

## THE SWING RIOTS 1830 STIRRING TIMES IN & AROUND ELHAM

1. **Title** I first studied the local events in the Swing Riots of 1830 about fifty years ago, when very little had been published on the subject, though it was already seen as a *cause celebre*, and the relevant Quarter Sessions papers, held at Maidstone, were bound separately for the convenience of students.
2. **Village Labourer** Virtually the only reference to the disturbances of 1830 was in the pioneering study *The Village Labourer* by J.L. & Barbara Hammond, published as long ago as 1911, and still in print. My copy is two volume paperback edition published by Guild Books in 1948.
3. **Extract** The Hammonds refer to disturbances in West Kent, and then say that “the first riot occurred at Hardres on Sunday the 29<sup>th</sup> August, when four hundred labourers destroyed some threshing machines”. That's actually wrong on several counts; it wasn't the first riot, the events at Hardres happened on Saturday night the 28<sup>th</sup>, only 52 men were involved, and only one machine was destroyed, though two more were despatched later that night in Lyminge. And, as we shall see, the Hammonds were wrong to say that no more was heard of the rioters. But I still think *The Village Labourer* is a great book, well worth re-reading. In the 1960s a London University student named Monju Dutt (not a local lad) did his Ph.D. Thesis on *The Agricultural Labourers Revolt of 1830 in Kent, Surrey and Sussex*. His supervisor was Eric Hobsbawm, and in 1969, Hobsbawm and George Rudé published *Captain Swing*, the first full account of the whole movement.
4. **Captain Swing** My 1970 Readers Union edition retains its dust jacket in spite of all the use it's had over the years when, from time to time, I have revisited the subject. One of the problems with *Captain Swing* is that the authors relied on Dutt's work and did no research of their own in Kent, so his errors and omissions are repeated.
5. **Extract** Hobsbawm and Rudé say “The first threshing machine was destroyed at Lower Hardres, near Canterbury in East Kent, on the night of 28 August 1830. The precise date is worth recording, as the breaking of machines was to become the characteristic feature of the labourers' movement of 1830, which, starting in Kent, spread over a score of counties in the next three months.” But it wasn't the precise date, nor did it happen at Lower Hardres, though we can't blame them or Monju Dutt for that error, but John Collick of Etchinghill, as we shall see later.
6. **The Day the World Took Off** One of the occasions when I was drawn back to the subject was in 2000, when Channel 4 did a series entitled *The Day the World Took Off*, with of course a spin-off book. It was about the history of technology in six programmes, and the first concentrated on the events of one day, the 15<sup>th</sup> September 1830, and the opening of the Liverpool & Manchester Railway. One could appreciate the argument in that, though there were earlier railways, Stockton & Darlington, and indeed Canterbury & Whitstable.
7. **View of Railway** But George Stephenson's enterprise in linking a great port with the biggest manufacturing town in the world, was what really led to the explosion of the Railway Age. There was a feeling at the time that it was a great event; everybody somebody was there, from the Duke of Wellington to Fanny Kemble, the young actress, whose journal recorded the events of the day.
8. **The Rocket** Sadly the day also became known for the first railway accident. William Huskisson, the M.P. for Liverpool was on the track talking to the Duke of Wellington in a carriage, when the “Rocket” came along and knocked him down, and he died later that day. As I watched that programme, I thought, I wonder what was happening in Elham on that day, and you might think that it's one thing to know what's happening at a newsworthy event like a railway opening, quite another to know about an obscure rural parish in Kent, but Elham was rarely out of the pages of *The Times* during September 1830.
9. **Wodehouse Painting** Well, at that time I didn't find anything for the 15<sup>th</sup> September (I have

since), but I did find a verbatim account of a conversation which took place on the previous day between two farm labourers from Elham and a carpenter from Etchingill.

This conversation took place in the windmill on Mill Down, where the reservoir now stands near Peter and Linda Vincent's house, so while we don't know what the Duke of Wellington and William Huskisson were talking about, we do have the exact words of Ingram Swain, Jack Spicer and John Hambrook.

10. **Wages Map** So, how did this all come about? There is a particular relevance in the events of the 14th/15<sup>th</sup> September, in that they highlight the very real difference between the north and south of England at that time, and it's very far from being the poor north as against the rich south; it's not exactly the reverse either, but there were great social and economic problems for the agricultural labourers of the south and east. In this map, the land to the east of the solid line is the cereal growing area; that to the north of the dotted line from the Wash through the Midlands to Liverpool is the area of high wages.
11. **Machine 1** From the 1780s there were attempts by various engineers, particularly in Northumberland and Scotland, to devise a threshing machine to do the work hitherto done by the labour intensive hand flail. The most successful was the Scot Andrew Meikle, who was also responsible for developments in windmill technology, and his machines which cost the vast sum of about £100 were in production from 1786. They were rapidly taken up in Scotland and the north, though his design was often pirated, and other cheaper machines became available.
12. **Machine 2** Most of the machines in use were horse powered, and that certainly appears to be true of those destroyed in this area.
13. **Machine 3** There were however also hand powered versions such as this, still quite labour intensive, because this is only part of the team, but still resented by the workforce, who would have spent much of the winter threshing by hand.
14. **Boys' General View** The Board of Agriculture under Arthur Young commissioned a series of county studies of agriculture, the *General Views*. The Kent volume was produced by John Boys of Betteshanger, and when the first edition was published in 1794 he claimed, probably correctly, that he had the only machine operating in Kent.
15. By the time of the second edition in 1805, his footnote says "Now there are several introduced in various parts of the county". The numbers increased quite rapidly throughout the second and third decades of the century. It is hard to see why, in view of the vast amount of cheap labour available, and indeed the reasons, and the actual numbers, have been a cause of controversy among academics.
16. **Poors' House** There were great problems with the operation of the old Poor Law as the eighteenth century drew to a close. The Elham Workhouse, which appears to me to have been a very humane institution in the eighteenth century, was probably very different in the early nineteenth, when it was serving a Gilbert Union and housing the poor of several parishes. The poor law records of Barham, Elham and Lyminge all show how acute the problem was becoming. Elham had paid to send some paupers to America, and had a ticket system of employment; at Barham the Vestry had decided to discontinue the use of threshing machines in the parish, but not all farmers did so. So many problems were mounting up, and the tipping point was the disastrous harvest of 1829.
17. **Hardres Court** East Kent was relatively quiet until the end of August. The first written indication of trouble hereabouts was on the 30<sup>th</sup> August, when William Dodd, who farmed at Hardres Court at Upper Hardres went before two magistrates in Canterbury and made a sworn statement.
18. **Dodd's deposition** This is the gist of his "Information & Complaint" - During 7 days past divers Thrashing Machines have been broken – Mr Inge's at Parmstead Saturday night 28 August and 2 other Machines at Stephen Kelsey senior and Stephen Kelsey junior in the parish of Lyminge the same Saturday night, and that a Machine had previously been

destroyed at a Farm in Elham. There was riotous and tumultuous Assembly of Persons to the number of One Hundred Persons and upwards. He believed that they would attack his machines “this present Night”, and asked for protection. In fact Dodd was to live in this nervous state for the next three weeks.

19. **Elham** But what of the machine at Elham? From late September, and particularly from 5<sup>th</sup> October onwards, the local magistrates started putting the pressure on by taking statements from labourers to prepare a case for Assizes.
20. **Mill Down** On 6 October, Ingram Swain, who lived at Mill Down, but was in custody in Canterbury, really spilled the beans. The magistrates had targetted him, because they believed, quite wrongly, that he was a ringleader, having got ideas from West Kent men when working with them on the harvest in the Isle of Thanet. Swain says “On Wednesday about 6 weeks ago I met Selden Bayley in Mr Fagg's barley field at Ottinge.”
21. **Wingmore Court** He said “We broke a machine at Wingmore Court last night”
22. **Wingmore Court (2)** “How many of you?” “Three or four and twenty”
23. **Grimsacre** “We are going to break another tonight at Grimsacre – there will be 30 of us tonight.” For those of you who don't know, Grimsacre is up the track from Worlds Wonder, and Park Gate is in the background in this photo.
24. **Silverdown Gate** I asked him what time they were going to meet. “Eight o'clock at Silverdown Gate”. There was nobody there – I went home to bed. Apart from Sir Edward Knatchbull putting the date 25<sup>th</sup> Aug. against the name of William Webb, nothing more is mentioned about the Grimsacre machine, but I can confirm, through the late Wally Palmer, that it was destroyed. As to the Wingmore Court machine, other evidence confirms that it was destroyed on the night of Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> August, so it was the very first.
25. **Valley Stores** Swain continues “The following Saturday I was at Ashbees the grocers in Elham. I went from there with my father
26. **Kings Arms** to the Kings Arms and had a Quart of Beer in the Tap Room. Charles Carswell was there. (It sounds in fact as if Charles Carswell was usually there. He was a 28 year old butcher, known, according to Richard Marsh of Ottinge as “Fat One”, and John Cramp, who worked for Mr Dodd at Hardres Court, gives a graphic description of him: “a man dressed in a dark flap coat made use of a gross expression, and I thought the voice was like Carswell's and I the more thought so on account of his dress and the grossness of his language”).
27. **Elham map** Isaac Croucher, another Elham labourer, describes how they met about 9 that night in Prebbles Meadow. “Henry Read, Edward Read, Stephen Minter and Stephen File were in the meadow (I don't recollect if Charles Carswell was there). Ned Savage was there (the son)”. The witnesses were being prompted to these names as those who the magistrates wished to prosecute. The others were younger, but the Read brothers were both over fifty, and were the true leaders. Croucher continues: “We started about 10 and went first into Elham Town. Then there came a large shower of rain before I got to Park Gate and I stopped under a hedge. Richard Marsh stopped with me.” Richard Marsh describes how he was recruited by Stephen Minter, who said “they were going out conking a machine” Marsh said that “there was a hallooing and a smartish noise all the time”.
28. **Palmstead** Croucher says about the action at Palmstead: “I can swear that Ned Read did not help break the machine as I saw him stand by the gratten loo”.
29. **Ottinge** That night John Page was watering his master's horses at Ottinge. He says “There was a great noise in a meadow near Elham. 50 or more were there. I went with them to Palmstead. I knew no-one as I have not been long in Elham”
30. **Fryarn Park** But he knew the way there for he had previously worked at Fryarn Park, which is in Stelling parish, for Cooper Inge, who also farmed Palmstead. He concludes, believe it or not “On coming home I heard some of them say they had broken a machine”.
31. **Collick's grave** This machine had belonged to John Collick of Etchinghill, who lies in Lyminge churchyard, and if he didn't lie in his evidence, he certainly caused confusion ever

after. This is what he says: "On Saturday about 6 weeks ago I hired my thrashing machine to Mr Inge of Lower Hardres and on the following morning I heard that it had been broken to pieces at Mr Inge's farm at Parmstead in Lower Hardres. And on the following day the fragments of the machine were brought home to my farm by the servants". So it was John Collick who misled not only the historians, but even the magistrates, because Lower Hardres was cited on the charge sheet.

32. **Lye Court** At Elham, 57 men had been in the gang; only 52 made it to Palmstead. Then, according to Ingram Swain, about 30 of them went home, and 24 made the long trek across Stelling and High Minnis to Lye Court (now Eastleigh Court), in Lyminge parish, where they destroyed a machine belonging to Stephen Kelcey senior, and also there
33. **Stone Hall** or at Stone Hall an old machine belonging to Stephen Kelcey senior.
34. **Lye Court** There had been an arson attack at Lye Court fifteen months earlier, when a barn was destroyed, and a lodge containing some unthreshed oats and, perhaps significantly, a threshing machine, all apparently uninsured.
35. **Kelcey tomb** The Kelceys could afford the losses, because when Stephen junior died without heirs, he endowed parochial charities in Lyminge, and his estate was large enough for members of the Foord and Finn families to hyphenate his surname onto theirs in order to inherit. The following night, Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> August, another machine belonging to an Etchinghill man was destroyed by a gang of men, mostly from Elham, but joined by some from Lyminge. Edward Knott of Lyminge tells us about this.
36. **Price's stable** "On the Sunday when Mr Hambrook's machine was destroyed, Stephen File came to me and the other men in the Rev. Mr Price's stable at Lyminge. He asked me whether I would go along with them to break Mr Hambrook's machine. I said "I didn't mind". He said "They are going to meet at Milldown. The Elham men are going to meet there". File asked the second boy (James Connolly) and the waggoner's mate (Edward Gower) whether they had a mind to go. They said "yes".
37. When I first spoke on this subject about thirty years ago, to the Lyminge Historical Society, it was in this building, then the Upper Room of the old Church Hall, which had been part of the rectory stable yard, perhaps where that encounter took place.. Edward Knott continues "We all went to Milldown about 11 o'clock. We saw File there and 40 or 50 other persons. Some of them had saws and hammers. In about a quarter of an hour's time we set off together and passed by Mr [George] Hambrook's house and went to Hitchin Hill and looked about for the machine. We could not find the machine there.
38. **Etchinghill** We went down the street and one Archer told some of the company that it was at Mr Swain's rough in the parish of Newington. The company went and broke the machine there and File went with them. I stood a little way off with James Connolly and Edward Gower. We three agreed to have nothing to do with it".

39.

**Etchinghill** John Archer was questioned on 18 October by one of the magistrates, John Bell. After seven denials, he confesses: "some one did ask me where the machine was. I told him it was at Swain's Rough. The last account is the true one. My reason for not telling the truth first is that I was afraid they would do me some injury". John Hambrook told how he hired his machine on Saturday 28 August to Mr Woollett of Shuttlesfield, but the following day they hid it at Mr Swain's Rough in Newington (probably not far from Shuttlesfield), That night "about 11 I was at my lodgings in bed at Hitchin Hill in Lyminge. I got up and looked out of the window A great number of persons passed my house.. I heard some of them cry out like "Hunters yo ho". I believe they were hunting after my machine. The following morning he went to Swain's Rough between 5 and 6. "I found it drawn out of the bushes and over a dyke into another meadow and knocked all to pieces".

40. **Mill Down** Norwood Woollett and George Hambrook (John's brother), who was the miller at Milldown, described how they got among the labourers at Milldown, but could not identify any because it was so dark, though Ingram Swain said that Woollett said "Well Fat

One” to a man who was probably Carswell, and “Well Harry” to him.

41. **Mill Down** In another statement John Hambrook records how he met Jack Spicer and Ingram Swain in the mill on the 14<sup>th</sup> August, and the following conversation took place:  
Hambrook: How do you get on with breaking machines? Swain: I don't know. Hambrook: You broke another Saturday night I suppose? Swain: I did not, but there was one broke I know, but I was not there. Hambrook: How came you to break my machine? He said he did not know “They all wanted putting down”. Hambrook: Was it not a terrible job to draw it over the dyke. Swain: No, it wasn't over middling easy. Those words, written down by John Bell, the examining magistrate, have the total ring of authenticity to me. In a separate note, Sir Edward Knatchbull records that Hambrook said to Swain: “Why did you destroy my machine, a poor man like yourself? Why not destroy those of the Rich Folks who can afford it?”, and Swain replied that they would do that at Michaelmas, when the servants were out of place.  
Though I have not been able to establish where that machine was destroyed the previous Saturday (i.e. the 11<sup>th</sup>), Sir Edward Knatchbull added that date to several names in a list which had been sent to him anonymously, with a Hythe postmark. It is clear that there were regular expeditions throughout early September of which we have little detail.
42. **Hardres Church** We are on firmer ground when we get to Saturday the 18<sup>th</sup>, when finally Williams Dodd's two machines were destroyed at Hardres. That day Dodd went to Canterbury market, where he met Mr Ayres of Elham, Mr Kelsey of Barham, and Norwood Woollett, who told him “they were coming to break my machine on that night”. When he got home, he sent his servant John Cramp to Clambercrown, because he had heard the men might assemble there. And he got his other men and Francis Castle of Stelling Lodge, and his three sons, to keep watch.
43. **Bossingham** One of Francis Castle's sons, who lived at Bossingham, reported after ten o'clock that there were 7 or 8 men coming from Stelling Minnis. Dodd mounted his horse and rode to his nearest magistrate, John Bell at Bourne Park, who authorised him to go to the barracks in Canterbury and get military assistance.
44. **Bossingham 2** John Fairman, who worked for Dodd, also lived at Bossingham. He says “about 11 at night about 20 or 30 passed with great noise of whistling singing and hallooing.
45. **The Dog** In the meantime, as predicted the Elham and Bladbean men had met up at the Dog at Clambercrown, which is in a very remote spot just beyond Palmstead.
46. **Hardres Barn** and some time after 11 the whole party got to Hardres Court, where they pulled the two machines, which were hired from John Holman of Canterbury and Thomas Harnett of Newington next Sittingbourne, out of the barn and smashed them.
47. **Hardres Barn 2** John Fairman continues: “At Hardres Court, there was knocking as of breaking iron for half an hour, three loud cheers, then they dispersed, the greater part towards Elham, some to Stelling Minnis passed my house.
48. **Rectory Corner** John Whitnall, waggoner to Mr Dodd, confirms that the parties separated at Hardres Rectory, and he recalls three things he heard them say: “The great wheel has broke our hammers”, “Remember Monday night”, and “You Stellingers go that way, and the Elhamers this”.
49. **The Dog** The Elhamers in fact went back via the Dog, where they got the landlord up and had three or four gallons of beer. It was paid for, but there appears to be some mystery as to who actually did so.
50. **Hempstead** Well what about Monday night? They certainly did remember, and it became the most remarkable night of the whole campaign. Two Lyminge men were recruited for the first time. George Youens and John Jefferys were working tying up sheaves of oats in Mr Pilcher's field at Hempstead, right up by Stone Street, when between five and six o'clock, David Arnold, who was an apprentice blacksmith, and William Greenstreet, came into the field and asked Jefferys to join the party which was to meet up at Elham at eight o'clock. He agreed that he would do so and would ask Youens to go as well. They left work perhaps as

- late as seven, and at half-past seven they set out for Elham.
51. **Duck Street** They called at the house of Henry Read in Duck Street, whom they understood to be the foreman, but were told that they were too early, and that nine o'clock was the time for meeting.
  52. **Kings Arms** So they went in to the Kings Arms and had a pot of beer and four pennyworth of bread and cheese. They had been there about an hour when Juicy Savage, from Bladbean, came in with another man, and they all left about five minutes later. Jefferys walked in company with Henry Read to the White Horse at Wingmore.
  53. **Palm Tree** They didn't go into the pub, but were joined there by a number of other men from Bladbean, and they walked on to Derringstone Green.
  54. **Derringstone** Here they were joined by more men, to make probably the largest group on any night, and George Youens records that they gave 3 cheers and then went forward.
  55. **Digges Place** So on through Barham to their first target for the night, Mr Sankey's farm at Digges Place, Out Elmstead. It was this incident that the authorities decided to prosecute on, so we have most detail about it.
  56. **Digges Barn** The machine was pulled out of the barn, and the hammers went to work. George Youens says "The machine was half broke to pieces before I and several others could get into the yard where the machine was. I saw the sparks fly from the ironwork of the machine. There were more than six hammers beating at it. The sparks at times quite lighted all over the lodge where the machine was. The people made a great noise all the time. They called out "Kill her! More oil, more grease!"
  57. **Digges Barn 2** "They were about half an hour engaged in breaking the machine. The Foreman then said "Hark forward" and we had three cheers and went out of the yard. Several of them called out "Sankey, get up and fetch us some beer because we have worked hard" Poor old Sankey heard all this, and a great splash as the main wheel was thrown into his pond. John Jefferys records that Stephen Minter said "Damme I have got the old fellows bell", and rang it for the rest of the night. This is I think the only instance of theft throughout the whole campaign, and the cutting in half of two ladders in Sankey's barn the only instance of gratuitous damage. They then went Womenswold and destroyed Mr Holtum's machine (I'm not sure which farm that was), and then to Denne Hill.
  58. **Denne Hill** This is the later Victorian lodge at Denne Hill, which some of you will recognise. The farm yard, which was also replaced in the 1870s, was about half a mile up the drive.
  59. **Denne Hill 2** Here the men destroyed Sir Henry Montresor's machine, and a roll call was taken, which showed there were then 94.
  60. **Broome** And so down to Broome, at Denton, though it lay in Barham parish. Here they were met by George Chichester Oxenden, one of Sir Henry's sons, who built Chichester Place in Elham, and gave the land for the old school. He asked them to spare his father's machine, as he was a good employer, but he could not persuade them.
  61. **Hempsted** Youens and Jefferys then left the party at the Denton turnpike gate, and walked home to Hempsted. By the time they got there it would certainly have been full daylight, and they had walked well over thirty miles!
  62. **Hughes & Hills** George Youens continues: On the Wednesday following I went with a party to Mr Hill's at Brabourne and destroyed his machine, and afterwards on the same night we destroyed Mr Hughes's machine at Gimminge Brook. This is confirmed by the two owner's depositions, which survived the damp of the Mersham Hatch archive: The Information of Edward Hughes and Richard Hills taken upon oath before me this 23d of Sept 1830. And said Edward Hughes says that on the Night of the 22<sup>nd</sup> his Thrashing Machine was destroy'd in the Parish of Standford by a number of Persons to said Informant unknown. Richard Hills says that on the same Night his Thrashing Machine was destroy'd. He saw the Persons in the act of destroying it, but cannot say who they were – that when

- they left his premises they exclaim'd Elham for ever.
63. **Denton** The final machine destroyed locally appears to have been at Hougham on the night of the 25<sup>th</sup>, and a letter of the 26<sup>th</sup> from TP of Denton gives details of men from Barham passing through Denton Street. He also gives Sir Edward Knatchbull information about the rioters, among whom he includes John Maycock, an Elham carpenter, who he describes as “a freeholder & a determined fellow though not generally concerned in malpractices”, but nothing more is heard of him, and I wonder if the semi-anonymous TP was being malicious. There were Prebbles and Pages at Denton, but I have not been able to identify him.
  64. **Sir Edward** What of the authorities’ response? The responsibility fell on the local magistrates. The chairman was Sir Edward Knatchbull.
  65. **Mersham Hatch** He lived in Robert Adam splendour at Mersham Hatch.
  66. **Higham** The Rev Charles Hughes-Hallet was vicar of Patricxbourne, but lived in his mansion at Higham, though the present facade belongs to Count Zbroski. He was in fact both cousin and brother in law to Sir Edward Knatchbull
  67. **Bourne Park** John Bell lived at Bourne Park. The labourer's depositions and confessions were all written down by the examining magistrates, and Bell wrote a particularly good hand. Sir Edward's was probably the worst, but it's quite manageable. I'm glad my research hasn't extended to the Wingham division, where Mr Plumtree wrote the most appalling scrawl.
  68. **Lyminge Rectory** A bit down the social scale was the Rev. Ralph Price, the Rector of Lyminge, and it was to him that the day-to-day work was entrusted. He was assisted by George Leadbetter, of the Bow Street Police Office, but it remains a mystery as to who called him in. There is nothing on Home Office files. At Elham, there was an absentee vicar, as there had been for over 50 years, claiming his tithes but rarely visiting, which is partly why Elham was such a radical community.
  69. **Elham** Price enlisted the help of the curate at Elham, Daniel Brammall, who supplemented his meagre income by running a boarding school at the vicarage, and appears to have been well respected by the men. He persuaded 39 (or maybe as many as 50) Elham labourers to give themselves up to the authorities. As the magistrates got nearer to laying charges in early October, relationships began to break down. Price had been regarded as a friend to the labourers, but then he became a target.
  70. **Lyminge** Price had been in Canterbury on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> October. He returned home about ten o'clock, and half an hour later was alerted by the screams of a servant to the fire at his farmyard, Court Lodge, half a mile away
  71. **New Barn 1** John Wakefield, Mr Price's bailiff, describes the extent of the devastation “ My master's Barn & Stacks – two Wheat stacks, two oat stacks, one Barley stack, two Pea stacks, one Clover stack were last night October 5<sup>th</sup> burnt and entirely destroyed. I saw the fire the first time about a quarter past ten. The Barn was full of Barley and Wheat.
  72. **New Barn 2** This is the new barn built after that fire. Edward Gower had left the old barn at six. When he got back there between ten and eleven he met John Carvill, and he says “It now came into my mind that John Carvill had set the place on fire. In fact Carvill, who had been sleeping in a shed by the barn, seems to be a drifter and an oddball, but probably innocent. No one was ever arrested for this, but it seems to have been the universal opinion that the Elham machine breakers were not to blame.
  73. **Louseborough.** The peace of this lane was sadly shattered that morning. When he got home Mr Price, who had been addressing letters to “Dear Sir Edward”, wrote “Dear Knatchbull, My Barn and Stacks are a heap of ashes. So much for my exertions in the good cause” Presumably Mr Price was uninsured, as a letter from Sir Henry Montresor on 27 October says “I consulted my Pillow [his wife, formerly Countess Sondes] & the result was that the most easy and at the same time most delicate way of remunerating Price would be to get him a Living in the gift of the Government” but I don't know if this was done

74. **Brammall's letter.** Daniel Brammall at Elham was also scared, and wrote this extraordinary letter to Mr Price, also on the 6<sup>th</sup>. “From what Mr Pittock [Elham’s doctor] informs me, I apprehend very effectual measures are about being adopted against some of my parishioners who thro’ my exertions have surrendered themselves to your mercy as persons concerned in breaking the Thrashing – should that be the resolution of the Gentlemen met at your house, I beg to suggest to their consideration whether I ought not at the same time to be arrested ~~or at least allowed to remove out of the neighbourhood for a season.~~ I need not explain my motive for offering this advice. I am a husband, the father of a large family, with the children of others under my roof. I may have acted indiscreetly in what I have done but I took no step without seeking that aid which a Christian minister is bound to ask for in the hour of peril and difficulty.” Going to deliver it, he was met by Hughes-Hallett, who had been at Lyminge Rectory, and he confirmed that poor Brammall was in real fear for his life.
75. On the 22<sup>nd</sup> October, seven Elham men and David Arnold, the apprentice blacksmith from Lyminge, were brought to trial. Ingram Swain turned King’s Evidence and Arnold was found not guilty. The others were harangued at length by Sir Edward, who reminded them that he could sentence them to transportation for seven years, before handing down a sentence of three days, and one day for the second offence. No one has quite explained his reasoning, but maybe a factor was consideration for Price and Brammall, who had to continue to live in these communities.
76. **Peel's letter** Sir Robert Peel was not impressed. “I would have thought that a severe example in the case of Destruction of farming Property would have had a much greater effect, than the unparalleled Lenity shown to the Destroyers of Threshing Machines. I have taken steps with regard to Cobbett and his Lectures.” (Cobbett was prosecuted for sedition, but acquitted after the jury failed to agree.) Thereafter the full severity of the law was exercised, both in East Kent and throughout the south of England. According to Hobsbawm & Rude, 644 men were jailed, 252 sentenced to death, though only nineteen executed, and 505 sentenced to transportation.
77. **Lyminge churchyard** The Elham, Lyminge and Stelling men went back to their work, and eventually found their rest in unmarked graves in our churchyards. Richard Hambrook, Norwood Woollett, and, in the background, John Collick, do have their stones in Lyminge churchyard to remind us of an extraordinary turbulent time in our local history. Had Sir Edward been punitive rather than lenient, and, even more, had there been a bloodbath at Hardres Court with the earlier arrival of the cavalry, the local labourers would probably feature in the Pantheon of working class heroes alongside the Tolpuddle Martyrs. The Reads certainly deserve that status; they showed great leadership qualities, and they were tough too, both being around eighty when they died.