

Advent Calendar 9th December

December's Husbandry

O dirty December

For Christmas remember

When Frost will not suffer to dyke and to hedge,

Then get thee a heat, with thy beetle and wedge:

Once Hallowmas come, and a fire in the hall,

such slivers do well for lie by the wall.

Get grindstone and whetstone for tool that is dull,

or often be letted, and fret belly-full:

A wheel-barrow also be ready to have,

at hand of thy servant thy compass to save.

Give cattle their fodder in plot dry and warm,

and counter them for miring, or other like harm.

Young colts with thy wennels together go serve,

lest lurch'd by others, thy happen to serve.

One of The Hundred Good Pointes of Husbandrie by Thomas
Tusser.

Thomas Tusser was born at Rivenhall in Essex (just north of Chelmsford, now on the A12) and later became a farmer at Cattawade on the county border. In 1557 he began to write his treatise on farming, later expanded to Five Hundred Pointes, and then he diversified into Good Pointes of Huswifery. His "Good Pointes" may not have been so very good as his farm failed. Or so my copy of An Essex Christmas says.