

and two boys, so that the labour force was then high. The number of domestic servants (21) suggests that life in the manor-house and in the large farmsteads was very comfortable, and the services of a jobbing gardener, three laundresses, a seamstress, and a charwoman were also available. Contact between Wormleighton and the outside world was maintained by three carriers and two wagoners, while services along the canal were to be reinforced in 1852 by the completion of the section of the Great Western Railway linking Banbury with Warwick and Birmingham. Like the canal, the railway utilized the Fenny Compton gap and a station was established well outside the parish on the road running west from Wormleighton (Fig. 7). Unfortunately there is no tithe map¹ for Wormleighton, so one cannot describe the detailed land use of the parish in the second quarter of the nineteenth century. Instead, reference will be made to the Board of Trade Returns² for 1867, which confirm that although Wormleighton raised wheat, oats, beans, and small acreages of peas, turnips, swedes, and clover on 23 per cent. of its area, the remainder of the large parish was still under grass. Certainly one's mind is carried back to Sir John Spencer I's assertion in 1519 that his manor 'was nevyr good for corne as the cuntrey will testefye'. The livestock figures for 1867—617 cattle, 3,480 sheep, and 37 pigs—may not together equal those of the sixteenth century but they were still considerable. Farmers today continue to take pride in the strong pastoral tradition that has been established in the parish over the past four centuries. The emphasis on the rearing and fattening of cattle and sheep remains very great, and both cereal production and dairying have been of only slight importance.³

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY: SALES OF SPENCER LAND

Within the parish today there are still seven separate farm units, four of which are worked from farmsteads within the village. Until early in 1924 all were tenant farms, and the maintenance of buildings and general supervision of the estate were carried out by agents of Earl Spencer living in the village. But a great change was to come about later that year when the present earl, who had succeeded to the title in 1922, was faced with the payment of heavy death duties on his father's estate. The decision was now taken to sell land within Wormleighton parish which had been in Spencer hands for over four centuries. Part of the sum was raised by the sale of two farms to their tenant occupiers in October 1924—Home Farm (then 253 acres) within the village and New House Farm (then 262 acres) outside (Fig. 7).⁴ In April 1926 Wormleighton Hill Farm⁵ (424 acres), which had been established outside the village soon after 1834, was also sold, together with a very small farm (Glebe Farm c. 40 acres) on the northern extremity of the parish. Glebe Farm appears to have come into being as a small tenant holding soon after 1834. Since 1926 no further sales have been necessary, but some of the farms already sold have changed hands.

¹ H. C. Prince, 'The Tithe Surveys of the Mid-nineteenth Century', *Agricultural History Review*, vii, pt. 1 (1959), 14-26.

² *Agricultural Returns for Great Britain, 1867*. Parish summaries for England and Wales are held by the Collection of Statistics Branch, Ministry of Agri-

culture, Government Buildings, Epsom Road, Guildford, Surrey.

³ For example, see Land Utilization Survey of Britain, 1 in. = 1 mile, sheet 83, surveyed 1931-7.

⁴ 1924 Rental in Spencer Muniments.

⁵ 1926 Rental in Spencer Muniments.