



Strike of Farm Labourers in South Wilts

The following paragraph appeared in the morning papers of Wednesday:- The labourers at Barford, Codford and Fovant, finding the increased value of their services, owing to the diminished number of the class to which they belong, have, with scarcely an exception, struck work and refused to return to their masters, unless they receive an advance from 7s. to 9s. per week. The farmers appear willing to make a slight advance upon the old rate of wages, but not to the extent demanded. The peasantry, however refuse to make any concession and resolutely declare they will have 9s. a week or nothing. On Monday last, a body of labourers, numbering from 150 to 200, proceeded from farm to farm, quietly stating their determination to get the advance they asked and to obtain, in addition a settlement weekly on a Friday instead of a Saturday night. The rector of the parish, the Hon. And Rev. S Waldegrave was ultimately called upon to obtain an adjustment of the matter. Mr Waldegrave undertook this task, with the earnest desire of benefitting both parties, but his recommendation of an uniform rate of wages of 8s. per week was indignantly rejected by the men. Matters remain up to the present in pretty much the same state.

(Salisbury and Winchester Journal, 5th February, 1853)

The story made the newspapers in Australia.....

Local labourers refusing to work until they receive a wage increase

The effects of the tide of emigration which has for some time past been carrying away from the English shores, large bodies of our labouring population, to seek that in a distant colony which they laboured for in vain in this country -viz, the ordinary comforts of life in return for their daily toil, has already been felt in Wiltshire and the adjacent counties. The labourers at Barford, Codford and Fovant, finding the increased value of their services, owing to the diminished number of the class to which they belong, have with scarcely an exception, struck, and refused to return to their masters unless they receive an advance from 7s. to 9s. per week. The farmers appear willing to make a slight advance upon the old rate of wages, but not to the extent demanded. The peasantry, however, refuse to make any concession and resolutely declare they will have 9s. a week or nothing.

(The Courier, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia Thursday 28th April, 1853 & Colonial Times, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia - Tuesday 17th May, 1853)
