

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURAL BOTANY

PROCTOR BARLEY

Since the issue of the circular about Proctor Barley which was sent to all Fellows of the Institute on the 22nd October the Council of the Institute have asked that it should be made quite clear that the Institute is prepared to receive applications for allocations of Proctor Barley direct from Farmer Fellows. At the same time, this does not mean that there is any departure from the Institute's long established practice of always invoicing seed to farmers through a merchant. It is therefore most convenient if a farmer's application for seed reaches the Institute through a merchant. Farmer Fellows who prefer, however, to send their request for an allocation direct to the Institute can do so, and in this case they are asked to state on their application the name and address of the merchant through whom they wish the seed to be invoiced to them. It will, of course, then be necessary for the Institute to obtain the merchant's agreement to the financial arrangement.

The Institute also wish to take this opportunity of drawing attention to the importance of maintaining the quality of the seed crops which will result from this distribution. Supplies of Proctor are still very limited and it is therefore particularly important that all possible causes of deterioration should be avoided. Some of the chief precautions which we recommend are as follows:

1. The land should be clean, to avoid contaminating a crop from ground keepers. The land should not have grown cereals for the previous two years, nor have been used for stacks, potato clamps, etc.
2. There should be a definite belt of fallow or non-cereal crop between the seed crop and any adjoining crop or headlands of a different variety, or of a different cereal.
3. All possible sources of mechanical admixture should be avoided and great care taken to clean all drills and binders, carts and wagons, threshing, drying and cleaning machinery, sacks, etc., before they are used for the seed crop. The cleaning should be done well away from the seed plot.

With a view to enabling purchasers of seed to know whether these precautions have in fact been observed in the production of the seed the Institute has, through its Seed Production Committee, developed the Field Approval Schemes for cereal seed crops. Seed from field approved crops is, of course, likely to meet a keener demand than from other crops. There are clearly, therefore, advantages in as many seed crops as possible being field approved. The Field Approval Schemes are run in many areas through the Seed Growers' Associations and some 140 approved merchants. When placing their orders for seed Farmer Fellows are advised to make enquiries as to whether provision can be made in their area for Field Approval so that as much as possible of this year's issue of Proctor Barley will be included in Field Approval Schemes. A list of the merchants and organisations which took part in the Schemes in 1953 will shortly be circulated to all Fellows in Seed Notes No. 47. Details of the arrangements are set out in a leaflet, "Inspection of Cereal Seed Crops" which can be obtained from the Institute on request.

30th October, 1953.

THE HISTORY OF HEMPSTEAD HALL.

Extracts from

The History and Topography of the County
of Essex.

by

Thomas Wright Esq of Trinity College
Cambridge

Vol 2.

Published by George Virtue, 26 Ivy Lane
London. 1835.

Lent to us by Mrs. Medcalf, Great Bardfield.

Hempstead, though sometimes spelt in that way at the time of writing, was customarily written HEMSTED, and occurs in Domesday or Domesday Book as HAMSTED. Also in other old records as Hemsted or Hemstead from the Saxon 'hem' or 'ham', a habitation or dwelling.

The heavy clay soil is mentioned, also the woods, in which connection there is reference to some remarkable trees of the district. Thus "and on land belonging to sir W. Eustace, a wych elm of a beautiful form called the High Tree, rising to an astonishing height".

??? Wych Tree Farm ???

"The ancient mansion of Hemsted Hall is about two miles north east of the church. This manor, from Richard Fitz-Gislebert, passed to one of the earls of Clare, who at an early period gave it to the De Veres, earls of Oxford, and it was holden of them, as of their knights fees; but the earls of Clare remained lords paramount. Robert de Watevil lived here in the reigns of Richard I and of King John. The estate continued in this family till it was conveyed by the marriage of Joan, daughter of sir John de Watevil, to Sir William Langham in 1341, the manor continued in the family till Alice, only daughter of Richard Langham conveyed it to her son Sigismund Cotton, who was succeeded by his son William in 1541, ... The last of the family mentioned in the record as holding this possession was Anthony Cotton in 1631; his immediate successors cannot be traced, owing it is believed to the confusion of the times."

The 'confusion of the times' may refer to Cromwell. In any case there appears to be a definite gap in the record, which may cover the movement of the house from