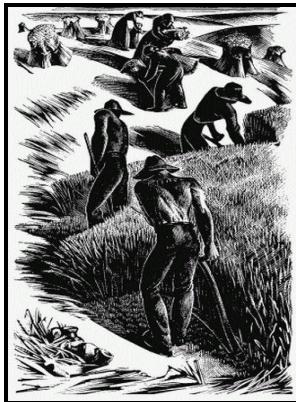


Field systems and farming systems in late medieval England

Ashgate - BBC



Description: -

Teachers -- Training of -- Developing countries.

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Middle Ages

Field crops -- Great Britain -- History

Agricultural systems -- Great Britain -- HistoryField systems and
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Collected studies

Variorum collected studies seriesField systems and farming systems in
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Agricultural improvements

. This falling proportion of workers in agriculture enabled the proportion working in industry and services to rise: in other words improved agricultural production made the industrial revolution possible, and many would regard the industrial revolution as the beginning of the modern world.

BBC

An enduring myth For many years the agricultural revolution in England was thought to have occurred because of three major changes: the selective breeding of livestock; the removal of common property rights to land; and new systems of cropping, involving turnips and clover.

Agricultural improvements

The three-field system of crop rotation was employed by medieval farmers, with spring as well as autumn sowings. Farming systems Southdown sheep with turnips Before this time, farmers did not know formally of the existence of nitrogen, but we can interpret many of their actions in terms of the conservation of existing stocks of nitrogen, and the addition of new nitrogen to the soil. The average yield of an acre of farming in the Middle Ages was eight to nine bushels of grain.

Agricultural improvements

But turnips were not common until the mid-18th century, and not widespread as part of the new Norfolk four-course rotation until the 19th century. This system also ensured that the same crop was not grown in the same field two years running. They focused on collecting acorns for pigs.

Agricultural improvements

Intensity was also increased by land reclamation, especially the draining of the fenlands of eastern England, from the 17th century onwards, when a

low-intensity agricultural system based on fishing and fowling was replaced by a high-intensity system based on arable crops. They focused on the ploughing and spreading of manure.

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The improvement in labour productivity, however, had begun long before this. Grain was cut with a sickle and grass mown with a scythe.

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