

CHAPTER 15 - THE ENCLOSURE AWARD

The Scene before 1771

Throughout England during the 18th and early 19th centuries it has become the fashion to enclose the open fields which lay within a parish and to proportionately re-distribute the land amongst the various owners together with an allotment to the owners of the tithes. This revolution, for a revolution it most certainly was, caught up with Stapleford in the year 1771 and changed forever the way of life which, by then, had been going on for centuries.

We must not make the mistake that all the arable land was in the open fields-enclosure had been taking place within the parish since the early 16th century and there are instances where some parishes were almost wholly enclosed as early as the mid-17th century and without the “benefit” of an Act of Parliament.

Stapleford under the old system

Before dealing with the Enclosure Award proper, let us take a look at Stapleford under the old system. In common with many other Midland parishes Stapleford maintained a simple three field system wherein the acreage of arable land predominated. What we are today prone to call fields are really closes: a field before the enclosure being a large open area divided into furlongs which were themselves sub-divided into selions, strips or lands and subject to the same crop rotation. It is not possible to equate these last three terms in size but the word “lands” being used at a time from which many documents date can be interpreted to signify an area of ground approximately one rood in size, although this was not invariable. All these divisions of land had their names some of which had obvious meanings, others a little more obscure. These will be dealt with at the end of the chapter.

We have no precise knowledge of the extent of each of the three great fields in Mediaeval times but Stapleford being only a smallish parish in area, a great deal of the ground would be under cultivation. Their arrangement, layout and cropping would be much the same then as in the 17th and early 18th centuries from whence more information is forthcoming.

Crop rotation

In any given year two fields were sown with the various crops and the third one left entirely fallow. Details about crops grown under the open field system are very scant and such as there are insufficient to give a completely comprehensive picture of arable farming in Stapleford during that time. Our knowledge is derived from 16th century wills and the very small number of inventories of the early 19th century from

which it is apparent that the main crops were wheat, barley, pease, a little rye and oats: there is no mention of beans-so abundant in Leicestershire. The six inventories which list any crops come from the wills of farmers and husbandmen of such different standing that they are practically useless for any sort of survey, and extracts appended here are for interest only:

Inventories

Moses Atkin 28:7:1709 Wheat and barley in the ground in the Brigg Field. More wheat with pease and oats (in one of the other fields)

Gervase Greasley 25:2:1710-11 Wheat in the ground. Pease on clotts; barley in clotts:- (Clotts were small parcels of land)

John Oldershaw 30:5:1716 Wheat and barley. Pease and rye.

John Greasley 31:5:1728 Corn upon the ground

William Attenborow 5:5:1737 Wheat corn (18 acres)

Pease (20 acres)

John Hooley 29:9:1755 Wheat, barley and pease (all newly harvested)

Flax

Another crop, albeit a small one, of which note must be taken, is flax. Flaxen sheets etc. and linen cloth are often mentioned in Tudor and later wills and these would be carefully woven from flax grown on small plots of land. Leys were sometimes used for this purpose as is evidenced by the will of Roger Storer made 20th December 1592. "All such linen cloth as came of certain seed sowed in the lees."¹

Leys, hades, baulkes and meres

Intermixed with the arable strips in the three fields were the "leys"-strip of pasture left by the farmer for the grazing of tethered beast and animals enclosed within temporary hurdles. The leys were independent of the meadows, which were for hay, and could be ploughed at will. In addition to these and the meadows were the hades (the unploughed part left where the plough was turned) and baulks boundaries between the furlongs) and the land on either side of the "sicks" or "sikes". A sick was a small stream running through marshy ground and "Sick-dyke" traversed the parish from the Bramcote boundary to the Erewash, dividing it into not quite two equal halves, and gave its name to many closes sited on either side of its banks. It acted as a drain for the land coming down from the higher slopes of the Hill Field and from under the Clouds. There was also the Mere, or Common Baulk, both names for the unploughed strip of land which separated the fields of Stapleford from those of its neighbour Toton. There was also the common baulk-Baulk Lane-between Stapleford and Bramcote but this does not seem to be quite on the same footing as

¹ Reg at York Vol 25 f.1409

the Mere.). In the Award John Borlase Warren is allotted a moiety of the Mere, 1 acre 1 rood in extent: the other moiety belonged to Toton.

By the Constables Accounts we see that from the year 1661 it was the custom to let the Common Baulk at rent and the money received spent for the town's use.

1661
Dec 13th "Received twenty shillings for a certayne
parcel of ground called ye Common balke
lyinge between the fields of Stapleford and
Toton"

The following year it was let to "Mr. Warren for £1-0-0", and then is not mentioned again until 1668 when a Mr. Wilsford rented it for 10 shillings. In 1669 and 70 the rent reverted to £1 but in 1676 this was reduced to 6s 8d and continued thus until the end of the accounts.

Trowell "sicke"

Trowell, too, had its "sicke"; this was the boundary with Stapleford and the same accounts shew the necessity for fencing the pastures there, (usually with gorse) presumably to keep apart the livestock of the two parishes.

1656		
June 14th	Paid John Trowell for gorse to fence ye pasture withal at Trowell Sicke	2s 4d
1660		
May 8th	Paid t Roger Hallam for kyddinge 200of gorse to fence the pastures by Trowell Meadow Side	2s 0d
1662		
April	Paid for kidding 100 of gorse	2s 0d
	Paid for fencing Trowell meadow with them	6d
1678	For scouring Trowell Sick	4d

Land survey made in 1709 on behalf of Elizabeth Atkin

There is nothing to tell us what the mediaeval arrangement was in Stapleford of the farmer's lands but as the open field system had been in use for some considerable time I think it not unreasonable that a survey made in 1709 on behalf of Elizabeth Atkin is indicative of such a lay-out; the exception, of course, would be the absence of any closes in those earlier centuries. Elizabeth was the widow of Moses Atkin (died 1700) who had bequeathed to her his horse and his horse and lands for the duration of her widowhood.

The whole of the Survey is given hereunder for it is rich in field names: the only omissions, after the first example, are the names of the occupiers of the adjacent lands.

In the Brigg-end field		A	R
Two lands on the long Rowe Wm Attenborrow junior			
Lands on the North & Jno Oldershaw on ye South being abt		1	0
Three Lands on the Short Bottoms			3
One Land on the top of Brockhill			2
Two Lands shooting in Wellspringdale			1
One Land on Greengate			1
Three lays on Wellspringdale			2
One Land butting on Wellspring			1 ½
Two leas on Blake Poole			2
One lea on Blake Poole			1
One lea more on Blake Poole			1
One land on Shuttrill			2
One other land on Shuttrill			2
Two Lands on Sower Moore			3
One Land on the Rickill			1
One other land on the Rickill			1
Two lands more or Sower moore			2
One through Land on Sower Moore			3
One Land in Toton Nook			1
One Land on Neither worme land			1 ½
Total		<u>8</u>	<u>3</u>

In the Windmill Field		A	R
One Land Butting on Clarke Hedge			2
One Land Butting on Clarke Hedge			1
Two Lands at the Lime Kiln			1
Two Lands on Windmill hole			3
Five lands in Kirke Gate		2	0
One lands on Cliffe Hill			1
Two Lands on ye topp of ye Clouds			2
One lea on ye Clouds			1
One lea on ye Clouds			1
Two lands on the Wett Furrows			3
One land on Have Aker Dyke			1
One through Land and one little land on the Wett Furrows			3
Two Lands butting on hanging hill Pitt			2
One Land on Bottom Gate			1
Two lands on Furgin Slade		1	0
One land next Common Baulke			1 ½
Two lands butting on Nott: Roade			2 ½
		<u>9</u>	<u>2</u>

In the Hill Field:			
One land in Rye Croffts	1 ½		1 ½
TWO Lands and a short one in Rye Crofft			3
One other land there			1
One Land a top of Ulum			1
One other land a topp of Ulum			1
Three Lands at Longstone			2

One other land at Longstone	2
One other land at Longstone	1
One Land at The Hills	1 ½
One other Land at the Hills	1 ½
One Land on the Scallards	1 ½
One other land on the Scallards	1 ½
Two more Lands on The Scallards	2
Two Lands a topp of towle lease	3
One land at towle lease	1 ½
Two lands at Standhill Gapp	3
One Land at Briery bush	1
One Land on Conesey	1
Two lands butting on the Paster Hedge8	1 0
	<u>8 2</u>

One can see that the distribution throughout the three fields is fairly even: there were no leys in the Hill Field, probably because in that year it was fallow; the “lands” were roughly one rood in extent, and “through lands” were two lands end-to end or side-by-side. The nine leys amounting to two acres, or approximately 1/13th of the whole of 26 acres 3 roods.

Five closes, a pingle, cow pastures, horse and sheep gates

In addition to the strips in the open fields Elizabeth had 5 closes:- “the Brockhill adjoining to Marsh Lane, the Bessills shewting down to ye river, Ulam Close, Blake Aker, and the long Close Butting on the Paster”.-all totalling 12 acres. There was also a Pingle called Stanhill Gapp of ½ rood and 4 leys: two within a close called Wellspring Close and two within a close called Seven mens Close, totalling 1 acre. The fact that these leys are within closes suggests that the closes themselves were mainly arable at that point in time and not pasture land, and also that they were in multiple ownership.

Several of the field names above mentioned had come down from mediaeval times (vide Assignment of Dower 1317), and Ulam Close was a corruption of Yule Holme Close, to be further corrupted at a later time to Ewe Lamb Close – hence the present-day Ewe Lamb Lane.

With Elizabeth’s land went 12 Cow pastures in the Pastures, 6 Horse Gates at the Hills and 42 Sheep gates.

Disposition of farms and homesteads

The absence of any early maps or plans prevents us from accurately knowing the disposition of the village before 1771 but Church street and Church lane must, for obvious reasons, be regarded as its nucleus. By the time of the Award there were homesteads along what is present day Nottingham road and also on Pinfold lane with a few at the Roach for good measure.

As it was usual before the time of the Enclosure for the farmer to have his house and buildings on the village street, and not out in the fields as is associated with many farms today, we can see that the village, being almost in the very centre of the parish, was well sited for its inhabitants to be within reasonable reach of their dispersed lands. However there were exceptions to this (a) Jacob Eaton’s cottage and croft, known in the late 17th century as “Broadmans Cottage”, which formerly stood opposite the Hemlock Stone and occupying a similar site where now stands the cottage and shop betwixt Hickings lane and the old entrance to Ewe Lamb lane; and (b) Atkins farm-described in the Award as “an ancient homestead” situate on what was then March Lane (now Derby road) at a point to the north of

that road’s junction with the present-day Hall’s road.

An example of the farm house on the village street was the house (now demolished of course) which stood facing south on the eminence since removed to provide us with the Co-op. Supermarket in Church Street. In living memory this was, to many, just a cottage (with a smaller one adjacent) but originally it had stables, outhouses etc. which one would expect to find appurtenant to a farm house; in its latter days as such it formed part of the estate of Joseph Smedley, cloth manufacturer.

Pastures, gates and stints

Each farmer, or husbandman, had the same proportion of arable in each of the three fields thus ensuring that all, more or less, had a share of the good, and the not-so-good land. Likewise, each farm, house, and cottage had rights appurtenant to it in the form of cowpastures, horsegates and sheepgates according to the stint of the parish. Stinting was the regulation of the number of cattle allowed to graze on the common land but what the stint constituted we do not know as such references to it are quite vague. “According to the stints and usage for putting in of horses in the said pasture called the Hills”, says a deed c1700. A change in the stint must have occurred sometime after that date for John Greasley in his will dated 1767 speaks of “one cowgate or depasturing for one cow according to the old stint in Stapleford pasture”. Perhaps it was due to problems caused by the population increase that it became necessary for the villagers to re-define the stint.

Nor do we know what was taken into account when determining the number of gates to go with any particular holding, the following list allows of no comparison, one item with another, which would shew a pattern to enable us to arrive at a satisfactory answer.

	Date	Name	Extent of land	Horse pastures,	Cow pastures,	Sheep pastures,	
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				gates or commons	gates or commons	gates or commons	
	1670	William Teabould	1 cottage		2	4	
	1672	"Miles Farm"	1 house 3 oxgangs	3	6	30	
	1675	Arthur Warren jnr	The Hall 39 ½ acres	6	6	No mention of sheep gates	
	1678	Thos. Jackson	1 house land which cannot be determined	2	4	20	
	1682	Geo Butler	1 cottage	4	1	4	
	1688/9	Jacob Eaton	1 cottage 4 acres	1	3	30	
	1687	Matthew Langford	1 cottage		1		
	1699	Geo. Brown	1 cottage 6 "lands" (approx. 2 acres		1	2	
	1709	Eliazabeth Atkin	1 house 39a ¾ r	6	12	42	
	1766	Thos & Elizabeth Atkin	1 cottage 4 acres	1	2	10	

A gate, (sometimes called a pasture or a common) was the right to graze one animal in the common lands which included the fallow field as is borne out by the following extract from a deed of sale of 1699 between Israel Jackson and George Brown – “Plus 2 sheepgates in such of the Townes three fields as shall be fallow only as is usual there”.² This suggests that beast grazed in the pastures, horses in the horse pastures at the Hills and sheep in the fallow field.

To return to the stint. This would be laid down by common consent and usually supervised by the Field Reeves. None of their accounts has survived and, of course, it is possible that Stapleford had no such officials, their duties being embodied with those of some other parish officer – perhaps the Constable; this was the situation in the mid-17th century for the paid out of his accounts monies, which one would expect to find disbursed by the Field Reeves, for duties loosely linked with the open field system, Some persons were appointed for a specific job, others, it would seem, were employed as and when necessary and paid “the rate for the job.”

1656	July 10th	Paid Wm Rabye for watching ye field Anno	1s 6d
		1655	
1660	Sept 29th	Paid to Edward Lacy for keeping ye cattel forth of ye hill field.	2s 0d
1661	after Easter	Paid Geo. Kinsey boy for helping the herdsman	2s 6d

² DD 193/2

1663			
Mar 4th	Paid Ric. Buttler for watching the meddow last year		6d
1665			
Mar 4th	Paid to Wm. Biddels boy for tenting the beasts		5s 0d
1666			
Dec	Paid Robert Smedley for scouring the sick		6d
1668	Spent when the new pinder was chosen		2s 0d
1675	Paid to the herdsman		5s 0d
1678	Paid to Katherine Wilde for neatheard wages & 2 warrants		1s 10d
1683	Pd. to ye neatherd Will. Greasley(how's that for women's lib?)		6d

Livestock and crops

Livestock on a Stapleford farm would be much the same as on any other in this part of the country; horses, cattle, pigs and sheep; poultry of course, but this is seldom noted in inventories and wills. Bees must not be overlooked – Henry Hooley (d 1737) had a hive valued at £3. The sheep were a most important item in mixed husbandry, and just how important, especially to the Tudor peasant, can be gathered by reference to the wills of that period wherein practically every testator makes bequests of sheep or lambs – usually ewes- to his children, grandchildren, nephews, nieces or servants.

From inventories made between the years 1709 and 1764 we can ascertain that the value of a man's stock usually exceeded that of his crops. An exception was William Attenborrow, a wealthy yeoman who died in 1737 and whose stock was valued at £84:19:6 and his crops at £94:12:6. If a man had no crops to swell his inventory, he had at least some stock – even if it was only one cow.

Hay was a valuable crop but varied from inventory to inventory without any seemingly regular pattern although the time of year when the inventory was made must be taken into account. From six inventories taken during the above period the following can be noted. Moses Atkin hay crop was valued at £5, Gervas Greasley's at £5-10-0 (his most valuable crop), John Oldershaw's at £1 (growing on Clotts), John Greasley's NIL, William Attenborrow at only £1, but John Hooley's at £20.

Mowing land was allotted to the farmer in accordance with his holdings in the open fields; little strips alternating with those of his neighbours and in some localities known as "doles". These were kept in severalty until the hay crop had been gathered, after which they came commonable this adding their quota of grazing to the area available to the livestock of the community. The usual date for declaring the meadows commonable was Lammass Day (August 1st)

Availability of common land

From mediaeval to Tudor times Stapleford was perhaps, wholly given over to subsistence farming when even the individual craftsmen of the village (and to these

could be added the priest-John Warburton(d. 1621) mentions at least one cow in his will)-carried on their crafts or callings in conjunction with the ownership or occupation of productive land. By the end of this period there was arising in the parish a class often referred to in wills etc. as “labourers”, who, for wages in cash or kind, or both, worked on a larger man’s farm. There were still the craftsmen, perhaps more of them and more varied as the population increased and the way of living changed: tailors, blacksmiths, weavers, cordwainers, nailers, etc. and towards the latter part of the 17th century the framework knitters. During the course of time many, though not all, of these persons had become divorced from any ancestral lands (however small and however held), but whilst plying their various trades were able to keep at least one cow on the common and may even have been able to rent a small parcel of land from a neighbour or employer and this, together with the productivity of the croft attached to the cottage, would give him a tolerably sufficient economy.

Enclosure of common land resisted

The Act of Enclosure cut right across this arrangement and for the smaller yeoman or husbandman, and even the new wage-earners, the enclosure of common land and extinguishing of common rights was to be resented and resisted. As has already been noted there were, before the Enclosure Act, many old enclosures within the parish testifying to the trend in farming and these lay either on the edge of an arable field (with access from road or path) or clustered together in some out-of-the-way part of the parish so that they did not constitute awkward islands in the larger expanse of the open fields.

By what arrangement a man could permanently fence off a piece of open field and form a close for his own use and benefit, as opposed to the leys which were of a temporary nature anyway, we do not know; from the early 16th century onwards attempts were made by the more enterprising and powerful individuals to enclose land and to cultivate it independently of their neighbours and to the detriment of the community. The Tevereys certainly tried it and at once brought forth a howl of protest from other inhabitants, and what at first seems to be a small incident really did hit at the very core of communal husbandry and entailed considerable physical difficulties for the unfortunate.

Opposition to enclosure of common land by Elizabeth Teverey-1517

Early in the reign of Henry VIII, John Burton, William Graseley, Hugh Wayne, William Chambers and others petitioned Cardinal Wolsey, then Chancellor of England, setting forth that they and their ancestors “time out of mind” had Common for all the towne’s cattle in all parcels of ground belonging to the fallow field-as any other town had. But Elizabeth Teverey, widow, and Robert, her son, “by their oppression and great power have enclosed a great quantity of ground contained 12 acres by estimation, parcel of the fallow-field and keep the same in severalty to their owne use and will not suffer the said petitioners or none of the inhabitants of

Stapleford to put in their cattle into the said ground, but drive them out and by force of great hedges and ditches kepe them continually from their said Commons so that they be not able to breed or rear Cattle as they in time past have done”.

Not content with enclosing a portion of common ground the Tevereys had resorted to law to back up their illegal action to the extent that they “grievously used and troubled divers of the said poore man not only by warrants for the peace and Citations in the Special Courts, but also by feigned actions at the Common Law” the petitioners go on to air further grievances and it is quite plain that the action they are fighting had caused great hardship - “and divers of them being men of 80 years of age and impotent have been attached and compelled to appear personally at Westminster before the King’s Justices there”.

It was because of their comparative poverty that these men, unable to pursue the common law for their remedy, decided to petition the Chancellor and beseech him to issue a writ of Sub-poena for Elizabeth and Robert to appear before him to answer the premises.³

The foregoing petition, undated, is included in a bundle covering the years 1515-1518 but must have been presented sometime after 7th March 1517, - the date of the death of Hugh Tevereys, Elizabeth’s husband, -and the last day of December 1518 although it could have been presented after 7th September 1517, the date on which a survey of enclosures in Nottinghamshire was taken and which extant portion shows no mention of Stapleford at that time. ⁴

The Act and the Award

Petition presented 1771

On February 2nd 1771 a petition was presented to the House of Commons from several owners of lands and common rights in the open fields of Stapleford (and part of Bramcote) that their lands lay greatly intermixed and dispersed in small parcels in those fields and that they were desirous of bringing in a Bill to enclose and divide them and to re-allot the lands of the respective owners in more convenient form⁵ Before this stage was reached, there must have been a public meeting of the interested parties, or their representatives, in either Stapleford or Bramcote, probably during the last quarter of 1770, with a view to preparing and presenting the Petition which required the signatures of a majority of the land owners including the lord of the manor-where there was one-as well as the tithe owners. This majority was not a numerical one of persons but a majority by acreage or by annual value.

³ PRO C1/391

⁴ Domesday of Inclosures (Hen VIII)

⁵ JHC XXXIII p 133.

The promoters of the Bill

The promoters of the Bill, which was introduced by Mr. Hanmer and Mr. Willoughby on February 14th 1771 and read for the first time, were William Chambers, Ruth Stokes, Ann Stokes, Millicent Stokes, John Jackson, John Sherwin, Esquire, Joseph Stubbins and others. P.161. Of these, John Sherwin can be ignored as his interest lay only in Bramcote; Joseph Stubbins, too, although he did own some old enclosures in Stapleford not affected by the Act. With the exception of John Jackson, the others above named were “absentee landlords” and represented more than half of the land to be enclosed in Stapleford. The actual acreage re-distributed was 755 acres 2 roods 36 perches of which those proprietors subsequently received 415 acres 2 roods 39 perches. Add to this figure the acreage allotted to John Jackson, 67 acres 14 perches and the total jumps to 482 acres 3 rood 13 perches or 64 per cent of the whole; a formidable “bloc” for any would be objector to overcome.

Second reading

The Bill was read for a second time on February 18th and sent to the Committee; ⁶ on March 11th Mr. Willoughby reported back from the Committee that the allegations of the Bill were true and that the parties concerned had given their consent to it (except 5 proprietors of some 24 acres etc.). The following table gives some idea of the isolated position of this handful of objectors.

How estimated	For	Against	Total
Acreage in the Open			
Fields and Meadows	566 ¼	24	590 ½
Cow Commons	158	3	161
Horse Commons	48	3 ½	51 ½
Sheep Commons	1396 1	10	1506

Unfortunately, the names of these objectors are not known, nor is it possible to determine whether or not they were all Stapleford men, all Bramote men, or some of each; none of them appear before the Committee to oppose the Bill, (hardly likely anyway considering the inconvenience, great expenses involved, and the futility of such a course), and it was, with the Committee’s amendments, sent forward to be engrossed. ⁷

Third reading

The engrossed Bill was read for the third time on March 18th when it was “resolved that it do pass, Ordered that Mr. Willoughby do carry it to the Lords and desire their

⁶ P.165

⁷ PP.243-4

Concurrence.”⁸ It was agreed to by these august gentlemen on March 28th and received the Royal Assent the same day when His Majesty was himself in the House.⁹

The machinery of government had rolled on and in so doing had left some with more land, some with less, and many, who, before the Act had only common rights, with not even these.

The Award

The Award was made on January 18th 1772 and dealt with about 1100 acres of which some seven hundred and fifty-five were in Stapleford representing approximately 63 per cent of the whole parish. (The total number of acres in Stapleford is variously given but a figure of 1200 would not be far out.). The remaining 37% consisted of old enclosures, roads, house and cottage sites with their crofts and gardens.

The Act named the Revd Tristram Exley of Trowell, Clerk, William Fox of Melbourne, Derbyshire, John Stone of Quorndon in Leicestershire, and Thomas Oldknow of Nottingham, gentleman, to be the Commissioners who were in turn empowered to appoint Surveyors to make a detailed survey of all the lands intended to be divided and enclosed, as well as such old enclosed lands which were subject and liable to pay tithes in kind. A value was to be set upon them to enable the division to be made.

The land involved was situated in the three great fields-The Hill Field, The Windmill Field and The Bridge Field – as well as the Meadows, the Pastures and the Hill Common (lying north of the Bramcote-Ilkeston Road around the Hemlock Stone), and the first allotment to be made was to Humphrey Hudson (of Little Chester, husband of Elizabeth Antill) in lieu of the tithes to which he was entitled. This consisted of so much land in the open fields, meadows, commons and pastures – Quantity, Quality and Situation considered – as would be equal in value to one-seventh part of such lands which were liable to pay tithes in kind to Humphrey; also, in lieu of his tithes arising from old enclosures he received so much land – again Quantity, Quality and Situation considered – as would be equal in value to one-tenth part of such old enclosures. And so, the extinction of the tithes brought him a welcome additional 23 acres 3 perches of land in the Bridge Field with the fencing thereof on the south side and a very, very small part on the north side paid for by William Chambers.

Turning now to the details of the allotments there were 39 proprietors who received varying amounts of land from the 28 perches of Isaac Burton

⁸ P.262

⁹ P.295

163 acres 3 roods 15 perches of William Chambers; all of which were awarded for land formerly held in the open fields and for common rights. (In some instances, the award involved the exchange of old enclosures and the result of all this was that whereas before the Act a man's lands lay scattered throughout the three fields, they were now, where size allowed, much closer together.

	Proprietor	Allotment		
		A.	R.	P.
1	Humphrey Hudson, in the right of his wife, Elizabeth. (Including the allotment made in lieu of tithes	52	1	38
2	William Chambers, Doctor in Divinity, of Derby, sometime Rector of Achurch in Northamptonshire, he married Dorothy, daughter of John Rolleston of Watnall. He died 4 th September 1777 aged 52 years. (An absentee landlord whose lands once belonged to the Hollingsworths, Palmes, and others.)	163	3	15
3	Ruth Stokes	86	0	31
4	Millicent Stokes	85	2	24
5	Ann Stokes (Absentee landlords. These were sisters, daughters and co-heirs of John Stokes, Rector of West Bridgford who purchased his lands from Isaac Burrows in 1714. John died intestate in 1749 leaving a widow Ruth, and three daughters. IN 1760, when the youngest daughter, Millicent, came of age, Ruth created a trust for herself and the three daughters agreed to partition the estate which included property and lands in Nottingham, East Bridgford, and Barsby in Leicestershire, as well as in Stapleford. The sisters drew lots to determine who should have what and any inequalities were financially adjusted. Millicent was the last to die and, as she was heiress to the other two, became a very wealthy woman. She in turn bequeathed all her estates to a Millicent Guy who had resided with her so that the younger Millicent at once became very desirable in the marriage market. Andrew Gideon Fisher, Captain of Artillery on the Bombay Establishment of the Honourable East India Company, was the fortunate man whom she married in 1807. He died in 1828, and she in 1857. Their only child, a daughter Isabella Mary, married George Leighton Wood, a surgeon, of Bath. Isabella died at Bath in December 1860 having sold most of her Stapleford estates during that year.)	80	0	8
6	John Jackson (He lived at the "Manor House" and was the largest proprietor resident in Stapleford)	67	0	14
7	Richard Cowle (He lived at Stanton-by-Dale and was the youngest son of Edward Cowle)	56	3	15
8	Henry Taft (It is difficult to say how the Tafts became owners of so much land in Stapleford: probably by purchase, although some by inheritance. Taft was a well-known name in Sandiacre about this time.)	36	3	35
9	John Oldershaw	11	1	31
10	William Hodges	9	3	35

	(Grandson of John Oldershaw who died in 1723 at Beeston)			
11	John Borlace Warren, Esquire	8	0	25
12	William Hall	7	1	31
13	Gervase Rice	7	1	30
14	William Saxton			
	(Formerly of Basford, he had married Elizabeth (b.1728-9)' daughter of John and Mary Oldershaw of Stapleford.)	7	0	11
15	John Daykin			
	(The son of William and Hannah, later to become the Parish Clerk.)	6	1	16
16	George Brown			
	(The son of George Brown and Elizabeth Eaton, daughter of Jacob.)	6	0	21
17	Ann Taft			
	(The widow of Henry Taft and formerly widow of Henry Jackson, grandson of Thomas and Grace.)	5	3	28
18	The Trustees of Woodborough School			
	(When the Revd. Montague Wood founded his school at Woodborough he endowed it in 1736 with property which included a cottage and tenement in Stapleford with the croft thereto adjoining, and 3 beast gates in the common pasture on the west side of the Erewash, together with a parcel of land of 3 acres called the Holme also on the "west side" of the river near to the Moor Bridge; there were 2 acres of land called Willow Flat lying in the Hill field and an undivided moiety of a parcel of ground of 1 acres lying near the long bridge in the Upper or Near Meadow. There was also another undivided moiety of a close called Meadow Close of 3 acres in the Upper Meadow.)	5	2	2
19	John Taft			
	(Probably son of John and Ann, and brother of the above-mentioned Henry (8))	5	0	37
20	Elizabeth Atkin			
	(Widow of Thomas Atkin who was a grandson of Thomas and Grace Jackson. She herself was their great-grand-daughter.)	4	3	10
21	The Heirs of Edward Thompson of Wilsthorpe, Derby; and were: -			
(a)	Martha Frearson			
	(wife of John Frearson)	4	3	16
(b)	Mary Gamble	4	2	32
(c)	Ann Taft			
	(widow of John Taft)	4	1	33
(d)	John Ward	4	1	1
22	Thomas Greasley			
	(He kept what is now "The Nags Head".)	3	2	18
23	The Churchwardens			
	(The land awarded to them is now overrun by Crawford Avenue and was in exchange for a close called "Hill Close" and "The Pingle".)	3	1	10
24	John Hancock	2	2	9

	(of Dale Abbey)			
25	Sarah Jackson			
	(Only daughter and child of Henry who died 1760, a blacksmith by trade and a great-grandson of Thomas and Grace.)	2	1	9
26	John Greasley			
	(Founder member of Wesley Place Chapel which stands I part of Jillings Cross, awarded to John along with No. 26 on the Award map.)	2	0	8
27	John Jackson			
	(Frameworkknitter. Another great-grandson of Thomas and Grace. He married Deborah, daughter of John and Deborah Attenborough and widow of Gervas Greasley.)	2	0	0
28	Francis Hooley			
	(A grandson of Henry Hooley and Mary Wilkinson)	1	1	38
29	Joseph Jackson			
	(Probably the Recd. Joseph Jackson, D.D. Rector of Risley 1773-1811. A Revd. Mr. Jackson appears in the Land Tax for Stapleford for 1780 when he pays 2s. 1d.)	1	1	7
30	John Robinson			
	(Of Cossall)	1	0	25
31	Ann Ward			
		0	3	23
32	Mary Ward			
		0	3	16
33	Samuel Calladine			
		0	1	32
34	Sarah Greasley			
		0	1	20
35	Mary Greasley			
		0	1	14
36	Isaac Burton			
	(Of Beeston. Could he be a descendant of those earlier Burtons of Stapleford?)	0	0	28

The forgoing allotments do not necessarily constitute the total extent of the lands belonging to these 39 proprietors; far from it, many of them owned at least on old enclosure not affected by the Award as did others not mentioned.

Roads, bridleways and footpaths

Apart from re-distributing the land the Commissioners were empowered to appoint and set out public and private carriage and drift ways, bridle –ways ad foot ways over the newly enclosed land, and over any old enclosures, as they deemed necessary.

There were two major, or Turnpike, roads running through Stapleford and their courses were not to be changed. These were the roads from Nottingham to Derby, and from Bramcote Odd House to Ilkeston. Present day Pasture Road would be little more than a cart track, likewise Toton Lane; in the Award they are defined as Public

Horse Carriage and Drift Roads and were to be 60 feet wide between the fences; Moorbridge Lane also fell into this category. It is not clear whether or not Hickings lane (sometime known as Henson's lane) was in existence before the Award. The Commissioners directed that there should be this Private Carriage and Drift road over the Hill Field and that it was to be 36 feet wide between fences. They also set out its course but I can't help thinking that it follows the line of an old occupation road or path to the old enclosures which were to border on to it. Certain other minor Horse Carriage and Drift Roads were set out but these were no more than access roads to specific and otherwise inaccessible enclosures.

Ditches and drains

They could also direct old ditches or drains to be scoured and new ones dug and were aware that part of the lands in the Pastures was subject to flooding by the Erewash so to alleviate this situation they ordered the digging of the Pasture Ditch which runs from Trowell Sick, across the Pastures, and finally enters the river near the Old Mill. The responsibility for scouring this fell upon certain proprietors in Stapleford and to this end a Rate was to be levied on them, payable from time to time and when necessary, to the Constable. The levy amounted to £1-11-0d and was apportioned according to the number of gates each person had before the Pastures were enclosed. The levy is as follows: -

	£	s	d
Elizabeth Atkin			4
George Brown			6
Isaac Burton			2
William Chamber, D.D.	6	0	
Richard Cowle	1	10	
Samuel Calladine			2
Thomas Greasley			2
John Greasley			2
Mary Greasley			2
Sarah Greasley			2
Humphrey Hudson			8
John Jackson, gentleman	3	0	
John Jackson, frameworkknitter			4
Sarah Jackson			6
Joseph Jackson			6
John Oldershaw			8
John Robinson			4
Ruth Stokes	3	8	
Ann Stokes	3	8	

Millicent Stokes		3	8
William Saxton			4
Woodborough School			6
Henry Taft		1	4
Ann Taft)		2
Martha Frearson) Thompsons Heirs		2
Mary Gamble)		2
John Ward)		2
Ann Ward			4
Mary Ward			2
John Borlace Warren, Esquire		1	8
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		1	11 0
		<hr/>	<hr/>

It will be noticed that all the aforementioned 31 owners received allotments under the Award. The remaining 8 allottees, who for some inexplicable reason were excused payment were John Daykin, William Hodges, Gervase Rice, John Taft, Ann Taft-widow of Henry, William Hall, John Hancock and the Churchwardens.

Settlement of disputes

In such an upheaval, when nearly everyone found himself with lands which had been occupied by someone else immediately before, there were bound to be disputes and the settling of these fell upon the shoulders of the Commissioners. As it would be to the detriment of the proprietors if the course of husbandry was not regularly carried on in the lands intended to be divided and enclosed, the Commissioners were to see that the tillage part of such fields, as should happen to be fallow the year wherein such division was made, be ploughed in a “husband-like manner” too several times in that year between 1st March and 1st August by the old proprietors or occupiers. Neglect to do this could result in forfeiture of 10 shillings per acre or part thereof by the old proprietors to the new. If, on the other hand, the old proprietor should not receive as much tillage allotted in the fallow field as he or she had ploughed, then the new proprietor was to compensate him or her for their ploughing as the Commissioners thought reasonable. The Commissioners also had full powers to direct the course of husbandry in the fields between the passing of the Act and the making of the Award with regard to the stocking, ploughing, tilling, folding, sewing, or laying down the same.

Liberty to tell trees

Owners of any land immediately before the allotment was made had liberty and authority, within 6 months following the allotment, to fell and carry away any trees,

hedges and bushes growing thereon unless any such hedges be assigned as boundary fences to any allotment, in which case the new owner was to pay to the old owner such money as the Commissioners should direct.

The costs

Of course, all this had to be paid for, and the burden fell squarely upon all the proprietors of the re-allotted lands. They were required to bear and defray all the costs attendant thereto by an equal pound rate according to the value of the lands newly allotted to them. This could be very severe, especially on the smaller landowner; there was no escaping it and the money had to be found from somewhere. The expenses including the cost of obtaining the Act; of surveying, dividing and allotting the property; of preparing the Award and of meeting the costs of the Commissioners and Surveyors and all other necessary sundries, except the ring fencing and sub-dividing of the allotments which were to be borne by the individual proprietors.

It is difficult to say how these costs pressed upon the smaller owners; no list is available but if the cost of a Leicestershire enclosure about the same time is any guide, then the pound figure would be roughly the same as the acreage figure. Add to this the cost of fencing the newly created closes or fields – a not inconsiderable expense – and one can soon see the formidable financial burden the Act had created.

Change in the way of life

A change in the way of life had been slowly creeping on and the Enclosure Act gave it fresh impetus; not overnight, of course, but during the ensuing decades the influx of new families becomes very noticeable. They are either complete new-comers like the Bonsalls, Fairfields, Lesters, Eatons and Gollins, or simply fresh names in the parish when a daughter of a Stapleford family married an outsider who then takes up residence here like:-

Shepherd-Atkin, Streets-Smedley, Scattergood-Daykin, Caughton (Carlton)-Wallis, Godber-Daykin, and Clifford-Atkin.

Many of the newcomers were framework knitters for Stapleford, within comparatively easy reach of Nottingham-a centre of the hosiery trade-, was ideally situated to receive them and to add them to its own established ones.

Under the new system the land was now incapable of supporting the new, as well as many of the old families, as well as branches of the old, greatly increased and with the advent of the industrial revolution many fresh occupations can be noted in the records and from there on agriculture recedes even further.

End of the rural parish

Land, when it comes up for sale later in that century is offered as “ideal building land” and so seals the fate of Stapleford as a truly rural parish. The trend continued at a leisurely pace until after the Second World War when a concerted effort seems to have been made to reduce to insignificance any pretence to rurality which may have lingered, and the land which once supported all the inhabitants of the parish has taken on a non-productive role and is now covered with concrete, gas-tar and bricks and mortar. Stapleford has lost its identity, its character and is little more than a dormitory in an unsightly conurbation.