

ART. VI.—*Agriculture in Cumberland in Ancient Times.*
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AGRICULTURE in mediæval Cumberland probably did not differ greatly from the systems pursued in the south of England, only that owing to its situation—so far removed from the capital and exposed to Scottish raids—the county was probably the poorest and most backward in the kingdom. Cultivated land was practically confined to isolated clearings; communication by road was of the roughest. In 1298 and the following years we find that the abbot of Holme Cultram, notwithstanding his large manor and possessions spread over the whole northern part of the county, was largely dependent on Ireland for corn and provisions.*

Prices in the thirteenth century which have come down to us are not numerous. Wages are reported as 2d. per day at Skinburness in 1299, coopers being paid at the rate of 3d. per day. At Holme Cultram damaged oats and malt were disposed of for 1s. 6d. per quarter,† while a few years later wheat carried away by the Scots from the abbey was valued at 8s. per quarter; barley, 6s. 8d. per quarter; beans and peas, 6s. 8d. per quarter; salt, 6s. per quarter; and salt fish, 30s. per hundred. And although the accounts of the bishops of Carlisle furnish us with a pretty extensive knowledge of the prices current 1407-1509, yet our actual knowledge of the state of Cumbrian agriculture, as indeed of the whole of England, dates from the first quarter of the sixteenth century. The revival of learning which then took place brought in its train several writers on agricultural subjects.

* *Cal. Close Rolls*, Edward I., p. 221.

† *Ibid.*

Chief of these was Sir John Fitzherbert, a landowner, who resided at Norbury in Derbyshire, where he succeeded his father in 1483. He published his *Boke of Husbandrie* in 1523, and his *Boke of Surveying* two years later. He quoted Latin authors freely, and drew upon Walter de Henley and other early English writers. His book, however, was undoubtedly the most valuable work in existence until a comparatively recent date.

Other writers of the period are Thomas Tusser the rhymist, who published *Five Hundred Points of Good Husbandry* in 1573; Barnaby Googe, *Four Books of Husbandrie*, 1517; William Harrison, *Description of England*, 1586-1593; Gervoise Markham, *The English Husbandman*, 1613; Samuel Hartlib, *Legacy of Husbandry*, 1651; Walter Blyth, *English Improver Improved*, 1652; Thomas Houghton, *Letters on the improvement of Husbandry and Trade*, 1681; and Sir Hugh Platt. These authors, who describe the general practice of agriculture under the Tudor and Stuart kings, together with information garnered from parish papers, manor accounts, and the *Household Books of Lord William Howard of Naworth*, enable us to describe pretty accurately the Cumberland farmer of the period.

The tenure of land is a wide subject, which cannot be discussed fully in the limits of this article. Much information will be found in these *Transactions** in connection with the question of customary and copyhold tenure and the common-field system of cultivation, which we must pass by, and picture to ourselves the Cumberland farmer of Elizabeth's reign paying his half-yearly rental to the Manor Court, keeping horse and armour ready to repel border reivers, and performing the necessary services on his lord's ground in seed time and harvest.

* See papers by Sir George Duckett (O.S., iii., art. xxiii.), Mr. W. Nanson (O.S., vi., art. xxix.), the Rev. T. Ellwood (O.S., xi., art. xxxiv.), Mr. T. H. Hodgson (O.S., xii., art. xii.), Mr. T. H. B. Graham (N.S., vii., art. iv., and viii., arts. ii., v., and xx.), and Mr. J. Rawlinson Ford in this volume (art. vii.).

His dwelling house in that period was of wood or clay ; later, it was built with rough unhewn stone if conveniently situate to some quarry. After the dissolution of the monasteries and the neglect of fortified buildings consequent on the accession of James I., castle and monastery became a ready quarry for the building of adjoining farms. Where stone was not easily obtainable a rough casing of boards was set up, and into this was poured the clay in a semi-fluid state, layers of straw cut to the required length being laid on the wall every few inches. The dwelling house consisted of two rooms on the ground floor, a living room or spence with wide hearth intended for the consumption of peat and logs, and the second room used as a sleeping chamber for the farmer and his wife.* Over the spence and parlour was a garret room approached by a ladder and open to the thatch, which covered the roof, in which the younger members of the family and servants slept ; at a later period a pentice or lean-to was erected on the north side, and used as a dairy or wash-house. The door was invariably at the north-east corner, opening into a passage running north and south, dividing the dwelling house from the byre, which opened from this passage on the left side. The only mason work required was in the jambs and lintels of the doors and windows ; all the remainder could be built by the owner with the assistance of his neighbours, "boon days" being customary when a house or outbuilding was to be erected.

On January 6th, 1720, the Manor Court of Holme Cultram ordered a house to be built for a widow under the custom of free bench or widow right :—

An account of ye particulars of ye rebuilding of two rooms for ye conveniency of Ann Benson Widow. Imprimis Three pieces of timber 9s. It. For three dorments 9s. It. for spears and finishing Ye principalls 10s. It. for dales & Jests for lofting 3 yards and a

* A somewhat different style of building was prevalent in the south of the Lake district. See Mr. H. S. Cowper's *Hawkshead, its history, &c.*, pp. 144-158.—ED.

half in length 18s. It. for three stone windows one to be 2 feet high & 2 feet breadth and Ye second to be a foot and a half in height and a foot in breadth & ye third a foot square 6s. 6d. It: For glass for the windows 3s. 9d. It: For one door and 2 pair of cheeks 5s. It: for stairs 3s. It: for building Ye walls and to make them 3 yards and a foot in height Ye east side wall and Ye end walls to stand and to rest ye west side wall 3 yards Ye height of house and Thatch Ye house 2*£*. It: for Ye chimney and oven Bricks lime and workmanship with six loads of lime for plastering Ye walls 17s. 8d. It: for wood-work and carriage of wood 13s. Total *£*6 . 15 . 3.

Huts of clay or brushwood, covered with thatch, reeds, or turves, sheltered the farmer's live stock. The floor of the dwelling in the majority of cases consisted of clay beaten almost to the consistency of stone by the constant passage of feet, flags being necessary for the threshold and hearth only. Where possible the fuel was obtained from a neighbouring bog, a necessary adjunct to the farm being a moss share from which the peats or turves were dug. The price paid in 1618 by Lord William Howard for "graveing" peats was 9d. per day; for "winning" or laying them to dry, 5d. a day; and for graveing and winning twenty-five days' work of peats, 25s. This work required a certain amount of skill, the wages paid being some 25 per cent. above the ordinary rate.

At the time of which we write the copyholder's land consisted of "one several close" or closes of arable land, which the occupier was bound in many manors to "quick-sett with thorns." This land was adjacent to the homestead and was continually under crop, no pasturage being obtainable therefrom until after the corn and pulse crops had been garnered. This infield land, although under continuous cropping, was not in so utterly an impoverished condition as the second class of land known as out-field land, common field land and acre dale, the holdings of adjoining holders being divided by strips of grass known as "balks" or "rheins."* These divisions were also

* For an account of the common fields in Cumberland and the ancient meaning of "acre," &c., see these *Transactions*, N.S., viii., pp. 341-351. —ED.

known as "Lammas lands," because, though fenced off from the common pasture from seed time to Lammas Day (August 1st), they were, after the corn had been gathered, thrown open to the commons and pastured until next seed time. The common field land was usually divided into three equal portions, and in the midland counties was divided into land under winter corn, spring corn, and fallow. In the north, I believe, in many instances, little fallow crops were grown, and in the case of the upper part of the manor of Holme Cultram, the common field, known as acre dales, spread over an area of some three miles by two of light sandy soil. The land of each of the three dales was cropped with grain three years in succession, and then laid to pasture six years—rent and tithe being paid only while the land was under crop. Thus out of an estimated area of two hundred and forty-three acres one-third paid rent yearly, the rental being calculated at 1s. per acre.

The word "acre"* originally meant any agricultural ground or field; it then came to imply the lots into which the field was divided. It frequently was regulated by the amount which was ploughed in a day, hence a "darrick;" and was found so late as 1876 by the Commissioners to vary widely in area even in the same locality. After careful examination of several holdings, I have come to the conclusion that an acre as returned in Elizabeth's reign consisted of three modern statute acres, and the rent paid in addition to tithe and certain customary services varied by 1s. to 2s. per acre. The rental paid per statute acre did not exceed in Tudor times for ordinary Cumberland soil from 4d. to 6d. per acre.

The third great land division of the period included the Lammas meadows. These were situate in some low-lying part of the manor, preferably near some stream.

* German *acker*, old Norse *akr*, Anglo-Saxon *æcer*, Gothic *akrs*, Latin *ager*, Greek *ἀγρός*.—ED.

This land was fenced from the common pasture until Lammas or until the last hay was carried, the Manor Court laying heavy "paines" or fines for breach of the custom in this particular.

The "Terrier" of the parish of Great Orton of 1704 gives an example of the common field system, quoted by Mr. T. H. Hodgson in these *Transactions*, o.s., xii., pp. 137-139; he also instances a survival of balks and raines at Halltown, near Rocliffe. Others can be seen at Aldoth, Abbey Town. From Holme Cultram we have the following:—

Acredale 1581.

A whole Riving called Whinny Rigg and his fellows: First, to Southerfield, vi acres, whereof one acre of Whinny Rigg, one acre of Askew Brigg, v acres of the East End of Stoney Law, 2 acres of the Undle Flatt of Stoney Law, one of the wester-most Flatt of Stoney Law, to their footmen* which Thomas Challenor had: Thomas Benson 2 acres in Little Flatt.

Gervoise Markham (*The English Husbandman*) said that meadows should be "bared"—that is, cleared of stock at Candlemas if the weather was cold; if fruitful, May 1st, and on the average by Lady Day, hay to be mown at the Translation of St. Thomas (July 7th). William Harrison (*Description of England*, 1586-93) described "the crop of upland meadows as not having more than on load of haie on an acre of land. . . . Low meadows have two loads or upwards; the latter-math is not so wholesome as the first; thereby they (cattle) often increase so fast in the bloud that the garget and other diseases consume them." From an inquisition held January 23rd, 1591, the custom of the ancient meadows of Holme Cultram is thus described:—

We alsoe doe say that after the said hay be led away, ye said meadow in ye Abbott's tyme was used to be closed and ye said yeate safely well kept locked until All Hallowes tyde and then ye cattell

* That is to say, they were bound to find foot soldiers for border service.

to be putt on to ye foggage or after crop of Benwary and not before; and there and then they shall staye and feede all the winter tyme withoute driveing fforth, or in even and Morne until our Lady Day in Lent, commonly called ye Annunciation of o^r Blessed Virgin Mary, and then ye said cattell were taken away from ye said meadow ground of Benwary and ye same was frithed for ye tenants Profit, until it was mowne and then for ye better rizing of ye foggage, it was spared till All Hallowes tide.

The fine for too early stinting ran as follows :—

We doe order and p'sent that everyone which hath any meadows in the High Meadows shall yearly make forth thereof from o^r Lady Day in Lente untill the hay be mowne and led away, upon payne for every head of Cattell and every nagg or mare to the King's Majestie's use, vis. vii^{id}.

The several portions of the tenants lay undivided by fences, the allotments being divided by "meare steanes" or rheins.* The area being measured by "darricks" or day's works, the space mown in one day would vary according to the soil and situation. Mortimer in 1708 says that a man will mow one acre of meadow if light, or if good to mow, $1\frac{1}{2}$ acres per day; on upland meadows, if thin, two acres—the cost per acre being from 1s. 6d. to 1s. 8d.; or for mowing and making the hay, 3s. 6d. to 4s. per acre. Lord William Howard appears to have paid 4d. with meat† and without meat 10d. and 1s., paying 1s. 6d. for mowing and winning a day's work of hay.‡ Professor Rogers gives the price per acre at 8d. in 1401, 1s. 1d. in 1436, $8\frac{1}{2}$ d. in 1550—the average during the middle of the fifteenth century being 9d. per acre; the average wage of the day labourer during the same period being about $4\frac{1}{2}$ d. per day, the cost of maintenance per day being calculated during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries at from 1s. to 1s. 6d. per week.

* Old Norse, *rein*, a strip (of land); *marr*, *marr*, border-land; *deild*, a share (*deila*, to divide) is a different word from *dalr*, a valley. In Anglo-Saxon *dæl*, a share, and *dæl*, a valley.

† *Household Book*, p. 39.

‡ *Ibid*, p. 324.

Artificial grasses, though recommended by Blyth in 1652, did not come into general use until the eighteenth century. Mortimer (1708) speaks of clover grass, St. Foin or holy hay (Sainfoin), Lucerne and rye grass; but in Stuart times the hay consisted of the natural grasses. In mediæval times the demand for hay as a commodity was practically non-existent, but an entry in 1461 gives 2s. 6d. as being paid for a load of hay for the Bishop of Carlisle.

The size of agricultural holdings in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries varied according to the circumstances of the holders. Some of the territorial lords farmed the great bulk of their manorial lands; in many cases the desmesnes were let to substantial yeomen and freeholders. Lord William Howard was an example of a territorial farmer. He was also perhaps the first pioneer in farming in Cumberland since the dissolution of the monasteries. As showing his efficiency in management the following figures speak for themselves. In 1596 the yearly value of Lady Elizabeth Howard's property is given by himself in a return to Queen Elizabeth as of the approximate value of £1,042 a year. Five or six years later Lord William took the management into his own hand. No record is available of the value of the estate until 1611, when the number of cattle of all sorts is given as amounting to 1,110 and the number of sheep as 3,000, besides the number consumed as provisions by the household at Naworth. The profit derived from such cattle and sheep is put down as amounting to £620, and the annual value of the estate had risen to £3,884; in 1633 the income had again increased to £6,144. That this increased value was not entirely due to good management, but to the increased security owing to the settlement of border feuds at the union of the two kingdoms is evident. Still there is ample proof of good management, although the relations existing for some years between Sir William and his tenantry were not amicable. Their revolt in 1612, and condemnation by the Star Chamber, are well known.

There is no evidence as to whether the ancient copyhold rents were increased by Lord William, but a similar attempt on the part of the Crown against the tenants of Holme Cultram in 1561 led to the appointment of a Commission, of which Lord Scrope of Bolton was the head. The demand for an increased rent, amounting to two and a half times the ancient rent, was defeated, and the rents fixed in the early years of the sixteenth century are still paid by the copyholders of that manor.

To judge from the records which have come down to us, the holdings of the bulk of Cumberland farmers did not often approach one hundred statute acres in extent. At the dissolution of the greater monasteries in 1538 a careful survey was made of the tenants of Holme Cultram, who were found to number three hundred and ten occupiers of arable land and fifty-four cottagers having common rights. The holdings of arable and meadow land range from two acres to seventy-three acres of the period, the average holding being about twelve "acres," or thirty-six statute acres; in addition, each tenant held in the common field from two to four acres, or an average holding of forty acres. Of course, in addition to this, each tenant had a right on the stinted pasture, the size of which to each stintholder would be about the same area as his allotment of arable land.

In a survey in the first quarter of the sixteenth century occurs an entry, of which the following is a translation:—

John Borrowdale received his land at an annual rent of 20s., gressom 20s., and he pays all tithe, fifteen bushels of barley or 8s., and he may keep on the pasture twelve oxen, twelve cows, six horses, and twenty sheep. He renders three ploughing days and twelve reaping days; one acre in Swabey Ing, rent 3s.

In addition, this tenant had to furnish three horsemen and one footman for border service. In the next survey (1572) the area of Borrowdale's farm is given as being

twenty-two acres in extent, so that the total holding would be seventy acres of land. In the summer of 1575 John Borrowdale died. His will, dated June 10th, may be of interest :—

In nomine Dei Amen, and the xth day of June, mdlxxv, I, John Borrowdale of Souterfield in the parish of Holm, seick in bodie, but perfect in minde, do ordaine and sett furth my last Will and Testamente in maner and form followinge. ffyrste, I gyff my Soule to Almighty God, trustinge to be one of his elect chyldren through the merits and passion of our Savyour Jesus Christ, and my bodie to be buryed in my Parish Churchyard of Holm, and my deities paid to the seyd Church accordinge to the lawes.

Imprimis. I geve to Anthony my sonne all my double husbandrye gear, together with a great arke, and a cupboard, on greate bedde, on pare of blanketts, on coverlette, my best horse, ryding gear, my younge gray meare : All my leasses, one round bason, one washinge bason, on mortar, on pistell, on pare of hibberts, thre spits, on ewer, one lead one, one mushe satte, on gyle seatte (for brewing). Item, I geve Mabell, my eldest daughter, one almarye, thre podigers, iii poyder (pewter) dishes, one pare sheets, xiv head of cattal, one housant fyllye, and Tordiffs fyllye. I geve Esabell my daughter xii Head of cattal w^{ch} are promised to her, one ffully called Tyndall ffully, tenne ewes and ther lammes, one nagge worth two nobles of money, thre unked podigers, the poyder dishes and one of the greate plaites for her wholl marriage goodes, and I wyll that these goodes be divyded by my Executors and assigns at the terme of v years next comynge after the datte hereof. I wyll that Thomas Nicholson shall have divyded for his use fower bushells of bigg, iiii bushell of rye, and viii bushell of oates or haver in recompense of all his childe portion of goodes w^{ch} came to my hands. I geve to William Barn 1 ewe and iiii lammes. I geve the residew of my goodes, my detts and funeral expenses being paide, to Anthony Borrowdale, my sonne, whom I appoynt my wholl Executor. Supervisors of this my last Wyll—Mr. Anthony Carwen of Camerton, Esquire, Mr. Anthony Hewath, Clerk, Edward Musgrave, and William Tickell. Witnesses hereof, Thomas Denys, Leonard Musgrave, John Tyndall cum aliis.

Inventorie of the goodes and cattells of John Borrowdale lately departed pryzed by Robert Barne, William Tremell, Thomas Waite, and Anthony Ullock, xiii June, 1575 :—

130 AGRICULTURE IN CUMBERLAND IN ANCIENT TIMES.

	£	s.	d.				
i Hors	iii	—	—				
iiii Meares & folles	xii	xiii	iiii				
v Oxen vii Kye	xxi	v	viii				
v Whyes viii Stotts	vi	viii	iiii				
vi oulde sheapp	—	xxxv	—				
xiv Lammes	—	xxxvii	viii				
ii Cartes & ii Waynes	}	xxxii	—				
iiii Coulters iii Forkes							
v of New Gear							
vii Bu: of Rye unthreshed				—	xxviii	iiii	
xxii Bus: Maulte	iii	vi	—				
x Bus: sawn [sown] rye	}	vi	viii	iiii			
& xx Bus: sawn bigge							
$\frac{1}{2}$ Bus: sawn wheatt	—	iiii	—				
xliii Bus: haver sawn	v	—	—				
xviii young geas & 12 oulde geas	—	xxxvi	viii				
Beddinge, a pare of Bedhangings	}	v	ii	—			
i sheits							
xiii Secks, iii wynding clothes							
ii axes & one great scath							
iii Basons i ewer					—	xl	—
v plattes & iii poyder dishes...							
vii Unked poddigers					—	xxii	—
v round poddigers, iiiii Sawcers							
vi Candlesticks					—	xiii	iiii
i chisle, i seatt					—	—	xx
v Brasse potts	—	—	xxx				
iii pannes, i fryinge panne	}	—	xxv	viii			
v spitts &							
xii hopp'ts							
i pare of tongs i lead &							
iii seatts							
iiii Landers, ii more, iiiii stands	}	—	viii	iiii			
iii poyd potts, i Brandreth, one							
pistol, i chaffinge dishe one ...							
great chisl							
One pyke & Bands i Cupboard	}	—	xxv	—			
i almyrye crookes							

This inventory gives us a fairly good insight into a Cumberland farmer's house three hundred years ago. The value of his farming stock is £49 7s. 8d.; implements,

about £4; crop, £16 6s. 8d. It will be noticed that, this inventory being made in June, the whole crop was in the ground. Although it was the custom in the midland counties to sow two London bushels of wheat and rye per acre, we shall not be far wrong in estimating John Borrowdale's crop as half an acre of wheat, ten acres of rye, sixteen acres of barley or bigg, and thirty-four acres of oats. This accounts for sixty acres of ground; in the valuation it is evident that some account is taken of the crop being in the ground, the valuation being about 6d. a bushel over current rates of the day. It will be noticed that the live stock approximates very closely to the stint allowed on the commons, as tenants were very jealous of any encroachment in the numbers allowed. The numbers valued are:—Horses and foals, nine; oxen, five; cows, eight; and young stock, thirteen—giving twenty-six head of stock and twenty sheep. On a similar farm at the present day of one hundred and twenty acres there would probably be thirty-five head of horned stock, not a great increase in numbers to boast of here.

Of implements, the first in importance was, of course, the plough. Let Fitzherbert describe the implement of the period:—

The plough beam is the long tre above the which is a slight bente. *The Share beam* is the tre underneath whereon the share is set. *The Plough shethe* is a thyn piece of drye wood made of oke, that is set fast in a mortecys in the plough beame, and also unto the share-beam, the which is the keye or chief band of all the plough. *The plough tayle* is that the husbandman holdeth in his handes and the hynder ende of the plough beame; it is put in a long slyt made in the same tayle and not sett faste, but it may ryse up and go downe, and is pinned behind, and the same plough's tayle is set faste in a mortys in the hinder ende of the plough beame. *Share*, a pece of yren sharpe before and brayde behinde, a fote long, made with a socket to be set on the further ende of the share beame. *Culture*, a bend pece of yren sette in a mortys in the myddle of the plough beame fastened with wedges on every syde, the back $\frac{1}{2}$ inch in thыckness, 3 inches brode, made keen to cutte the erthe clean and it must be well steeled.

It is doubtful what was the cost of a Tudor plough; the greater portion, being of wood, must have been made at home, the sock and the coulter, with some sheet iron of the plough sheath called "ferripedales," being the only iron needed. Coulters cost from 1s. 8d. to 2s. each, while four ploughs and harness are only valued at 8s. The swingletrees would no doubt be of very primitive construction. The horses or oxen were yoked in wooden yokes to fit the neck, and drew the plough or harrows by hempen ropes bound to the gear with leathern thongs. With such an instrument as that in general use the depth taken could at best be only shallow.

With the plough went the plough staffe or acre staffe, which, Markham says,* "they carry with the plough, and when the iron shilboard or plough beam be choaked with dirt, clay, or filth, you shall put the same off the plough while going." The cost of ploughing and harrowing an acre of ground is given in 1460 as costing 1s. 2d. per acre,† and Hartlib (1651) speaks of 1s. 6d. in Kent being considered a reasonable price.

The other implement in general use was the harrow, sometimes of iron throughout, but commonly of wood. Fitzherbert describes the ox harrow as consisting of six harrow bulles; in each, six sharp pins of iron called harrow tendes. In case of the harrows not breaking the clots, then "malles" were to be used (a wooden instrument with a heavy head). The only other large implement I can find in early husbandry was the "great rowler," a round piece of wood thirty inches in compass and six feet in length.‡

The cart body was of very primitive construction. In 1612 Lord William paid 6d. for making a cart; for a pair of wheels and putting in two axles, 8s.; while for ironing six wheels, £5 16s. is paid. These must have been very

* Markham's *Boke of Husbandry*, p. 51.

† Bishop of Carlisle's accounts.

‡ Markham, p. 51.

heavy ones, for in 1460 the bishop only paid 4d. for two iron hoops. If the body of the cart was of a primitive description, so were the wheels. They were called tumble or clog wheels; they were about $22\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter and 3 inches wide at the tyres, the distance between the wheels being 3 feet 2 inches. Axle and wheels revolved together in iron or hard wood forks fastened beneath the cart.

The bushel in use in Tudor times frequently consisted of twenty-four gallons, the gallon being four wine quarts and a pint.* This measure was a variable one, and consisted of twelve, eighteen, or twenty-four gallons. The increase from the Winchester measure arose, I believe, from the custom of heaped measure, causing larger measures to be constructed, and they in turn being heaped. Afterwards it was described as strike (*i.e.*, level) measure. A skep contained twelve bushels, a threave being twenty-four sheaves or two "stooks."

The farm live stock consisted of (first) the horse. Owing to the requirements of border service, it is probable that many more horses were kept in Cumberland than in the south. The larger holdings contributed horse and armour, while the smaller holdings furnished "lesser horses or naggs," known as "demys."† These were probably "galloways," or the race of ponies at present reared in the fell dales. It is evident that both horses and demys were bred in the county, as most of the inventories of 1500 to 1660 contain mention of foals. In 1307 the priory of Durham paid £4 11s. for a palfrey, and five years earlier the abbot of Holme valued a palfrey at five marks (£3 6s. 8d.). In inventories of wills the following prices occur:—1569, 13s. 4d.; 1572, mare and foal, 11s. 6d. (these two evidently demys); 1572, horse, 16s.; 1573, foal, 6s. 8d.; 1575, a nagg, £5; 1584, a horse, £5; 1595,

* State Papers, Domestic, Charles I., cccc., 165.

† Survey of Holme Cultram, 1538.

a horse, £8; 1601, a horse, 40s.; 1617, a mare, 30s.; grey filly, 33s.; a stagg (colt), 13s. In the Naworth accounts £4 10s. and £5 were paid for a pair of horses in 1612. Shoeing cost 9s. 4d. for twenty-five horses and shoes in 1298 (Holme Cultram), 2½d. each shoe in 1605, 3d. and 4d. each in 1612; frosting a nag, 6d. in 1620; and about the same date, a halter cost 3d.; "brydells," 8d. to 1s.; a saddle, 21s. 6d.; while in 1629, Lord William Howard paid £40 for a pair of carriage geldings.*

Oxen were, like other live stock, reared on the farm. The colours of cattle were dun, white, black, and "hawked" (spotted). Wild cattle were found on Lord William Howard's farm at Thornthwaite in Westmorland, probably the same breed which exist in Chillingham Park, Northumberland, and they roamed at large over Martindale Forest.† Probably Cumberland live stock in the sixteenth century were the result of some improvement which had been effected from these wild cattle. The price of oxen ranged from 10s. and 12s. 6d. in 20 Edward IV., 15s., 20s., and 21s. in the latter part of the sixteenth century, to £3 11s. 8d. paid for a Scotch ox by Lord William Howard. They were frequently shod; Lord William Howard paid 5s. 8d. for shoeing sixteen oxen, or about 4d. a head. The weight of the ox when fatted at from five to eight years is given by Professor Rogers as averaging 600 lbs. in the seventeenth century. This is curiously enough the very figure given by Professor Long in speaking of the modern fat bullock. The explanation is very simple. The ox as brought into the market was comparable not to the present bullock but to the aged bulls, and such would weigh at present 18-20 cwt. live weight, or from 1,200 to 1,400 lbs. dead meat.

Milch cattle were kept on all Cumberland holdings, and were the only cattle, with the exception of some of

* *Household Book*, p. 272.

† *Household Book*, p. 264.

the working oxen, sheltered in winter time. Stock management, as we practise it, was unknown; the introduction of root crops in the eighteenth century having quite revolutionised the winter management of stock. Details of the values and treatment of cattle in the south are given by Markham (*The English Husbandman*, p. 87), Harrison, and Mortimer (*Household Book*, 1708, p. 248). In Cumberland milk cattle were valued in the fifteenth century* at from 9s. to 10s. each; 11s. to 20s. in the end of the sixteenth century; in the middle of the seventeenth century, 12s. to 50s. each; queys, 3s. 4d. to 10s.; stotts (young bullocks), 3s. 4d. to 13s. 4d.; and calves, 1s. 8d. to 3s. 4d. †

Hartlib thought midland county farmers "too negligent with their kine. Lancashire and some northern counties are the only places where they are careful in these particulars." ‡ Of the cattle turned on the commons, those which were fat, and those which were poor and not like wintering, were killed at Martinmas for winter consumption, hence the term used for such cattle—"marts." The carcass was laid in brine in a "flesh salt," usually made of lead, sometimes hollowed out of stone. After a time the joints were hung up and dried in a living room or passage adjoining.

Every village, township, or grieveship kept a bull. This was generally a duty imposed on some particular farm in return for certain privileges granted; in other cases, it would seem to have gone to each tenant in turn. From the Holme Cultram Court Leet of October 7th, 1654, the following extract is taken:—

Presented that whereas there hath been divers and sundry complaints made to us for want of Bulls in this lordship and that no small loss damage or disadvantage hath been received thereby we

* Bishop of Carlisle's accounts.

† Holme Cultram wills, Carlisle Registry.

‡ Hartlib's *Legacy*, pp. 73 and 77.

therefore think it fit and necessary, being for a general good, to present and put in pain that every town or graveship (not heretofore charged) shall provide a sufficient Bull for their Kyne betwixt this and ye next head Court, and from thenceforth keep from time to time under pain and forfeiture for every 20 days, 6s. 8d. to Ye Lord of this Manor; and that every Tenant or occupier within our social towns or graveships so refusing, to their neighbours consenting, shall forfeit and pay to Ye Town or Graveship for every 20 days, 6s. 8d.

This custom remained in force until the end of the eighteenth century, for under the head of "An account of Receipts and Disbursements of the Sixteen Men of Holm Cultram from January 1st, 1790, to January 1st, 1793," appears this entry:—"1790, March 6th. To the Tenants of Pelatho for the releasing of a free Bull at West House, £46 10s. od."

The third animal of most importance was the sheep. Breeding ewes seem to have been kept on most farms; we can only conjecture what breed was kept. Bailey and Culley (*Report on Cumberland, 1797*) speak of the sheep throughout the country as having been descended from "the Black-faced, coarse wooled, heath sheep, but by crossing with some other breed, presumably Herdwicks, many have acquired a large proportion of white on their faces and legs, some having those parts speckled and others totally black." In contour they were high shouldered, narrow backed, flat sided, strong boned, with rough, hairy legs, the wool coarse and long, and weighing from 3 lbs. to 4 lbs. per fleece. This sheep, there can be little doubt, descended from early times. The conventual Orders which established themselves in the county in the twelfth century, especially the Cistercians, were great patrons of the sheep. As early as 1308, in the petition of the abbot and convent of Sweetheart in Galloway to the King's Council, they pray redress for the value of eight and a half sacks of good teased wool, taken for the late king's use by Hasculf de Cleseby and others from the grange of Holme Cultram, where it had been stored for fear of the

Scots.* Along the shores of the Solway was extensive sheep pasturage, and three cotes or enclosures were built by the monastery of Holme Cultram to shelter the sheep in case of need. Probably the early Cumberland sheep had some French or Spanish† blood in their veins.

It seems clear, then, these sheep did not produce more than one lamb each. I have read a great many inventories to wills in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and never remember to have seen the lambs more numerous than the ewes. A ewe and a lamb formed a very favourite bequest to grandchildren or servants, sometimes the whole flock being disposed of in this piecemeal fashion. Fitzherbert says that the ram should be put to the ewes at the Exaltation of Holy Cross (September 14th), and the lambs should be weaned at sixteen to eighteen weeks old, thus making the yeaning season the beginning of June. After that date the ewes were milked, and their milk mixed with cows' milk. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the value of a ewe's milk was put at 6d. per annum.‡

The sheep cote or fold was a permanent building. The floor was sprinkled with fresh soil or stubble rakings once a fortnight, the sheep being sorted out once a year between Easter and Whitsuntide, and those for sale shorn earlier and fattened on some stunted pasture; an old ewe or toothless wether was killed and salted with the Martinmas beef.§ Between Martinmas and Easter the sheep were kept in the fold, and fed with hay, straw, and peas-haulm; in November the sheep were salved. On November 3rd, 1633, the Naworth accounts show "14 stone and a half of butter, greesinge the sheepe in the Forrest,

* Bain, *Cal. Documents relating to Scotland*, vol. iii., p. 13.

† The traditional origin of the Herdwick breed is that some sheep swam ashore from a Spanish vessel wrecked at Drigg (Dr. Parker's *Gosforth*, p. 35). Dickinson, in the *Cumberland Glossary*, notes a tradition that they were saved from the wreck of a Norwegian vessel. See also "The Mountain Sheep: their origin and marking," by the Rev. T. Ellwood, these *Transactions*, O.S., xv., 1.

‡ Garnier's *History of English Landed Interest*, vol. i., p. 207.

§ *History of English Landed Interest*, vol. i., p. 208.

ijj^h xii^s vi^d; for greesinge 600 sheepe in the Forrest, 45^s.* In the Hexham priory accounts in 1417, 10d. is paid for one stone of "grease for smearing." Sometimes the grease was mixed with tallow, for in John Chamber's *Account Book* in 1605 occurs the entry "for taller to the sheap, 18d." In the end of the eighteenth century the salve consisted of butter and tar in the proportion of 16 lbs. of the former to four quarts of the latter, this being sufficient for forty sheep.† After smearing, the old sheep were turned out again on the common, hoggs being kept only in enclosed ground until severity of weather obliged some hay to be given. Sheep scab was early a trouble, and the large tracts of unenclosed common favoured its existence. The disease was treated with verdigris and coppers, and after the close of the thirteenth century bitumen was used. Great loss was also experienced from the rot.

Early in the fourteenth century the farm produce of the greatest value was sheep skins for the sake both of their wool and leather, as also for their use as articles of clothing. Sheep skins, wool, and leather were declared staple goods, and the Sovereign, by establishing different ports as the site of the staple, obliged merchants to bring their wares to such port only for sale. So early as 1354, one-tenth of the year's export was wool contained in 32,000 sacks, and valued at £138,000. Every Continental dyer and fuller could distinguish Cotswold wool from that of any other country. It became a constant subject of legislation, and such importance was attached to English wool that Edward IV. presented King John of Aragon with some ewes and rams. Coarse and hairy though the wool was, it was worth a vast deal more in proportion during the fourteenth century than the silkiest Leicester fleece is to-day.‡ During the Tudor period the legislature

* *Household Book*, p. 325.

† Bailey and Cully, p. 213.

‡ *History of English Landed Interest*, vol. i., p. 233.

was constantly called upon to encourage tillage at the expense of pasture, "where in some towns two hundred persons were occupied and lived of their lawful labours, now there are occupied two or three herdsmen and the residue fall into idleness."* On account of the great rise in the price of wool, no one was allowed to keep more than 2,000 sheep,† and about the same period export was prohibited. In 1597 arable land, made pasture since 1st of Elizabeth, was to be reconverted to tillage, and that still under the plough was to remain so in future.‡ A popular saying of the time was "it was never merry with poor craftsmen since gentlemen became graziers." This would affect the demesne lands, but scarcely the ordinary copyholder.

On a farm of about one hundred statute acres of good land—Raby Cote—the accounts of May 23rd, 1605, printed in these *Transactions*, N.S., i., p. 214, show 175 lbs. of wool produced, which at $3\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. per fleece would give Thomas Chamber's flock as fifty head, and three stones of wool were kept at home to be carded and spun for domestic purposes. From the tithe lambs we can also gauge the number of sheep kept in the manor of Holme Cultram. On June 9th, 1613, Hugh Askew and John Chamber reckoned for their tithe lambs. The number collected from the 310 tenants was 289, which were sold for £31 4s. 7d, and fifty-eight were bought by the owners for £6 13s. 3d.—an all-round average price of 2s. $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. each. The number of lambs in the manor was therefore 3,430, taking one lamb per ewe and ten per cent. for loss. That would give the number of ewes kept as about 3,000, divided between 310 copyholders and some 1,500 acres of demesne land. In 1307 the priory of Durham bought sheep at 10d. each, and "muttons" (viz., fat sheep) at 1s. 2d. Hexham Priory, one hundred years

* 4 Henry VII., c. 19.

† 25 Henry VIII., c. 13.

‡ *History of English Landed Interest*, vol. i., p. 309.

later, paid 11d. In the 3rd and 4th Henry IV., the Bishop of Carlisle's accounts give the price of lambs at 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ d., 8d., and 9d.; a hogg (yearling sheep), 1s.; while Lord William Howard's accounts show sheep purchased at 3s. 9d. and 5s.; ewes at 9s. and 4s.; tups, 6s.; a "mutton," 7s. 6d.; lambs, 2s. 9d. and 3s. 3d.; fattening wethers, 5s. 10d. Lamb skins were valued at 1s. 0 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. at Rose Castle, and sheep skins at Naworth 9d. each; whereas in the sixteenth century inventories prices range from 1s. 7d. to 2s. 6d. for sheep, 6s. for wethers, and 1s. 4d. and 1s. 6d. for lambs. Wool was valued at 2s. 4d. per stone at Rose Castle in 1450; 5s. to 9s. per stone in 1605; 5s. 9d. in 1621 at Naworth. But wool is an item which very seldom occurs in inventories of wills, proving that it was either sold or carded and prepared for wearing apparel at once. Lord William Howard paid for clipping twenty wethers, 6d.; and on July 12th, thirty-six clippers of sheep received 9d.; thirteen winders and servers, 3s. 6d.; six wool gatherers, 1s.; ten turners, 10d.; and twenty-three washers, 6d. each.*

Pigs and goats were kept by the farmer, although the former were usually in the hands of large holders, who turned them into the forest of Inglewood, and paid "pannage." Then as now the pig was mischievous, and liked to seek for worms in the upturned soil. Consequently the pig very often figures in Manor Court rolls as a delinquent. Thus, under date October 8th, 1657, I extract the following "paines":—

Unringed Swine. Item that no Tenant or other Inhabitant in any town or hamlet within ye Lordship of Holme Cultram keep their swine unringed in winter, or unringed or unyoked in summer, upon pain of 6s. 8d. every default.

If any have swine being unringed going within the churchyard or Sanctuary, he or they shall for every such swine be amerced to the King's Majestie's use for every default, xxs. And if any such swine

* *Household Book*, p. 39.

shall be found wrooteing about any graves then the said swine shall be killed and the owners thereof americyed to the King's Majestie's use, xxs.

Pigs are valued at 1s. 2d. to 4s. 3d. in inventories of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and are in one case described as "gissies."* John Chamber paid 1d. each for "tow younge soukers." A young pig is valued at 1s. 2d. and other pigs 4s. and 5s. each, at Naworth; while swine are valued as high as 5s. 9d. each in the priory accounts of Durham (1307); "bacons" or fat pigs, 2s. 9d. and 3s.; while fourteen young pigs cost 11s. 8d. in Henry the Fourth's reign at Rose Castle. Fitzherbert says that pigs should be reared in the spring or early summer only, and that castration should not be performed. At Naworth, however, they were "libbed" at 1d. each, and in 1618 twenty-five rings cost 4d., and sixteen hoggs were "rung" for the sum of 2d.†

Poultry complete the farmer's live stock. They consisted of geese, farmyard poultry, and ducks. The goose was probably considered the most important, as during the summer and autumn they obtained their living on the common pasture. Little mention is made of poultry by the early writers. Goodge, however, mentions that "goose eggs may be set either under a hen or a goose; if under the former, 3 to 5; if the latter, 7 to 15." He gives the quaint advice—"Put under the roots of nettles, so that the goslings may not be stung. At four months fatten with ground malt and wheat flour." The number of geese kept in Holme Cultram in 1613 was somewhat fewer than the number of lambs. The number of tithe geese collected in the year mentioned was 218, which were sold for 7d. each. This would give the number of young geese in the manor as 2,180. Not many ducks were kept, and hens seemed to have been kept chiefly for

* Giss! Gissy! call notes for swine; also applied to the swine itself (Prevost's Dickinson).

† *Household Book*, p. 93.

the production of eggs. Capons* were kept for fattening, and were valued at a higher price than ordinary poultry. In September there is a charge made at Naworth for making an enclosure for "keeping green geese in," and the carpenter frequently was called in to make coops for keeping capons in. The priory of Durham in 1307 bought hens for 1½d. each, ducks for 3d., and the Bishop of Carlisle paid about the same prices a century later; while at Naworth they bought capons at from 5d. to 1s.; hens, 5d. to 7d.; duckling, 2d.; geese, 6d. to 3s.

In considering the farm operations of the year in Tudor and Stuart times, it is well to remember that the Julian Calendar was in force during these times, and that the dates on every occasion were really twelve days later than they appear. This explains the dates of May 12th and November 11th, and August 12th, when grouse shooting commences. Although the Gregorian Calendar was adopted by Scotchmen in 1600, religious prejudice in England was opposed to accepting anything, however good, which came from Roman sources.

The active work of the year began after the festivities of Christmas were past—on Plough Monday. Early in January the ground was ploughed ready for the spring crops. Little seeding would be done in this month, but the thresher would be at work in the barn, the necessary day's work being thrown down by the master from the gofe or mow. The flail consisted of the head, a piece of tough wood some 3 feet 6 inches long, bound by leathern thongs to the handle of a somewhat similar length. This instrument was in general use in the county up to the middle of the nineteenth century. Ten stooks of wheat, fifteen of barley, and twenty of oats (twelve sheaves) used to be considered a day's work. The sheaves were laid in two rows, the heads forming the chief aim of the thresher. After one side was threshed the sheaves were turned, and

* *Household Book*, p. 316.

the same operation repeated. The straw was then gathered up with a fork, well shaken, and transferred to the mow, the chaff, short straw, and grain being left on the well-beaten clay floor. The corn was separated from the chaff with a fan or wing, or with the casting shovel used in a through draught. Mortimer says "a man with a casting shovel will cleanse as much corn as four men with the wicker or flail fan; a man may thresh four Bushels of wheat or rye, five of oats, and five of peas or beans a day." In Cumberland, corn was threshed by the farmer's family or by ordinary day labour.

Oats then as now formed the chief grain of the county, although in some districts barley was more generally grown. The varieties grown were, according to Mortimer, "the great long white oate, great long black oate, the cut oate, and the skegg oate." Oats were considered suitable for the wettest ground, and the "worst part of the best land." "Skegge" oats (Icelandic *skegg*, beard) were bearded at the small end like the wild oat, and were fit only for barren or worst earth. Mortimer also recommends the crop to be cut "when pale yellow for great increase," and Fitzherbert speaks of a variety called "riddle." When first threshed the grain should be yellow in the bushel," and is good to make oatmeal of;" the crop "wears the ground very sore, and makes it bear guych" (couch grass). Markham knew what he was speaking of, for he says (p. 116) "oats should be cut as soon as more than half changed, two parts white and one part green, the straw to be left and shorne for thatch."

Following sharply on the oat crop was that of barley. The varieties known were the "common," having long ears, two ranks of corn, broad and flat with spikes and in fashion like a battledore; and bere, or bigg barley, large and four-square like an ear of wheat, which was the variety grown in Cumberland, and thought most suitable for light land. Fitzherbert recommended "the stubble to be dunged, the barley fallow lying rygged all the deep and

cold of winter ; before Candlemas to be water furrowed and rygged up in the beginnige of March, the seed sown to be five London bushels per acre." Barley formed the staple food of the Cumberland peasantry up to the nineteenth century, being used for bread, malt, and beer. After the barley harvest came an interval of rest sorely needed by the oxen and horses. There were, however, two minor crops still to put in—hemp and flax, indispensable on each holding for workers during the coming winter, and for completing that domestic economy of those days when every household was self-supporting. The hemp grown seemed to be of two varieties—"fimble,"* the first to ripen, and "carle," most valuable for its seed. Hemp required a stiff soil. Fitzherbert regrets the falling off in the growth of hemp, and suggested that all farmers who plough or sow fifty or one hundred acres of land should sow from one half to one bushel of hemp or flax, or pay 5s. or 10s. towards the poor of the parish,† and because of the threatened scarcity, this recommendation was placed on the statute book—"hemp should be grown in the north of England, where land is very cheape."

Flax, on the other hand, required light soil, the ground to be well ploughed, flat and even, and the seed sown in a warm season from the middle of March until the beginning of June. The statute of Henry VIII. seemed to have been acted on, as in farm valuations for probate hemp and lyne invariably appear, the value being put down as 2s. to 6s. 8d., and, in some cases, line seed was bequeathed by will. A byelaw of 1657 enacted "that noe tenent or other inhabitant do water any hemp or flax in any river, running stream, brook, or other comon pond where beasts used to be watered upon pain of 6s. 8d."

During April the wheat when sown was rolled, the cattle were brought off the meadows, and the fences

* *History of English Landed Interest*, vol. i., p. 324.

† 24 Henry VIII., c. 4.

mended. Early in May the common pasture was stinted, and we may be sure that an early spring was ardently looked for, as a defective hay crop and a bad harvest meant short commons for the farmer and certainly starvation for the unfortunate live stock. Besides his own work the farmer had to keep and plough the lord's demesne, according to his ability and number of horses and oxen. His allowance, while on boon labour in spring, was for every plough three days' work, seventeen white herring, six red herring, a quarter of salmon, three wheat loaves, three loaves of yeoman's bread; and in harvest for every person three days, three loaves of bread, six white herring, and three pints of ale. At Naworth, September 17th, 1629,* "for meate and drinke for twelve boone shearers at Corbye, 50s.," or a little over 8d. each.

The orders for the care of the commons were numerous, some of which may be given here:—

Holm Cultram Court 15th April 1636.

No flackes or turfes to be graved for, to burn or break upon dung-hill for manure sub pœnâ, 6s 8d.

None shall take beasts of any foreigners without ye lordshippe sub pœnâ, 6s. 8d.

Every Frithman shall take account of every man's beasts in his town eight days before our Lady Day in Lent and also within eight days of St. John the Baptist comonly called Mid-Sumer Day, sub pœnâ, 6s. 8d.

Every Township having comon or pasture shall have a comon herd to keep their cattell yearly before St. Hellen's Day, sub pœnâ, 40s.

That no Tenant shall put any horse, mare, or gelding on ye myres, mosses marshes or moores—infectious with scabb or mange, sub pœnâ, 13s. 4d.

In the Manor Court of Weather Millock (Watermillock), October 2nd, 1706, the jury "find Hodgson of Dacre for 2 forreign horses, 20^d: we find John Turner of Soulby 2 forreign horses, 20^d: we find James Wrey for one forreign

* *Household Book*, p. 265.

horse, 10^d." Probably these defaulters made some money out of the transaction after all, for in 1461 the Bishop of Carlisle paid 2s. for grassing a horse in summer. The tenant paid an acknowledgement to the lord known as grysom or gressom, probably the same name as the grassyrth of the Anglo-Saxon, a fee paid for the Lammas meadows* (the Icelandic *grasverð*, fine for grazing). The yearly charge seems to have been from an eighth to a tenth of the copyhold rent, and to have been paid every five years.

The use of the scythe does not seem to have been general until the nineteenth century, the sickle being used instead; and until the eighteenth century the straw was cut about half length to avoid weeds, and preserve the precious grain the easier. The stubble was afterwards shorn for fodder or thatch. After harvest the pigs and geese were turned into the stubble and cattle and horses into the common field, and cottagers were allowed the run of the stubbles for a certain payment.

After wheat was sown (and wheat was, I believe, only grown in Cumberland on good strong ground in the neighbourhood of Carlisle) land intended for barley—that is to say, wheat or oat stubble—received its first ploughing. Martinmās ushered in the winter season. It was not, however, a season of idleness. There were shoes to mend, flax and hemp to beat, malt to grind, and candle rushes to pick; while the females were busy in carding wool, and spinning the wool, hemp, and flax for domestic purposes; and for use on the farm.

* *History of English Landed Interest*, vol. i., p. 88.