

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

local knowledge.

Interviewed: Mr. R. G. Robinson, Mr. R. Proctor, Mr. Clayton.

# A GENERAL STUDY OF

## BOUGHTON

BY D.A. MILLER. 1963

### Road System

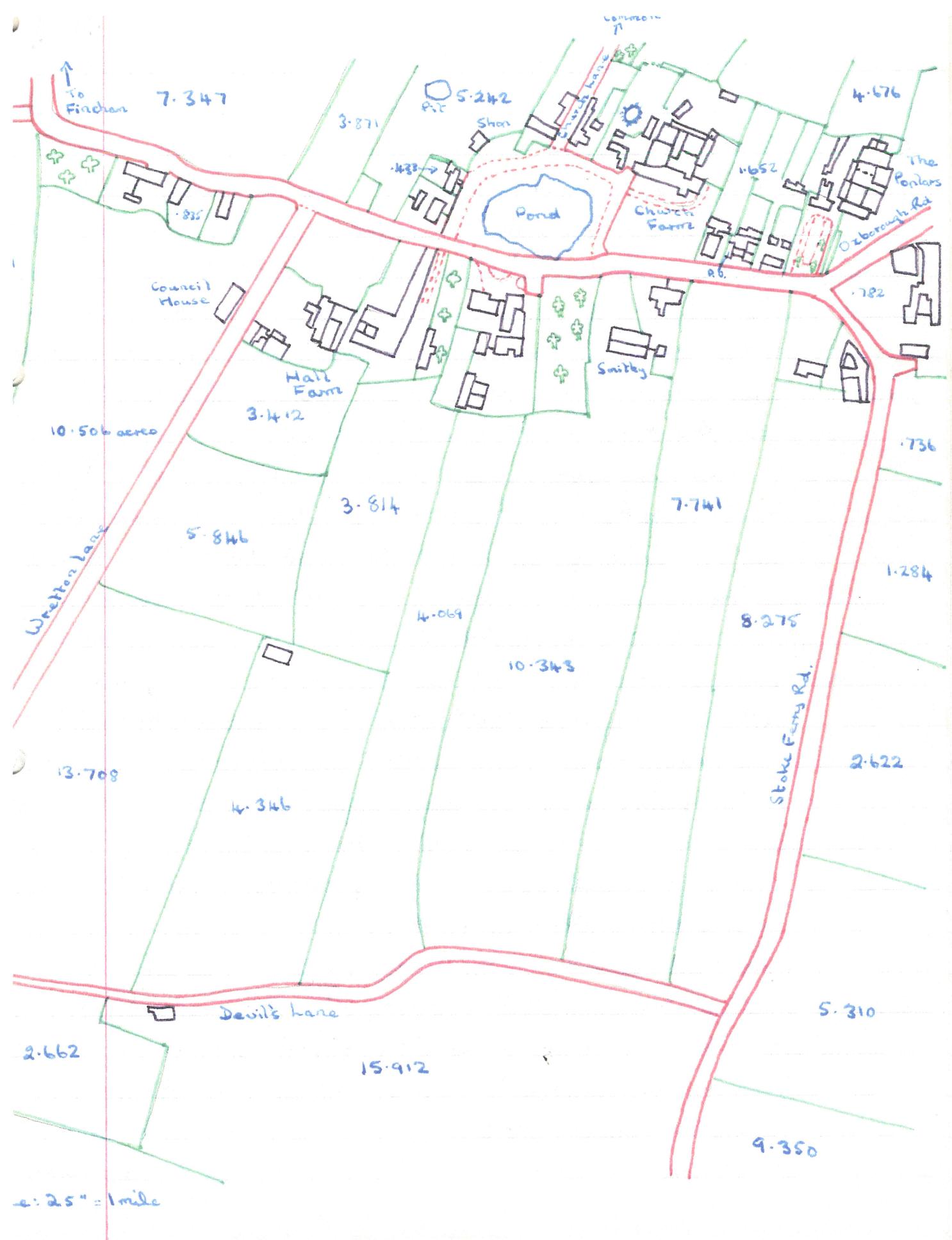
Boughton is a small village in Norfolk, situated  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles south-east of Downham Market and 1 mile north-east of Stoke Ferry. It is in the South West division of the county, Claxton hundred and petty sessional division, Downham union and county court district, rural deanery of Feltwell and archdeaconry of Wisbech and diocese of Ely. Boughton could be thought of as a minor landmark as all the land, except that to the north, slopes gently down, in the distance of about  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile, to the rest of the surrounding land which is some 80 feet lower than the village. From the heart of the village Wretton Lane runs to the east and at the bottom of this, about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile away, is the main road, the A134. The road that goes through the village is unclassified. At the southern end of the village is a second road running to the east which goes to Stoke Ferry, just over 1 mile away. Going southwards is the Osbournish Road which goes down to the Oxborough for only  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile distant. It is significant that this is the only road from Boughton that still is completely by thick high hedges and trees. The reason for this is that any hedges and trees, or the like, that may have been growing alongside the other roads have been pulled up during the last 15 years as the verges of the roads have not been considered too susceptible to giving way under the weight of the transport.

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that invariably has to use them, because the roads are so very narrow, as those of the Oxborough road. Even though the ground is firmly held together by thickets and so forth down the Oxborough fair, several times a year lorries or tractors sink in to such a great extent that they are almost on their sides due to the fact that their road-side wheels don't sink in so fast as all the load is transferred to the other side on account of the ground sloping down from the road. At the northern end of the village a road runs to the west to Boston Berditch, about 2 miles away, which was tarmacadamed 7 or 8 years ago. Another leading to the north of the Boston Berditch road is a road branching off to the east for Washam, which is  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile away. The road has been newly surfaced with tarmac during the last year. This, as all the other roads stemming from Boughton, is unclassified and hardly carries any traffic. Opposite the opening of this road is really the continuation of it which goes to Fincham, fractionally over 3 miles away. The by-road that continues northward eventually reaches the A 134 from where the nearest towns are Dartham, 7 miles, and Kings Lynn,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles. In the village is a private road for farm use that goes past the church and leads to an area of land that is locally known as the 'Common'. The hedgerows that have disappeared from the roadside have also vanished from around most of the fields to make several small fields into one large one of a greater acreage that is easier to work. The removal of the hedges not only makes the fields larger but also improves the working conditions for farm implements as they are hindered by these obstructions.

#### Religious Buildings

The Church of All Saints in Boughton was rebuilt in 1872, with the exception of the tower, at a cost of about £1000. It is a



building made of stone in the Early English and Decorated styles, consisting of chancel, nave, south porch and an embattled western tower with pinnacles. The western tower contains three bells that are quite adequate enough to summon everybody to church from the village when it is time to worship. There are seats for one-hundred and fifty people in the church and the population of Boughton, as far as my knowledge is concerned, has never surpassed this number so there are always plenty of spare seats. The church's register dates from the year 1729. The register states from this time when the inhabitants of over the parish could said to have been, very few and far between. At present the living is held by the Reverend Bradshaw who does not actually live in the village itself but comes in to preach from the neighbouring village of Firsby several times a week. A stone cross was erected in the churchyard in 1921 with the names on it of those who died in the Great War (1914-1918) from the parish, and the names of those who fell in the Second World War (1939-1945) have also been added to the cross. The church is protestant and there are very few people in the village who themselves are not of the Protestant religion. Those who are Methodists go to the Methodist church in Stoke Ferry and the Roman Catholics go further afield either to Witham or Ely. The Wesleyan Chapel was built in 1871 and is a building in the Gothic style. It has seating for about one-hundred people although very rarely does the total congregation go above 30 people as most people who I have spoken to find it a very dull experience and extremely boring. The churchyard is kept tidy by one of the villagers, namely Mr Smith, while the church and chapel are kept clean inside by

Mrs. Payne.

### The Pond

Boughton is lucky in having a large pond in the middle of the village that is a source of pleasure for many of the people. This is because it is well stocked with fish, mainly rodd, but with some roach, pike, perch and eels. It is extremely difficult to get fed up with fishing in this pond as one is sure of getting numerous 'bites' which makes it interesting even though you may be unlucky enough not to catch any. The pond is an attraction of a good number of fishermen from the surrounding villages and on Sundays there may be as many as twenty people dotted round the pond fishing. The reeds that once hindered the fishermen in the pond were cut down a year ago and this has improved their conditions a great deal but has removed a nesting place for the moorhens and a roosting place for the thousands of swallows that used to congregate there in summer. The ducks were once over crowded on the pond when there were about seventy on it but recently nearly half of these have gone and at the last count two-thirds of these were drakes.

### The Population and their Occupations

Most literature that can be found on Boughton states the population to be approximately one-hundred and fifty and when I did an accurate survey of the population I found there were one-hundred and forty-four people. Obviously it would be pointless to go through the names of the people one by one and it seems to me to be just as explicit to put the various age groups into categories. There are forty-one children ranging from small babies to those up to 20 years of age. Apart from the six children that are too young

To go to school all the others have a daily chore somewhere. This excludes Miss Judith Proctor who at 20 years old is now a qualified nurse. There are sixteen children who are still young enough to go to the Primary School in the village, five who go to Downton Secondary Modern and one who goes to Downton Grammar. Of the rest five go to private schools, all four from one family go to Swaffham Convent and the other four are studying at universities. Recently there has been a tendency to try and avoid Methodist Secondary School and Downton has been the school where everybody seems to prefer going. A young gentleman by the name of Michael Payne is intensely interested in birds and when he catches them in the nets he sets up for the purpose he rings them, mainly swallows, to see if they come back to the same place the next year. From the forty-seven women in the village three go to work at the Snellips factory in King's Lynn, four at the new Jaeger factory also in King's Lynn, and one goes to the Coffin factory at Downton. The remaining are all housewives but some render some render other services to the community. Mrs. Cheshire cooks the school meals while Mrs. Fox cleans the school up after the finished school lessons each day. A few of the women act as cleaners for the older people and are a great help. The Post Office is managed by the Clarks although most of the work is done by Miss Clark. The parish nurse lives in Broughton and has just had a new bungalow built. The men just outnumber the women as there are fifty six, and seventeen of these are retired gentlemen who still occasionally help a farmer if he needs it during the peak working months. The rest all work on the land apart from four who are a great asset to the village. Mr.

Savage (John) is an electrical engineer, Mr. Frank Savage is the village shopkeeper, Mr. Walton is a solicitor and Mr. Jones is a builder. There is a blacksmith in Baughton but he combines his occupation with being a farm worker.

### Buildings

There is only one wooden building in the village and this was built by converting two railway carriages into a small compact, and quite adequate home. The compartments are still discernable although some have been enlarged and there is of course no partition down the middle but a central narrow corridor. The house is called appropriately 'Cherrytree' and Mrs Pentels lives there.

There are four decent modern bungalows in the village, built within the last three years. These are made of brick with tiled roofs and have all been built for understandable reasons. One was built for the parish nurse to live in, one for the Poplars Farm cowman, the other two were built for new inhabitants of the village coming to live there. There are five much older bungalows but they were still built with brick and have tiled roofs. Only one council house has been built in the village and in one side of this is where the baker-cum-paperman lives and this is Mr. Rice. The remaining houses are the traditional semi-detached made of brick with slate roofs. This is with the exception of the three large farm-houses and one belonging to Hallmark Hatcheries. There were two public houses in the village, built of flint with tiled roofs, namely 'The White Horse' and 'The Bell' but these were closed down almost simultaneously two years ago on account of lack of trade. The odd time when they could take a fair amount of money was if there was a cricket match in the village but when the cricket

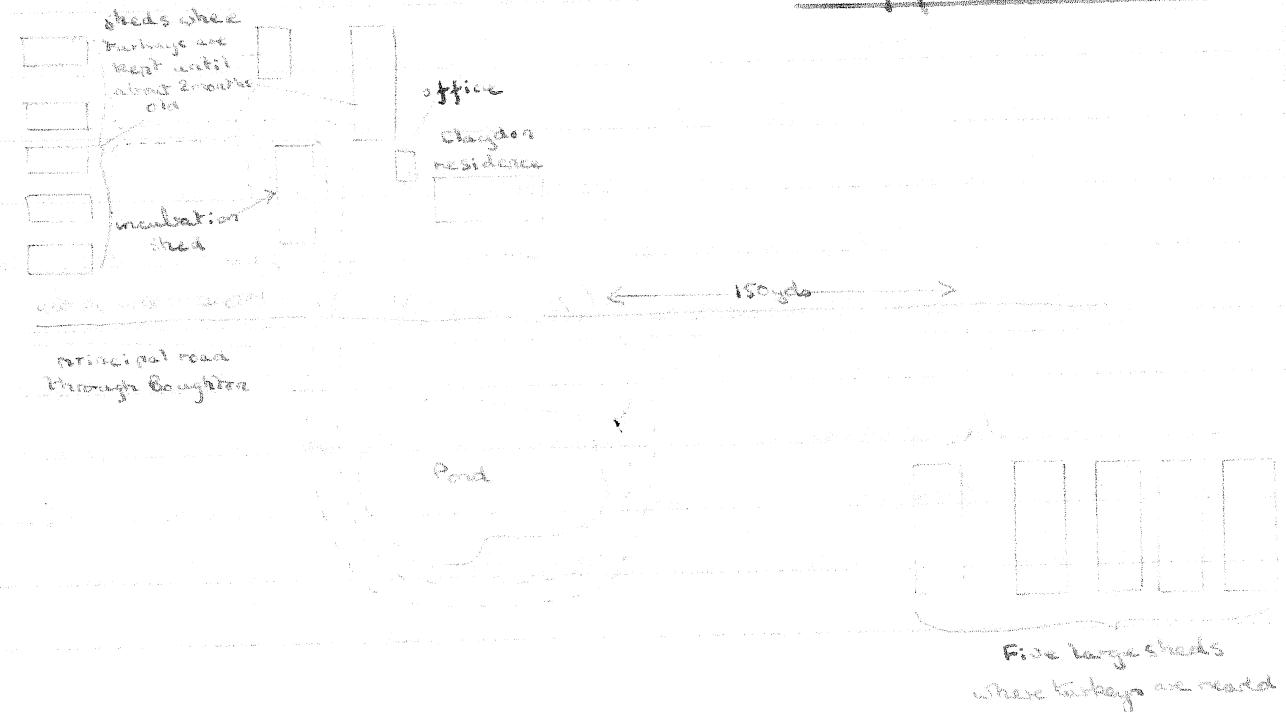
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Year was extinguished four years ago this source of income went. The only shop in the village is owned by Mr. Savage and caters for everybody in the village very adequately and up until it was built 12 years ago the inhabitants had to ride or walk to get their goods from Stoke Ferry or Wetheram. The post office is looked after by Miss J. Clarke who brings round the mail at 7 o'clock in the morning and then at about 5 o'clock in the evening. Mr. Clarke takes care of the office when she is not able to do so.

### Hall Mark Hatcheries

There is an extremely minor branch of Hall Mark Hatcheries in Brough for which is managed by Mr. Claydon who took over some 6 years ago from Mr. Hoxton. He employs two local men, Mr. Sheppard and Mr. Carter, as there is just sufficient work to keep these two men occupied. There are two separate parts to the Hatcheries, one where the turkeys are hatched and kept until they are about one month old and the other where the main sheds are and also free range facilities.

### Siting of Hall Mark Hatchery



The whole institution is controlled by Mr. Clayton and the clear thinking of this man has paid dividends since he took his office. The food is stored in both sections and this means that a minimum amount of 'tugging' it about is done. When the time comes to pluck the turkeys anyone from the village who wishes may go along to help and are paid so much per turkey that they pluck. H.C. Beat always supply the turkey food but not the same firm takes the plucked turkeys each year.

#### Education

Boughton Primary School is mixed and was erected in 1874 and rebuilt in 1888 which is shown for all to see on a placard above the main door. The rebuilding of the school was thanks to the complete financial support of the late Mr. Richard Harris, and was taken over by the County Council in 1913. It was built for the purpose of taking forty children at a maximum each term and this is still the case today. Fifteen of the children are in the infants class and the other twenty-five in Class I, as it is called. The garden that used to be in front of the school has been cleared and instead the children have now got a small sandpit. The playground has been equipped with netball posts and also other apparatus, like a seesaw and swing, for amusement. Up until five years ago Miss Harbury and Miss Flint had faithfully served the school but they decided it was time to retire and someone else had to be found to teach. Mrs. Barby took over in Class I and Miss Eye in the infants class but Miss Eye soon left and a local woman, Mrs. Savage, who has a good knowledge of teaching substituted until another full time teacher could be found. This continued until 1966 when both teachers were again changed. Mrs. Hayes came as headteacher

and luckily a young local girl who had been studying to be a teacher said that she would like to take on the job full time as she was going to be married. These two have been teaching ever since except from when Mrs. Hayes had a short illness and Mrs. Warner took over. The old school building of 1879, attached to the Wesleyan Chapel, is now used as a Sunday School.

#### Traffic Observation

I did not think it would matter when I did a traffic survey as the traffic is much the same every day, very sparse. I eventually decided to do it on a Saturday morning, Saturday April 5th, over the period of one hour, from 9 o'clock until 10 o'clock, when I hoped there would be an interesting mixture of vehicles. The figures turned out to be:

|              |             |                    |
|--------------|-------------|--------------------|
| Cars - 10    | Lorries - 4 | Motor-Bicycles - 2 |
| Bicycles - 5 | Vans - 7    | Tractors - 12      |

The results obtained were a little higher than I think is completely true of the amount of traffic, although the numbers are true of most days. As can be seen the cars come through Broughton very occasionally whereas the vans, bicycles, tractors mainly come from the farms and are comparatively more frequent for the type of traffic they are. The lorries, were those bringing some commodity, or taking it from the farms.

#### Agricultural Holdings

Sir Henry Bedrifford Bart. is the Lord of the manor. Messrs. R. G. Robinson, the Poplers Farm, R. J. Proctor, Church Farm, and W. Hill and Sons, Hall Farm, are the principal landowners. The chief crops grown are wheat, barley and sugar beet. Broughton's land area of 1,353 acres is of a soil of varied description, one

half being strong clay land; subsoil clay. Mr. Robinson owns 850 acres which is all heavy land and most of it is arable. However, he has a few acres devoted for pig keeping which is gradually growing to be more extensive. He keeps about 30 beef cattle and somewhere around 80 sheep. Mr. Robinson employs ten labourers who have various jobs to do apart from two who have a full time job looking after the pigs. The cattle and sheep are of not so great importance to him and these are fed and cleared by some of the normal workers. He had his own dozer installed some 12 years ago as this is a necessity with the large output class combine tractors and the large number of acres he has to cut. The tractor force is nine, the latest addition being a four-wheel drive 'Roadless' which is still being put through its paces. His crops this year include mustard, barley, wheat, sugar beet, potatoes and a new drilling of cocklesfoot. There are 25 acres of mustard, 150 acres of barley, 100 acres of wheat, 80 acres of potatoes, 120 of sugar beet and 60 acres of cocklesfoot for next year. The rest of the acreage is made up of crops such as oats and peas although a good amount is left fallow. The extent of the land to the west is bordered by the Bator River which is a small stream only about 1 foot deep. Mr. Robinson's main farm buildings are in the village but he also has some down the common where pigs are kept, and also two sheds at Odsmough that again house pigs. The water here is still drawn up by a windmill. Although the orchard is fairly small at 5 acres the apples are still packed and sent away which is another source of income. The apples that fall to the ground and turn rotten are fed to the few pigs kept in small sheds in the orchard. The apple production is taken as a serious source of money.

as the apples are kept in good condition by various sprayings of the trees. Like most, or at least a great deal of his produce, the apples are transported by his Bedford T.W. lorry which can also be transformed into a cattle float when market day comes. He does not content himself with any contractors at all, showing he has all today's necessities of farm machinery, as ever the muck spreading is done by his own tools. Although farm work never seems to be at an ebb on Mr. Robinson's farm the hard work appears to pay dividends each year by the good crops he obtains.

Mr. Procter, with an acreage of 230 acres, employs two workmen and a full time cowman. The cowman has a herd of forty to milk and with the new equipment that has been installed in the parlour his work is made considerably less. The milk is collected by a bulk tank truck from the 2,000 gallon bulk tank of Mr. Procter. As Mr. Robinson, all Mr. Procter's land is heavy and will not work at all after a good amount of rain. Of the 230 acres some 80 are pastured for the cattle. The remaining land is taken up by crops of barley, wheat and sugar-beet (barley 60 acres, wheat 55 acres and sugar-beet 15 acres). On account of the greater part of his acreage being taken up by cereals he has his own Parsons' combine and storage shed. He has four tractors which easily do the necessary work and so has no need to get contractors. Going back to the subject of cereals he has his own dozer which was built in to one of the old existing sheds. A new bungalow is being erected for him and his two boys to live in, on a piece of land facing the pond.

Hillier and Sons have a total land area of 450 acres, 90 acres light sandy soil, 70 acres fern soil, and the remaining 290 acres are heavy land at Boughton. When Mr. Hillier realised that he would

need to increase his acreage if he was to increase his income he decided that more land would have to be bought. As there was none readily available in Broughton he had to look further afield and he soon found 90 acres of light land which he could rent at Whittington and 70 acres of farmland which he could rent at Metherwood Hythe. His labour force of four was still enough to cope with the extra land and so there was no need to obtain another labourer. All the land in Broughton, as Mr. Crocker's and Mr. Robinson's, is well drained by 6" pipes on the whole to get rid of the large amounts of water that the land holds. If the land was not well drained when heavy falls of rain came then it would nearly all be like bracke. The only grassland on the farm besides 30 acres of cocksfoot is a small field of 8 acres at Whittington used for keeping a neighbour's cattle on. The rest of the land at Whittington has been utilised in the following way this year, 30 acres of barley, 20 acres of sugar beet, 30 acres of potatoes. This is contrasted with the use of land at Metherwood Hythe, 35 acres of potatoes, 10 acres of carrots, 25 acres of sugar beet. The heavier land at Broughton especially and that which is nearly as heavy down the Oxborough road are kept mainly for cereals as they are not very easy to get about on if the land is wet. Here there are, 30 acres of cocksfoot, ~~30~~ 40 acres of sugar beet, 120 acres of barley and 100 of wheat. All the sugar beet from the land at Broughton and that for a sizeable radius about it is taken to Wansford factory which is now being nearly three enlarged to become the biggest beet factory in Europe. The cereals are collected by H & C. Beards from Ulverch and the potatoes are under the guidance of Beams and Walker. Mr. Miller buys his cereal dressing from Sirens of Boston and this includes the cocksfoot