

## Bio-Dynamic Work in England. <sup>Sent to H. Knight 1930.</sup>

Having been asked to contribute what I could to the 'history' of the development of the Bio-Dynamic work in England I have sifted through book numbers, reports etc. connected with this. The result although not complete in many details, produces the following picture of those early days.

Maurice Wood, a farmer in Huby Yorkshire, having for ten years fallen ill with shingles. This led to his attending the 1927 Anthroposophical Conference in Anglessey. There he became acquainted with Steiner's work and also with George Adams (-Kasjmann) as a result in 1928, when D.N. Dunlop was organising a 'World Conference for Spiritual Science', Dr Carl Mier (later Miær) was invited to Huby. Carl Mier had been sent by Count Keyserlingk, since he himself was not able to accept Dunlop's invitation to present Rudolf Steiner's agricultural work at the conference.

Carl's English needed practice and he also required time to prepare his conference lecture entitled 'Agricultural Depression - its causes and means for its relief.' Huby <sup>thus</sup> became a 'growing point' for the B.D. work in the UK.

At the 1928 Conference it appears that <sup>a few</sup> of the present were already connected directly to the Dornach Experimental Circle of Anthroposophical Farmers & Gardeners. This 'British' group met in the evening, following Carl Mier's lecture, with Dr Wachsuth, Dr Pfeiffer and Dr Mier to discuss how B.D. work could be developed in the UK. Further meetings during the conference were arranged and although Dr Wachsuth had to return early to Dornach it could be reported that Carl Mier had been asked to stay a further 12.

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work ~~in the~~ and that he had offered his services free for 6 months, and Mairie Wood's invitation of hospitality for this period was supported by spontaneous donations to cover costs. George Adams was closely involved in all this, chairing the meals which were also attended by Dr E. Vreede, the Countess Keyserling, Miss Cross, Mrs Howard Pease (later mentioned as Marna Pease) John Sargeant, and <sup>old</sup> some 70 people altogether.

As a result of this 'Notes and Correspondence' was started in 1929. This was a duplicated newsletter containing articles, notes, letters etc concerning B.D. work. In the meantime George Adams had been invited to stay at Huby (Sleights Farm) where he translated the 'Agriculture Course' into English. Mairie Wood had therefore the possibility of becoming one of the first, if not the very first, B.D. farmers in England. This led to his wheat being milled locally and sent all over England by post. <sup>from 1932 onwards</sup> The need to mill on his own farm led eventually to him designing the 'Huby' stone mill, <sup>in 1939</sup> for flour production on his own premises. In addition he persuaded the local M.P. to get a private members bill through parliament to protect this right of milling on the farm.

In 1929 the 'Anthroposophical Agricultural Foundation' was started with D.N. Dunlop, General Secretary of A.S. in G.B., acting as chairman, Carl Mier as Agricultural Adviser, Marna Pease as Hon. Sec., and Lloyd Wilson <sup>as Hon. Treasurer</sup>. During these first years Members of the council included L.L. Binnie, Miss E.M. Bruce, Mrs Cameron, Miss Cross, George Adams, Mrs Mier and Mairie Wood.



In 1931 it was realised that a regular members subscription would have to replace the voluntary donations which had hitherto supported the work. 'Notes and Correspondence' was then printed instead of duplicated. This then ran under that title until 1953 when it became 'Star and Furrow'. Editorship lay with Carl Mier and Marna Pease until the war when Doris Davy took over from Carl. Marna Pease shouldered a particularly heavy load as not only was she co-editor of 'Notes & Correspondence' and Hon. Sec. but took on the work of Hon. Treasurer in 1937.

By 1933 membership had increased to over 130 from a total of 70 in 1932.

It seems that up until 1933 the office was located at Dameter House Steadyford Birmingham but moved to The Old Mill House BRAY Maidenhead in 1934. This home of Marna Pease became an active centre for meetings and visits even finding room for a small experimental laboratory for Mrs Kolisko in 1938. Marna herself was not only an active gardener but also kept bees & made regular contributions to 'Notes & Correspondence'.

1934/35 was a period of much change & activity. Broome Farm was taken into B.D. working under Carl Mier's guidance; difficulties arose within the 'General Anthroposophical Society' which led to a split within the agricultural work in this country & the beginning of a second journal entitled 'The Star and Furrow'.