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The Economic Development of a Norfolk Manor 1086-1565

This highly detailed analysis of the medieval records of Forncett Manor, first published in 1906, is a case study of the development of an agricultural estate from early medieval to Tudor times. The economic system of the manor and the people who depended on it, aristocrats, tenants and serfs, is described and statistics are given where they can be extrapolated from the surviving records. Appendices list and transcribe important sections of the archive, including lists of tenants and financial records, as well as relevant passages of the Domesday Book. Starting from the documentary evidence, Harvard-trained Davenport does not speculate beyond the facts and offers little interpretation. However, she creates a highly instructive case study for medieval economic history that remains a rich source of valuable information for historians of later generations.
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The Economic Development of a Norfolk Manor 1086-1565

Frances Gardiner Davenport
THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
OF A NORFOLK MANOR,
1086—1565
THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
OF A
NORFOLK MANOR
1086—1565

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CAMBRIDGE:
at the University Press
1906
TO

LUCY MAYNARD SALMON
PREFACE.

SOME explanation of the circumstances which led to the writing of this book may serve to make clear the point of view from which the subject is considered.

During the year 1895–6, in connection with a course in Economic History in Radcliffe College, I transcribed a number of Court Rolls of the manor of Moulton, Norfolk, belonging to the Library of Harvard University. In the summer of 1896 a search in England for other material relating to Moulton failed to bring to light further important documents concerning that manor; but a comparatively rich series of manorial documents was found to be in the possession of the steward of the adjoining manor of Forncett. The owner of Forncett Manor, Mr A. C. Cole, most kindly allowed an examination of these, and to facilitate the work consented to deposit them in the Public Record Office. Through the courtesy of the officials of the Public Record Office, permission was obtained to consult the rolls there. Mr Cole has since presented these rolls to the Cambridge University Library, where they now are.

Some of the results of this study of the Forncett records were printed in a paper on the "Decay of Villeinage in East Anglia" (Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, N. S. xiv., 1900), part of which is reprinted with some additions and alterations on pages 88–97 of this book.

A fellowship held from the Association of Collegiate Alumnæ during the year 1902–3 made possible a further examination of the Forncett MSS. and the completion of this volume.
Preface.

No attempt has been made in this work to consider the history of Forncett Honor, or to treat of other than economic conditions in Forncett Manor.

It is a pleasure to acknowledge the many kindesses that have lightened a laborious task. My best thanks are due to Mr A. C. Cole, Mr Hubert Hall, and especially to Professor W. J. Ashley, under whose direction the work was begun. I am also much indebted for advice and assistance to Professor J. F. Jameson, Professor F. W. Maitland, and Mr W. J. Corbett. Miss E. M. Leonard has kindly supplied the photograph of St Mary’s Church, which serves as the frontispiece of the book.

F. G. D.

May, 1906.
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**Plates.**

St Mary's Church and Dam Meadow, Fornckett | frontispiece |  
Open fields in Tacolneston, formerly included in Fornckett St Mary's parish | to face p. 26 |  
Map | opposite p. 1 |
Map of the parishes of FORNCETT ST MARY AND FORNCETT ST
made from a descriptive Survey of 1565

Scale, three inches to one mile

- = built messuage held by free tenure
• = vacant
● = built
□ = vacant
Δ = built
■ = vacant
□□□□ = common demesne. The lines run at right angles to the length of the acre strips
□□□□□□ = meadow
□□□□□□□□□□ = meadow
■■■■■■■■■■ = meres
- - - - - - - - = balks
- - - - - - - - - - = line dividing parishes of St Mary and St. Peter

Roman numerals indicate precincts
Arabic = furlongs

The position of the messuages in II, 1 (St Peter’s) in relation to another is conjectural. The contour of Juliot’s Greer is conjectural. Names are spelled as in the Survey.