

Vol 7

"DERBYSHIRE MISCELLANY"

THE LOCAL HISTORY BULLETIN  
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DERBYSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

DERBYSHIRE MISCELLANY

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Spring 1975.

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Derbyshire in 1975.

1975 sees the revival of the Federation of Derbyshire Archaeological and Historical Societies. Its newsletter will probably appear just before this number of Miscellany. A special meeting is planned for autumn, dealing with various aspects of conservation. If any one knows of new archaeological or historical societies would they please write to Mr. D. Fowkes at the Derbyshire Record Office, County Offices, Matlock, DE4 3AG.

The Derbyshire Historic Buildings Trust, Ltd., was set up at the end of 1974 to restore and conserve "those buildings in the County which would be lost to posterity unless some help is urgently given towards their conservation". The Trust is a registered charity, and a non-profit making company. Its Chairman is Mr. Alan Bemrose, and its Vice-Chairman the Duchess of Devonshire. It plans to buy property in need of preservation which cannot be restored by its owner, to restore it, then to sell or lease it. The Trust needs a widely based fund to assist with this work, and the help of everyone who is interested in old buildings, or enjoys a drive through Derbyshire's towns and villages. The minimum subscription is £1, but it is hoped that as many people as can will give more. A supporting programme of talks, exhibitions, and wine and cheese parties in country houses not normally open to the public is being arranged. Applications for membership should be sent to the Hon. Secretary, Mr. D. Knight, Stalisfield, Wishingstone Way, Matlock, DE4 5LU.

In honour of the Trust and European Architectural Heritage Year, 1975, the County Planning Department, Derby Museum and Art Gallery, and the Derbyshire Record Office are collaborating in a large exhibition on Derbyshire's Architectural Heritage including industrial building. The exhibition will open at Derby in May, and move to Ripley at the beginning of June. As much as possible will go to Hope 28 June - 6 July, then the whole exhibition to Glossop 8 July - 24 July, and Buxton 26 July - 17 August. Part of it will go to Castleton 29 August - 7 September, and part to Dronfield, 19 August - 11 September. The whole will be shown in Chesterfield 13 - 27 September, and in Tawney House, Matlock 4 October - 1 November. It will then move to Alfreton for November. It will continue to tour in 1976.

The Society has recently published a facsimile reproduction of P. P. Burdett's Map of Derbyshire surveyed in 1762-7 and reprinted in 1791. The map is the first one inch map of Derbyshire, the first map to show the county's full road network, and the first to attempt to show individual buildings as small groups as well as industrial sites. It can be bought from Mrs. C. Brown, 57 Dovedale Avenue, Long Eaton, Nottingham, price £1.50p.+ 30p. package and postage.

A ROMAN ROAD IN DERBYSHIRE

by

M. A. Bellhouse.

It appears that at long last, the line of the Buxton to Melandra Roman road, has been established. (D.A.J. 1971)

In 1959, several trenches were dug between Nuns Farm Fairfield and Dove Holes, proving that we were on the right trackway, but nothing was printed about it.

Our first 'dig', took place under the leadership of Dr. J.W. Jackson for the Buxton Field Club, and Jack Hodgson for the Melandra Field Group, at a point north of Nuns Farm, and near the end of the double row of trees on the west side of the Common.

Previously we had a walk along our proposed line from Batham Gate to Fairfield Road, noting the rubble of the former Grandstand for the Race Course, amongst the trees.

We had a preliminary dig on July 14th 1959, followed by 3 in September, with a further more extensive dig on Oct 11 1959. These were all on land between Nuns Farm and Brook House.

The following year, on May 22nd, a further trench was examined nearer to the Bridle Road, which crosses the Railway line, and in July, we moved along to a point behind the Market Garden at Tom Thorn, still on the same line, where two trenches were examined.

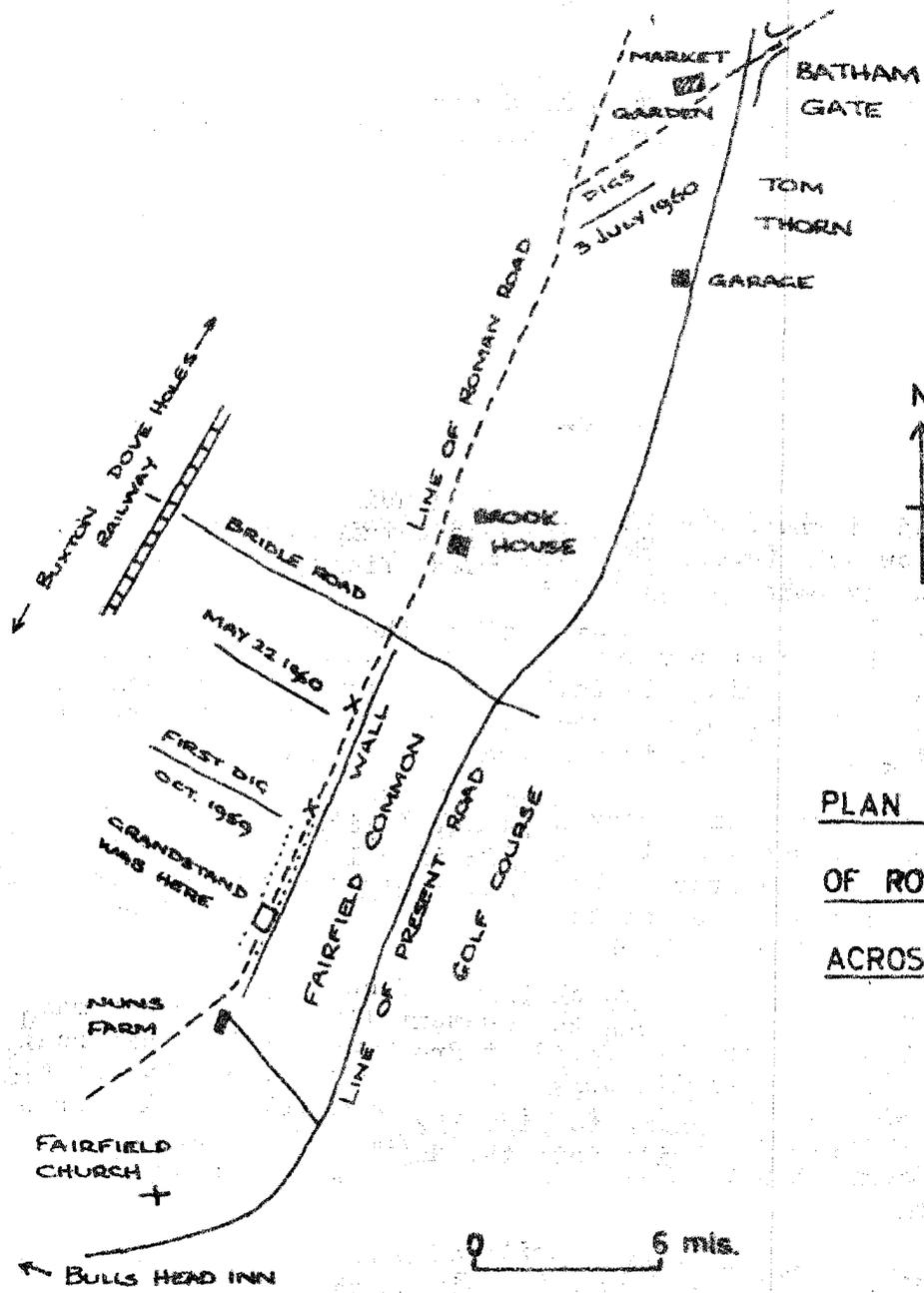
On the same day, we dug a section, (hoping to prove that Batham Gate did join up with our presumed Roman road), in the field to the right and South of the Market Garden.

All along our line, we found a raised causeway, commencing from a field (now a housing estate) below the Bulls Head Hotel, Fairfield where in 1878, a Roman Milestone was found.

Some of the paving stones had been robbed, but in all cases, what was left, lay approx. 1 foot below the surface. In no place, did we find any coins or pottery, which would have cheered and helped us.

On July 3rd 1960, the trench we examined to the South of the Market Garden, showed that although all stones had been removed, Batham Gate had continued to join up with our road, as the soil, of a different colour, was compacted to the width of a road.

Although we had no further digs, the ground was surveyed to beyond Dove Holes, noting the raised causeway running under

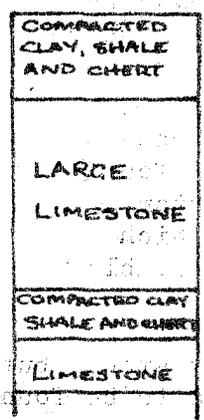


PLAN AND SECTIONS  
OF ROMAN ROAD  
ACROSS FAIRFIELD

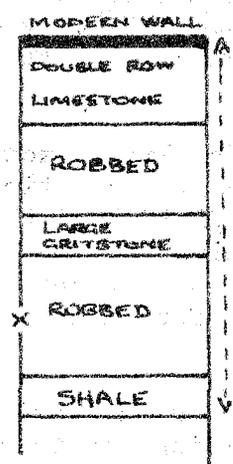
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COMMON

COMMON AND  
GOLF COURSE

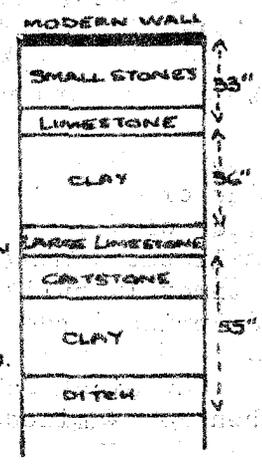


SECTION DUG  
3 JULY 1960



SECTION DUG  
22 MAY 1960

ON A  
CLAY  
FOUNDATION  
UP TO X  
WHOLE  
WIDTH 7 YDS.



SECTION DUG  
11 OCTOBER 1959

N ←

and beyond Bibbington's Tip, and descending to the small brook below Ash Piece Farm. We also obtained permission to dig at any point we wished in these fields, by the Burton family.

We thought the Roman way would follow the present road to Martinside, descending via Long Lane to cross the present Chapel to Whaley road, and continue at a slant up the fields to Lydgate, where there is a reasonable track.

Our findings, with photos and sketches, were duly sent to Mr Margary, who was pleased to agree with us over the pavement we had uncovered, but said in a letter dated Oct 31st, we should also have dug on the Common side of the modern Limestone wall for the kerb.

According to Mr C. Mycock (since deceased), three Roman Milestones once stood along the present line of the main road. One near the Bull grazing field at Brook House, one by the big lime tip and one opposite Brick Row at Dove Holes. All three have now disappeared owing to pipe laying. He found a further Roman stone, built into the Railway wall near Black Edge Farm.

Thanks to Messrs Taylor Frith of Dove Holes, we were able to see photographs taken from the air of the ground around Dove Holes, and the Roman Road was easily discernable running to Bibbington's tip.

As early as 1886, the Roman road was noted by Thomas Watkin, Tristram (D.A.J. vol viii), by J. Ward (Roman Roads in Britain 1919), W. Turner (Ancient Remains near Buxton p.194) and others.

In D.A.J. 1903, Mr Brittain, Auctioneer of Buxton, about the year 1878, made an excavation in the garden at the side of his house on Fairfield Road (No 147), and found a piece of pitched road, which was dug up and the stones utilised. Amongst them, was a Roman Milestone, which was ultimately built into the foundations of his new stables in Spring Gardens.

Mr Micah Salt, recorded the position of this stone, but when we examined the building, no trace of it was to be found.

SWATHWICK IN WINGERWORTH

AN EXERCISE IN HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY

by

David G. Edwards

Modern Ordnance Survey maps show Swathwick as a small area or group of houses, barely justifying the description of hamlet, situated on the ridge between Hill Houses and Harper Hill in Wingerworth. But a number of documents from the period before 1800 make it clear that Swathwick was formerly of much greater extent and for some purposes was considered as a distinct part of the parish or chapelry of Wingerworth. For instance: a rental of Wingerworth in 1427 includes a separate section for Swathwick;(1) surveys of the hundred of Scarsdale for military assessment in the 1650's quote acreages separately for Wingerworth and Swathwick(2); and the eighteenth-century land-tax assessments for the parish are headed "Wingerworth and Swathwick". There are other examples, though it is only fair to say that many pre-1800 documents do not make the distinction. The former extent of Swathwick is suggested by at least two sources: a fourteenth-century deed quoted by Yeatman (3) indicates that it included Stubbing to the south, and a register (4) of Sir Windsor Hunloke's estate in 1717 refers to a stone quarry "called Stonedge being in Swathwick". This and other similar Hunloke-estate registers also distinguish properties in Swathwick from those in Wingerworth.

However, none of the above documents or of the available maps (the earliest of which is dated 1758) makes it clear where precisely lay the boundary-if indeed it was at all accurately defined - between Wingerworth proper and Swathwick. Nevertheless it has proved possible to locate this boundary approximately, by combining the information given by five different types of record: 1) primarily, the land-tax assessment of 1780 (5), a survey of the Hunloke estate in 1779 (6), and the 1758 map (7) just mentioned; 2) secondarily, the Commonwealth surveys of Scarsdale referred to above, and the Wingerworth and Tupton enclosure award and map (8) of 1758. It was necessary to use the land-tax assessment because the 1779 survey combines the tenants of the two parts of the parish in a section entitled "Wingerworth and Swathwick Collected".

The 1780 land-tax assessment for the parish is made up of two lists of proprietors, occupiers and sums assessed. As Sir Henry Hunloke and the Dean of Lincoln appear as proprietors in both lists but Col. Henry Gladwin and the Rev. Samuel Pegge as proprietors in only the second list, it seems reasonable to assume that the first list refers to Wingerworth proper and the second to Swathwick, since other sources show that Henry Gladwin's property and Samuel Pegge's glebe lay in the western, i.e. Swathwick, part of the

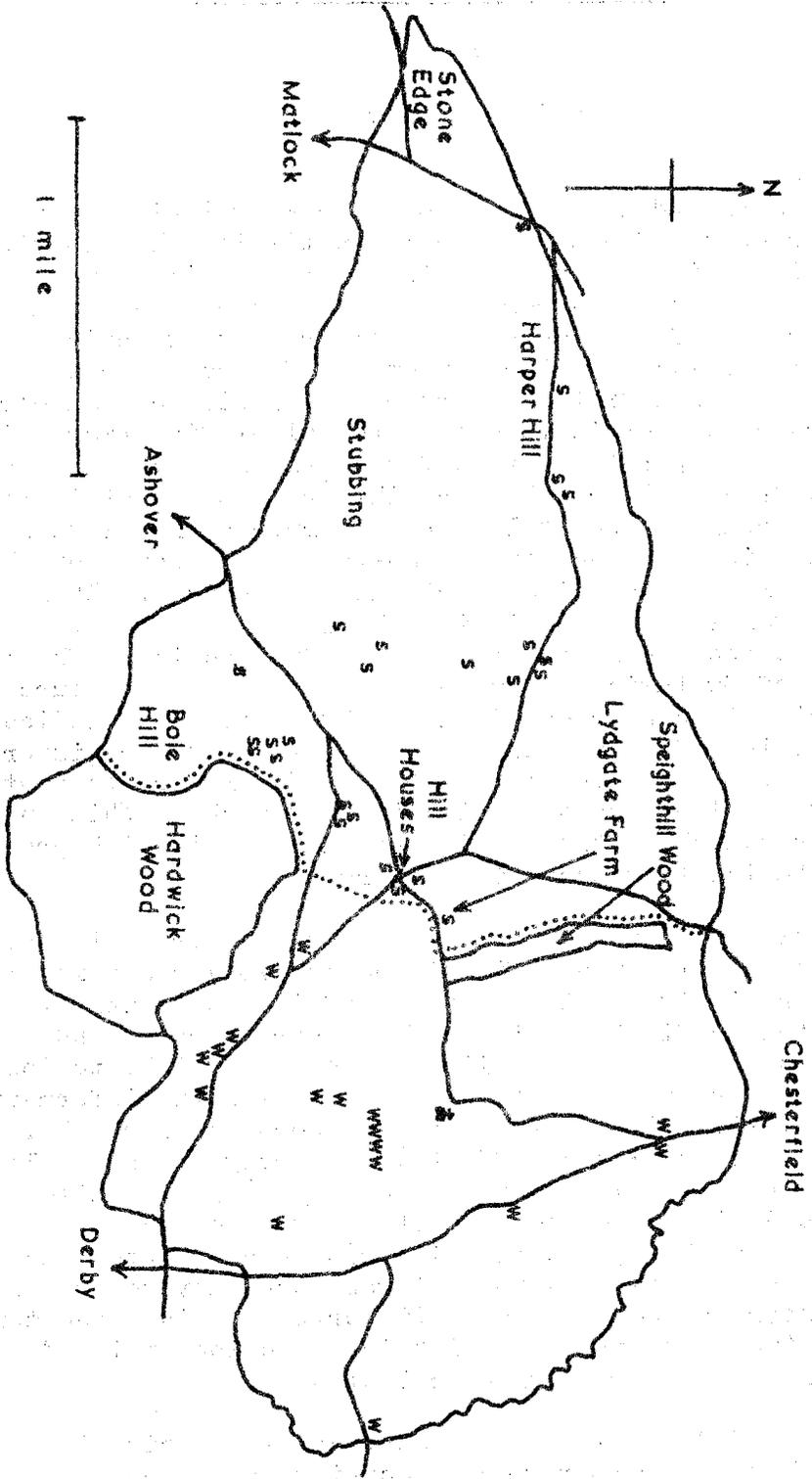


Fig. 1. Wingerworth parish, showing main roads and features mentioned in the text

parish. Complete correspondence between the land-tax assessment and the 1779 survey was not expected, because 1) the smallest landholders would have been exempt from the tax, 2) the survey covers only the Hunloke land in the parish, and 3) changes in tenants could have taken place from one year to the next. However, as the Hunloke land made up some 90 per cent of the parish, 2) was thought unlikely to present a serious problem.

As far as possible therefore, the tenants listed in the survey were assigned to Wingerworth or Swathwick according to their position in the land-tax assessment and, with the aid of the 1758 map, their houses were marked as W or S on an outline map of the parish (see Fig.1). The process may be summarized as follows.

A. Number of tenants listed in survey	69
B. Number of Hunloke tenants listed in land-tax assessment	52
C. Number of tenants common to A and B	48
D. Number of houses corresponding to C	44
E. Number of houses in D identified on 1758 map	42

It can be seen from Fig.1 that there is no intermixing of the W and S houses; this supports the assumption that the two parts of the land-tax assessment represent geographically distinct areas of the parish. One perhaps surprising feature is that Swathwick apparently extended so far to the east as to include Hill Houses and Lydgate Farm.

The above information leaves the actual boundary still a little vague, especially towards the north and south edges of the parish. It was thought unwise to attempt to use the limits of the farms or smallholdings attached to the houses to locate the boundary more exactly, because 1) the extents of these holdings could be changed by the landowner periodically, 2) some of the holdings were fragmented, and 3) some of the local farms cross even the parish boundary. However, it was guessed that the boundary might lie along the west side of Speighthill Wood, where there is a natural declivity, and along the west and north sides of Harwick Wood (leaving the summit of Bole Hill in Swathwick). To test this supposition, the area to the east of the dotted line marked on Fig.1 was worked out from the tithe award and map, and was compared with the area given for Wingerworth in the Commonwealth surveys. These surveys give the following figures.

		<u>Acres</u>
<u>Wingerworth</u>	Meadow, arable and pasture.....	948
	Woodland .....	400
	Total.....	<u>1348</u>

	<u>Acres</u>
<u>Swathwick</u> Meadow, arable and pasture .....	733
Woodland .....	200
Total .....	<u>933</u>

The woodland figures justify the assignment of Harwick Wood (over 250 acres) to Wingerworth rather than Swathwick.

The form of the Commonwealth figures made it necessary to deduct from the area east of the dotted line the acreage represented by roads, water and common land. The figure used here for common land is the 45 acres which was enclosed in this part of the parish in 1758; no better figure is available, but the chance of error from this source is less than if the western side of the dotted line had been chosen for the comparison, as the area to be deducted is much less.

The net area east of the dotted line proved to be a little over 1400 acres, which is not greatly different from the 1348 quoted above, considering the inaccuracy of seventeenth-century surveying and the possibility that in the 1650s there might have been more than 45 acres of commons in this part of the parish. If it is assumed that the seventeenth-century acre was a statute acre and that the parish boundary did not greatly change between the 1650s and its later known location, the above measure of agreement between the areas, though not absolute proof, suggests that the dotted line on Fig. 1 is indeed a reasonable position for the ancient boundary between Wingerworth proper and Swathwick.

Some support for the general NE-SW trend of this boundary is provided by the Commonwealth survey of church livings (9) made in 1650, which recommended that Wingerworth chapelry should be divided up between Ashover and Chesterfield. The relevant phrase in the survey is "the part of Swathwick on the north side of Wingerworth".

Finally, two questions remain: why the parish was divided into these two parts for some purposes, and why this division disappeared altogether after about 1800 (as is clearly shown for example by a change in layout of the land-tax assessment about then). Although Wingerworth appears in Domesday Book (as sokeland of Newbold manor), Swathwick is not recorded until the middle of the thirteenth century (10), and it was never a separate manor as far as is known. There is also no evidence that it had a separate local administration at any time. One possibility is that Wingerworth proper and Swathwick were once agriculturally independent of one another, each perhaps with its own open-field system. With the progress of enclosure, such a distinction would cease to be valid, but it could have become fossilized and have continued in use on occasion until finally recognised to be useless and inconvenient. Moreover, the small size of the total population (probably never exceeding 500 until the 1920s) hardly justified the continuation of such a division.

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CANAL BOATS, THEIR BUILDERS AND THEIR OPERATORS

IN THE FIRST SIXTY YEARS OF THE CANALS.

by

John Heath

The building of the canals in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century resulted in an expansion of boat-building, an occupation already well-established on the rivers of the country. In the East Midlands, Newark and Nottingham were the main centres for building river barges, that is vessels with a beam of up to fourteen feet and a length of about seventy feet. Boat-builders' 'yards' were sites on the river bank, generally with no special facilities, although William Flint had a saw-pit at Newark, and there was a well laid-out boat-repair yard at Woolsthorpe on the Grantham Canal.

Boat and barge-building in Derbyshire was largely restricted to the canals, the only river sites being at Cavendish Bridge where Soresby and Flack built boats in the 1820's, and outside the county at Burton where the Burton Boat Company built its own boats in the 1780's and 1790's.

Boat-builders in the south of the county (N.B. this excludes the Peak Forest and Chesterfield Canals) fall into two categories; the established builder like the Clifford family at Shardlow who operated from at least 1777 to 1838, and the occasional builder, who either built a boat for himself or moved from place to place building boats to order like John Leland, who between 1781 and 1816 built boats at Derby, Breaston, Swarkeston and Willington accounting for 3% of the boats built in the East Midlands between 1770 and 1840.

The source for this information is 'A Set of Tables for ascertaining the weight of the cargoes carried by boats navigating on the River Trent and other navigations communicating therewith' Vols. I - XII, which records the boats built between 1770 and 1850 after which date boat-building sharply declined with the competition of the railways. The list of names can be enlarged upon by reference to the directories published after this (N.B. the Gauge Books continue into the 1900's) but there are several omissions.

The earliest 'boat-yards' were established at Shardlow where the Shardlow Boat Company (1774-1834?) which later became part of James Sutton and Company which was one of the key carriers in the East Midlands, and Benjamin Clifford were building boats in the 1770's. In the 1790's Henshall and Company (Henshall was the son-in-law of James Brindley and supervised the completion of the Trent and Mersey Canal following the death of his father-in-law), the Gainsborough

Boat Company (1794-8) and Clifford were building boats (one yard was alongside the turnpike road).

On the Erewash Canal, Robert Barnsdall, a member of the extensive boat-building family (they built over one-third of the boats operating on the East Midlands waterways in the first half of the nineteenth century) built boats at Ilkeston, Trent Lock and Sawley Field in the 1790's. There were a large number of boat-builders on the Nutbrook Canal at Shipley (particularly in the 1830's) and on the Cromford Canal where boats were built at Cromford, Whatstandwell (Samuel, Abraham and Gabriel Wheatcroft), Bull Bridge, Butterley, Hartsay, Pye Bridge, Pinxton, Codnor Park and Oakerthorpe.

The specification of the boats is given in the gauge books as follows:

No. 68.

E.Hollingshead & Sons, No.3.- F.Birch, Master.

This Boat was built by Mr.Samuel Barnsdall of Nottingham, in the year 1783, for Thos. Manners and Co. of Wollaton. The present Owners purchased her of Mr.Stretton of Derby, in the year 1793, and have always employed her in the Trade between Gainsbrough and Derby.

This Boat had been trimmed about a month before these gauges were taken. Part of her Floor was taken up, and she was found in good condition. Her length is 73 feet 9 inches, and breadth, across the Midships, 13 feet 9 inches. She drew  $9\frac{1}{2}$  inches Water when light, and 30.86 inches when laden with 40 Tons.

When these gauges were taken, there were on board,- a Mast, Sail, and complete standing Rigging, Blocks, Lines, &c. five Poles, one Windrope, one Chest, one Corn-tub, two deal Planks, a Headfast, and Cadger.

No. 74.

Samuel Newton, Cossall, No.1. - S.Newton, Master.

This Boat was built by Mr.Robert Barnsdall of Ilkeston, in the year 1798, for the present Owner, who employs her in the Coal Trade to Nottingham.

This Boat had never been trimmed when these gauges were taken. Part of her Floor was taken up, and she was found in good condition. Her length is 72 feet, and breadth, across the Midships, 14 feet 1 inch. She drew  $8\frac{1}{2}$  inches Water when light, and 30.55 inches when laden with 40 Tons.

When these gauges were taken, there were on board, - a small Jury-mast and Lines, four Poles, two deal Planks, one Chest, and a Fire-stand.

Unfortunately details of the boatbuilders activities are non-existent (N.B. one of the few examples is given in 'A Short History of the Narrow Boat' by Tom Chaplin (Dibb, Norwich-1967). In fact the boats were usually built to a rule of thumb using an odd sketch and perhaps by the construction of a model. Only one boat was built in Derbyshire for carrying passengers, although Henshaw and Storer, of Weston-on-Trent adapted a boat in the 1800's (probably 1810) to carry passengers on the Derby Canal on Market Days (ref. Farey). The Nottingham and Cromford Packet was built by Abraham Wheatcroft (the only boat he built) at Whatstandwell in 1803 for brothers (?) Nathaniel and Gabriel Wheatcroft.

The Wheatcroft family controlled the distribution of goods from Cromford having a large fleet of boats (over 100). Many of the canal boat operators had only one or two boats but a fleet of more than fifty boats was operated by Gabriel Brittain of Butterley carrying coal, iron ore castings, stone (to Paddington and Brentford) and limestone. These he offered for sale in 1839. The Derby Mercury of March 13 carried the following advertisement:

"To be sold by Mr. Weston - property of Mr. Gabriel Brittain who is declining house keeping. Ten good substantial canal boats".

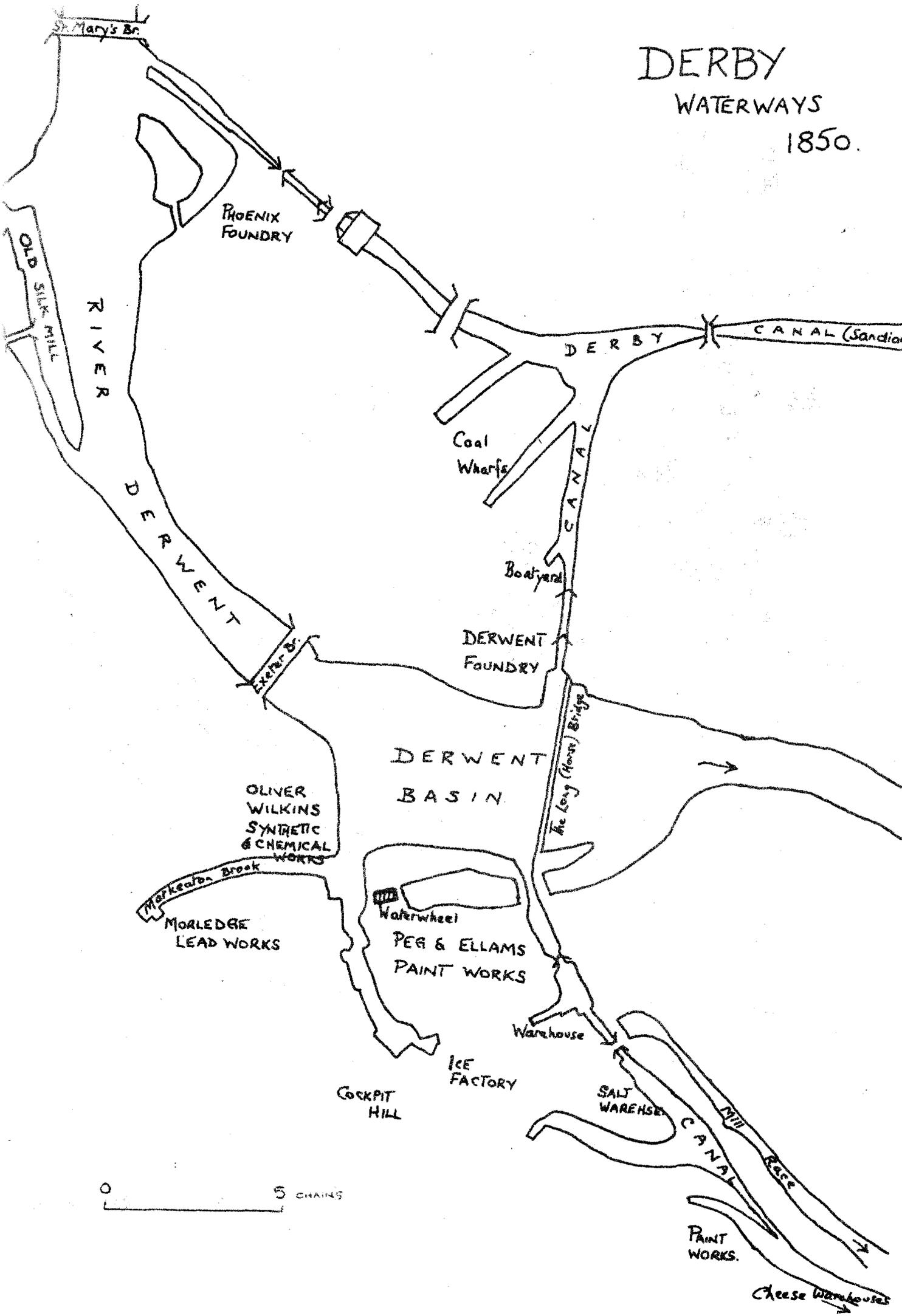
Soresby and Flack and James Sutton operated large fleets of boats from Shardlow to various parts of England. Several colliery owners such as E.M. Mundy, Drury Lowe, Barber Walker and Company, the Butterley Company (earlier Benjamin Outram), Haslam (Oakerthorpe Colliery) Oates, and H.C. and E. Moorwood distributed coal, particularly along the line of the Grand Union into Leicestershire and Northamptonshire. Other canal boat operators included Potter and Bourne of Ilkeston (carrying material for engines at collieries), T.J. and B. Towle of Draycott (Cotton Spinners), F. Agard and Sons (Borrowash Cornmills), J. and C. Mold (Alderwasley and Morley Park Ironworks), and Richard Evans and Sons of Derby.

The two chief canal 'ports' in Derbyshire were at Shardlow and Derby. The warehouses at Shardlow which have been 'modified' illustrate the range of building styles but the warehouses and basins at Derby have disappeared under the new road system. Such is progress. Both were major inland ports served by the canal boats of this article, and plans of them are appended.



# DERBY

WATERWAYS  
1850.



RAILWAY EXCURSIONS IN THE  
NINETEENTH AND TWENTIETH CENTURY.

by

John E. Heath.

At the beginning of the twentieth century bank holidays were an occasion when large numbers of people took advantage of Cheap Excursions on the railways. Sometimes the whole workforce of a factory or mill were taken on one of these 'trips', the organisers benefitting from the special terms.

It is generally accepted that the excursion was the inspiration of Thomas Cook who was born at Melbourne. In his late teens he became an evangelist who travelled about the country on foot. He was over thirty when he first became interested in organising excursions and then only because he saw it as a means of promoting the cause of Temperance. It was while walking to the Temperance Meeting at Leicester that Cook hit upon the idea of chartering a train to provide economic transportation for Temperance enthusiasts. The first excursion that Cook organised was on 5th July 1841 between Leicester and Loughborough at a cost of one shilling return (third class). Cook hired this train at his own risk operating as the first 'excursion agent'. It was not until 1845 however, that Cook decided to run a trip solely for pleasure. This was an excursion to Liverpool and Snowdonia for which Cook wrote the first excursion guide book: 'A Trip to Liverpool'. Other excursion possibilities were developed when the Dukes of Devonshire and Rutland were persuaded to open up their estates to the public in 1848. Soon after this John Ellis, then the Chairman of the Midland Railway Company, convinced Cook that his talents would be better employed in organising excursions to the Great Exhibition of 1851 in London. As a result, Cook was responsible for carrying 165,000 visitors to the exhibition.

In fact the first excursion trains were run on the Midland Counties Railway in 1840. On Friday, 10th July 1840, it was announced in the Nottingham and Newark Mercury that:

'The Committee of the Nottingham Mechanics' Institution have resolved to visit Leicester Exhibition, with their friends, on Monday week, July 20th. The names of persons wishing to be of the party will be received at the Exchange Room, a special train having been arranged by the directors to convey them'.

The success of this venture obviously depended upon the number of names received. A similar exhibition was held at Nottingham, and an excursion train was organised by the Leicester Mechanics' Institute on 27th July 1840.

The success of these privately organised ventures led to the Midland Counties Railway Company organising their own excursions. The first true excursion was run from Leicester to Nottingham on the 10th August 1840. The excursion, run on 24th August from Nottingham to Leicester, carried about 2400 passengers (sixty-five coaches). The Leicester Journal for the 28th August reported:

'The enormous train of nearly seventy carriages passed majestically in review before the astonished spectators. It was indeed a wonderful scene. Grand! Magnificent! Sublime! were the terms which gave vent to the feelings, as in countless succession the animated mass rushed into view....'

The first excursion train to Derby ran from Sheffield on Whit-Tuesday, 1st June 1841 when the Sheffield public were invited to visit Derby and the Arboretum or Public Gardens. The Sheffield Mercury, 5th June described the trip:

'There were forty-seven North Midland and Sheffield and Rotherham carriages and five engines, containing about 2000 persons, and about one hundred were left behind they not having applied for tickets in time.....The train started about half-past nine, and arrived at Derby at a quarter-past twelve. It returned at 6.30, and reached Sheffield at 8.50 without any accident occurring save a few hats being blown off and an individual falling out of a carriage when it arrived at Sheffield from getting up before it had stopped.'

Once established to the railway companies' satisfaction as profitable the numbers of excursions and excursion centres rapidly expanded. The effect on excursion centres was striking. In 1879 Edward Bradbury wrote:

'To assert that Matlock Bath is crowded on Good Friday is really to extenuate circumstances. To say that it is lively is to convey but an elementary idea of the hilarious jollity which prevailed. Rudely aroused on the buniferous day from her winter's rest, Matlock receives visitors from half-a-dozen counties. There is a crowded train from Bradford and Leeds. Sheffield and Chesterfield call for two 'specials'. Manchester and Stockport send ten excursionstrains to Matlock and three extra trains of sensational length hardly satisfy the demands of Derby. Birmingham by special train sends her button-makers, Nottingham her bleating 'lambs' and Leicester her mill-hands; while dog-carts and traps contribute a large auxilliary traffic. Matlock is ready for the invaders, and resists their demands with boiled ham and Mounds of beef sufficient to victual an army corps. She lays in oceans of explosive beer and makes barriers of buns. The supply of eggs for tea speaks libraries for the industry of the Derbyshire hens; while the professional commissariate of the place is strengthened by half the private house boiling 'hot water for twopence a head'.

Just as Derbyshire provided excursion centres, so the townsfolk of the area were offered excursions elsewhere. The programme of Cheap Excursions offered by the Great Northern Railway in 1904 is typical of the range of options available on a Whitsuntide Bank Holiday from Burton, Derby and the towns of the Erewash Valley. Six, seven, eight and fifteen day excursions were available to places in the North of England including Whitby, Bridlington, Filey and Scarborough, Harrogate, Ripon, Newcastle, Bishop Auckland and Dewsbury; the Eastern Counties (Yarmouth, third class return at 13s. 6d. (67½p); the South of England (Brighton at 17s. Od. Bournemouth or Hastings at 19s. 6d., Isle of Wight at 21s. Od., Guernsey or Jersey at 31s. 6d.). From Dover it was possible to go to Brussels via Ostend for 11s. 9d., or to Braine L'Alleud (for Waterloo) for 12s. 7d.

Special excursions were put on over the Bank Holiday to London for the West Middlesex Horse Show at Wembley (11s. Od), to the York City and Suburban Sports at Malton (4s. 9d), to Skegness which 'was (is) celebrated for its bracing air and its beautiful and extensive sands' and to Boston, Sutton-on-Sea and Mablethorpe (all at 2s. 9d. or 2s. 3d. a half-day), and to London at 7s. 6d. a day ticket but passengers had to return only from Kings Cross at midnight!

Local day or half-day excursions were available to Tutbury, Grantham, Ollerton and Edwinstowe, Burton, and Bottesford where tickets for admission to Belvoir Castle could be obtained at 3d. each on presentation of railway tickets and where refreshments could be 'had at the "Belvoir Coffee House", "Devon House Tea Gardens", "The Six Bells", "Rutland Arms", "Bull Hotel", "The Ferns" and "Levick's Tea Rooms".

During May and June excursions were available to Alton Dovedale and Rudyard Lake (where boats were available for fishing by arrangement with the Hotel Proprietor at Rudyard) on every Monday and Saturday.

The hey-day of the excursion coincided with the maximum extent of the branch times of the railway network. Today the car and to a lesser degree the 'bus have replaced the railways, and the role of the railway excursion has shrunk pitifully to football excursions and the occasional day trip.

THE REVD THOMAS GRESLEY, D.D., F.R.S. 1734-1785

HIS LIFE AT OXFORD AND NETHERSEAL 1

1759-1778

by

C. Castledine

This article attempts to describe and discuss the life of the Reverend Thomas Gresley, who was born at Wirksworth in 1734 and presented to the Rectory of Seal in 1759. It is based mainly on the records of his personal expenditure.

A summary of his life appears in 'The Gresleys of Drakelow' compiled by his descendant Falconer Madan and printed for subscribers in 1899. Madan drew on family papers gathered together by his uncle the Reverend John Morewood Gresley who was curate in charge at Seal (and for part of that time Rector) from 1841 to 1866 and made family history a life's work.(1)

It proved very interesting to compare Madan's printed account of Thomas Gresley with his personal papers now in the Derbyshire Record Office. These papers include correspondence (clearly used by Madan) and receipted bills. The latter are part of an unlisted deposit (2) of Gresley family papers made some years ago.(3) All the bills had been put on spike files with a slip bearing the initials J.M.G. (John Morewood Gresley) and a description. The wires had rusted through and in one box I found a quill pen cutter thought to be early Victorian. It was concluded that John Morewood Gresley had examined the bills and set them aside, considering them to be of no interest to historians, and that they may not have been examined since his day. Madan, presumably after reading the family papers, described Thomas Gresley's life as 'that of a country rector in easy circumstances'; how 'easy' this essay tries to show.

Long before his presentation to the Rectory of Seal however, Thomas Gresley was in easy circumstances. In 1748 his father inherited a life interest in the Manor of Netherseal and sent his son to Oxford in 1751 when just under seventeen. There he lived like other well-to-do young men as described in the diary of James Woodforde who came up to Oxford in 1758.(4) Failing to graduate in 1755 Thomas Gresley came down and began to live at Netherseal where it appears he represented his father (who continued to live at Wirksworth) as Lord of the Manor. Seal was being enclosed under private agreement (5) and there are bills in 1756 and 1757 for hedging the enclosures and for bricks, probably for farms built upon them. Some further notes on enclosures in the area are at Appendix I.

Thomas Gresley's principal local suppliers were Joseph Wilkes and Sons of Overseal. Joseph Wilkes Jnr., that 'remarkably versatile . . . and much neglected man' was two years older than Gresley and just beginning to establish himself as a business man.(6) Gresley's financial dealings with the Wilkes family, as shown in his papers, are analysed at Appendix III.

When settled at Netherseal as a married resident rector, Thomas Gresley lived as one would expect an eighteenth century squarson to live. His bills could equally be those of a layman, and but for the records of the Archdeacon's visitations there would be virtually nothing by which to judge his zeal as a clergyman. The main interest in the papers must lie in the way they show how improved communications enabled the well-to-do to draw supplies from a wide area and enjoy a higher standard of living. Appendix II lists some of Thomas Gresley's suppliers.

Seal is part of an area in which Derbyshire and Leicestershire have been strangely mixed since Domesday and before.(7) The parish has interested me since on a map of Derbyshire local government areas hanging on my father's office wall fifty years ago I saw the two separate portions of the Rural District of Hartshorne and Seals (sic).(8) While trying to establish the boundaries of Seal in the eighteenth century I have indulged my taste for such detail; what I have found will appear in a later article on the parish of Seal and the border areas of Leicestershire and Derbyshire

#### 1. Thomas Gresley's ancestors

Drakelow Power Station in Derbyshire near Burton upon Trent stands on the site of Drakelow Hall, the seat of the Gresleys until Sir Robert Gresley, eleventh baronet sold out in 1931.(9) The family is perhaps unique in combining proved succession in the male line from the Conquest with continuous occupation of a manor which was held by an ancestor at the time of the Domesday Survey. This ancestor was Nigel de Statford whose holdings included not only Drakelow but also Heathcote in what is now Gresley parish.(10)

Gresley is not mentioned in Domesday but Nigel's son William (who took the name Gresley) was there before 1130.(11) Land in Seal was held by the Gresleys from the time of Henry II (12) until the first baronet, Sir George Gresley sold to George Morewood, a London Merchant, about 1628.(13) He was a younger son of John Morewood of Bradfield (near Sheffield) from whom the squires of Alfreton in Derbyshire are descended.(14)

The Manor of Netherseal was restored to the Gresleys by the marriage of the second baronet to Gilbert Morewood's daughter Frances.(15) William, their elder son, became third

baronet with his seat at Drakelow. On Thomas, their younger son (1668-1743) was settled the Manor of Netherseal. Thus began the Netherseal branch of the family from which in 1837 came the ninth baronet when the main line became extinct.(1)

Thomas's eldest son, Lee, succeeded in 1743, but the fourth son, having no expectations, had married Dorothy Wilcockson of Wirksworth, who was connected with the Toplis family, later bankers in that town. They spent all their married life in Wirksworth where their eldest son Thomas was born on 21 July, 1734. (1) He is the subject of this essay.

## 2. Wirksworth to Seal. 1748-1755

When Thomas was fourteen in 1748 his uncle Lee died unexpectedly and his father inherited a life interest in the Manor of Netherseal.(1) Although John's main residence was at Wirksworth, it seems probable that he and his family spent some time at Netherseal. (Among Thomas's bills there is one dated August 1753 from Richard Inge for 'a journey to Seal, an expensive purge, a cordial drink after it: 5s.6d.')

The shortest route from Wirksworth to Seal would be via Duffield, Derby and Burton; when the young Thomas made this journey what would he see that was new?

There was no road south from Wirksworth along the valley of the river Ecclesbourne; it lay to the east over Alport Height (over 1000 feet) where there is a stone signpost dated 1710 pointing to Derby, Wirksworth and Ashbourne. When the Derby-Duffield-Chesterfield-Sheffield road was turnpiked in 1755, a new route slightly further east was chosen for its Wirksworth branch: this has somewhat easier gradients but would have been impassable in the worst weather.(16)

In the Wirksworth area most of the well-to-do families had made their money in lead: at this time the problems of unwatering deeper lead mines were being solved by the driving of long drainage tunnels (soughs) and the use of Newcomen pumping engines.(17)

In Derby, John Lombe's Silk Mill was foreshadowing the developments of Arkwright and Strutt with its intricate machinery constructed by George Sorocold who had provided a new water supply for the town. John Whitehurst, clock-maker, had been in business in Derby since 1736.(18)

In the Burton upon Trent area roads to Derby, Lichfield, Ashby and Tutbury were all turnpiked by 1753; North Staffordshire pottery and Birmingham hardware was being shipped on to the Trent Navigation along with Burton ale.(19)

In the South Derbyshire and Leicestershire coalfield shallow 'bell pits' were being exhausted and coal miners were facing the same problems as the lead miners of Wirksworth.(20)

The eastern boundaries of the parish of Seal reach to the coalfield, but it continued to be dependent on agriculture as it still is. Dairy farming was one branch of an essentially mixed agrarian economy but the one which brought in the most cash. In the late seventeenth century it was claimed that 'great quantities of butter and cheese out of Staffordshire and those parts of Derbyshire and Leicestershire which lie near burton are sent to London by land carriage (21) and the effective opening of the Trent to Burton by George Hayne of Wirksworth in 1712 increased the trade.(22) The Wilkes family of Overseal greatly profited from this trade,(23) as probably did Isaac Hawkins, a Burton Attorney (24) who bought the Manor of Overseal in 1751, (25) and John Gresley himself.

### 3. Thomas Gresley at Oxford. 1751-1755

John Gresley, having decided to stay at Wirksworth, seems to have made plans for the future of the Manor of Netherseal and in 1751 Thomas Gresley was sent to Oxford. No evidence of a family tradition of going to the University has been found and Thomas entered Hertford College,(1) founded only a few years before in 1740.(26) Perhaps a place in a new foundation was easier to obtain.

He matriculated on 17th April 1751 aged just under seventeen,(1) his college quarterly accounts are continuous from then until midsummer 1755. For that quarter, for the first time, the account is in two parts, the second referring to a Batchelor's Degree and fees for Change of Gown. As Thomas Gresley did not take his degree until 1758 it is concluded that after four years' residence he should have graduated in the summer of 1755 but failed to do so.

He could not have been in continuous residence at Oxford after midsummer 1755. No college bills or shopkeepers' accounts bear a date between then and the autumn of 1756. His bills at Netherseal begin in 1756 and he was married in 1757.

The young man could, of course, fill his needs without making immediate payment. Shops gave extended credit and even barber and washerwoman had to wait for their money. College accounts covered "battels", i.e. board and provisions supplied, fixed University and College dues, fixed charges for the services of butler, cooks, steward and bedmaker. In each quarter up to Ladyday 1755 there is a charge of £2.15.0. for Tuition and Stipends. Broken windows were common enough to ensure that the word glazier appeared on every account, though Gresley was not often charged for his services. Rarely did he escape 'pecuniary penalties'

(presumably fines for minor offences) and regularly paid 'decrements' (presumably breakages etc)

Charges for battels varied considerably, ranging from 3s. 5d., to £3.18s.9d. a quarter. The variations are presumably due to the amount of eating out, but the average for the Michaelmas quarters is very much less than for the other quarters. Gresley usually paid up within a month of the end of the quarter, but the Midsummer account was usually paid before Midsummer Day. Clearly Gresley enjoyed a long summer vacation.

Whenever he was in residence Hannah Savery did his washing. She charged a shilling a week and had to wait from nine to thirty seven weeks for her money. Her bills are receipted with a signature in the same handwriting; it appears that she wrote them out herself.

John Kirby, who supplied him with a brown wig for a guinea, charged 12s. for a half year's shaving after February 1753 (when Thomas was 18). For the first two years he had made the same charge for 'attendance'. He waited up to eighteen months for his money.

Heating and lighting of Gresley's study were not included in the quarterly charges; he paid 4s. for a sack and 2s. 4d. for half a sack of sea coal. There is a bill of November 1751 for 'Bricking up a Great'; in the same month William Rough painted '18 yards in your study'. Was Hertford though a new foundation, housed in old buildings that were being adapted to burn coal? It seems strange that such charges should fall on the undergraduate.

Thomas Gresley's pleasures included riding, boating and shooting. There are several bills for riding kit and one of nearly six pounds for saddlery. William Rough painted a pleasure boat with all the tackle for 12s. and there is a bill for guns of £4.11s.6d. Pastry in a basket and chocolate sustained him when on these activities. Wine was bought by the gallon, port at 12s., madeira at 10s. and red port at 6s. and he drank green tea and coffee. There are bills from Richard Spendlow for 'Beefstake and Oyster Sauce', for 'Ham, Beans and Peas' and for 'Goose and Greavey'. Each bill has charges for knives and forks and one for table cloths. To one is added a charge for keeping two dogs! Malbon and Leaver supplied Spirits of Wine, Oil of Tarter, Purge Pills and Potions and Rheumatism Drops.

Clothing was, of course, a large item of expenditure. Interesting items are '2 Cotten nightcaps at 1s.' and 1 yd  $\frac{1}{2}$  and  $\frac{2}{15}$  Gold Lace at 10s: 16s. 3d.' There is a bill for £8. 6s. for footwear, and in November 1756, Gresley (back at Oxford (27)) incurred a bill with Ives and Chettoe for £18. 15s. including:

3½ yds. best silver superfine cloth	18s.	£3. 3. 0.
16 5/8ths yd. rich gold lace	9s.	7. 9. 7½
2½ doz. Rich Gold wire coats	8s.	1. 0. 0.
2 doz. vests ditto	4s.	8. 10.
2 gold garters	9s.	18. 0.

Was he perhaps preparing for his wedding? If so it appears that the account was not settled before his wedding day, nor indeed before 1759 (by which time he was Rector of Seal) for this bill of exchange was found among his papers:

Oxon: Augt: 31. 1759

£14 9. 6d. Sir

Be pleased to pay to Mr. James Lockett or order Fourteen pounds nine shillings and sixpence value recd as per advice and shall be in full discharge from your Hbl. Serts.

Ives and Chettoe

To the Revd Mr. Thos. Gresley  
at Drakelow near Burton upon Trent  
Staffordshire.

By drawing on Thomas Gresley at the seat of the head of his family, Ives and Chettoe were able to negotiate the bill, for it is endorsed by James Lockett, Samuel Challoner and James Hubbard, the last of whom presumably presented it for payment.

'At Oxford by 1770, no serious examination at all was held for a degree'.(28) In 1761 James Woodforde records 'I am to read the three first Books of Hutchinson's Moral Philosophy, and I am to give a summary account of them when I am examined for my degree'.(29) What Thomas Gresley had to do for the degree (which he failed to get) has not been discovered, but the nature of the course planned can be judged from his book bill. To Greek, Latin, Divinity, History, Geography and Logic in the first year are added Euclid and Algebra, Chymistry, Physick, Electricity and Anatomy. The Microscope appears at the end of the fourth year. Gresley bought his own microscope from Jas. Ayscough for £12.1.6. in May 1755.

Though there are no modern languages (the Italian titles are thought to be music) it was, on the face of it, a broad course, very suitable for an eighteenth century gentleman. That Thomas Gresley was planning to fill his Library as well as his mind is suggested by the bill at the end of the course for binding some of the books on the bill:-

1755	Thos. Wood
July Mr. Thomas Gresley, Gentleman Commoner, Hartford College	
Universal History	
20 vols calf lettered and tooled	1. 0. 0.
Hist of Charles XII of Sweden do	
3 vols	<u>3. 0.</u>
	<u>1. 3. 0.</u>

So in the summer of 1755 Thomas Gresley went down from Oxford with his leather bound volumes, his books less than half paid for and no degree; in December 1756 he went down to be married with his books paid for, but with a bill for expensive clothes and still no degree.(27)

4. The enclosure of Seal by private agreement 1755-1756.

As Thomas Gresley was leaving Oxford in the summer of 1755 his father John, Lord of the Manor of Netherseal, Isaac Hawkins, Lord of the Manor of Overseal and other landowners in the Parish entered into an agreement dated 2nd July 1755:-

"For establishing a Division and Enclosures of the Open and Common Fields and Pastures within the Manors or Lordships of Netherseal and Overseal in the Parish of Netherseal (sic) in the Counties of Leicester and Derby or one of them and certain exchanges of Lands and Estates with the said Parish". (30)

Besides the two Lords of the Manor, the principal parties to the agreement were William Inge, Rector, and the Trustees of the Hospitals (Almshouses) of Netherseal and of William Wigston in Leicester. Other parties, presumably in respect of smaller holdings, were the Earl of Huntingdon, William Hawkins and Thomas Jervis, Esquires, and John Farnell (31) and Richard Inge,(32) Gentlemen. They agreed that the land should be 'divided, set out and allotted' by:-

Christopher Saunders of Shareshill, Staffs, Gent  
William Wyatt of Seaney Park, Staffs, Gent (33)  
Nicholas Grundy of Thornton, Leics, Gent.

In addition to the parties to the agreement about eighteen men and two women received an allotment; the name Wilkes was not found in the document. (Appendix I)

'Private enclosures are rarely well documented.'(34)  
This agreement survives incorporated in the private Bill promoted in confirmation.(35) Unfortunately no map is known to survive.

It is possible that John Gresley, who from Madan's account (1) had not been to a University, took exception to

his son Thomas's way of life at Oxford and insisted on his leaving to do useful work of estate management at Seal and in particular work which was arising from the enclosures. Thomas's bills at Seal begin on 22nd January 1756 (he was still only 21) with tea and sugar from Zachary Gilbert.(36) John Morewood Gresley in his MS. notes on Netherseal(37) established that Thomas lived from the time of his presentation to the Living in the old stone mansion near the Church.(38) It seems probable that his father installed him there earlier than that, probably from the time of the first bill.

Among Thomas's bills for 1756 and 1757 are some for bricks and brickmaking in large quantities. Unfortunately they provide little evidence of where these bricks were used in building, but the quantity involved suggests that some at least of the isolated farms in the parish must date from this time. (Appendix †) Some were probably used to replace timber framed buildings as is suggested by the bill at Figure 7. In 1759 an account from Joseph Wilkes and Son for Malt for £6 together with Interest £4. 7s. 6d. and a Cash advance of £14. 2s. 0d. was offset by the delivery to Wilkes of 44,500 bricks! In the many bills for work done about the estate there are several charges for carting bricks up to 1760. Was Gresley in business as a brickmaker?

There are several bills for hedging, ditching, removing stumps and for carting large loads of wood and 'trouce' (39) as well as cutting thorns and 'quicking'. Thus in 1759 William Capenhurst charged for '7 acres of quick putting in at 3d. an acre' and '8 acres of ditching and quicking at 1s. 6d. an acre', while Zachary Gilbert charged for 'cutting thorns' and 'drawing thorns' at 1s. a day. It is concluded that all this refers to the hedging necessary in the new enclosures.

##### 5. Marriage, graduation, ordination and institution 1757-1759

Bills at Seal continue throughout 1756 including the autumn when Thomas must have been back at Oxford for he paid his quarterly account there on 6th November. He was probably trying again for his degree (27); if so, he failed to get it. On 7th February 1757 (aged 22) he was married to Elizabeth Vincent, daughter and sole heiress of the Reverend William Vincent of Sheepy Magna in Leicestershire, (Near Atherstone) who was about two years older than he.(1) Despite his marriage Gresley continued to spend some time at Oxford in each quarter in 1757 and 1758 as Fig.9 shows. He at last managed to satisfy the examiners and graduated Bachelor on 14th February 1758 and Master on 11th May 1758.(1) He was ordained priest by the Bishop of Lincoln on 24th September 1758(1) but continued to spend time at Oxford until Michaelmas 1759, shortly after which (31st October) he was instituted Rector of Seal.(1) The patrons were the trustees of his Uncle Lee's estate, John Wilcockson (perhaps Thomas's Mother's brother) and John Wall, and it would

appear that the previous Rector, William Inge, (40) was persuaded to make way for Thomas Gresley for the latter was officiating at weddings at Seal (41) either with William Inge or alone from March 1759 onwards. (On 29th June 1759 he married Mary Wilkes and Thomas Jones of Wolverhampton and on 11th September 1759 Joseph Wilkes Jnr. and Elizabeth Wood of Burton, the witnesses being William Pycroft and William Wilkes). When William Inge became Canon of Lichfield Cathedral (40) the way was open for Gresley's presentation.

By this time his wife had borne two children, Nigel born January 1758, died January 1761, and Dorothy, born April 1759, died February 1767. (There is a bill of that date for £2.0s.6d. for 'a coffin for your daughter'.) Children continued to arrive, the third eventually succeeding his father as Lord of the Manor and Rector of Seal:

3.	William	.....	1760 - 1829
4.	Thomas	.....	1761 - 1817
5.	Elizabeth	.....	1763 - 1792
6.	Mary	.....	1764 - 1834
7.	Richard	.....	1766 - 1850
8.	Frances	.....	April 1769 to (1 and 42) July 1770

From the last confinement, Mrs. Elizabeth Gresley never recovered; she died on 19th May 1769 aged 36 and was buried in Netherseal Churvhyard. Her portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds hung at Drakelow.(43) Her gravestone, fixed to the east wall of the vestry, was presumably brought inside when the church was restored in 1877: the long and highly complimentary epitaph can still be deciphered.(44)

## 6. Married Life 1757-1769

On one of the spike files was a slip marked John Morewood Gresley's hand 'Dr and Mrs Gresley's bills about 1758-1769'. These are analysed below with some tentative conclusions.

### a. Food and Drink

The Gresleys were to an extent self-supporting. They bought wheat and oats, not flour, malt and hops, not beer, and there are several bills for carting lime. The corn mill(12) was still operational in 1843 (45) and at this time belonged to the Lord of the Manor. There is a bill from Thomas Newbold, joiner for repairs to the Brewhouse in 1756. They grew radish, cress, white mustard, spinage, carrot, onion, parsley, lettuce, colleyflower, early pears, marrow, Windsor Beans, long pod beans, sholots, asparagus and cowcumber, apreycocks, peaches, nectorines, vines, cherys, plumbs, pears and rasberries.(46)

In December 1767 Thomas Capenhurst of London sold Gresley spices value £5.16s.Od. At the bottom of the bill Capenhurst wrote: 'The above I sent Directed to you by Bass's waggon and a Barrell of Oysters which I hope get safe to hand.'(47)

Joseph Wilkes and Sons supplied sugar ('lofes' and 'best lumps') and tea (especially green tea). 'It was in these ... years that Joseph Wilkes, Jnr. established himself as a factor in agricultural produce';(48) he would exchange his cheeses in London for imported foods like sugar and tea.(49) Cheesemaking produced whey fed to pigs;(50) Wilkes supplied bacon, the only meat for which any bills were found. The only evidence of the keeping of livestock for food is a bill for a new cheesetub and another for making a pen in which to keep pheasants.

#### b. Clothing

The Gresleys bought material rather than garments. As mentioned above Gresley bought expensive material at Oxford and various kinds were regularly ordered from suppliers over a wide area. Sarah Chetwynd was paid for making up, and Thomas Hinde for making mending and altering clothes for the children. One bill for footwear (Master Tommie and Billy; shoes) was found. In 1768 Gresley bought two pairs of doeskin breeches for £2.14s.0d.

#### c. Household supplies

It is assumed that wood was the principal fuel, but there are several bills for carting coal.

When Thomas Gresley brought his bride to Seal Hall it was already furnished but they bought additional kitchen equipment from James Gilbert including a sors pan, a pewter coll-oder, a mashing kettle, a cheese toster, a warming pan with plate inside, a Duch oven, a brass bastor, a tin fish kettel and a round pudding pan. They also paid him for mending a coffee mill. William Parker supplied bottles, while Haslam and Brooks of Irongate Derby, sold them pottery and glass in a hamper. Wilkes supplied 'sope and candles' while sperm oil came from Arnold Finchett, Tin Man of St. Paul's Churchyard, London. Newspapers at a penny a day commenced on 11th April 1757; Thomas Kirland who also supplied medicines had to wait 57 weeks to collect £1.8s.6d. for the papers. Other Chemists and Druggists included Mr. Cope. assumed to be of Derby.

#### d. Books, a gold watch and a new fireplace

Thomas Gresley continued to extend his library buying mainly from S. Fox of Derby. Bills show that he bought both 'academic' books and treatises on estate management.

John Whitehurst, the famous Derby clockmaker, supplied him with a Gold Watch for £21 in 1757, while in 1758 William Thompson supplied a 'Black Marble Chmbndry piece' and a Swithland Slab for £3.10s.0d. Carting the chimney piece cost 5s.0d. and setting up only 4s.0d.

e. Trees

Thomas Gresley appears to have carried out a considerable planting scheme between 1756 and 1759:-

1756 May	300 Scotch Firs 300 broad leaved elms 1 doz large Weymouth pines
1757 Feb.	160 Scotch Firs Spanish Chestnuts
(1758 Apr.	Rails for Grange Wood)
1759	30 Scotch Fir Trees Ackorns Holleys Virginia Tupip Tree Virginia Trumpet Honeysuckle Leburnam Syringa White Lelack Broom Roses

Perhaps the woodland around the Hall was established by him. A few trees may remain though the extensive planting of forest trees in the 1930's by the late Mr. E. J. Manners suggests that most of Gresley's trees did not survive the first World War.

7. Bachelor and Doctor of Divinity, 1768

Madan records that Thomas Gresley took his degrees of B.D. and D.D. together as a Grand Compounder on 11th November 1768. His motive for taking a doctorate are unexplained; was he hoping for preferment? What he had to do for these degrees is also unexplained; on the evidence of his bills he was not in residence at Oxford after becoming Rector of Seal and as the previous section shows, in the years immediately before taking the degrees, family life continued there. The records suggest that he was as much concerned with estate management as with academic studies while the bill for degree expenses indicates that the celebrations with Bread, Butter, Cheese and Beer were as, if not more, important than the 'Examining ye Book for your degree'. The 'Admiss' (£15.17s.0d. for B.D.G.C. and £19.6s.0d. for D.D.G.C.) are enormous compared with the guineas for both A.B. and A.M. and suggest that Divinity degrees were partly rationed by price! The total bill of official expenses was £64.10s.0d., £26.17s.0d. for the B.D., £32.17s.0d. for the D.D., and £4.16s.0d. office expenses. On each occasion the official charge for gloves was £3.18s.4d.

8. Widower 1769

The bills for the period after Thomas Gresley's wife's death give an impression of greater affluence. Madan records that Mrs. Gresley was her father's sole heiress:(1) her money may therefore account for the change. But opportunities to buy were being increased at this time by improvements in communications with which Joseph Wilkes was associated (see map)(7); The bills show some of the ways in which the new turnpikes and waterways were used.

In 1771 Gresley paid £36 for a pipe of wine from Richard Bell of Hull who wrote on the receipt 'I am glad you have got it safe into your cellar and if you will give it time there it will reward you for it'. He goes on to declare that he is not in the wine trade but willing to share what he has with his friends. There can be little doubt that Joseph Wilkes provided the link between the two men.

In 1774 George Richardson of Irongate, Derby, sold 'A Bath Stove' price £1.16s.0d. to Thomas Gresley and dispatched it to the Three Queens in Burton (51) while in May 1777 from William Allan of 129 New Bond St., London, came the following to complete the modernisation:(52)

1 Patent Water Closet	ten guineas ready money	£10.10.0.
A strong packing case and packing Bands & Screws		7.0.
A strong brass water cock		7.6.
A man 15 days at Netherseal to fix up ditto	3/6	2.12.6.
Paid for coach hire time and expenses from Nottingham to Netherseal different times		7.6.
Paid at Nottingham for a washer and weast for a water closet		10.6.
Man's coach hire from Lichfield to London		1.10.0.

In July, Bagnall and Elks beautified the structure in which it was housed:

To 3 times painting the water closet finished Pay Green (53)		6.0.
Venetian Blinds do.		1.6.
Outside of Door and Closet adjacent		1.0.

Clearly an outside W.C.! Kedleston Hall had one indoor W.C. by this time (54) but Gresley contented himself with one 'Very fine Mahogany Night Table, cross banded with Rosewood Commode front' price £1.10s.0d. from the suppliers of the water closet.

In 1776 Joseph and Thomas Wilkes supplied:

Burton Beer	28 gallons	11.6.	(55)
Wilsons for Beer	27 gallons	11.3.	

There are bills in 1773 and 1774 for Champaign at 96s. a dozen, but it was on his table ware that Gresley really indulged.

In 1775 he bought from Josiah Wedgwood, dishes, plates, a butter boat, a purple edged jug, a mug, 9 antique edge cups and saucers, 6 antique coffee cups, a slop bason and creamboat, a sugar dish, a tea pot, a butter tub, a coffee pot and a large tea cup and saucer - all for £1.16s.0d.

In the following year Wedgwood supplied a table service of Queen's Ware, Royal Pattern for £5.0s.1d. The bill is on plain paper but the heading is in copperplate handwriting:-

'Etruria May 31 1776

'The Revd Doctr Gresley

Bot of Josiah Wedgwood  
Potter to Her Majesty'

At the bottom of the bill is written in an ordinary hand:

'Directed to the Revd Doctr Gresley at Nether-say  
near Horninglow, Staffordshire.

'The above package was forwarded from Etruria on  
Wed June 5 by Messrs Henshall Company Boat'. (56)

Below this is the receipt dated 26 May 1777.

This however, was a modest purchase compared with the next one, also on plain paper:-

Soho, Near Birmingham  
27 October, 1776

Bot of Boulton and Fothergill

Silver 3 pint coffee pott  
Soup ladle  
Salts  
Desert spoons  
Silver handled table knives  
Forks  
Desert Knives and forks

Mahogany knife case to contain £58.15.0d.

-----  
Soho, 27 Oct 1776

Dr. Gresley

Sir

Our Mr. Boulton has received your favour by your servant in consequence we herewith send you the articles specified in the annex'd Invoice amounting to £58.15.0. which is all we could possibly get ready of your order; the 3 waiters that

are wanting to compleat it, we have in hand, ready for hall-marking and shall be furnished and sent in the course of next week. We are sorry we could not now send it compleat, but hope no inconvenience will occur to you for the delay. We do not find that we have received any order to engrave any of this plate, if you should want them engraved and will be pleased to send us the plate again with the impression of your coat of arms we will immediately engrave and return the same.

We remain most respectfully  
Sir,

Your very obed. hble servts  
(signed) Boulton and Fothergill (57)

- - -

But Boulton and Fothergill's bill was not the largest in 1777. One from Paulins and Coates, Lace Importers of London is made out to Thomas Wilks (a brother of Joseph and John) (59) and is for:-

'A Suit of point lace, treble ruffles and tippet  
tuckers and lappetts

73 guineas'

For which lady would Thomas Wilkes buy and Thomas Gresley (since it is among his papers) pay for such an expensive outfit? The puzzle is probably explained below.

#### 9. Archdeacon Bickham's visitation - June 1776

James Bickham, D.D., was Archdeacon of Leicester from 1774 to 1788 and from the record of his first parochial visitations (58) appears to have found a great deal that needed putting right. In the rural deanery of Akely (60) (which included Ashby de la Zouch and Seal until the latter was transferred to the Diocese of Derby in 1927) which he visited between 1774 and 1776 there was only one absentee incumbent, but in each parish the Archdeacon found some neglect. His notes on the visitation of Seal on 4th June 1776 take up more space than those of any other parish and are summarised over leaf:

a. The Archdeacon's requirements

A new register according to Act of Parliament  
A new linen cloth for the table  
A new cloth to cover the elements  
An Inventory of Plate with weight  
Walls to be whitewashed  
Pews and floor needed repair  
Mortar in the Tower to be repointed  
Some Rubbish in the Church to be removed

b. His report on the Parsonage

'The Rectory House is in very bad condition but the Rector has a faculty on leave from the Archdeacon's Court to take it down and build a New one on the Glebe. The reason for the delay is because the Rector expects an Act of Parliament will soon be obtained for granting him land in lieu of Tithes and he will then move for a clause to enable him to exchange the Manor House with some land about it for the Rectory House and some Glebes.' (61)

Thomas Gresley took action on this report and at the next visitation (Easter 1777) the Archdeacon noted (58) that an inventory of plate was exhibited and that everything had been done except the repairs to the floor and pews because of the intention to repew of which a plan had been approved and a faculty granted to the Churchwardens and further time allowed.

Among John Morewood Gresley's notes on Seal (37) there are references to meetings of parishioners on 20th December 1776 and 11th February 1777 about the cost of the alterations to the Nave - ornaments and seating and the taking down of the old pulpit and reading desk. 'A question arose whether the inhabitants of Donisthorpe whose houses were in another parish and diocese were entitled to sittings in Netherseal Church in proportion to their lands and also whether they were to be assessed to the charge of £300.' (The parish was, it seems, levying a church rate.) Legal opinion was sought on the question and the answer given in the affirmative.

At Easter 1779 the alterations had been carried out and the Minister (sic) so certified to the Archdeacon.(62) But the resident clergyman was no longer Thomas Gresley. Although Rector till his death he had gone to live at Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield.(1)

10. Second Marriage - 1777

When Mrs. Elizabeth Gresley died on 19th May 1769 she left six children aged, 8, 7, 6, 4, 3 and 2. Whether the care of them fell on a relative or servants is not known, but there is a bill for Board, Schooling and Sundries for



If Thomas Gresley married Elizabeth Pycroft under pressure it seems he did so on the understanding that he did not take all the responsibility for her children. The following dated 7th November 1777, illustrates this:-

'Having carefully examined the accounts relative to my nephews William and Joseph Pycroft and to my niece Elizabeth Pycroft and being perfectly convinced that my sister Elizabeth Gresley (late Elizabeth Pycroft) hath expended in the maintenance and education of my said nephews and niece since the death of the late Mr. William Pycroft at least two hundred pounds more than she has received on their account, now I do hereby promise to pay the said Two Hundred Pounds to the Reverend Doctor Gresley and Mrs Elizabeth Gresley upon demand as witness my hand this 29th day of November 1777

Jno Wilkes (65)

It comes as no surprise therefore to read in John Morewood Gresley's notes (37) that 'Thomas Gresley, being incapacitated by ill health from performing the services of the Church', purchased Four Oaks from Lord Irnham on 5th April 1778. He was not, however, incapable of entertaining fashionable gatherings at his new home which are recorded in journals of the day which Madan quotes. 'He made that his principal residence for the remainder of his life and Netherseal Hall was occupied by Samuel Ball, husband of Elizabeth, Thomas Gresley's sister'.(1) If the last sentence means that Netherseal Hall was not sold, whence came the funds to buy Four Oaks? Perhaps a mortgage was arranged by the Wilkes family.(66)

#### 11. Epilogue

No bills dealing with Four Oaks were found among Thomas Gresley's papers and it is assumed that they passed out of the possession of the Gresley family with the house. But some letters referred to by Madan as 'Letters at Drakelow' are in the County Record Office.(67) From them Madan sums up the last years of Thomas Gresley's life as follows:-

'He was extremely touchy in matters which concerned his reputation and peppery in temper. He was most indignant for instance with his son William for not obeying his wishes in the matter of profession,(68) and conducted his disagreement with his brother John with much asperity. It appears that Mrs. Beardsley, Thomas's cousin had by her Will dated 6th October 1778 (69) settled property on Thomas to the exclusion of his brothers and sisters who were disappointed. John undoubtedly after this spoke of his brother as 'Dr. Delegate the Will-maker' suggesting thereby that he had dictated his

cousin's will: a pretty quarrel arose. . . Their sister Mrs. Ball also shared John's feelings, but as she was partly dependent upon Thomas after her husband's death she endeavoured to keep on good terms with both sides. . . But nothing would reconcile the two brothers and their old father John(70) was much exercised about it and made frequent attempts to heal the wound. . . (1)

On 17th April 1785 Thomas had a fit of apoplexy at Bath, died the next day and was buried in St. James' Churchyard there on 23rd April 1785.(1) The memorial tablet now above his first wife's stone in Netherseal Church merely reads:-

Sacred to the Memory of  
THOMAS GRESLEY, D.D., F.R.S.  
and Rector of this Parish  
who died April 18th 1785  
in the 51st year of his age (71)

## 12. Conclusions

'Recent demographic research as well as recent ecclesiastical history has tried to improve the image of eighteenth century Anglicanism'(72); this essay can hardly have done so. A great deal of Thomas Gresley's behaviour must today appear quite unacceptable. But judgement must be made by eighteenth century standards.

The Elizabethan settlement had insured that just as the Crown de facto appointed Bishops, the vast majority of incumbents were presented to their livings by the squire. Rising agricultural prosperity in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries made the Church of England an institution fit for aristocrats to serve in and 'country Gentlemen came more and more to regard livings in their gift as worth the acceptance of their younger sons'.(73) At Seal it was not a younger son, but Thomas Gresley, the eldest, whom the trustees of his late uncle presented to the Living. From him were descended four squire-rectors of Seal who lasted until 1897, appointing themselves, contrary to our ideas. Yet it is clear that Thomas was not founding a dynasty; he did all he could to persuade his son (and successor as Rector) to make the law, not the Church, his profession.(68)

Thomas Gresley was not a pluralist and for nearly twenty of his twenty nine years as Rector resided in the Parish. As squire he appears to have devoted himself to the improvement of the estate and as father and husband been forward-looking and up-to-date.

If his way of life was typical of other clergymen it is easier to understand the place of Methodism in the life of his day. But Methodism appears to have passed Netherseal by; there was no Nonconformist place of worship in the village until 1840 (74) and then it was the Baptists who came. Indeed many things seem to have passed by; South Derbyshire

people sometimes refer to Netherseal as a real old English village by which they must mean that it retains its eighteenth century character. To-day we must surely rejoice that one small part of South Derbyshire has been kept as it was by the Gresleys (and their successors in the same tradition) (75) and profoundly regret that this year vernacular buildings are coming down to make way for commuters' houses at about £10,000 each.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### APPENDIX I

#### Enclosure in West Leicestershire and South Derbyshire in the eighteenth century

##### a. Enclosure as 'tidying up'.

'Leicestershire was a county of yeoman farmers where the medieval enclosures never ceased'.(76) 'Hoskins estimates that 10 per cent of Leicestershire had been enclosed by 1607; 52 per cent of the county was further dealt with between then and 1730'.(77)

The situation in Derbyshire south of the Trent was very similar. Miss Sinar describes eighteenth century enclosure there as 'tidying up'.(78) Measham (then Derbyshire, now Leicestershire) enclosed 1749/50 (79) and Seal (then Leicestershire, now Derbyshire) enclosed after 1755 (80) present similar features.

The important and presumably yeoman Wilkes family in Seal whose holding may have been as much as 500 acres (76) must have farmed land already enclosed for their name does not appear in the private enclosure agreement of 1755.

'Already by the late sixteenth century . . . in west Leicestershire on the poor soils . . . the traditional pasture-farming of the region tended to develop a special emphasis on breeding and dairying, and this trend was accelerated in some places by enclosure . . . (but) . . . the breeding of cattle with butter and cheese-making were common on open as well as enclosed lands'.(81) In 1631 the J.P.'s of Market Bosworth pleaded in support of enclosure that some part of the land 'is of indifferent quality for corn, the rest unfit for corn or sheep pasture, but most fit for milch kine and breeding cattle, being of a sour cold, and wild nature'. After mentioning in particular Nailstone and Donington le Heath they concluded 'in our opinion, there is no likelihood of depopulation or decay of tillage'.(81) Wright(79) states that available evidence seems to indicate that 'in Measham . . . enclosure was not accompanied by

depopulation' and it would appear that the same is true of Seal.

b. The building of isolated farms

Tate asserts that 'the old houses in the main street (of a village) two centuries ago were dwellings of farmers not labourers; isolated farmsteads did not exist'.(82) Barlow emphasises that 'in the eighteenth century . . . the final enclosure of open fields systems set off another phase of building'.(83)

Miss Sinar (79) warns of the dangers of assuming that all isolated farms date from the eighteenth century, especially when they are not associated with parliamentary enclosures, but the quantities of bricks mentioned in Thomas Gresley's bills must be accounted for. Mr. J. B. Henderson, who has drawn attention to High Fields Farm, Etwell with date stone 1752 (84) writes (November 1973) 'There are at least four farms of such isolation built on what must have been the open fields, three east of Seal Brook off the road between Grange Wood and Clifton Campville and one east of that road, Seal Fields Farm . . . There are one or two at Cadborough Hill'.

Seal Grange, north of Seal Fields Farm, is, as its name implies, certainly older. It appears on a pictorial estate map in the Gresley papers, undated but by its style judged to be early seventeenth century.(85) The Cistercian Abbey of Merevale (near Atherstone) held land in Seal from the time of Henry IV until the Dissolution.(86) Perhaps they had a grange there.

It is hoped that the Architectural Section of the Derbyshire Archaeological Society under Mr. Henderson's leadership will undertake some field work in Netherseal. Mr. Henderson hopes to relate the quantities of bricks in Thomas Gresley's bills to quantities used in farms and farm building which can be dated from this time.

APPENDIX II

Some of Thomas Gresley's Suppliers. 1756-1777

Year	Firm's Name	Nature of Business	Goods Supplied	Details of Address
<u>BURTON UPON TRENT (87)</u>				
(1767 1777)	<u>BASS</u> , WILLIAM	Carrier to London	Carriage	
1767	<u>EVANS</u> , HENRY	Wharfinger	Wheat	
1776	<u>WILSONS</u>	Brewers	Beer	
<u>DERBY (88)</u>				
1760	<u>COPE</u>	Druggist	Purgings draught & opening pills	
1777	<u>FLINT</u> , HENRY		Tape thread, silk, ribbons	
(1760 1768)	<u>FOX</u> , S.	Bookseller	Books and Maps	
(1760	<u>HASLAM</u> and <u>BROOKS</u>	Hardware & Glass	Pottery, Glass	Irongate
1774	<u>RICHARDSON</u> George	Oilman and Ironmonger	A Bath Stove	Irongate
1774	<u>STEPHENSON</u> , A		Fine Oil	
(1756 1777)	<u>WHITEHURST</u> , John	Clockmaker	Watches, Sundial, Watch repairs	Irongate
<u>ASHBOERNE (89)</u>				
1773	<u>BRADLEY</u> , Anthony	Mercer and Draper	Irish Linen	
<u>LEICESTER</u>				
(1759	<u>CHAMBERS</u> , Joseph		Material for clothing-suit, Coat, Breeches	
<u>ATHERSTONE</u>				
(1759 1767)	<u>EBORALL</u> William	Law	Searching, Lease preparation, Interviewing re tithes	
(1760 1761 1768)	<u>UNDERWOOD</u> Joseph		Sugar, Hops	

Year	Firm's Name	Nature of Business	Goods Supplied	Details of Address
<u>LICHFIELD</u>				
1756	<u>BARKER</u> , John		Material for Clothing	
1775	<u>WILKINS</u> , James		Cloth	
<u>COVENTRY</u>				
1778	<u>WEST &amp; GOLD</u>	Mercers		
<u>(STOKE ON TRENT)</u>				
1775	<u>WEDGEWOOD</u> , Josiah	Potter to Her Majesty	Queen's Ware and other pottery	Etruria
<u>BIRMINGHAM</u>				
1776	<u>BLYTH</u> , B.		Material for clothing	
1776	<u>BOULTON &amp; FOTHERGILL</u>		Silver Plate	Soho
1769	<u>CARLESS</u>	Druggist		Old Cross
1776	<u>COOK</u> , James	Goldsmith, Toy & China Manufacturer	Silver Shoe Buckles Knee Buckles	59 High Street
1776	<u>GOODALL &amp; DICKENSON</u>	Drapers and Mercers		Bull Street
1756	<u>LAWRENCE</u> Thomas		Hat	
1776	<u>MOBBS</u> ,	Hatter and Hosier		
1776	<u>RICHARDS</u> , Theo & Thomas		Hat Buckles, Gilt Coat Button with Crest on.(90)	
<u>LONDON</u>				
1777	<u>ALLAN</u> , WM.		Patent Water Closet	129 New Bond Street
1775	<u>BLUNT</u> , Robt.		Shirts	Charing Cross
(1774 (1776	<u>BRADLEY</u> , John		Tea	
1764	<u>BUTLER &amp; COBB</u>		Cloth	Drury Lane

Year	Firm's Name	Nature of Business	Goods Supplied	Details of Address
LONDON (cont.)				
1772	<u>CLARKE &amp; PICKERING</u>		Coffee	St. James' St.
1767	<u>CAPENHURST</u> Thomas		Spices Oysters	
1757	<u>FINCHETT</u> Arnold	Tin Man	Sperm Oil	St. Paul's Churchyard
1776	<u>GIBSON</u> <u>WINTER &amp; JOHNSON</u>	Lace Men		5 Lawrence Lane
1774	<u>HARRIS</u> William	Bookseller		St. Paul's Churchyard
1775	<u>HILL</u> , Thos.		Material for clothing	Newgate Street, Cheapside
1764	<u>JAMES</u> , Hugh		Tea	Fleet Street
1757	<u>NEALE</u> , Wm.		Cloth Lengths	Bedford St., Covent Garden
1777	<u>PAULINS &amp; COATES</u>	Importers of Lace	A suit of point lace	
1777	<u>PYEFINCH</u> , E.		Hyson Tea	30 Bucklesbury Cheapside
1764	<u>STEWART</u> , Robt.	Druggist	Tea and Chocolate	Gracechurch Street
1768	<u>STEWART &amp; RAMSEY</u>	Druggists		Gracechurch Street
(1767 1768)	<u>STANBURY</u> <u>SMITH &amp; SPENCER</u>	Mercers		Cloysters
1777	<u>SHRAPNELL</u> James	Goldsmith & Jeweller	Gold enamelled watch & Silver gilt pencil	
1776	<u>SPILSBURY</u> <u>WAREHOUSE</u>	Masquerade Dresses sold and lent	Loan of costumes and masks	Tavistock Street
1775	<u>TWININGS</u>		Hyson Tea	Temple Bar
1777	<u>WILDER &amp; BROWN</u>	Confectioner	Oranges	77 Cheapside
1776	<u>WILSON</u>	Woollen Drapers		Strand

Year	Firm's Name	Nature of Business	Goods Supplied	Details of Address
<u>LONDON (Cont.)</u>				
1777	<u>CHAPMAN &amp; SHEPPARD</u>			
1775	<u>YOUNG &amp;</u>		Silk Linings	Boswell Court
1771	<u>WHITE</u> , Peter		Hood	81 Newgate Street
<u>WORCESTER</u>				
1771	<u>GOULDEN &amp; LOWE</u>	Silk Merchts.	Rich Cord	
<u>HULL</u>				
1771	<u>BELL</u> , Richard		A pipe of Wine	
<u>BATH</u>				
1777	<u>CREANER</u> , Thos,		Cloth	
1777	<u>MAINWARING</u> , A.		Jewellery	
<u>OVERSEAL</u>				
(1756 1777)	<u>WILKES</u> , Joseph & Sons	Cheese Factors General Mchts. Financiers	(see Appendix III)	

APPENDIX III

Thomas Gresley's finances and the Wilkes Family

In 1748 Thomas's father John inherited a life interest in the Manor of Netherseal but as he lived to the age of eighty three, dying in 1783, only two years before Thomas, the latter probably benefited little from the estate. In October 1757, John Gresley made out 'an account of Receipts and Payments for what money my son Thomas received on my account' (mostly rents) and 'what money my son Thomas paid on my account', the balance being due to John. If such an arrangement continued it is perhaps not surprising to find considerable evidence of Thomas's financial problems.

Reference has already been made to Oxford debts, though it seems likely that gentlemen commoners there usually left Oxford owing money.(91) Bills at Seal are usually shown as paid long after the goods or services have been received. Thomas does not appear to have liked paying his 'tenths'.(92) Included in a bill for professional services over the years 1759 to 1767 from William Eborall of Atherstone (see App.II) is an item dated 1766 for 'payment to Undersheriff of Leicestershire Tenths of Seal Rectory 1765 - £2.7s.8 $\frac{3}{4}$ .' On 2nd August 1773, the Undersheriff of Leicester wrote to Thomas Gresley:-

'Sir Process is issued against you from the Exchequer for nonpayment of your tenths. I have subjoined the Account which you will be so good to order payment of in about a fortnight'.

It was paid on 12th August 1773.

In 1774-5 Joseph Wilkes and Son paid the tenths (see below).

On the other hand Thomas Gresley paid his Land Tax regularly. This was collected on a parish basis and like 'tenths' demanded and receipted on plain paper. Excise Duty of £4 a year was paid on a post chaise in 1757 to the Atherstone District of the Hinckley Collection; by 1767 £4 annually was being paid on both a chaise and a phaeton. In 1777 there is a receipt from the Ashby District of the Coventry Collection for £1.10s.0d. for 600 ounces of silver plate of which he had given notice according to 29 George III. Receipts for excise duty are on printed forms as are all ecclesiastical dues (first fruits, synodals, procurations and fees at induction) paid to officials acting for the Archdeacon of Leicester or the Bishop of Lincoln.

Between 1758 and 1763 Thomas Gresley was raising money by way of bonds arranged it seems by Christopher and George Saunders. In 1759 when paying back £300 of a £400 bond to Mr. Hiscox, Christopher Saunders charged £5.5s.0d. for his trouble! In 1771 Thomas Gresley paid £20 as half year's interest on a loan of £1000, an appropriate rate for the

period of relatively cheap money between the Seven Years War (1756-63) and the war of American Independence (1776-1783). (93) But it is Thomas Gresley's financial relationship with the Wilkes that make the most interesting story.

Joseph Wilkes's career in banking is said to begin with the establishment of a bank in Ashby de la Zouch in 1780.(94) But at least twenty three years before that the Wilkes family were beginning to perform banking functions for their customers. 'Just as London banking grew in the late seventeenth century out of the goldsmith's shop, so also in the eighteenth century the country banker grew out of the general merchant'.(95) The Wilkes progressed from family farmers specialising in cheese production to cheese factors supplying the London market (hence their interest in the Trent Navigation) and so to general merchanting, especially of imported goods exchanged for cheese in London. 'Every country banker had his eyes on London . . . The contact with London was indeed the main factor in the evolution from general merchant to specialised banker . . . Such a merchant, having a private account with a London banker not only for his own business but also to oblige local customers easily passed into a country banker who drew by arrangement on a London house'.(96)

Thus in 1756 the Wilkes are supplying Thomas Gresley with sugar, tea, candles, soap and bacon while a year or two later they are charging him £35 for a London bill. Yet at the same time the two are still conducting business by barter for the account reads:

January 6 1758		Joseph Wilkes
Malt	£43 6. 5.	
A London Bill	35 0. 0.	
Interest	<u>2 5. 0.</u>	
	80 11. 5.	
less 25qts 2 stone Barley@17s.	<u>21 9. 3.</u>	
	59 2. 2.	
less 2250 Tyles at		

Again in 1759 Wilkes's bill for

Meat	6 0. 0.
Interest	4 7. 6.
Cash	<u>14 2. 0.</u>
	24 9. 6.

is offset by the delivery of 44,500 bricks! As this is exactly at the rate of 11s. a thousand, the cash figure is presumably a balancing item.

In 1771 Joseph Wilkes's tithe for 1771 (valued at £89) is set against loans and interest, while for 1774-5 there is a large account for items set out in the following order totalling no less than £1211. (Some repayments are shown on the other side as are tithe payments):-

Sugar, Malt, a letter, hops, tenths, shot, spring, nails, paid at Burton on a parcel, green tea, payments, notes, cash.

But when settling accounts for Thomas Gresley, Wilkes was not just a payer.

On 17th April 1767 Henry Evans of Burton (see Appendix II) sent under seal a letter to Mr. Joseph Wilkes in Seal saying that he was dispatching 11 sacks of wheat. He could not possibly charge less than 56 shillings as he had just sold at 58/8. A note to Thomas Gresley was added in Wilkes's hand saying that he expected to beat Evans down to 55 shillings!

Thomas Gresley had in October 1776 bought plate from Boulton and Fothergill for £58.15.0. The following letter suggests that Wilkes beat them down to £49.17.7.:-

'Birmingham 25th December 1776

Messrs Joseph and Thomas Wilkes

Gentlemen

This morning's post favour'd us with yours of 21st instant enclosing your draft for £49.17.7 upon Messrs Stanbury and Co in London which we have, agreeable to your request placed for full balance of our present account with the Revd. Dr. Gresley and are with much esteem,

Gentlemen,

Your very obed. hbl. sts.  
Boulton and Fothergill'

As the letter from Boulton and Fothergill is with Gresley's papers it is assumed that he benefited from the discount. The relationship of the Wilkes family with Thomas Gresley was not, it seems, entirely on a business basis.

The speed of the rise of the Wilkes family to affluence gave rise to a story in explanation which John Morewood Gresley recorded a century or so later in his notes on Seal. (96) An Overseal parishioner told him that his father had said that when the Young Pretender had reached the area in 1745 a Wilkes had bought a bag of nails from one of the party. When opened, the story went, there were nails at top and bottom but gold in the middle. Unfortunately John Morewood Gresley only records and makes no comment.

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\* \* \* \* \*

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### 3. THOMAS GRESLEY AT OXFORD, 1751-1755

26. Maxwell Fraser, Oxford in Pictures (Guide Book n.d. bought 1972)
27. No College accounts for the quarters ending Michaelmas 1755 to Michaelmas 1756 have been found, but there is an account for St. Thomas, 1756. Did Thomas Gresley return to Oxford in the autumn of 1756 to try again for his degree?
28. G. M. Trevelyan, English Social History /Trevelyan/ (1944). 366.
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31. John Farnell's daughter married William Wilkes. (See Nichols,, where inscriptions on Farnell and Wilkes' tombstones at Netherseal are recorded).
32. Richard Inge appears to have been a medical practitioner.
33. Seaney Park os Sinai Park, Burton upon Trent. 'The most important town official was the High Bailiff of the Borough who often combined the office with those of Steward of the Manor and Coroner . . . It was customary for the Steward to reside at Sinai (or Seaney) Park . . . The most outstanding Steward during the eighteenth century was William Wyatt.' 23.
34. D. V. Fowkes (Compiler): Derbyshire Record Office Archive Teaching Unit No.3. Enclosure in Derbyshire (1973), 1.
35. 39 George III (1799).
36. Zachary Gilbert was not a supplier but an agricultural worker. He presumably bought in the goods.
37. DRO 809A/PI 1431.
38. Nichols. 988\*

Netherseal Hall as it was then known was demolished between 1928 and 1932. (Kelly's Directories of Derbyshire for those dates). The site was bought by the late Mr. E. J. Manners of Netherseal Old Hall and Messrs. Worthington and Co. of Burton upon Trent. His widow, (now Mrs. Usher) is President of the Burton upon Trent Division of the Girl Guides Association and on the site the Guides camp. (Personal communication from Mrs. K. Farr who is in charge of the camp site and who very kindly showed the present writer a post card of the Hall, and took him round the site in November, 1973)

39. Miss Joan Sinar suggests (personal communication) that 'trouce' is a variant of 'trowse' which is defined by Samuel Pegge (Two centuries of Derbicisms, English Dialect Society, 1896, 77) as 'rough faggot wood used in repairing breaches in the banks of rivers'. Pegge describes the word as obsolete in 1890. In the context of Gresley's bills it must have been used for repairing ditches.

5. MARRIAGE, GRADUATION, ORDINATION AND INSTITUTION 1757-9

40. Nichols, 995.  
41. Seal Marriage Register 1754-1777, DRO 809A/P17.  
42. Seal Register of Baptisms, Marriages and Burials, 1725-1787, DRO 809A/PI 2.  
43. Madan, Plate XVIII.  
44. Grateful thanks are due to the present Rector, the Reverend B. J. Everett.

6. MARRIED LIFE. 1757-1769

45. Parish of Seal Tithe Award and Maps (Leicestershire Record Office).  
46. Bills for seeds from Thomas Kirke (February 1757 and January 1759).  
47. Joseph Wilkes Snr. and his sons Joseph and John became trustees of the Burton-Hinckley Turnpike in 1760. The Burton-Measham section was opened in 1763 and the Measham-Hinckley section must have been completed soon after for by 1764 William Bass of Burton operated a weekly service between London and Manchester via Hinckley, Burton and Ashbourne. His waggons carried a wide range of merchandise at the rate of £6 a ton between Burton and London. Owen, 58, quoting from the William Bass Book 1762-4 in Bass & Co's. records) See also Wright, 4.  
48. Wright, 4.  
49. C. C. Owen, personal communication.  
50. Derbyshire Miscellany Vol.V. part 2 (Autumn 1969), 243.

8. WIDOWER. 1769

51. The present Queens Hotel (see Underhill, History of Burton upon Trent, 142).  
52. 'Joseph Bramah . . . was a versatile genius . . . (and besides inventing a lock) . . . he applied the principles of the forcing pump to the invention of the hydraulic press, the publican's pull-over tap and the water closet. Safes, cotton presses, drink and sanitation; what an exquisite quartet of gifts to the new 19th century'. (Present writer's underlining) C. R. Fay: Great Britain from Adam Smith to the Present Day [Fay] (1932), 257.

But Gresley bought his patent water closet in 1777!

'The first such patent . . . was taken out in 1775 by Alexander Cummings, a watchmaker of Bond Street. In this are found all the elements of the modern valve closet . . . it has the overhead supply cistern, the valve interconnected with the flush and with the pull-up handle and the syphon trap . . . Only the valve was unreliable . . . With Bramah's improvements to the Cummings valve, a design resulted that was to serve for well over a century . . . Bramah's patent is dated 1778. By 1797 he had, he said, made about 6,000 closets, and the firm went on making them until about 1890 . . . With inventions it often pays to get in second, not first. Bramah seems to have taken much of the credit and all of the business that might have gone to Cummings, whose patent has all the elements of Bramah's except the hinged valve'. Lawrence Wright, Clean and Decent [Lawrence Wright] (1966), 107-8.

Perhaps the fifteen days taken to fix up were necessary because of difficulties with the Cummings valve!

53. Pay greēn = probably pea green. (S. Derbyshire speech!)
54. Lawrence Wright, 104.
55. Benjamin Wilson, Senr., started brewing in the Blue Stoops on the east side of Burton High Street in 1742. Benjamin Wilson, Jr., obtained control of the business after 1773. In 1807, after over thirty years of successful business he sold out to Samuel Allsopp. Owen, 96-8.
56. 'At the first meeting of the Trent and Mersey Canal Committee held at the Crown in Stone on 10th June, 1766, Josiah Wedgwood was elected Treasurer, James Brindley Surveyor General, and Hugh Henshall, Brindley's brother-in-law, Clerk of Works'. In 1795 Hugh Henshall and Co. operated sixteen boats on the canal between Shardlow and Runcorn. Owen, 50 and Appendix C2. p.74.
57. James Watt entered into partnership with Matthew Boulton in 1775 but Boulton continued his partnership with Fothergill with whom he had built up a successful hardware business and with whom he had made Sheffield plate after 1762. In 1773 as a result of the energy of Boulton, an Act of Parliament was passed 'for appointing Wardens and Assay Masters for assaying wrought plate in the towns of Sheffield and Birmingham'. In the late seventies Boulton and Fothergill introduced the steam engine into their factory and began to produce shaped silver parts in quantity, the first signs of mass production. Fay, 142 and 255, and Gerald Taylor, Silver (1963), 213-5. By its price, it is assumed that Gresley's silver was hand-made.

9. ARCHDEACON BICKHAM'S VISITATION. 1776

58. Parochial Visitations of the Reverend and Worshipful James Bickham, D.D., Archdeacon of Leicester, 1774-1788, Leicester Museum Muniment Room 1D 41/18/21.
59. John Morewood Gresley's pedigree of the Wilkes Family, DRO 809A/PI456.
60. V.C.H. Leicestershire. Vol.III, 166.
61. Was this a serious intention or merely delaying tactics? Nothing more has been found about the Rectory until the present one was built in 1863 (see DRO 809A), and the Hall remained in the family. Perhaps Thomas Gresley and his father had discussed the promotion of a Bill to confirm the enclosure agreement of 1755. The inclusion of a clause authorising land to be set out 'for and in lieu and in full satisfaction of and for Tithes, Tenths and Ecclesiastical Dues by this Act extinguished and abolished', W. E. Tate, The Parish Chest, 139 quoting the enclosure act for West Retford, Nottinghamshire of 1774. Tate adds that by 1831 there were more than 2,000 private acts dating from after 1757 which contained clauses relating to tithe commutation. He thinks these represent about half the enclosure acts at that time. The Seal Enclosure Act of 1799 (see note 35) makes no mention of tithe commutation.
62. When Nichols wrote in 1804, Netherseal Church had been 'new pewed in good oak and the pulpit and desk of the same stand at the West (sic) end where there is also a neat vestry'. The Reverend Michael Austin, Ph.D. (unpublished thesis) Birmingham University, Church and People in Derbyshire, 1824-1885) confirms this is not an error; a similar Derbyshire example was Willington. The new seating in the nave probably consisted of several pews on the north side facing south to a gangway south of centre and a few pews opposite facing north. The pulpit would be at the west end, beyond the porch on the south wall; those in the north-facing pews had to turn their heads to the left to see the pulpit. Dr. Austin says that the Faculty would have a pewing plan but unfortunately neither Faculty nor plan has been traced in Lincoln Diocesan Records at the Castle, Lincoln.

10. SECOND MARRIAGE, 1777

63. John Morewood Gresley quotes Vol. 307.
64. Wright, 5.
65. Joseph Pycroft was later a partner in his Uncle Wilkes's bank. Wright, 62.
66. See Wright, about the rise in land values in the late 1770's and the relative ease with which mortgages could then be raised.

## 11. EPILOGUE

67. DRO 803M.
68. Thomas wanted William to make law his profession. But shortly before his father's death William was ordained and on 3rd October, 1785, admitted and instituted to the Rectory of Seal - Episcopal Act Book 39, 1761-1799, f.434, Lincolnshire Archives.
69. The will is dated after the purchase of Four Oaks but Thomas may have borrowed to buy his house in anticipation of his legacy.
70. John Gresley died in 1783, aged 73. See Madan.
71. Madan records Thomas Gresley's F.R.S., but makes no comment. Perhaps he knew its value. Between 1740 and 1780 'two thirds of the candidates (for the F.R.S.) had no knowledge of scientific subjects, nor did they take any interest in the aims of the Society. The social distinction which they may have hoped to gain from its Fellowship probably proved much less than they had expected'. This situation persisted until about 1830. Sir Henry Lyons, The Royal Society 1660-1940, 166, and statistical tables 341.

## 12. CONCLUSIONS

72. David Martin, A Sociology of English Religion, 16.  
See also:  
Peter Laslett, The World we have lost (1965) 71-4.  
C. R. Cragg, The Church in the Age of Reason (1960) 139-140.  
L. W. Cowie, Hanoverian England (1967) 68.  
R. J. White, The Age of George III (1968) 12 & 14.  
J. H. Plumb, England in the eighteenth century (1950) 44-5.  
Christopher Hill, Reformation to Industrial Revolution (1967) 275-6.  
J. S. Watson, The Reign of George III (1960), 42.
73. Trevelyan, 360.
74. Kelly, Directory of Leicestershire (1864), Seal Tithe Award (1843) in Leicestershire Record Office, and date stone on Netherseal Baptist Chapel.
75. When Thomas Gresley's sister died in 1802 Netherseal Hall passed into the hands of the Robertsons. When Mrs. Robertson, last of that family died in 1904, the Hall seems to have passed back into the Gresley family who let it. It was unoccupied in 1928 and demolished soon after. Kelly's Directories of Leicestershire 1864, 1888 and of Derbyshire 1900, 1902, 1925 and 1928.

## APPENDIX I - ENCLOSURE IN WEST LEICESTERSHIRE AND SOUTH DERBYSHIRE IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

76. Wright, 4.
77. A. H. John, 'The Course of Agricultural Change', Studies in the Industrial Revolution, ed L. S. Pressnell (1960), 149, quoting W. G. Hoskins, 'The Leicestershire Farmer in the seventeenth century', Agricultural History XXV (1951)
78. Personal communication.
79. Wright, 128.

80. DRO 809A/PI 436
81. Joan Thirsk, The Agrarian History of England and Wales, Vol.IV (1967) 251-2 quoting SP 16, 183, 17
82. W. E. Tate, The Parish Chest (1969), 4.
83. M. W. Barley, The English Farmhouse and Cottages (1961), 243.
84. Derbyshire Miscellany, Vol. V, pt.2 (Autumn 1969) 124
85. Dr. P. M. G. Eden, University of Leicester, addressing Architectural Section of Derbyshire Archaeological Society, November 1973.
86. Nichols, 980 and 986.

APPENDIX II - SOME OF THOMAS GRESLEY'S SUPPLIERS. 1756-1777

87. In Bailey's Western and Midland Directory 1783. [Bailey] Burton upon Trent entry, (Reprint Derbyshire Archaeological Society 1972) Wm. Basswell (presumably an error) is described as 'Brewer and Carrier' and Henry Evans and Co. as 'Wharfingers'. (Henry Evans was one of the syndicate forming the Burton Boat Company in 1762). In the same directory, both Benjamin Wilson, Brewer, and John Walker Wilson, Brewer and Raff Merchant, appear. Benjamin most probably supplied Thomas Gresley. (Owen, 96)
88. In Bailey, Derby entry, George Richardson, Oilman and Ironmonger, appears but none of the others are mentioned. Cope (later Cope and Taylor) recently closed; some of their original fittings are now in Derby Museum. Haslams are still in business in Irongate.
89. Anthony Bradley, Mercer and Draper, appears in Bailey's British Directory, 1784, Vol.3. (D.A.S. Reprint) Ashbourne entry.
90. 'About 1775 the button began to replace the buckle', Fay, 306.

APPENDIX III - THOMAS GRESLEY'S FINANCES AND THE WILKES FAMILY

91. About a century later Tennyson wrote of a Lincolnshire clergyman:  
'And thin 'e coom'd to the parish wi' lots o'  
Varsity deby,  
Stook to his taail they did an' 'e 'ant got  
shut on 'em yet . . .'  
Northern Farmer (New Style) Tennyson's Works(1880), 269
92. 'The ancient "Fifteenths" and "Tenths" had originally been a true 10% tax on movables in boroughs and a true 6 $\frac{2}{3}$ % upon the capital value of goods in the rest of the country'. Tate, 26.
93. See L. S. Pressnell, 'The Rate of Interest in the eighteenth century', Studies in the Industrial Revolution, 179.
94. See Wright, and V.C.H. Leicestershire, Vol.III, 50 & 52.
95. Fay, 108, 109.
96. DRO 808A/PI 1431.

Book review

Darley Abbey - from monastery to industrial community  
by Don Peters, Moorland Publishing Company, price £2.40.

So much of the work carried out on the Evans family and their industrial complex at Darley Abbey lies in unpublished theses that a book on this important subject is long overdue. It is much to be regretted therefore that Mr. Peters' contribution falls short of expectations, even allowing for the fact that the book is aimed at a general readership rather than specifically at historians.

The principal faults lie in Mr. Peters' far from successful excursions away from his main theme of the Evans family and Darley Abbey Mills and village on which he is basically sound. Indeed, the book would have been much better without the first two chapters on the early history of the abbey which contain an unfortunate number of incorrect interpretations of mediaeval terms and concepts (for example seisin means freehold, toft means smallholding), several examples of wrong terminology and some straightforward errors of fact. The first page contains the startling revelation that 'Derby was at one time the seat of the kings of the ancient kingdom of Mercia' and, sadly, the opening chapters never really recover from this start.

Once into the eighteenth century the book improves considerably, although it continues to contain a smattering of irritating little mistakes. There is, for example, a lack of consistency in the spelling of place names, Alkinton managing to be Alkinton, Almonton and Alkmanton when referred to in the last century, and two popular misconceptions about Arkwright and Cromford are repeated yet again. First, the power for the first Cromford mill was provided not initially by the water from Cromford Moor Sough but by Bonsall Brook and second, Cromford was not 'almost non-existent' when Arkwright came: it had seven public houses and ale houses in 1767, hardly a sign of a non-existent settlement.

A further major quibble concerns the referencing which is poor throughout. Where the source is given, only the repository is named without giving any collection name or reference number. One item that is named (J.B. Robinson's Founders of the Cotton Manufacture) is attributed to the wrong repository.

On the credit side, the book is very attractively produced and lavishly illustrated with a well-chosen selection of photographs and many people will find the later chapters on the Evans family, their mills and Darley Abbey village enjoyable and interesting reading.

D. V. Fowkes.