AGRICULTURE

1900 - End of W.W.I

For this period, there is limited information and no farming memories. However, with published agricultural comments adapted for East Bridgford, a likely description can be built up.

As the twentieth Century dawned, East Bridgford was an agricultural village permeated by the sights, sounds and smells of livestock, very different from the mechanical world of today. The vagaries of the weather as it affected farming were very important then to all the inhabitants, both directly and indirectly. There were regular sights of carthorses taken out from the stables to work in the fields in the early morning returning before nightfall. In non-winter times, dairy cows were brought along the roads and lanes for milking at the farm homesteads. Many families kept pigs. Stacks of straw, hay and corn were a common sight around the village as were orchards. Over half the parish's working agricultural homesteads were in the village, with most of the main units situated on College Street (then appropriately known as Farmer's Street). This was mixed farming, being arable with different types of livestock, particularly dairy cattle. The cattle in the crew yards provided valuable manure for applying to the fields, particularly for root crops; the villagers knew when it was "muck spreading time!" The thorn hedge field boundaries and lanes were broadly similar to the position after the last enclosure of the "open fields" in 1796/1801, very different from the large fields now. There were numerous ponds in the fields and homesteads, which formed the main sources of water for livestock. These have largely disappeared due to the increase in arable farming and the availability of piped water. The soil is mainly free-working loams of the new Keuper Marl.

The main produce in addition to permanent and temporary pasture was wheat, peas, potatoes and a range of market garden crops for sale. Oats, mangolds, swede turnips and sheep-keep (kale, kohla-robi etc), were the main arable feeds for livestock in addition to meadow and seeds hay (hay from temporary pasture). Barley and beans were grown less often, but the opening of Mason's Pea Factory in 1902 increased local pea production to some extent. The cattle were mainly Dairy Shorthorns for milking; some of the milk was sent to London from Bingham Station. Other Shorthorns

The yard at Mulberry Farm, Cherry Holt Lane in the early 1900's. Although no longer used for farming the buildings were fundamentally unchanged at the Millennium

and Lincoln Reds were for rearing and fattening for beef. The sheep were most likely black or grey-faced short wooled sheep, including Shropshire Down, due to the depression in the wool trade. The Shire breed of carthorse was in favour owing to the revival in trade for them.

The internal lanes, Old Hill, Occupation, Closes Side, Springdale and Brunts were shut up for summer grazing annually. The grazing rights belonged to the Parish and were sold each spring by candle auction. The Chairman stuck a pin into a lighted candle and when it fell out the bidding finished. Springdale Lane was the last to close - in the late 30s.

By **1900**, agriculture was in a bad way and many were predicting the end of pure farming. Nottinghamshire had felt the full effect of the continuing agricultural depression, which came in the late 1870s. The better land (as at East Bridgford) was selling at £30 - £45 per acre, the latter for smallholdings with buildings, which would have made £70 per acre in the 1870s. Local agricultural agents thought that Nottinghamshire was in a better position agriculturally than most counties. There were few failures among farmers, but many lived from hand to mouth.[1] Agriculturists told H. Rider Haggard who visited our County in 1901 that wheat was threshing badly, oats were very bad, barley uncertain and beans a hopeless crop that year. Also milk brought in more money than mutton. He painted a dark picture that he attributed to cheap imports and to losing the best labour to the towns. Farming wages were now at the highest affordable level averaging £1 per week and a cottage, but he was told that the urban orientated system of education turned them away from the land.[2]

Far-sighted Nottinghamshire livestock farmers were leading a recovery, helped by a demand for milk, cheese and potatoes in Nottingham.[3] By 1908, W.H.R. Curtler noted an improvement, with prices rising a little, rents remaining low and farmers making a fair living out of pure agriculture. He also included improvements to farms, particularly near Bingham[1]. Whether or not this included East Bridgford is a matter of speculation! However, this village with its loamy soil, dairy mixed farming and market gardening, would be in a better position than most in the county, but times were hard. In considering the yields at this time, the following table covering 1895-1904 is helpful.

Average tons per acre [4]

	Wheat	Barley	Oats	Potatoes	Turnips	Seeds Hay	Meadow Hay
Notts	0.75	0.65	0.65	4.73	11.53	1.39	1.19
England	0.82	0.68	0.73	5.84	11.91	1.44	1.18

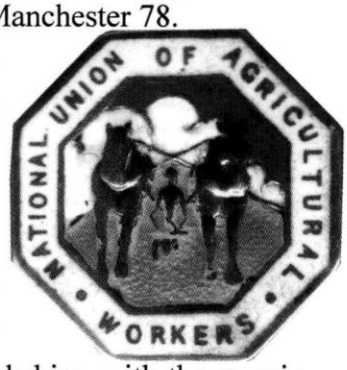
The production from East Bridgford was probably slightly over the above national averages. Due to effectiveness of modern methods these figures were greatly exceeded by the end of the century, particularly for grain and potatoes.

Now, turning to the position of labour on East Bridgford farms, it is interesting to compare the Census Returns for 1891 and 1901 for the actual labour employed on the land.

East Bridgford Agricultural Worker Statistics

	1891 Census	1901 Census	% Difference
Agricultural Labourers	102	88	-13.7%
Market Gardeners	11	13	+18%
Farmers & Small-holders	13	19	+46.1%
Farmers' Relatives (Working)	5	5	-
Total	**131**	**125**	**-4.6%**

The total 1901 figure shows that 35% of the male population was working directly in farming. It also indicates an increase in the smaller acreage or part time businesses. However, there was a decrease in the number of **agricultural labourers**, bearing out Rider Haggard's comments, but possibly to a lesser extent as it was mitigated by an increase in individual enterprises. The reduction is reinforced by the fact that 25 dwellings out of 230 were not occupied. Analysis of the ages of agricultural workers in the 1901 Census for East Bridgford is revealing. The age group 13-19 years has about 50% more members than the average of the other groups (all in tens of broadly similar numbers). This indicates that 35%-40% of the teenagers were leaving agriculture in the village. However, there were working "Old Timers" led by John Richardson 80 years, George Smith 79 and John Manchester 78.



About 64% of these workers are described as general/ordinary agricultural labourers, but 17 are waggoners/ horsemen, with 2 specialised shepherds being Sam Cloxton and William Kemp. The latter was awarded a special silver badge for loyalty to the Agricultural Workers' Union. This leaves 11 stockmen, including 13-year-old George Pepper, mentioned as a "Cow Boy on Farm" (not a westerner!). Around 58% of the "agricultural labourerss" were born in this village, with 8 from adjoining parishes, 6 from Nottingham area, 5 from Lincolnshire, 1 each from Derbyshire & Yorkshire, with the remaining 16 from villages within a 10 mile radius (most within 6 miles). Taking into account the difficult labour position, our village seems to have been a favoured location.

This could account for the comparatively high number of **market gardeners**, 13 on the 1901 Census, due to the demand for vegetables in the towns. However, some were probably part-time as Kelly's Directory for this time shows fewer, but the number increases to 11

market gardeners in **1908 & 1912**. The Census records most of them as Bridgford born, but Charles Bullers, born in Yorkshire, came when young. Their ages varied between 25 and 70 averaging at 46 years. The list in Appendix 2 includes one woman, Alice Upton, a widow. J. Fox was a threshing machine owner on Millgate.

Regarding the **farmers**, only 8 were born in the village, another 8 were from villages within a 10 mile radius, 1 from Long Eaton, with J. Turner and W. Widdison from Lincolnshire. 6 farmers had another occupation as 3 were butchers, 1 a blacksmith, 1 a builder and William Green kept the Plough and Harrow inn on Kneeton Road. As the total number includes 2 poultry farmers and a smallholder, there were only 10 full time traditional farmers, of which 6 had homesteads in the village, most on Farmer's Street (a.k.a College Street). Seven farmers had a total of 16 sons living with them of which 9 were at least 11 years old. Farmers' ages averaged 52 ranging from 30 to 78 years (John Baguley)[5]. In 1888 he was awarded joint second prize for the best East Midlands farm between 25 and 100 acres, by the Royal Agricultural Society of England (R.A.S.E.). This achievement is still commemorated today as his farmhouse on College Street is called "Prize Farm".

The R.A.S.E's report gives an insight into a well managed Bridgford farm around the turn of the Century. The area was about 70 acres comprising 50¾ acres arable and 19 acres grass, which together with house, farm buildings and cottage let for £120 per annum, plus £11 for rates and taxes yearly. The arable area was farmed on a 5 course rotation (1) potatoes/ mangolds (2) barley/peas (3) grass seeds/tares (4) wheat (5) oats. The livestock included 8 cart horses, of which 2 were breeding mares, 23 Shorthorn cattle being 9 milk cows, 13 followers and a bull, plus a few sheep. The milk cows are described as "very useful looking" and were "fed with straw cut by horse power, mixed with roots, crushed oats, 20 lbs linseed cake and brewer's grains from Newark". Additional small revenue came from sale of poultry, eggs, butter and orchard fruit. A heavy amount of farmyard manure was spread; also a top dressing of soot and nitrate of soda was applied as necessary. Mr Baguley was complimented on farming the land very well; great neatness in all departments, including proper care of his implements and for "raising himself by his own industry from a humble position". He was also congratulated for making a moderate profit on a 3-year average, with mixed farming, "even in these days of low prices", "with careful management".[6]

There is a list of farmers in Appendix 4. The majority appear then to be renting land, but there were owner-occupiers. Kelly's Directories 1900-1912 state that the **principal landlords** were the President and Scholars of Magdalen College, Oxford, Mr Roland Hacker, Mrs Martin soon succeeded by Mr O. Martin and the Trustees of Rev. Thomas Mitchell. In 1468 William Deyncourt settled his moiety of the Manor of East Bridgford (35%-40% of the Parish) on Bishop William de Wainfleet as part of his foundation of St Mary Magdalen College, Oxford.[7] By **1908** this was 663 acres let for agricultural purposes, comprising 11 lettings on a yearly rack rent totalling to £1,245 (188p per acre).

The area of the 6 largest holdings were approximately 66 acres, 72 acres, 79 acres, 98 acres, 116¾ acres and 207 acres. The largest centred on Burneham House was let to J. Wilkinson.

These lettings all included farmhouse, farm buildings (and in 2 cases a cottage) with pasture and arable land and were let for annual rents per acre of between 164p and 213p (average 182p). In addition, there was a modest Land Tax to pay annually. To reflect the difficult agricultural situation, all these rents had remained the same since 1893/4 for some, and 1886 for most[8], when there had been a reduction of about 17 ½% from a previous rent in the Golden Age (1849-1877). These rents per acre are higher than the 110p for loamy soil near Wollaton and 100p at Southwell, but lower than pasture north of Mansfield and first class land at Ruddington.[6] The tenants were required to cultivate the land in accordance with the approved custom of the neighbourhood:- not to have more than 2 corn crops in succession, not to sow any brown mustard for seed and to consume all green crops on the farm by livestock etc.

The College Bursar arranged to visit one of the farms (a different one each year) after Lady Day (25th March). At the appointed time, he arrived with his Gladstone Bag, entering a room which was set aside for him. All the estate tenants sat in a row in the kitchen, going to see the Bursar one by one to pay their rent in guineas. On one such occasion Charles C Allwood of Clyde House Farm was worried that his cattle in the open crew-yard were not doing well, due to winter rain. So he had the courage to ask for a shelter. This was agreed, and when he told Joseph Turner of Oxford House Farm, he promptly made a similar request, resulting in a mono-pitch shelter for his crew-yard, which is still there today. At Clyde House, half the crew-yard was covered by an apex shed, with the guttering and down pipes used to conserve water, by connecting to a large cistern, which was hard to clean out. Before mains came, water could be very scarce, so the farmer arranged the piping for water to the horses and cattle first!

It is interesting to note that the insurance value for all the College's agricultural dwellings and buildings here was £7,580. Sale details are scarce, but in September 1902, an arable field of 6½ acres was sold for £442 (£68 per acre). Sometime during this period (unfortunately the particulars are undated) the 34.88 acres of Burrows Farm with barn, crew-yard and a well was sold for £2,000 (£57.34 per acre). The land, which was 1/3 grass and 2/3 arable, was in 6 fields approached from Springdale Lane and from Brunts Lane. Before WWI and for a long time after, it was farmed and market gardened by the Bullers family. Subsequently the buildings were removed and land is now mainly with Spring Farm, Bingham.

The Government carried out a national valuation of agricultural properties including East Bridgford in **1912**, which gives useful financial information. For example, a 25½-acre market garden unit with cottage and farm buildings was let for £70 per annum (275p per acre) with the tenant paying rates (R.V. £64.25p) and landlord paying for insurance and repairs. Allowing for the above, hedges and footpath, the market value was assessed at £1,400 (£54.90p per acre). Also nearly 7 acres of Glebe Land pasture was let for £17.50p per annum (252p per acre) with the tenant paying land tax 45p and rates (R.V. £17.75). Allowing for the above, hedges and a bridle path, the market value was £460 (£66.31 per acre). In another case, an owner-occupier of a 6 acre arable field had a 4% mortgage.

According to the **1916** Kelly's Directory, the number of farmers and small holders had reduced to 14 with only 6 the same as the 1900 Directory. Market gardeners showed a smaller reduction to 10. Also Magdalen College was the only major landowner. Although our farming remained mixed, as elsewhere arable areas may have reduced before W.W.1 (1914-1918). Whilst previously the Government encouraged training, education and advice, with the advent of war, the involvement was more directional. Britain's reliance on imported food and the tragic effect of German submarines made increased agricultural production extremely important. This was done by the "carrot" of incentive prices and the "stick" of ploughing up orders on grassland and other requirements. In October 1916, the government took charge of wheat supplies and in November controlled vacant farmland for food production. All this resulted in more arable production and some much needed improvement in farming incomes.

Early in the 20th century boys did a lot of work, particularly at harvest time, when the school might close for a period.

On the other hand the war meant a big loss in labour, firstly to volunteers and in 1916 to conscription. In 1915/16 the Army was ordered to send men home temporarily to help with harvest, but unfortunately some officers did not send the "Ag Labs", but those who they wanted to get rid of! After urging women to work on the land in March 1915, the Government started to recruit women "to till fields" a year later, which by September 1917 resulted in 200,000 working in the Women's Land Army on the land. Remount Officers came to villages to requisition horses for the Army. They preferred carriage horses and were told to keep enough horses on the farms to do the work. In **1914** farm wages were 85p per week, but the Agricultural Wages Board, introduced during the war, increased them appreciably. Although no evidence is to hand, it is very likely that all the above affected our parish and its people. However, it is known that Gertrude Willows of Kneeton (later Mrs Dickinson of College Street) won a silver plated teapot for horse ploughing at a Flintham Ploughing Match anniversary in 1917.

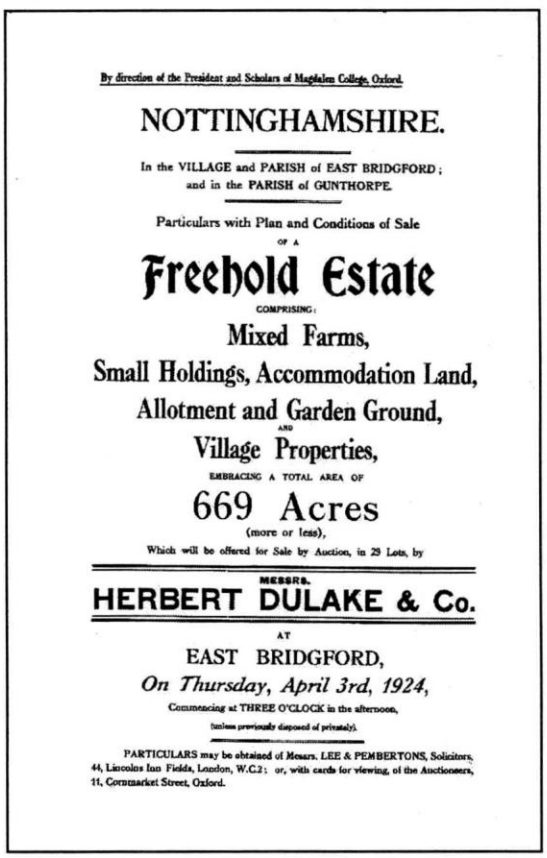
Between the Wars (1919-1939)

By **1920**, the minimum farm wage rose to £2.15 per week, but in **1921**, world corn prices collapsed, resulting in repeal of the Corn Production Act with its guaranteed prices.[3] Arable production, particularly corn, was hit badly but East Bridgford's mixed farms, especially family ones, should have survived the storm better that those in the arable areas. The **1922** and 1925 Kelly's Directories show a reduction in the number of farmers to 12. The market gardeners remained at 10 as in the 1916 Directory, with Thomas Alvey being the only one remaining from the 1900 issue. Wages dropped seriously to £1.40p, but by **1925** had crept to a £1.60 minimum wage in Notts for a 50-hour week, unchanged 6 years later, reaching

190p in 1939.[3] Bill Widdison remembers leaving school in 1924, when he was 14, to work at Top Field Farm, an arable and feeding unit. He walked up Kneeton Road past the lane to the Potteries (where the gypsies stayed) arriving at 6.30 am every day. He earned 13/9d (69p) per week at first. His weekly wage rose by 10p or 20p each year, reaching about 150p in 1931. Later he worked at Harry Hall's poultry unit on Walnut Tree Lane with numbers of fowls on free range and around 1,500 chickens reared per week. The main unit closed in 1958.

The critical farming situation made some landlords realise that their capital could do more for them elsewhere. One of the first to see trouble coming was the Rector or his adviser, who on 5th October 1920 sold Glebe Farm of 140 acres, 1 rood and 10 perches (140.312 acres) for £4,075 (£29 per ac) with sale expenses of £185. This outlying farm, near the north-eastern corner of the parish was let for £149.77 yearly (only 107p per acre).

In **1922** the College paid for builders from Wainfleet to carry out lots of necessary repairs to farmhouses, farm buildings and provided new gates. This foretold a big change, being the sale of the whole of Magdalen College estate at East Bridgford in **1924**. The area sold was 669 acres with a yearly rent roll of £1,361 being an average of 203p per acre for the total and 177p per acre for the largest 6 farms. The properties were described as a freehold estate comprising 6 mixed farms, 3 small holdings, 12 lots of land, 2 allotment groups, 3 lots of garden ground and 3 village properties. (See Appendix 6 for abbreviated schedule) The particulars stated that the properties would be sold by auction at East Bridgford, unless previously disposed of privately.



By direction of the President and Scholars of Magdalen College, Oxford.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE.

In the VILLAGE and PARISH of EAST BRIDGFORD; and in the PARISH of GUNTHORPE.

Particulars with Plan and Conditions of Sale

OF A

Freehold Estate

COMPRISING:

Mixed Farms,

Small Holdings, Accommodation Land,

Allotment and Garden Ground,

AND

Village Properties,

EMBRACING A TOTAL AREA OF

669 Acres

(more or less),

Which will be offered for Sale by Auction, in 29 Lots, by

MESSRS.

HERBERT DULAKE & Co.

AT

EAST BRIDGFORD,

On Thursday, April 3rd, 1924,

Commencing at THREE O'CLOCK in the afternoon,

(unless previously disposed of privately).

PARTICULARS may be obtained of Messrs. LEE & PEMBERTONS, Solicitors, 44, Lincolns Inn Fields, London, W.C.2; or, with cards for viewing, of the Auctioneers, 11, Cornmarket Street, Oxford.

East Bridgford was described as a "healthy village" with "land of high class producing quality including some of the best in the locality". The sale included the standing timber, also underlying minerals, and the auctioneers stressed the valuable layers of gypsum existing in the parish.

Such fishing rights as the College possessed for the frontage of lots 13 and 19 to the River Trent went with the purchase. Each lot was reasonably well described giving area, location, tenant, rent, out-goings (usually a small Land Tax) and where appropriate housing accommodation and type of farm building. The farmhouses were all brick built with tiled or slated roof, the vast majority of the farm buildings were of similar construction. The farms were reasonably well equipped, all having a storage barn, mainly with cement floor, the majority

had a crew-yard often with a cattle shelter, meal store, stock-pen, loose box, piggeries, implement shed, trap house and granary loft. The following table shows human, horse and cow accommodation:

Lot	Farm	Approx. Acres	Farmhouse Bedrooms	Cot-tages	Stabling - horses	Cow-sheds
5	Clyde House	106	6	0	6	6
6	Oxford House	56	6	1	6	8
7	NE Corner of College Street (later Croft Farm)	78	5	0	4	0
13	Burneham House with Top Field farmhouse (as cottage)	159	9	0	8	14
			n/a	1	6	0
17	Prize	58	5	2	5	8
19	Springdale (Walnut Tree)	72	5	0	7	12

The farms had a schedule of fields and homestead giving its number on the good plan, name, area and cultivation, which was either pasture or arable, as stated on the tenancy agreement (total about 77% arable 23% pasture). Some unusual names were Tween Wongs (NE of Butt Lane) and 4 Creekthorne fields (NE of Occupation Lane) on Clyde House Farm; 4 Long Barrow fields (between Old Hill Lane and Green Lane) and Elizabeth Carrs (NW Kneeton Road) on Oxford Ho. Farm; 7 Die Furlong fields (SE of Kneeton Road opposite Green Lane) on Lot 7 above; Constable Mear and Newark Gate (NW of Kneeton Road next Old Hill Farm, formerly Jerusalem Farm) on Topfield Farm; Nether Hollands (between Occupation and Closes Side Lanes, one field from Fosse) on Prize Farm; and Desborough Plotts (E of Brunts Lane) on Springdale Farm and Haycroft smallholding. All the farms had scattered land with the main block away from the homestead, making work more difficult and expensive. This was probably due to the College only owning part of the parish and quality distribution at the En-

LOT 17.

(Coloured Pink on Plan).

In the Parish of East Bridgford.

A Productive Freehold Holding

KNOWN AS

Prize Farm

EXTENDING TO AN AREA OF

58a. 0r. 23p.

(more or less),

INCLUDING

AN EXCELLENT FARM HOUSE, which is double-fronted and constructed of Brick, with blue Slated Roof, affording the following accommodation :—Entrance Passage, 2 Sitting Rooms, 5 Bedrooms, Kitchen, Scullery, Dairy, and Cellar.

THE USEFUL FARM BUILDINGS, which are of Brick and Tile construction, consist of :—Meal House and Workshop, Stabling for 5, and Fodder House, Cowhouse for 8, and Loose Box, Barn, Wagon and Trap Houses, and Pig Sty.

TWO Brick and Tiled COTTAGES, containing 5 and 4 rooms respectively.

SCHEDULE.

Tenant.	*No. on Plan.*	*Description.*	*Cultivation.*	*Quantity.* A.	R.	P.
Mr. C. ALLWOOD ...	14	Moor Close	Pasture	3	1	39
	16	Little Colston Close ...	Ditto ...	4	3	20
	166	Farm House, Buildings, etc.	...	2	3	1
	216	Square Close	Arable	1	3	15
	217	Old Foss Close ...	Ditto ...	5	1	6
	218	Near Foss Furlong ...	Ditto ...	6	0	22
	219 and Pt. 220	Middle Furlong	Ditto ...	6	1	28
	221 and Pt. 220	Long Lands	Ditto ...	5	0	11
	222	Foss Close	Ditto ...	6	0	23
	223	Nether Hollands ...	Ditto ...	9	1	24
	224	Long Lands Close ...	Ditto ...	4	2	20
	225	Part of New Close ...	Ditto ...	1	0	6
	Pt. 166	House and Garden ...	...	...		...
				A.	38	0 23

Let on a Tenancy determinable 6th April in any year, at an apportioned rental of £115 per annum.

OUTGOINGS :— Land Tax apportioned at £1 11s. 6d.

closure Award 1801, exacerbated by most College farms lying on College Street. Some of these outlying fields were wisely sold in 11 separate lots, with apportioned rent and land tax.

All farms and most land (22 lots) were subject to a note that it was "on a tenancy determinable 6th April in any year". Security of tenure was still 24 years away, so there was a strong incentive for a tenant to buy before the sale if he (or she) could manage it or persuade someone to buy and accept his (or her) yearly tenancy; particularly as the sale was on 2nd April. This resulted in the "Sale of the Century" being a disappointment as a spectacular, due to the private pre-auction sale of 23 lots. In the majority of cases, this was to sitting tenants, which included Miss E.S. Millington (12 acre smallholding, Haycroft); C.C. Allwood (Clyde House Farm); J. Turner (Oxford House Farm); J.S. Wilkinson (Springdale Farm, Walnut Tree Lane). The rector and historian, Rev. du Boulay Hill, as Secretary of the local allotment association bought their 18-acre allotments on Closes Side Lane. J. Shardlow bought G. Jackson's smallholding (Mill Heyes) prior to the sale. Other private purchasers were H. Curtis, - Lodder, F. Mason, J. Turner and an un-named person who bought 5 lots for £5,500. The remaining lots were sold by auction as follows:[9]

Lot	Description	Location	Approx Acres	Rent £	Purchaser	Price £	£ per acre
7a	Now Croft Farm	College St. NE Corner	78	132	H Millington	3,300	42
13	Burneham House Farm	College St. SW Corner	159	255	Un-disclosed	5,500	35
17	Prize Farm	College St. SE	58	115	E Alton	2,150	37
24	Allotments	Butt Lane to Springdale Lane	5.6	11	E Colville (? E Covill)	305	54
27	Smallholding	College St. NW Corner	3.2	32	H Knight	100	31
29	Smithy	Straws Lane	-	4	H Thompson	47	-

The Nottm. Journal reported that all lots "realised approximately nearly £40,000", (roughly £58 per acre gross over all). From these figures and the above table, it is clear that the lots sold before the sale, made appreciably more per acre than at auction. This seems reasonable and sensible, as it gave the purchaser certainty and security at an undisclosed figure, but it must have been difficult to raise the money.

However, the villagers were soon to be treated to another sale on 26th June 1924 at the Temperance Hall. This was for 188 acres, 3 roods and 2 perches (188.756 acres) that comprised Burneham House Farm, previously sold by auction and lots 1, 14, 15 and 16 private sales before the April sale. The former was divided into 7 lots, the attractive farm residence with good farm buildings in 1¾ acres; Topfield Farm 136 acre; Butt Close nearly 5 acres; Long Close 4 acres grass fronting on College Street and Cross Lane with expectation of gypsum; 2

separate grass fields and a garden. All lots were occupied by John Wilkinson (a Wesleyan Preacher who bred a lot of horses of different types) who had received notice to quit them expiring on 6th April 1925. The solicitors came from Grimsby, which might give a clue to the vendor's location. Local auctioneers were used this time, being Hawson & Taylor, Pelham St., Nottingham who pointed out the advantage of the proposed new river bridge in freeing all tolls from the existing bridge to and from L.M.S. railway station at Lowdham and the north. The Nottingham Journal stated that the sale took place before a large company and commented that "the dividing of the holding into smaller accommodation lots apparently appealed to local residents, for the competition for the odd fields was very keen, and a great improvement on many recent local property sales." The following lots were sold:-[10]

Lot Jun	Lot Apr	Description	Location	Rent £	Purchaser	Price £	Per ac £
1	Pt13	Grass 7.7 acres	Springdale Lane - N	20	E W Millington	440	57.1
2	Pt13	Grass 3.9 acres	On E side of Lot 1	10	C Kirkland	245	62.8
3	16	Arable/Grass 15.65acres	Springdale Lane - S	31	J Curnow	670	42.8
9	15	Grass 3.5 acres	Butt Lane - S	9	W Alvey	260	74.3
11	1	Garden 0.1 acres	Walnut Tree - N	1.5	WJ Baguley	28	-

The other garden was sold privately before the sale, but 5 larger and important lots, including Burneham House and Topfield Farm were passed, possibly due to shortage of agricultural money available in difficult times. Whether or not they were sold privately shortly after the sale is not known, but Kelly's Directory 1932 has John Wilkinson still farming in the parish and Bill Widdison worked for him at Topfield Farm till 1931 when the farm changed hands. It was estimated that 80% of the tenants bought their land. Whilst the initial change of occupier was fairly small, the change had begun; more would come and then accelerate later. Also for the first time ever, there was not one single owner of a substantial part of the parish. Whilst in most cases, regular payments were made for mortgage instead of rent; there was generally more freedom and flexibility. Kelly's Directories 1925-32 states, "Nearly all the farmers of this parish own their own farms".

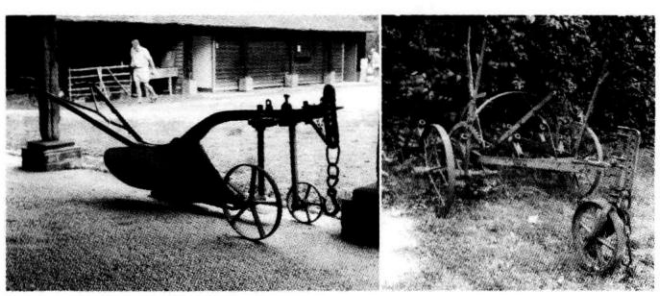
About **1926**, Joseph Allwood came from Screveton (where he used steam engines for cultivation) to take over his father C.C. Allwood's Clyde House Farm. He also farmed and lived at Oxford House Farm following his grandmother's husband, Joseph Turner. He came as a foreman carpenter, married his landlady and settled as a farmer. Later he became a Church Warden at St Peter's Church.

In **1927** F.B. Kirkland started farming at Cape Farm on a small acreage. Times were difficult, so he was glad to sell picked mushrooms and rabbits, the latter paid for his first dairy cow at £18, when the best made £28.

In **1932**, there appears to be an increase in the number of holdings, as 43 are recorded, but only 5 had more than 100 ac, including John Wilkinson's farm exceeding 150 acres. At the other end, 10 were less than 5 acres and a further 20 had less than 20 acres.[11] These would be mainly market garden units, their numbers had increased and some "stood market" in Nottingham including G. Ellis; T. Ellis; F. Thornton; J.T. Gregg and W. Ellis. In the early part of the century one of the Ellis family rode to his market stall with his vegetables tied all round his horse. In the late 1950s Valerie Bates remembers, when 11 to 15 years old, working for her father Walter Ellis on his market garden. She says "*My dad did it for his dad, now I was doing it for my dad. One hour before school and one hour after*". The work included stone picking, scything, raking, hoeing, digging, picking vegetables and loading boxes into their lorry going to his market stall. The vegetables grown included "*lettuce, beetroot, spring onions, marrow, potatoes, kidney and broad beans. Later in the year there were cabbage, cauliflower, brussels, kale and cooking onions*". Heavy tools were shared or borrowed. She remembers cleaning and greasing the borrowed tractor and implements before they went to the next user. The work was hard and cold, but rewarding with much "*self-satisfaction seeing the different vegetables grow well*".

In the early **1930s**, J. Simpson Wilkinson's Springdale Farm on Walnut Tree Lane had a bad fire when 5 or 6 corn and haystacks were lost, but the farm buildings were saved as they were not adjacent. This would be a big loss, but the cause and how well insured he was is not known. About this time, Samuel "Toffee" Richardson of Mulberry Close Farm retired from farming. As none of his 5 sons took over the farm, the house and buildings were separated from the land, which was then farmed by Joseph Allwood. Similarly, Burneham Farmhouse (now called "Old Manor House") and farm buildings were occupied separately from agriculture.

Joseph Allwood had brought with him his ex-Army Fordson Tractor, which he bought at a 1920 dispersal sale. This is believed to be the first tractor in the village; it had cleats on the wheels and an iron weight was required for 2nd gear. Air was drawn through a gallon water bowl, which needed washing out regularly. Generally though, in 1932 most work had not yet changed and horse power was still dominant. There were 90 horses on the parish's holdings, including 66 workhorses. However, the full-time manual labour was down 42% from 1901 to 52 including 3 females reinforced by 11 part-timers.[11] Then work was hard and long, arrival times at Oxford House Farm, which were probably typical, were as follows:- The waggoner (who as a "Craftsman" received the highest wage) came at 5.30 am to feed and water the horses, the milkers arrived at 6.00 am and the others at 7.00 am. Work was supposed to finish at 5.00p m.



Typical horse drawn implements of the period

Fred Smith remembers:- "*A ploughman would leave the farm at 6:30am and head for the*

open field, set to plough one acre of land before 2:30 pm. During this time he would walk more than ten miles. This was hard work, and great skill was needed to plough a straight furrow and guide three great horses. Two horses would walk on the unploughed land, the other horse in the furrow. After ploughing, the horses would be taken back to their stables where they would be fed, watered, cleaned and combed. Later on, at around 9:00 pm, they were bedded down for the night. Next morning at 4:00 am feeding and cleaning would start again, in readiness for another day's work in the fields.

He also recalls the "Cuckoo Barley" crop that was drilled after the winter swede crop for the sheep was finished. The barley drilling took place from mid-March to mid-April. The short straw was good for cattle feed in the crew yard or open fields. The barley was ground for pig food, as it was not good enough for malting. April to May in the 1920s/ 30s was a busy time in the fields, with the hoes and the spuds – no, not potatoes! A spud was a tool with a two-inch blade used on thistles in grass fields. "

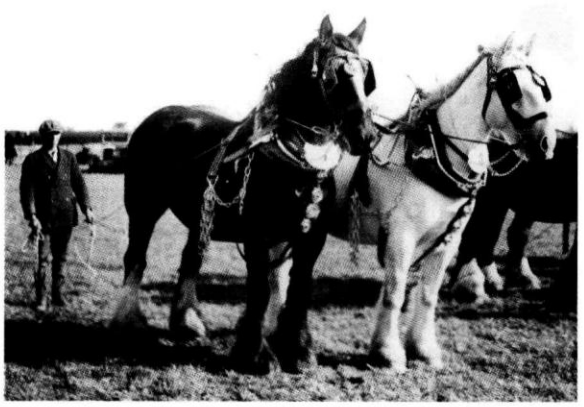
It was a common view locally that in the 1920s and 1930s farming did not really pay; it was a question of survival. To provide some help, agricultural land and buildings were de-rated. One of the larger farmers reckoned that he had consistently worked 50-60 hours a week to obtain a level income balance. A bonus in the **mid 1920s** was the building of sugar beet factories at Kelham and Colwick, which gave the opportunity to grow a crop under contract. Oxford House Farm grew it in 1928 and others probably did the same, because by **1932** there were in the parish about 64 acres of sugar beet sown, eclipsing potatoes at 47 acres and bare fallow 46 acres. Mangolds and swedes for fodder at over 100 acres was still the principal root crop in the rotation. Wheat at around 250 acres was the leading arable crop with oats still popular. About 44% of the total farming acreage of about 1,750 ac was down to permanent grass, with a further 7% temporary pasture, underlining the importance of livestock in the farming pattern. There were 346 cattle in the parish, with about 2/3 connected with dairying and the others for beef. In addition, the total sheep flock was 391, also recorded are over 200 pigs and substantial poultry numbers including 84 ducks.[11]

One way of trying for a regular income was by dairy farming. Those who were milking in the '30s included C.K. Allwood; J. Allwood; Dr. Taylor (Manor Farm); J.R. Fletcher (Bungalow Farm); F. Kirkland (Cape Farm) and possibly E. Covill (Old Hills Farm); Ellse Bros (Glebe Farm) and J.S. Wilkinson. Jo Allwood recalls that at Oxford House, 15-20 Lincoln Red Cows were hand milked. They were fed with dairy cake, kale, sugar beet tops and beet pulp soaked to make it go further. There was a Lincoln Red Bull bought with a Government subsidy provided that the bull was available to serve cows in the area, which he did. After milking, a 12-gallon churn was put in a horse trough to cool. Milk sales were retail and wholesale. For the former there was a 22-gallon churn carrier (ex Lincoln Co-op) with legs and a tap, which was pushed around the village, filling customer's receptacles using 2 measures.

C.K. Allwood of Prize Farm, who had one arm, took his milk around the village in a pony and trap. Mabel Ellis remembers as a 14 year old, riding with him and being told to be careful in measuring out the milk whilst he held the pony. She said that homemade butter, cream, eggs, potatoes and anything else available were also sold from the trap. At the

'Milking Gates' on Kneeton Road, there was a wooden building with a corrugated roof (described as 'tin buildings') where the 2 cows that remained in the field were milked. The milk was taken to the Manor for their use.

In **1935**, Flintham Ploughing Match was held at Kneeton Road, East Bridgford. One of the ploughing winners was Cyril Cox, waggoner at Manor Farm who is depicted with his horses and he also won prizes on other occasions. The same year, a lot of farm labourers were taken to dig trenches and other work in connection with providing a proper sewage scheme. The provision of mains water, 3 years earlier to the village was a great boon, particularly to the livestock farmer. However, it did not go to outlying farms.



Cyril Cox with his horses—see alongside

In **1937** at Glebe Farm, a borehole was taken 300 ft down and operated by a wind pump. The water was black and not good, but used until 1960. Just prior to W.W.II there was some evidence of mechanisation approaching. Earlier in the decade Ted Fox, a steam engine contractor from Millgate had a tractor; later Dr. Taylor had one for Manor Farm. By 1939 the Halls of Egg Farm had a Fordson Tractor and J. Allwood acquired his second tractor but still retained 4 work horses.

W.W.II to 1959

In general, the economics of farming during the war were somewhat better, as with imports drastically cut, there was an urgent need to increase home produced food. This prompted a local comment "*it is a pity that it takes a war to make farmers wanted*". However, times were restricted and hard with young farm labour being called up to the services. M.A.F.F. set up 'County War Ags' (Agricultural Committees) giving them many powers to increase food production including 'Ploughing up Orders' on permanent grass. In 1940 only Curtis's, Egg, Manor & Oxford House Farms had these orders, mainly growing oats and wheat, but in 1941 this increased to 19 holdings with the same cereals popular. The first year corn often failed or was poor, due to wireworm, but the next year it was usually alright. Total cropping in 1940 was broadly similar to 1932 but with a preference for kale and mangolds over swedes for animal feed. Bare fallow was losing favour and there were less pulse crops. Cattle numbers increased 37% to 476 with the extras for rearing and feeding. Work horse numbers decreased 20% to 52 due to increase in tractors to 9.[12] In **1940** Halls bought another Fordson, a utility one for £145. By 1941 Prize Farm had 2 tractors, with a tractor each at Brown's Fosse Farm and Chamberlain's Fosse Fields Farm. Early in the war, E. Rawding became tenant of Topfield Farm (about 100 acres) in place of Mr Kirk, moving from Old Hill Farm (approximately 74 acres of Glebe land), where he was succeeded by E. Covill.

National Farming Survey 1942

A detailed **National Farm Survey** was made for every holding of 5 acres or more, with the aim of ensuring that the land was used for maximum output and managed efficiently. The inspections in this parish were made in Jan and Feb 1942 on 29 holdings and provide a good picture of physical and other factors. The sizes varied, with 18 holdings less than 20 acres and only 7 above 100 acres. Only Oxford House and Manor Farms had over 150 acres. 16 holdings had full-time farmers including a poultry farmer, 5 had full-time market gardeners; 4 had part-time occupiers (butcher, postman, carrier and greengrocer) and 4 hobby farmers. 6 were full owner-occupiers, 14 tenants only, with the rest part owner, part tenant. Surprisingly, there were 36 different landlords including Glebe Land and Notts County Council. Most lived within the wide locality, but also from Suffolk and Exeter. The area rented was about 1,150 acres out of a total of around 1,695 acres. The annual rent per acre ranged from 86p to 540p averaging 164p, a drop of 19% in 18 years, which reflected the hard times of the 20's and 30's. A controversial aspect of the survey was an assessment of management. The top grade "A" was awarded to 12 occupiers coming from all the above groups, 12 were graded "B" and 5 the lowest, "C". The reasons for being "B" or "C" ranged from temperament or physical disability to lack of knowledge, ability, interest or ambition; one was dubbed lazy!

The inspectors judged the condition of the farms under 3 headings of good, fair and bad. Of the 28 farmhouses, half were good and half fair. 10 of the farm-buildings were good with only 3 bad, including Burrows Farm. 7 cottages were attached to farms of which 4 were good and 1 bad. The vast majority of holdings had a good situation to roads and railways. No holdings had private electricity, but 13 had public light to the farmhouse of which 6 had it to the farm buildings and power to both.

Piped water supply went to 13 farmhouses whilst another 13 relied on wells and Topfield Farm and S. Curtis' farm only had roof water. For the buildings, 6 had piped water, 12 wells and 3 roof water, but 8 had no provision for water. In the fields were 19 ponds, also a few had piped water, others wells, stream access or none. About half the occupiers felt there was a seasonal shortage of water,

The condition of farm roads to fields for 4 farms was bad. About one third of the holdings were not conveniently laid out, but it was good for one quarter of them, including Fosse Fields, the only one over 100 acres in this group. The inspector judged the texture of the soil to be 91% medium and the rest heavy; he considered 37% to be good quality, mainly on the south of the parish. and the rest being second grade, fair. There was no derelict land, nor any bad field drainage, but it was good for 38% of the holdings. Regarding the condition of the arable land, 38% was good and 29% poor and the rest fair, contrasting with the condition of pasture with less variation at 75% fair. All holdings had fertilisers applied to arable and grass, except for a different one in each group, but an adequate quantity was only applied by 6 to arable and by 3 to grass, all by "A" occupiers. 8 holdings had good fences and 3 bad ones leaving most in fair condition; most ditches were similar with 5 good

and 2 bad. The inspectors found no infestation of rabbits, moles, rats, mice, insect pests, rooks nor wood pigeons; also no heavy dose of weeds.

In general, the results of these surveys seem satisfactory with some inherent good points, but there were obvious areas for improvement such as more electrical, water and mechanisation provision, reduction in fragmentation, better knowledge for some and increased fertiliser application. The difficulty was that most required capital expenditure, which could be the reason for the deficiencies.

During the war

F Kirkland with his "Superior" milk cart. The crates of bottles can be seen by his feet

F. Kirkland was now at Springdale Farm, Walnut Tree Lane, milking about 18 cows of different breeds, later increasing to 24-26 herd. He delivered milk around the village in a pony and float using ladles and later, hand filled bottles; the surplus was made into butter or Colwick cream cheese sold on the round.

Farmers were short of labour, particularly at harvest because it was still the practice to cut the corn by binder, putting the sheaths in stooks and later when dry, loading them on carts to take them to the homestead for making stacks. Much later the dusty job of threshing came. So all available labour was used for hay making, harvesting, including the older school children who also helped potato picking at 4d per hour. In addition boys helped in chopping out, singling and hoeing sugar beet and at its harvest, lifting, knocking and topping the crop.

Some land girls provided regular help. Italian Prisoners of War (P.o.W) were employed digging trenches and refilling them, but they were very slow. German P.o.W from Wollaton worked on sugar beet and other jobs. Again they were slow with a lot of tea drinking! These were fixed price jobs, so caused no extra cost for the farmer. After inspecting Oxford House Farmhouse, the authorities allowed 2 German P.o.W to sleep there. They stayed and worked even for a few years post war. One was very good and keen and both married local girls. J. Allwood and son paid a Sneinton woman to bring 12-15 women for potato picking during and after the war. When she stopped coming, they gave up growing potatoes. As Philip Lyth wrote "*low cost, mixed farming based on relatively small family farms, while only producing small returns, had maintained fertility*", stating that the grass provided a convertible reserve to maximise food production in the war effort.[3]

The Machine Age

When a man left, there was a greater need to become more mechanised. Greater production and shortage of labour naturally encouraged more tractors in the village, including F. Kirk-

land's Fordson Model N in 1942 but they were difficult to obtain 1944-45. War-time needs made a big change. The speed and convenience of machinery was replacing the skill of the hand and the power of the horse. Others followed like the Thorntons with a useful grey Ferguson Tractor. This was bought in 1949 for £350 for use on their small mixed holding on Main Street. Livestock included Lincoln Red cattle and pigs.

The machine age had come on our farms. Geoff Hall from Egg Farm was doing contracting work. About **1945/46** he remembers buying a 2-year-old Ann Arbour baler by Lease-lend. It was a very dusty job, which needed 3 men to hand tie and separate. Initially he was contract threshing, steadily changing to combine harvesting when in **1947** he bought a new Massey-Harris 722 for £1,000 that, like his baler and his rubber-tyred tractor, was the first in the parish. Later it was used for peas when he acquired a New Holland Combine, which he used for 11 years. He carried out a wide range of agricultural work and claims to have worked on every field in the parish except for 2 fields on Fosse Fields Farm, but has cut all the farm hedges.

Joseph Allwood with his second tractor

The advent of new implements like hay loader, manure spreader and tipping trailer saved a lot of hard work. In **1946/7** Joseph Allwood retired and his son Jo took over all the live and dead (implements and machinery) farming stock at a mutual valuation to farm 180ac Clyde House Farm. He recalls growing 8 different crops and employing 5 men when he started, which was reduced to 2 when he retired in 1987. He was one of the first farmers in this area to grow one sprout sugar beet to save labour. From **1948** onwards, he reared his Lincoln Red steers and bought store cattle early in the year for fattening. The men were hand milking till "Young Jo" brought in pipeline milking in 1948, this went to single-range cowsheds for 8, 2, 3 and 5 cows with the dairy at the end.

At Prize Farm by **1946**, C.K. Allwood was milking about 20 British Friesians, later increasing to around 30. Most of the time milking was in 3 different sheds till 1963 when a milking bail was taken to the fields. The dairy collected the milk in churns, and bottles came back for Allwoods to deliver. Heifers from the best milkers were reared "to follow in mother's hoof marks". The steers were reared and fattened. Rhode Island Red hens were kept and eggs sold at the door. An old horse was left and used for hay raking. The farm was about 120 acres but with a poor layout as the fields were in different locations. Labour in 1946 was the farmer, his son and 2 men; the crops were wheat, barley, potatoes, mangolds, peas, kale and a little oats grown in a rotation.

The Government increased its control on farmers with the important Agriculture Act of **1947**, affecting farming activities, and the Agricultural Holdings Act **1948** which gave conditional security of tenure. Despite "cheap food subsidies" some local farmers felt that, after

Springdale Farm, Walnut Tree Lane as it was in **1951** showing crew-yard with cattle shelter, cow standings, loose and calves boxes and 45ft lean-to.

the war, things were not so good. It was also tough in the **50s** with seesawing prices. Hill Farm, which is about 52 acres, mainly lies between Kirk Hill and Pancake Hill and was occupied by W.E. Claye (with Jack Allister as Manager) as a good hobby unit, and later by Harry Reid. He erected the present buildings, including single range cowsheds for milking Ayrshires, replacing the old farm buildings on the side of the gateway across Streetway woodland in field O.S. No. 260, formerly Kirk Hill Common, with a square pond.

In the early **50s** our market gardeners stopped having stalls at Nottingham Market, Alf Ellis was probably the last. Mrs Curnow with a market garden business in Nottingham still used Springdale Farm, Springdale Lane to grow vegetables including a field of lettuce, with J. Cox as manager.

Manor Farm in 1964

In **1954**, Dr and Mrs Taylor sold the Manor House and Farm privately as one lot of approximately 160 acres of which only 148 acres was agricultural with farmhouse and 3 cottages. This arable and mixed dairy, T.T. Attested farm had a good compact layout with recent piped water supply to most fields. In the 1942 survey, 30% of the land was assessed as heavy and the remainder as medium texture, also 50% was considered good quality and the remainder fair. The farm buildings were likely to be the best in the parish including 4 stall milking parlour, dairy, 7 loose boxes, cattle sheds, large barn with granary, 5 bay Dutch Barn and implement sheds. Mr Dobson bought and his son farmed, until C.F. Windrow purchased the property and with Jim Lennox as manager milked British Friesians 3 times a day, having erected new dairy buildings further up Kneeton Road.

Harry Lee who entered Glebe Farm in 1948 milked 12 cows in the 50s. With the monthly milk cheque, dairying was still important and the milk churn lorry came into the village. These were not the only livestock as F. Kirkland kept sheep. In **1956** C.K. Allwood retired and let Prize Farm to his son Edwin, later taking his grandson into joint tenancy. In 1952-53 the Council acquired land belonging to various owners for houses on Cross Lane, and in 1953-55 Holloway Close was built This was the start of the reduction in size of some agricultural units as the village population started to expand.

1960 - 1999

Jo Allwood feeding the chickens in the stackyard at Oxford House, site of Moss Close

As an early indicator of these times, Oxford House Farmhouse and buildings ceased to be used for farming circa **1960**. The following year, they were sold for domestic purposes and the dip in the crewyard was filled in. 2 years later the stackyard and neighbouring field were built on as Moss Close. However, improvements appeared at other farms, mainly in the form of corn bins. Clyde House had 8 with drying facilities installed in the Dutch barn with M.A.F.F. grant aid (then another Dutch Barn was needed!) At the Egg Farm, G. Hall installed Bentall wooden ventilated corn bins. Prize Farm had 4 Crittall drying bins with malt kiln tiles and ducting, using hopper and cleaner from the old pea factory. E. Allwood at Prize Farm did a lot of farm building work himself. He also built a cattle shed with second hand timber and corrugated sheets and converted a waggon shed to modern use. Around 1960, important improvements in field work included hydraulic lifts on tractors and spraying crops. Again G. Hall is thought to be the first in the parish to spray using his grey "Fergie". In 1961 Richard Pickford took over Springdale Farm, Springdale Lane with under 60 acres. It was a mixed feeding and arable unit with cattle, sheep and pigs also cropping potatoes, sugar beet and corn. P. Thornton had Kirkland's village milk round 1957-8 then they had a few years selling wholesale, giving up milk about 1960.

In 1960 Ray Kirkland took over from his father when he died. Unfortunately, he did not have the opportunity of occupying a 24 acre field which reduced his acreage to 55 acres including 16 acres grass. Spring barley and oats were sown yielding about 2½ tons per acre, also potatoes, mangolds, kale, new seeds and lucerne (cut and wilted). In 1963 a concrete framed Dutch Barn was bought for £660 with a Government grant and proved a great benefit. Also in the early 60s Mick Foster, following his father, was farming at Croft Farm, College Street with mixed arable including vegetables, beef cattle and pigs. No contractors were used except for sugar beet harvesting. At Prize Farm, E. Allwood grew pedigree wheat and barley for seed, but stopped growing kale, oats and peas. When the contractor became busy, E. Allwood bought a combine harvester and baler, possibly the first full-time farmer in East Bridgford to have them.

In **1968**, Frank Welsh came to Glebe Farm, which now incorporated Fosse Farm, totalling 140 acres with alluvium soil over stony subsoil and 240ft above sea level (the same as Mapperley Plains). Then he had 150 Scotch half-bred X Suffolk ewes till 1988/9. The crops originally were sugar beet, barley, wheat, beans and linseed.

By 1968 compared with 1940, there had been a dramatic change particularly in cropping, and land lost to development gave a farming acreage of 1615 acres. The corn area had about doubled with "Cinderella" barley increasing to 2/3 of the corn area with a small increase in wheat, but oats were cut back by half due to the absence of horses. Sugar beet had reinforced its position as favourite root crop with 122 acres, but mangolds, swedes and kale were reduced to 15 acres total. No peas were grown and bare fallow had almost gone. Wartime changes reduced permanent grass to nearly 1/3 of its level 28 years ago, whilst temporary pasture increased. The following percentage table shows the varying importance of different crops.

Approx. Percentage of Crops

Year	Corn	S.B.	Tates	F.R.	Beans	Peas	Veg	T.P.	P.G.	Other
1932	29	4	2.7	6	1.8	1.8	1.3	6.5	43.4	3.5
1940	31	3.6	2.5	6	0.2	1.6	1.3	3.6	47.2	3
1968	60	7.5	3	1	2	0	1	8.5	16.5	0.5

S.B. = Sugar Beet; F.R. = Fodder Roots; T.P. Temporary Pasture; P.G. Permanent Grass
Other includes Orchards and bare fallow.

The increase in arable farming had decreased cattle numbers by 40% to 274. Due mainly to the cost of complying with milk and dairy requirements, dairy cows were gone, except for 2 house cows. However, there were 28 suckling cows and heifers, but a big drop in the number of cattle 2 years old and over to 26. Numbers of 1 to 2 year olds were similar at 123 and younger ones were slightly less with each group showing more steers than heifers. Sheep numbers fell a little to 333, but pig numbers halved to 101. Full-time workers were 16, being down to half of 1940 figures, but an increase in part-time and casuals to 8. There were only 25 holdings of which 5 were general cropping; 4 mixed; 2 cereal cropping, 1 poultry unit and the rest part-time. Surprisingly sizes had not changed much as 8 were less than 30 acres, and still 7 over 100 acres.[13]

In **1970** E. Allwood died and his son Trevor took over Prize Farm, when only a few years back from Brackenhurst Agricultural College.

Anyone coming to East Bridgford in the 50s would be struck by the number of orchards, about 13 acres, mostly commercial. These included 3 acres on

Cherry Holt Lane from College Street to the twitchell, College Street opposite to Moss Close, Brown's Lane S.E. of footpath, Croft Rise, Haycroft Way and Tom Gregg's Orchard from Main Street to Springdale Lane. Most of these disappeared together with several fields in the substantial housing development during the 60s.

In **1972**, the Walnut Tree Lane and Burneham Close developments followed 6 years after the nearby bungalow developments. Apart from more good land going, the whole homestead of Springdale Farm, Walnut Tree Lane was included, which meant the end of this small and scattered farm. Until then R. Kirkland usually bought store cattle to fatten from Kendal, as he found them cheaper. He also kept a few ewes, 30 sows and 250 hens.

In the **1970s** G. Hall was growing spring malting barley "Proctor" on contract for Heineken for between £100-£170 per ton. The barley was sampled to check the requirement for low nitrogen and moisture. It was transported in 25-ton loads to the docks to be shipped abroad. He had a 3-course rotation of sugar beet followed by 2 barleys or wheat then barley. He only did a little hedge removal and feels that our parish is better than most others in this respect.

The early 1970s saw British farming in the E.E.C. with the benefits, restrictions and paperwork that it brought. By **1971** the trends in crops continued with barley maintaining its supremacy and oats declining further in acreage. The sugar beet area increased but permanent grass was less at 232 acres. Cattle continued to decline to 216 and ewe numbers were now only 113. Although sow numbers were low, there were more feeding pigs.

Two part-time holdings had finished but there were still 11. Also there had been a slight consolidation as there were now 8 holdings over 100 acres, but there were now only 2 mixed units. At Prize Farm, they bought store cattle to rear, especially after giving up milking in about 1968 for economic reasons. From **1977** till 1986 in early March , Jo Allwood bought 12-15 matching Irish cattle for feeding on his Trent side fields. It was considered that Watson's Piece provided good Trent side feeding for cattle. Late 1977 saw a colour change of some fields to yellow, heralding the arrival of Oil Seed Rape (OSR), which proved a good break crop for some. Farmers' views were expressed that the 1960s and particularly the 1970s were the best years for farmers.

To illustrate the fluctuating prices for farmers, the following are the prices obtained from Springdale Farm for potatoes per ton in the autumn:- 1967 £20; 1968 £15; 1969 £20; 1971 £20; 1973 £22; 1974 £32; 1975 £100; 1977 £48; 1978 £48; 1979 £80; 1980 £60; 1981 £45; 1982 £40 and 1983 £60.

In the **1980s** the E.E.C. instituted compulsory "Set-Aside", by which the farmer should leave un-cropped a given percentage of his land each year, in order to receive payments. In **1981** Geoff Hinchley, farming at Park Farm, Epperstone, bought the 174 acre Manor Farm, Kneeton Road from A.P.Berger; then an all grass farm equipped for dairying. He converted the dairy buildings to a modern piggery for 200 sows with progeny fattened on the farm. The grassland was ploughed to grow wheat, barley and O.S.R. and a new grain store was erected.

The decline of Agriculture in the Village

In the late 70s and early 80s market forces finally finished market gardening in the parish, Albert Spring on Kneeton Road plus Fred and Geoff Crossland on Closes Side Lane, were probably the last. Thus, a valuable long standing tradition closed, which had helped some people to survive with a lot of hard work on a small acreage in difficult past times.

Lucrative new housing development was making it difficult to farm in the village, but the crunch for Prize Farm came when Trevor Allwood's landlords obtained planning permission for the Farm and Brook Closes' dwellings. This compromised his security of tenure, making the holding non-viable, so in **1985**, he left the farm, taking all his equipment and any movable buildings to Herefordshire. By the time he finished, the labour on the farm had halved to himself and 1 man. In **1987** Jo Allwood retired and was succeeded by his son. Philip, who in 1992 moved to a farm near Boston. Then Clyde House Farm closed and the traditional brick buildings were converted into 3 dwellings and 8 new ones in the orchard. So another tradition ended; for the first time in 98 years, there was no Allwood farming in the village. When the late E. Rawding gave up farming about **1987**, Mrs Price of Morton Grange took over Topfield Farm, having received it in 1977 from her father, the late C.G. Caudwell who bought the farm of about 104 acres in 1940.

The final scene

As the Century closes, in the village there are very few signs of farming, only the occasional large tractor or lorry load of straw corn or sugar beet etc. The farms are now outside the village. The last homestead to close was Croft Farm due to having an old-fashioned layout and access. About **1990**, M. Foster relocated his homestead outside the village on the Kneeton Road with a modern set of farm buildings and a new house called "Lammas Farm". It is around 100 acres devoted to growing sugar beet, wheat, barley and hay for sale; also at one time he reared calves there.

Lammas Farm

In **the mid 1990s** Old Hill Farm was sold with the house separated from the land, which was mainly added to Manor Farm making a total acreage of 284 acres, including 30 acres rented (former Hill Farm). By **1999** hedges had been removed to allow access for modern machinery and increasing the average size of the fields from 10 acres to 35 acres. The farm is run by G. & E.J. Hinchley & Son from their Epperstone Farm with the cropping on a 5 year rotation of O.S.R., 2 years wheat and 2 years barley using the equivalent of one man, plus 2 men

for the piggery, which is still 200 sows and about 2000 progeny. Also on Kneeton Road is Topfield Farm, occupied by Price Partnership, with the increased size of approximately 186 acres. Sugar beet was grown for 2 years but the cropping is now O.S.R., wheat and barley with grassland let for grazing; only one hedge has been removed. Opposite is Glebe Farm being one of only 15 remaining Notts County Council farms. The tenant, F. Welsh now only grows O.S.R. , beans and corn (usually wheat) and the yields per acre are approximately O. S.R. 1½ tons, beans 1¼ - 1½ tons, wheat 3½ tons and barley 3 tons.

In 1999 R. Pickford, of Springdale Farm, died and was succeeded by his son Harvey who was then at Brackenhurst. The 125 acres is ¾ owned and ¼ rented lying in one block and still grows only 3 crops, sugar beet, wheat and barley. The usual yields per acre are sugar beet up to 25 tons subject to sugar content, wheat up to 3 tons for biscuit wheat, and barley 2½ - 3 tons for malting, if quality is right. H. Pickford is one of the few occupiers who does all his own work. Fosse Fields Farm remains with a derelict house and old farm buildings including 2 Crittall grain-drying bins. It is tenanted by D. Chamberlain as a mainly arable farm, growing sugar beet, wheat and barley. There is also a substantial poultry farm with an arable unit on the Fosse. In the parish, there are at times C J Neale Ltd's beef cattle grazing a field in the north of the parish. Also about 20 cattle belonging to Sam Crossland, are kept for breeding and rearing stores for sale; his holding is Mill Heyes, Closes Side Lane (formerly Mill Lane) and grows corn, usually wheat. Also about two dozen Wensleydale sheep owned by Mrs. S. Brunt are in the parish. Some permanent grass fields are used for non-agricultural purposes connected with riding horses for pleasure and livery. This is slowly increasing due to the influx of non-agricultural money.

Thus during the century, the number of farmers have about halved, market gardeners gone and farm workers mainly replaced by contract work with powerful machinery and part-timers. From the mixed farms of 100 years ago, we now have nearly all arable farming. In the words of the ancients "*up corn down horn*". The plough is now master of the fields, pre-war it was 1 furrow, during W.W.II came 2 furrows, in 1949 it was 3 furrows, in 1983 came 4 furrows and now it is 5 furrows. This illustrates the growing size of all implements and machinery including tractors and harvesters making work easier and physically less heavy for the farmer than in the past.

Agriculture has come a long way, but the fears in 1900 of the end of pure farming are here again amongst some people due to cheap imports, changing market conditions and the intense pressure etc. of today. The earlier fears were unfounded so let us hope that the present ones are also proved wrong by the skill of our farmers, advisers and scientists and the great importance attached to the countryside and environment today. May our parish farmers flourish and continue their productive work.

Allotments

At the beginning of the century allotment gardens were an important feature of life for the majority of the inhabitants of the village. Agricultural wages, and those of other manual workers, were sufficient to support life only at a very basic level, and the vegetables which could be grown on an allotment garden would make a substantial contribution to a family diet. With no supply of frozen foods or exotic fruits and vegetables flown in from abroad, in the shops, an assured and cheap source of seasonal vegetables was the basis of daily meals. As well as vegetables, many allotments were also used to keep a pig, or a few hens. At that time most working families in the village would have had an allotment, and there was a plenty of land available to meet this demand.

The 1914 Ordnance Survey map shows 5 allotment sites in the village with a total area of over fifteen and a half acres. The sites were at Lammas Lane (3.954 acres, known as Milward allotments, occupied until 1994); Kneeton Road (1.400 acres at the back of the Reindeer Inn); Browns Lane (1.492 acres, now a development of 4 modern houses); Millgate (3.183 acres) and Butt Lane (2 parcels totalling 5.51 acres). Some of these sites were provided by the Parish Council in fulfilment of their responsibilities under the various Allotment Acts, others were provided by private landlords including the Church. Between 1916 and 1926 the gross rent from Glebeland Allotments varied between £41 and £53 per annum.

Unfortunately, there is no record of the extent to which this designated allotment land was actually occupied for allotment purposes, nor of the number of tenants on the land. More land was provided for allotments than that shown on the Ordnance map. In 1924, the sale of land in East Bridgford belonging to Magdelen College included 18 acres in Closes Side Lane described as Allotments, and let at the time to the Allotment Holders' Association. This was duly purchased by the trustees of the Association, but another parcel of 5 acres, also described as allotment land was reported as being bought by a Mr Colvile (possibly a misspelling of Mr Covill, known to be in East Bridgford at the time).

It might reasonably be assumed that during war years occupancy would be high, but in 1942, the middle of the second world war, a parcel of allotment land of about 5 acres was let to a partnership of Messrs T Ellis and Spring, and another parcel was let to Mr E. Ellis, presumably prompted by a lack of demand for allotment plots.

By the end of the century a part of the Butt Lane site, owned by the Parish Council was the only site actively used as allotment land in East Bridgford. The number of tenants had fallen to 24, occupying only in the region of 5.5 acres and although many of the plots are beautifully tended by enthusiastic allotment holders, there are a number of unoccupied and overgrown strips, for which there are no takers. The modern plot holder is more likely to grow for the pleasure of gardening and producing good fresh food with its own flavour, rather than from the necessity of supplementing the diet.

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