

The extent of early enclosure in the Triangle is reflected by the near total absence of enclosure awards: in Sudbourne 150 acres were enclosed in 1807; in Gedgrave and Orford about 46 acres in 1878; and in Hollesley 44 acres of heath in 1844. In the 20th century 1,134 acres of heath were enclosed at Shottisham and 148 acres in Bromeswell.



Typical small fields with tree-lined hedges surveyed by Norden in 1601. Hedgerow oaks reduced the need for woodland.



Chillesford hedgers at work: a seasonal labour now done by machine.

The old enclosures were mostly small; one acre took a day to plough and was a convenient size for one man to cultivate. All the hedges were carefully maintained to protect crops, as well as to provide faggots for firing, since woodland was the preserve of the manorial lord. Oak trees in the hedges were a valuable resource for house and barn construction. In places they can be seen marking the line of ploughed-down hedges within today's larger fields.

### *Cultivating the land*

Robert Forth's estate was surveyed in 1594. It consisted of the three manors of Butley, Boyton and Tangham (Capel St Andrew) and was calculated as 5,301 acres. He farmed 3,223 acres of this himself. The home farm comprised the manor-house and Home Park, 22 acres of gardens, orchards, yards and ponds, while he kept all 129 acres of woodland. There were 50 tenements, 8 cottages, 2 water-mills, 2 separate barns, a ferry and a ferry-house. During the previous 40 years, reflecting a decline in sheep-farming, Forth had reduced the heath commons by a third, while his arable in the three manors had all but tripled to 1,600 acres. None of his tenants had large farms and the majority held their land *'at his will'*. Only five of these had farms of more than 100 acres and they were rented on an annual basis only. In the three manors little more than 386 acres were either free, leased or copyhold and they were divided among 34 small farmers and cottagers. He let land on

an annual basis to 42 men. They included men who also had freehold and/or copyhold land of their own to farm, and also purely tenant farmers such as: Edward Ablett with his 208-acre Dairy House Farm in Boyton; and John Gilders who rented 335 acres including Edwardes Farm in Boyton and all the salt marsh on the estate. The latter flanked the Haven on the east shore of Boyton and amounted to 120 acres. John Herbert of Hollesley supplemented his 6-acre copyhold arable with 232 acres rented from Robert Forth along with 27 acres of pasture. His cultivated land was in the western part of Boyton, but his pasture lay down by the sea wall. In the Triangle mixed farms needed to comprise fields on marsh, sand and the better soil; the small farms tended to be sited where they occur close together.

There were ten freeholds, but these totalled only 47 acres or less than 1% of the estate, and most were cottage plots. The largest freeholders were: Robert Bourne