

in a convenient manner the respective allotments and the inclosing of these allotments. It is obvious that this latter object could only be effected by imposing on the allottees obligation to fence, at any rate, on some one side of the allotments assigned to them.

The face of the country two centuries ago was very different from what it is at present. We do not allude to the greater number of buildings, factories, and so forth, but to the great change that has come about by reason of the Inclosure Acts. The familiar sight of rectangular fields, with their hedges and ditches, was unknown two centuries ago. These rectangular fields are almost a sure indication that the fields were laid out under some inclosure award. This is more especially the case in agricultural parts and in older parts of the country—if we may use the expression. A surer sign that the land has been the subject-matter of an inclosure award is the existence of long, straight drove-way roads, often unmetalled, which were designed as part of the inclosure scheme. When we remember that it was usual to impose in respect of each boundary a quasi-statutory obligation to fence and for ever afterwards to keep fenced each such boundary, we can appreciate that there are at the present day many owners bound to repair a fence for the benefit of their neighbors.

But fields laid out under inclosure awards have changed ownership many times over since the days of the Inclosure Acts. With changes of ownership, as, for instance, where one owner becomes possessed of what was originally the property of two adjoining allottees, the Inclosure Act obligations have disappeared. In many cases the fences themselves have been thrown down, and the passage of time has tended to destroy or remove those obligations. Moreover, although rather the exception than the rule, there were inclosures long before the advent of the Inclosure Acts. "Ancient inclosures" they were called. "Improvements" by the lord they were in theory. That is to say, the lord in fact granted, or was supposed to have granted, out parcels of his land in severalty to be inclosed by the grantee. In point of fact, as often as not, they were encroachments on the lord or on the commoner's rights. However that may be, this matter of inclosing, apart from the machinery of Inclosure Acts, brings us to