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Part 1

DERBYSHIRE MISCELLANY

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ASSISTANT EDITOR
Jane Steer

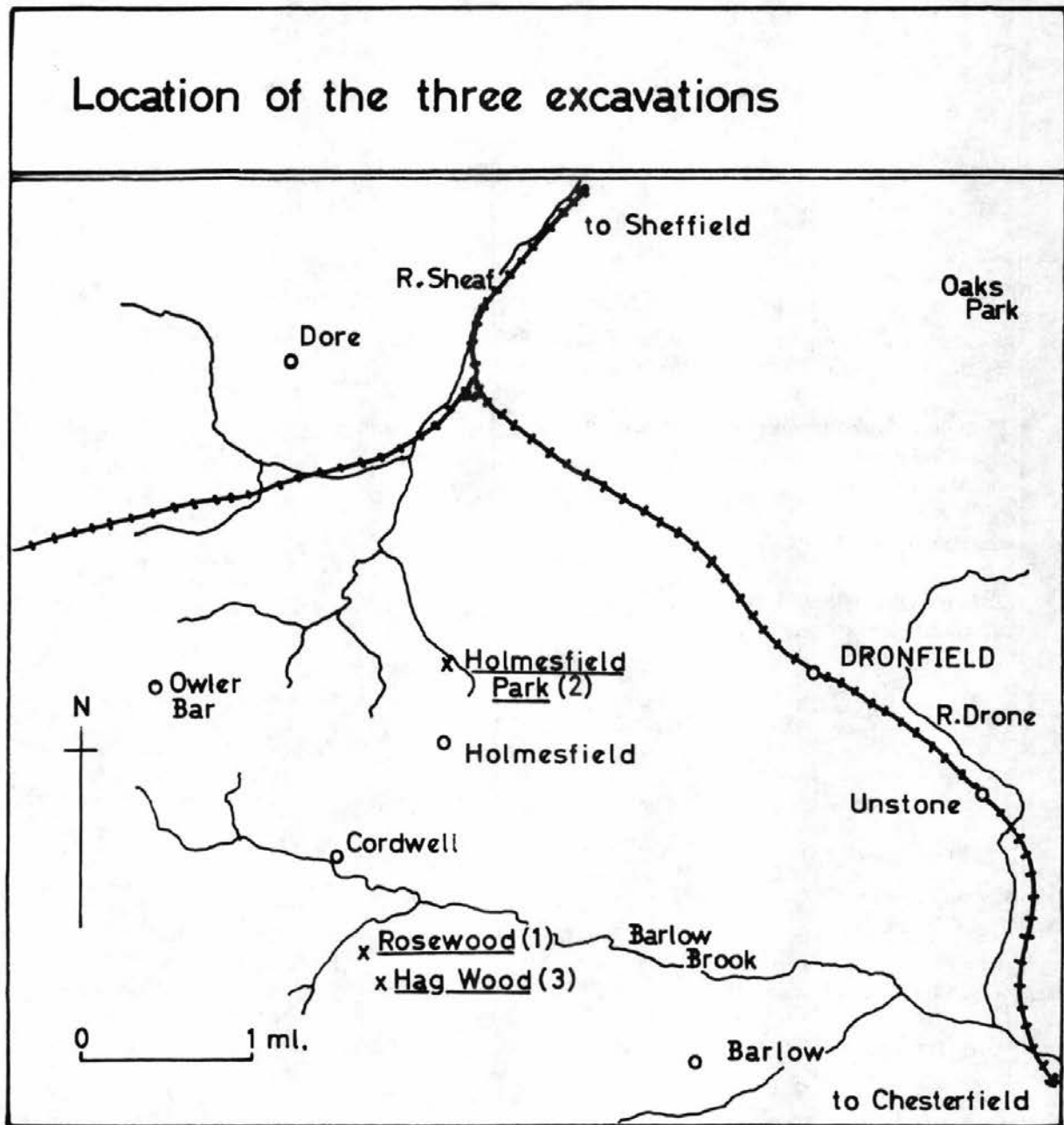
EDITOR
Dudley Fowkes

TREASURER
T.J. Larimore

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FIG. 1



EXCAVATION OF WHITECOAL PIT AT HAG WOOD, BARLOW, 1986-1987

(by Dudley Fowkes)

This article is published as a tribute to Richard Doncaster who died in 1991.

INTRODUCTION

Fuel processing pits

A considerable number of ancient deciduous woodlands in the coal measures of North East Derbyshire are dotted with shallow man-made conical pits in which fuel for the local ore smelting and metal working trades were processed. It is very difficult to be precise about the date of these phenomena or their exact function over the centuries but we do know that in the late 16th and early 17th centuries a fuel known as whitecoal was produced in considerable quantities in this area for the lead smelting industry in its hearth-smelting phase. This was carried out alongside the production of charcoal of which one can assume fairly continuous production from Medieval times.

It is in this context that three of these characteristic fuel-processing pits have been excavated in the recent past, two by the Hunter Archaeological Society in 1982-3 and one by the Derbyshire Archaeological Society in 1986-7. (see Fig 1)

What is whitecoal?

Wright's *English Dialect Dictionary* of 1905 defines whitecoal as "*wood slit into small pieces, dried in a kiln and used as charcoal*". Other definitions are as simple as "*dried sticks*" and "*dried sticks of oak*". Raistrick settles for "*small wood which has been barked and dried so as to drive out all sap*".

Its use

However one cares to define it precisely, whitecoal was undoubtedly an important fuel in the ore hearth lead smelting process in the 16th and 17th centuries, the roasted or dried wood being especially suitable for this smelting technique. It was not used in the reverberatory furnace however where it was superseded by coke or charcoal so the whitecoal creating industry rapidly disappeared from the mid 17th century onwards as reverberatory furnaces replaced the ore hearths.

Method of production

Whitecoal was produced in pits. Whether these merited the description "kiln" as suggested by Wright is doubtful as "kiln" implies some above ground structure in which the drying or roasting took place. Precisely how the roasting or drying process was carried out within the pits is not known and it was hoped that the excavations might help to elucidate this.

Distribution of pits

The pits are located in woodland areas of North East Derbyshire usually associated also with charcoal production and also very often close to where coal outcrops, providing the obvious inference that both timber and coal played an important part in the processes concerned. The majority of woods with pits in fact lie on the Lower Coal Measures west of the Silkstone seam outcrop. The limits of the area are quite closely defined with only Ecclesall Wood north of the ancient Derbyshire-Yorkshire having a significant number of pits and with nothing beyond Clay Cross to the south.

Location of pits

In excess of 400 fuel-processing pits have been found and they are located in two basic types of situation. The most

prevalent is close to the banks of streams: the other is further from streams but always on sloping ground. The gradient of slope varies considerably but each pit has a "spout" which invariably faces downslope. The "spouts" nevertheless face every point of the compass even within individual woods.

Dating of pits

One of the principal problems in the objective investigation of these phenomena is the lack of dating evidence in the form of dateable artefacts. As quoted above, we know when whitecoal and charcoal were produced in the area but there must be a possibility that the fuels produced varied in both time and space as smelting technologies and the distribution of industry changed. Some firm dating by electro-magnetic tests of some of the carbonaceous material found might help to clarify this problem.

Earlier excavations

In the *Derbyshire Archaeological Journal* Vol LXXII (1952), Dr W.A. Timperley reported on his excavations at Oaks Park, Norton of what he then called "Q holes", so named after their shape. These are, in fact, the same fuel-processing pits considered here and, whilst Timperley's conclusions may now be discredited, his illustrations and measurements are well worth re-examination in the light of these recent excavations. The overall dimensions of his "Q1" hole are, for example, very similar indeed to the dimensions of the Hag Wood pit.

In 1974 Sheffield University Extra Mural Department in its *Essays in the History of Holmesfield* recorded whitecoal pits in Rosewood and dug a trial trench across a pit at SK 3147581.

DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Whitecoal

In William Senior's *Book of Surveys* at Chatsworth House, there is a reference to "whitecoal" in the Morehall area within a survey of woods at Morehall and elsewhere in the parish of Dronfield. This survey by Henry Bramley in 1618 refers to Meek Field, Stripes Wood, Cockglades Wood, Fishpond Wood and Stonepitt Field. Meek Field survives as a minor place-name and can be identified. Stonepitt Field is shown on the Senior Plan of Morehall (fo. 23 in the *Senior Atlas*, Chatsworth House) and can be identified as approximately SK 312756, that is only a short distance to the west of the pit excavated at Hag Wood.

The valuation of the woods appears to be for sale purposes - probably just of the timber as only timber is valued - and a calculation regarding the sale price and costs of making "whitecoal" appears to be an addendum aimed at making the sale more attractive. It was aimed at lead merchants on the assumption that they were the most likely people to buy timber and that the conversion of the timber to "whitecoal" would increase its attractiveness.

This reference unequivocally links "whitecoal" to the early 17th century lead smelting industry and also associates its creation with this area of woodland in and around Morehall. It also indicates the very fundamental point that in this context "whitecoal" was a timber product.

The "whitecoal" is described in the calculation in terms of "dosen of whitecoal": a dozen bundles, loads, baskets or what? Suffice to say that this description certainly made sense to contemporaries as cordwood and other materials related to the wood burning/drying processes were frequently described in this way.

Eighteenth century Portland leases for land in this area (Nottinghamshire County Record Office) continue to give licence to make whitecoal but the decline of the hearth lead smelting industry makes it unlikely that lessees would avail themselves of this facility.

THE EXCAVATION

The pit at Hag Wood (SK 315754) was excavated by members of the Derbyshire Archaeological Society's Industrial Archaeology Section between Spring 1986 and Summer 1987. It is located at about 650 ft above sea level on a north-facing slope in an area of mixed woodland, probably ancient in origin but containing much relatively recent

FIG. 2

HAG WOOD KILN SKETCH PLAN OF EXCAVATION

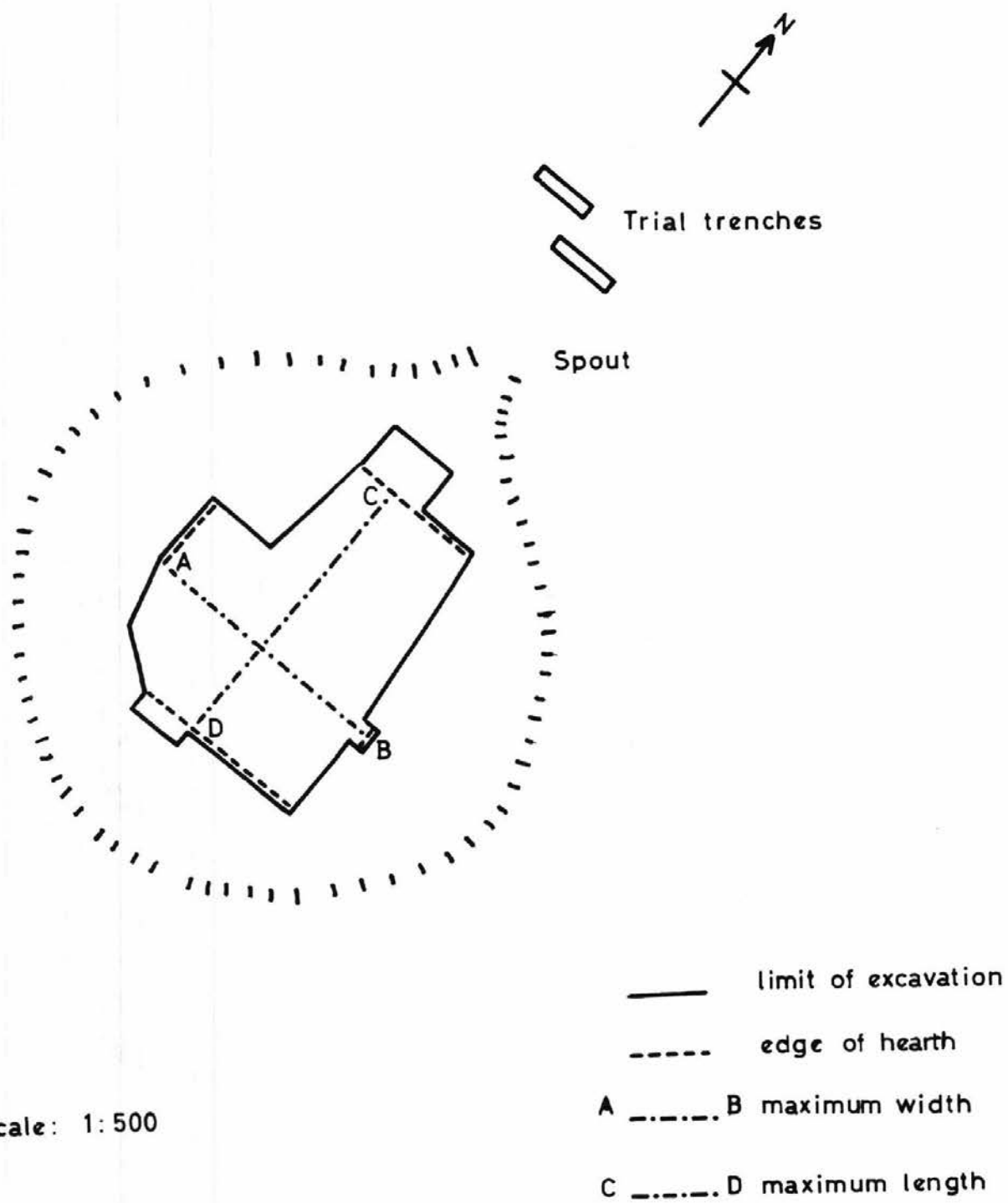
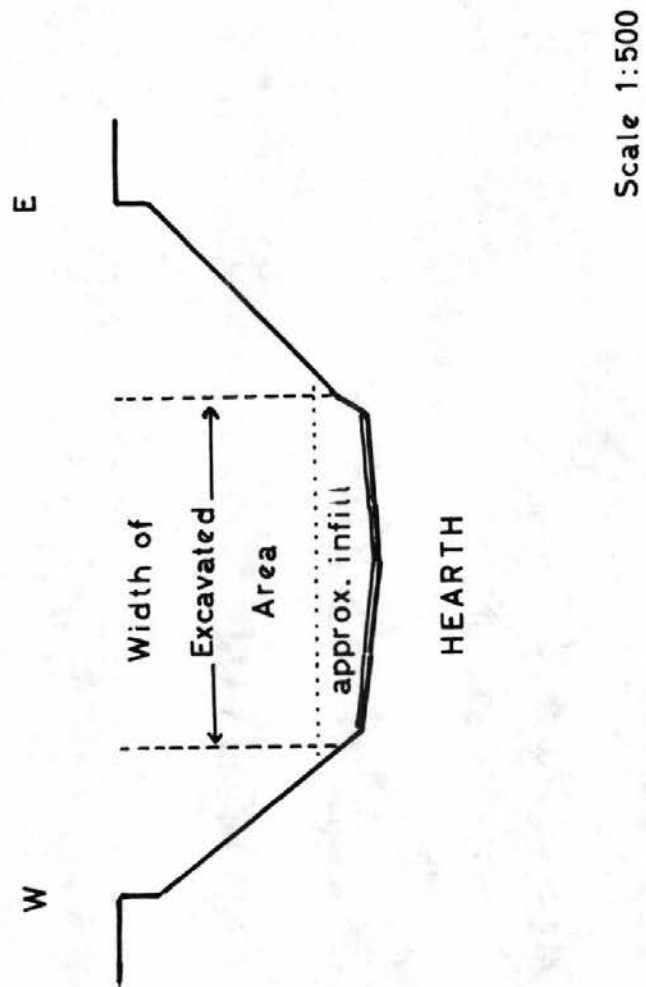
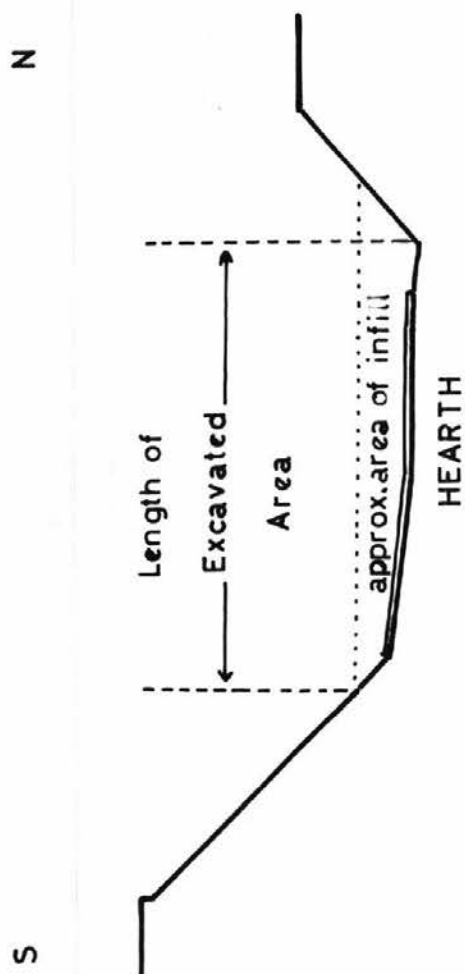


FIG. 3



HAG WOOD KILN - CROSS SECTION W-E

FIG. 4



Scale 1:500

HAG WOOD KILN - CROSS SECTION S-N

FIG. 5

HAG WOOD KILN : SKETCH OF CROSS SECTION THROUGH MIDDLE
OF HEARTH



Horiz. scale 1:200

Vertical not to scale

- Baked clay hearth
- Coal Measures clay
- Irregularly-bedded C.M. sandstone
- A,B Concentrations of carbonaceous materials

The pit is roughly circular (Fig 2) with maximum dimensions of approximately 520cm North-South and 470cm East-West giving a potential surface area of around 16 sq m. It then tapers to a roughly rectangular base with a considerable infill some 50-60cm in thickness of leaf mould, loose stones, soil, branches, animal bones and carbonaceous materials.

The hearth was located at depths from the surface varying from around 165-170cm at the southern end towards the top of the slope to around 100cm at the northern end of the lip or spout downslope (Figs 3-4). Because of the variable slope, accurate measurement of these depths was difficult. As at Rosewood, the hearth was distinguishable as an area of hardened baked clay, with a clear reddish tinge, contrasting markedly with the natural yellow clays of the Coal Measures series. The baked clay layer is no more than 2-3cm thick and overlies bedrock, ie a mixture of yellow clay and irregularly-bedded sandstones of the Coal Measures series (Fig 5). The irregular surface of the sandstone suggested the presence of a deliberate central drainage channel or trough cut into the rock as at Holmesfield Park. This was supported by the fact that the hearth layer was discontinuous at this point (Fig 5) but if it had been slabbed these had been removed. The sandstone is so irregularly bedded however, that this central "trough" could just as easily be a natural feature. Certainly all the evidence (see below) points to drainage from this pit being totally natural.

The hearth area had maximum dimensions of approximately 238cm North-South and 215cm East-West making it roughly square in shape (Fig 2) and having an overall area of some 5 sq m. It curved up at the edges for a short distance like the Rosewood hearth (Fig 5) and the areas above its edges were particularly rich in carbonaceous materials, ie charcoal, unburnt coal and coke. Some carbonaceous materials were present in small quantities throughout the infill but there was a general absence of ash and cinders.

The spout of the kiln was downslope at the northern end (Fig 4) but there was no trace of any drain either within the area abutting immediately on the hearth (the small extension of the excavation to the north beyond the edge of the hearth - Fig 2) or in two trial trenches adjacent to the North-South axis, each dug to depths of some 170cm, ie well below the level of the hearth at the northern end of the pit.

CONCLUSIONS

It seems reasonable to conclude from the amount of coal, coke, partly-coked coal, etc, found at the site that the last processes for which the pit was used involved the burning of considerable quantities of coal. It is impossible to say at this stage whether the coke was produced intentionally or as an incidental by-product of another process.

The heat produced in the process at Hag Wood at least was sufficient to produce a reddish-coloured baked clay hearth. It is open to question whether the making of a coal fire over which wood was dried on racks as in the whitecoal making process would generate heat of sufficient intensity to produce such a result.

In the detailed construction of the pits it seems that every advantage was taken of nature, as would be expected. The sides were only lined if the looseness of the soil demanded it: drainage channels were only provided if nature itself did not perform the task.

The lack of any firm archaeological dating evidence from artifacts is clearly the basic hindrance to interpretation of these phenomena. There is no reason at all why they should not be the means by which the whitecoal referred to as being produced in the area in the early 17th century was manufactured but there is equally no reason why they should not have been re-used for other purposes when the market for that commodity collapsed in the later decades of the 17th century. The evidence seems to point in this direction.

FIELD NAMES IN WINGERWORTH

A COMPARISON OF SURVEYS MADE IN 1779 AND 1843

(by D.G. Edwards)

The author has compared field names in the parish of Wingerworth in the years 1779 and 1843 in order to discover the extent and nature of changes between the two dates. The sources used are:

- a) the terrier¹ of the Hunloke estate made in 1779 in conjunction with the map of Wingerworth and Tupton dated 1758² and
- b) the Wingerworth tithe-apportionment survey of 1843³ in conjunction with the printed version of the accompanying map⁴.

The geographical extent of the comparison is limited by the following factors:

- a) the 1779 terrier naturally does not include the land owned at that time by freeholders other than the Hunlokes, amounting to perhaps a tenth of the total area.
- b) not all the fields (or, more correctly, the closes: there were no open fields in Wingerworth at that period) shown on the 1758 map are marked with index letters and numbers, this being partly due to the fact that residual common land had only that year been subject to an enclosure award.
- c) some of the closes indexed on the map cannot be identified in the terrier (and there are also apparently a few instances of transposition on the map).
- d) field boundaries in some areas were completely changed between the two dates (mainly before 1819 in fact, as the map⁵ of that year shows), most noticeably towards the south-east of the parish where Hanging Banks Plantation, a 'pleasure-ground' and new kitchen gardens were set out by the Hunlokes around 1800 on what was previously farmland; the North Midland railway also cut across several fields adjoining the River Rother.

The 1843 map indexes about 770 separate plots, but these of course include woods, ponds, homesteads, etc, so the overall effect of (a) and (b) above in reducing the number of indexed closes for 1758/79 to some 430-440 is not too serious. However, factors (c) and (d) reduce the number of closes available for direct comparison to 237, although it can be seen that some of the earlier names survive at the later date in the areas occupied by the other 200 or so. Included in the 237 'available' closes are a small number where subdivision occurred between the two dates but where the overall outline was preserved.

These 237 available closes can be classified into four groups in which:

- 1. the name is identical in both surveys, apart from minor spelling changes or addition of simple descriptive adjectives when subdivision occurred (87 closes or 37%).
- 2. The name remains essentially the same but there is a significant corruption of the spelling (14 closes or 6%).
- 3. the name is partly changed, but only so far as the word used for 'field' or a general topographical adjective, etc, is concerned (60 closes or 25%).
- 4. the name is completely different at the two dates, at least so far as the distinctive element is concerned (76 closes or 32%).

In other words, about one-third of the fields underwent a complete change of name and over half suffered at least some change, while corruption occurred in a small (but not negligible) proportion of cases. Examples from each group follow, but it should first be pointed out that practically all the changes had occurred by 1819: the 1843 survey is used here merely because the author possesses a transcript and a copy of the map.

In group 1, an example of a minor spelling change allowed for the present purpose is the alteration from Emmatt Field (at Swathwick) in 1779 to Emmet Field in 1843. An instance of a subdivision is the bisection of Long Close (at Hockley) into Bottom and Top Long Close; there are only three other such cases in this group.

Group 2 is perhaps the most interesting, so all instances are quoted below:

1779		1843	
Index	Name	Index	Name
P1	Dayside	757	Daisy Close
210	Long Ralf	695	Long Rails
Ai7	Parks Close	463	Far Parker Close
z11	Parks Close	378	Parker Close
z2	Foard Close	360 364	Far Close Far Near Close
O7	Ford Close	358	Fourth Close
O16	Turnhill	372	Tunnel
u17	Kiln Croft	167	Killing Croft
u30	Great Scrog East	164	Great Sogs
u31	Little Scrog East	165	Little Sogs
Az4	Barr Close	389	Bare Close
t1	Alice Close	394	Ales Close
W1	Cowmire Close	597	Cogmire Close
m14	Hebba Croft	223	Hib Croft

To these might be added z8 or 407, Malkiln Close, since although it appears with this spelling in both the 1779 and 1843 surveys, it is given as Maukin Close in the terriers^{6,7} of 1819 and 1864. The latter spelling is a version which is known to present-day inhabitants and which also occurs in an early 18th century lease⁸ in the slightly different spelling Maukeing Close. It is therefore doubtful that a malt kiln ever stood there or that it was a field traditionally supplying barley for malting; rather, the name is probably cognate with malkin (or mawkin), a dialect word for a cat, hare or a scarecrow (cf the entry *Mawkin* in J. Field's *English Field Names: a Dictionary*, 1972).

On the other hand, it does look as though Killing Croft is indeed a corruption of Kiln Croft, unless this was a place where animals were once slaughtered. Possibly also Hill Croft (437) represents a corruption of Kiln Croft (?Ai23), but this example has been included in group 4. Similarly it is fairly clear that Far Close and Fourth Close are corruptions of Ford Close, because of the presence of adjacent fields with the element 'ford' in the name, bordering Birdholme Brook; and that Ales Close is a distorted form of Alice Close, since the two can be pronounced almost identically. Again, Turnhill seems likely to be more correct than Tunnel; it might have signified a balk in an open field that possibly once existed between Widdowson Spring Wood and Langer Lane. Conversely it looks as though Long Ralf was merely a scribal error for Long Rails. However, it is less certain which of the two versions is the more correct among the other pairs of names in the above list. The lesson to be drawn from these comparisons

seems to be that an earlier rendering of a field name is not necessarily the one to be preferred or to be used to deduce the original meaning.

A very few examples must suffice for group 3. Thus we have Far Mill Close (Aq1) in 1779 changed to Far Mill Field (761) in 1843; West, East and North Rails (N13-N15) changed (including amalgamation of the first two) to Upper and Nether Rails (690, 689) and Long Close (f11) changed to Long Lands (386). This last example is perhaps a warning against always assuming that the term 'lands' denotes the former existence of open field agriculture on the same site. An example of a different kind is afforded by Broomley (O1) in 1779, changed to Bennett Bromaly (357) by 1843 to distinguish it from the adjacent Bromaly (356); these two closes were in different farms in 1779, the former in the farm tenanted by a John Bennett. To these we might add the composite area known as Sutcliffe, bounded by Derby Road on the east, Nethermoor Road on the south and Sutcliffe Wood on the west and north. This was divided up rather differently at the two dates and though some of the field names are common to both, eg Lane Sutcliffe, others acquired different adjectives, eg the North, Middle and South Sutcliffe of 1779 were largely amalgamated into the Top Sutcliffe of 1843.

Rather more illustrations should perhaps be offered for group 4, the complete changes of name. Some of these were due to the need for more (though not often much more) distinctive descriptions of parcels of land recently enclosed and which were initially called merely 'Common Piece' or 'Intake'. The following is a selection of about a quarter of the total

1779		1843	
Index	Name	Index	Name
Am1	Upper South Mill Holme	762	Great Close
P12	Yate Close	758	Triangle
f3	Cross Lands	681	Nether Barn Close
Q5	Calf Garth	328	Little Croft
n5	Long Close	538	Pingle
q1	South Croft	557	Thorn Tree Close
g3	Townend Close	618 620	Top Croft House, etc.
i2	Common Piece	275	Pasture
AX3	Owler Close	38-39	Great Close
Ag8	North)Marsh Meadow Middle)	716	Crosslands
Ai26	Three Nook'd Close	464	Near Parker Close
Ai22	Smithy Close	441	Pond Close
O5	Crabtree Close	367	Field
X8	Well Yard	71	Nether Croft
w3	Wood Close	414	Three Nooked Close
m13	Twelves Croft	222	Sam Croft
Az13	Common Piece	296	Lavender Knob
Af4	West Intake	204	Little Croft
AX9	Hillside & Needham Croft	45-46	Pigs Wood
XX3	Little Meadow	28	Flatt

The precise reasons for most of these changes may never be known, but the name Townend Close was abandoned very possibly because this location (by Hockley farm) was no longer the 'end of the town' after the last vestiges of what seems to have been the original village of Wingerworth were eradicated about 1800. The appearance of the name Crosslands and Flatt in 1843 (the latter in an area of former common pasture or waste) again warns us to be reticent in interpreting such names as indicators of former open-field arable. The question remains: was it the landowner or the tenants who were mainly responsible for the changes? Perhaps it is more likely to have been the latter.

The present comparison is necessarily based on only a fraction of the closes in only one parish, but the number used is still considerable and the closes are distributed over the length and breadth of that parish, so there is little reason to suppose that the sample is a biased one. Thus we may draw some conclusions which should be generally applicable:

1. Many field names appearing in 19th century surveys are of fairly recent origin even when the field boundaries have not been altered. Conversely, old names may well survive even when boundaries are changed.
2. Field names may become corrupted at any time, so it is unwise to draw conclusions about their meanings (at any rate of unusual ones) from relatively recent forms without reference to earlier spellings. On the other hand, earlier spellings may sometimes be less reliable than later ones.
3. Field names incorporating elements like 'flatt', 'lands', etc have sometimes been coined quite late, so one must be cautious in treating them as indicating the former existence of open-field arable unless there is supporting evidence.

References

1. *Survey of the Hunloke estate, 1799*, Chesterfield Public Library, Hunloke Collection
2. Derbyshire Record Office, Wingerworth Parish Council deposit, D1306A/PP1
3. *Apportionment of the rent-charge in lieu of tithes in ... Wingerworth, 1842 [with survey, 1843]*, Chesterfield Public Library
4. *Plan of the parish of Wingerworth in the county of Derby*, Standidge & Co's Litho, London, 1843 (ref 297-2T)
5. Derbyshire Record Office, Wingerworth Parish Council deposit, D1306A/PP2
6. *Parish of Wingerworth, surveyed May 1819 by Jos^h Gratton*, Chesterfield Public Library, Hunloke Collection
7. *Terrier to maps of the Wingerworth estates in the county of Derby, 1864*, Chesterfield Public Library, Hunloke Collection
8. Derbyshire Record Office, Bourne-Nodder MSS, D1101M/E53 (reference kindly provided by Mr Philip Riden)

CORRIGENDA

Derbyshire Miscellany, Vol 12, Autumn 1991, Part 6

Page 165 - Section headed 'Clearly defined centres'.

line 1 word 4 to be 'founded' (not 'defined')

line 4 word 17 to be 'this' (not 'those')

line 7 word 11 to be 'justification' (not 'justifications')

line 9 insert the word 'a' between 'as' and 'tomb-making'.

- Section headed 'The London primacy'.

line 8 word 8 to be '15th' (not '16th').

I am reminded by J. Enoch Powell that the tomb of Richard de Vere listed on page 172 under Map, 3, 1400-25 and now at Bures in Suffolk was originally provided for Earls Colne Priory in Essex.

A Rental

of Arthur Mower
Donor unto you at y^e Annunciation of y^e lady
for hys halfe year's rente being y^e first day
of June dond: 1606: And in the reigns of y^e
most dread sovereigne Lord King James of
England France & Ireland the first year
And of y^e 26 years reign of Scotland the
xxvith year

- + **Impmes** Elizabeth Donnell of Stronsburg
and wth her husband of hardwyl for land
in y^e more consob ground and payd to her old plun
for y^e 26 years rente at hys 26 days
- + Peter Forthill of Etobolow hys self for moss
and land in Drounfeld woodcuse and payd to hys
tenant hys Peter for at hys 26 days
- + Honey hantke for hys more land of y^e north side
hys gut & y^e land in Drounfeld woodcuse & payd
to hys self at hys 26 days
- + Robt Peyton of Drounfeld woodcuse for y^e 26
moss & land in y^e same & payd hys self at hys 26 days
- + Robt Deelo of Donloy for y^e moss & land
in y^e same and payd to hys self at hys 26 days
- + Arthur Garthwyll outwed of my moss and
land in Cold Ashton at hys 26 days after hys
death of y^e 26 full & much my sister Jane
James platt for my Deltay & Garden in Cold Ashton y^e 26
- + Jo: Bonot for my moss & land at y^e lough of y^e 26
- + Jo: Mowbray for y^e salt of Gceest consob land a
y^e 26
- + Jo: Mowbray for y^e salt & y^e salt modors a
y^e 26
- + James Dalton of Wygley for my barn & land
at hys in Wygley accordyng to a boundary but
y^e 26
- + Ryt Mowbray for my moss & land at y^e lough hys
to: Dalton for y^e lough consob & Deltay a
y^e 26
- + Ryt Alon married Mowbray was wth y^e 26 of a
y^e 26

ARTHUR MOWER OF BARLOW WOODSEATS, COUNTY DERBY

A SIXTEENTH CENTURY YEOMAN

(by Rosemary Milward)

Introduction

In 1558, on the death of his father, George, Arthur Mower of Barlow Woodseats began a rental of his property which was continued by his son, Robert, and by his grandson, Arthur.¹ It consists of pieces of paper 6 inches wide and from 12 to 16 inches long which were stitched together so when the roll came to an end in 1655 it measured 103 feet.

Both sides were used, one for his tenants and their rents, the other for his chief rents and the proceedings of the various manor courts. His personal comments are scattered throughout. During most of Arthur's life the writing is small and neat and the information is well and carefully set out. Latterly the quality varies: from time to time other men evidently took their turn, and for the last two years before his death it appears to be the writing of an old man with failing sight - the lines are crooked, words are misplaced and the ink is blotched. The chief rent side and most of the rental appear to be his own work, and, indeed, he states - "*I wrot me name and thys Remembraunces I set doune*" and when delivering up his rentals to George Barley on resigning as bailiff he describes them as "*they whyche was me hown hand wryting*".

Each side has a heading:

'A Rentall of Arthur Mowere for hes wholl year folowing and began at our Lady daye the next after the departur of my father Georg mower And was unpaid at daye of hys deathe Anno dom 1558 A °Regn Pylipe and Mary the iiijth and the fayst year of the Raigh'

The reverse starts a little later:

'A Remembraunce or Nootte of the paying of my Chyffe Renttes dewe unto the Chyffe lordes of the fees and the Sarvesses that dow apartayne or Bylong to the same renttes and the manere of the same as was demandyd of my Arthur mowere After the deathe of my father Georg mower as I prowed by my lerned Counsell in the lawe the tenues of my landes and the Sarvesses I hought to do to them and in wate manure or hordare the should by Donne hor was Donne at the tyme afoursayd by my Arthur mower After the deathe of my father Georg mower as here after foloethe or Inshewethe in the Raygne of our most Souffarant lady quene Elyzabeth ij Anno Domini 1559'

It is from the detailed reporting on this roll that this account of Arthur Mower's life is mainly based; it provides information about his property, his farming, tenants, the manor courts and many disputes. His well-known Memorandum also helps with the family and what was happening in the district and other documents in the Thorold Archives have also been used. In some extracts the spelling has not been modernised in the interest of illustrating his rich Derbyshire speech. He is often verbose and repetitive, perhaps as a result of studying the legal language of his charters and deeds, and he is careful to consult the legal profession on occasions when his rights were questioned.

Early owners of Barlow Woodseats

In about 1270 Jordan de Lees, who is thought to be Jordan d'Abitot, ancestor of the Barleys, made a grant of land to Robert Francis of Barlow Woodsetts. Some time later Robert's son, Adam, confirmed to Allan le Heme '*all that land called Barley Woodsetts between the Roggewaygate and Waterfallgate*' - ways still traceable. In 1360 Margerie, daughter and heiress of William de Heme of Barlow Woodseats granted the estate to William de Mora and Joan his wife.² It seems probable that the Mowers (also spelled More, Mawer, de Mora, del Mor) were already tenants

as their names appear as witnesses to several deeds of local property before this time. Roger de la Mor subscribed 9s 3d to the lay subsidy in 1327/8; the same, or another, Roger granted, with Roger de Barley, a messuage and a bovate of land in Barlow Woodseats to Henry Nutte of Castleton in 1368, and various James, Johns, Roberts and Williams of Barlow Woodseats are recorded between 1323 and 1407.

It is possible that in these early times Woodseats was a small settlement, rather than a single dwelling, and that Henry Nutte had a separate house and land, this name having no other connection with the Mowers, and in later documents names other than Mower appear, though these may have belonged to servants or relations living with the family.

In 1438 Adam Mower left land in Barlow Woodseats to his son, James, and after a gap of nearly fifty years the Mowers acquired their largest block of property when Robert married Elizabeth, eldest daughter and co-heiress of Thomas Hugate, the younger³, of Chesterfield, described as a draper. The Hugates were of some importance in the town and had, for several generations, been buying houses and lands in Chesterfield and district since 1447, or before. Members of the family are entered in the court rolls of Temple Normanton from 1447 to 1473⁴, but three years later the entry is for the heir of Thomas Hugate, which continued till 1490 when Robert Mower's name is down - he was Arthur's grandfather. In 1500 he was ordered to put his hedge and land in order, and the land of John Pyppys, chaplain, and he was amerced on several occasions for non-attendance. Ten years after this 'Robert Mower Buxton and Ashillhurst as heirs of Thomas Hugate' were in mercy for default of suit. Buxton and Ashillhurst had married Elizabeth Mower's two sisters, Margery and Joan, and so inherited the other two thirds of the Hugate estate. Buxton was of Brassington and does not feature in the court rolls, but John Ashillhurst's name is there more than once, for instance when he was granted the tenancy of a tenement in the tenure of John Wilson lying beside the 'Fleshamuls' in Chesterfield; a John Wilson occupied a house left by Hugate to Joan Ashillhurst's son, so, if it was the same tenement, he had had to wait some thirty years for ingress, for which he paid 9s.⁵

A rental of Thomas Hugate of 1450 exists and it is interesting to compare it with that of the Retford merchant, John Rowley, of his holdings in Chesterfield in 1411. That he was alive still in 1450, or had a son of the same name, is suggested by the Hugate entry:

'Item 4 acres of land lying in the fee of Dronfield⁶ and a meadow pleck in pease croft⁷ between the land of Thomas Bassettes upon the east side and half an acre of John Rowley upon the west side, and butts of the highway at the south end, and upon the water that is called hypper at the north end, and geves by year 6s 8d.'

Rowley⁸ and Hugate both had property in the Marketstead, Hasland, the Pease Crofte and Loundhill in Brampton. Little is known about Rowley, who was probably of a previous generation, but it is possible that the acquisitive Hugates bought some of his estate during the forty years between the two rentals.

In 1485 the last Thomas Hugate (the younger) made a partition of his estate between his three daughters and Elizabeth's share can be seen in the first rental of her eldest son, George Mower, whose rentals for 1520, 1524, 1530 and 1557 survive. That of 1520 is headed:

'A trewe Remembraunce of Ressevyng of my Renttes the whych I had by in Erytances off my late father Robert moware and Elizabeth the wiffe the whyche was the doughtiare and here of Thomas Howgate by my George moware here unto forsayd Robart and Elyzabethe and to my heres for evere as here after foloethe in the xij yeare of the Rene of oure moste dryd and souffarant lord kynge henry the Eyghte anno domini 1520 fyrste for my mother Renttes that come of here of had landes and tenementes ...'

George died in 1558, having married three wives - Agnes Blythe, the mother of Arthur and his four sisters, who probably came from the Blythes of Norton or Dronfield, Ann Hunt and Agnes, daughter of John Parker of Egglesfield, co York.⁹ Parker was a prosperous iron master with smithies at Wadsley Bridge, Treeton and Whiteley. As a measure of his success he left silver and gold to his wife, Cecilie, and to his daughter, Frances, an iron-bound chest with eight keys, in the custody of four persons, containing more silver and gold. To his other

daughter, Agnes, her husband, George Mower, and their children an unspecified sum of money was bequeathed (and no doubt she had had her portion on marriage). George was to be one of the executors and received a quarter of Parker's raiment.

He seems to have led an uneventful life, collecting his rents, running his farm and presumably attending the courts. Arthur writes that at the latter end of his life he lost some of his rents for want of asking, so perhaps he was not a forceful man or, by then, in declining health. But it is his son, Arthur, who gives us a vivid picture of the life of a Derbyshire yeoman.

Arthur Mower

In 1595 Arthur Mower composed a document with the heading:

'The Pedegrey of all thoos gentilmen And yemen that doe paye unto my Arthur mower and my heiers of Barley Woodsettes A standing yearly Rentt dewe unto my at the Annunciation of our ladye and S^{te} mychall thangell the tym out of mynd hearto fore not to the conterarye'.¹⁰

In this he says *'when my father was dead, I being about eighteen years old'*, so he was born in 1540, married at 15 and died in 1613 aged 73.

He was an observant man and little relating to his neighbours escaped his notice. We see through the eyes of a man who was there what actually happened when land, or a manor, was sold; what was aid and done in a dispute between the lord of the manor and his tenant as to whether the property was held by knight service¹¹ or by socage tenure¹²; the procedure at funerals or the courts.

What education he received can only be guessed at. Chesterfield school was not founded until 1594 and the fact that Chesterfield men left money for this purpose in the 1560s and 70s shows that the need was felt. Neither did the Free School of Henry Fanshawe at Dronfield exist until 1579. In 1581 some sort of school was held in the nether chapel at Holmesfield¹³, but whether it was operating in Arthur's childhood has not been discovered. If there was no school for him to attend, what learning, and the art of writing, he acquired was probably from either the local clergy or those of Chesterfield.

Meticulous in setting out his rentals and in copying those of his father and grandfather Hugate, he amassed an unusual quantity of records for a man in his position. He was clearly a shrewd man and one who would fight for his rights. In fact, so determined was he that no man should deprive his family of their ancient privileges that he set down what these were in writing at several times for use in the immediate future and for his heirs. He seemed to have respect for the earls and baronets to whom he owed his chief rents but he was not an easy neighbour and resented the middle men - the bailiffs, the clergy (when they acted in this capacity) and particularly his wife's cousin, Robert Fanshawe.

For most of his life he was healthy and energetic but perhaps in middle age suffered from rheumatism. In 1588 he missed the leets in Chesterfield as he was not able to travel, having been troubled with *'acke in me lims aloung tyme afore'* and still was. He was ill several times in the 1590s though what form this took is not specified; at such times his sons paid his chief rents and they and his friends essoined¹⁴ him at the courts. In the last ten years of his life George, and less frequently, Robert, his heir, took over many of his duties when he had a poor hand or *'soar foote'* and was not able to ride, or was just sick.

In 1555 the wife chosen for him was a minor local heiress who shared with her sister the estate of their father, Christopher Kyng of Holmesfield. He died three years later when Joan Mower inherited property in Holmesfield and Millthorpe which added compactly to the Woodseats estate.¹⁵

Two years after their marriage, Jane, the first of their eight children was born. She was followed by George, who died three days later, Mary, Robert, Dorothy, another George, Anne and Alice born in 1571. Their god-parents were drawn from relations and local families but the Mowers began with the gentry and Jane had Mrs Barley of

Barlow, John Fanshawe of Fanshawegate and Mrs Fox of Lees, grandmother of Peter Barley and 'at bishop' (confirmation) Mr Henry Fanshawe's wife of London. After this grand array the others had to be content with the yeomanry.

All these children married and had families, the members of which their grandfather recorded with his usual thoroughness. Three babies were born at Woodseats, the other eleven in their own homes. When tragedy happened Arthur was moved to describe the scene. Jane's fate was a sad one for she and her twin boys died at their birth. He writes '*the mother was buried against the seat opposite the old chancel door, her elder son laid close by the side of her, close to the seat side, and her younger son was buried on the other hand his mother in the chancel at Barley*'. And less than a year later Jane's widower, William Outram, was dead. Another daughter, Dorothy, married to Thomas Wilson of Wothwaite, Yorkshire, in 1589, had three children, George, Joan and Frances, born in 1590, 1593 and 1599, unusual spacing in those days when a child arrived year after year, but their father died a month after the last baby. Perhaps this was a favourite daughter for Arthur missed the leets three times between 1596 and 1598 because he was at Wothwaite, the last time '*upon great occasions*', though what these were is not revealed. Thomas was buried the same day close to his seat in Tickhill church and afterwards all the neighbours were dined and money was given to the poor folks in Tickhill. The other Woodseats girls married into local families and received rather small doweries.

Arthur's two sons were Robert and George. The former was born in 1562 and was Arthur's heir. On his marriage to Joan Sheldon of Tissington his parents made over to him the Millthorpe estate of his grandfather Kyng and he lived in the Millthorpe house for the rest of his life, his widow and seven children remaining there till they married or left home. Robert's second son, George, also lived there until he died. Inventories survive for both these men and provide much interesting information.¹⁶

Robert's goods were valued at £424, £100 of which related to the lead mill. The house was large with 17 rooms, an unusual one being the clock chamber with clock, chime and bell, and there were chambers for the maids and other servants. Service rooms comprised the kitchen, two butteries, oven house, kiln house, larder and store chambers. Much furniture is listed but not described in detail; a plentiful supply of linen, household equipment, food (6 score lbs of butter, 21 cheeses) with refinements such as books, a citterne¹⁷, a pair of playing tables¹⁸, a frame for a child to go in, and outside, 2 pea cocks, 3 pea hens and a turkie hen. The farming side is described in the farming section.

Less is known about Arthur's second son, George, born in 1567. His father presented him with certain rents and is said to have given him lands in Chesterfield; he is also referred to as a tanner. He was the son most concerned with his father's business, dealing with minor local problems, collecting the Barlow rents, on occasions attending the Chesterfield courts. As a bachelor he probably lived at Woodseats and at the age of 40 he married Helen, daughter of Hugh Bateman of Hartington, steward to William, Lord Cavendish. They continued to live at Woodseats where their son, Arthur, was born in June 1608. But Helen died the next year so, apart from servants, the family at Woodseats after this consisted of an ageing grandfather, a middle-aged son and a baby, all the Mower daughters being married and their father having been a widower for many years. Arthur's financial problems seem to have increased, owing to unpaid rents, debts and old age, so it was George who, in 1607, bought £82 worth of his father's goods and chattels and undertook to provide sufficient and convenient diet and lodging for him for the rest of his life. He seems to have been a kindly man and later was helping his nephew, Arthur the second, with rent collecting and other small estate jobs.

Arthur and the Barleys

To return to Arthur Mower as a young man, in 1563 he became bailiff to George Barley, lord of the manor of Barlow, younger brother of Robert who was Bess of Hardwick's first husband. The family home was Barlow Hall, lying in grounds opposite the chapel, surrounded by farm buildings, service rooms, gardens and a great fish pond which was filled in about this time with a thousand loads of earth. It was a house of many rooms, the main ones seeded, and much of the furniture was of '*walnut tree*', a wood little used at this time except by the rich. The great hall, which was open to the roof and still used for feeding the retainers and some of the family, contained only two long tables, a long form and twelve buffet stools. There were also two cupboards with no doors which were side

tables with two or three shelves for displaying silver, pewter or earthenware. When not panelled the rooms were hung with red and green say, a fine serge; bed hangings and cushions were of brightly coloured fabrics.

The Barleys made many improvements outside, supervised by Mower, such as making a new garden on the south side of the Hall, paving the ways about the barns and rearing a wainhouse on the south side of the church but it was not until the Earl of Shrewsbury took over the estate that the house was altered, in fact modernised. Arthur writes in 1590 *'my lord took down hull at Barley and altered the going into the little parlour and going up into the chamber over it'*. It seems unlikely that he demolished the great hall but he probably had a floor put in to divide it into two storeys which require the change of the access to the little rooms, a fairly common alteration at this time.

Mower's duties as bailiff were many - collecting rents, supervising servants and workmen, accompanying the family on journeys, etc. He was not enriched by the salary he received which was 6s 8d per year and as many livery coats as the other Barley yeomen had.

George Barley's son, Peter, had been sent to live and be educated, according to custom, at Mr Talbot's house in Lancashire. Talbot had bought his wardship from Mr Frecheville of Staveley and, as usually happened in such cases, Talbot married his daughter Frances to Peter Barley in 1566, no doubt with an eye (though mistakenly) to the Barley lands. The wedding took place at Salesbury, Lancashire, and Arthur described the cavalcade setting out from Barlow - first George Barley, his wife and daughter, Alice, followed by his men, Arthur and four others. Behind them were the bridegroom's grandmother, Mrs Fox of Barlow Lees, other relations and their retainers. To Mower's satisfaction, all expenses were paid.

George was evidently a sick man then, for in 1567 he went to London before Christmas for two months to take physic for the cough and phlegm - most probably tuberculosis - and Arthur went with him as far as Nottingham. He came home again no better and proceeded to settle his accounts with his steward. Arthur relates that he delivered in all his rentals to his master, which were in his own handwriting, and his master made acquittance in his handwriting for what he had received at every rent day *'and if my master should lay anything to my charge, let him show the rental of my hand-writing and there you shall find all the acquittances on every rental on it'*. In an age when litigation was enjoyed he was determined to be prepared! George died in January 1568/9 and Mower ceased to be steward to the Barleys.

Nevertheless his preoccupation with their affairs continued and from his Memorandum it is known that Frances, Peter and his mother lived together in Barlow Hall for eight years. But it seems to have been a far from happy arrangement for his mother suddenly left the Hall, taking all her household stuff with her. She went to a house belonging to her mother-in-law so Peter and his wife were left with a house empty of furniture and 'provision'. He was probably extravagant and incapable of managing his finances. Some time before he had mortgaged part of the estate to Rowland Eyre of Hassop and later to Mr Blount of Eckington, his uncle by marriage, Mr Roger Columbelle and Mr Roger Beresford¹⁹. In 1586, overwhelmed by debt, he *'flytted'* to his father-in-law's house whence his wife had gone with her belongings a fortnight before. Peter locked up the Hall doors and left nobody in it but Edward Bolton, the steward, and his wife to live in the Lady's Parlour. Francis Leake of Barlow Grange and Arthur went with him to Grinlow Moor beyond Stoney Middleton. His other men went all the way together with two little girls riding behind two of Peter's men. The girls were cousins, both called Mary Talbot, who had been brought up at Barlow Hall,

The Barleys' reign in Barlow was nearly over. Peter became ill and died in 1588. When his brother, James, inherited he had really nothing to live on as the mortgagees sold the whole manor of Barlow to George, Earl of Shrewsbury, who bought what James had left - part of the manor of Dronfield, Hill Top and Dunston Hall and its lands.

Arthur did not seek to serve any other master: he already had plenty to do otherwise. His neighbour's activities were absorbing. At Moorhall, for instance, a mile or so to the south west of Woodseats, lived in succession two Foljambe brothers, Godfrey and Hercules, who came of a minor branch of this family which had been powerful since the fourteenth century and owned houses and land in many places. At this time their principal seat was at Walton, near Chesterfield. Godfrey and Hercules stemmed from Roger of Linacre. There had been Mowers at

Moorhall '*tyme oute of mynde*' until in 1573 Arthur Mower's cousin, James, exchanged it with Godfrey Foljambe for property in Holmesfield. Godfrey died in 1591 and, having no children, left the Moorhall estate to his brother, Hercules. He was a professional soldier serving in Ireland, the Netherlands and the West Indies and when in England inhabited a remarkable number of houses in Derbyshire and elsewhere. In 1591 he was living at Fairburn, near Ferrybridge in Yorkshire, and Arthur sent a man up to fetch him. He arrived next day and his servants and goods soon after. Life at Moorhall at this point was far from peaceful as the executors, Roger Columbelle and Edward Beresford, were trying to sort out the complicated affairs of the two brothers. An inventory was being made by four men who had been called in and Godfrey's widow came for 4 to 5 days to see about her thirds. Thus every room would have had people inspecting every object and making lists. Hercules went off to London and decided not to occupy the house so Arthur's draught²⁰ and one from Grange were used to remove Mr Hercules' goods to Chesterfield where they were stored in a chamber belonging to Thomas Rollinson (or Rawlinson), a well-to-do tanner with several houses in the town and a shop '*under the Towns Hall*'. He seems to have been a kind of servant to the Foljambes for he paid Arthur Mower, on Hercules' account, the overdue rent for the Moorhall fields two years later. Then, as Hercules was perpetually in debt, Mower had to wait a further four years for the next instalment.

Another request for help came from Thomas Eltoste in 1606. He had a lease of Barlow Hall and domain lands for £42 yearly and also rented the Barlow smithies, the furnace there having been erected by the Earl in the previous year. Eltoste's request, made overnight, was that Arthur should be present when the first sow of iron was drawn at 7 o'clock on the morning of 27th March. He arrived before 6 to find that it had been drawn an hour before. All he could do was to give the workmen a groat²¹ and three pots of ale at Richard Greaves of the smithies.

Neighbours and relations called on him to '*make up*' the marriages of their children; in the case of a kinsman called Robert Mower and Alice Hill of Heath he arranged for the bride's mother to give £10 of money '*and a penny worth at sight of themselves, and to array her to bed and back, and to give them their dinner for as many as she bids of her part, and to be to them a daily friend*'. He doubtless kept a strict eye on the business side of the marriages of his own seven children and was involved in their lives afterwards.

Farming

Neither the rentals nor the Memorandum give many details of the farm at Woodseats but certain measures are touched on, namely the hiring and letting out of cows. This had been fairly common in the fifteenth century when the usual charge was 1s a year, so that assuming the average value of a cow to have been 10s the interest was 10%.²² In the sixteenth century the charge had increased, the hirer expected a calf and a supply of milk for his money. The owners of these leased-out cows were sometimes the churchwardens, who used the rents for the good of the parish, but the instances in Barlow seem to have been private transactions between neighbours.

In 1563 one, Heye, took Arthur's cow called Lovely for three years. The manuscript is defective so that the rent is missing, but in the next year Robert Parkenson hired a cow from one of Arthur's sisters a month before St Ellin's day for which he was to pay 4s in the first year and 4s 4d in each of the following years. Again, Mower was present when his step-mother, Agnes South, was arranging with William Obson of Dore to let him a cow for three years at 4s a year. At Whittington near Chesterfield an orphan called Margaret Harrye²³ was left a black cow named Frostle in 1575 and her uncle Thomas was to have the letting and setting of it to the child's behoof, while a man at Brampton left his son a heifer or cow, with the increase, which was let to one Fletcher of Tupton for three years. In 1598 the charge per year was 6s 8d and by 1633 the cost had risen again and a man from Brampton had '*two kine that are at Hyre £2 13s 4d*'. At the end of the century one at hire cost £2 10s.

Derbyshire cattle about this time were well known and were black with white horns tipped with black²⁴ and this is borne out by many Derbyshire wills and inventories showing black to be the popular colour, though some were brown, some red and a few farmers had the odd white beast - Thomas Furness of Eyam, a substantial yeoman - had white cattle worth £35.

Perhaps Mower's many activities outside his home and estate - his regular attendance at the various courts most of his life, his stewardship to the Barleys from 1563, and other concerns, caused him to neglect the running of the

farm, for he mentions several unprofitable transactions. They had a cow called Lounslly that they ought to have sold at Chesterfield Fair but had, mistakenly, kept over the winter when food was short, so they only got 17s for her: the dun cow he fed all the summer and then killed was, perhaps, more useful, but the history of Brownly is less satisfactory for she was bought from a relation, and though kept for a year, produced no calf, after which an exchange was made with cousin, William Parker, for a 'beeched' cow '*and that was the beste markett we could bring her to*' though he considered her to be worth 26s. 1571 seems to have been a bad year financially and Arthur writes '*A Remembraunce of the debts I owe*' which included £3 6s 8d to his sisters, Dorothy and Anne (unmarried, living at home and obviously taking some part in the farming) for two oxen and £20 16s 8d to his step-sister, Agnes South, who appears to have lent him the money. He did, however, make it up to Dorothy six years later when he gave her 20s to buy her wedding gear at Chesterfield and 3s 4d more to buy her a felt (presumably a hat). There were other debts for corn and wool.

About the farm, ditching and hedging were carried out in 1566 when '*I dyked over the Nether croft between the green yard end and the aforesaid croft and quicksetted it;*²⁵ *and between the house and the lane end gate, and from the Coney Clappers to the kiln house end and quicksett them*'. There was also a new hedge in the Rose fields. Roger Travis was the ditcher and Thomas Marsh 'my man' and his master dyked for 13 days and the men got 4d a day. The house Arthur lived in was not that existing today and so it is difficult to place these hedges but the Rose fields lie to the west of Woodseats and here there are no stone walls as in other parts of the farm, only mixed hedges.

Management of the land is hinted at in Robert Mower's marriage settlement drawn up by Arthur in 1589. After the latter's death his executor, Robert, was to have the Woodseats lands for a whole year in order to keep the farm running; to enter to the fallow and to sow the ground with ware corn²⁶ and to reap when appropriate, but if Robert should inherit at such time of the year that corn cannot be sown nor reaped, the ground is to be left fallow for a year. Arthur died in August which was convenient for reaping the crops of that year.

No inventory of Woodseats has been found for any date, but Robert, dying seven years after his father in 1620 left one which indicates that the farm, and that of Millthorpe where Robert lived, were run together. At that time the stock they carried was 30 head of cattle and 80 sheep. This was a small flock compared with other Holmesfield farmers, four of whom, between 1542 and 1600, had more than 100 sheep each and one, Thomas Burton of Cartledge, had nearly 300. With regard to Robert's crops, he had wheat, barley, corn, peas and hay, all of which his father grew in 1563. Robert did not note his peas but still today there are the Far, Middle and Near pease Fields. The barn with five pairs of crucks still survives and would have housed most of the 40 thraves²⁷ of barley, 78 thraves of wheat and 481 thraves of oats.

An example of early enclosure appears in 1590 when somewhat complicated changes to some Mower land in Holmesfield took place. Arthur had a number of scattered doles²⁸ which he was keen to consolidate and so an arrangement was made with Mr Thomas Fanshawe of London (the second Queen's Remembrancer) to exchange his own great dole in the Old Field Head for Fanshawe's '*gryne gatt dooll*' and a little '*Remblant*' which joined his dole in the Nether Old Field. This new land he enclosed with his own and called it the Old Field Close, pulling down an old '*dayke*' which was between the two and '*I mayd good land of Dayke as any ys in ye feld inclosed*'.

The Woods and Industry

The area of woodland is considerable and, although reduced since medieval times, Woodseats is still an appropriate name, there being small woods on every side, the greatest and most profitable through the years being to the west - the Rose and Hagg woods. These were carefully managed as springwoods in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, yielding a saleable crop about every forty years. In 1526 they were felled and the Earl of Shrewsbury bought the timber for £10 for his industrial projects which consumed the woods of many local landowners. Again in 1563 the Rose wood and Rosehagg were fallen and sold for £50 6s 8d though the buyer is not named. Arthur also sold kidwood²⁹ and charcoal but when the buyer was Peter Barley the money was never paid. The woods continued to be profitable and in the early nineteenth century these and some other woods yielded £13,000. The present house, reputedly built by Arthur's grandson about 1620, has a great quantity of exceptionally large timbers but whether the home woods produced them is not known.

Mower is surprisingly, and unfortunately, reticent about his mineral enterprises - just the casual mention of charcoal but nothing about its production which must have employed several men and sites, some of which have been identified in the Rosewood in modern times. There are also the numerous small saucer-shaped pits in most of the woods which have been giving rise to much speculation recently³⁰ but no clue as to their purpose is to be found in the Mower archives. One suggestion has been that these hollows produced whitecoal, or kiln-dried wood, used in the smelting of lead. Some light may be thrown on the problem by the survey carried out by William Senior for William, Lord Cavendish. Under the heading of Moorhall et alia, an estimate was made by Henry Bramley in 1618 of the value of the timber in four local woods: the Long Stripes Wood adjacent to the Rose Wood on the north-west was £40; the Cockglode at £70; the Fishpond Wood, £28, and the Stonepit Field Wood, £162. £300 in all. Following this is the cost of converting the timber into whitecoal:

<i>'Every dozen of White Coale brought to the leadmilne is sould for</i>	<i>11s</i>
<i>You must pay for makeinge a dozen of White Coale</i>	<i>2s</i>
<i>You must pay for carriage of a Dozen of White coale unto the lead milne</i>	<i>1s 8d</i>
<i>And thereafter they pay for makeinge a footther of lead.'</i> ³¹	

In Robert's inventory, taken only seven years after Arthur's death, waste, cokes, a stock of lead and debts were appraised to more than £100 'at the Lead Milne'. Evidence seems to indicate that Arthur was no business man and so perhaps it was Robert, who, though he died young, started the rise of the Mower fortunes built largely on the lead trade. His grandson, another Robert, was known as the great lead merchant when he died in 1675.

The dwelling house at Woodseats

The architectural history of Woodseats is something of a mystery and nowhere in Arthur's many writings is there any reference to the house. According to George Mower, a much better diarist in the eighteenth century, the present house was built by Arthur Mower II, grandson of Arthur I, who died in 1652. In 1620 he married Rose, daughter of Robert Stone of Carsington, gentleman, and a date of 1624 over a fireplace suggests that he considered the house he had inherited was too humble for his station as at his death he was the owner of property in Hognaston, Kilburn, Horsley, Stanley, Barlow, Dronfield, Brampton and Chesterfield. He had married into the gentry and was expanding the family interests in the lead and other trades.

The previous dwelling, having sheltered generations of Mowers, would have been medieval and most probably a hall house, smaller than the present building. It does not appear to be incorporated in Arthur II's new one which seems to have been built all of a piece with a large central chimney and rooms radiating from it. There is much re-used timber and a pair of half crucks in an attached cottage which has a seventeenth century look. Historically, George, Arthur's second son, was paying an annual rent of £8 for 'part of Woodseats' for the three years (1614-1617) following his father's death. What was happening to the other part? His sisters were married, his parents dead, and Robert never left Millthorpe. The site of the ancient dwelling, whether part of the present one, or in a different place, is likely to remain unknown.

Servants

It was a common practice for landowners to settle trusted and reliable upper servants, and other men who worked for them, on estate farms. Sir William Coventry, writing about 1670, observed that few building craftsmen 'rely on their trade as not to have a small farm, the rent of which they are more able to pay by gains of their trade'. The Plumtry brothers, who worked at Hardwick and Owlcotes for Bess as wallers were rewarded with the tenancy of Moorhall which the Cavendishes had bought from Hercules Foljambe in 1601; John Akerode and Francis Baker, agent and secretary to the Clarke family of Somersall, rented farms on Clarke lands in Brampton and at least three men were treated in this way by the Mowers in Arthur's lifetime or were helped to rent the property of another landowner, as happened in 1615 when Robert Mower sent his chief rent for Woodseats by George Glover, his late servant, to Mr Thomas Hall, bailiff to Sir Charles Cavendish. 'The reason I sent it by Glover was that he desired Mr Hall's good will of a house and close that John Owldfeild dwelled in. I spoke to Mr Hall of seterday after, and he said that when he had spoken with the owldfeild children he should have his good will'.

Michael Mosley

In 1584 Michael Mosley, as a servant to Arthur Mower, was given on his marriage to Margaret Harry, whose father was the previous tenant, the tenancy of Lane Thornes House with the dole it stood on, two doles in a close called Old Field, one dole in the Holmes Close and another in Benylands. Also a close called New Close, except for a dole of Robert Haslams in that close. He was a tenant at will and remained there until 1620. As an upper servant he collected the rents; on one occasion when he was sent to Moorhall for that of Hercules Foljambe, which was overdue for the Cote Fields and a dole in the Old Field, he found that Foljambe was away from home. Robert Jefcoot, his man, told Mosley that it would be sent down to Woodseats on his master's return when Robert Glossop delivered '*tow wholl shylynges*', of which Mower returned a groat. This transaction is puzzling as the rent of this land had been 3s 4d for many years. Perhaps the groat was 'luck money'.³²

Thomas Fentham

Another upper servant and rent collector. When Leycliffe House became vacant on the death of John Bennett in 1607, Arthur let Fentham have the house and land in the Lees Field for 30s a year. This was in consideration of his having served the Mowers for more than twenty years and '*he now waxeth owld*'. Two years later he rented the Harper Croft as well, after it was cleansed, so evidently he was not too decrepit to run a farm, which he did till 1614.

The Bennetts were old tenants, having been at Leycliffe since 1521, and John's two sons might have remained there had they not '*flytted*' to the Loads, in Brampton, without consulting their landlord. They seem to have asked for it back but by this time Fentham was in possession. Arthur however abated 10s of their unexpired lease.

Roger Travis

A respected workman, rather than a superior servant, in that he dug ditches and planted hedges and built his own house, which would have been inferior to the established farms let to Mosley and Fentham.

The Rosefields section reveals further details of the Travises.

Mower Property, Tenants and Rents

The estate in the second half of the sixteenth and early seventeenth was as follows:

Original

Barlow Woodseats, lands and woods.
Gorst House, Car Meadow and Car Meadow Wood.
Leycliffe House and land in the Lees Field.
Cotefields and a dole in the Old Field at Moorhall
Messuage and an oxgang of land at Cold Aston.
The Rosefield and Rose Wood

Hugate

The Old Hall in Chesterfield, with garden and yard butting on the water of Hipper, and a little close beyond the water; with a close in the Pease Croft lying in the fee of Dronfield,³³ butting on the water of Fulbrook on the north, and of Penmore in Hasland and the highway on the west.
A tenement in Soutergate³⁴ with a garden and yard, butting on the water of Hipper³⁵ with a close in the Pease Croft and an acre of land on the Highfield beneath Spital.
Three acres of land lying in Hasland.
A tenement in Dronfield Woodhouse that one Mason dwelt in.
A tenement in Dronfield Woodhouse on the north side gate.
A tenement at the over end of Dronfield Woodhouse and lands belonging.
Certain lands in Cowley called Black Carr, and other lands belonging to great John Coak farm.
A fourth part of a tenement in Wigley (Brampton).
Two acres of land lying on Lound Hill in Brampton.

Christopher Kyng

- 1578 Messuage in Millthorpe with a garden, orchard and 14 closes.
 A toftstead called the Old House Yards.
 Messuage in Holmesfield with garden, 2 yards and 2 crofts.
 Three closes called Riddings.
 One close called Grymselles.
 One dole in the Holmes.
 One dole in Renylands.
 Two doles in the Old Field.
 Two doles in the Townfield *'where is paid forth of the leasse dole to the Chapel of Holmesfield 2d per year'*
 One dole in Layne Tournes.

Bought by Arthur Mower from Godfrey Foljambe of Moorhall

- 1575 One croft called Symon Acre.
 Two acres in the Nether Lamb Croft.
 One close called Hobfield.
 One close called Fanshawe Acre.
- 1576 One tenement in Birley, Brampton, for which he paid 4 score and 10 pounds.
 One meadow lying near Renshaw Bridge Green, £25

Although map references can be attached to certain farms and fields, and many of these can be matched on the long roll, some have been utterly lost during the last 400 years. Either the buildings have been demolished without leaving a trace, as in the case of the Hagg and Rosefield houses which were both in or near woods and no buildings of any kind are in the area now, or more recent houses have replaced the ancient ones with a different name. Layne Tournes or Lane Thornes cannot now be found, and although Gorst or Gorse House and Carmeadow House were both in Wildhay Green, their exact sites are uncertain; Carmeadow Wood is shown on modern maps, so perhaps the present Holme Farm, which was part of the Thorold estate till some 30 years ago, has replaced Carmeadow House.

The Old Hall in Chesterfield was in Beetwell Street at the south east corner of South Place and was demolished about 1885. The Soutergate tenement was probably pulled down soon after 1697 when Robert Mower sold it for £100 to the Unitarians to build a house for their minister.

Only the Woodseats and Millthorpe houses, buildings and their lands were in hand, the other farms and lands being let. Relations were favoured - Uncle James Mower and his descendants at Gorst House, Mower cousins at Moorhall, brother-in-law Cartwright at Cold Aston. Several tenants built a dwelling or improved the farm and paid a reduced rent; some worked for the Mowers and were allowed the tenancy of a farm of their own - reliable servants would not be in arrears with the rent so it suited the landlord well. Some of the tenants changed quite often, others had held their farms and cottages for several generations. Remarkably, most of the rents hardly altered during the time that Arthur held his estate, Cold Aston being one of the exceptions. He did not increase them when his father died: indeed George's rental of 1520 shows the amounts mainly to be the same then as in 1613 - almost a hundred years with no change. The reason for an occasional alteration was usually if the tenant took on more, or less, land.

To be continued