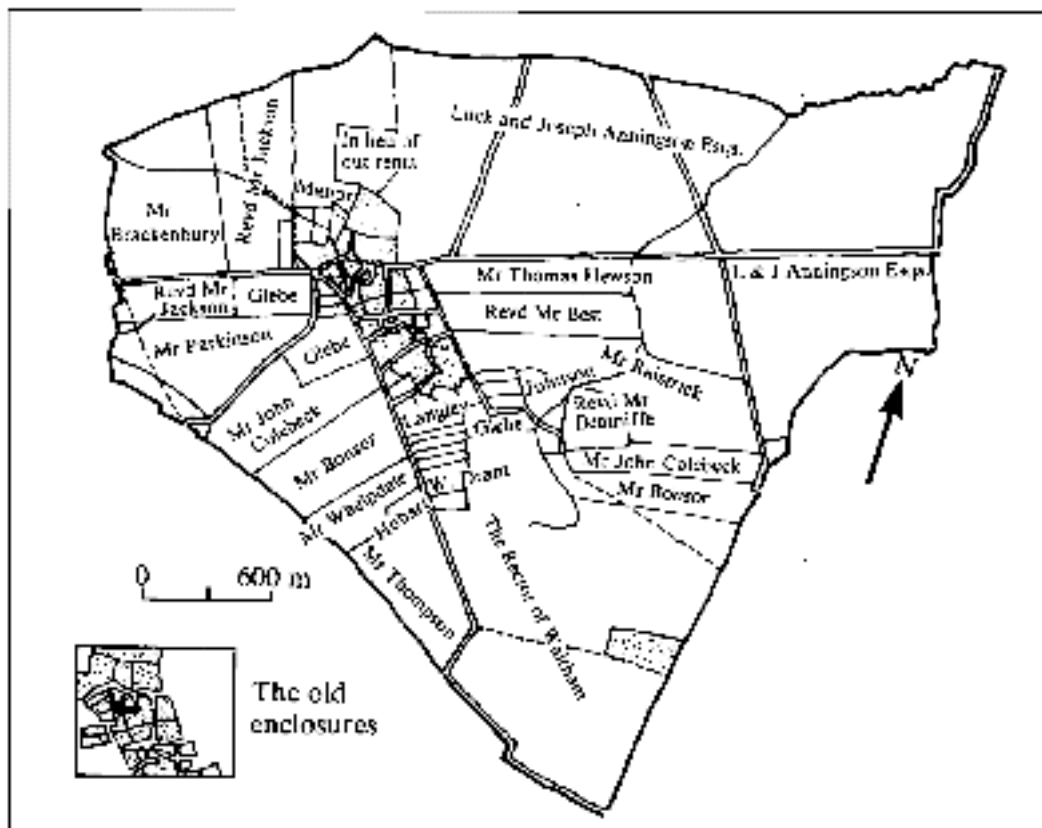


Depth Study G - Parliamentary Enclosure and its Effects. c.1790-c.1830

SOURCE A: Arthur Young's description of some unenclosed land written during a tour of the Midland counties, 1791.

19 July 1791. I took the road from Cambridge to St Neots, and saw for six or seven miles the worst farming in Great Britain. All are using the fallow system, with all its loss of time and expense, without any benefit from the common land which is overrun with thistles. The lands, mostly open field, are badly managed, are clay, and some of the fallow land has not been ploughed.

SOURCE B: An enclosure map of 1771 of the village of Waltham showing the village after enclosure.



SOURCE C: A table showing the cost of enclosure of some land in Sheffield in 1791.

Services	Cost
Commissioners' Fees	£1,284
Roads and Paths	£1,030
Surveyors' Fees	£934
Miscellaneous	£916
Legal Charges	£876
Commissioner's expenses	£251
Parliamentary expenses	£219
Stakes and Fences	£184

SOURCE D: Taken from a Board of Agriculture Report on Bedfordshire, 1808.

The common was very extensive. I spoke with a farmer and several cottagers. One of them said, 'enclosing would ruin England; it is worse than ten wars. I kept four cows before the parish was enclosed, and now I don't keep so much as a goose; and you ask me what I lose by it!'

SOURCE E: Written by a Parliamentary Commissioner responsible for carrying out enclosures in 1801.

I am sorry that I have helped injure 2,000 people at the rate of 20 families per parish. Large numbers who feed their animals on the commons cannot prove their rights; and most who have been given land have not more than an acre, which is not enough to support the man's cow; so both cow and land are usually sold to the rich farmers.

SOURCE F: Taken from Arthur Young, *General View of Agriculture of the County of Lincoln*, 1813.

The vast benefit of enclosing upon poor soils can be seen in Lincoln-heath. I found a large area which was covered with heath, gorse, etc., which produced very little. It was changed by enclosure into profitable arable farms with offices, farm buildings, new farmhouses, barns, and every appearance of prosperity. Rents have risen on the heath and the farmers are much better off. They grow more crops, the number of cattle and sheep has increased, and more of the poor are employed...
