

Extract from Parliamentary Papers relating to the report of His Majesty's  
Commissioners for inquiring into the state of the Poor Laws in England & Wales  
1834

## **Examination of Mr. *William Cropper*, Pass-master of Willoughby, Warwick.**

WHEN I receive vagrant passes they are accompanied by certificates from the magistrates of Mr. W. Cropper's Northamptonshire, directing the pass-master of Old Stratford to pass the parties to Willoughby; Evidence, that certificate or order I take to the Warwickshire magistrate, and he files it, and gives me instead another order in the same form, directing me to pass the parties to Drayton Bassett, in the county of Stafford. For thus continuing the vagrant's pass I pay the magistrate's clerk 6 *l.* on each pass.

When I make up my account at the end of each quarter I take it to the same magistrate, who examines it by the certificates or orders which he had before filed ; and on his certifying that the general account is correct, I pay his clerk 6 *d.* more for the bill relating to each load of paupers that I take. In my last quarterly account I had 72 bills, and paid the magistrate's clerk 1 *l.* 16<sup>s.</sup>, being at the rate of 6 *d.* for each, for passing the account.

Generally speaking, I believe that the people thus passed are in great distress ; but nevertheless we sometimes have them bringing baggage and luggage with them, which we convey from motives of humanity without making objections, although I believe that we are not bound to do so. . I have known some instances in which persons have been passed more than once, some few four or five times ; but it is difficult to detect such doings, because they come in different names.

I think that frauds of this nature might be prevented, by the appointment of an inspector to have *Mode of preventing* a general superintendence overall the business of passing these paupers. He might be required to *Frauds.* keep an alphabetical list of the names of all parties passed, together with a description of their persons, and if they were found to have imposed upon the county, I think they should be punished.

I think that one person of diligent and active habits might attend to both lines of road, and I am persuaded that the expense of his salary would be much more than paid by the saving which he would effect by due vigilance. Of course it would be necessary that he should be conversant with the nature of the business, and with the habits of the Irish; and he would require a decent subsistence, besides his travelling expenses, which might be paid by each county rateably, according to the distance travelled in each.

My charge for their conveyance is about 6*s.* a head throughout the county, and this includes *Expense of Con-* the expense of medicine for the sick, burials for those who die, &c.; but I am inclined to think. that our charges are about the lowest on the whole line of road. I think that these people would be subjected to great hardships if they were conveyed by the fly-boats, especially in cases of Vagrancy.