

WILLIAM TAYLOR'S AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT: EASTWOOD MANOR FARM, EAST HARPTREE

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In 1861 William Taylor purchased Eastwood Manor estate in the north Somerset village of East Harptree. Investing heavily, Taylor turned its main agricultural unit into a model farm, ¹ to be laid out, organised, equipped and run on the best modern scientific principles. The building is one of the few agricultural structures accorded grade I in the list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest kept by the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.² This note tries to explore, from limited sources, what may have led Taylor to undertake such a venture, how it was funded, whether it succeeded economically, and what effects, if any, it had on the village: in particular, did the efficiency savings, especially of labour, result in unemployment?

NATIONAL CONTEXT

By 1861 farming in England as a whole had undergone complex changes, some of them so marked as to prompt some agricultural historians to use expressions like 'economic revolution'. Throughout the nineteenth century England's population had risen steadily. That rise had driven up the demand for food. The repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846 had facilitated the importing of more grain, which made the market for corn for bread more competitive, and caused grain prices to fall. Canals, turnpikes and railways had extended the markets into which farmers could sell their produce, which facilitated sales but also sharpened competition. Inclosures had expanded the area under cultivation, stimulated efficiency and boosted productivity, but also increased the competition. Scientific advances in breeding livestock and using fertilisers and the inventing and improving of machinery had raised farm outputs, but had also made some farmers more competitive.

One response to these changes was advocacy of high farming, that is, heavy investment in improving farm buildings, machinery and soil in order to maximise outputs and hence profits. Another response was a shift from corn to livestock. One respected authority (Caird 1848, 1849, 5-7) argued that the repeal of the Corn Laws having encouraged the importation of foreign grain, English farmers ought to change to different outputs less liable to foreign competition. He also observed that the increase of population and the rising national prosperity were leading, especially in heavily populated areas, to more demand for meat and less for bread (Caird, 1852, 484-485):

With the great mass of consumers, bread still forms the chief article of consumption. But in the manufacturing districts where wages are good, the use of butcher's meat and cheese is enormously on the increase; and even in the agricultural districts the labourer does now occasionally indulge himself in a meat dinner, or seasons his dry bread with a morsel of cheese ... It is reasonable to conclude that the great mass of the consumers, as their circumstances improve, will follow the same rule. ... Every intelligent farmer ought to keep this steadily in view. Let him produce as much as he can of the articles which have shown a gradual tendency to increase in value.

Ideas like this were disseminated not only in books and pamphlets but also by agricultural societies. Leaders included the Royal Agricultural Society of England, which had been founded in 1839, and what was then called the Bath and West of England Society, which had been reformed and revitalised in 1849 and by 1850 had some 1200 members. Model farms were often named to proclaim their purpose: instances include Example Farm at Whitfield near Thornbury in Gloucestershire, and Exhibition Farm at Withersfield near Haverhill in Suffolk.

WILLIAM TAYLOR

There are two local traditions about William Taylor. One tradition (Woodham 1996, 48; Budd 1999, 25) is that Taylor was butler at Eastwood Manor, owned by Sir Henry Gournay; that when Gournay died, Taylor married his daughter, who styled herself Lady Gournay. The other tradition (Budd, 1999, 25) is that Taylor was butler to a Gurney of the Norwich banking family of that name, and that he ran off with Gurney's wife. Either way, Taylor thus acquired access to considerable wealth, including Harptree Court, which he made his residence, and the Eastwood Manor estate. The first tradition is false, and seems likely to have been fabricated by exploiting the similarity between Taylor's wife's previous surname and that of a long-established local family; the second contains a core of truth, but does not tell even half the story.

William Taylor, born in 1838 at Cley next the Sea, Norfolk, was the son of John Taylor, who farmed seven acres at nearby Wiveton.³ He became a footman to John Henry Gurney, who in 1846 married his second cousin, then aged 16, Mary Jary Gurney. She was the daughter of Richard Hanbury Gurney M.P., a member of the Norwich banking family, and Mary Jary, the estranged wife of Joseph Salisbury Muskett. On the death of her mother in 1857 Mary Jary Gurney became entitled, at the age of 27, to a life interest in a fortune said to have yielded her £20,000 a year in her own right.⁴ In the autumn of 1859 she formed an attachment to William Taylor, then aged 21. When Richard Gurney found out, he dismissed Taylor. The couple eloped, Mrs Gurney leaving the following note for her husband:⁵

I have, indeed, left you and our poor children; but you know my heart has long been another's; and, therefore, I could not be happy with you any more. Please send my luggage and Vic [a dog] to No. 216, Marylebone-road; also the small books which I brought from Catton and my work.

John Henry Gurney divorced his wife in January 1861.

Mary Gurney and William Taylor settled in East Harptree and were listed in the 1861 census (taken on 7 April) as living together at Harptree Court.⁶ They married, not locally, but in Perivale, Middlesex on 11 March 1862, the register entry stating his place of residence as Perivale, hers as East Harptree.⁷ They had two children, William

Anselm Gurney, surnamed Taylor, baptised at Perivale 29 August 1861 with the register entry giving his father as John Henry Gurney of Catton Hall, Norfolk; and Alice Maud Mary Gurney Taylor, baptised at East Harptree 18 May 1862. The 1891 census describes her as having what a later age would term learning difficulties.⁸ In a second set of legal proceedings brought on behalf of the children of Mary Gurney's first marriage to exclude the children born during her relationship with Taylor from entitlement to a share in £2,000 settled on them by a relation, the court declared both children illegitimate:⁹ legitimation by subsequent marriage did not enter UK law until 1926.

Eastwood Manor estate's title deeds show that it had long belonged to the Waldegraves, not the Gournays. Since 1847 it had vested, under her marriage settlement, in Frances Elizabeth Anne the dowager countess of the seventh earl. After she married again, the countess lived elsewhere, so it is possible that she let Eastwood Manor to Mary Gurney or Taylor or both as tenants. Having put the estate up for sale in 1858, in August 1860 the countess exercised a power of appointment under the settlement to vest the estate in two Bath land surveyors and a Glastonbury solicitor, who may have been trustees, speculative purchasers or undisclosed agents.¹⁰ In October 1861 they sold the estate to Taylor for £18,850.¹¹ It is tempting to speculate whether the countess did not wish to be seen to be selling directly to Taylor. The estate at that time consisted of Eastwood, Pit[t] and Sherborne farms, totalling some 646 acres. Taylor bought a further 17 acres in 1865.¹² Whilst it is probable that Taylor may have drawn on Mary Gurney's money, it was not her ownership that gave Taylor control of Eastwood Manor: his acquisition of the estate was by purchase in his own name, and was clearly a commercial transaction at full value. Whether or not the purchase money came from Mary Gurney, she may not have wholly financed the construction of the new model farm, because in 1863 Taylor borrowed £10,000 from a Carmarthenshire landowner, and mortgaged the estate to him.¹³ It is possible that Taylor raised that loan for other reasons, explained below, in which case money Taylor acquired through Mary Gurney, by 1862 his wife, may have paid for the construction of the buildings as well as the purchase of the land.

Whatever Taylor's family arrangements may have been, in 1861 he had an estate that constituted nearly a third of the land in East Harptree parish. According to the 1801 census of agricultural land,

more than 80 per cent of the arable land in the parish was given over to growing corn, and in the absence of evidence to the contrary it is not unreasonable to infer that that may still have been the case when Taylor purchased. Given the importance of his estate in the village economy, any change in its regime was likely to have a big impact locally. To realise what he had in mind, Taylor turned to an expert, and engaged the services of Robert Smith.

ROBERT SMITH

Smith was born in 1809 at Oundle in Northamptonshire. He farmed at Burley in Rutland and at the age of 26 was secretary of the Rutland Agricultural Association.¹⁴ Having gained a reputation as a breeder of cattle and sheep, Smith was elected in his thirties to the council of the Royal Agricultural Society of England. He was also a member of the Bath and West of England Society (Orwin, 1929, 1997, 83). Smith had several scientific articles published in journals, and was known to landowners interested in raising farming outputs by scientific methods. In 1848, when Smith was 39, John Knight, owner of large tracts of Exmoor, appointed Smith his agent to implement his huge reclamation project. In addition to his salary of £400 a year as Knight's agent, Smith also farmed 670 acres at Emmets Grange near Simonsbath.

In 1850 John Knight died, and was succeeded as owner by his son Frederic Winn Knight, who continued to engage Smith as agent. Smith

published accounts of his methods (eg Smith, 1851; Smith, 1856). At Lady Day 1861, however, Knight dismissed Smith, perhaps because of disagreement about policy or Smith's methods, perhaps because of misconduct: one tenant of Knight's alleged that Smith ran up debts of between £4,000 and £7,000, and had pressured tenants, most of whom struggled to overcome natural conditions to survive, let alone to make ends meet, to act as sureties for Smith's borrowings (Orwin 1997, 288). Another possibility is that because Smith was developing a consultancy practice, and also undertook other work (for example, until 1856 as agent for the Dowlais Iron Company, which mined on Exmoor), Knight may have objected to Smith devoting time and effort to other people's concerns, and may have thought that Smith had put himself in a position where his interests and responsibilities conflicted.

After his dismissal, Smith continued to farm on his own account at Emmets Grange, and to develop a private land agency and consultancy business from that address. In the absence of surviving correspondence it is not possible to say when Taylor appointed Smith as agent and consultant at Eastwood Manor; whether Smith's role was as employee or as independent contractor; whether Smith actually moved to East Harptree to manage Eastwood Manor farm; or whether Smith visited as and when necessary. What is clear is that Smith designed Taylor's model farm.



*Fig. 1 Eastwood Farm,
East Harptree.
© Mr Arthur A Chapman.
Source: English Heritage
Archive*

THE CONCEPT

Taylor's plan, inspired by contemporary high farming thinking, was to grow corn, not for milling for bread flour, but to feed to livestock. If grain was retained on the farm to feed to the animals, that would save the cost both of transporting the grain to the mill and of buying in food for the livestock. In farming parlance, the grain was to walk to market. Second, the aim was to house in one place and under one roof all the farm's animals, stores, equipment and machinery: if everything the farm workers required was to hand or needed to be moved only short distances, that would save time and labour. Third, Taylor aimed to take advantage of freely available natural features of the land, in particular water: a stream fed an overshot water wheel to drive all powered machinery and a drinking water fountain for the animals. The layout allowed for diversion of the stream to wash down the yards, the waste to be fed to fields by a system of tanks and pipes, all by gravity and so at no cost of fuel. The cast iron columns supporting the structure would double as pipes for circulating water. Having all the animals under cover would generate warmth which, it was thought in those days, would help them grow faster, so they could be sent to market earlier and fetch higher prices. In terms of what a later age would call a business plan, all this made a lot of sense, particularly as during the 1850s corn prices in England as a whole had risen (Wade Martins 2002, 23).

THE DESIGN

If the description of the farmstead Smith gave to Kelly's *Post Office Directory* is anything to go by, he was at pains to stress that the ideas were Taylor's, and that all Smith did was to implement Taylor's concepts. Given that Taylor was the son of a farmer and presumably had been brought up on a farm, albeit a very small one, that is not altogether implausible. Victorian ideas about deference, however, and the dependence of consultants on landowners for work make it more likely that Smith's ostentatiously self-effacing modesty was conventional or was calculated to flatter the client: the technical sophistication of the works at Eastwood Manor suggests that only an expert of Smith's experience was likely to have been the author.

Sources differ about the timing and the cost

of the works. Some say they took 10, others 15, years to build, and cost £10,000, others £15,000. One architectural historian (Foyle 2011, 491) dates them to 1858-9, two others (Little 1954, 199 and Bettey 1993, 129) to 1859, another (Wade Martins 2003, 134) to between 1858 and 1860, and another (Woodham 1996, 48) says they were finished in 1860, all which seem inconsistent with Taylor not acquiring the land until late 1861. Another (Jones 1972, 919) says they were built 'in 1868', which would be not inconsistent with Taylor purchasing in 1861, but is not reconcilable with Taylor having sold up in 1867. Assuming Taylor did not start building until after he had acquired the land, and that the works took a year or so to construct, a date of 1862-1863 seems preferable.

The huge building, covering an acre and a quarter, consisted of a roofed quadrangle: a central bullock yard surrounded by four wings each of two or three storeys. The roof was of glass and corrugated iron, supported by a frame of iron girders in five segmental spans, two 18 feet high, and three of 36 feet. Some of the cast iron columns doubled as pipes for distributing water. Most of the ironwork came from Bristol ironfounders called Wright, not yet identified. Some of the other materials came from local sources: the flagstones for the bullock yard from Temple Cloud; the wood for the doors was local oak. The floors of the first storey were of Baltic pine, tongued and grooved so that nothing would fall through to waste. The north range contained a large barn for machinery, an office and an equipment store. The south range contained sheds for farm machinery, a bailiff's stable, a coach house, granaries and store house. The three storeys of the east wing housed pigs below, cattle above, and corn on the top floor. The west range had two floors for cart horses and harness rooms, with spaces for storing chaff and corn, and an office above. The machinery was driven by a 27 foot (9 metre) diameter water wheel. Rail tracks led from the stacks to the threshing machines. There was housing for a dog, a wise precaution where grain is stored, but perhaps reflecting Taylor's wife's interests. A distinctive external feature is an ashlar stepped gable with quatrefoil openings, giving the symmetrical east elevation of the building a gothic, almost churchlike, appearance.¹⁵ Writers (e.g. Bantock 1982, 2; Woodham 1996, 48; Foyle 2011, 492) have remarked on the similarity of the cast iron roof spans to railway station architecture; appropriately, perhaps, partly because Taylor invested in local railways and would have noted

their roof structures at Bath and elsewhere, and partly because by 1860 engineers were increasingly involved in designing large farm buildings (Wade Martins 2003, 129).

THE IMPACT

In theory, Taylor's venture ought to have been successful. He invested heavily: Smith's skills, experience and knowledge, which no doubt came at a price; his own (or his wife's) and borrowed capital, which must have amounted to about £20,000 in land and up to £10,000 for the works; and new working methods and routines. The overall arrangements involved less transport, less labour, use of abundant and free water for power and cleansing, recycling of animal heat and waste, and use of efficient modern equipment. All that ought to have increased the estate's output and reduced its costs, so, other things being equal, Taylor ought to have increased the estate's profits. That would give him more money to plough back into the business, or to spend, locally or elsewhere. Either way, in Keynesian terms Taylor was adding to the village's aggregate expenditure. Some of that money would have found its way into the village if Taylor employed people who lived locally; if he purchased goods and services from people in the village; and if he made charitable or other donations to local institutions like church, school, charity or poor fund. A flamboyant character, Taylor is said to have been generous to local charities (Budd 1999, 25). There is not enough information to permit a guess at the village's marginal propensity to consume, but on ordinary Keynesian principles Taylor's investment ought to have had some local multiplier effect, with comparatively large impacts early on, tailing off as they approached the limit of their sum.

So much for economic theory. What actually happened was more complicated, with many uncertainties and imponderables. Because it is not clear how long the works took or exactly when the new model farm became operational, it is difficult to fix a point in time from which to draw comparisons. By 1861 East Harptree village was not a closed economic entity, so there will have been many instances of financial leakage. There must have been economic interaction with other villages, and with the cities of Wells, Bath and Bristol, to which a horse bus plied three days a week and where many villagers will have bought

and sold, and from which some traders will have delivered. We do not know what other calls there were on Taylor's disposable income, except that he owned cottages and other land,¹⁶ lent money on mortgage,¹⁷ and invested in local railways (Budd 1999, 25, and see below).

Other new and significant economic activity was going on in the village at the same time, of which two ventures – waterworks and mining – will have been important to the village's prosperity, and they may have absorbed workers who would otherwise or previously have been engaged in agriculture. Bristol Waterworks Company had been founded in 1846, and in 1851 it started to lay a line of pipes to supply water to Bristol from the Mendips. The pipeline passed through East Harptree, and equipment, some of it surviving and still visible, was installed there. Workers will have been based in the village, surveying, setting out, excavating, hauling, laying the pipes and installing the pumps, filters and other equipment, and afterwards backfilling and maintaining the works. In 1861 six waterworks labourers lived in the parish, and it is possible that the civil engineer recorded in 1871 was engaged in the waterworks.

As to mining, lead working had prospered particularly at the end of the 17th century, but by 1850 the poor quality of the local product and cheaper imports had led to its cessation. In the 1850s, however, rising prices made it profitable to extract ore from old slag heaps, starting at Priddy in 1857, at St Cuthbert's in 1862 and, from 1867, on Smitham Hill above East Harptree (Buchanan and Cossons, 1969, 111). Taylor had property and financial dealings with James Bray, a mining agent, from 1861.¹⁸ Mining employed 20 East Harptree people in 1861, and 19 or 20 in 1871, most of them skilled miners and labourers. Most of the product is thought to have gone to the lead shot works in Bristol until they closed in 1876.

In addition to those practical considerations, other difficulties and uncertainties arise from the archival traces or the lack of them. Taylor's farm accounts, which would have afforded some indication of profit or loss, appear not to have survived, nor has correspondence between Taylor and Smith. Taxation records do not survive for East Harptree for the relevant period. Directories (Kelly's *Post Office*) survive for certain years, but their tendency to repeat text from earlier years renders suspect what they say was the case in a particular year. As a result, the main surviving relevant traces are census returns, from which

the information in the table on pp. 111-12 is abstracted.¹⁹

All the usual warnings (Higgs 1996) about interpreting census information apply. Does the large number of 'schoolmistresses' in 1861 imply an influx of families with children, or were most of them pupil teachers incentivised by the recently-introduced grants? Was a 'driller' a farm worker or a miner? Was the 'naval blaster' on shore leave or did he work in mining or the waterworks? Critically, did the enumerators distinguish consistently between 'agricultural labourer' and 'labourer'? They recorded 116 and 5 in 1851, 91 and 0 in 1861, and 18 and 75 in 1871. Are we seriously to believe that the numbers of non-agricultural labourers rose so sharply between 1861 and 1871? Whilst the origin of this note was a speculation whether the new model farm may have made some agricultural labourers redundant, it is difficult to believe that the change was quite so dramatic. On the other hand, the instructions to enumerators were explicit.

Subject to those caveats, some tentative conclusions can be drawn from the census data:

- 1 Given the concentration of labour and resources in the new model farmstead, one might have expected the demand for haulage to fall, and for the number of people employed in haulage to have fallen accordingly, consistent with the model farm having reduced the demand for their sort of work by concentrating activities under the one farmstead roof and using the corn to feed animals instead of carting it to mill for bread flours. But the number seems to have risen between 1851 and 1861, and then to have held up. One possibility might be that by 1871 some or most of the hauliers were employed not to transport corn but to shift ores, waterworks materials or spoil.
- 2 The large drop in the number of agricultural labourers between 1861 and 1871 seems to confirm that the new model farm, which constituted so large a part of the parish's farmland, had a significant impact on local employment. The big rise in the number of non-agricultural labourers by 1871 suggests that many of the parish's agricultural workers were still employed, but no longer in agriculture: they had got jobs in mining or the waterworks.
- 3 The 20 per cent drop between 1861 and 1871 in the total number of people employed in agriculture as a whole suggests that Taylor's new model farm employed fewer people. The similar fall in the number of farmers might be the result of nation-wide agricultural conditions, or of purchases and amalgamations, but Taylor's improved competitiveness may have made some small farmers uncompetitive and put them out of business.
- 4 By 1871 some occupations had disappeared from the village: apprentices/errand boys; thatchers (who were not there in the 1861 census either). The baker had also gone. That is not surprising if the grain was no longer going to the mill to make bread flours. But overall the main occupations of the villagers seem to have persisted, and to have been augmented by the newly-emerging public sector occupations (police, firemen, relieving officer, postmen). Perhaps they were sustained in part by the mining and waterworks activities. Perhaps the absence of apprentices and errand boys in 1871 (or as a later age might term it, youth unemployment) is a sign of recession: that would be consistent with the decline in the number of shop and other assistants and in the number of labourers in specific trades.
- 5 If the numbers of people employed in the waterworks and lead mining are stripped out, there was no significant increase between 1851 and 1861 in the total number of people working in the village but not in agriculture, and a modest rise in numbers between 1861 and 1871.
- 6 If any inferences can safely be drawn from the above, they are that:
 - (1) the model farm drastically reduced the number of agricultural workers, but
 - (2) many of those rendered unemployed found work in non-agricultural jobs;
 - (3) the model farm will almost certainly have been profitable, but
 - (4) it did not add significantly to the prosperity of the village under Taylor's ownership, because
 - (5) its profits must have gone elsewhere, and were probably spent or invested by Taylor outside the village, some of them in Somerset railways.

THE RAILWAY

Local tradition is that Taylor overreached himself, largely by investing or speculating in local railways, particularly the Bristol and North Somerset company whose line from Bristol to

Radstock via Pensford opened in September 1873; that Taylor's money 'went into the Pensford viaduct' (Budd 1999, 25); and that he lost his money in the failure of that company (Bantock 1982, 4). The documentary evidence suggests that that is not the whole story, but it was certainly Taylor's involvement with the Bristol and North Somerset railway that led to his financial discomfiture and his decision to sell Eastwood Manor estate after only 6 years' ownership.

The idea of promoting a railway to link the north Somerset coalfields and Bristol docks was floated in September 1862 at a public meeting at Midsomer Norton chaired by Henry Milward the rector of Paulton (Warnock 1978, 11). The prime movers were the coal owners, especially the dowager countess, who owned mining rights around Radstock, who saw the railway as a cheap and efficient means of transporting coal to Bristol and beyond, but it was also supported by owners and tenants of agricultural land, who saw the railway as a cheaper and quicker way of transporting produce, especially meat in bulk, to Bristol and thence to London, where grain and meat market prices were higher than in the shires. In June 1863 the House of Commons committee hearing objections to a private bill was told that subscribers had promised upwards of £100,000. The Act was passed in July 1863, incorporating the company with an authorised capital of £275,000 in shares of £20 each, with power to borrow up to £91,000 in loans. The first contractor tried to renegotiate the deal but was refused; the second contractors became insolvent. The company got involved in litigation with competitors, including the Somerset and Dorset. At the fourth half-yearly meeting of the company on 1 February 1865, just over three years after purchasing the Eastwood Manor estate and establishing his new model farm, William Taylor was elected to the board of directors. In September 1865 Taylor and another director were authorised to renegotiate with the latest contractor. By August 1866 Taylor had resigned.

The reasons became clear when a committee appointed to investigate the company's affairs reported in June 1867.²⁰ Of the 13,750 shares authorised, only 804 had been paid for and allotted; 355 had been issued in lieu of payment for land; 2026 had been issued to the contractors. Four directors, one of whom was Taylor, had signed notes to borrow £180,000. They had recorded the issue of bonds totalling £23,000, but had also issued another £36,000 in bonds without recording

them. The total debts of the company were some £300,000, but because borrowing over £91,000 was not authorised, the directors who had signed the loan notes were liable personally. Taylor had to raise money, and fast. Eastwood Manor estate was put up for auction on 24 August 1867.²¹ The purchaser was the Reverend Charles Adam Kemble, rector of Bath. The model farm continued under his ownership until 1894,²² and continued profitable.²³ Given that Kemble is reputed to have paid for extensive renovations of Bath Abbey out of his own pocket (after providing for wife and eight daughters), it seems likely that the profits of the model farm went, not into the East Harptree economy, not into the Pensford viaduct, but into Bath Abbey.

AFTER HARPTREE

William Taylor and Mary Gurney Taylor moved to an ancient farmhouse, Priest Hawes, at Westham between Eastbourne and Pevensey in Sussex,²⁴ where Taylor became a member of Westham and Pevensey corporation, serving twice as mayor and thus becoming a justice of the peace. On 10 October 1870 he was made a freeman of the borough.²⁵ Taylor continued to farm, and exhibited animals, mainly Devon reds, at many shows.²⁶ He served as poor law guardian, member of the school board, and trustee of local almshouses and of the Town trust that in 1876 took over the residuary assets of Westham and Pevensey corporation, and as rural district and county councillor. Taylor taught in the local Sunday school, was president of the cricket club, and chaired the local Conservative association. Mary Gurney Taylor died in Eastbourne on 19th October 1872. As a result of her death, it was reported that her lifetime income of £20,000 per annum reverted to the trustees under the liquidation of Overend, Gurney and Company Limited, which had gone into spectacular insolvency in 1866.²⁷

In 1874 William Taylor married the daughter of a London hotelier who came originally from Stuttgart but who then lived near Pevensey,²⁸ Winifred Schill, with whom Taylor had six further children. The couple bought Glenleigh (later Glyndley) Manor, Westham.²⁹ Taylor became Colonel of the 9th Cinque Ports Artillery Volunteer Corps,³⁰ and was awarded the Volunteer Decoration. In the 1890s he bought a derelict estate of 1,500 acres at Withersfield near Haverhill in Suffolk, which he improved in much the same way as he had developed Eastwood Manor estate at East Harptree, overhauling and repairing

the tenanted farms but keeping Exhibition Farm (so named in 1851) in hand and making it what the local newspaper described as 'a model of efficiency'.³¹ William Taylor died there on 21st March 1897, aged 59.

TABLE
Occupations of East Harptree residents, 1851, 1861, 1871
Information extracted from East Harptree census, 1851, 1861, 1871

		1851		1861		1871	
sellers of services							
	agricultural						
	Farmer, yeoman	30.5		18		21	
	Cowman, dairymaid			6		2	
	gamekeeper	1				1	
	Agricultural labourer	116		91		18	
	Farm bailiff, steward			1		3	
	hurdlemaker	1					
	weedcutter			1			
	shepherd			4		1	
		-----	148.5	-----	121	-----	46
	Non-agricultural						
	Domestic servant	40		37		27	
	Errand boy, apprentice	6		2			
	Schoolmaster, mistress	3		11		3	
	Carpenter, mason, thatcher	12		11		9.5	
	brickmaker					1	
	Ochre manufacturer	1					
	Blacksmith	2		2		4	
	Gardener	2		2		4	
	Laundress, washerwoman, starcher	9		6		5	
	Shoemaker	3		3		2.5	
	Draper	1		1		1	
	Victualler, beershop keeper	2.5		3		1	
	Dressmaker, milliner, seamstress, tailor	5.5		14		4	
	Baker	0.5		1.5			
	Builder	1					
	Carter, haulier, carrier	2		7		4.5	
	wheelwright					1.5	
	gilder			1			
	Nurse, midwife, nursemaid	2		3		3	
	Shop, storekeeper, butcher	2		1		3	
	Assistant (shop, trade)	4		1		1	
	Labourer	5				75	
	Labourer to a trade	7		2		1	
	Waterworks labourer			6			
	Sexton			1			
	Miller			1			

	Barm seller			1			
	driller			1			
	Hawker, higgler					2	
	Mining-related workers						
	Lead miner			13		10	
	Lead mine labourer			5		5	
	Mining agent			1			
	Mining clerk			1		1	
	Engine driver					1	
	Mineral assayer					1	
	Civil engineer					1	
	Public officials						
	Relieving officer					1	
	Policeman, postman, fireman			2		2	
			-----	110.5	-----	140.5	-----
	Non-sellers of services						
	Importers of income						
	Pensioner, fundholder	7		15		8	
	Naval blaster					1	
			-----	7	-----	15	-----
	Receivers of rents and transfer payments						
	Landed proprietor, gentleman, vicar	4		6		2	
	Pauper	18		22		11	
			-----	22	-----	28	-----
	Unpaid people						
	Wife, dependant	325		270.5		342	
	Child, scholar	109		82		90	
			-----	434	-----	352.5	-----
	population			722		657	
	Inhabited dwellings			160		154	
	Empty dwellings			12		2	
							13

ENDNOTES

- ¹ For model farms generally, see Macdonald, S., 1981; Wade Martins, S., 2003.
- ² http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/resultsingle_print.aspx?uid=1129549&showMap=1&showText=1
- ³ 1851 census, TNA, HO 107, piece 1809, folio 709 page 12.
- ⁴ *Ipswich Journal*, 26 October 1872, 'It's an ill wind, etc.'
- ⁵ *Wells Journal*, 26 January 1861, 'The Gurney Divorce Case'. 'Tatton' is a misreporting of 'Catton,' their house near Norwich. Vic was her dog.
- ⁶ 1861 Census, East Harptree: RG9/1677, f.59, p.11.
- ⁷ St Mary the Virgin, Perivale, register of marriages, London Metropolitan Archives DRO/073/006.
- ⁸ 1891 Census, TNA RG12/770, f.20, p.9.
- ⁹ *Kentish Chronicle*, 9 May 1863, 'The Gurney Divorce case'.
- ¹⁰ Indenture 7 August 1860, Waldegrave to Cotterell and others, S[omerset] H[eritage] C[entre] A\ASI G/2076.
- ¹¹ Indenture, 4 October 1861, Cotterell and others to Taylor, *ibid*.
- ¹² Indenture, 24 March 1865, Gale and others to Taylor, *ibid*.
- ¹³ Indenture, 14 November 1863, Taylor to Gulston and others, *ibid*.
- ¹⁴ *The Farmer's Magazine*, 2 January 1837, 6, 110.

- ¹⁵ Photograph, National Monuments Record, 32763.
- ¹⁶ Conveyances, SHC, A/AS I/3.
- ¹⁷ Ibid., especially mortgages 1 November 1861, James Bray to Taylor; 22 March 1864, Saul Loxton to Taylor.
- ¹⁸ Conveyances and mortgages, 1 November 1861, 23 April 1863, 28 December 1864, SHC A\ASI/3.
- ¹⁹ Census returns, East Harptree, 1851, 1861, 1871: TNA, HO 107/1938; RG9/1677, RG10/2467.
- ²⁰ Minutes, Bristol and North Somerset Railway Company, TNA, RAIL 77.
- ²¹ Sale particulars, reproduced in Budd, 1999, 158.
- ²² Conveyance, 22 March 1884, Kemble to Hope, SHC, A/ASI G2076.
- ²³ Valuation, 18 March 1909, Moses Smith and Sons, Bristol, *ibid.*
- ²⁴ What follows draws largely on obituary and funeral report, 'Death of Colonel Taylor,' *Hastings and St Leonards Observer*, 27 March 1897.
- ²⁵ Roll of freemen, East Sussex record office, PEV/390.
- ²⁶ Hailsham, 21 Dec 1867, *Sussex Advertiser*; Smithfield, 8 Dec 1868, *Sheffield Independent*; 8 Dec 1870, *London Standard*; Royal Agricultural Society (Wolverhampton) 12 Jul 1871, *Hampshire Advertiser*; Southampton 16 Dec 1871, *Salisbury and Winchester Journal*; Berks and Hants Agricultural Show 27 Jun 1872, *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*; Smithfield, 10 Dec 1872, *Western Daily Press*; 12 Dec 1873, *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*; Royal Agricultural Show (Bedford) 14 Jul 1874, *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser*; Hailsham, 19 Dec 1874, *Hastings and St Leonards Observer*; Smithfield 13 Dec 1874, *Reynolds's Newspaper*; Royal Counties (Hants and Berks) at Portsmouth 19 Jun 1875, *Reading Mercury*; Lewes 9 Dec 1876; Hastings Leanstock Show 31 Aug 1889, *Hastings and St Leonards Observer*.
- ²⁷ *Ipswich Journal*, 26 October 1872, 'It's an ill wind, etc.'
- ²⁸ Correspondence, East Sussex record office, PEV/672-679.
- ²⁹ http://www.parksandgardens.ac.uk/index2.php?option=com_parksandgardens&task=site&id=5014&preview=1&Itemid=
- ³⁰ *London Gazette*, 21 April 1874, 2197.
- ³¹ *Chelmsford Chronicle*, 31 July 1896, 'Colonel Taylor's Withersfield Estate', copied from the *South-West Suffolk Echo*.

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