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The Transformation of Agriculture In Brookline, 1770-1885

Ronald Dale Karr

The farmer on the city's outskirts has been neglected by both historians of agriculture and historians of the city. Yet few American farmers felt the consequences of urbanization more directly; few were more vulnerable to the whims of the marketplace. And within the metropolitan scene, few controlled more undeveloped land than these market gardeners and dairy farmers.

The course of agriculture in Brookline provides an example of the changes experienced by farmers on the fringes of a rapidly-expanding metropolis. In little more than half a century this community, only three miles from downtown Boston, evolved from a small farming town into a densely-populated bedroom suburb. Brookline's farmers successfully adapted to this changing environment by abandoning age-old practices and attitudes. Ultimately, the tide of population proved irresistible and farming ceased, though not before the farmers extinguished their holdings at high prices. As urbanization and modernization changed Brookline's farmers, the farmers in turn helped shape the emerging suburb.

In 1770 farmers dominated Brookline. The town's 350 inhabitants were tied to the soil; as late as 1820 agriculture employed eighty-four percent of the male workforce.¹ In 1770 there were 45 farmers out of a total adult male population of 108. Although the majority, nonfarmers—farm laborers and a handful of rural artisans and professionals—were clearly secondary to farm operators. More than two-thirds of the nonfarmers lacked taxable assets, and most of the rest owned little more than a house, a lot, and a cow. Primarily young, unmarried outsiders, the nonfarmers had little long-term stake in Brookline; four-fifths of them eventually left the town. In contrast, the farmer was a full-fledged member of a tightly-knit society, with a virtual monopoly on local offices and honors. Not only were 58 percent of the 1770 farmers born in Brookline—another 16 percent were from neighboring Roxbury—but fully 53 percent belonged to families that arrived in Brookline before 1700. Four out of five of these farmers lived out their lives in the town.²

Brookline's farmers were among the most prosperous in New England.³ They produced a broad mixture of crops, fruit, and livestock, with maize—grown for animal food and fodder—apples, and hay the major staples.⁴ Brookline's farmers

owed their success to the rich Coloma loam that covered the central part of the town, a longer growing season than most of the region, the introduction of cultivated English grasses in place of wild marsh, and above all, the proximity of Boston. The city not only offered a ready market but also provided a plentiful source of both labor and fertilizer. Thanks to favorable soils, climate, fertilizer, and labor, Brookline's farmers were far more productive than the average in Massachusetts.⁵

Despite the farmer's successful orientation toward the market, capitalistic impulses had not entirely vanquished more traditional values. Few farmers in pre-Revolutionary Brookline were ambitious entrepreneurs bent on maximizing profits at any cost. Acquisitiveness was held in check by a social system that discouraged individual advancement at the expense of the community.⁶ For more than a century the townspeople of rural Massachusetts had celebrated the values of order, unity, and conformity, not relentless striving. In colonial Brookline, open conflict was rare, and even such potentially divisive questions as how to respond to British actions in the 1760s and 1770s were disposed of unanimously.⁷ Further reinforcing social stability was the nearly total dominance of a few powerful families. Collectively, the town's three leading clans had accounted for more than three-fifths of all major local offices between Brookline's separation from Boston in 1705 and the onset of the Revolution.⁸

A young man in this premodern society sought a farm not merely for its economic value but also because it represented nearly the only means of obtaining full adult status within the community. A farm was not acquired lightly, for land in crowded eastern Massachusetts no longer came cheap. The patient son bided his time under the watchful eye of his father, until the latter either gave him the family homestead or bought him a farm of his own; the restless left town in search of opportunities elsewhere.⁹ In Brookline, farm ownership was not for the young. Only four of the forty-five farmers in 1770-71 were under thirty years of age, while nineteen were fifty or older.

For a time the American Revolution upset these longstanding ways. Brookline's proximity to Boston ensured its participation in the events that launched the conflict, and the extended siege of the city brought war to the town's doorstep. Everyday life was disrupted by the presence of troops and batteries, accompanied by smallpox and dysentery. The closing of the Boston market forced farmers to seek new outlets for their surpluses. Even after the fighting moved elsewhere following the British evacuation in the spring of 1776, the war affected everyday life. For several years the town struggled to meet recruitment and supply quotas and coped with hyperinflation.¹⁰ During the war the old guard which had previously governed the town was replaced, first by its sons, nephews, and younger cousins, and then by newcomers. Only a few Tories lived in Brookline, but among them were two of the town's wealthiest inhabitants. When these Loyalists fled to England, their lands were confiscated and leased to tenants.¹¹

By upsetting familiar routines, the war encouraged Brookline farmers to become more oriented to the marketplace. With uncertainty as the norm, taking risks became unavoidable. The generally high prices that prevailed for farm products, together with the town's advantageous location, offered chances to increase



profits. The army itself provided an important new market for meat and produce. Eastern Massachusetts farmers pursued these opportunities with such relish that both the urban poor and the less favored farmers of the interior accused them of heartless profiteering.¹²

Throughout the war years the town's population rose slightly, from 338 in 1764 to 364 in 1783; the number of polls—taxable adult males—increased from 106 in 1770 to 111 in 1784.¹³ Brookline farmers reacted to wartime conditions by bringing seven percent more land into use. Tillage and pasture each increased by twenty-two percent and hay-producing marsh lands expanded by ten percent; meadows, however, decreased by twenty-one percent. Despite the expansion of pasturage the number of cattle declined, apparently reflecting a tendency to slaughter more animals in order to supply soldiers with meat.¹⁴ Most other livestock, especially hogs, were more numerous than they had been in 1771.¹⁵

The return of peace in the 1780s restored stability, and for a time relatives of the men who had governed the town before the war regained control.¹⁶ But the reinstatement of the old order proved temporary. By 1800 Brookline had entered a period of sustained growth that soon altered the scale of life and introduced diversity previously unknown. The first federal census in 1790 counted 484 inhabitants, an increase of forty percent over 1770. By 1800 there were 605; by 1825, perhaps 1,000.¹⁷ Boston was the ultimate source of this growth. After nearly half a century of population stagnation and economic depression, that city nearly doubled its numbers between 1790 and 1810. Domestic and international commerce flourished as Boston became the hub of a network of improved roads and waterways reaching far into the hinterlands.¹⁸

Newcomers fueled Brookline's growth. Most conspicuous were a small number of wealthy merchants, retired sea captains, and Federalist politicians who erected gracious mansions in the central and southern parts of the town. Although only six such men had arrived by 1798, they already owned twelve percent of the town's acreage.¹⁹ These Brahmins, which came to include merchant king Thomas Handasyd Perkins and United States Senator George Cabot, were for many years only summer residents of Brookline, yet they indelibly left their mark on the community.²⁰ Joining this elite were larger numbers of middle-class artisans and tradesmen. A village settlement developed, clustered about the nucleus of an old crossroads tavern; outside the village, several tanneries were established. By 1820 forty-two men—sixteen percent of the workforce—were employed in nonagricultural pursuits. Carpenters, masons, blacksmiths, wheelwrights, carriage builders, shoemakers, and storekeepers in particular found opportunities in Brookline.²¹ At the bottom of the social pyramid still more newcomers swelled the population. In 1787, seventy-four men were assessed for the poll tax only. By 1812 the propertyless numbered 102; by 1826, 177. These men came and went rapidly, and only a few became permanent members of the community. Of the 102 propertyless men of 1812, only nine were present fourteen years later.²²

Despite the emergence of a village and the growth of the nonagricultural sector, Brookline in the 1820s remained a farming community. In 1820 five out of six men were still employed in agriculture (as late as 1840, seventy-five per-

cent worked the land).²³ Over the previous fifty years the number of farms had remained roughly the same, forty-five in 1771 and forty-eight in 1821.²⁴ The most striking change from 1771 was an enormous increase in grain production. In 1821 Brookline farmers took in 11,433 bushels of grain, compared to 4,763 fifty years before. In 1771 the average farmer had harvested 91 bushels; his successor in 1821 produced 213. Cider output increased from 751 to 1,041 barrels. Hay production rose from 734 to 883 tons, and the proportion of cultivated English grasses among all hay harvested went from 58 to 76 percent.

How was this increase obtained? More land under cultivation was the principal reason for the surge. The amount of land being plowed more than doubled between 1771 and 1821. Pasturage and marsh gave way to cultivated fields, as the town's cattle decreased from 239 in 1771 to only 147 in 1821.

Brookline's farmers could never have brought this much additional land under the plow without increased farm labor. The 1820 federal census counted 215 Brookline men engaged in agriculture—twice the entire adult male population of the town in 1770. Most farm workers appear to have been young, single men, born outside the town.²⁵ Farmers, who once had gotten by with the help of relatives, neighbors, and perhaps a single hired hand, increasingly relied on paid labor. The diary of Brookline farmer Benjamin Goddard is filled with the periodic hirings and dismissals of farm laborers. "This day hired Samuel Townsend for one month for which I am to pay him 14 dollars," he wrote on April 20, 1812. On August 26 Goddard "discharged David Abbot this day, and agreed with Cutter who commenced this day for three months, at 12 dollars per month, with liberty to discharge him any time after one month, giving him a weeks notice." Three weeks later he hired a fellow named "Johnson who I have agreed to hire till the first day of April next at twelve dollars per month, and on condition that [if] this price is too low in my opinion, I am to give him half a dollar per month in addition thereto."²⁶

The widespread use of fertilizer was still another factor in Brookline's expanded output. Manure kept old fields productive and increased the richness of the new lands being brought under the plow. Between 1771 and 1821 the average yield actually increased from twenty-one to twenty-three bushels of grain per acre. The stables of Boston offered a convenient and plentiful source of manure. "Abbott to Boston for manure, at White's Stable," Goddard noted on June 2, 1812, "having agreed [with] the stable for eighty dollars per the year to commence 1st May—to have what is on hand."²⁷ Fertilizer provided an excellent back haul to fill wagons returning from market trips.²⁸

Brookline farmers in the early decades of the nineteenth century were more productive, but agriculture remained unspecialized. The average farmer raised grain (ninety-four percent of it Indian corn in 1821), vegetables, fruit, hay, and livestock. Benjamin Goddard grew beans in four varieties, squash, sweet corn, barley, oats, turnips, carrots, beets, asparagus, cabbages, parsley, radishes, lima beans, cucumbers, apples, cherries, parsnips, onions, lettuce, peppers, and potatoes, all in the same year, 1812.²⁹

By 1820 Brookline's farmers found themselves in a different environment

than their fathers and grandfathers had known. Growing urbanization and commercialization had undermined their traditional authority. Farmers now constituted a relatively small portion of the community: in 1821 there were but forty-eight farmers in a town of nine hundred inhabitants. In colonial Brookline, ownership of a working farm had been virtually a prerequisite to obtaining a major town office. But following tanner John Robinson's rise to power after 1805, farmers began to be displaced by artisans and tradesmen in important municipal posts. In 1817 the board of selectmen comprised a tanner, a carpenter, and a shopkeeper. Farmers did not return to the board until 1825, and although represented regularly thereafter they never regained control of the town's government.³⁰

Many of these farmers were newcomers. In 1771, fifty-eight percent of Brookline's farmers had been natives of the town; by 1821 the proportion had fallen to forty percent.³¹ Some eager outsiders obtained Brookline farms by wedding the daughters of prosperous farmers. This was the course followed by Timothy Corey of Weston just before the Revolution, David Coolidge of Watertown in 1814, and Moses Jones of Washington, New Hampshire, in 1822. Others, like Charles Stearns of Waltham, who arrived around 1804, and George Babcock, who came a quarter-century later, leased land for several years before saving enough to buy their own farms.³² For those who chose to rent, opportunities were available. The federal direct tax list of 1798 reveals that almost a third of the town's lands were worked by tenants; in 1817 it was said that "nearly one half [of the farmers] are tenants who pay an annual rent from two to six hundred dollars for their farms."³³

In the two decades after 1820, Brookline agriculture underwent changes more sweeping than those of the previous fifty years. In 1840 total grain production was down to 4,385 bushels, from 11,433 in 1821. By 1844-45 it had dropped further to 3,397 bushels, substantially less than in 1771.³⁴ What was behind this decline? Certainly a shortage of labor was not the cause; between 1820 and 1840 the number of men employed in agriculture had actually increased from 215 to 325 (those in nonagricultural pursuits grew even faster, from 42 to 107, a quarter of the workforce in 1840).³⁵

Rather than decline, the sharp reduction in grain output represented a radical shift in agricultural practice. Grain production dwindled, but increases in other kinds of produce more than offset the losses. Hay output doubled, rising from 883 tons in 1821 to 1,727 in 1840. The number of cattle more than doubled during the same period, horses increased from 87 to 270, and swine went from 200 to 376.

The 1821 valuation did not record the amount of fruits and vegetables grown, but their numbers must already have been substantial. In 1817 the town's pastor and first local historian, the Reverend John Pierce, had observed that owing to Brookline's good soil, "Indian corn and other grains might be cultivated to advantage. But from the vicinity of the town to Boston market it is mostly improved for the cultivation of esculent vegetables which cannot conveniently be transported from a much greater distance."³⁶ Given the eleven thousand bushels of grain grown in 1821, Pierce's dismissal of grain cultivation seems exaggerated.

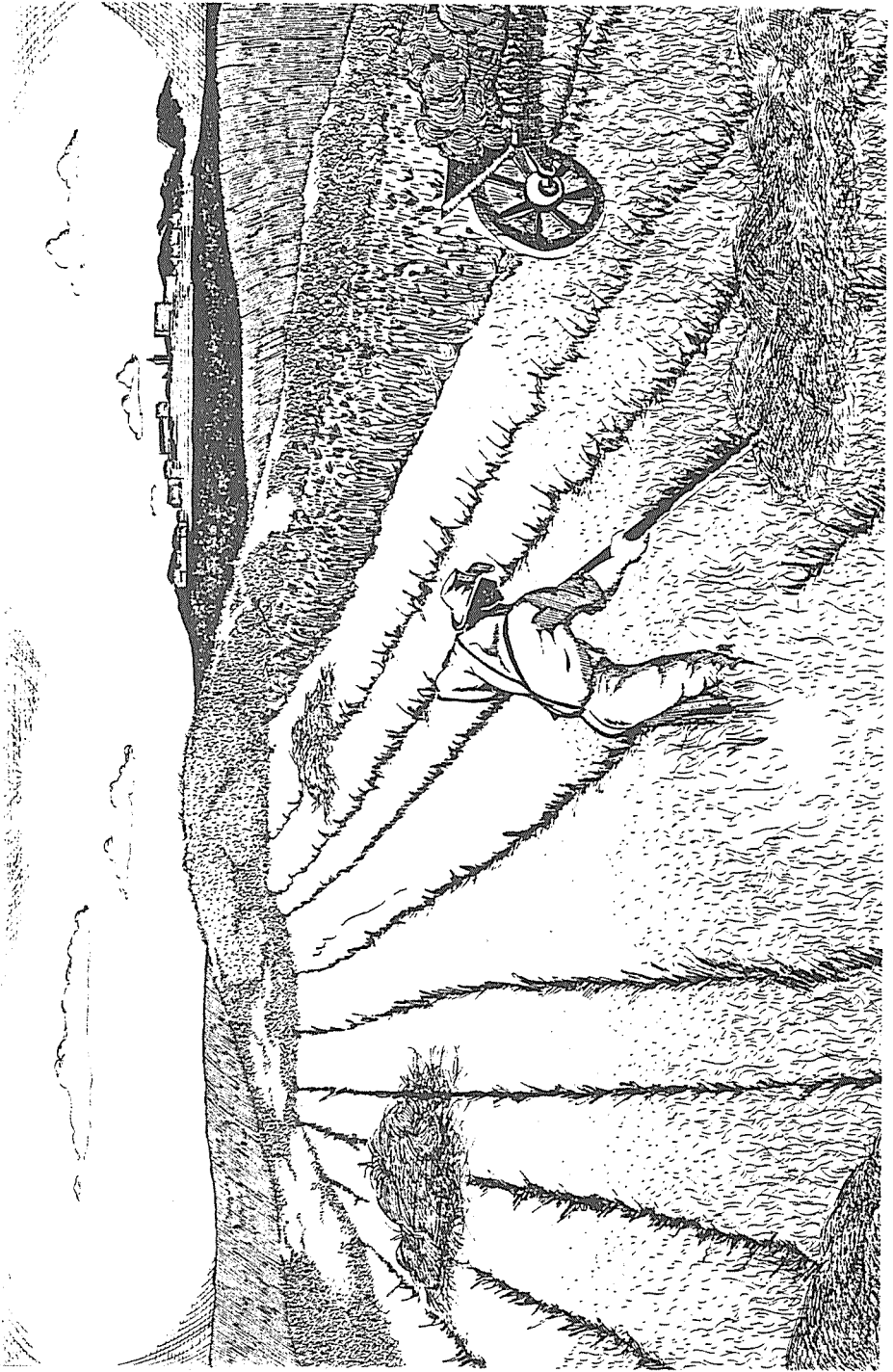
But by 1840 vegetables and fruit were clearly the most important segment of Brookline's agriculture. In that year the value of these two items accounted for three-fifths of the total value of the town's output.³⁷

Market gardening required skills and care beyond those of traditional general farming. A large labor force and intensive fertilization were only the beginning. Specialized techniques like the "Boston hotbox"—long, low planks supporting glass sheets, heated on cool nights by fermenting manure—enabled Brookline farmers to artificially extend the growing season. Later, greenhouses would come into widespread use. Market gardeners had to time their production carefully to meet both the competition of other growers and the fluctuations of the Boston market, and errors were costly. At the same time, the profitability of this intensive farming served to boost land values, further raising the stakes and discouraging unspecialized agriculture.³⁸

Hay ranked next in importance after vegetables and fruit. Boston's large population of work and livery stable horses consumed a large portion of the total output. Together, vegetables, fruit, and hay accounted for seventy-eight percent of the value of Brookline's agricultural production in 1844-45. Somewhat surprisingly, dairy farming was of secondary importance, with the output of Brookline's cows amounting to only a tenth of the town's overall production. Potatoes brought in nearly as much. And grain, once the mainstay of agriculture, now accounted for the value of only two percent of the town's output.³⁹

The decision by Brookline's farmers to abandon general grain farming in favor of market gardening and hay represented a major break with traditional practice. In part this change was traceable to the transportation revolution that followed in the wake of the Erie Canal's opening in 1825 and the construction of the first railroads in the 1830s.⁴⁰ Yet, despite increased competition from western produce, Brookline farmers were not forced into making the changes they did. The market for corn and other grains did not suddenly collapse. Corn prices in Massachusetts fluctuated considerably, but moved only gradually downward in the 1820s and 1830s; by 1840 corn was only thirteen percent below what it had been in 1821. In the 1850s prices actually increased.⁴¹ In Concord, fifteen miles away, corn production fell between 1821 and 1840—although nowhere to as great an extent as in Brookline—but then rose to an all-time high in 1855.⁴² Brookline farmers seem not so much to have been pushed out of grain production as they were pulled into market gardening by opportunities for increased profits.

After 1845 the transformation of Brookline into a railroad suburb helped erase the last vestiges of traditional agriculture. The first subdivision came in 1843; railroad commuter service to Boston began in 1848; the horse-drawn streetcar reached the town in 1858. The town's population grew from 1,682 in 1844 to 2,516 in 1850, 5,262 in 1865, and 9,196 in 1885. In 1840 farmers and farm laborers still constituted seventy-five percent of the adult male workforce; ten years later they made up well under half.⁴³ Suburban agriculture, the final stage of agricultural evolution in Brookline, was the culmination of changes already under way by 1845. The production of grain virtually ceased. In 1821 the average farmer grew 201 bushels of Indian corn. By 1850 this had been reduced



to 17; by 1860, 13; and by 1870, a scant 5. Meanwhile the output of garden produce climbed from an average of \$1,146 per farm in 1850 to \$1,343 in 1860, and \$1,973 in 1870, while that of fruits rose from \$106 in 1850 to \$368 in 1870. During this period potato, hay, and dairy production showed little change. Brookline farmers took advantage of advances in agricultural technology, the average investment in farm machinery in the 1860s increasing from \$455 to \$885 per farm.⁴⁴

Farming in Brookline appears to have remained profitable during the first few decades of suburbanization. The twenty-six farms of 1870—down from forty-eight in 1821—now averaged forty-eight acres each, compared to sixty-two acres in 1850. The agricultural schedules from the 1870 federal census show farm revenues ranging from \$750 to \$8,000. These represent gross receipts, not profit. In order to estimate net income, the costs of labor (up twenty-five percent since 1860), taxes, and mortgage expenses or rent must first be deducted. According to the census returns labor costs in 1870 ranged from \$50 to \$3,200 per farm, with an average of \$1,407. Taxes on farmland amounted to less than \$200 a year for most farmers, although a few paid over \$500. Mortgage or rent costs are difficult to estimate, but they probably fell somewhere between the expense of labor and taxes.

These figures suggest that the larger farmers were prosperous if not wealthy. The eleven Brookline farmers whose gross receipts in 1870 exceeded \$5,000 probably netted between \$2,000 and \$4,000, an amount confirmed when checked against the federal income taxes they paid in 1866 and 1867. In an age where a laborer received \$2.00 a day and a carpenter \$3.15, \$3,000 a year put a family squarely within the ranks of the metropolitan upper middle class.⁴⁵

After 1870 the rapidly rising value of Brookline land, particularly in the northern half of the town that lay closest to Boston, altered the economics of farming. Even in 1870 the average farmer's return on his total investment in land, buildings, livestock, and machinery must have been below five percent. With the value of land increasing, even this modest rate of return could be maintained only if produce prices rose commensurately or if output was further increased. In fact, food prices were generally falling. But the suburban farmer had an option most farmers did not: he could profitably sell his land.⁴⁶

Unlike his counterpart a century before, the suburban farmer of the 1870s viewed his land as a simple commodity, a valuable asset to be cashed in at an opportune moment. As a twentieth-century New England farmer explained: "We farmers raise three crops. We go onto a place in our youth and raise a family. We spend our working years producing milk. When we are ready to retire we harvest enough capital gain from the land to keep us in our old age."⁴⁷ It was not necessary for a farmer to dispose of all his holdings at once. Every few years, streets and lots could be surveyed on a twenty or thirty acre parcel and then sold to builders.⁴⁸

The principal obstacle farmers faced in developing their land came not from scruples but rather from the opposition of suburbanites. The commuters who moved to Brookline after 1845, like the Brahmins who preceded them, wanted

the town to retain its rural atmosphere. Although they could not halt development altogether, the suburbanites worked to slow its pace.⁴⁹ The division between farmers and commuters appeared as early as 1851. In that year a dispute erupted over whether a new railroad should be forced to install an expensive bridge instead of a cheaper grade crossing. By a vote of 76 to 67, the town meeting ordered the railroad to build the bridge. Whereas all of the resident professionals and 80 percent of the merchants and commuting professionals voting opposed to the railroad's stance, 81 percent of the farmers and 76 percent of the blue-collar workers supported the rail line.⁵⁰ To the farmers and artisans the railroad promised better transportation and increased land values; to the suburbanites it represented a threat to their serenity.

Frustrations in developing land helped spur some farmers into backing an annexation movement. During the 1860s and 1870s Boston had annexed its contiguous suburbs one by one—Roxbury, Dorchester, Charlestown, Brighton, West Roxbury—until Brookline was nearly surrounded by the city. Within the town an active annexation movement arose. But after a spirited campaign, in 1873 the town's voters decisively rejected the idea of merging Brookline into Boston, and further attempts at annexation in 1875, 1879, and 1880 met with no greater success.⁵¹

Examination of the 114 most active anti- and pro-annexationists of 1873 reveals that seven of the nine farmers represented supported annexation. The core of the annexation movement consisted of frustrated land-owners in the northern half of the town, who hoped union with Boston would speed development.⁵² "I find great difficulty in getting streets laid out," complained farmer Willard A. Humphrey. "It took me three years to get one street laid out," that is, accepted by the selectmen as a town way.⁵³ Opposing annexation was the curious but effective combination of men with stakes in the status quo: the town's largely middle-class suburbanite political establishment, estate-owning Brahmins, and Irish laborers.⁵⁴

The farmers' unsuccessful efforts to obtain consolidation with Boston were symptomatic of a general decline in their political influence. During the 1840s and 1850s farmers had recovered some of the authority they had previously enjoyed. Of the sixteen men elected between 1845 and 1865 to Brookline's five-man board of selectmen, half were farmers. But over the next twenty years, not one of the twenty-three new selectmen was a farmer. Merchants, lawyers, and contractors governed Brookline after 1870.⁵⁵

By 1885 urbanization and suburbanization had reduced Brookline agriculture to a shadow of its former state; but even in a suburb with more than 1,400 persons per square mile farming continued. Only twenty-four farms, with a total of 959 acres, were left. At thirty-nine acres, the average farm in 1885 was fifty percent smaller than its counterpart in 1821. Yet so great was the rise in land prices that the smaller farm in 1885 was worth nearly twice the average farm in 1870. By 1885 the town's orchards had all but vanished and grains were no longer grown to any extent. Even the value of vegetables sold in 1885 was less than half that of forty years before. Dairy production, though, had increased both relatively and absolutely until it now formed the most important compo-

ment of the town's agriculture. In 1844-45 fruits and vegetables were responsible for 61 percent of the total value of the town's output, and dairy products made up 11 percent; in 1885 the corresponding figures were 34 and 39 percent.⁵⁶

The rapid urbanization that Brookline experienced after 1885 finally ended the practice of agriculture. Between 1885 and 1900 the population rose from 9,200 to nearly 20,000, and closely-spaced buildings covered a large portion of the town. Agricultural land exclusive of woods declined to eighty-eight acres in 1905, with only four farms remaining. In its final years, agriculture in Brookline was largely dairy farming, although the very last farms grew vegetables and hay⁵⁷ Even in 1976, a single twenty-acre farm remained, a relic preserved by a quirk in the tax code.⁵⁸

The contrast between Brookline's last farmers and their predecessors is instructive. Although the colonial farmer grew for the market, his economic function was inseparable from his social role. Maximization of profit was only one of several, often conflicting, goals: security for himself and his children, even at the expense of potentially lucrative but risky gains; the perpetuation of traditional norms, including ancient farming techniques and cooperative arrangements with neighbors; obtaining the status derived from operating a farm, a status made manifest through such recognition as election to political offices.

One hundred years later farming in Brookline had been stripped of most of its social meaning. With their reliance on wage labor, machinery, and the competitive marketplace, farmers were largely indistinguishable from other middle-class businessmen. In a fully capitalistic society a farmer derived his status from the economic value of his land and the profitability of his agriculture, not from any prestige intrinsic to his occupation. A farmer no longer enjoyed advantages in obtaining positions of leadership in the community.

The farmer's willingness, indeed eagerness, to aid in the growth of the metropolis was a consequence of his altered social role. The colonial farmer might have hesitated before carving up the family homestead into building lots; the market gardener did not. Though he still worked the land, the suburban farmer was no longer rural in any meaningful sense. Like the town in which he lived, the Brookline farmer had been engulfed by the city and its values. The suburban frontier had produced the urban farmer.

NOTES

The author wishes to thank James Henretta, Richard Bushman, and Michael Ebner for their comments, criticisms, and encouragement.

1. U.S. Secretary of State, *Census for 1820* (Washington, D.C., 1821), p. 7.
2. These and other agricultural and social statistics for 1770-71 are derived from a reconstruction of Brookline's population, using tax lists, valuations, and genealogical sources. The tax lists, dating from 1770, can be found in Massachusetts Archives, 130: 421-24; the 1771 valuation is in *ibid.*, 132: 160-62, and made more widely accessible by Bettye H. Pruitt, ed., *The Massachusetts Tax Valuation List of 1771* (Boston, 1978), pp. 488-89.
3. Brookline had the highest per capita assessment of any of the seventy-four eighteenth-century New England towns surveyed by Edward M. Cook, Jr., *The Fathers of the Towns: Leadership and Community Structure in Eighteenth-Century New England* (Baltimore, 1976), p. 73.
4. The 1771 valuation does not specify the type of grain grown, but all accounts, including evidence from a later period in Brookline, testify to the predominance of maize in eastern Massachusetts. Robert A. Gross has estimated that in Concord Indian corn constituted seventy-one percent of the grain the town produced in 1771 ("Culture and Cultivation: Agriculture and Society in Thoreau's Concord," *Journal of American History*, 69 [1982]: 60). In 1821 maize accounted for ninety-four percent of the grain grown in Brookline (1821 valuation list, papers of the Brookline Historical Society, Public Library of Brookline). See also Howard S. Russell, *A Long, Deep Furrow: Three Centuries of Farming in New England* (Hanover, N.H., 1976), pp. 42-43, 93-94, 134-36.
5. W. J. Latimer *et al.*, "Soil Survey of Norfolk, Bristol, and Barnstable Counties, Massachusetts," in U.S. Department of Agriculture, *Field Operations of the Bureau of Soils, 1920* (Washington, D.C., 1925), pp. 1033-1120, map 31; Russell, *Long, Deep Furrow*, pp. 120-22, 128-31, 236-37, 374-75; Max George Schumacher, *The Northern Farmer and His Markets during the Late Colonial Period*, Dissertations in American Economic History (New York, 1975), pp. 50-58, 67-68, 91-99, 139-40, 144-45; Gross, "Culture and Cultivation," p. 60; Percy Wells Bidwell, "Rural Economy in New England at the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century," *Transactions of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences*, 20 (1916): 352-53; James A. Henretta, "Families and Farms: *Mentalité* in Pre-Industrial America," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 35 (1978): 14-17. See also Bettye Hobbs Pruitt, "Agriculture and Society in the Towns of Massachusetts, 1771: A Statistical Analysis," (Ph.D. diss., Boston University, 1981), pp. 37-38.
6. Henretta, "Families and Farms," pp. 3-32; Michael Merrill, "Cash Is Good to Eat: Self-Sufficiency and Exchange in the Rural Economy of the United States," *Radical History Review*, 4 (Winter 1977): 42-71; Robert E. Mutch, "Yeoman and Merchant in Pre-Industrial America: Eighteenth-Century Massachusetts as a Case Study," *Societas*, 7 (1977): 279-302; Christopher Clark, "Household Economy, Market Exchange, and the Rise of Capitalism in the Connecticut Valley, 1800-1860," *Journal of Social History*, 13 (1979): 169-89. For a dissenting view, see Winifred B. Rothenberg, "The Market and

- Massachusetts Farmers, 1750-1855," *Journal of Economic History*, 41 (1981): 283-314.
7. Michael Zuckerman, *Peaceable Kingdoms: New England Towns in the Eighteenth Century* (New York, 1970); Brookline, *Muddy River and Brookline Records* (Boston, 1875), pp. 218-54, *passim*. As late as 1834 a town resolution forbidding cattle to graze on the public highways termed the measure "the best course, we could possibly pursue for the preservation of mutually good feeling and Harmony among ourselves" (*Muddy River Records*, pp. 603-4).
 8. Ronald D. Karr, "Two Centuries of Oligarchy in Brookline," *Historical Journal of Massachusetts* 13 (1985): 117-28.
 9. Philip J. Greven, Jr., *Four Generations: Population, Land and Family in Colonial Andover, Massachusetts* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1970), pp. 72-99, 135-77, 222-58; Daniel Scott Smith, "Parental Power and Marriage Patterns: An Analysis of Historical Trends in Hingham, Massachusetts," *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 35 (1973): 419-28; Henretta, "Families and Farms," pp. 6-20; Kenneth A. Lockridge, "Land, Population, and the Evolution of New England Society," *Past & Present*, no. 39 (1968): 62-80.
 10. *Muddy River Records*, pp. 218, 234, 242-44, 247-50; Richard D. Brown, *Revolutionary Politics in Massachusetts: The Boston Committee of Correspondence and the Towns, 1772-74* (Cambridge, Mass., 1970), pp. 158-59, 186, 229; John Gould Curtis, *History of the Town of Brookline, Massachusetts* (Boston, 1933), pp. 144-48, 150-51, 158-61.
 11. *Muddy River Records*, pp. 262-349; Theodore F. Jones, *Land Ownership in Brookline from the First Settlement*, Publication No. 5 of the Brookline Historical Society (Brookline, 1923), pp. 22, 24-25. Information on most of Brookline's wartime leaders was obtained from my reconstruction of the population in 1770-71; the others were identified from various genealogical sources.
 12. Russell, *Long, Deep Furrow*, pp. 224-26; Oscar and Mary Flug Handlin, *Commonwealth: A Study of the Role of Government in the American Economy: Massachusetts, 1774-1861* (Cambridge, 1969), pp. 12-13; Van Beck Hall, *Politics without Parties: Massachusetts, 1780-91* (Pittsburgh, 1972), pp. 55-57; John T. Schlebecker, "Agricultural Markets and Marketing in the North, 1774-1777," *Agricultural History*, 50 (1976): 25-29.
 13. U.S. Bureau of the Census, *A Century of Population Growth* (Washington, D.C., 1909), p. 158; 1783 census return for Brookline (microfilm), State House Library, Boston; 1784 valuation (microfilm), State House Library.
 14. Schlebecker, "Agricultural Markets," p. 29.
 15. 1784 valuation.
 16. Genealogies were traced for the major town officeholders of 1790, as listed in *Muddy River Records*.
 17. Massachusetts Bureau of Labor Statistics, *The Census of Massachusetts, 1885* (3 vols., Boston, 1887-88), vol. 1, pt. 1, pp. 72-73.

18. Samuel Eliot Morison, *The Maritime History of Massachusetts, 1783-1860* (Boston, 1961), pp. 124-25; Walter Muir Whitehill, *Boston: A Topographical History* (second edition, Cambridge, 1968), pp. 46-52; Edward Chase Kirkland, *Men, Cities and Transportation: A Study in New England History, 1820-1900* (2 vols., Cambridge, 1948), I: 7-8, 34-59, 62-66; Russell, *Long, Deep Furrow*, pp. 236-37, 264-69, 326-32.
19. Calculated from the manuscript returns for the Direct Federal Tax of 1798, in *New England Historic Genealogical Society*, Boston.
20. Curtis, *History of Brookline*, pp. 186-87; Harriet F. Woods, *Historical Sketches of Brookline, Massachusetts* (Boston, 1874), pp. 212-13, 345, 353-60; Jones, *Land Ownership*, pp. 24-34, maps 5 and 6; Nina Fletcher Little, *Some Brookline Houses* (Brookline, 1949), pp. 55-57, 87, 89; Carl Seaburg and Stanley Paterson, *Merchant Prince of Boston: Col. T. H. Perkins, 1764-1854* (Cambridge, 1971), pp. 141, 276.
21. *U.S. Census for 1820*, p. 7; Woods, *Historical Sketches*, pp. 25-27, 39, 50, 125, 130-31, 150, 354, 375; Samuel Aspinwall Goddard, *Recollections of Brookline* (Birmingham, England, 1873).
22. Manuscript tax returns for 1812, 1826, Town Assessor's office, Brookline.
23. *U.S. Census for 1820*, p. 7; U.S. Secretary of State, *Sixth Census or Enumeration of the Inhabitants of the United States* (Washington, D.C., 1841), p. 39.
24. These and other agricultural statistics for 1821 are derived from the 1821 valuation list.
25. *U.S. Census for 1820*, p. 7. Federal censuses before 1850 do not provide the ages or occupations of individuals, but some clues to the identities of these men can be seen in the fact that as early as 1800 men outnumbered women 120 to 75 in the group aged 16 to 25; this sexual imbalance persisted through 1840 (*Second Census of the United States* [Washington, D.C., 1801], p. 8; *Sixth Census*, p. 39).
26. Diary of Benjamin Goddard, April 20, August 26, and September 15, 1812, in Public Library of Brookline. Similarly, in Concord "by the mid-1820s, the evidence strongly suggests that hired labor had come to supplant family labor on the farm" (Gross, "Culture and Cultivation," p. 51).
27. Goddard diary, June 2, 1812.
28. *Ibid.*, October 27, 1812. On the widespread use of fertilizer see *ibid.*, June 2, 1812 and May 31, 1813; John Pierce, "Brookline in 1817," *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, 2d ser. 19 (1905): 425; *Papers to the Massachusetts Society for Promoting Agriculture*, pp. 13-14, 16-17.
29. Goddard diary, April 20, May 2, 12, 15 and July 25, 1812.
30. The names of the selectmen are from *Muddy River Records*; biographical information comes from Woods, *Historical Sketches*, pp. 21, 176-79, 205, 354; and genealogical sources.

31. The nativity of the farmers of 1821 was determined from genealogical sources, particularly *Vital Records of Brookline, Massachusetts, to the End of the Year 1849* (Salem, 1929).
32. *Vital Records of Brookline*, pp. 98-99, 131; Jones, *Land Ownership*, p. 29; Charles H. Stearns, "President's Annual Address," *Proceedings of the Brookline Historical Society* (1911), p. 11; Curtis, *History of Brookline*, p. 121; Emma Downing Coolidge, *Descendants of John and Mary Coolidge of Watertown, Massachusetts* (Boston, 1930), pp. 40 and 215.
33. Pierce, "Brookline in 1817," p. 425. Except for the 1798 direct federal tax, tax lists do not distinguish between tenants and owners.
34. 1840 statistics come from the ms. agricultural schedules, U.S. Census, 1840, National Archives (microfilm); 1844-45 statistics from John Pierce, *An Address at the Opening of the Town Hall, in Brookline, on Tuesday, 14 October 1845* (Boston, 1846), p. 40.
35. *U.S. Census for 1820*, p. 7; *Sixth Census*, p. 39.
36. Pierce, "Brookline in 1817," p. 425.
37. The value of grain, potatoes, and hay were estimated using their prices in 1844-45 as given by Pierce, *Address at Town Hall*, p. 40; the monetary value of the other commodities appears in the ms. census schedules.
38. Russell, *Long, Deep Furrow*, pp. 295-96, 374-78, 451; Percy Wells Bidwell and John I. Falconer, *History of Agriculture in the Northern United States, 1620-1860* (Washington, D.C., 1925), p. 242.
39. Pierce, *Address at Town Hall*, pp. 39-40; Russell, *Long, Deep Furrow*, pp. 366-67.
40. George Rogers Taylor, *The Transportation Revolution, 1815-1860* (New York, 1951), pp. 32-36, 74-103, 132-75; P. W. Bidwell, "The Agriculture Revolution in New England," *American Historical Review*, 26 (1921): 689-92; Russell, *Long, Deep Furrow*, pp. 332-38.
41. Massachusetts Bureau of Statistics of Labor, *History of Wages and Prices in Massachusetts, 1750-1883* (Boston, 1885), pp. 181-82; see also Winifred B. Rothenberg, "A Price Index for Rural Massachusetts, 1750-1855," *Journal of Economic History*, 39 (1979): 975-1001. Although fairly large amounts of western grain were shipped from Albany to Boston after 1825 via water, rail connection between Boston and the Erie Canal was not secured until 1841 (Kirkland, *Men, Cities and Transportation*, 1: 92-136).
42. Gross, "Culture and Cultivation," p. 60.
43. *Boston Evening Transcript*, May 22, 1843; *Boston Post*, May 22, 1843; Woods, *Historical Sketches*, pp. 64-65; Charles Knowles Bolton, *Brookline: The History of a Favored Town* (Brookline, 1897), pp. 55-58; *Brookline Transcript*, October 15 and November 19, 1870; R. G. F. Candage, "Brookline Changes—Street Car Accommodations," *Brookline Suburban*, June 29, 1899; *Massachusetts, Census, 1885*, vol. 1, pt. 1, pp.72-73; *Town Records of Brookline, Massachusetts, 1838-1902* (5 vols., Brookline, 1888-1902), 1: 156; U.S. Census, 1850, ms. population schedules.

44. U.S. Census, 1850, 1860, 1870, ms. agricultural schedules. Average output per farm is used here instead of overall town production because the returns, especially for 1850, appear to be incomplete.
45. U.S. Census, 1870, ms. agricultural and manufacturing schedules; *Incomes of Citizens of Boston and Other Cities and Towns in Massachusetts* (Boston, 1866), pp. 19-21; *Incomes of Citizens of Boston and Other Cities and Towns in Massachusetts* (Boston, 1867), pp. 28-29. During the middle decades of the nineteenth century many of the great Brahmin estates were brought under cultivation, primarily for horticulture and livestock breeding. See Curtis, *History of Brookline*, p. 181; Thomas C. Amory, *Memoir of the Hon. Richard Sullivan* (Cambridge, Mass., 1885), p. 16; Russell, *Long, Deep Furrow*, p. 409; Pierce, *Address at Town Hall*, p. 40; Marshall Pickney Wilder, "The Horticulture of Boston and Vicinity," in *The Memorial History of Boston*, ed. Justin Winsor (4 vols., Boston, 1881), 4: 625-27.
46. *Brookline Transcript*, March 30, 1872. The highest price paid for lots at Brookline's first subdivision in 1843 was five and a half cents per square foot. By the late 1880s some Brookline land was selling for \$1.00 to \$2.00 a foot (Woods, *Historical Sketches*, p. 63; *Brookline Chronicle*, September 17, 1887 and February 2, 1889). John Bartlett paid \$10,000 for his forty-acre farm in 1843; thirty years later his heirs sold it for \$115,000 (*Proceedings of the Brookline Historical Society*, 1905, pp. 20-21). On produce prices in New England see Russell, *Long, Deep Furrow*, pp. 431-33.
47. Anonymous Connecticut farmer quoted in Jean Gottman, *Megalopolis: The Urbanized Northeastern Seaboard of the United States* (Cambridge, 1964), p. 274.
48. Sam Bass Warner, *Streetcar Suburbs: The Process of Growth in Boston, 1870-1900* (Cambridge, 1962), pp. 121-42; Cynthia Zaitzevsky, "Frederick Law Olmsted in Brookline: A Preliminary Study of His Public Projects," *Proceedings of the Brookline Historical Society*, 1975-78, p. 47.
49. For example of suburbanite attitudes toward land development see *Brookline Transcript*, November 26, 1870; March 30, July 13, 1872; May 24, 31, 1873; *Brookline Chronicle*, August 16, 23, 1879, August 26, 1893; Woods, *Historical Sketches*, p. 405.
50. Alisa Belinkoff, "Everyone Who Was Anyone in Brookline, Massachusetts, 1705-1875" (Senior honors thesis, Brandeis University, 1975), pp. 189-92.
51. *Brookline Transcript*, December 16, 1871; January 6, 27, 1872; March 15, 22, April 19, May 3, 1873; *Brookline Independent*, October 11, 1873; *Brookline Chronicle*, March 6, 27, November 6, 1875; February 22, October 25, 1879; January 31, March 13, 27, 1880.
52. The annexationists and their active foes were identified from lists in various issues of the *Brookline Transcript* and *Independent*, 1871-73, and additional information on each individual was obtained from the 1870 U.S. Census ms. population schedules, city directories, and tax lists. On the real estate interests of the annexationists see *Brookline Independent*, August 9, 16, September 27, October 4, 18, 1873; *Brookline Transcript*, January 13, March 15, 22, 1873; G. M. Hopkins and Co., *Atlas of the Town of Brookline, Mass.* (Philadelphia, 1874).

53. *Brookline Transcript*, March 15, 1873.
54. *Ibid.*, January 13, March 15, 22, April 29, 26, 1873; *Brookline Independent*, July 25, September 27, 1873.
55. Biographical data on Brookline selectmen 1845-1885 were compiled from U.S. Census for 1850 and 1860, ms. population schedules, business directories, and genealogies.
56. Agriculture statistics for 1885 are derived from Massachusetts, *Census of Massachusetts, 1885*, 3: 384-85, 850.
57. Massachusetts Bureau of Statistics of Labor, *Census of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, 1895* (7 vols., Boston, 1896-1900), 6: 268, 435, 440-510, *passim*, 546-47, 556-57; *Census of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, 1905* (4 vols., Boston, 1908-10), 4: 58-59, 97-250, *passim*, 266-67, 282-83, 298, 336-456, *passim*).
58. "A Farm that Thrives in the City," *Boston Globe*, August 11, 1976.