



Farming Reports

Mr. Thomas Pullin, Lenton Farm, Great Chalfield, Trowbridge, reports:- After a cold, wet and backward spring we are having east winds with frosty nights, which are unfavourable to vegetation. On cold pastures there is very little grass, and without the needful rain soon crops will be light. There is only a small quantity of hay left over on many farms. Rain is wanted badly for barley, oats and all spring corn. Wheat is a good plant, and doing fairly well. Prices are hardening, which is somewhat hopeful for it has been a disastrous time for wheat grower for several years past. Beef and mutton are selling well. Store cattle and sheep are also making satisfactory prices. The worst prospect for pasture farming is the low price of milk, which at the present time is over 5 ½ per gallon. One of the largest buyers in this part of the county when asked to give a little more, answered that farmers are never satisfied. Is there any man who can produce milk at 5d per gallon, pay a fair rent for his land, good wages to his men, and get anything like a fair return for his capital?

Western Daily Press, 9 May 1901

Mr. Thomas Pullin, Lenton Farm, Great Chalfield, Trowbridge, reports: In consequence of the past seven weeks' continuous wet weather corn crops are in a much worse condition than for very many years. Beans and oats appear to be the least damaged. Wheat, especially in the late districts, will be of poor quality and under the average yield. There will be none of the favourite bright samples of barley, which is quite a serious matter, as on many farms it has been the best paying crop. Hundreds of acres where clover-seed was sown in the spring (which is usual) owing to the very wet season has outgrown the barley. Where such is the case the sole crop will be lost, unless there is an immediate favourable change in the weather. Peas, which promised a fair crop, have lost half the estimated value through sprouting and shedding on the ground. Everything appears to be against corn growing, what with the great expense of labour, unfavourable seasons, and the very low prices obtained, one would almost think corn growing doomed to extinction in this county. The only redeeming feature for arable land farming is that it has been a good season for breeding sheep, which have done well and are making satisfactory prices. For pasture land the outlook is much better. On dry healthy dairy farms, where most of the hay was made during the three weeks fine weather, there is little cause for complaint, as it is doubtless a good year for producing milk, and the prospects are favourable for the coming winter, as hay on the majority of farms is plentiful and good.

Western Daily Press 3rd September 1903

Mr. T. Pullen, Lenton Farm, Great Chalfield, Trowbridge writes:- Both March and April have been favourable to farmers in this immediate neighbourhood. The fine weather during these two months enabled the spring corn to be sown in good tilth. Barley and oats are up and looking strong and

healthy. The wheat plant on the drier land is good and does not appear to have lost plant during the winter. In consequence of the wet season last year, the various autumn-sown crops, such as vetches, rye, winter beans, and wheat on the wetter soils, are indifferent and not so clean as they should be. Pasture, except on the driest land, is in a bad state, and it will take a long time to overcome the effect of last season. But, on the whole, farmers in this neighbourhood, did not suffer so much as in some districts. It is satisfactory to not that the Education Committee contemplate fostering in the rural districts the teaching in elementary schools of matter relating to gardening and agriculture, and the Agricultural Committee of the County Council, by the various lectures now being given, must tend to diffuse knowledge and general information favourable to rural life; but the lack of enterprise in the erection of suitable dwellings for the labouring classes in the villages is one of the causes of the migration of the village population to the towns, to the detriment of the better cultivation of the soil.

Western Daily Press, 5 May 1904

Mr. Thomas Pullin, Lenton Farm, Great Chalfield, Trowbridge, writes:- The season has not been favourable for sowing the spring corn, the stormy weather prevailing throughout March greatly delaying operations. The wheat plant is thin, and does not at present promise an average yield at harvest. Winter beans are doing well; winter oats nearly a failure. Clovers and sanfoin are exceptionally promising, and will be over an average crop. On all dry pastures, grass is plentiful, but the cold wet land is suffering for want of warmer weather. Cattle of all descriptions are selling well, especially milking cows, but as a rule they have not wintered well, much at last year's crop of hay being very indifferently made. The price of milk this season being lower, and expenses having increased with dearer feeding stuffs and higher prices for milking cows, the prospect is not as good as last year. Sheep have done fairly well, both mutton and wool being lower in value. The outlook for sheep farming is not quite as good as for some years past. However, taking the season up to the present, there is not much cause for complaint.

Western Daily Press, 21 May 1908

Mr. Thomas Pullen, Lenton Farm, Great Chalfield, Trowbridge, writes:- The year now drawing to its close may be described as one of great expectations and, in many cases, bitter disappointment. As an instance, I may mention that I am interested in a corn and sheep farm in the neighbourhood of Marlborough, in which district, owing to the continuous wet weather during harvest time hundreds of acres of corn on some of the best farmland in Wiltshire was rendered valueless. Until about the middle of June the prospect could hardly have been more promising. The recent higher prices for wheat was no benefit to the majority of farmers, as nearly all the previous crop had been disposed and no sooner had we any to sell than it suddenly dropped quite 10s per quarter; it has been a trying time for wheat sowing, the greater part having done very badly, and with the lower prices for sheep, taken altogether, the outlook for arable land farming is not very bright. On pasture farms there is not much cause for complaint. The reason has been favourable for the production of milk, grass being plentiful. All descriptions of cattle have done well and are realising quite satisfactory prices.

Western Daily Press, 2 December 1909