax Assessments, however, it appeared that the tax for the two townships remained fairly stable during enclosure and after it. Scarrington, for example, had the same total in rents for 1781 as it did for 1801 and Aslockton increased only slightly. The final assessment of Aslockton was taken yearly instead of half-yearly as before.⁽²⁾ this information indicates that prices were fairly stable around the time of enclosure, which, therefore had no drastic affect on land prices and, possibly, on rents.

Farm size varied little throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Fawkes suggests the sizes were almost identical in 1750 as they were in 1830. The most obvious change seems to be a general increase in the mean sizes throughout the County, but Fawkes is quick to point out that the general increase was not sufficient to disturb numerical dominance of smaller farms.^{xlvi} The largest decrease in any size group was in the number of farms between twenty acres and forty acres, which was the source of land for consolidating the larger farms in the higher bracket of two hundred to two hundred and ninety acres in individual parishes. The proportional change over the period is similar from area to area.

Table 4 Frequency Distribution of all Farm Sizes in Nottinghamshire 1750 - 1830.^{xlvii}

Acres	10-19	20-49	50-99	100-149	150-199	200-299	300-399	400 +	Total
1750	123	201	154	130	34	28	28	17	698
1830	94	139	146	104	68	64	32	32	679

It is possible to see from the table that the biggest decrease comes from the twenty to forty nine acre farms and the biggest increase went to the farms of 200-299 acres, but, if the table is correct, we can also see that, throughout the County, over these eighty years, there were only nineteen farms which were lost~:

Land tax did not increase between 1780 and 1832, the totals for each village remained the same. However, we can see that some farm sizes did alter. This can be seen from the Land Tax Assessments. An example of this can be seen for Scarrington. In 1781 William Blagg paid two shillings for the land he held, which was let out to two tenants, Thomas Wite and George Pick. In 1832 the assessments show that William Blagg was paying nine shillings and two pence. Therefore, as land tax throughout this period had not risen, because the totals were the same, we must conclude that William Blagg increased the size of his lands.^{xlviii} The next question to ask is whether this was done during enclosure. At the time of enclosure (1781) Blagg received a total of eight acres one rood and two perches of land in Bradmore field. We can see from the tax assessments of Scarrington for 1782, a year after enclosure, that Blagg was paying only three pence half penny more than he was before enclosure, and was still paying the same in 1801. Therefore, Blagg's land did not increase because of enclosure, he increased his land between 1801 and 1832, over twenty years later. From looking at individual taxes before

and after enclosure we can see they did not, on the whole, increase or decrease rapidly, and therefore enclosure did not have any immediate effect on the farm sizes.

The most important difference expected when land was enclosed was the type of husbandry expected to take place. Throughout Nottinghamshire Wheat continued to increase in importance, which was little different to what had been grown before. There was a dramatic increase in the application of manure and fertilizer and also marling. The latter was a mixture of clay and lime or chalk and lime. The clay and lime marl was usually added to sandy soil and helped the soil to retain water, so retaining manure spread afterwards close to the surface. The addition of chalk and lime was made to a heavy clay making it easier to work and better for drainage. Also of great importance was manure. In fact inventories in the early eighteenth century contain mentions of manure as a valuable substance.^{xlix} Drainage was only just beginning to make progress at this stage. The ridge and furrow method of farming was inadequate, for it meant that in wet weather soil was washed away from the ridge and water stood in the furrow. Experiments were being tried, for example, one method to facilitate drainage was to cut the course of the brooks or rivers straight, this happened in Aslockton. The River Smite, which originally flowed next to the village, was altered to flow straight through the fields. With the new improvements, a field no longer had to be left in fallow and therefore enclosure did not mean that farmers would lose any of their production potential by having to leave some land fallow, but crop rotation was still important. Fawkes implies that a standard for crop rotation of turnips, barley, seeds and wheat, was the most popular combination in the County by 1830.¹ The unenclosed parishes, such as Norwell and Oxton, were conspicuous by their continuous use of the traditional three crop rotation. The growing of root crops was really only brought about through enclosure, these were rarely grown in the open fields. There is no evidence to suggest that the enclosure of Aslockton and Scarrington brought about a better efficiency in farming, although enclosure gave better scope for innovation. The terms of tenure in Nottinghamshire were mainly year to year and there is little evidence of any lasting leasehold tenure. It is difficult to say whether this was the system in Aslockton and Scarrington, for names do not change every year, although some do. This could have two meanings, either the tenants have died and new ones have been picked, or it could mean they have reached the end of tenure for one year.

Those who stayed on did so because they had a lifetime lease or had a year's lease.^{li} There may have been two types of tenure, and therefore no generalization can be made. From the census of 1841^{lii} we can see that the main occupation of the villages of Aslockton and Scarrington was agriculture. Most men were either farmers or agricultural labourers, but it is impossible to say how the land areas used after enclosure for the specific villages, owing to lack of information. Reference was made in the will of George Roberts^{liii} in 1784, to his cattle and his crops but no reference as to what they were. As the committee looking into Agrarian problems claimed the main crops in the Vale of Belvoir were generally wheat, Barley and Beans,^{liv} a continuation of these crops would be likely, along with a mixture of cattle and dairy farming, which is prominent today. In the 1780 Land Tax Assessments for Aslockton some members appear who were not included in the Enclosure Award or in the 1780 assessment. These were:

M Binden
W Cole
John Hand

Samuel Peake
William Greene
William Turner
William Flower

Thomas Watson

The names in the first column disappeared altogether. There may have been several reasons for this, firstly they may have died, leaving no heirs, or perhaps the heir had a different name. Secondly, they may have bought land

elsewhere and so sold their land in Aslockton. Land holders in this period usually had land in more than one village. The names in the second column do not appear in the next tax assessment, but female relations of theirs do, for example, Elizabeth Greene appears instead of William, who probably died leaving Elizabeth his land. The name of Watson does not appear in Aslockton again, but does appear in the Scarrington enclosure list. He must, therefore, have retained land in Scarrington only.

In the same way, some names appeared on the tax assessments in 1782 after enclosure.

Bilbie and Eaton	Hannah Ward	William Lander
Francis Wotton		William Timms
Vicar of Orston		William Hooper
Vicar of Whatton		Robert Williamson
Earl of Chesterfield		Richard Brown

The names in the first column appear afterwards because of the clause in the Act that states tithes should be discontinued and land should be given in payment. These tithes were either for ancient enclosures, such as Bilbie and Eaton and Francis Wotton, or for the upkeep of the Church, such as the Vicar of Orston and the Vicar of Whatton. The Vicar of Aslockton does not appear for there was no Church in Aslockton during this period. Hannah Ward appears in the enclosure Award, but seems to have held no land in Aslockton or Scarrington before, so it is difficult to ascertain why she received an allotment. The third column of names consists of those who were not mentioned as proprietors in 1780, or mentioned in the Enclosure Act. Richard Brown, however, was a tenant in 1780 for Ruth Brown who does appear in the Act, it therefore seems reasonable to suggest that Richard Brown was Ruth's heir.

Conclusion.

From evidence examined, it appears that enclosure had little effect on the two villages of Aslockton and Scarrington. The open-field system was obviously inadequate for the enclosure was met with little resistance, and groups of landholders must have joined forces to initiate the Bill in the House of Lords. The effects were slight, there was no radical change. This could be because: "Full scale enclosure when it came, often represented the final rather than the first stage in the progress of reorganization and its effects on farming methods and on the village community were not always great".^{lv} During the open-field system, improvements were being made all the time, but, because improvements needed the consent of all strip holders in the field, it became impossible and so the eventual conclusion had to be enclosure, where man was free to try any methods he chose. However, as farmers rely on their crops, most farmers would not try new methods until they had been proved to give better yields. In small communities such as Aslockton and Scarrington, there would be no pressure or demand for innovation. If any change did take place after enclosure, it would be expected in the area of rents, farm size and types of husbandry. It can be seen from the study that the change in these areas was only slight. It is often believed that enclosure caused upheaval and unrest, but as the enclosure of Aslockton and Scarrington was neither of these, it would be reasonable to suggest this statement was untrue. The only difference being that now the land was more private and owners did not have to worry what their neighbours were doing.

Endnotes

- ⁱ Ernle 'English Farming Past and Present' 1912 page XXXIX
- ⁱⁱ Ibid page 1ii
- ⁱⁱⁱ Orwin "The Open Fields" 1967 page 37.
- ^{iv} Ernle Op. Cit. page xliii
- ^v Tate "The English Community" page 27.
- ^{vi} Open Conjectural Field Map DD.RC14/2.
- ^{vii} Ault "Open Field Farming in Medieval England" 1972 page 15
- ^{viii} Ibid, page 52.
- ^{ix} Open-field map Op.Cit.
- ^x Orwin Op.Cit, page 39
- ^{xi} Fawkes. "Agrarian Change in Nottinghamshire 1720--30" page 2a
- ^{xii} Orwin, Op.Cit. page 64.
- ^{xiii} Open field map Op.Cit. and Enclosure Map.
- ^{xiv} Ault, Op.Cit, page 23.
- ^{xv} Ernle, Op.Cit. page xliii
- ^{xvi} Orwin, Op.Cit. page 37
- ^{xvii} Enclosure Map DD.9/2.
- ^{xviii} Kerridge "The Agricultural Revolution", 1967. page 59.
- ^{xix} Bennet "Life on the English Manor", 1937, page 58.
- ^{xx} Enclosure Award, Aslockton and Scarrington. DD.9/2.
- ^{xxi} Enclosure Act, page 1.
- ^{xxii} Kerridge Op.Cit. page 50.
- ^{xxiii} Enclosure Act, page 1.
- ^{xxiv} Kerridge Op.Cit. page 57
- ^{xxv} Addy. "The Agrarian Revolution" 1872, page 30
- ^{xxvi} Enclosure Act DD.9/2 page 1.
- ^{xxvii} Enclosure Act Ibid, page 4
- ^{xxviii} Enclosure Act Ibid, page 4
- ^{xxix} Ibid, page 4 .
- ^{xxx} Transactions of Thoroton Society, Vol.41, 1937, page 77.
- ^{xxxi} Enclosure Act Op.Cit. page 9.
- ^{xxxii} Ashby, "The Changing English Village" 1974, page 62.
- ^{xxxiii} Enclosure Map. Op.Cit.
- ^{xxxiv} Enclosure Award DD.9/2.
- ^{xxxv} Enclosure Act Op.Cit.
- ^{xxxvi} Enclosure Award Op.Cit.
- ^{xxxvii} Enclosure Act Op.Cit page 22
- ^{xxxviii} Enclosure Map Op.Cit.
- ^{xxxix} Enclosure Map Op.Cit
- ^{xl} Addy. Op.Cit. page 25.
- ^{xli} Enclosure Act Op.Cit. page 5.
- ^{xlii} Land Tax Assessment for Aslockton & Scarrington 1780,1781,180', (3) Fawkes Op.Cit. page 466.
- ^{xliiii} Fawkes Op.Cit. page 466.
- ^{xliv} Ibid. page 489.
- ^{xlv} Ibid. page 467

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- ^{xlvi} Fawkes Op.Cit page 487.
^{xlvii} Ibid page 489.
^{xlviii} Land Tax Assessments Op.Cit
^{xlix} Mingay "Enclosure of the Small Farmer in the Age of the Industrial Revolution". 1968 page 47.
^l Fawkes Op.Cit page 497.
^{li} Land Tax Assessment Op.Cit.
^{lii} Census for Aslockton and Scarrington 1841.
^{liii} Will and Probate Inventory of George Roberts 1784. P.R.N.W.
^{liv} Fawkes Op.Cit. page 472.
^{lv} Mingay Op.Cit 18.