

How farming has changed the landscape

*Read the following*

For the last 5000 years ago farming of one kind or another has been carried out in the British Isles  
Before this time most of the countryside was covered in woodland, even on the slopes of many of the hills and mountains. But as time passed most of the trees have been cut down to make way for fields for farming, also to provide wood to burn and to make things such as ships, homes, furniture etc. For instance it took 2000 large oak trees to make a ship of war in 1750.



Part of the **New Forest** one of the few pieces of ancient woodland left in the British Isles.



The natural landscape 4000 years ago



Part of the ancient forest in Scotland but it is in poor condition



An ancient oak in Sherwood Forest, probably more than 1000 years old but now propped up with poles. This type of tree would have been common in the countryside.



The start of farming

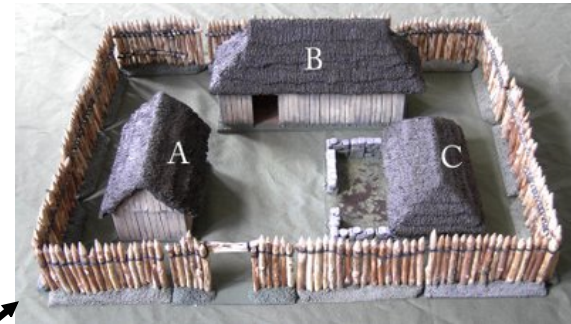


Food like this deer was found in the forests and man hunted them. After hundreds of years they were in short supply so man had to start to look after animals to provide food and skins. Once most of the deer were cleared from the forests the woodland suffered by becoming overgrown. So man began rearing wild cattle to browse the woodland and keep it under control.



It will look a bit like this one!

Houses like this one appeared in woodland clearings and the landscape began to change for ever.



Houses like this with a house (A), a store (B) and a pig sty (C) soon began to appear. More animals were domesticated and the farmyard began to show itself.



New plants and flowers appeared in the clearings and this was the start of meadow grassland for animal grazing

the landscape of farming

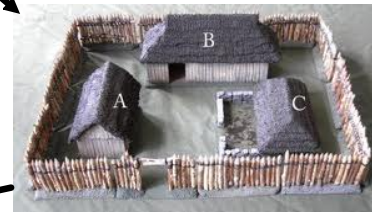
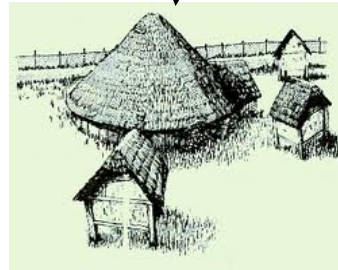
Man the hunter



**The start of farming - altering the landscape**

*Copy these drawings into your book*

Man the animal farmer



Man the arable farmer - ploughing the land



These strips of land or terraces are called lychets and show early attempts to plough the land to grow crops.



Emmer wheat, an early crop of wheat, very much like our barley

How farming has changed the landscape - The mediaeval period



During the time of the Saxons (about 750 AD) farmers began to plough the fields in strips. This is called strip farming and can still be seen today in many villages throughout the British Isles. This type of farming again changed the landscape of many villages. (see picture below)



Many modern fields are rectangular in shape as this aerial photograph shows



Many fields have small humps and valleys in them called "Ridge and Furrow" or "Rigg & Furrow"

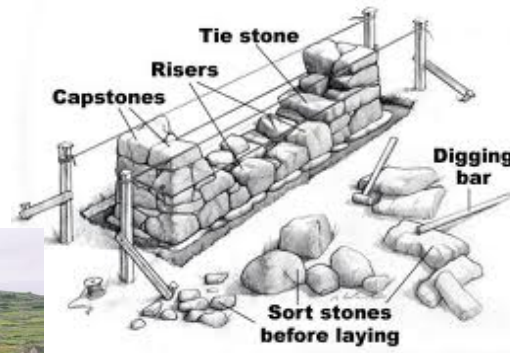


**Enclosures - Field Boundaries, walls and hedges**

Once the rigg & furrow strips were taken back from the peasants by the Lord of the Manor or in some cases given to the peasants they were separated from each other by marker stones or posts. Later on, walls were built or hedges grown to stop animals getting out of the fields. This was known as the enclosures period. Most of the hedges and walls we see today in the fields came about 500 to 600 years ago. Some hedges follow ancient tracks while others show where the early fields were. It is more usual to see walls in places where there is plenty of stone e.g. in hilly and mountainous areas like the Lake District. The walls are **dry-stone walls** i.e. the stones are not held together with cement. Today hedges are good for helping and protecting wildlife such as birds.



How to build a dry-stone wall.  
*Try and copy the drawing into your book*



A mixed natural hedge with both bushes and trees. This type of hedge is the best for wildlife since it is high and thick. It is difficult to maintain since it is thick and bushy. It surrounds a meadow in this case.



This is a layered hedge where an old hedge has been cut back and the main stems left which are then trained to make a solid barrier. It will eventually grow back but is much easier to maintain in the future.