



# Poor Law Rating Question ?

Stratton St. Margaret  
1863

**THE RATING QUESTION** – On Thursday evening one of the largest and most influential vestry meetings held in this parish for many years was convened at The Crown, for the purpose of taking into consideration the new assessment made by the Poor Rate Committee, some few months ago. Mr. John Arkell, of Kingsdown, was called to the chair, and, in opening the business of the meeting, said if he mistook not the object of the meeting it was to examine into the gross inequalities of the sums assessed upon the various buildings in the parish and compared with other portions of land assessed by the owners and other persons. If he might be allowed to give advice, he would suggest that persons should make their statements in such a way they might be committed to paper as they went along, so that the meeting could come to the right decision, and if there was not time to do effectively this evening they could if they choose, adjourn to another day, and then take evidence. He knew of no Poor Law rules which could hinder them from adjournment for discussion till another day.

Mr Thomas Day entered into a very lengthy exposition of the sums imposed upon various land occupiers whose rates are made upon the very high rent they pay to their landlords, and compared the value of the acreage with the rateable value put upon the lands of David Archer, Esq, Mr Thomas Arkell, of Pen Hill, and a few others. Mr Tucker, as the owner of Upper Stratton estate, said the facts such as Mr Day had just laid out before them, respecting the inequality of rating throughout the parish, proved it to be so glaringly and inconsistently unjust, he thought the very best plan was to agree at once to a petition the Poor Law Commissioners for a new valuation altogether, as the only means of restoring peace and good fellowship throughout the parish.

Mr Arkell of Pen Hill, made some few explanations as regarded the course taken by the Poor Rate Committee on account of a dictum, which he said came from the magistrates, who had held a meeting on the subject, and whose order was that Schedule A was to lay the foundation of the rating throughout the whole country, in consequence of which, and the very extravagant rents paid on the lands in Stratton, in inequalities of the rate complained of had arisen. The basis of rent he had opposed in committee, but it was of no use, the course of action being first taken by the magistrates, who had determined to sign no other Poor Rate but such a one as before stated.

A resolution was then come to at once, requesting the overseers and churchwardens to petition the Poor Law Board for a new valuation, and the proceedings terminated.

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