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HAMMERMAN'S HILL

The Land, People and Industry of the Titterstone Clee Hill Area of
Shropshire from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Centuries.

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PART TWO

THE PREDOMINANCE OF AGRICULTURE, 1640-1720

1. THE SETTING: 1640-1650

The area was predominantly royalist and formed part of the western royalist heartland based on Wales and the neighbouring counties. From 1644 this area came under increasing pressure itself but before that it had been forced into a condition of hardship by continual demands for men, food, equipment and other supplies from the King's commissioners, and by the depredations of many of the King's motley, and often ill-disciplined, forces.

The royal castle at Ludlow was the seat of the Council in the Marches of Wales and many of its local officials and connections were, naturally, royalist but the attitude of the local landowners was more influential. They included Lord Craven who was devoted to the King's sister, Elizabeth, the mother of Prince Rupert. Although he took care to avoid being involved directly in the war himself he provided large amounts of money to the royalist cause ¹. His Whitmore cousins, who looked after some of his affairs in the area during his absences, played a great part in the defence of Bridgnorth and his tenants, the Baldwins, strengthened and held Stokesay Castle as an outpost of Ludlow ². The Catholic Blount and Lacon families were unstinting in their support for the King, financially and on the battlefield. Even Sir Francis Lacon is said to have fought with the army ³, although, as he was born in 1564 and would have been nearly eighty years of age, this seems unlikely. However, in view of the irascible, impetuous nature

1. See above, p. 117.

2. Old Shropshire Houses, ed. H.E. Forest, p.134.

3. Mrs. E. Childe, 'History of Cleobury Mortimer', T.S.A.S., ii (1879), 48.

revealed by some of his earlier behaviour it would not have been impossible ¹.

By contrast with the large landholdings of Lord Craven, the Blounts and the Lacons, most of the other landholdings in the area were made up of only one or two manors, although in some cases these were outlying parts of larger estates. Coreley manor and advowson were owned by Sir Francis Ottley, of Pitchford, who was Sheriff of Shropshire in 1643 and Governor of Shrewsbury in 1644. Sir Edward Littleton, created Baron Munslow in 1641, lived at Henley. He had been Puisne Judge of North Wales (1623-32), Recorder of London (1631-34), Solicitor-General (1634-40), and Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas (1640-41). From 1641 to 1645 he was Lord keeper of the Great Seal ². The lord of the manor of Milson was John Hunte, Sergeant at Arms to Charles I ³. Greete was purchased from Thomas Foxe for £700 in 1639 by Thomas Edwardes, the grandson of a Shrewsbury draper. His sister, Lucia, was the wife of Sir Francis Ottley and after initial hesitation he became a dedicated supporter of the King although his brother, Humphrey, was a leading Parliamentarian and, later, a regicide. In 1644 he was made Sheriff of Shropshire and created a baronet for his services ⁴. Robert Charlton, a London goldsmith and a descendant of a younger branch of the Charltons of Apley who had purchased Ludford and Whitton manor in Burford parish between 1635 and 1638, also supported the royalist cause. He is said to have lost over £30,000 during the wars because of his sympathies ⁵. Apart from the rich men of this type and the great national or county magnates, there were smaller men in the area who took part in the wars as far as they were able. Among them was Richard

1. See above, pp. 119-120.

2. J.F.A. Mason, 'The Recorders of Bridgnorth', T.S.A.S., liv (1951-53), 187-189.

3. Milson Par. Reg. (1915), introd., p.iv.

4. E.C. Hope-Edwardes, 'Sequestration Papers of Sir Thomas Edwardes, Bart.', T.S.A.S., 3rd ser., i (1901), 329-332.

5. Old Shropshire Houses, ed. H.E. Forest, pp.154-55. H.T. Weyman, 'Ludford', T.S.A.S., xlix (1938), 229.

Hyde, of the small manor of Hopton Wafers, who fought in the King's armies and was referred to locally thereafter as Captain Hyde.

There appear to have been few supporters of Parliament in the district among the gentry as is underlined by the difficulties experienced in obtaining continuity in administration even at parish level for several years after the war. Tenants probably followed the lead of their social superiors in political affairs in most cases for the manorial organisation was still strong, manor courts were held regularly and relationships between manor lords and their suitors were close, except in the manors of Lord Craven who was, however, apparently well served by his stewards and bailiffs, and by the petty constables who were selected each year in his courts leet for the various townships within, or partly within, his manors. The relationship of Sir Francis Lacon with his tenants, and his own forceful personality, are indicated by the replies of his tenants in Cleeton and Farlow to the interrogatory administered to them in connection with the dispute over mining rights in Catherton in 1629¹. They obviously felt that it was necessary to support their lord's case but their replies appear to lack substance and conviction. George Beard for example states that he had heard 'by his elders that where the ironstone was gotten is in Cleeton'. Some answers may have been rehearsed and a covering comment for the benefit of Sir Walter Pye, the Attorney of the Court of Wards and Livery, asks him to note that some witnesses 'speake but as they were tolde for their supposed bounds' and that others referred to the claims that had been made in their presence by Charles Adams, the previous lord of the manor. It would have been surprising if the large freeholders of the lower parishes and townships, whose wealth and status had been increasing in recent years, had been quite as well disciplined as the more dependent tenants, but there is no indication that any of them

1. S.B.L., Deeds and Charters, 9758. See above, pp. 119-120.

were active supporters of Parliament. Of the few men in the area who took public office after the defeat of the King, only Thomas Waties of Boraston, who was elected registrar of Burford in 1653¹, and George Thompson of the Shear House, Burford, who became a preacher in the Fifth Classis, were drawn from their ranks². Edward Whichcote of Stoke House, Burford, who approved Waties as registrar, and Thomas Kettilby became Justices of the Peace. Both were lesser members of the families of established gentry rather than prosperous freeholders. Whichcote's younger brother, Jeremias, was Solicitor-General to the Princes Palatinate³ and Kettilby's wife was a daughter of Edward Littleton, Baron Munslow, the Lord Keeper of the Great Seal who was referred to above. On the 17th May 1654, Kettilby carried out at Stottesdon one of the few civil marriage ceremonies noted in the records of the area.

None of the four appeared to be opponents of the royalists or of the church, and their activities were directed mainly, apparently, to providing a basis of administration and to maintaining some measure of religious continuity, and were complementary to the work of Thomas Good⁴ who was rector of Coreley from 1647. He had been ejected from Saint Alkmunds, Shrewsbury, in 1645 by Humphrey Mackworth the elder, but was appointed a delegate of the parliamentary visitors for Oxford on the 30th September 1647, and later worked with Richard Baxter to maintain religious services.

1. Burford Par. Reg. (Shrewsbury, 1913), pp.64-65.

2. J.E. Auden, 'Ecclesiastical History of Shropshire during the Civil War', T.S.A.S., 3rd ser., vii (1907), 268-270. Salop was divided into six Presbyterian Classes in 1646. They were abolished in 1653.

3. Burford Par. Reg. (1913), introd., p.viii.

4. Walker Revised, ed. A.G. Matthews (Oxford, 1948), p.305. Alumni Oxonienses, 1500-1714, Early Series (Oxford, 1891), p.581. D.N.B., xxii (London, 1890), 112. Good was created Doctor of Divinity and appointed Canon Residentiary of Hereford Cathedral in 1660 after the Restoration. He was a fellow of Balliol from 1629 to 1658 and was elected Master in 1672.

George Thompson of the Shear died in 1654 and was one of the first persons buried in Nash Chapel yard, but Whichcote, Kettilby and Waties survived into the Restoration and apparently suffered no disabilities, Whichcote and Kettilby continuing as Justices.

The history of the area is not well documented during the period from 1640 to 1650. The collections of deeds dealing with the large estates of Lord Craven and the Lacon family contain few that refer to this time and the lands and estates of smaller landowners have left even fewer references. The few parish registers that begin before 1640 have suffered from neglect or damage in nearly all cases. The Neen Savage register has many omissions between 1644 and 1654, the entries for Cleobury Mortimer have disappeared completely for the years 1638 to 1647 and other years are obviously far from complete, and the entries for Coreley cease abruptly early in 1645, are resumed in July 1647, but after March 1648 are obviously deficient until 1651. Preceding the 1647 entries in this register is the comment: 'Registering neglected until (?) a happy time', from which one assumes that the arrival of a rector and the resumption of registering ended an unhappy period. Only the Burford register was maintained without an obvious break, probably because at least one of the portionaries was able to maintain it until a 'minister', John Lloyd, who was responsible for at least some of the register entries, including some referring to his own family, arrived in 1646.

The deficiencies in local documents reflect the turmoil and strains of the period of the war, and the near completeness of the breaches between 1645 and 1647 hints at the harsh consequences of defeat.

Prince Rupert, having defeated Fiennes at Powick Bridge on the 23rd of September 1642, proceeded with his forces the same evening to Tenbury on his way to Shrewsbury. From this time soldiers on their way between the South Midlands, or the Worcester area, and Shrewsbury, or Chester, frequently passed through the district to cross the Teme over Tenbury bridge. Garrisons

were established at Ludlow, Stokesay, Hopesay and other places in the area and other soldiers, sometimes untrained and ill-disciplined groups, were often quartered in the district. Among them were foreign mercenaries who were experienced, through service in the religious wars in Germany, in confiscation, plundering and worse depredations and who had little regard for the fact that they were in a friendly part of the country. The strain of financing, supplying and suffering the behaviour of soldiers must have become increasingly more difficult to bear as the war progressed badly for the King and as his demands on the diminishing areas under his control became greater.

Thomas Edwardes of Greete, an energetic and able organiser, was responsible during 1643 for raising money and supplies in Shropshire for the King's forces. His task even at this early stage in the war was

difficult and painful and at times he was subject to threats and arbitrary time limits. He contributed so much himself that his estates became heavily encumbered and, by the end of the war, he had 'desperate' debts. By 1644 the people, including his own tenants at Greete, were in great distress as a result of the heavy demands made upon their resources¹.

In July 1643, a member of the garrison at Brampton Bryan reported that Colonel Howard had about fifty Walloons and Dutchmen nearby with saddles but no horses and that he intended 'to steale horses for them'². This indicates the unpopular methods that must already have been found necessary for remounting troops and incidentally illustrates the strain on the supply of horses, particularly saddle-horses, caused by cavalry warfare and long forced marches. The effects of the wastage of horses, inevitably increased by the speed and élan involved in Rupert's cavalry tactics, must have put an extra burden on this district, for its stock of saddle-horses

1. E.C. Hope-Edwardes, 'Sequestration Papers', T.S.A.S. (1901), 329-332.

2. 'Four Letters from Shropshire to Prince Rupert', ed. J.E. Auden, T.S.A.S., 4th ser. (1912), ii, 19.

was probably very limited to begin with. As late as 1673 the vicar of Cleobury noted that horses were extremely dear and good ones very scarce in the district. All that he could find was a young gelding ... 'but hee will not bee bought under 3 or 4 and twenty pounds ...' ¹.

On the 6th of January 1644 Rupert was made Captain General of all forces in Shropshire and adjacent counties. Letters sent to him during this year show the deterioration in the condition of his forces, some of their depredations, the unpopularity of the mercenaries, in particular, and the growing desperation of local people. In a letter dated 15th August 1644, Joh. Van Byrusch reports that the Governor of Bridgnorth had quartered him on Wenlock and that this had made the 'Country almost ryse against mee'. The governor had then taken half his regiment away to quarter it in Bridgnorth but 'his authority kould not prevayle so much against the malignancy of the Cityzens as too let them entre in their houses ...'. As a result many of his men had deserted ². On the 5th of October 1644, the Governor of Ludlow Castle, Sir Michael Woodhouse, reported to Rupert that the horse of another mercenary, Van Garies, had refused to accept orders from anyone but Rupert himself and added that 'he ise quartered to destroy and not advance the service'. He begged that orders be sent for Van Garies, 'otherwise we must be starved, the Countrey allredy refusinge contribution' ³. The growing rebelliousness in the area is emphasised by a report of January 1645 that more than a thousand men were in arms in south Shropshire 'neither for the King nor for the Parliament, but stand only upon their own guard for the preservation of their lives and fortunes'. They demanded restitution for the wrongs done by Van Garies, his expulsion from the area, the removal of two local garrisons and the

1. See below, p. 189.

2. 'Four Letters to Prince Rupert', ed. J.E. Auden, T.S.A.S. (1912), 18-19.

3. Ibid., 19 20.

appointment of commanders of their own. Van Garies was killed shortly afterwards in a small engagement in Gloucestershire ¹, and efforts appear to have been made to remove at least some of the causes of the complaints that had been made.

A commission of 14th February 1645, made Prince Charles the Captain General of a new army. On the following day a proclamation for raising soldiers, issued from Oxford by Charles I, was directed to the Associated Counties of Salop, Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Staffordshire ². The commissioners were required to impress six hundred foot from each of the first three counties and two hundred from Staffordshire, to be delivered to officers appointed by Prince Rupert on 21st of March 1645. They were given powers to settle and enforce the payment of contributions, which were to be paid by the clergy as well as the laity, to take delinquents' estates, fines and compositions, and half the money raised in excise in the area. Every inhabitant was to declare on oath all the arms that they possessed and these were to be requisitioned together with any goods, horses and money that was needed. Everything taken in this way was to be noted down so that it could be restored eventually.

The proclamation placed severe burdens on the people, but efforts were made to reduce discontent and disarm opposition by limiting the arbitrary powers of commanders and by removing other threats to personal liberties. The soldiers were to be subject to common law, not martial law, and were to be mustered frequently, so that officers who claimed for more men than they had could be discovered and punished. Free quarter was forbidden except 'of necessity on the march for one night'. If the soldiers tried to enforce free quarter or offered violence, it would be 'lawful for the inhabitants to resist', powers of arrest were limited strictly and the

1. 'Four Letters to Prince Rupert', ed. J.E. Auden, T.S.A.S. (1912), 20-21.

2. Stafford R.O., D661/2/737.

seizure of property without the warrant of the commissioners was to be treated as theft.

The commissioners were to select a central meeting place for the new army. They chose the Cleobury, Tenbury and Burford area, for by early March many soldiers were quartered in those places, particularly, according to local tradition, on the meadows alongside the Teme in Boraston ¹. Another local tradition reveals the unsettled state of the countryside and, in spite of the terms of the proclamation, the insecurity that resulted from the presence of soldiers even when they were in the territory of their own supporters. It refers to Katherine Cooke, the wife of Richard Cooke, the descendant of the Richard Cooke who had established a forge on the Teme in 1597 ². The soldiers were quartered in the meadows around the site of the forge for several weeks in 1645 and during this time Katherine is said to have fled into the nearby woods with a female servant and lived in a charcoal-burner's cabin until the soldiers had moved on. The area in which she hid can be pointed out confidently by some of the people who live in the neighbourhood today, although they usually refer to her as Miss Good. She was in fact the ancestress of the Goods through her daughter Anne who was baptised in 1646 and who married Roger Good in 1681.

Little is known of the events of the period from early 1645 to the fall of Ludlow Castle on 9th June 1646. The castle was invested during its long drawn-out defence by a large group of Parliamentary soldiers, whose entrenchments can be seen, still, on Whitcliff, the hill opposite the castle, and it fell only after artillery had been used to pound a wide breach in the western curtain wall. It is probable that the stocking of the castle for its long period of resistance and, soon afterwards, the supplying

1. F.W. Joyce, Tenbury, p.104.

2. See above, p. 98.

of the investing forces, imposed heavy burdens on the local people, for the proclamation of 15th February 1645 had required that all provisions necessary for garrisons should be taken to them forthwith 'to provide always for the garrison and to secure the countries' corn from the enemy and injure him if he enters'. To the losses of food and other necessities resulting from the fall of Ludlow would be added further losses of crops, stock and other property during the ensuing period of confusion and insecurity when wandering groups of soldiers, deserters and marauders were at large. Even after the wars had finished the district continued to suffer from the presence of the victorious soldiers for several years. In spite of its exhausted condition, it had to bear free quartering and various forms of ill-discipline, which grew worse as the discontent of the soldiers increased with the degree of their boredom and the size of their arrears, until it culminated in the mutinies that broke out in some parts of Shropshire in the summer of 1646¹. During this period Parliamentary soldiers are known to have burned down Sodington Hall, the home of the Blount family², and parish registers were, in most cases, neglected or damaged. Samuel Yale who was inducted as rector of Coreley on the 29th May 1642, apparently disappeared early in 1645, for he is never heard of again either in south Shropshire or in the Wrexham district, from which he had probably come originally³.

The establishment of parliamentary control was followed by ejections

1. J.S. Morrill, 'Mutiny and Discontent in Provincial Armies, 1645-47', Past and Present, 56 (August 1972), 53, note 18.

2. See above, p. 103.

3. Alumni Oxonienses, 1500-1714, Early Ser. (Oxford, 1891), p.1698. A brief reference is made to Samuel Yale of 'Danub', which, it is suggested, could mean the Forest of Dean. It seems more probable on the evidence of his surname and, to a lesser extent, of his christian name and profession, that he was a member of the Yale family of Plas yn Ial, Llanelidan, and of Plas Grono, Wrexham, Denbighshire, whose head until his death in 1626 was David Yale, Chancellor of the diocese of Chester. Elihu Yale, b. 1648, the patron of Yale University was also a member of this family.

of other clergy, who included Thomas Bannister, rector of the first portion of Burford, John Barker, vicar of Cleobury Mortimer, Thomas Amias, vicar of Stottesdon with Farlow, John Tylor, rector of Greete, Edward Pitts, rector of Neen Sollars and of Milson, and Charles Hall, vicar of Caynham. In most of the other parishes in the area changes in incumbencies are seen to have taken place, when the continuity of records is resumed, although the reasons for the changes are not given.

The civil wars must have stimulated many of the local industries through the demands of the King's armies for clothing, equipment and weapons. Among those which probably benefited were the woollen industries that supplied clothing, the leather industries that supplied numerous items of clothing and equipment ranging from gloves, riding boots, belts, jerkins and breeches to saddles, packs, pouches, buckets and harness, and the iron industries which, becoming more vital as other ironworking centres were lost, were well adapted to the production of thrusting and cutting weapons and, in the case of Bouldon at least, to the casting of cannon. But, obviously, any stimulus given to industries did not compensate for the money, food and goods gathered by officials and soldiers or for the strains caused to the economy by the absence of many of the most active, able-bodied men, the loss of many draught animals and the lack of capital. Later, when some of the landowners had to compound for their estates they, and no doubt, some of their tenants indirectly, suffered further financial strains and the general economy of the area was probably affected by the loss of more capital. Among those who compounded for their estates, apart from the Blounts ¹ and the Lacons ², who were required to find £66 only, were Sir Thomas Edwardes of Greete who paid £2,060 and Sir Francis Ottley who paid £1,200,³ although, as

1. See above, p. 103.

2. See above, p. 102.

3. T.F. Dukes, Antiquities of Shropshire (Shrewsbury, 1844), Appendix, pp. lxxix-lxxx.

they had property elsewhere, their burdens were not related entirely to this area.

The losses and devastation caused by the civil wars, and the uncertainties of the period that ensued, obviously caused great harm to local communities and imposed severe limitations on them for several years.

2. THE LAND:

(a) Introduction

The agricultural changes and improvements that had been stimulated from the late sixteenth century in Burford and nearby parishes by the proximity of agricultural developments in Herefordshire and Worcestershire, and the competition of the cheap corn that resulted from these developments, spread to other parishes in the area and continued into the seventeenth century. In general the predominantly pastoral nature of the district was emphasised by these changes and by the growth of industrial activities which provided an expanding market for agricultural produce.

The greatest impact on agriculture had been made by the changes that had modified the patterns of landholding in many parts of the area. The changes, which included an increase in the number of open field strips held in severalty, their subsequent consolidation and enclosure, the engrossing of holdings, and further expansion into the woodlands and wastes, reduced the amount of land wasted in access routes, aided time-saving and convenience and extended the area of more productive land. The settlements that had retained vestiges of co-aration or that had been built up by later expansion and scattered clearances were affected most. Naturally the changes had less relevance in areas where there were already compact holdings of demesne lands or where the clearance of woodland and waste land during later medieval settlement periods had led to the establishment of large farmsteads surrounded by their own blocks of land. However, many such holdings had been increased in area by further expansion into the surrounding woods and

wastes, by the absorption of some of the few smaller holdings that had grown up around them and, in some cases, by amalgamation with other large holdings.

The changes in landholding patterns enabled farmers to make more effective use of available techniques, encouraged specialisation in response to market forces and, by providing more favourable or suitable conditions, encouraged the more extensive adoption of new crops, the better use of manure and other waste, more careful estate management, and other improvements.

After the setbacks of the 1640s a recovery began early in the 1650s. The agricultural communities were able to benefit during this recovery from the improvements that had been made earlier and were encouraged by their achievements and by increasing market opportunities to undertake further developments that had as their objective the greater efficiency and profitability of farming.

Modifications in landholding patterns continued after the middle of the seventeenth century, but as the most obvious changes were completed in the lower and agriculturally richer parts of the area, the emphasis shifted to the woodlands and to the poorer parts on the higher slopes and to the hillside wastes themselves. Changes in landholding and settlement patterns in these areas were closely related to industrial developments and associated population movements and were a relatively less significant aspect of strictly agricultural change than the more extensive improvements in farming that were occurring in the richer lower areas.

(b) Landholdings and Settlements

There is no indication that significant amounts of common arable land still existed in 1650. On the contrary, deeds and other documents that refer to the old open fields, or parts of open fields, which had not been enclosed invariably indicate that the strips were held in severalty as were swathes in the common meadows. Where they still existed, the consolidation of the strips, swathes and other small pieces of land continued

to take place and enclosure often, but not invariably, followed. The rate of change was usually uneven within the same township and varied considerably between different areas.

By 1646 Thomas Powys of Ludlow had engrossed a considerable amount of land in and around the lower parts of Bitterley parish. He owned lands at Stanton Lacy and Ludlow and a large estate at Henley which had been augmented through his marriage to the niece of Sir Edward Littleton, and he was a large leaseholder in the manor of Snitton for he held Snitton Hall ¹, another tenement and several large pieces of land ². He continued to add to his estates and worked hard to consolidate and improve them.

On 11th October 1661 Powys made an agreement with Peter Loyd and William Mullard to enclose parts of Hucklemarsh Field that he had consolidated through exchanges. He noted the details in his estate book himself, thus indicating his personal concern and the close attention that he paid to the management of his estates ³. Loyd and Mullard were to supply the 'quicks' at six shillings the hundred and were to be paid two shillings for cutting stakes which Powys would transport for them. The work of enclosing, which involved digging a ditch 'near one yard broad', throwing up a bank, setting the quickset and providing it with protective stakes, was to be paid for at the rate of four pence the perch. Powys specified that the quicksets were to be taken from a certain well-established hedge when it was plashed, which indicates, together with the large amount of six shillings per hundred to be paid for them, that the plants were already rooted and were not cuttings.

Almost exactly a year later, on the 13th October 1662, Powys made another, similar, agreement with Higges and Farket for the making of

1. Sketch 1, p. 264.

2. S.R.O., Oakly Park Estate, 20/Box 13. Foxe family rental of Snitton manor dated 12th Sept., 1646, prepared by the bailiff, Ambrose Mapp.

3. S.R.O., Henley Hall, Powys Notebooks, 320/5, 'Lib. 2', p.17.

enclosures in Warratry Field as well as in Hucklemarsh Field. On this occasion he drove a much harder bargain, for they were to supply the quicksets which 'must be all whitethorn' at five shillings the hundred. He was to deliver them to the ditch, however. There is no reference to payment for stakes and Higges, who had to transport his own to Warratry Field, was to receive no more than fourpence a perch and Farket, whose stakes were to be transported by Powys, was to be paid only threepence a perch for his work in Hucklemarsh Field ¹.

In December of the same year Powys made an agreement to exchange lands in the 'further field' with Mr. Walter Lea ² and in the following month he made another agreement to exchange 'grounde' in Hucklemarsh Field for an acre of arable in Little Field ³. Clearly the consolidation of lands could be a lengthy and difficult undertaking when carried out piecemeal.

However, in some parishes where there were a few large landowners who held between them most of the land, the final stages of consolidation could be carried out very quickly. In Hopton Wafers the lord of the manor, Richard Hyde, Ludlow Corporation as trustees of the lands of the Palmers Gild of Ludlow, and the rector, whose patron was Richard Hyde, owned most of the land. A copy of a survey of the lands of the Palmers Gild in Hopton Wafers was made by Samuel Weaver in 1657 ⁴. This shows that although the lands of the Gild had been partly consolidated by 1657 there were still many scattered pieces and holdings in the six or more old fields, in the meadow and pasture lands of the parish, and at places near the parish boundaries where small closes had been made by encroachment

1. S.R.O., Powys Notebooks, 'Lib. 2', p.28.

2. Ibid., p.33.

3. Ibid., p.34.

4. S.R.O., Ludlow Corporation, 356/686.

into the wastes. Weaver's copy of the survey was made, probably, as part of a scheme for the large-scale reorganisation of lands in the parish which took place in, or shortly after, 1657, for he added later to the description of some lands the information that they had been exchanged. Later leases and other deeds concerned with Gild lands in the parish reveal that they were consolidated after the exchanges into four large holdings: Rochehead Farm, Waddingtons Farm, Shote Farm, and Sproseley Farm¹. The Hopton Wafers glebe terrier of 1682 refers to 'all exchainges and agreements formerly exchainged and agreed upon'². It was signed by Richard Hyde and shows that the church lands lay, by then, in a compact block well away from the church near the Shote Farmstead³ and that the lands owned by the Hydes near Hopton Court, and their lands elsewhere, had been consolidated into larger holdings.

The most obvious consequence of the exchanges and their creation of larger holdings in Hopton Wafers was the decrease in the number of smaller holdings available for leasing or renting. Moreover, consolidation affected small landowners as well as tenants for it reduced the opportunities for augmenting their own limited lands with some of the scattered parcels of land that belonged to one of the large landowners. In some cases this restriction, and the changes brought about in the balance of their holdings caused by exchanges that appear to have left most of the arable and meadow lands in the hands of larger landowners, forced some to sell their holdings and in other cases must have undermined the viability of holdings and forced their owners to purchase additional land, to expand into the hillside waste or to take up supplementary occupations. In these objectives they were aided by the financial difficulties of the Hyde family.

1. S.R.O., 1150/762-797.

2. Deposited at Hereford R.O.

3. See below, Plate 8.2, p. 151.

When Mr. Hyde was trying to borrow the paltry sum of £50 from a Mr. Pardoe in 1666, two of his neighbours were required to give their bonds on his behalf. One of them, Robert Goodwin, was very reluctant to stand as a security and admitted this in a letter to Pardoe but added: 'yet I have promised to bee bound'. Goodwin was unable to accompany Hyde to Mr. Pardoe's house that week but as Hyde 'seems to have urgent occasion for money' he asked Pardoe to lend it to him 'if you think fit to lett him have soe much' ¹. Obviously Hyde's financial standing was very low. In 1673 he sold a tenement and lands to Francis Reese, yeoman ², but although his affairs were in a better condition afterwards he was still borrowing money in 1677 and was trying to use his lands as security. Goodwin, in pressing Hyde's 'urging reasons' for a loan of £100 on Mr. Hunt, referred to the fact that he had personal experience of his integrity and that Mr. John Holland had often said to him that 'hee would as soone furnish him with moneys upon Land security as he would any upon the best personal security that could be given' ³. Clearly Holland, who as an attorney had done business for Richard Hyde and his family on previous occasions, had, like Robert Goodwin, a wealth of experience to draw upon.

Soon afterwards Hyde sold the next presentation to the benefice of Hopton. In 1683, following the death of John Wheeler whose patron in 1616 had been Humphrey Hyde, John Taylor, the son of George Taylor, yeoman, of the Woodrow in Coreley parish, was presented by Charles Boughton of Doddington, yeoman, and following the resignation of Taylor in 1691 Richard

1. Robert Goodwin, vicar of Cleobury Mortimer, left several memoranda books which are deposited in Cleobury Mortimer Parish Chest. They have been bound in sequence and amount to 332 numbered leaves and occasional inserts. A selection, transcribed and edited by Mrs. Francis Childe, 'Extracts from the Note-Book of a Shropshire Vicar, 1656 to 1691', T.S.A.S., 3rd ser., v (1905), 191-217, includes a few items which are not in the bound volume. However, her extracts suffer from some confusion over dates and, in places, from significant errors or omissions in the transcription, and, of course, refer to only a very small proportion of the material. The letter to Pardoe is on fo. 57 v.

2. S.R.O., 1150/701.

3. Goodwin, Memoranda Books, fo. 164 r.

Hyde presented Edward Boughton, the son of Charles. Also, Hyde began to sell land near to the waste on the hillside. On 5th May 1681, Goodwin noted that he had received six months rent, 6/6^d, from one of his tenants for the land 'that I bought of Captayne Hyde' ¹, and on 27th April 1683, Anne Roberts purchased from Hercules and Richard Hyde, for £70, the tenement now called Andrews Wood ². Other similar sales took place, although they are not recorded, and the area now known as Hopton Bank began to attract small industries and to expand into the hillside waste through the establishment of cottages on small enclosures. The growth of this settlement, which was not referred to in the survey of 1657, was encouraged by the presence nearby of the coal-works at Catherton and at Hints and Doddington which ensured supplies of cheap fuel for small industries such as glass-making and pottery and which provided work for the miners who obviously found it comparatively easy to settle there. From the late 1670s several of the men who supplied Robert Goodwin with coal were residents of Hopton Wafers and by the early years of the eighteenth century that parish was the home of the Butchers, Nichols, Bishops, Owens, Prices and Wardleys, who between them provided many of the local specialists in sinking pits and in driving levels and adits, and some of the supervisors of the coal-works ³. Three neighbouring houses are still known as the Pot House, the Tile House and the Glass House but there is little documentary evidence of the industrial activities associated with these houses ⁴. As the Hydes and their successors retained until the present century their manorial rights over the waste and exercised careful surveillance over the cottagers who had settled there, a strong presumption exists, although there is no evidence,

1. Goodwin, Memoranda Books, fo. 224 r.

2. S.B.L., Deeds and Charters, 839.

3. See below, pp. 331, 335.

4. See below, pp. 241, 242-43, 246.

that the development of the new settlement, and its industries, was encouraged by them just as similar small industrial settlements were developed in Nash and Caynham by Andrew Hill and John Shepherd both of whom were also suffering from financial difficulties ¹.

In Cleobury borough the remaining parts of the Lide Field, much of which was owned by Sir William Childe, was probably enclosed by a procedure that was much less complex but similar to that adopted at Hopton ². The accounts of Robert Goodwin's dues reveal that the number of townspeople who owned or leased land near to their burgages declined after 1656 when he became vicar. Moreover, some of those who retained their burgage land, which in some cases was only a close, rented it out to neighbours or to more distant and larger landholders. Goodwin noticed the movement towards the concentration of effort on other work or interests and began, in 1676, to assess more systematically for dues the trades and industrial occupations of those who had no land while not neglecting the land of those who had retained it ³.

A greater impact was made on the pattern of agricultural holdings in the lower part of Cleobury parish by further expansion into the woodlands, particularly in the East Foreign Liberty which included parts of the Wyre Forest. In 1662 Goodwin recorded the existence of thirty five households in the 'Forest' compared with the seventeen families noted in the parish register between 1620 and 1627 ⁴. Even when allowances are made for the fact that his list is more exact than the evidence of the register over a period of eight years, a considerable increase in settlements must have taken place in the area between 1627 and 1662. However, the dues

1. See below, pp. 149-52, 165-66.

2. See above, p. 52.

3. Goodwin, Memoranda Books, fo. 154 r.

4. See above, p. 110.

actually collected by Goodwin show that more than half of the families had little or no land and that some of them were very poor ¹. Later lists made by Goodwin indicate that more settlements were made in the forest after 1662 but they were not as numerous as they had been earlier and they were mainly poor cottages which had little or no land attached to them.

In Mawley and in the other lower and more productive parts of the parish outside the borough the most important changes involved in the enclosing, consolidation and engrossing of holdings had been completed long before the middle of the seventeenth century ². Goodwin's predecessors had acknowledged this by negotiating compositions of the vicarial tithes for some small farms as well as for larger estates ³.

In the areas to the north and east of Titterstone Clee where many of the settlements had been established in the late Middle Ages and afterwards in the heavily wooded areas of the Wyre Forest outliers, there had been few or no open fields. Moreover, the existing settlement pattern had aided the early consolidation and engrossing of those holdings that were small or fragmented. In Neen Savage and in neighbouring townships the full effects of these changes had been felt most acutely in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries and emphasis shifted thereafter to the expansion of holdings through the clearance and enclosure of woodlands and wastes ⁴. Occasionally, as in earlier periods, groups of clearances which were distant from the centre of existing holdings were increased in size by further enclosure and became separate holdings. This occurred in Neen Savage in 1694 when a new capital messuage was established at Overwood ⁵, thus

1. See below, pp. 178-179.

2. See above, pp. 51, 52.

3. See below, p. 179.

4. See above, pp. 83-85.

5. S.R.O., Cat. of Neen Savage Records, 732/8-9.

extending the dispersed pattern of settlement already predominant in that area ¹. However, in most of the area expansion was on a smaller scale for, apart from hillside waste, large areas of land were no longer available for clearance and settlement. This is illustrated clearly by the slow rate of change in the neighbouring township of Catherton.

Although Catherton township was a member of Cleobury Mortimer parish it formed part of Lord Craven's large manor of Earls Ditton. Nearly all of its land was owned by the lord of the manor whose rentals, leases and surveys for much of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries have survived. It is possible, therefore, to discover at different periods the pattern of landholding and to ascertain the changes that were made. In the early seventeenth century the hillside waste amounted to over six hundred acres and the farmed lands to nearly as much. A rent roll made in 1616, when the manor was owned by Sir John Hayward, shows that nearly all these lands were in the occupation of five large leaseholders ². The rents that were paid imply that the holdings were relatively large, although one was only about two thirds as large as the other four. Another holding, separated by waste land from the rest, was based on the site of the old furnace and had several enclosures of poor pasture land that had been taken in from the waste. It was known as Heathhills and it was leased continuously by successive members of the Pountney family from 1617 until the early 1730s, and then by members of the Haycox family. Both families were regularly engaged in the carriage of coal and ironstone and, at times, in mining as sub-lessees themselves or as supervisors or agents for Lord Craven or for his lessees ³.

A rent roll made in 1662 ⁴ reveals that the pattern of the

1. See above, pp. 30, 67.

2. S.B.L., Deeds and Charters, 7449.

3. See below, pp. 159, 180.

4. S.B.L., Deeds and Charters, 7450.

holdings had changed very little since 1616, and leases granted between 1660 and 1700 indicate that each holding was a well-established unit which required little description. The average size of the holdings was over a hundred acres but one which was leased to Thomas Wheeler in 1667 amounted to eighty eight acres ¹. However, Wheeler held lands nearby at Broompark in Neen Savage and farmed both holdings ².

Robert Goodwin's account of his tithes and Easter dues in Catherton for 1662 can be compared directly with the rent roll which was drawn up at Michaelmas 1662. It shows that two of the large holdings were retained and farmed by the lease-holders and that another, leased by Ralph Seward, had been sub-leased to one tenant, although Seward had retained some pasture land for which he paid herbage of two shillings. Of the others Roger Pountney, senior, had sub-leased his lands, as two holdings of roughly fifty to sixty acres each, to John Rusbury and Maurice Hayward, and had rented a meadow to Richard Grateley. James Kettilby's lands were held, apparently, by Thomas Wheeler and John Hynton, some of whose pasture was used by Robert Rutland of Neen Savage for his sheep. It is obvious that the basic pattern of large holdings was not altered greatly in Catherton by sub-tenancies ³.

A detailed survey of Catherton made in 1769 reveals that little change occurred during the next century, for the lands were still arranged in five large holdings, and one smaller one at the furnace site ⁴. Of the large holdings two were held by one man, Thomas Roberts, and the smallest holding was, by then, 105 acres in size. Some small rearrangements of lands between the holdings had taken place and the study

1. S.B.L., Deeds and Charters, 8365.

2. Goodwin, Memoranda Books, fo. 57 v.

3. Ibid., fo. 31 v.

4. S.B.L., MSS., 2480, pp.29-35.

of several series of deeds and of the survey shows that the total area of the tenantable lands had increased in the main holdings by an amount, probably, of less than twenty acres. Much of this could have been brought to light, of course, by the greater accuracy of land measurement required for the survey of 1769. It is clear, therefore, that the more productive land in Catherton had been cleared and settled by the early years of the seventeenth century and that only the hill wastes were available for further settlement.

A similar situation existed on the western slopes of Titterstone Clee at Hillupencott in Bitterley parish. This township was a later settlement also, as its name indicates, and most of it had been held as a single estate for many years. A copy of the court roll of the manor of Hints for 1540 confirms that the main holding at Hillupencott ¹ was held from William Lord Arundel by the family of Richard Sheppard at a rent of sixteen shillings, a heriot and a farefee of two shillings, and the services of a knight, if required, when the king went to war ². In 1559 the reversion of Hillupencott was held by Richard Sheppard who was described as 'husbandman' ³. His descendants prospered and, in 1618, one of them, John Sheppard, yeoman, purchased Hillupencott, which amounted to one hundred acres of land with pasturage rights on the adjacent hill waste, from Sir John Hayward for £100 ⁴. For many years afterwards Hillupencott, although nominally part of the manor of Earls Ditton, was virtually independent. John Sheppard and his descendants acquired lands elsewhere in Bitterley, and in the nearby parishes of Burford, Caynham, Coreley and Milson, and built up the estate at Hillupencott through purchase and

1. See below, Plate 8.1, p. 151.

2. S.B.L., Deeds and Charters, 3288.

3. S.B.L., Cal. Deeds and Charters, 3314.

4. Ibid., 3291.

through judicious marriages. The Sheppards were considered to be gentry by the early years of the eighteenth century when they spent much of their time in their town houses at Ludlow and, later, at Tenbury but they were heavily indebted ¹. On the 25th March 1718 Sheppard leased a small messuage to John Wright, potter, on the edge of the waste in the manor of Caynham at Whitewayhead ². Another lease of three messuages and lands made on the same day reserved to Sheppard all alum, coal and other minerals, and access to carry them away ³. In 1720 and 1721 several leases included reservations of coal, stone and ironstone as usual and added fullers earth, potters clay and tobacco pipe clay ⁴. Obviously the mineral resources of this area, which was situated above Whitton and Hope Bagot, where there is still a building known as the Pot House, were being consciously developed at this time. On 25th March 1719, when Sheppard leased a cottage and lands to Samuel Gennoe of Hopton Wafers, Gennoe was given full liberty to enclose a piece 'of common ground', about half an acre in extent ⁵, and in other leases of 1720 and 1721 John Sheppard reserved to himself the right of enclosing any part of the waste ground around the messuages concerned ⁶. On 16th May 1720, he leased a messuage and lands at Whitewayhead, Caynham, to Samuel Tomkiss and required him to erect at his own cost a house, on a convenient part of the premises, which was to revert to Sheppard at the end of the term of the lease ⁷. On 6th September in the same year two pieces of meadow and some waste were leased to Richard Warrington at Colleybrook Green,

1. When his son William was baptised at Bitterley on 30 October 1721, John Sheppard was described as 'a poore Esq.' in the parish register.

2. Kidderminster Library, Knight Mss., 6421.

3. Ibid., 6419.

4. Ibid., 6415, 6416, 6422.

5. Ibid., 6424.

6. Ibid., 6416, 6420.

7. Ibid., 6425.

PLATE 8

FARMSTEADS : 3.



I. Hillupencott, Bitterley.



2. The Shote, Hopton Wafers.

Bennettsend, Caynham. Warrington was given permission to build a house on the parcel of waste land. This house, also, was to revert to Sheppard at the end of the term of the lease¹. The leasing policies of Sheppard were designed to extract as much benefit from his land and mineral resources as possible and in doing so they encouraged the growth of a small industrial settlement on the edge of the waste lands of Caynham parish near the small coalfield at Knowbury, and increased the value of the Hillupencott estate.

When Hillupencott was valued in 1733 for John Sheppard, gent., it amounted to 350 acres of arable, meadow and pasture lands, fifty acres of woodland and 400 acres of hill waste, and was worth £320².

When the large manor of Earls Ditton came into the possession of Lord Craven soon after 1620 the patterns of landholding varied from place to place in different parts of the manor. In Hints and Doddington, where the open fields had been established for a long period, the consolidation and engrossing of holdings had not progressed to the stage reached some years before in Coreley, Catherton and Hillupencott. Many of the small holdings that had emerged from the open fields and from expansion up the hillside in the sixteenth and early seventeenth century had survived with the help of the extensive grazing land that still remained on the hillside and with the help of the by-employments provided by the limestone, coal and ironstone industries. Although most of the customary tenures had been replaced by leaseholds by his predecessors, the Haywards, the management of Lord Craven's own estates which occupied large parts of the manor was in the hands of stewards and bailiffs and remained conservative, relatively generous to tenants and free from policies that applied pressure in favour of change and innovation. Most of the lands were leased out for terms of

1. Kidderminster Library, Knight MSS., 7116.

2. S.B.L., Cal. Deeds and Charters, 8563.

ninety nine years or three lives, the fines were relatively high and rents were low and few adjustments were made although, with the passage of time, lands were improved, agricultural incomes rose and the value of money declined.

A rent roll for the half year to Michaelmas 1662 reveals that there were twenty three leaseholdings in the manor producing total annual rents of £29/17/4^d, and one rack-rent producing £4 a year ¹. In 1728 a rental for the half year to Lady Day shows the same number of leaseholds, most of them clearly the same holdings although slightly larger in some cases ². They produced an annual rent of £30/10/8^d and the rack-rent still produced £4. In 1728 John Baldwin paid a rent of £1 a year for Studley Farm in Coreley. The same amount had been paid by his great-uncle, Richard, in 1662 and by his great-grandfather, George Baldwin, for the same farm, in 1615 ³. William Pountney paid 3^s a year for Heathhills, as had his grandfather in 1662 and the latter's own grandfather in 1617 ⁴. Other families held the same lands, or appeared as leaseholders of the manor, for well over a hundred years and most tenants held their lands for periods that were much longer than the average of twenty one years that is implied, usually, by terms on three lives. This indicates that the people who acquired, or who already had a lease, found it worthwhile to renew it when necessary and encountered few difficulties.

The leases drawn up on behalf of Lord Craven, in contrast to those of the Hill family ⁵, Thomas Powys ⁶, John Sheppard ⁷, and of other smaller

1. S.B.L., Deeds and Charters, 7450.

2. S.R.O., 407/12.

3. S.B.L., Deeds and Charters, 7449.

4. Ibid., 8449.

5. See below, p. 165.

6. See above, pp. 140-141 and below, pp. 169-70.

7. See above, pp. 149-152.

landowners in the area, contain few provisions, restraints or exceptions that indicate concern for the improvement of the land or for the exploitation of the estates in an efficient manner. The easy terms of the leases, and the high degree of security of tenure enjoyed by Lord Craven's tenants, were undoubtedly profitable to leaseholders and enabled some of them to purchase freehold land or to combine leasehold and freehold lands in larger holdings or to rearrange holdings and to profit from sub-leasing. So, although the conservative nature of the management of Lord Craven's estates fossilised parts of the open fields and ensured that more of the smaller holdings remained in existence than in Hopton and other places where reorganisation had been planned, some of the larger or more efficient leaseholders were able to make changes of a semi-permanent nature in the landholding patterns. This was done by members of the Taylor family who had held, since the sixteenth century, a freeholding, now known as Woodrow Farm and had acquired a lease of lands in Hints from the Haywards which was renewed in 1613¹. In 1641 a house and about twenty acres of land were purchased by Thomas Taylor near to his leasehold lands². During the second half of the seventeenth century his descendants and those of his brother George held three messuages in Hints and Coreley and one in Doddington which had both freehold and leasehold lands attached to them.

Moreover, in those parts of the manor held by freeholders a few recent enclosures as well as older tynings and closes were steadily consolidated by purchase or exchange, despite occasional setbacks. Under a post-nuptial settlement dated 7th May 1660, most of Francis Nash's lands in Milson and Coreley were settled on his son James and James's wife, Alice³.

1. S.B.L., Deeds and Charters, 8445.

2. Kidderminster Lib., Cat. of MSS., 6317, 6318, 6319. The original documents were destroyed in the flood of 1955. The messuage was known as Abbots Nook then but it is now called Hillside.

3. S.B.L., Deeds and Charters, 595.

Some pieces of land passed to interested parties who included Henry James. He received a close in Coreley called Bonsford, but as he lived some distance away at Red Marley in Worcestershire he probably sold it, for in 1663 Thomas Baldwin of the Shear Farm, Burford, granted it to his brother George whose lands adjoined it. In return Thomas received the Held which was an acre larger.¹ It was far from his farm, however, and in 1665 he sold it for £25 to another brother, William, who was busily consolidating the neighbouring lands². It seems probable that the exchanges involving Bonsford and the Held were more complicated than usual and that there were many other acts of consolidating that left no documentary evidence, although some were referred to incidentally. The land granted to George Beddoes and Mary, his wife, by her mother Margaret Wellins in 1662 included 'Winterfould had in exchange from Thomas Taylor'³. This exchange had involved neighbouring pieces of land, and it, and others like it, were carried out with the minimum of fuss and trouble, particularly in the lower townships where freeholdings were more numerous and where the restraints of the manorial organisation had little effect.

The details of the marriage portions granted to the daughters of Margaret Wellins in 1662 reveal that although there were still many unconsolidated pieces of land in Hints and some in Coreley, they had been reduced in number since the end of the sixteenth century. Margaret herself appears to have played a considerable part in this process. She had been widowed before 1635 and had lost her only son, William, who was buried at Coreley on 21st July 1657, and she obviously prepared for the division of her lands between her three daughters. A church lewn in the second volume of Coreley parish register, undated but from internal evidence referring to 1635, gives a list of house-owners and shows that Margaret owned two houses

1. S.R.O., 1150/357.

2. S.R.O., 1150/359.

3. S.R.O., 1150/354.

in the parish. By 1662 she had acquired a third, for each daughter received a messuage as a marriage portion and holdings of lands that were recognisable units ¹. Although the settlement resulted in some breaking up of previously consolidated lands near the edges of the holdings and in the arable fields, it proved to be a temporary setback only. George Beddoes acquired the scattered arable lands near his own which had been given to George Sheppard, his brother-in-law, and purchased two neighbouring meadows ². In 1665 Margaret Wellins bought some meadow-land and four butts of arable land from Thomas Taylor for £5 in the same area ³, and she gave them to him in 1670 'for the goodwill natural love and affection that I owe and Board unto George Beddoes ' ⁴. The third son-in-law, John Richards, was a member of a local family which had been in occupation of large leaseholdings at Doddington and Earls Ditton since early in the seventeenth century at least. His portion adjoined the lands of his father and brother, in places, and he acquired much of George Beddoes' land soon after Margaret Wellins' death in 1672.

William Baldwin, who purchased the held from his brother Thomas in 1665, received a bequest of £5 only when his father died in 1640 ⁵, yet from 1662 it becomes increasingly obvious that he was prospering. His wealth appears to have been derived largely from Lord Craven's estates. He rented some of the coal and limeworks on Titterstone Clee, acquired land in Ditton and was at times bailiff of the manor. A rental for the manor made in 1664 shows that he paid £16 a year for mineral rights which probably had been very profitable, for later in the same year they were leased, with

1. S.R.O., 1150/354-6.

2. S.R.O., 1150/361.

3. S.R.O., 1150/360.

4. S.R.O., 1150/362.

5. S.B.L., Deeds and Charters, 14695. Baldwin Family Wills.

all other rights to coal and ironstone, to Richard Walker at a higher rent ¹. Baldwin appears to have retained the limeworks, but from this time he began to build up an estate in Coreley and Hints. As well as the Held he purchased Lodfords meadow from Robert and Thomas Cleeton for £20 in 1668 ² and extensive lands from the executors of William Pynson for £90/4/0^d in 1672 ³. The hearth-tax roll for this year shows that his house had six hearths, a larger number than any other house in Coreley parish ⁴. He died in 1680 leaving £8 a year to Ann 'my now wife' and small sums of money to many relatives and friends. Ann, whom he had married recently, had four daughters but he had no children of his own and he left all his lands and freeholds to William Baldwin, the son of his brother Thomas ⁵.

The younger William Baldwin married the daughter of John Richards, Margaret, who was granddaughter of Margaret Wellins. In 1697 much of Margaret Wellins' land was acquired by him from his father-in-law ⁶ and he continued to build up these lands by obtaining leaseholds from Lord Craven. He retained the lease of the limeworks, also ⁷. In 1728 Baldwin, his wife and his eldest son, John, held eight of the twenty three leaseholdings, including the farm of the tithe, granted by Lord Craven in Earls Ditton manor ⁸.

The Baldwins' estates were considerable in extent but they were exceptional, for no other estates were as large and many smaller holdings survived. These were in existence when Lord Craven became lord of the manor soon after

1. See below, 230-233.

2. S.B.L., Deeds and Charters, 651.

3. S.R.O., 1150/363.

4. Shrops. Hearth-Tax Roll of 1672, ed. W.W. Pitchford, p.236.

5. S.B.L., Deeds and Charters, 14695.

6. Ibid., 9586. Abstract of deeds belonging to Sherrington Davenport (21 Aug., 1697).

7. See below, pp. 238-39.

8. S.R.O., 407/12.

1620 and although enclosing, consolidation, and other changes in land patterns continued to take place steadily in the lower parts where freeholdings were numerous, such changes were fewer in the large areas dominated by his leasehold lands. His conservative estate management protected many of the smallholdings for although it allowed some engrossing to take place and enabled some families to prosper, it ensured that, ultimately, neither his tenants who benefited from the easy terms of their leases nor any of the freeholders could aspire to the dominant position achieved by the Sheppards in Hillupencott, and still less to that acquired by local manor lords at Greete, Hopton Wafers, Nash and Whitton. The payments of chief rents to him in 1728 indicate that there were nineteen freeholds still in existence as well as the fifteen leaseholds that were not held by the Baldwins, and that many of them were smallholdings.

In practice there were more smallholdings in Lord Craven's manor than appeared on his rental for some leaseholders and freeholders obviously found it more profitable to sub-let much of their land rather than to farm it as part of large agricultural units. The existence of fragmented holdings is indicated by references to the people who farmed neighbouring lands in the description of William Pinson's lands that were sold to William Baldwin in 1672¹ and by the will of John Taylor, yeoman, of the Ring, Hints, dated 18th April 1716 which refers to his 'message of freehold land called Abbots Nooke now in possession of John Norgrove and William Evans'². A survey of John Baldwin's estate made in 1737 shows that it contained 287 acres in Coreley and Hints and was in the hands of at least twelve tenants, six of whom were closely involved with the industrial activities on the hillside³.

The survival of the smaller holdings in the upper townships between

1. See above, p. 157.

2. Nat. Lib. of Wales, Hereford Diocese Copy Wills, Register 19. See above, p. 153, note 6.

3. S.B.L., Deeds and Charters, 9608.

1650 and 1720 was aided, as it had been earlier, by the existence of large amounts of rough grazing land on the wastes and by the employment provided by industry. The expansion of the mining industry after 1650 provided greater opportunities for carriers, skilled miners and labourers and increased the demand for smallholdings and grazing land. The number of pack-animals required increased again from early in the eighteenth century following the closure of Tilsop furnace ¹ nearby and a group of professional carriers, using pack-animals and known as crickers, emerged to organise the transport of the ironstone to the more distant furnace at Bringewood ².

The increase in mining activities attracted some miners and skilled workmen and some of the settlements of Earls Ditton manor were extended into the wastes from about 1650 onwards. The rental for Lord Craven's manor of Doddington-Hints of Michaelmas 1662 contained details of the rent paid for fourteen established cottages, very few of which had been referred to by the 1616 rental for the same manor ³. The rental for 1666 referred to fifteen cottages ⁴, and leases of two newly erected cottages were granted in 1668 and in 1669 by Lord Craven's agents ⁵.

A map which was made in 1663 of the area of waste claimed by both Lord Craven and Sir William Child shows four small island settlements and their cottages ⁶. Two of them were in Farlow and the other two were in the disputed area. In 1662 only one cottage, which was occupied by John

1. See below, pp. 225-228.

2. The earliest reference to this occupation that has been noted occurs in the parish register of Hopton Wafers where it is recorded that Rowland Mawnd, 'a Cricker', was buried on 14 Feb. 1717.

3. S.B.L., Deeds and Charters, 7450, 7449.

4. Ibid., 9861.

5. Ibid., 8253, 8254.

6. Ibid., 9762.

Pountney, was charged to cottage rent in Catherton township. Pountney, who was described as a ground collier 'of the Clee' in the Cleobury Mortimer parish register when he was buried on August 18th 1667, paid six shillings and eight pence and in the same year he paid Easter dues of one shilling to Robert Goodwin who noted that he had a wife, a house and garden, one cow and a calf ¹. Humphrey Roe, who was not included in the manor rental, was charged one shilling by Goodwin for the years 1661 and 1662, 'the 4 first years unpaid'. Other, poorer, people lived in Catherton for Goodwin noted in his records for 1664 the presence of at least five other houses which were occupied by the Widow Rose (Roe or Rowe), Alice Owen who was a servant, Widow Dyckins and her son George, another son John Dickins, tailor, whose brother Walter was apprenticed to him, and John Bowen ².

The practice of the manor as shown by the manor court records which exist for the period after 1695, was to amerce squatters one shilling, sixpence or fourpence a year for some years and then to enforce a lease upon them. On the 17th January 1671 leases were acquired by John Gittings, smith, and John Evans, collier, of land measuring about one acre and half an acre, respectively, 'whereon a cottage is lately built ...'. A similar lease was obtained on the same date by Walter Dickins, tailor, whose period of apprenticeship to his brother John had ended ³.

However, after this surge of manorial activity which regularised the position of established cottages, further squatting was restrained in Earls Ditton manor, apart from the area included in the large freehold estate of Hillupencott. In 1700, when all cottagers without a lease were named in the court baron of the manor and were amerced, there were only ten ⁴, and a rental

1. Goodwin, Memoranda Books, fo. 31 v.

2. Ibid., fo. 43 r.

3. S.B.L., Deeds and Charters, 8509, 8510, 8511.

4. Ibid., 8088.

of the manor to Lady Day 1728 ¹, reveals that by then there were only twenty five cottagers in possession of leases compared with fifteen in 1666. The rate of settlement on the wastes of the manor was obviously not very great. The records of the manor courts reveal at least some of the reasons for this. Although the courts were presided over by Lord Craven's stewards or bailiffs they were dominated by the large freeholders and leaseholders of the manor ². The latter carefully restricted encroachments on the waste by using early and, if necessary, repeated court presentments followed by heavy penalties. In 1700 Thomas James of Hopton Wafers parish was presented for encroaching and enclosing part of the waste of the manor and was amerced five shillings. He was ordered to throw 'the same open (and soe to continue it) within the space of 20 Dayes' or pay a further penalty of ten shillings ³. In 1701 the jury found that the pain of ten shillings laid on James had been forfeited and a further penalty of ten shillings was laid on him should he fail to throw open the enclosure within fourteen days ⁴. This action appears to have been successful for a time but in 1704 Richard James was presented for what was obviously the same enclosure ⁵ and in 1705 he was amerced five shillings for maintaining it ⁶. After this he seems to have given up his expensive attempt to increase his lands on what must have been a fairly large scale, but the courts continued to maintain their vigilance. In 1708 a pain of 10^s was laid on any person who in future enclosed any waste or common ground, however limited, within the manor. In 1718 five men, including Henry Yapp of Farlow, were presented for encroaching on

1. S.R.O., 407/12.

2. All references have been taken from the records of the court baron in S.B.L., Deeds and Charters, 8085-8106.

3. S.B.L., Deeds and Charters, 8088.

4. Ibid., 8088A.

5. Ibid., 8090.

6. Ibid., 8091.

the waste. Two were fined six pence, and the others two pence each, so the amounts of land involved must have been very small and there is no reference to newly built houses ¹.

Other measures indicate an increasing concern for grazing land in the early years of the eighteenth century. In 1704 a pain of 3/4^d was placed on anyone who cut turf to burn from the waste and in 1705 Thomas Webley, senior, of Stepple, Neen Savage, was fined £1 for driving his sheep and depasturing them on the manor waste 'he having noe Right of Comon there' ². A growing shortage of herbage was indicated particularly from 1706 by the reiteration of penalties for those who between Candlemas and Michaelmas turned 'any beast or horse into any of the highways or lanes' of the manor ³. In 1717 John Tomlings of Coreley and Richard Oseland of Hints were amerced 6/8^d each for keeping and tending their cattle in the lanes of the manor 'to the damage of their Neybours' ⁴.

The manor records reveal that cottagers settled on the waste could be a great nuisance. From 1703 a penalty of ten shillings was placed on any cottagers 'that shall chase aney Inhabitants or Commoners sheep ... with dogs or otherwise ...'. Sheep-worrying was not always caused by dogs that were neglected or out of control, for the records of 1708 reveal that sheep had been chased or coursed deliberately by cottagers who as a result were forbidden from that time on to keep dogs. They were given ten days to do away with those they had or forfeit 6/8^d. Only one cottager, John Crump, defied this and he paid the penalty in 1709 ⁵. The court took action, also, on a number of occasions against the negligence of miners by laying penalties

1. S.B.L., Deeds and Charters, 8103.

2. Ibid., 8090, 8091.

3. Ibid., 8092, 8095.

4. Ibid., 8102.

5. Ibid., 8089, 8090, 8094, 8095.

on those who endangered sheep by leaving unfenced and open pits on the wastes ¹.

The concern for the grazing land provided by the waste and for the safety of the sheep, and the consequent restraints on encroachments, enclosures, cottagers and miners, protected smallholdings and helped to ensure their survival. The larger landholders benefited as well and all of them had an interest in restricting settlements that might result in increases in the poor rates. This concern was rarely revealed in the records of the manor courts, but in 1707 John Rowe of Doddington was fined for 'frequently resetting and ent(er)teyning vaggabondes and sturdy Beggars that have come within the manor' and the severe pain of ten shillings was laid on him 'not to resette or entertaine any such sort of people for the future' ². The action appears to have been successful for Rowe was never required to pay the penalty. Such restraints were not exercised in the part of the manor that was included in Hillupencott, nor in the part of Caynham that was controlled by John Sheppard nor in other areas where one family in effect controlled and disposed of the rights to the waste as at Hopton Wafers. Such families benefited directly from the fines or rents due from cottages and from the profits of industrial activities, but other landowners, and tenants, shared the burden of poor rates and other taxes and suffered from the decrease in the area of common grazing land.

In the large parish of Burford the great increase in agricultural prosperity in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries had been closely associated with the reorganisation of landholding patterns and had given further impetus to the movement towards the consolidation and engrossing of holdings. By 1650 the main changes involving the enclosing and consolidation of land had long been completed and very little land remained available for

1. See below, p.233.

2. S.B.L., Deeds and Charters, 8093.

clearance and enclosure in the lower and more productive parts of the parish.

As a result of the changes and of increased agricultural prosperity many large freeholders and leaseholders increased their wealth and influence and raised their social status, thus reducing the distance between themselves and some of the lesser gentry ¹. The latter had been established on lands that had been fees, or parts of fees, subject in earlier times to the Barony of Burford. The decline in the authority of the barony, which was shared equally between the Crown and the Cornwall family, had begun in the sixteenth century and gathered momentum in the early seventeenth century. Greete had acquired manorial independence long before 1630, when it proceeded to establish its parochial freedom from Burford ², and Whitton which had been held of Sir Thomas Cornwall in 1500 by service of half a knight's fee, as of the manor of Burford, and of the King in 1546, also by military service, appears to have been relieved of this, and of any other service, in 1600 when the manors of Whitton and Faintree were granted to Francis Whitton by Letters Patent ³.

By 1650 the authority of the Cornwalls was limited to their own estates and to the town of Burford for the barony, through the Crown's interest in it, was in effect destroyed by the abolition of feudal tenures in capite in 1645. The lesser gentry were thus presented with an opportunity to increase their wealth and status. The efforts made by them to build up their estates, and to revive or enforce their rightful or supposed manorial privileges, were the most effective causes of change in the pattern of landholding in the parish of Burford in the second half of the seventeenth century.

Strong compact estates were established at Whitton and at Greete by

1. See above, p. 74.

2. Greete Parish Register, Shrops. Par. Reg. Soc., v (Shrewsbury, 1905), introduction, v.

3. Old Shropshire Houses, ed. H.E. Forest, pp.149, 150, 151.

the Charlton and Edwardes families ¹ who used the wealth that they had acquired from public office and from business, or from their other estates, for this purpose. In Nash, from their seat at Court of Hill, the Hill family built up their demesne lands, enforced their manorial rights and expanded into the townships of Weston and Tilsop, although they had no large sources of wealth outside the area and were forced into great financial stringency at times by the need to supply portions for younger children and by large-scale and extravagant rebuilding schemes which included the complete rebuilding of Court of Hill in 1683 and the addition of a large wing to the Shear Farmhouse at about the same time ². The study of their estate documents and other records indicates that as well as ability and a determination to make the fullest possible use of their manorial rights and mineral resources they practised careful estate management ³. Also they made judicious or fortunate marriages, which to some extent compensated for the difficulties resulting from the provision of portions for younger children ⁴. However, a more important influence on the fortunes of the Hills appears to have been exercised by the situation of their lands near the periphery of Burford parish, in the relatively remote township of Tilsop, in the upper areas of Nash township, which included a large outcrop of carboniferous limestone and part of the hill waste, and in the upper parts of the neighbouring parish of Hope Bagot. As much of their land was suitable only for grazing the Hills had not benefited greatly from arable farming. The increasing emphasis on pastoral farming during the seventeenth century

1. See above, p. 128.

2. See below, Sketch 2, p. 264.

3. S.R.O., Norris and Miles Collection, 1670/19-23, 40, 57. It is noticeable that the estate benefited in particular from the careful management of Lucy Hill, widow, between 1675, when her husband died, and 1680.

4. On January 17th 1680 Andrew Hill married Ann Powys of Henley. She was the daughter of Thomas Powys and the sister of Sir Littleton and of Sir Thomas Powys who became, later, a judge of the Queens Bench and the Solicitor General, respectively.

changed this situation and enhanced the value of the hillside wastes which, having established their manorial rights, they disposed of as they wished. At a time when very little productive land was available for enclosure in the lower parts of Burford they were able to enclose large areas extending up to the base of the Knowle hill. Some of this, which was referred to in 1713 as 'that parcell of inclosed ground ... adjoyning to the Knowle ... conteyning by Estimation seventy acres ...' ¹, was added to the demesne lands, and other enclosures were added to farms occupied by their tenants at Sherbourne, the Shear and the Knowle.

The common pasturage of Nash was reduced to a few dozen acres as a result of these enclosures. Most of it was on the steep slopes of the hill called the Knowle and it was further reduced by the presence of lime-pits, limekilns and stone quarries which the Hills exploited to supplement their income. In addition, by 1713 six cottages with their appurtenances were established on or near the Knowle. The Hills continued to grant rights of pasturage there to their tenants including some in Weston ² and in Tilsop ³. Its value as grazing land must have been very limited by then even for the tenants and any rights that other farmers in Nash might once have possessed had obviously been extinguished.

The loss of common grazing rights had occurred in other manors in the area and the consequences became more apparent in the early years of the eighteenth century. At Hope Bagot, near Nash and Whitton, an entry in the parish register, dated 23rd April 1717-18, refers to an agreement, reached by the parishioners, on the allocation of the amounts to be paid to Mr. Marston for his tithe. Benjamin Marston was the rector of Bitterley from 1703 until 1736 and the agreement was obviously part of an attempt by the

1. S.R.O., 1670/28.

2. S.R.O., 1670/57.

3. S.R.O., 1670/40.

parishioners of Hope Bagot to claim common grazing rights on the hillside waste in his parish which would replace the rights lost to the Hill family, on the eastern side of the Knowle hill, and to the Sheppards further north at Bennettsend and Colley Brook. According to the arrangement, ten of them were to pay amounts varying between 1^s and 3/3^d making a total of nineteen shillings and nine pence. However, the next entry notes rather pathetically that the agreement had been broken, for Mr. Marston had 'denied those turning out in his place. He said Hope hath no common'.

At Whitton the rights of common in Whitton Wood had been purchased by Sebastian Harvey early in the seventeenth century ¹, but the people in the manor that he was building up and consolidating do not appear to have been completely deprived of their commons at this time. However, the extension of the cleared and enclosed land of the demesne at Whitton into the woodlands by the Charltons, who succeeded Harvey, in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries removed most or all of the remaining common rights within the parish. Meanwhile the people of Whitton, like the people of Hope Bagot, had been cut off from direct access to the wastes of Titterstone Clee by the claims and activities of the Hill and Sheppard families. In 1719, having had the opportunity to note the failure of the people of Hope Bagot to claim grazing rights in Bitterley, the Whitton landholders supported by Charlton began a desperate and determined effort to claim grazing rights on the hillside waste in Coreley parish. This encroachment on their own rights was resisted strenuously by the commoners of Hints and Coreley and efforts were made by the people of Whitton to re-establish or create precedents. A death-bed declaration by John Williams stated that in Robert Charlton's time, which must have been before 1670 for Charlton died in that year, he had heard his name called in Lord Craven's court held at Hints. Williams had asked what estate was held by Charlton

1. Old Shropshire Houses, ed. H.E. Forest, p.152.

for which he was required to pay suit of court and 'the answe^r was That Whitton had a Right of Common one the Clee Hill' ¹.

The Charltons did in fact have an estate in Lord Craven's manor which, with three messuages in Burford parish, had been purchased in the early seventeenth century by Sebastian Harvey for £280 ². For this they owed suit of court to Lord Craven and a chief rent of six shillings and eight pence a year and no doubt possessed the common grazing rights such a messuage would have. Charlton sought counsel's opinion following what appears to have been a pretended demand by the rector of Coreley for the tithe of the wool of all of the sheep concerned ³. The opinion was based on the assumption that the claims of Whitton were justified and that the matter at issue was the apportionment of tithes between the rectors of Burford and Coreley. The rights of the rector of Coreley were duly recognised in a generous fashion but it appears that the attempt to turn the limited rights of the Charltons into general rights enjoyed by all of the landholders of Whitton was unsuccessful. The dispute was unresolved, or was reopened, in 1739 when the Whitton 'cattle' were impounded by Lord Craven's steward and other Coreley freeholders. They were not released until 12/6^d had been paid by Charlton on behalf of the people of Whitton as compensation for the trespass. The matter had not been settled by the 20th of September 1740, when William Tomlins, the steward of Earls Ditton manor, admitted that 'the right to the Comon remains in dispute ...' ⁴, but there is no further evidence concerning the dispute and it appears that the inhabitants of Whitton, discouraged by the long duration and the cost and inconclusiveness of their efforts, ceased to press their claims and

1. S.R.O., 11/753 (dated 24 May 1719).

2. H.E. Forest, op.cit., p.152.

3. S.R.O., 11/753 (dated 15 Dec. 1719).

4. S.R.O., 11/753 (dated 20 Sept. 1740).

either took a greater part in the growing industries of the hillside or adapted their farming methods to the prevailing conditions.

Many farmers were forced to put a greater emphasis on arable farming again although their land was not well suited to it. By the end of the eighteenth century Hope Bagot, Whitton and several other parishes, particularly those placed to the east of Titterstone, were included in the area known as 'The Wheatland'. The reply to the crop return of 1801 for Hope Bagot stated that the parish was 'very unproductive with others adjoining which lie more in the Valleys. The Wheat crop does not exceed 12 or 14 bushels' ¹.

(c) Land Management and Agriculture

The increasing pressure on grazing land and the impact of industry in the early years of the eighteenth century on the landholding patterns and on the agricultural development of the upper townships emphasised the pastoral nature of an area which had been engaged closely in animal husbandry for many years. To a great extent they were consequences of the changes in landholding patterns and in agriculture that had taken place, largely since 1650, in the lower parts of the area.

Soon after Thomas Powys had enclosed lands out of Warratry and Hucklemarsh Fields in 1662 he arranged for large parts of them to be laid down to grass. On 23rd December 1662 he agreed with Bartholomew Palmer to plough the lands in Hucklemarsh and to sow them jointly for two years with barley and to 'lay on Muck'. He added: 'It shall lye for grasse and in these 2 yeares it must bee levelled' ². Two weeks later it was agreed that Palmer would put twenty loads of manure on the lands and Powys would provide thirty horse-loads of lime ³. On 26th August 1663 he granted Palmer a lease for twelve years of

1. J.P. Dodd, 'The State of Agriculture in Shropshire, 1775-1825', T.S.A.S., lv, Part 1 (1954), 3.

2. S.R.O., Powys Notebooks, 320/5 'Lib. 2', p.33.

3. Ibid., p.35

the same lands, which he described as 'the new Inclosure', and repeated that it must be turned into pasture land after it had borne its two crops of barley ¹. On 1st September in the same year he leased lands in Warratry Field and elsewhere to Peter Loyd and John Perks and required them to turn part of it into orchard land. During the last three years of their twenty one year lease they were to put a total of forty loads of manure on the lands ².

As well as laying down arable to grass Powys was improving pastures that already existed. On 21st April 1663 he agreed to pay Higges 13/4^d for 'stocking up ' wood in the part of Bickley furlong that was to be ploughed. The land was well-wooded, for Higges was to cut the wood into faggots and was to be paid for these by the hundred ³. By 1669, when Powys made a list of his pasture lands, the Bickley furlongs, and Bickley woods, were grass lands and were described as suitable pasture for young cattle ⁴.

The list, described as 'pasture for Cowes', also referred to three meadows that were suitable for hay, leys that would support four oxen, closes suitable for either calves or sheep and other closes, including an orchard, suitable for horses. Other references in the Powys estate books indicate that he kept a large flock of sheep. In January 1663 he noted that he had sold seven sheepskins at 24^s the dozen between Shrovetide and May 1662, eighteen at 9^s the dozen between May and Michaelmas, and six at 15^s and ten at 18^s the dozen since Michaelmas. He noted also that he was owed 2/8^d for four calfskins and 1^s for two lambskins that he had sold during the same period ⁵.

1. S.R.O., Powys Notebooks, 320/5 'Lib. 2', p.39.

2. Ibid., pp.13, 14, 15, 41.

3. Ibid., p.37.

4. Ibid., 'Lib. 3', unnumbered endpaper. Powys was buried at Bitterley in 1671.

5. Ibid., 'Lib. 2', p.5.

The laying down of arable to grass was carried on in other parts of the area and was accompanied by an increasing occurrence of provisions in leases of farm lands which forbade the ploughing up of grass lands. Searches of the deeds that describe the lands that eventually became part of John Baldwin's widespread estate in Hints and Coreley indicate that in 1662, although the lands were predominantly grass lands, numerous pieces of arable land still existed particularly in the areas covered by the old open fields ¹. However, the amount of land described as arable land steadily diminished and in 1737 out of more than 280 acres only about ten acres, in the old open fields, were described as arable land although the numerous descriptions of leys implies that some convertible husbandry was practised ².

In most parishes, particularly where the pasture lands were supplemented by plentiful rough grazing on the wastes, less attention was paid to cereal food crops than to fodder crops, and the meadows and their crops of hay were of great importance. When the sheep were grazing on the waste many of the closes on the hillside above the old open fields were used as upland meadows, as they are today. The valley meadows had been improved in places for some floated meadows were in operation before 1662. In that year in Coreley Margaret Wellins gave George Sheppard 'liberty to come upon a parcell of ground at Broad Meadow Style to set and maintain a Wyre and Turn the water without any disturbance' ³.

The irrigation of meadows was not the only significant change in agricultural techniques for more intensive farming was developed and new fodder crops were introduced. Among these crops were vetches and clover which were legumes, as were the pulses and peas that were being grown on a larger scale at the same time, and they must have improved soil fertility

1. See above, pp.154-158.

2. S.B.L., Deeds and Charters, 9608.

3. Ibid., 9586, Abstract of Deeds (1st April, 1662).

directly by fixing nitrogen.

The improvements in the meadow lands, the introduction of new crops and the more extensive cultivation of other fodder crops made it possible to keep more animals. This increased the amount of dung which, in turn, made further crop increases possible. Thomas Powys was not alone in realising this ¹. The return of all dung and at least some straw and waste to the lands from which it arose was required in the second half of the seventeenth century in most leases. Those granted by Lord Craven were the most notable exceptions.

A more extensive and detailed account of the agriculture of the area than can be obtained from deeds and other sources is provided by the memoranda books of Robert Goodwin who was vicar of Cleobury Mortimer from 1656 to 1691 ². Cleobury was a large parish and included a wide cross-section of the agricultural lands of the area for it contained the settlements of the Wyre Forest, the earlier settlements based on the River Rea with their centre at Cleobury town, and the upper townships of Catherton and Doddington which contained large areas of waste on the sides of Titterstone Clee ³.

The only glebe terrier of Cleobury Mortimer that still exists was made towards the end of the sixteenth century and is very brief. It states that the Queen is patron of the living and concludes 'our vicar hathe no Glibe land but a house with a Closse lieing within the towne of Cliburye' ⁴. The impropriate tithes, 'corne and graine' ⁵, of Doddington, Dudnell and Catherton, those parts of the parish that lay in the manor of Earls Ditton,

1. See above, p. 169.

2. See above, p. 143, n. 1.

3. See above, Figure 10, p. 82.

4. Deposited in Hereford R.O. See below, Plate 11.1, p. 185 and Plate 9, p. 183.

5. S.B.L., Deeds and Charters, 13070. Lease of tithes from Lord Craven to William Richards of Earls Ditton (20 Oct., 1636).

were held by Lord Craven and his rent roll of 1662 shows that they were farmed by Mrs. Atkinson for £24 a year ¹. From 1697 they were held by William Baldwin ². The inappropriate tithes of the much larger part of the parish that lay within the manor of Cleobury were owned by the lord of that manor. When Sir Francis Lacon referred to these tithes in 1630 he described them as 'corne graine pulse and hay' ³.

The living was not an easy one and Goodwin's struggles to collect his tithes, Easter dues and fees, and to develop other sources of income are reflected in his memoranda books. He was concerned mainly with the vicarial tithes and his records of assessment and collection neglect the arable crops of 'corne graine and pulse' and may put too much emphasis on the importance of the pastoral aspects of farming in the area, particularly as the tithe of hay was no longer inappropriate by 1657 for his accounts show that it belonged to him. However, other entries help to restore the balance.

He collected the inappropriate tithes for Sir Lacon Childe at times and although he does not go into details he gives the sums paid by individuals for holdings that are named, so comparisons with the vicarial tithes can be made and these reveal that the vicarial tithes, particularly in the areas outside Cleobury in the East and West Foreign Liberties, were usually more valuable than the inappropriate tithes. In 1689 the small tithes paid by William Pennell, who farmed Curdale Farm and Bransley Farm in the lower area near Cleobury, were valued at fifty shillings but the inappropriate tithes were worth only forty shillings ⁴. Similar comparisons can be made in the parts of Cleobury parish that were in the manor of Earls Ditton. In 1662 Goodwin collected, or was owed in cash, the sum of £25/18/5^d from Dudnell, Catherton

1. S.B.L., Deeds and Charters, 7450.

2. Ibid., 10381.

3. S.R.O., Childe Muniments, 10h/I

4. 'Notebook of a Shropshire Vicar', ed. Mrs. Frances Childe, T.S.A.S. (1905), 195.

and Doddington for vicarial tithes and had received free carriage of two tons of coal and a wainload of wood. Also, tithes of apples, hops and some home closes remained to be collected or assessed ¹. In the same year Lord Craven received tithe farm of £24 for the other tithes of the same townships ². Even if an allowance is made for an undervaluation of the latter, similar to those that occurred elsewhere on Lord Craven's estates ³, the greater value of the vicarial tithes is clear. As they were derived largely from the products of pastoral farming, and as Lord Craven's 'corne and graine' included pease, oats and other crops that were at least in part fodder crops, the relatively greater, and increasing, importance of pastoral farming in the parish is confirmed.

Goodwin's household accounts, the details of payments made to him in kind, his own ventures into farming and other, incidental, information in his records give a more detailed and more reliable indication of the emphasis placed on pastoral farming and of the amount of technical change and other developments in farming in the area.

Goodwin's accounts indicate that he received a total of £44/19/0^d from his tithes in 1657 ⁴. A large proportion of this was paid to him through compositions arranged by his predecessors. Although he retained, or renewed, some that were related to large holdings he found it increasingly worthwhile to make more detailed and more frequent assessments of his titheables elsewhere, although these involved him in much extra work and worry. The reason for his zeal is not difficult to understand, for his lists show that new crops were being introduced, more animals were being kept and an increasing emphasis was being placed on pastoral farming. Compositions

1. Goodwin, Memoranda Books, fos. 31 r, 31 v, 32 r.

2. See above, p. 173.

3. See above, pp. 152-154.

4. Goodwin, Memoranda Books, fo. 1 r.

were a disadvantage in these circumstances for their inflexibility could cause the loss, at least for a period, of income from new crops and the fruits of developing prosperity. By making regular reassessments he ensured, in effect, that his list of titheables remained open-ended.

The growing of hops appears to have begun in Cleobury in the 1650s and been encouraged by him. In 1658 he noted that his last sack of hops weighed three quarters 'of A hundred excepting 2 pownd and halfe', and then adds the names of those who had bought hops from him at eight pence a pound ¹. In 1661 he charged seven pence a pound but does not seem to have grown them himself after this date ². He received tithes on hops for the first time in 1662, from Thomas Pennell of Bransley, and Roger Pountney and Maurice Hayward of Catherton ³. The earliest reference to a hop-yard in Coreley occurs in the same year in the description of the lands granted to John Richards by Margaret Wellins ⁴. It was an enclosure out of pasture land known as Moorhead and little is heard of it afterwards. The same is true of Fletchers Meadow, 'with a hop yard at the upper end thereof', in Mawley, which was leased by Henry Field to Thomas Harris in 1669 ⁵. The crop does not seem to have flourished in the area at that time, outside Burford ⁶, and Goodwin rarely refers to it after 1662.

On the other hand fruit trees, which had been grown in the area before the middle of the seventeenth century, were more successful. In 1658 Goodwin gave to his wife as part of her housekeeping allowance the tithes of hemp, flax, pigs, geese, honey, apples and pears ⁷, but in later years he found it

1. Goodwin, Memoranda Books, fo. 7 v.

2. Ibid., fo. 24 v.

3. Ibid., fos. 30 v, 31 v.

4. S.R.O., 1150/355.

5. S.R.O., Childe Muniments, 10g/I.

6. See above, pp. 79.

7. Goodwin, Memoranda Books, fo. 2 v.

necessary to take more careful account of orchards which implies that they had become much more important. In 1662, referring to John Bishop of the forest, he noted 'his teyth Apples unpaid', and also referred to titheable apples at Dudnell, and at Reaside Farm nearer to Cleobury town ¹. Such references gradually became more numerous and as the apples were collected by Goodwin himself they were probably used for dessert purposes. References were made to crab apples also, and in 1674 he paid the considerable sum of 2/6^d to Anne Laucky 'for crabs' ². These may have been used for making cider for in a letter written in 1677, in which he implored a friend to visit him, he added as an inducement the information that he had 'an hogshead of the best cider ... which were worth your drinking ...' ³. This is the only occasion on which he referred to cider and the tone of his invitation indicates that it was not a common drink in the area at that time. The establishment of orchards continued in other parts of the area as well as in Cleobury Mortimer. In April 1663, when land in Warratry Field was leased to Peter Loyd from the next Michaelmas, Thomas Powys of Henley noted that a previous lease of land would have to be redrawn and that 'Hee shall plant 50 ffruit trees upon it within one yeare next ensuing' ⁴. The lease, by Lucy Hill, of Weston Farm, Burford, in 1680, to Edmund Hints throws light on the development of fructicultural skills for Hints was required to plant on the premises within four years 'at least fifty young Appletrees or graft the like number of crabtree stocks ...' ⁵.

Goodwin's titheables in 1658 included sheep and lambs, cows and calves, herbage and hay, sons and daughters, servants and 'smoak and

1. Goodwin, Memoranda Books, fos. 30 r, 32 r, 30 v.

2. Ibid., fo. 136 r.

3. Ibid., fo. 180 r.

4. S.R.O., Powys Notebooks, 'Lib. 2', p.15.

5. S.R.O., 1670/57.

garden' ¹, as well as the lesser tithes given to his wife. In addition to hops he established goats and kids, eggs, home closes and trades as titheables in later years but the most valuable vicarial tithes were those on sheep, lambs, cows, calves, herbage and hay. The charges on the sheep referred to their wool ², and on the cows to the milk produced and were usually commuted to a penny for each animal. Lambs and calves were generally charged for at rates of threepence and sixpence respectively and hay at a rate of eight pence a ton or, like herbage, at one tenth of the annual rent or estimated annual value of the meadow, or pasture, involved.

Some of Goodwin's information was acquired by making personal visits, for at times he notes that he had 'examined' people about their dues and at other times he found it necessary, or more profitable, to collect his tithes himself, in kind, as in 1657 when he gathered two fleeces valued at a shilling each from John Sheward for his twenty two sheep ³. However, he was a busy man and his parish was very large and in most cases he had to rely on the word of the landholders themselves. In 1657 'John Bishop, junior, of the forest fermeth he hath 18 sheep, 9 lambs, ³ cows, 1 calfe, 1 Tonne of hay' ⁴. The temptation to underestimate must have been very strong, as it was late in the eighteenth century and early in the nineteenth century in connection with crop returns carried out by local clergy. In 1661 Margaret Evans informed Goodwin that the Widow Worrall 'hath 8 or nine Lambs ...

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1. Goodwin's assessment of smoke and garden appears to refer to occupants of houses that were substantial enough to possess a hearth with a flue and chimney and a small plot of land. A house of this type was leased to Thomas Farmer, labourer, by Sir William Childe on 20th March 1661. It was situated in Lower Street, Cleobury, and was described as 'all that messuage or cottage and one Garden and Backside thereunto belonging ...'. S.R.O., Childe Muniments, 10f/2.
 2. Various prices, and valuations of payments of wool in kind, indicate that the average fleece weighed between $1\frac{1}{2}$ and $1\frac{3}{4}$ lbs.
 3. Goodwin, Memoranda Books, fo. 14 r.
 4. Ibid., fo. 1 r.

notwithstanding shee hath sayd shee hath but fower ... and that shee hath 14 sheep' ¹. In 1662 Goodwin noted cautiously that the widow 'hath as shee sayth 15 sheep 3 lambs fallen and two more to fall and one in calfe cow ...' ², but he managed to collect only one shilling and threepence from her for the two years and one is left with the impression that she was a difficult adversary and that Goodwin retired defeated, at least on this occasion.

The compositions retained by Goodwin were concerned mainly with the larger estates and farms. They give an indication, therefore, of the parts of Cleobury parish in which large holdings predominated. Most of them were arranged in the area around Cleobury town, in Bransley and Baronsland, in Ditton township and in parts of Catherton and Mawley, and included a high proportion of the better agricultural lands of the parish. In 1657 the compositions included £2/4/0^d for the Lea Farm; 10^s for Curdall Farm; £3 for Baronsland and Brockley; £5 for Mawley Hall, and £4 for Reaside Farm which was occupied by Richard Walker ³. In other parts of the parish where holdings were more numerous and varied greatly in size, each holding was assessed separately in alternate years as far as was possible. Some very small landholders who were overlooked remained inconspicuous and avoided the payment of tithes for years, but Goodwin appears to have discovered most of them in time and made them pay for previous years. It is hardly likely that his own popularity and the respect felt for the Church would be enhanced in these circumstances.

The memoranda books show that many sheep and cows were kept in all parts of the parish. In the East Foreign Liberty outside Mawley, described as 'The Forest' by Goodwin, there were thirty five households in 1662 ⁴. One

1. Goodwin, Memoranda Books, fo. 22 r.

2. Ibid., fo. 30 r.

3. Ibid., fo. 1 r. See below, Plate 10.2, p. 184.

4. Ibid., fos. 30 r, 33 r. See above, p. 145.

man was described as a pauper and paid nothing. Jane Bishop, widow, and her daughter also paid nothing. Six families paid Easter dues of a few pennies, only, which in the case of Hugh Davies and his wife amounted to twopence so they were obviously very poor. Another five families who were a little better off also paid a few pennies extra for 'smoke and garden'. Of the remainder three paid a composition of five shillings, five shillings and sixpence, and six shillings respectively, and no details of their stock is provided. Four others paid sums of between 3^s and $3/6^d$ for pasture or herbage and their animals were not listed. The other fifteen, whose payments ranged from 1^s to $7/4^d$, had nearly 270 sheep and nearly thirty cows between them without allowing for underestimations ¹.

The average flock probably contained about twenty sheep, although in practice the numbers varied between the thirty four in John Bishop's flock and the six in John Price's flock. Lambs made up about a third of the sheep, indicating a lambing rate of around fifty per cent on average, but with fourteen lambs from twenty sheep John Bishop's was seventy per cent, and with three lambs from sixteen sheep Humphrey Adcox's was less than twenty per cent. With seven lambs from seven sheep Thomas Mantle achieved the highest returns.

At least eleven of the fifteen owned cows. John Bishop had five, including two calves; Humphrey Adcox had two cows and two calves; and John Rowley, who had twenty one sheep, and John Worrall, who had twenty six sheep, both had three cows, including one calf each. Of the other seven, six had one cow and one calf each and Widow Worrall had an in-calf cow. Only one cow, which belonged to John Rowley, was referred to as a barren cow by Goodwin and there was no indication of the presence of any draught animals.

The amount received by Goodwin from the forest in 1662 was $\pounds 3/7/6^d$,

1. Apart from deliberate underestimations, Goodwin himself makes it impossible to obtain a complete list of animals. For some households he gives the number of lambs or calves only or a monetary figure 'for lambs'.

not counting some arrears which were carried over. This compares very favourably with 1657 when he received, apparently, £1 only from the same part of the parish ¹. Much of the increase can be attributed to Goodwin's careful assessments and persistence but some was the result of an increase in animal stock and of the introduction of new crops. The only detailed figures from 1657 that are available for comparison are those that referred to John Bishop. By 1662 he had added one calf, two sheep and five lambs and an orchard to his titheables. He paid Goodwin $5\frac{1}{2}^d$ in 1657 and $7\frac{1}{4}^d$ and a tithe of apples, which remained to be collected, in 1662.

Other parts of the parish were not described in such detail by Goodwin, but his list of amounts paid, or still owing, from Catherton in 1662 indicates the importance of sheep in an area which had a large proportion of the hillside waste and large amounts of enclosed grazing land ².

Richard Grateley, Ralph Sheward and Roger Pountney paid for herbage and meadows, Robert Rutland for the wool of eighteen sheep and for eight lambs, some of which had fallen in Neen Savage parish, and John Monox paid a stone of wool valued at eight shillings. The Easter dues for the same township in the same year show that Widow Pountney of Heathhills and her son, William, had six cows, although they had very little land ³. Thomas Wheeler had seven cows, John Hynton had five cows, but neither had any calves. The cows were probably draught animals for William Pountney and Wheeler undertook the carriage of coal for Goodwin himself on a number of occasions. As far as can be ascertained Goodwin never refers to draught cattle as oxen. Richard Jones had six cows and six calves and there is no indication that he was involved in the carriage of coal.

1. Goodwin, Memoranda Boo's, fos. 1 r, 30 r, 32 r.

2. Ibid., fo. 31 v. Also, see above p. 148.

3. During 1662 they paid to Lord Craven an annual rent of 3^s for Heathhills and a chief rent of 1^s for other small lands. S.B.L., Deeds and Charters, 7450.

At Dudnell in 1662 ¹ Hyllary Viall paid three shillings and sixpence for sheep and lambs. He had four cows and three calves, also. Thomas Cumber paid fourteen shillings for his lambs, wool and hay. In addition he had six cows. William Bufton had two cows and two calves and Roger Cumber had two cows and one calf. Other landholders paid lump sums and no details of their titheables are given. One of them, Francis Pigot, however, was assessed in detail in 1657 ². In that year he had twelve sheep, five lambs, five cows, two calves, seven tons of hay, and hemp and flax, and was charged for these ten shillings and two pence. In 1662 he paid nine shillings for his sheep, cows and hay and owed Goodwin for his apples and for the produce of his home close. Home closes were adopted as a titheable by Goodwin for the first time, apparently, with this entry and were referred to frequently thereafter, probably because they were being put to an increasing number of uses. Some were rented out to larger landholders or were retained for use as meadows and pastures, others were used to grow small crops such as hemp, flax, hops and fruit or were used for occasional crops of cereals, as in 1661 when John Chettwin paid tithe for the barley of his 'hemp yard' ³. Pigot's home close had provided him with hemp and flax in 1657 but its produce in 1662 was not recorded by Goodwin, possibly because Pigot was experimenting with a new crop. Although Pigot had taken charge in 1651 of the living of Stottesdon, from which Thomas Amias the vicar had been ejected in 1647 ⁴, and was described as 'minister' in Cleobury Mortimer parish register when he was buried on 23 April 1666, he had described himself as a mathematician in an almanac that he had written for the year 1660 under the name of Marcus Pigott. The almanac included 'profitable directions' for gardeners ⁵.

1. Goodwin, Memoranda Books, fo. 32 r. See below, Plate 10.1, p. 184.

2. Ibid., fo. 1 r.

3. Ibid., fo. 29 r.

4. Walker Revised, ed. A.G. Matthews (Oxford, 1948), pp.302-303.

5. Cleobury Mortimer Par. Reg. (1904), Introd., p.vii.

More cattle appear to have been kept in the lower, more fertile parts of the parish around Cleobury Mortimer town, although even there sheep were important for Goodwin noted in 1657 that Humphrey Watmore who lived in the town itself had a flock of twenty sheep. Entries in the estate books of Thomas Powys of Henley, which was in the lower part of Bitterley parish, reveal that large numbers of sheep were kept in that area also ¹.

Goodwin received many payments in kind for tithes and other debts. His records of these throw light on the farming activities of some of the larger landholders. Of the sum of £40 that he had allowed his wife for housekeeping for the year beginning on the 1st October 1658, he had already provided £15/2/1^d in money or in provisions. The latter included two gallons of butter, at four shillings the gallon, and four cheeses, three of which, valued at eight shillings and sixpence, had come from the Lea Farm. Three strikes of oats had come from there also, and three strikes of peas had been provided by Thomas Pennell of Baronsland Farm ². In addition several strikes of malt and of corn were provided by farmers who were not named ³.

In 1660 four of Richard Walker's ⁴ sons, John, George, Benjamin and Edward, were pupils at the vicar's school. Goodwin noted that Walker owed him twelve shillings in school fees which had been reduced to seven shillings and eight pence by the delivery of two cheeses, weighing eighteen and seventeen pounds respectively, and a pound of butter. The amount outstanding was paid off later by the delivery of two pounds of butter, one turkey and two capons ⁵. Walker obviously had a large dairy herd and its extent is partially revealed by the payment of Easter dues to Goodwin in 1662

1. See above, p. 170.

2. Goodwin, Memoranda Books, fo. 2 v.

3. Ibid., fo. 8 r.

4. Ibid., fo. 3 v. See above, p. 178 and note 3.

5. Ibid., fo. 11 r.

PLATE 9

CLEOBURY MORTIMER : THE BOROUGH.



1. The Talbot Inn, High Street.



2. Church Street, with Wyre Common in the distance.

PLATE IO

CLEOBURY MORTIMER : FARMSTEADS.



I. Dudnell.



2. Reaside.

PLATE II

ROBERT GOODWIN : RESIDENCES.



I. The Vicarage, Cleobury Mortimer.



2. Stone House, Neen Savage.

which were assessed on himself and his wife, two male servants who were living in, and on 'the milke of 12 cows' ¹. Other payments in kind received by Goodwin in 1660 included five strikes of peas and one strike of wheat. They were added to the household account for that year together with the butter and cheeses received from Walker as part-payment of school fees ². Probably the wheat was provided by Walker, for in 1661 he and Goodwin agreed that the composition for the small tithes of Reaside, beginning in that year and payable every Saint James Day, should be £4, one strike of wheat and one strike of munne corn ³.

The payments in kind received from Walker for tithes, Easter dues and school fees indicate the wide range of his farming activities but Goodwin's accounts do not reveal that wheat was grown on a scale sufficient to provide a surplus by any other farmers in the area. It was referred to very rarely after 1661.

The common bread grain, referred to as munne, or monge corn appears to have been a mixture of wheat and barley. In May 1673 when the mills commonly known as 'the Cleobury Mills' were leased by Sir William Childe to Thomas Harvey of Cleobury Mortimer, glazier, they consisted of 'one wheate mill one Monge Corne mill and one mault mill' ⁴. Munne corn cost between $4/6^d$ and 5^s a strike in 1658, and between $4/4^d$ and $4/9^d$ a strike in 1662 ⁵. In 1676 it was sold at 3^s a strike ⁶ and in 1681 at $2/7^d$ a strike ⁷. Although these prices are scattered irregularly and it is not known in which

1. Goodwin, Memoranda Books, fo. 30 v.

2. Ibid., fo. 5 r.

3. Ibid., fo. 26 r.

4. S.R.O., Childe Muniments, 10q.

5. Goodwin, Memoranda Books, fos. 2 v, 5 r, 8 r, 30 v.

6. Ibid., fo. 173 r.

7. Ibid., 239 r.

part of each year they were paid there was undoubtedly a considerable fall in the cost between 1658 and 1681, of wheat and barley. The prices of other arable crops declined also.

The wheat received by Goodwin was not valued by him, but malt was priced on five different occasions in 1658 at between $3/6^d$ and 4^s a strike and in 1662 a bag of malt, received in part-payment of tithes, was valued at $\text{£}1/6/0^d$. In 1673 a strike cost $2/6^d$ and a bag was purchased from John Hayley for 12^s ¹. In the same year six strikes of barley were purchased at $2/6^d$ a strike and, in 1675, eleven strikes cost 2^s each and a further fourteen $2/6^d$ each². The decline in the price of the principal constituent of the food and drink of the people was obviously considerable. As its price declined the payments in kind, as well as his own local purchases, indicate that after the early years of his incumbency although much barley was malted and purchased in munne corn a decreasing amount of it was grown in the area.

The price of some of the arable fodder crops declined also, but less noticeably. In 1658 he bought peas at different times of the year and paid from $3/4^d$ to $3/6^d$ a strike for them³. In 1673 he paid $2/4^d$ for white, and $1/10^d$ for grey peas and in 1676 he paid 2^s a strike for what he described simply as peas⁴.

In 1658 one strike of oats was valued at $1/9^d$ and was used 'for feeding geese', but others purchased in the same year cost him 2^s for each strike. In 1690 he bought eight strikes at $1/8^d$ a strike⁵.

Goodwin made few references to his own farming activities but these

1. Goodwin, Memoranda Books, fos. 2 v, 8 r, 31 r, 121 r, 127 r.

2. Ibid., fos. 129 v, 151 r.

3. Ibid., fo. 2 v.

4. Ibid., fo. 129 v, 171 r.

5. Ibid., fos. 2 v, 330 r.

are sufficient to show the emphasis that he placed on fodder crops and animal husbandry. In 1673 he wrote down the details of the work that Richard Harwell had done for him and the payments that he had incurred. These show that Harwell had been paid seven shillings for ploughing and had sown sixteen strikes of oats, six strikes of peas, one strike of vetches and one strike of barley ¹. Earlier in the same year Thomas Watmore had supplied Goodwin with two loads of clover at a cost of 1/6^d and had been paid 18^s for ploughing ².

Various references show that Goodwin kept a small herd of cows. In 1665 he received 'a fat cow' as part-payment of the fees of Mary Burton whom he had undertaken to keep and educate for a period of seven years beginning in December 1660 ³. Later, in 1665, he wrote to a friend or kinsman asking for a temporary loan so that he could purchase from Ludlow fair on the following day 'a heifer or young cow' ⁴. In 1681 he carefully recorded a prescription which would 'make a cove cleane'. The drench included spermaceti, saffron, turmeric, treacle and malt kernels ⁵. In 1683 he received in part-payment of rent a bull valued at £2/6/8^d from Francis Causer, one of his tenants on lands in Hopton Wafers that he had leased from Ludlow Corporation in 1673. In the same year he purchased a cow for £2/19/8^d from Thomas Owens, another of his tenants in Hopton Wafers ⁶.

Goodwin made no references to horses during his early years as vicar of Cleobury even in those parts of his accounts that referred to parishioners who were known to have delivered coal, or wood or building materials to him,

1. Goodwin, Memoranda Books, fo. 121 r.

2. 'Note-Book of a Shropshire Vicar', ed. Mrs. Frances Childe, T.S.A.S. (1905), 197.

3. Goodwin, Memoranda Books, fo. 12 r.

4. Ibid., fo. 54 r.

5. Ibid., fo. 222 r.

6. Ibid., fo. 226 r.

or to have carried out ploughing or other farm work for him during the same year. His detailed accounts of the East Foreign Liberty including Mawley, for 1662, reveal that the keeping and breeding of horses was not undertaken in those parts of the Wyre Forest that lay in Cleobury parish as it was in woodlands elsewhere at that time. On the other side of Titterstone Clee near Ludlow Thomas Powys kept, apparently, only one horse. In October 1661, when Peter Loyd and William Mullard agreed to enclose part of Hu clemarsh Field using thorns from a certain hedge when it was plashed, he offered to lend them the horse to transport the thorns. They had to borrow a sledge elsewhere if they wished to accept his offer and it appears that Powys did not have a cart for it ¹. It was probably a pack-horse for in January 1663, when he made an agreement with Bartholomew Palmer he promised to provide thirty horse-loads of lime for the land that they were preparing, jointly, to lay down to grass ². Powys refers in the same agreement, and on several other occasions, to his team which was used for ploughing and other heavy work and it is clear from his allocation and description of his pasture lands that the team was made up of the four oxen pastured on 'High Trees' and 'Brooms Leys' ³. His list did not give the number of any other animals related to specific pasture lands and allotted only two small closes and an orchard to horses.

In 1673, in a letter to a member of the Kettilby family, Goodwin remarked that 'horses here are extremely dear and good ones very scarce ...' ⁴, but by 1677 he had acquired at least one saddle-horse himself for, in a letter of invitation to a friend, he offered to send him by the carrier a horse for his journey to Cleobury ⁵.

1. S.R.O., Powys Notebooks, 'Lib. 2', p.17.

2. Ibid., p.35.

3. See above, p. 170 and note 4.

4. Goodwin, Memoranda Books, fo. 134 r. See above, p. 133.

5. Ibid., fo. 180 r.

Goodwin mentioned pack-horses for the first time in 1681 when he noted that he had paid for 'all coales brought of Horse back and for 3 tunne brought by my waine' ¹. An increasing concern for horses is indicated by the entry of a salve for horses' hoofs in 1684. It included beeswax, turpentine, dog and hog grease, and black soap ². Obviously horses were becoming less rare, and he noted in 1687 that the horse belonging to his daughter Elizabeth, who was fourteen, had strayed and cost him 7^s for a fortnight's keep and 2^s for crying and proclaiming ³.

Shortly after Goodwin's death in 1691 his memoranda books were used by one of his successors to draw up a complete list of titheables ⁴. Colts were included in this list and it was stated that Goodwin had started to charge for them before his death although no precedent could be found in his writings. However, the fact that the successor wanted to justify his inclusion of colts indicates that the breeding of horses had become significant before the end of the seventeenth century.

The increase in the use of horses revealed by a comparison of Goodwin's accounts for coal delivered to him in 1662 and in 1681, and later dates, could have been due to a steadily growing realisation that they were superior to oxen for carrying loads. A century later, in 1794, Bishton noted in the original report on the agriculture of Shropshire that 'oxen are preferred for ploughing in the strong lands, but horses for the road business ...' ⁵. The

1. Goodwin, Memoranda Books, fo. 224 r.

2. Ibid., fo. 265 r.

3. 'Note-book of a Shropshire Vicar', T.S.A.S. (1905), 217.

4. Goodwin, Memoranda Books, fos. 270 r, 270 v. Goodwin's son John who was vicar of Silvington and rector of Abberley, Worcestershire, from 1691 was presented to the living of Cleobury Mortimer in 1694. He did not reside in Cleobury and both before and after 1694 the parish duties were carried out by his father's curate, William Edwards, who married Elizabeth Goodwin on 4th February 1697 at Coreley. After John's death in 1699 Edwards was presented to the living which he retained until his death in February 1738.

5. Joseph Plymley, General View of the Agriculture of Shropshire (London, 1803), p.264. Much of Bishton's earlier report is included in Plymley's account.

advantages that horses possessed for carriage purposes were greater in areas such as Titterstone Clee where there were many severe gradients. The greater use of horses would have been encouraged also by pressures on pasture lands which reduced the amount of lush grazing available for draught cows, for horses are not so demanding in this respect, and can be pastured on much poorer, or on odd lots of grazing land.

Goodwin's household accounts, lists of titheables and the payments in kind received by him between 1657 and 1691 show that, as well as an increase in the number of sheep, cows and horses that occurred during that period, many more pigs and poultry were kept by most households including his own. The increase in the number of livestock, which was closely related to the fall in the price of food crops, appears to have outstripped the extension of pasture and meadow lands, their subsequent improvement and the introduction of new crops such as clover and vetches, for Goodwin's records show not only that the price of fodder crops fell much less than the price of food grains ¹, but also that the value of hay and of herbage remained at a high level. Of the 10/2^d paid by Francis Pigot in 1657, 5^s was accounted for by the tithe of his hay which amounted to seven tons ². In the same year it was noted that John Bishop, junior, of the Forest had one ton of hay and that James Evans had paid 2^s for the meadow 'towards the forrest' ³. In 1660 Thomas Winwood and Humphrey Adcox of the Forest had hay there to the value of 32^s and in Cleobury town itself Goodman Adams and John Poyner paid 6^d and 3^s respectively for hay they had gathered there ⁴.

The assessments made by Goodwin in later years confirm that hay and herbage continued to be of great importance. The few prices that are given

1. See above, p. 187.

2. See above, p. 181.

3. Goodwin, Memoranda Books, fo. 1 r.

4. Ibid., fos. 8 r, 20 v.

for hay show that it maintained its value steadily and cost between 6/8^d and 7/1^d a ton throughout the period when arable crops were falling rapidly in price and by the 1670s the shortage of meadow land was such that men whose farms were situated some distance away were regularly renting closes in Cleobury town itself to supplement their supplies of hay. By the early years of the eighteenth century the shortage of grass lands had become a serious problem that had spread to some of the upper townships ¹.

The cheapness of food corn directly increased prosperity by reducing the cost of basic necessities. It encouraged, also, the growing of more fodder crops and the laying down of arable land to grass which, in an area that was suited to pastoral farming, increased the profits derived from farming. The surplus incomes and purchasing power of the landholders who were able to take advantage of this situation stimulated the development of services, trades and industries which absorbed some of the labour released by less intensive farming practices. A decline in part-time farming by tradesmen ensued and as little land remained available for new settlements, even in the forest, after about 1680 ², and as the demand generated by increased purchasing power was satisfied and as population increased, some labour was forced by the lack of local opportunities to move into the expanding industrial areas on or near the coalfields of the upper townships.

3. INDUSTRY:

(a) The Iron Industry

(i) Introduction

The new iron industry of the Cleobury Mortimer area which had its beginnings in the 1540s expanded rapidly after 1560, when the Earl of Leicester arrived in the district, and again in the early years of the

1. See above, pp. 160-162, 166-169.

2. See above, p. 145.

seventeenth century. As in other parts of the Midlands, and in the Weald, the Forest of Dean and other areas, the industry reached a peak between 1610 and 1635.

The early blast furnaces made great increases in production possible for they were capable of producing a little over two hundred tons of pig-iron annually. From this amount about one hundred and fifty tons of bar-iron could be made by the forges compared with the twenty to thirty tons of iron that could be produced directly by a bloomery each year. The establishment of ironworks on several new sites near Cleobury in the second half of the sixteenth century further increased local production as did the introduction in the early years of the seventeenth century of improved furnaces which had a much greater capacity than the earlier furnaces. Under conditions of rapid expansion such as these it was inevitable that a setback would occur when earlier unsatisfied or latent needs were met and the pace of iron production exceeded the development of its markets.

In practice the relatively rapid rate of expansion in the iron industry of Cleobury came to an end in the 1630s shortly after the onset of a decline in the iron industry of the Weald and elsewhere. Although temporary shortages of charcoal, the difficulties over supplies of ironstone following the dispute at Catherton and the exhaustion of easily accessible outcrops of the Gutter seam, and the financial problems of Sir Francis Lacon may all have played a part in the slowing down of the rate of development, the greatest restriction was imposed by the limitations of the market for iron goods and the failure, consequently, of the area to attract large numbers of metal workers¹. As the Cleobury forges were situated only eight miles, and one of the furnaces on Baveney Brook about five and a half miles from Bewdley, some bar-iron and pig-iron was probably sold there, although there is no evidence that this occurred until later. The high costs of

1. See above, pp. 111-114.

transporting iron overland are revealed by the churchwardens' accounts of the town of Ludlow for the year 1636-37. Four and three quarter hundredweights of bar-iron were purchased, for £4/2/6^d, from Cleobury forge to repair the steeple of the church and Thomas Stringer was paid four shillings and sixpence, a rate of nearly twenty pence per ton mile, for transporting it. The churchwardens did not purchase large amounts of iron from Cleobury again but from time to time between 1639 and 1662 they paid between fifteen and seventeen pence per ton mile for the transport of lead that they had bought in Bewdley. High carriage charges such as these increased the cost of iron greatly at inland markets that were more than a few miles away from the forges and furnaces, thus reducing local demand, and they made it very difficult to compete in outside markets with iron producers who had easy access to the River Severn and other waterways, particularly during a period of economic depression and severe competition such as that which existed from the middle years of the 1630s.

In 1636, in an attempt to provide badly needed water transport for the products and raw materials of the area, William Sandys of Fladbury, Worcestershire, put forward a proposal to make the River Teme navigable from Worcester towards Ludlow. A similar project for the River Avon was successfully carried out by him and the proposal for the Teme was supported actively by the Privy Council. However, the civil wars broke out before work could be started and the scheme was postponed and, ultimately, abandoned ¹. The Teme, apart from short inland stretches, has never been made navigable. The implication that the scheme was no longer considered to be worthwhile is supported by evidence that there was some dispersal of the skills and capital of the Cleobury Mortimer iron industry to Bringewood and Bouldon ². Local markets in central and southern Shropshire and in northern

1. W. Rees, Industry, i, 343.

2. See above, pp. 105-6.

Herefordshire were expanded or opened up from these sites which, while not competing with Cleobury for charcoal and ironstone, restricted its inland market severely and, in time, came into competition with it in outside markets.

(ii) General

From the middle of the seventeenth century to the early eighteenth century there is little documentary evidence of the activities or of the development of the iron industry of south-east Shropshire. No detailed accounts have come to light so far and the existing records of other ironworks and of the iron markets have been of little assistance. In this respect the iron industry of the area is not unique, for the lack of records generally has caused considerable problems for the historians of the charcoal iron industry.

At that period there were no official statistics, and estimates of national production, or of the general trends in the industry, have been notably dependent on exiguous or isolated figures and on circumstantial or controversial evidence and hopeful conjectures. As a result they have been, inevitably, little better than guesses¹. The most influential estimate was based on a reference, probably misunderstood, by Dud Dudley in his 'Metallum Martis' of 1665, to an estimate made by Simon Sturtevant early in the seventeenth century. This appeared to indicate that there were at that time three hundred furnaces and five hundred forges flourishing in England and Wales. In the nineteenth century this information was compared with a more detailed list, produced by David Mushet, which was based on a list originally prepared in 1717. The list purported to show that there were only fifty nine furnaces in existence by about 1720 and it was concluded that the iron industry must have declined severely. This view was accepted by

1. M.W. Flinn, 'The Growth of the English Iron Industry, 1660-1760', Economic History Review, 2nd ser., xi (1958), 145.

Scrivenor who, noting also the increasing amounts of iron imported into the country in the early eighteenth century, passed on the information to a wider public ¹.

For many years afterwards historians of the iron industry believed with little hesitation that a long period of decline began in the industry soon after the middle of the seventeenth century and continued until the great upsurge of activity in the 1760s. Apart from the element of statistical evidence that appeared to be provided by Dud Dudley's remarks and the Mushet list, their views were based on other factors which included the steady increase in the imports of iron, as in Scrivenor's case, and the obvious decline by the eighteenth century of the Wealden iron industry from the days of its greatness in the sixteenth century, and the general belief that exhaustion of wood must have led, by the second half of the seventeenth, to shortages of charcoal with consequent ill effects on iron production.

In recent years, however, the traditional view that the iron industry was declining or at best stagnating has been challenged, notably by M.W. Flinn in the article cited above. Dud Dudley's figures, moreover, do not appear reliable enough to bear the burden placed on them ², and the 1717 list of ironworks, and later lists based on it, although believed to be reasonably accurate for some areas, such as those in which the Foley partnerships were active ³, is obviously inaccurate elsewhere, for it omits ironworks known to be active at that time and understates the output of those that are listed ⁴.

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1. Harry Scrivenor, History of the Iron Trade (2nd edn., London, 1854), pp.56-7. Scrivenor, incorrectly, gives the date 1740 to the list. It has been printed as the Mushet-Scrivenor List, dated c. 1720, in E.W. Hulme, 'Statistical History of the Iron Trade of England and Wales, 1717-1750', Trans. Newcomen Soc., ix (1928-9), 14-15.
 2. G. Hammersley, 'The Charcoal Iron Industry and its Fuel, 1540-1750', Economic History Review, 2nd ser., xxvi (1973), 594.
 3. B.L.C., Johnson, 'The Foley Partnerships: The Iron Industry at the end of the Charcoal Era', Economic History Review, 2nd ser., iv (1952), 322 and note 3.
 4. T.S. Ashton, Iron and Steel in the Industrial Revolution (3rd edn. Manchester,

The increasing imports of iron could indicate that domestic demand was expanding faster than home production not that the latter was falling. There was also a considerable rise in the export of manufactured iron during this period. The century to 1760 was not alone in importing increasing amounts of foreign iron, for as late as the 1780s about 66% of the total supply of bar-iron was imported and it was not until nearly the end of the eighteenth century that the proportion was reduced to about 50% ¹.

M.W. Flinn points out that although the industry in the Weald was but a shadow of its former self by the early years of the eighteenth century the decline had occurred mainly in the period 1620-1660 and a marked revival had taken place since then ². Moreover, the use of conditions in the iron industry in one area to estimate by analogy the state of the industry in other areas has doubtful validity for a period when problems of transport and communications made regional groupings and influences more important than national factors. In such a situation the decline of the industry in a particular area could be merely the result of changes in locational factors, or could be a consequence of purely local difficulties.

The impression that shortages of wood for making charcoal must have caused a decline in the iron industry after 1660 appears to have had little foundation, for by then coppicing had become common in many areas. The continued existence of industry for long periods in the same places shows that a balance of wood supplies could be achieved and suggests that there was no general critical shortage. Sometimes the balance was acquired through agreements over allocations of felling areas, as when the terms upon which Richard Knight agreed to take the lease of Wildon forge provided that he should have the wood cut by Lord Foley on the north side of the River Teme

4. (cont.) 1963), p.235 and note 1. M.W. Flinn, art.cit., 145.

1. Alan Birch, The Economic History of the British Iron and Steel Industry, 1784-1879 (London, 1967), p.18.

2. M.W. Flinn, art.cit., 146.

but not that on the Wildon side of the Teme which was to be left for Shelsley forge ¹.

The need to balance the supply of wood and the demands of industry obviously worked against heavy concentration of the iron industry and could act as a restraint on expansion in less heavily wooded areas. Also any upset in the balance could lead to shortages of fuel in a particular area as may have happened for short periods after the old timber had been exhausted and before the new coppices were ready. However, there is no reason to believe that there was an absolute or overall shortage of wood needed to provide charcoal ².

The view that the iron industry was in decline after 1660 does not appear, therefore, to be supported by evidence of substance. Moreover, it seems that the absence of reliable figures of output and the absence of other general information makes it impossible to discover from this direction the general trends in the industry after 1660. In these circumstances it is necessary to use other criteria derived from a more detailed knowledge of the development of individual ironworks or of groups of ironworks in various localities or regions.

Local and regional studies have provided evidence, already, that has suggested to Mr. Flinn that there was considerable growth rather than decline in the English iron industry between 1660 and 1760. He is impressed most by the fact that there were large investments of capital in new furnaces, forges and slitting mills during this period. This revealed not only a growth in capacity, for the furnaces and forges that were closed down during the same period were fewer or smaller, but also indicated that the condition of the industry encouraged the belief that there would be sufficient returns on the capital employed. Following a setback in the 1620s that lasted

1. Hereford R.O., Foley Coll., F/VI/DFC, of 31st August, 1705.

2. Flinn, art.cit., 148-50. Hammersley, art.cit., passim. H.R. Schubert, History of the British Iron and Steel Industry, p.222.

until after the civil wars, Mr. Flinn postulates a general recovery in the industry after 1660 which was slow at first but which became more rapid after 1710 ¹.

(iii) South-East Shropshire

A major feature of the charcoal iron industry after 1660 was the development of the interrelated and interdependent Foley partnerships which eventually directed large areas of the iron industry and controlled over half of the pig- and bar-iron producing capacity of the Forest of Dean and of the North and West Midlands ². Their influence was made even more extensive through their trade with independent ironworks and through the outside interests of the various partners. The partnerships were a notable step forward in the development of the iron industry for their establishment resulted in the reorganisation and rationalisation of large areas of production with the aim of satisfying the widest possible range of needs and demands of the ironworking trades and industries. It has been noted that they were of minor importance in central Shropshire ³, and they appear to have had little interest in south-east Shropshire. The records of the partnerships that are still in existence provide very little direct information about the area.

Although the south-east Shropshire iron industry was not an integral part of the Foley partnerships, it is possible that some smaller combines were in existence or, at least, that various ironworks cooperated from time to time. Until 1618 when the Childe family finally disposed of the manor of Willey they had operated a furnace there as well as furnaces in Cleobury Mortimer, and had been connected with the Cleobury forges owned by their

1. Flinn, art.cit., 152.

2. B.L.C. Johnson, 'Foley Partnerships', Economic History Review (1952), 330.

3. Ibid., 330.

relatives, the Blounts. In the late 1630s Bringewood and Bouldon had come under the control of the Cleobury iron-masters Francis Walker and Sir Walter Blount¹. Although there is no evidence to show that they were working together, the geographical pattern of their various works ensured that they would not compete with each other for fuel and raw materials and could work together to supply the needs of the Midland iron market, based on the Birmingham plateau, through ironmongers and later through the earlier Foley co bines, which were in existence in the Stour valley from the 1660s at the latest². However, any agreements that may have been made did not compare with the range and effectiveness of those that existed in the Foley partnerships, and the Walkers, Blounts, Hills and other iron-masters of the district looked upon themselves primarily as landowners who were engaged in, but not dedicated to, the production of iron. None of these families founded powerful dynasties of iron-masters and by the early years of the eighteenth century they had withdrawn from active management of ironworks, apart from some of the younger sons of the Blount family in Cleobury Mortimer, and had been replaced by professional iron-masters. Unlike many of these men, and unlike many of their own aristocratic predecessors, whose family archives retain references to their interests in ironworks, the manor lord and yeoman iron-masters have left few accounts or other records.

As a result, and because of its position on the outer edge of the Foley interests, there is little evidence concerning the extent of the involvement of the ironworks of the area in wider markets in pig-iron and bar-iron between 1640 and 1720. This, together with the lack of information concerning individual furnaces and forges has given the impression that the iron industry of the area continued to decline after the middle of the seventeenth century. Yet some surplus iron was sold outside the district to

1. See above, p.106.

2. B.L.C. Johnson, art.cit., 326.

areas where there was a shortage of bar-iron. In 1648 Robert Foley, a younger son of the great iron-master Richard Foley, who was himself an ironmonger in Stourbridge, was buying large quantities of bar-iron from Richard Walker's forge at Bringewood and was delivering it at a rate of four tons every fortnight to John Norgrove of Rignoll ¹. During the second half of the seventeenth century the iron of the Clee Hills found its way into the Worcestershire ironworks where it enjoyed a reputation for quality similar to that enjoyed by Forest of Dean iron. This is confirmed by Andrew Yarranton who was in a position to know from personal experience, for he had been a forge master on the Severn at Dick Brook south of Bewdley. He wrote, between 1677 and 1681, that the best iron was 'in the Forest of Dean, and in the Clay-Hill in Shropshire' ². This implies that the iron of the Clee Hills was already bought in sufficient quantities for its quality to be well established and widely known and is in accordance with the high reputation that pig-iron from Bouldon already enjoyed, and that the bar-iron of the Cleobury Mortimer forges came to enjoy to such an extent that they continued to make charcoal iron until the early years of the nineteenth century ³. Through the sales of bar-iron from the Bringewood and Cleobury forges iron production in the area acquired links with ironworking elsewhere and in this way must have become subject, at least to some extent, to the developments and the changes in demand of the iron industry of the wider region of the West Midlands.

The production of bar-iron was resumed in Cleobury Mortimer soon after the end of the civil wars and although the Cleobury furnaces were not rebuilt a new furnace which smelted the ironstone of Titterstone Clee Hill was

1. M. Rowlands, 'Two Seventeenth Century Ironmongers', West Midland Studies, vii (Wolverhampton, Autumn 1974), 18.

2. Cited in W.H.B. Court, The Rise of the Midland Industries, 1600-1838 (1st edn. corrected, London, 1953), p.81.

3. Iron for making piston rods, necessarily of the best quality, was obtained from Blount of Cleobury Mortimer forge in 1777 by Boulton and Watt. T.S. Ashton, Iron and Steel, p.67.

established nearby, at Tilsop in Burford parish, indicating thus that large investment of capital in the local iron industry was considered worthwhile. The iron industry prospered for the next thirty to forty years and its recovery, as well as the general economic recovery after 1660, benefited the whole area. Other industries and agriculture prospered, also, and several new industries were introduced. But by the 1690s when general economic conditions were not so favourable a decline had begun in the iron industry. The independent status of the local industry, which implied local organisation, management and financing, became increasingly disadvantageous and restrained its development. No new investment was made after the establishment of the furnace at Tilsop, and the Hills of Tilsop and the Walkers of Bringewood and Clee Hill appear to have been in serious financial difficulties by the 1690s, and Sir Walter Blount was suffering from the effects of his religious disabilities which had been brought into prominence by the recent political changes ¹.

The Foley partnerships had become much more powerful by this time and it is reasonable to assume that as demand fell and costs rose ironworks that were outside the partnerships or, at best, on the periphery of them, as in the case of Tilsop, found their access to the market restricted in the interests of the ironworks belonging to the partnership itself.

Tilsop furnace closed down early in the eighteenth century and shortly afterwards, although the Cleobury Mortimer forges apparently continued to work, the decline in the iron industry obviously reached serious proportions. When economic recovery began in the second decade of the eighteenth century the connection between the district and the iron industry was less direct for it was based largely on the mining of large quantities of ironstone for the use of furnaces elsewhere.

1. See above, p.103-104.

FIGURE 13



- The sites of ironworks that were operating during the 17th or early 18th centuries.
- The sites of 16th century blast furnaces in Cleobury Mortimer and Neen Savage parishes.

(iv) The Cleobury Mortimer Forges

No statistics of production for the Cleobury forges exist for this period, until 1717. The only evidence of the level and continuity of activity is provided by references to workers at the forges. There are indications that production of bar-iron was resumed at the latest by 1648 when a forgerman, William Maybury, was referred to in the parish register. For several years references to forgermen are few and are limited to members of the two families, Maybury and France, who had been established at the forges for many years. From 1655 the number of references steadily increases and a greater variety of surnames is noted. These indicate that by the early years of the 1660s the production of bar-iron had recovered to a high level and that work at the forges continued at this level, fairly consistently, into the 1690s and probably into the early years of the eighteenth century. A short period of relative inactivity followed but recovery had taken place before the end of the second decade of the century.

The vicar of Cleobury, Robert Goodwin, gives a list in his memoranda books ¹, from time to time between 1662 and 1688, of the people in Mawley who had paid or who still owed Easter dues or tithes. The lists, while not exhaustive, show that the forges were active during that period, and, together with parish register references to forgermen and iron-masters, give a rough indication of the relative levels of activity and, by distinguishing between finers and hammermen, show that at least two forges were in operation. In 1662 the names of nine men associated with the forge were referred to. They included William Maybury and George France, Thomas Brazier, 'stocktaker', and Mr. William Read. Mr. Read answered for the tithes of Mawley and Rowley Farms and appeared to be in charge of the forges. After his death in 1664 he was succeeded by Rowland Read. The forges appear to have been very busy at this time for thirteen men were recorded in this year. They included

1. See above, p. 143 note 1.

William Hall and Robert Hall who gradually emerged as persons with some authority at the forges. William, who lodged with William Maybury, the leading hammerman, was referred to as 'Mr. Hall' by 1669 and was probably in charge of the day-to-day activities of the forges. Mr. Rowland Read appears to have been responsible for the supplying of charcoal to the forges for he purchased, from Lord Craven's lands in Catherton, large amounts of wood which were cut and corded during 1671 and 1672. Robert Goodwin entered in his memoranda books a copy of a letter of 1672 from Richard Hopton, Lord Craven's steward, to Mr. Read in which the latter was requested to pay tithes of £9, arising on this wood, to the vicar. It is probable that Robert Hall was Rowland Read's assistant for, although Read was succeeded by Mr. John Baldwin when he died in 1675, Mr. Baldwin was himself succeeded by Robert Hall in 1677. Mr. William Hall paid the vicar of Cleobury the considerable sum of ten shillings for the sermon delivered at the funeral of Mr. Read, yet the records of the hearth tax of 1672 indicated that he lived in a modest house for he paid for one hearth, as did William Maybury 'de forge', George France, and Robert Hall. By contrast Sir Walter Blount paid for eleven hearths at Mawley Hall ¹.

Robert Goodwin's lists and the parish registers refer to eight men at the forges in 1673, to ten in 1680, to eight in 1681, to ten in 1684, and to seven in 1688. Successive generations of the Maybury and France families appear to have worked continuously at the forges. Other families who worked there over long periods were the Leonards, the Cranages, the Gittins, the Phillips, the Harts and the Griffiths. Although other forge-workers stayed for short periods, the impression given by Robert Goodwin's lists and register entries that continuity of work was maintained at the forges is strengthened by the presence at one of the forges of an apprentice finer, Charles Woodcocke, in 1684 ².

1. W. Watkins Pitchford, The Shropshire Hearth-Tax Roll of 1672 (Shrewsbury, 1949), p.235.

2. Goodwin, Memoranda Books, fo. 263 r.

Early in the 1690s the entries in Robert Goodwin's memoranda books cease, but until 1694 parish register entries refer to forgers as frequently as before. Thereafter there are fewer references, and there are no more entries concerned with the families of France, Leonard, Gittins and Woodcocke. After the burial entry for John Maybury in 1704 there are no more references to the forgers of this family, which is known to have been associated with the Cleobury forges for nearly a hundred years. So from 1707 the impression is given, not only by the lack of references to forgers, but also by the absence of many of the names of families long associated with the forges, that activity was at a very much reduced level for several years. However, Amos Griffiths, John Cranage and George Hart were still referred to from time to time in the registers and the list of ironworks of 1717¹ indicates that production of bar-iron at Cleobury had recovered to a fairly high level by that time for it amounted to 180 tons a year compared with an average production of 141 tons a year for the other thirteen forges in Shropshire, and 123 tons a year for all of the forges referred to in the list ².

(v) Tilsop Furnace

During the seventeenth century an iron-smelting furnace was established in the township of Tilsop in Burford parish on the Corn Brook where it is joined by a small calcareous stream that rises above Court of Hill in Nash. The site, in a heavily wooded, steep-sided valley, which in its upper parts is still known as Deep Dale, was owned by the Hill family of Court of Hill. It rests on a spit of land which extends south and south-east from Tilsop, separating the parishes of Burford, Coreley, Milson and Knighton on Teme, which is in Worcestershire. Within Burford parish this piece of land contains the boundaries of Nash and Boraston chapelries and of Nash, Tilsop and Whatmore

1. See above, p. 195.

2. E.W. Hulme, art.cit., 17.

townships. Its position near the limits of so many different administrative areas reveals that the area of which it forms a part was remote from the early settlements of the district and that it was cleared and settled during later periods of expansion.

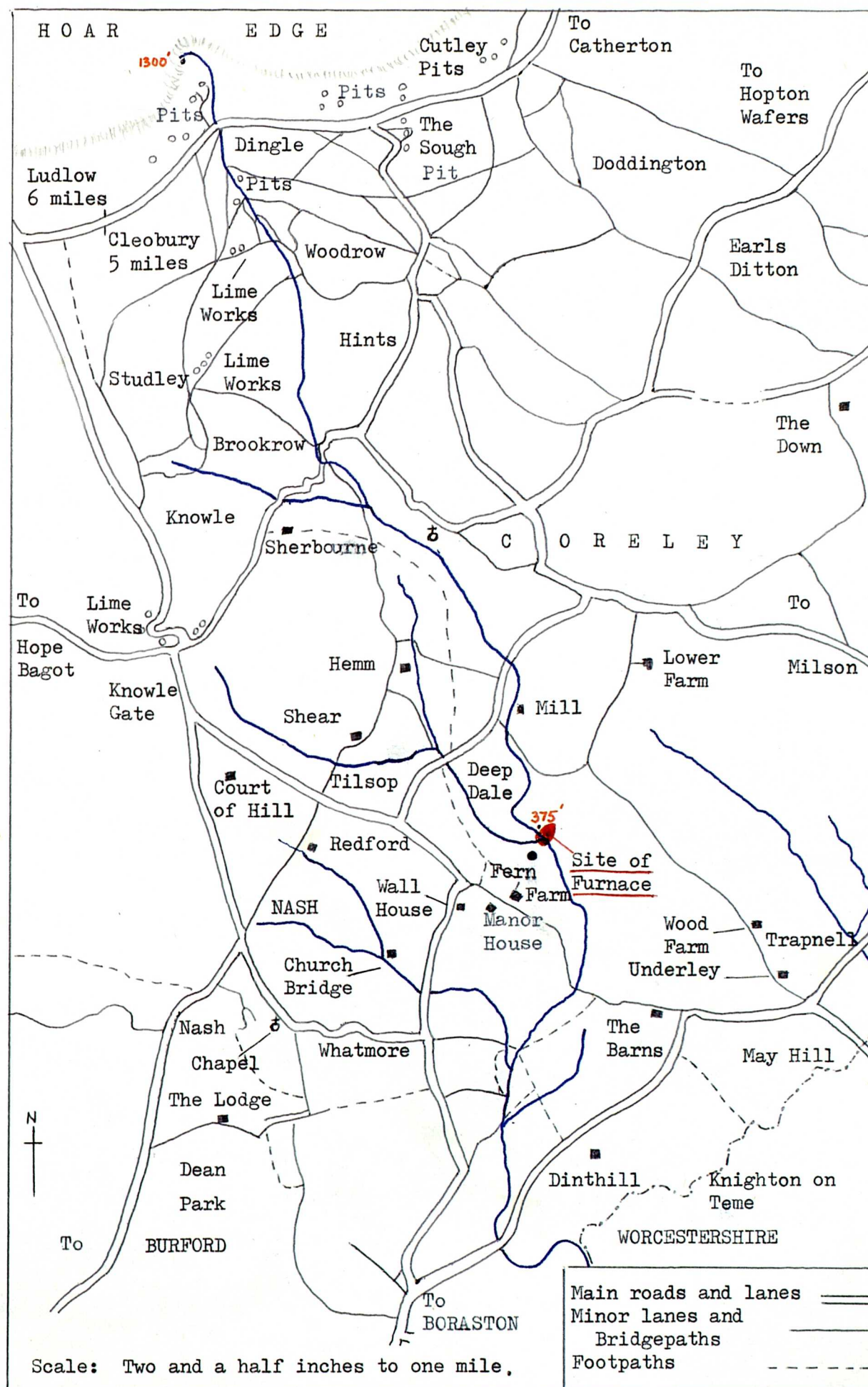
Some hamlets and farmsteads, including Tilsop, the Hemm, the Shear, the Fern and Trapnell, were settled by the thirteenth century and a scattering of other settlements was made in the later Middle Ages, and afterwards, as is indicated by their names ¹. They included Lower Tilsop, Underley and Wood Farm in Tilsop itself, the Wall House in Whatmore, Lower Farm in Coreley, Hillhouse Farm and Wood Farm in Milson, and the Barns, Mayhill and Dinthill Farms in Boraston. These settlements form a rough circle around a large area that includes parts of the parishes of Burford, Coreley and Milson that are still unoccupied. It contains wooded hillsides and stream valleys, and large areas of woodland known as Milson Wood, Nickless Coppice and Coreley Coppice ².

In addition to these large areas of woodland that were close to the site of the furnace there were, within a few miles, heavily wooded areas in the parishes of Neen Sollars and Nighton on Teme and in the chapelry of Boraston. But the most important area was probably the old forest known as Dean Park in Burford which was shown on Saxton's map of 1577. The distance from the Lodge, Dean Park, to the site of Tilsop furnace is little more than one mile in a direct line, and by bridle-path and road it is about two miles. Although this route passes over several difficult hills and ridges, and not all parts of Dean Park are as conveniently close as the Lodge, it is clear that the furnace was well sited with regard to supplies of charcoal from this area as well as from the wooded areas of both its immediate neighbourhood and of the nearby parishes. In these circumstances the charcoal would not be

1. See above, pp. 38, 39.

2. See below, Figure 14, p. 208.

FIGURE 14

Tilsop Furnace - Situation, Raw Materials and Routes

broken up by lengthy journeys, transport charges would be moderate and the cost of the charcoal at the furnace would be reduced. This would have great influence on the profitability of the furnace, for the cost of charcoal was easily the greatest expense in iron-smelting and could exceed seventy per cent of the total costs of production ¹.

The siting of the furnace near to plentiful supplies of wood did not take it far from supplies of ironstone. The most easily mined and the richest deposits of ironstone at this period were in Hints township, which was part of Lord Craven's manor of Earls Ditton. The deposits were situated high on the hillside near the source of the Corn Brook and the easiest access to them was provided by Cornbrook Dingle. From this area a series of bridle-paths, footpaths, lanes and roads, passing through Studley, the Brookrow, the Hemm and Lower Tilsop, provide a route that is nearly direct between the mining area and the site of the furnace. Only the last two hundred yards or so of the route are missing today, as the final stages of what is now a footpath turn away towards the Fern Farm, which is situated on the hillside above the furnace site, and towards Tilsop Manor House and the roads to Whatmore and the Barns.

The route from Cornbrook does not cross difficult terrain and, apart from two or three short sections where the banks of streams that have been forded have to be surmounted, it is all downhill. The distance from Cornbrook's Dingle to the furnace site is less than two and a half miles. Such a short and easy route would not create great problems of transport, nor would it increase the price of ironstone enough to reduce noticeably the benefits derived from easy access to cheap charcoal. In Herefordshire in 1680 the cost of transporting ironstone worked out at less than seven pence a mile for each dozen bushels and transport costs from Titterstone Clee Hill to Bringewood in 1733 cost less than nine pence a mile for the same amount. The ironstone that

1. B.L.C. Johnson, 'The Charcoal Iron Industry in the Early Eighteenth Century', The Geographical Journal, cxvii (1951), 174.

was transported in Herefordshire sold for three shillings a dozen where it was mined but carriage costs of seven shillings a dozen for the thirteen mile journey to the furnace more than trebled the initial price ¹. In 1733 the ore carried to Bringewood cost ten shillings on average to get and two shillings in royalties for each dozen. Carriage to Bringewood, a distance of between eleven and twelve miles, cost eight shillings, thus increasing the undelivered price by two thirds ². By comparison, even if one assumes the higher transport charges of nearly nine pence a dozen - which would be unlikely to apply for the route was easy, short and local and would therefore encourage widespread participation by the farmers of the district - the carriage costs would add less than two shillings a dozen to the price of the ironstone purchased for Tilsop. This was less than a sixth of the undelivered cost of the ironstone, a relatively small proportion, and less than the royalty of two shillings a dozen that was payable to Lord Craven as his rent roll of 1662 reveals ³.

The value of limestone as a flux in the iron-smelting process was known by the middle of the seventeenth century and examination of the slag from Tilsop furnace indicates that it was used there. Limestone quarries existed at Studley and The Woodrow, near Cornbrook Dingle, and it could have been carried down to the furnace using the same route followed by the ironstone carriers, but it is more probable that it was supplied to the furnace from the Knowle, in Nash. The large outcrops of limestone in that area are easily worked for they are fifteen to eighteen yards thick and nearly vertical ⁴.

1. Rhys Jenkins, 'Industries of Herefordshire in Bygone Times', Trans. Newcomen Soc., xvii (1936-37), 182. These figures appear to be somewhat speculative, however, and it is possible that the charge of ten shillings a dozen refers to the undelivered cost of the ironstone. Carriage and royalty charges were often dealt with in separate accounts.

2. Kidderminster Library, Knight Mss., Book 244, General Accounts 1733-4.

3. See below, p. 214.

4. V.C.H., Shropshire, i, 29.

They were on land that belonged to the Hill family of Court of Hill, who owned the site of Tilsop furnace, and it would be safe to assume that the Hills would ensure that they gained the benefit of using their own limestone in the furnace as Hanbury did later at Pontypool ¹. The outcrops lay alongside the highway from Hope Bagot to Coreley and a branch road ran directly to Tilsop from Knowle Gate, a distance of about one and a quarter miles. So, while the lack of roads on the hillside near the ironstone-mining area and in the woodlands made it necessary to employ large numbers of pack-animals to transport the ironstone and charcoal to the furnace, this road from the limestone quarries, which ran mainly downhill to Tilsop, could have been used along its entire length by wheeled vehicles. Similar roads were being used, increasingly, after the middle of the seventeenth century in the neighbourhood of Cleobury Mortimer by wagons and wains ², and such use would have ensured that the furnace was supplied very cheaply with limestone.

In Tilsop the existence and situation of the furnace is revealed by the large mounds of slag, clinker and ash which surround it and which extend down both sides of the stream for a considerable distance. Much of the refuse has been taken away for use as hard-core ³, and for other purposes, but great amounts remain, indicating that the furnace was in existence for many years. A small furnace-pool still exists and was used until the early years of the twentieth century for washing sheep ⁴, but the furnace site does not appear to have been investigated, or even identified. It is not marked as an old

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1. Schubert, British Iron and Steel Industry, Appendix xvi, Hanbury's Observations, 1704, p.424.
 2. Robert Goodwin received 'a wayne load of wood' as part-payment of tithes from Wm. Cumber of Dudnell in 1662. During 1676 his own wain was used frequently to carry materials for repairs to 'The George' after he had leased it. Memoranda Books, fos. 32 r, 159 r.
 3. Information, based on first-hand knowledge, kindly provided by Mr. Perkins, The Manor House, Tilsop.
 4. Information kindly provided by Mr. T.H. Brown, Nash, and Mrs. D.M. Goodman, Burford, who remember driving sheep there for their father who farmed The Shear Farm between 1908 and 1928.

furnace on Ordnance Survey maps although a much smaller furnace which was built about 1795 at The Woodrow, two miles upstream, is noted.

As far as can be ascertained, the furnace has never been referred to in either histories of the charcoal iron industry or in local histories, or in any other accounts of the district, probably because of the paucity of documentary evidence relating to its existence. The main, and most striking, evidence of its existence continues to be its physical remains. The parish registers and other parish documents of Burford make no references to it and the existing Hill family deeds give no indication that the site had a long period of industrial use. However, the neighbouring parishes of Coreley and Milson provide some information which shows that the furnace was operating in the second half of the seventeenth century.

On the floor of the chancel of Coreley Church, before the altar, is the following inscription:

Here lieth the Body of Elinor the wife of
Edward Hussey of Tilsop Furnace, Gent 3rd
Daughter of Edward Cresset of the Coates
in the (c)ounty Esqr who departed this life
the 29 day of April Anno Domini 1684 Aged 31 years

The parish register shows that Elinor Hussey was buried on April 30th, 1684, but does not refer to Tilsop furnace. Her daughter, Elizabeth, was baptised a few days later implying, probably, that Elinor had died in childbirth. Some of Edward and Elinor Hussey's other children had been baptised at Coreley Church also, but their earlier children were baptised at Burford Church in 1677, 1678, 1680 and 1681, as was Ann, the child of his second marriage, in 1686. The surname 'Hussey' occurs among iron-masters associated with the Foley partnerships in the late seventeenth century, among the partners of William Rea early in the eighteenth century and in connection with Prescott forge from about 1708 onwards¹. The Cresset family owned large areas of land on Brown Clee from which ironstone was mined until well into the eighteenth

1. See below, p. 227.

century. Edward Hussey had been living in Tilsop since 1672 at the latest, for the hearth-tax returns of that year show that he was assessed on two hearths ¹. However, although it is assumed that he was an iron-master, his position is never described. He took part in mortgaging and then purchasing land in Burford in 1678 and 1680 ² in association with William Hill of Tilsop and of Court of Hill and on behalf of Lucy Hill, widow, of Court of Hill, and appears to have had a close relationship with the family of Hill generally. He had associations with Coreley parish as is shown by the burial of his wife there. In 1697 he was one of the jurors of the court baron of Lord Craven's manor of Doddington alias Earls Ditton ³. The latest reference to him that has been found is his signature as a witness to the lease and release of a messuage in Cleobury Mortimer dated 25th and 26th March 1698 ⁴. On the 7th May 1702, his daughter Jane, who was baptised at Burford in 1678, married Thomas Lane of Tenbury at Ludlow Parish Church. Her place of residence was stated to be Cleobury Mortimer and it seems probable that by this time the Husseys had left Tilsop.

Although the burial inscription in Coreley Church provides a limited amount of information it does confirm that a furnace existed at Tilsop. Supplementary evidence is provided by another reference made a few years later which indicates that the furnace was still in existence. Milson parish register contains the burial entry, dated 8th December 1687, of 'Ric. Preese, a wandering boy belonging to the Furnace'. No further information is given but as no other furnace existed at this time in the area the reference must be to Tilsop furnace which was sited only a few hundred yards from the boundary with Milson parish. The Burford register

1. W. Watkins Pitchford, The Shropshire Hearth-Tax, p.277.

2. S.R.O., 1670/19-21.

3. S.B.L., Deeds and Charters, 8086.

4. S.R.O., 1201/23-24.

refers, from time to time, to labourers who lived at Trapnell Bridge on the boundary itself but when deaths occurred, as neither Boraston nor Nash chapels were licensed for burials, it would have been much more convenient for the people of this community to have used Milson Church rather than the distant mother church at Burford.

As a consequence of the Act for Burial in Woollen more details were given in the entries of burials in Milson parish register between November 1678 and April 1684. During this period four of the sixteen people buried were Tilsop people and in two cases those who testified on oath that the burials had taken place in woollen were also from Tilsop. Five of the six people involved were spinsters and in most cases it is possible to ascertain from the Burford registers that they were not natives of the parish. Similar groups of unmarried women were included in Robert Goodwin's lists referring to Cleobury forges¹. Their occupation is not mentioned but they were usually required to pay Easter dues of four pence, the same amount as the ordinary forgermen and they appeared to have some connection with the forge. Some of them were married later but none there, or in Tilsop, have left evidence that they had illegitimate children and their independent status in both places encourages the assumption that it was the practice to employ women for some unskilled work at the ironworks in the area.

The Coreley and Milson references show that the Tilsop furnace was active during the 1680s and other evidence indicates that it was in existence for more than forty years, although not necessarily in blast every year. A rent roll 'of the lordshipe of Darles Deyton dew to the Right Honbull the Lord Craven at mickellmas 1662'² contains on the dorse where it has, apparently, been overlooked until now the statement: 'Eyraston this year of the Clee Hill to Tilsope furnis to Mr John Hall 494 douzen at 2s the

1. See above, pp. 204, 205.

2. S.B.L., Deeds and Charters, 7450.

douzen comes to ^{lib} 49 - ^s 8 - 0'. This entry reveals that the furnace was in existence in 1662, and the phrasing implies that ironstone had been supplied to it in previous years. This is supported by the large amounts involved for they indicate that mining on Lord Craven's land was on a scale that required considerable effort and organisation and the provision of working and transport arrangements that would have taken years to evolve. Moreover, it is likely that other, smaller, supplies of ironstone were available from parts of the Clee Hill where mining was taking place outside Lord Craven's manors for there were no other furnaces in the neighbourhood at that time that could have taken it. Apart from the disputed area of Farlow and Catherton, which was still in the possession of Sir William Childe and where the Gutter seam was probably nearly worked out ¹, mining was taking place in Snitton, and in other parts of Bitterley parish. John Bayton, described as 'coale myner', had the lease of his cottage in upper Bitterley renewed by Sir Henry Anderson in 1644 ², and in a rental of Snitton manor dated Sept., 12th 1646, Francis Barber and Wm. Wadeley paid 3/4^d for 'The Clee myning' ³. The continuity of mining in these areas is indicated by a release of November 23rd 1687 ⁴, from Wm. Wyndham of London, Merchant, to John Walcot, Esq., which included 'All that royalty of the manor of Bitterley and all wastes, cole works, mines ...', and by the Bitterley burial entry, dated May 21st 1712, of William Gillson 'occidit per accidens in Puteo' ⁵.

Obviously Tilsop furnace had been established some years before 1662 and had replaced, after no more than a short interval, the furnaces in Cleobury Mortimer that had ceased to work in the late 1630s ⁶.

1. See above, pp. 103.

2. S.B.L., Deeds and Charters, 1300.

3. S.R.O., 20/Box 13.

4. S.B.L., Deeds and Charters, 1303.

5. Bitterley Par. Reg., Shrops. Par. Reg. Soc., iv, Pt. 2 (Shrewsbury, 1902), p.52.

6. See above, p. 105.

Altogether there is very little information available concerning Tilsop furnace. No other annual figures of the amount of ironstone delivered to the furnace are available but the arrangements accepted by those who leased the mineral rights in Earls Ditton manor from Lord Craven indicate that it was assumed that large amounts of ironstone would be supplied to the furnace regularly as in 1662¹. This implies that Tilsop was capable of producing something like 230 to 250 tons of pig-iron a year², which was a higher rate of production than that achieved by most furnaces in the early years of the seventeenth century, but which was much less than that achieved by new furnaces established later in the same century. However, nothing is known of the average length of time that the furnace was in blast, of periods when it was inactive, or of its true production rate when it was in blast, so estimates of its output remain purely speculative.

There is no evidence that Tilsop furnace had an associated forge nearby. The forge established on the Teme in the neighbouring township of Oraston in 1577 was less than three miles away from the furnace site by road but it is not referred to again after the early years of the seventeenth century, although, in the eighteenth century, it was said to have been worked 'for many years'³.

It is probable that, as at many other furnaces, some of the iron smelted at Tilsop was cast into pots, buckets, irons, and other domestic utensils, or into hammers, anvils and other tools used by blacksmiths and forges, and were disposed of in the local markets, or to local industries. As the use of coal for domestic fires became more common, the need to protect hearths and fireplaces from the more intense heat provided by the

1. See above, p. 215.

2. It has been estimated that about $2\frac{1}{4}$ dozens of ironstone were required to produce one ton of pig-iron.

3. See above, p. 99.

mineral fuel led to an increase in the use of fire-backs or fire-plates.

In 1674 Robert Goodwin had an oven bottom installed in his house when repairs were carried out. It cost eight shillings to which was added two shillings for carriage. During the same year he went to great trouble to have a fire-plate installed in a house in Hopton Wafers that he had leased from Ludlow Corporation and rented to William Walker. The fire-plate cost ten shillings and Walker provided the following receipt and guarantee: 'Received the 17th Aprill, 1674, of Robt. Goodwin, clerk, the summe of tenne shillings for an iron plate behynd my fyer att Hopton, w'ch plate I am not to remove thence untill I pay him back this tenne shillings w'ch I acknowledge the receipt of ...'. Unfortunately neither he nor Goodwin gives any indication of where the fire-plate was made or of the identity of the person from whom it was bought ¹.

The source of the supply of pig-iron to the Cleobury forges during this period has not been identified with certainty. Neither the parish documents of the area nor the memoranda books of Robert Goodwin, which cover the period from 1657 to 1691, and so span the largest part of the probable life of Tilsop furnace, give any information on this subject. It has been assumed that most of the pig-iron that was worked in the forges came from Bouldon, largely because both ironworks were owned by the Blount family but it seems probable that at least some was supplied from Tilsop. Such an arrangement would appear to have been natural and convenient and would have had the advantage of better transport facilities than usually existed in similar circumstances. The distance between Bouldon and Cleobury Mortimer by the direct route is circa twelve miles. The route runs over difficult terrain, including the upper slopes of Titterstone Clee, and only pack-animals would be able to use it. By contrast the road from Tilsop which runs by the Fern Farmstead, a few hundred yards from the furnace site, joins the Tenbury to

1. Goodwin, Memoranda Books, fos. 122 r, 125 v, 141 r.

Cleobury highway less than half a mile away. The streams on this section of the highway were already bridged at Trapnell and Haybridge before the middle of the seventeenth century, so it would have been possible to use wheeled vehicles with little difficulty directly between the furnace and the upper forge at Cleobury. By road Tilsop is about six miles from the town of Cleobury and about seven miles from the upper forge. Alternative ways, usable only by pack-animals, exist along parts of the route and reduce the distances by the insignificant amount of about half a mile. It is tempting to connect John Hall, who paid Lord Craven's steward, Richard Hopton, for the ironstone in 1662, and who was, presumably, the predecessor of Edward Hussey, with William Hall and Robert Hall of Cleobury forges. There is, however, no evidence that they were related in any way. Hall was a common name in the district, as was Hill which was sometimes transcribed as Hall. So John Hall could have been a member of the Hill family of Court of Hill which owned the site of the furnace.

Tilsop may have supplied some pig-iron to Bringewood, at times, to supplement the output of the furnaces there, when the demands of the Midlands markets were high, as they appear to have been in 1648¹, and when the local balance of wood supplies would allow no increase in local pig-iron production. From 1664 mining rights to the coal-works on Lord Craven's wastes on Titterstone Cleve were leased by Richard Walker², who already had the lease of the ironworks at Bringewood, and they remained in the possession of his family until 1698. He had experience of mining for he had acquired a similar lease of the coal-works at Little Dawley from Lord Craven in November 1662³. His main interest in Titterstone Cleve appears to have been the profitable exploitation of the minerals and not the safeguarding of supplies of ironstone for his own furnace. His lease of Bringewood furnace included deposits of ironstone in

1. See above, p.201.

2. See below, pp. 230-233.

3. S.B.L. Deeds and Charters, 12981, p.17 (Schedule of Lord Craven's leases).

the neighbourhood which, although poorer in quality than the Titterstone ores ¹, were very cheap because of the low transport costs. There is no indication that ironstone was transported to Bringewood from Titterstone Clee while supplies were available in sufficient quantities near the furnace. In 1690, when the ironworks lease was renewed by his son, Job, the ironstone of Titterstone Clee was related, for the first time, to the furnace by a covenant that allowed Walker to dig for ironstones and hearthstones in Lord Craven's manor of Earls Ditton ². On the same day the intention of the covenant was carried out by the renewal in Walker's favour of the lease of the mineral rights in the manor ³. As usual the lease of the ironworks included the right to dig for ironstone in the neighbourhood of Bringewood but, obviously, it was felt that supplies in that area might not be sufficient for future needs.

Before this stage had been reached the Walkers were probably content to sell the Titterstone ore to the furnace at Tilsop and to buy Tilsop pig-iron if they needed it. By doing this they could make a profit on the part of the mineral lease represented by the ironstone, reduce their responsibilities and capital commitments, save the difference between the transport costs of the pig iron and of the equivalent amount of ironstone from the area to Bringewood and yet retain some control over the output and prices of pig-iron at Tilsop furnace. The same policy was continued, apparently, by Richard Knight, who acquired the leases of both areas from Lord Craven in 1683 when they were surrendered by Job Walker. Knight assigned his rights to ironstone to Andrew Hill of Court of Hill ⁴, obviously for the use of Hill's furnace at

1. Dr. Bull, 'Some Account of Bringewood Forge and Furnace', Trans. Woolhope Club (186.), 55.

2. Hereford R.O., Cat. Downton Coll., 598 (dated April 11, 1690).

3. S.B.L., Deeds and Charters, 10904.

4. Hereford R.O., Downton Coll., 678. Assignment by Richard Knight to William Baldwin in 1702 of a moiety of coal-mines and works on Clee Hill. In this deed it is stated that the ironstone had been assigned to Andrew Hill.

Tilsop. From the point of view of Tilsop furnace this arrangement could make it very vulnerable to changes in the policy of the Walkers or, later, the Knights, or to changes in the conditions at Bringewood furnace, particularly during periods of falling demand when it, or the other forges that it supplied, might come into direct competition with the pig-iron or bar-iron of Bringewood. Like other furnaces that were not owned by the large partnerships or smaller integrated groups, such as the Walker family, Tilsop was a marginal furnace dependent on rising demand for pig-iron based on a developing market for iron products which was itself related to general economic expansion, agricultural achievements and the level of imports of iron.

Apart from its connections with the Walker iron interests, it is probable that Tilsop had some connections with parts of the Foley partnerships. These partnerships were orientated towards the demands of the Midland market based on the Birmingham region which had a dominating position in the iron industry because of its numerous metal-workers who required many types of iron of different qualities and price. The supply of different types of iron was maintained, largely, through a close relationship between the ironworks of the Forest of Dean and Midland forges, many of which were sited near the Severn in the Stour valley or, like Shelsley, in the Teme valley. The Forest furnaces smelted a high quality pig-iron, known as 'tough' pig, from haematite ores which had a low phosphorus content. This pig iron was transported to Bristol and elsewhere but large quantities were carried to Bewdley, using the cheap water transport of the Severn, and were distributed from the warehouse owned by the Foleys to the Midland forges. At the forges, most of which contained a finery and a chafery, some of the pig-iron was refined and drawn out directly into the highest quality bar-iron, known as merchant bar, but much of it was blended with iron of lower quality in different proportions to satisfy the needs of different industries. The lower quality iron, generally known as 'cold-short' iron was produced from the ironstone of carboniferous measures.

It contained a larger amount of phosphorus and was more brittle. In practice there were many different qualities of cold-short pig iron produced from the ironstone deposits of different carboniferous areas and even, at times, from different deposits in the same area. Often, only the poorest grades of iron were known as cold-short iron and the bulk of the iron was known as 'ordinary'. Some of the ordinary iron, which was of medium quality, enjoyed a high reputation, as did the iron of the Clee Hills according to Yarranton ¹. Much of the bar-iron made from ironstone of the carboniferous measures was suitable for the products of many metal-workers, including the nail ers, and did not need to be improved by the addition of better quality iron, but much of it was absorbed by Midland forges that produced a range of blended iron mainly in the form of mill bar which was intended for the slitting mills where it was cut into strips and rods for the use of the various ironworking industries ². Local supplies of cold-short pig-iron were not always sufficient to supply the needs of the forges and were supplemented with pig-iron produced by furnaces situated in the border counties. In this way the surplus production of Shropshire furnaces made its contribution to the Midland iron market.

The Foley partnerships naturally used the cold-short iron of furnaces that, like Hales and Grange, lay within the partnerships' interests, but when their own furnaces did not produce enough cold-short iron they purchased additional supplies from related furnaces or from outsiders. The outsiders were obviously in a weak position as marginal suppliers when faced with the strong, integrated Foley partnerships. They could be sure of a market for the part of their production that was not sold locally only during long periods of steady economic growth or during other periods when the furnaces associated with the partnerships were unable, through lack of capacity, to supply their

1. See above, p. 201.

2. B.L.C. Johnson, 'The Charcoal Iron Industry', The Geographical Journal (1951), 176.

needs. The uncertainties of such a situation would inhibit capital investment and restrain expansion, and could account, at least partly, for the decline of some of the independent furnaces.

Shelsley forge was owned by Thomas Foley of Witley, Worcestershire, and was leased to Richard Avenant of Little Shelsley ¹. During the 1680s Avenant had several partners at Shelsley and acquired interests elsewhere. On 26th August 1685 he and John Wheeler leased the furnaces at Elmbridge, Bishopswood and Linton for seven years from Paul Foley and took, also, the remainder of the lease of Flaxley. Foley promised not to 'permitt or suffer to blow ma e or cast pigge mettle of Tuft Iron' at Longhope furnace, nor to in any way 'intermedle in the Iron-Trade' to the prejudice of the furnaces leased ². On 12th December 1685, his son Thomas became a partner in the furnaces and in Shelsley and Wildon forges ³.

Both forges received tough pig-iron from the Forest of Dean furnaces and also purchased cold-short iron to blend with it ⁴. Some of this could have been supplied to Shelsley through Bewdley warehouse and been carried cheaply down the Severn to Redstone and then transported overland by wagon to Shelsley, as was the case with tough iron brought upstream, but the deficit was made up, as Yarranton implied, by the furnaces of the Clee Hills ⁵.

Tilsop was the nearest Clee Hill furnace and the only one operating on Titterstone Clee Hill during the second half of the seventeenth century. A road that is nearly direct, passing through Knighton-on-Teme, Newnham, Lindridge, Stockton and Stanford Bridge, joins the two places. The distance from the furnace to the forge is only about eleven miles which is well within

1. B.L.C. Johnson, The Charcoal Iron Trade in the Midlands, 1690-1720 (Birmingham University M.A. thesis, 1950), p.82, note 1.

2. Hereford R.O., Foley Coll., F/VI/DDc/3.

3. Ibid., F/VI/DDc/4.

4. B.L.C. Johnson, Charcoal Iron Trade, 1690-1720, pp.86-9.

5. Ibid., p.90.

the twelve to thirteen mile range within which pig-iron was often carried at that period. Moreover, for most of the route the road was suitable for wheeled vehicles throughout the year, although in places along the Teme valley there are some difficult gradients. An alternative route, which was shorter but which in some parts was suitable only for pack-animals, existed from Newnham. It passed through Eastham, Orleton and Stanford.

On the 28th May 1684, an agreement was made concerning a messuage in Neen Sollars that had been bought by Richard Avenant and then conveyed to Anne Martyn of Prestwood, Staffordshire, where Philip Foley resided also ¹. The agreement provided for the lease of the premises to Richard Wheeler, another Foley partner, for the life of Anne Martyn, at a rent of £20 a year. Richard Wheeler's address at that time was given as Bickley, Lindridge, which is two to three miles away from Tilsop. The provision of the Neen Sollars property for his use by Avenant strongly suggests that Wheeler was representing the interests of Shelsley forge in the area. Less than a year later, on August 1st 1685, John Wheeler of Wollaston, Worcestershire, 'ironmonger', was assigned the lease of a messuage and lands in Neen Sollars, by John Williams, for the residue of its term of ninety nine years on payment of £25 ². Since Lady Day 1685 at the latest John Wheeler had been in partnership with Richard Avenant at Shelsley and elsewhere ³.

As the wood of the Tilsop area was probably too far away to be of use to Shelsley forge, which had the Teme and Severn valleys and the area between them close at hand, its attraction to the Foley partners must have lain in its supplies of pig-iron. However, there is little indication that this interest continued after 1692, when the Shelsley partnership was wound up. Control of the forge reverted to Avenant alone and John Wheeler became general manager

1. Hereford R.O., Cal. Downton Coll., 328.

2. Ibid., 83.

3. Hereford R.O., Foley Coll., F/VI/DDc/4.

for the Foley partnerships ¹. The changes appear to have coincided with a period of falling profits at the furnaces. On 19th October 1691, John Wheeler sent to Paul Foley an estimate based on a Forest of Dean furnace which 'may blow 40 weeks' producing 770 tons of sow-iron a year. This would fetch no more than £6 a ton at Severn Bank, payment being received between three and six months after sale. A capital investment of £4,000 would be required to build, equip and start such a furnace and, after deducting running costs and interest charges from the income that would be derived from the sale of 770 tons of pig-iron, he found that the best possible profit would be £175, which was a very poor return. Moreover, he added that he had taken no account of increases in the price of wood nor of bad debts, nor of 'disasters & damages w^{ch} by the hazard of fires flouds & neglect or unskilfulness of founders & workmen a furnace is lyable to & doth frequently happen at it' ².

In these circumstances probably only a few fortunate and well-placed furnaces made more than a small profit. Wheeler's letter implies that some of the large groups of ironworks encountered difficulties from the early 1690s. By 1705 the Foley partnerships had relinquished control of many of their interests in the Midlands to Richard Knight ³. As it seems reasonable to assume that in times of economic difficulty the Foley partners would put the interests of their own furnaces first and that marginal suppliers would suffer most from the decline in demand, it may be more than a coincidence that during the 1690s a slow decline appears to have begun at Tilsop furnace.

The parish registers of Burford and nearby parishes show that there was an unusually high level of population activity in Tilsop and in the

1. B.L.C.Johnson 'Foley Partnerships', Economic History Review (1952), 326.

2. Hereford R.O., Foley Coll., F/VI/DDf/8i.

3. See below, pp. 279-80.

adjacent parts of nearby parishes during much of the second half of the seventeenth century. This activity was particularly noticeable in the 1680s at a time when members of the Foley partnerships appear to have had an interest in the neighbourhood. The acceptance by Job Walker, in 1690, of the lease of the mineral rights of Titterstone Clee with an extension of the mining area and a corresponding increase in the annual rent charge implies that mining activity had continued and was expected to make a profit in the future for the conditions would not have been acceptable otherwise ¹. But from the early 1690s population activity in Tilsop, as indicated by local parish registers, becomes less noticeable and by 1698 Job Walker had surrendered his mining leases as well as his leases of lands and ironworks at Bringewood ². During this period the furnace at Tilsop probably made no profit, for the age of the furnace, its relatively low output compared with newer furnaces of the type described by John Wheeler in 1691, and the high land carriage charges to Shelsley and other forges would have outweighed price advantages gained from its proximity to supplies of charcoal and ironstone.

The furnace was still operating in 1702 when the rights to the ironstone were assigned by Richard Knight to Andrew Hill of Court of Hill ³. Soon after 1702, probably between 1705 and 1708 when the parish registers reveal that a severe economic crisis was developing in the district, the furnace went out of production and was soon forgotten. By the early years of the eighteenth century it had been working for at least forty or fifty years and probably required considerable expenditure on maintenance and continual repairs, if not large-scale capital investment in rebuilding. Its owner, Andrew Hill, had spent a great amount of money on the enlarging and

1. See above, p. 218.

2. See above, p. 219.

3. See above, p. 219, n. 4.

rebuilding of Court of Hill in 1683 and was heavily mortgaged to Ferdinande Gorges. When the Shear Farm was leased to Anthony Bray on 22nd June 1693, reference was made to the mortgage 'whereby the Estate in Lawe is now vested in the said Ferdinande Gorges' ¹. The latter received £230 and Andrew Hill £50 as their shares of the consideration money paid by Bray. It seems probable that Hill would not have welcomed, nor been able to undertake, heavy additional expenditure in these circumstances.

There is no indication that the closure of the furnace was anything other than a consequence, for a vulnerable furnace, of the general economic situation and of the limited financial resources of its owners. It does not appear to have been hampered by a lack of sufficient supplies of wood for making charcoal and although much of Dean Park was not replanted and became farm land, large areas near the furnace were covered with coppices which, remaining uncut, have developed into the woodlands of today ². Also, there is no reason to believe that the furnace was deprived of ironstone, its other major raw material, for the assignment to Andrew Hill of the rights to mine it had been confirmed as late as 1702 ³.

It seems probable, therefore, that after several years when profits were falling or losses were made the carelessness of a workman or a failure in the furnace led to a situation in which Andrew Hill was forced to abandon the furnace because he was unable to raise new capital or because the investment of new capital appeared to him as unlikely to provide a reasonable return as it had to John Wheeler in 1691.

In 1704 Richard Knight acquired the lease of the Down Farm in Earls Ditton manor from Lord Craven ⁴. This appears to mark the beginning of closer

1. S.R.O., 1670/40, and see above, p. 165.

2. A large blast furnace could work for ever with about 7,000 acres of woodland and a small one producing 200 tons of pig-iron a year would need 2,000 acres. G. Hammersley, *art.cit.*, 606, 607. Much more than 2,000 acres was available within a reasonable distance of Tilsop.

3. See above, p. 219.

4. Hereford R.O., Downton Coll., 81. The lease, dated 20 Sept. 1704, was surrendered on renewal by Mrs. Ursula Knight on 23 rd June, 1765.

contact with the area. It may indicate also that the mining rights had returned to his control or that they were expected to do so shortly and that Tilsop furnace was near the point of closure. It is not known when Knight began to transport the ironstone of the district to his own furnace at Bringewood, but the hardship suffered in the district particularly between 1708 and 1712 does not appear to have been alleviated, for the upper townships, by large-scale mining activities. From 1713, however, the arrival of miners from other mining areas indicates that the industry was recovering rapidly. Several miners were referred to in the registers of the parishes of Bitterley, Caynham and Coreley, where, in September 1713 Thomas Harrison 'de Broseley' married Elizabeth Baldwin and, in 1714, Jeremiah Hayward also of Broseley was buried and children of William Hatton and of James Whitacher, both of Madeley, were baptised.

During the years of depression Knight, who was a skilled and determined professional iron-master, had acquired control of a large part of the iron industry of the West Midlands. Under his guidance the iron industry of a much wider area was reorganised and relocated and, for the first time the industry of the Titterstone Clee was put into close contact with the markets of the Midlands ¹. However, although a forge was established at Prescott, on the River Rea north of Cleobury Mortimer, by Peter Hussey, and the Cleobury forges continued to operate ², the presence of ironstone, wood and streams no longer ensured that furnaces would work on Titterstone Clee or in its neighbourhood for Knight concentrated his smelting activities at Bringewood and Charlcott. It has been noted that he found the ironstone of the Bringewood area to be unsatisfactory after he had used it for some time ³. This probably means that the best ironstone was

1. See below, pp. 279-282.

2. See above, pp. 206 and below, p. 274.

3. Dr. Bull, art.cit., 55.

exhausted, a situation foreseen in the lease of 1690¹, and that this, together with the increasing output of his furnaces resulting from his extensive control of much of the trade in cold-short iron, made it worthwhile to use at Bringewood the supplies of ironstone that he owned on Titterstone Clee, despite the high costs of carriage.

In future the ironstone of the area was transported considerable distances to these furnaces. Within a few years the demand for it had increased to such an extent that the expansion of mining activities was having a much greater impact upon the area than the earlier, local iron industry had ever exercised. So the closure of Tilsop furnace during a period of hardship, which must have seemed a disaster at the time, proved itself to be beneficial after a short period of readjustment, for the restraints imposed on the local iron industry by its independent and peripheral position were replaced, when it became part of the large and powerful group of ironworks, by opportunities to expand on a large scale.

The number of people employed in the forges and other industries situated in the lower townships and parishes did not increase greatly, so the balance of industrial activity moved in favour of those parishes in whose upper townships deposits of ironstone were mined.

In many respects the developments in the iron industry of the Titterstone Clee area, which from the early eighteenth century was included in a wider area based on Bringewood, appears to conform to Mr. Flinn's pattern², allowing for small variations in the timing of the stages. The period of decline probably began in the 1630s rather than in the 1620s and recovery had begun some years before 1660. Similarly, the period of more rapid recovery probably began a few years later than 1710 following the severe depression that occurred early in the eighteenth century.

1. See above, p. 218.

2. See above, p. 198.

(b) Mining

Most of the early mining of coal and ironstone had been carried out in Catherton where the Gutter seam was near the surface. The dispute between Lord Craven and Sir Francis Lacon which erupted in 1628 over the neighbouring parts of Farlow reveals that the easily mined parts of the seam were nearing exhaustion, and that coal and ironstone would have to be sought for elsewhere in seams that were not so near the surface or that outcropped further up the hillside. New techniques and larger investments were needed to drive the levels and soughs, or drains, that were necessary. In places efforts were made to link several pits that were close to each other but elsewhere the new pits were still little more than large bell-pits from whose relatively shallow depths levels were driven into the seams. The dipping seams were soon lost or the levels of nearby pits were reached and work had then to be transferred to another site ¹.

By 1661 the importance and value of mining had increased greatly. Lord Craven's rent roll for the manor of Earls Ditton referring to the half year ending at Michaelmas 1662 ² reveals that he received, for the whole year, £30 for the main coal-works and £7 from 'Rich. Gilbertt littell Cole works', together with the sum of £49/8/0^d received from John Hall for ironstone royalties, making a total of £86/8/0^d. This exceeded by a large amount his income of £65/5/7^d, from the farm of the tithes of Earls Ditton and from large areas of land, received in the form of rack-rents, lease-rents, cottage-rents and chief-rents. Only one fine, of £3 from William Pountney of Heathhills ³, was received for the granting of leases, for many had been renewed in 1660 or in the early months of 1661, and heriots and the profits of the manor courts were probably very small, as they were in years for which

1. See above, pp. 21 et seq., pp. 118-122.

2. S.B.L., Deeds and Charters, 7450.

3. Ibid., 8367.

records exist ¹.

The main coal-works was still at Catherton, for when William Lloyd paid his rent of £12 for the six months ending at Michaelmas 1664, it was described as the 'Heath' ². It was known by this name in 1734 when Samuel Haycox paid an annual rent of £40 for it. It was not abandoned until 1757 when Richard Francis, the son-in-law of Samuel Haycox, closed it and sold his tools to the Knight partners ³.

In 1664 William Baldwin paid at the rate of £16 a year for another coal-works and Richard Gilbert still paid £7 for the small workings. A total of £47 was received for the pits in that year compared with £37 in 1662. Obviously mining activity had continued to increase rapidly during that period. It continued to expand for, although Lord Craven's income from his mineral rights was already relatively large, considerable changes were made in the arrangements and terms of the new lease of mineral rights which was granted on November 18th 1664 ⁴. These were designed to ensure that the work was organised more efficiently and was more profitable to him. The dispute with the Childes, successors of Lacon, had been resumed between January 1663 and November 1663, in what was clearly an effort to clear the way for the new lease which could be extended to cover, then, the whole area claimed by Lord Craven ⁵. The dispute was not settled until 1673, however, so the 1664 lease included the wastes of Earls Ditton manor only. Under the new arrangements all coal and ironstone mining rights were leased to Richard Walker of Wootten, who had succeeded his father, Francis Walker, at Bringewood ironworks. Only the rights to quarry limestone were excluded

1. The profits of the manor courts amounted to 8/4^d in 1695, the earliest year for which details exist. S.B.L., Deeds and Charters, 8085.

2. S.B.L., Deeds and Charters, 7548.

3. Kidderminster Library, Knight Mss., General Accounts for 1734-35, p.7 and for 1757-58, p.7.

4. S.B.L., Deeds and Charters, 10978.

5. Ibid., 9759, 9760, 9761.

from this lease and Walker agreed to pay an annual rent of £50 for his rights. In addition he was required to pay a royalty of one shilling per dozen bushels on the ironstone that was mined, except when it exceeded the value of the coal mined in the same pit. When that occurred royalties were to be paid at the rate of two shillings per dozen. The inclusion of this clause indicates that it was confidently assumed that considerable quantities of ironstone would be mined in future.

It is impossible to assess the relative importance of coal and ironstone for although much more income was derived from ironstone royalties than from the leases of all the mineral rights in 1661-62 this year might have been exceptional. The royalty payments for other years have not been recorded. In the six months to Michaelmas 1666, the only period during the currency of Walker's lease for which a rental exists, he paid £25 'p lease for ironstone'¹. The amount corresponds exactly with six months rent of the mineral rights but as they are usually referred to as rights to 'coleworks', and the lease required the settlement of ironstone royalties 'at every half year', it is possible, but unlikely, that the payment refers to ironstone royalties. Even if it does there is no indication of which royalty rates had been applied so the quantity of ironstone that had been mined cannot be calculated although it must have been at least as much as the average amount mined over the same period in 1661-62.

The lease itself implies that ironstone was a by-product of coal-mining for much of it was said to be mined from the coal seams 'in Gitting of the said cole'.

The 1664 lease reveals that, from that time, the major mining activities of Titterstone Clee were carried out in the Cornbrook and Doddington area where, on the steeper hillsides, there were seams of better quality coal and ironstone. Some of this was near the surface and could be

1. S.B.L., Deeds and Charters, 9816.

won by using bell-pits and levels, or drifts, or was to be found in the depths of Cornbrook Dingle where it was easily accessible ¹. Other large and rich seams were at greater depths and were much more difficult to mine. The deep shafts that were needed, and the drainage problems that resulted, required a change in control and organisation and larger investments of money, but once the problems were overcome more coal and ironstone could be extracted and greater profits could be made.

The large increase in the rents payable to Lord Craven is the most obvious sign that mining activities had reached this significant stage in the area, but other aspects of the lease are equally revealing. For the first time several small leases were replaced by a single lease to one entrepreneur, Richard Walker, a successful iron-master who held, also, the lease of the coal-works at Little Dawley ². He had experience of large-scale undertakings, access to skills and developments in mining techniques that were not available to local men working on a small scale, and he had the capital resources that were needed to put them into operation. The lease indicates that various mining operations existed for it refers to 'all coal works, delfes and pitts now in being' and gives free liberty 'to sincke any pitts, souffes Delfes or ffootrids in any place or places on the wast grounds', and a later clause reveals that in one area, at least, as well as at the Heath, pits were being developed in a large group, described as a 'coalworks' and not yet known as a colliery, which required more skill and capital investment than the surface workings, bell-pits and levels. This clause required Walker to make, within two years, 'a sufficient suffe or watercourse for the drayning of the said coalworkes'.

After the lease of the coal-works had been acquired, Walker and his successors financed the groups of large mines, which later became known as

1. See above, pp. 22, 122 and below, Plate 13, p. 343.

2. See above, p. 218, note 3.

collieries, and made them the centres of their activities. One of these was called 'the Sough' early in the eighteenth century, and another, deeper, mine which was obviously the first to have sophisticated winding gear was referred to as 'the Gin pitt' in 1721 when there were complaints that it had been left uncovered when it was not being worked 'whereby the neighbours sheep are lost' ¹.

The right to mine other areas was subleased to small groups of men who worked the upper seams of coal and ironstone deposits. These men and their successors continued to work on a small scale using the old methods for many years. Some bell-pits were still in use on Titterstone Clee in the second half of the eighteenth century ².

In 1690 the lease was renewed in favour of Job Walker ³, Richard Walker's son, on similar terms but the annual rent was raised from £50 to £60, because of the addition to the lease of the disputed area described as 'what was lately purchased by the said Earl from Sir William Childe and pretended p'cell of the sd. manor of Cleobury Mortimer'. Lord Craven paid £200 for the area, which included Roes cottage and about 600 acres of waste ⁴, and the addition of £10 to the rent represents a return of five per cent a year on this money.

Although the changes in organisation and in techniques, and the increases in rents, indicate that more coal was being mined, there are no statistics of production available to prove that this was so. However, there are signs that the mining of coal and its use for domestic and industrial purposes was increasing within the area.

The dangers posed by numerous unfilled, abandoned coal and ironstone

1. S.B.L., Deeds and Charters, 8106.

2. See below, pp. 322-23, 353.

3. S.B.L., Deeds and Charters, 10904.

4. Ibid., 8514, and see above, p. 121.

pits and by workings that were still in use but left uncovered after working hours, were referred to in the manor court of Earls Ditton in 1697, and a penalty of ten shillings was laid on anyone who failed to fill in, or cover, such pits in future. The penalty was renewed in 1701, 1703 and 1704, and in 1705 Richard Evans forfeited ten shillings for failing to fill up a disused pit. In 1708 the penalty was increased to twenty shillings but, significantly, the offence was not mentioned again until 1715, several years after the period of severe hardship had finished ¹.

The memoranda books of Robert Goodwin show that the use of pack-horses and of wains for the transporting of coal had become commonplace by 1681 ², but it appears likely that the outside market was limited, still. Even after great road improvements had been made in the area coal transported between twelve and fifteen miles to the Leominster area at the end of the eighteenth century, which cost 9^s a ton at the pit-head, was sold at twenty to thirty shillings a ton when delivered ³. In 1811 the pit-head price was thirteen shillings a ton but when delivered in Ludlow it cost twenty one shillings per ton ⁴ which, as the distance from the nearest pits was just over five miles, indicates that the cost of carriage averaged one shilling and sixpence per ton mile. Such high costs naturally discouraged sales over long distances, and restricted the market, but for people who had industries or residences near the pit-head coal was a relatively cheap fuel.

(c) Coal

(i) Domestic Uses

Robert Goodwin's memoranda books show, through occasional references to his household accounts and to tithes and dues owed to him, that he

1. S.B.L. Deeds and Charters, 8086, 8088A, 8089, 8090, 8091, 8094, 8100.

2. See below, p. 236.

3. Rhys Jenkins, *Industries of Herefordshire*, 188.

4. W. Felton, Descriptions of the Town of Ludlow (Ludlow, 1811), p.116.

regularly bought large amounts of coal for his own use and, sometimes, smaller amounts for the use of his church. An account of his expenditure made soon after 1st October 1658 shows that five tons of coal had already been bought in that year and that the cost of it had been deducted from the £40 a year that he had agreed to give his wife for housekeeping. She was given the small tithes that were paid in kind 'and the swine she keepeth' as well, and as her part of the bargain she was to maintain him and his family 'with sufficient meat, drink, and clothes, and that in due time, and in good order'. The five tons of coal were clearly for domestic purposes and were not necessarily the total amount required in that year. Coal was used partly for heating, baking and cooking, and partly for other purposes such as pig-scalding, preparing hemp, and brewing. Among the items of expenditure already incurred during that year were 'to will Chetwin for Kil. the hogge', 6^d, and 'to the woman for spinning Nogges', 3^s. Also, ten strikes of malt had been acquired at various times at prices between 3/6^d and 4^s a strike and other strikes of malt were received in part-payment of tithes during the same year, and were no doubt used for brewing beer ¹.

A part of a housekeeping account for 1660 shows that he bought six tons of coal at 7^s a ton after September 1st in that year and the records of his tithes for the same year show that one ton was delivered by Maurice Hayward as part-payment of his tithes and that Thomas Wheeler and John Morris carried one ton each in lieu of Easter dues. In 1662 Wheeler and Hayward carried a ton each as part-payment of tithes and in 1677 William Pountney paid part of his tithes in coal. In 1666 Goodwin made a brief note that he had paid one pound and ten shillings 'for coales', and in 1673 he noted that he had paid J. Owen 1/9^d for three loads of coal. In February 1675 he bought twelve loads for the church and thirteen for himself from Roger Pountney at ten pence a load. On the 5th May 1681 he noted the receipt of rents due to him

1. Goodwin, Memoranda Books, fos. 2 v, 8 r.

from three of the tenants of his lands in Hopton Wafers and added 'and I payd for all coales brought of Horse back and for 3 tunne brought by my waine'. In 1683 he received, in part-payment of rent, coal to the value of £3/3/0^d from Francis Causer and other, unspecified, amounts from Thomas Owens. On the 13th January 1685 he noted that he owed William Pountney for 215 loads of coal at 9½^d a load, a total of £8/10/2½^d. The last reference to coal in his books shows that he paid Butcher 4^s for a delivery in 1687 ¹. Obviously, although his records are incomplete he was using large, and apparently increasing quantities, of coal.

There is no reason to believe that Goodwin resold any of the coal or that he had an interest in any of the local industries and used the coal for other than domestic purposes. It seems reasonable to assume that many people in the district used coal as he did, although he probably used larger amounts than most. He maintained a school, kept boarders and had several servants and for most of the period he appears to have maintained his own home, Stone House, as well as the vicarage, and from 1676 he rented the George House from Richard Chetwin probably to accommodate some of his pupils and an assistant master ².

(ii) Industrial Uses

Large amounts of coal were used during this period for brewing and malting, for the preparation and finishing processes involved in the cloth, leather, metal and wood-working trades, and in the making of candles and soap ³. Fuller remarks that 'many utensils are made of the iron of this county' and implies that coal was already widely used in Shropshire to melt iron in forges 'to be wrought in the bars' ⁴, but there is no evidence that

1. Goodwin, Memoranda Books, fos. 5 r, 20 r, 31 v, 185 r, 65 r, 125 v, 150 r, 226 r, 178 v, 224 r, 289 r.

2. Ibid., fo. 173 r; See Plate 11, p. 185.

3. See above, p. 123.

4. Thomas Fuller, The Worthies of England, ed. J. Freeman (London, 1952), p.475.

coal was used to make bar-iron at the Cleobury Mortimer forges.

Coal was used in an increasing number of industries after 1650 but the largest consumer was probably still the lime industry. Limekilns existed on several parts of Titterstone Clee and, as in Leland's time, they supplied the country around. The largest and most accessible outcrops of limestone were on the north-east and south-west slopes of the hill ¹. In the north-east, kilns existed in the chapelry of Farlow and in the neighbouring township of Oreton in Stottesdon parish. When premises in Oreton were sold on 20th November 1660 ², the limestone was excepted and when part of the same premises passed by deed of feoffment on 2nd January 1671 ³, Margery Hamond and others retained the right 'to digge and get limestone and to make lime' anywhere on the premises and to 'cary away sell and dispose' of it as they wished. These kilns were close to the Catherton coal-pits to which they were joined by tracks and roads and they supplied their own district, as well as the Cleobury area, with lime.

In April 1673, Robert Goodwin paid the wife and boy of Phillip Goodman twelve shillings for eighteen loads of lime. Phillip Goodman, who lived in Stottesdon, supplied another two loads a short time afterwards and for these he received one shilling and a penny. The lime was obviously used for building purposes, for in the same account Edward Gryme, a local mason, was paid ten shillings 'for getting stone', and Humphrey Perkins was paid one shilling for plastering. In February 1675 one load of lime cost Goodwin ten pence and in 1676 and 1677, when he built a wain house and repaired Stone House and its cowhouse, barn and stable, he paid between one shilling and one shilling and two pence a load for six loads ⁴.

1. See above, p. 18 and Figure 4, p. 19.

2. Stafford R.O., D660/19/9.

3. Ibid., D660/18/8.

4. Goodwin, Memoranda Books, fos. 125 v, 150 r, 176 r, 216 r.

On the south-west part of the hill the chapelry of Nash and the parishes of Coreley, Hope Bagot and Caynham contained areas where limestone was accessible. When the Shear Farm was leased to Anthony Bray of Greet and his wife Mary, the daughter of John Taylor of Hints in Coreley, on 22nd June 1693, they were allowed by the terms to have and take as much 'Lyme Slack of and from the Knowle which belongs to the said Andrew Hill' as they had occasion to use on 'the said demised premisses' ¹. Andrew Hill's successor, Thomas Hill, mortgaged his estates to Edward Hammond of London, vintner, on 24th February 1713. The property included all 'lime pits, kilns and quarries of stone in and upon the Knowle', most of which was in Nash although some, including the Novers, was in Hope Bagot ².

Earlier, on 1st April 1662, Margaret Wellins of Hints, widow, divided her lands between her three daughters and their husbands as marriage portions. George Beddows and his wife Mary were given a messuage and various lands in Hints 'with a free liberty to take stone in a quarry of limestone which the said Margaret had on the Clee Hill as much as will make two kilnes in a year' and to make it in the kiln that belonged to Margaret on the hillside ³. John Richards and his wife Elizabeth ⁴, and George Sheppard and his wife Margaret ⁵ were given a house, lands in Hints and Coreley and the same liberty to obtain limestone. Although the connection between the land and the lime was less explicit than in the lease of the Shear to Anthony and Mary Bray, the lime from Margaret's kilns was obviously intended for agricultural use.

By 1697 much of Margaret Wellins' land had been acquired by William Baldwin who had married Margaret's granddaughter, the daughter of John Richards.

1. S.R.O., 1670/40.

2. S.R.O., 1670/29.

3. S.R.O., 1150/354.

4. S.B.L., Deeds and Charters, 9586, 'Abstract of deeds and writings belonging to Sherrington Davenport' (the fourth item).

5. S.R.O., 1150/356.

Baldwin built up a large estate, of which 261 acres was free land, and developed also a close connection with local industries. As well as the limestone quarries and kilns that had once belonged to Margaret Wellins, he worked the quarries and kilns on the waste that belonged to Lord Craven. His lease of these was renewed on 16th January 1700¹, and on 20th June 1702 Richard Knight assigned to him a moiety of the coal-mines and works that lay in Lord Craven's manor of Earls Ditton². These coal-mines and works were not necessarily an exact half of the works on the hillside. They were probably in the portion that included the larger and deeper works that had been controlled directly, since Richard Walker's lease of 1664, by the sole leasee, for the smaller pits and levels were generally sub-leased to separate small groups of miners who operated them with varying degrees of independence³.

William Baldwin paid £10 a year for his share of the coal-works and £5 a year to Lord Craven for the limestone quarries and kilns, and although this indicates that he was burning large amounts of lime it is possible that he was using some of the coal for other purposes. He built for himself one of the earliest houses to be built in brick in that area. It is still known as Brickhouse, as it was when it was named in a survey made in 1737 when his son John sold the estate to Sherrington Davenport⁴. The survey included also a reference to a piece of land known as 'Brickkills'. In October 1705, and in later years, the jury of the court baron of the manor of Doddington, alias

1. S.B.L., Deeds and Charters, 10843.

2. Hereford R.O., Cat. Downton Coll., 678.

3. See above, p. 233.

4. S.B.L., Deeds and Charters, 9608. However, some of the stonework and the internal timbers of Margaret Wellins' earlier house were incorporated in this building. The bricks generally are of poor quality and indicate that consistent kiln temperatures were rarely attained. They have been protected from the elements by a rough-cast cement rendering for some years. I am grateful to my aunt, the late Mrs. Rose Brown, and to her sons for the help that they gave me in studying both Brickhouse and Lower Farm, Coreley.

PLATE 12

CORELEY : WILLIAM BALDWIN.



I. 'Mr Wm. Baldwins pooles' and the Brickiln Floor, Shetfields.



2. Brickhouse, Hints.

Earls Ditton, laid a penalty of ten shillings on anyone turning above half the water that was running from 'Mr Wm. Baldwins pooles on the Clee hill into a peice of Land of George Taylors called the Birches' into any other course ¹. The pools are still in existence on the edge of the waste near Shetfields and the stream that runs from them can be directed to run either eastwards so that it runs through Hints or westwards so that it runs through Shetfields. Naturally, disputes concerning it still arise from time to time. The area where the pools exist is known locally as the Brickiln Floor. It has been the site of brickworks for many years and was in use as such until the late nineteenth century when its large, easily quarried deposits of clay were nearly exhausted. There appears to be no limestone in this area and William Baldwin was probably the first of a long line of brickmakers to use the site. It is very near to some of the outcrops of coal and in the early eighteenth century the Old Sough Pit was being worked only a few hundred y ards to the north-east of it and the Old Footrail Pit, in Cornbrook Dingle, was about six hundred yards away.

There are some brick-built houses dating from the seventeenth century in most parishes but the only brickmaker referred to in the parish registers of the area was John Bond, whose son was baptised on the 14th April 1667 in Cleobury Mortimer. However, he was not mentioned again and it seems probable that bricks were made in different places as they were required and that brickmaking was, at that time, a peripatetic and part-time activity which acquired, later, a close association with the mining industry on the hillside under the influence of men such as William Baldwin.

Clay appears to have provided more full-time employment in Cleobury, from the 1650s, through the development of a new industry, the making of tobacco pipes. The earliest reference to the occupation occurs in the parish register in 1656 when William Ganno 'pipemaker' married Jane Cound.

1. S.B.L., Deeds and Charters, 8091. See Plate 12, p. 240.

On 21st December 1656 Humphrey Sheffill was referred to as a maker of pipes also, although he had been described as 'artist' earlier in the same year. He kept to this 'trade', as it was referred to by Robert Goodwin in his memoranda books, for he was described as a pipe-maker in 1665. His son, William, succeeded him in the trade and was described as a pipe-maker when he was buried in 1700. The trade seems to have attracted several more people by the 1670s, including, by 1671, Thomas Browne 'tobacco pype maker' ¹, and in 1685 Goodwin, in his lists of Easter dues named three others, Richard Farmer, Thomas Wattmore and Thomas Barker. In his list for 1686 he included John Chetwin, so that by that year there were at least five pipe-makers in the town ². The fact that Goodwin required no payments from them for lands or for other occupations implies that pipe-making was their main, or full-time occupation, and indicates that the industry was active at that time. From about 1690, however, it seems to have declined and, as the older men died, fewer references to pipe-making were made. After 1719 when John Newall, pipe-maker, was buried there were no more references to it.

The source of the clay used at Cleobury for pipe-making is never identified in references to the industry but it was probably the deposits of white clay that still exist in the waste above Hopton Bank to the east of the public house, the Miners Arms, locally known as 'the Finger', and in the upper areas of Catherton waste. Coal had been used in the pipe-making industry since the early seventeenth century,³ so the fuel for the Cleobury industry was provided by the areas close to the clay deposits. At that period twenty four pipes was the greatest number that could be baked at one time in a kiln. It has been estimated that nearly a ton of coal was required for each firing at Broseley and it is probable that larger amounts would be consumed in the Cleobury area, for

1. S.R.O., 1045/437.

2. Goodwin, Memoranda Books, fos. 268 r, 269 r, 275 r.

3. J.U. Nef, op.cit., i, 218.

the clays of Titterstone Clee are very stiff and the baking of such clays requires more fuel. The wastage rate for bricks and pottery was about twenty per cent and tobacco pipe-makers probably suffered numerous breakages as well so the four or five pipe-makers who were known to be working at Cleobury must have used between them large quantities of coal each year ¹. When the industry was established in the middle of the seventeenth century it began in Cleobury on the lower slopes of the hill where traditional industries already existed and where there were workers, sites and markets readily available. The cost of transporting clay and coal was high, however, and must have made production expensive. This probably had much to do with the decline of the industry by encouraging greater development of the clay-using industries on, or near, the coalfields.

Clays suitable for use by pipe-makers, potters or brickmakers existed at the Whitewayhead in Caynham, as well as at Hints, Hopton Bank and Catherton. The presence of clay-working industries in this area early in the eighteenth century is revealed by the leases of John Shepherd of Bitterley who was encouraging the development of settlements and industries on his lands ². In 1720 when Shepherd, whose own house at Hillupencott had been extended in brick about the middle of the seventeenth century, leased a messuage and lands at Whitewayhead to Samuel Tomkiss, yeoman, the terms of the lease required Tomkiss to erect at his own cost a house on a convenient part of the premises. The house was to have two rooms below stairs and two above and be 'fit and convenient for habitation, of timber, stone or brick' ³. From this it is apparent that bricks were already included in the range of customary building materials, although observation reveals that local basalt, dhustone, was the material used most frequently at this time in the erection of cottages near to, or on, the waste ⁴.

1. J.U. Nef., op.cit., i, 218 and footnotes 2 and 4.

2. See above, pp. 149-52.

3. Kidderminster Library, Knight Mss., 6425.

4. See below, Sketch 4, p. 265.

Glass-making had been established in Cleobury Mortimer parish probably before the middle of the seventeenth century ¹, but little is known about the sites of glass-houses, for documents and fieldwork have, so far, provided very little evidence. Moreover, it is not certain that the men who sold glass, or were described as glaziers, were always makers of glass rather than middlemen who received their supplies of glass from glass-makers elsewhere.

Such supplies could have come from Dudnell, one of the townships of Cleobury, which was situated on the same Mill Brook that ran through Catherton higher up the hillside. In 1664 the baptism of a son of Thomas Geerse of Dudnell, glazier, was recorded in Cleobury parish register. No evidence of the existence of a glass-house in Dudnell has been discovered and Geerse, who had been described as a husbandman in the register when another son had been baptised in 1660, was not referred to as a glazier in the several entries that concerned him later. However, his residence and landed interest in a thinly populated part of the parish clearly suggests that he was not trading in glass that had been bought elsewhere and implies that he operated a glass-house for some time at least.

The demand for glass had increased sufficiently by the second half of the seventeenth century to provide employment for several families in the parish of Cleobury. Apart from William Newell, who was referred to as a glazier in 1648 and was succeeded by another William Newell, and the Harveys, who had come originally from Ludlow ², the parish registers refer to James and Charles Davis as glaziers in 1676 and 1696, respectively. These families all lived apparently in Cleobury town itself for they were shown to be there by Robert Goodwin's lists of Easter dues during periods when parish register entries revealed that they were active as glaziers. Goodwin paid John Harvey eight shillings and six pence for glazing in 1673 and bought glass from William Carter

1. See above, p. 124.

2. See above, p. 124.

in 1677 at a cost of two shillings ¹. In 1681 he allowed one of his tenants in Hopton Wafers, Henry Griffin, four shillings and six pence for glazing done to his house ² but his accounts and the parish registers have few references to glaziers from this time onwards. In May 1673 Thomas Harvey, glazier, who seems to have acquired considerable wealth from his trade leased, from Sir William Childe, a messuage, three water-mills and adjacent lands, all near Cleobury Bridge ³. The consideration was £100 and a rent of £5 a year was payable. After he had taken this lease there were no further references to Thomas Harvey as a glazier.

Like some of the other industries that recovered, or developed, and then flourished in Cleobury after the middle of the seventeenth century, glass-making appears to have declined from the 1680s. Coal had been the main fuel of the industry since the early seventeenth century ⁴ and large quantities were consumed, possibly as much as 500 to 600 tons by each furnace every year ⁵. Even if the smaller furnaces that would be likely to exist in a thinly populated area such as Cleobury used much less fuel than this, the amount of coal used would be relatively large and the high cost of transporting it several miles from the coalfield would have a severe effect on the costs of production and upon the price of the glass. As in the case of the pipe, pottery and brickmaking industries the high costs of production could be reduced by re-establishing the industry on, or near, the coalfield. This movement would not involve the abandonment of large capital investments, for apart from its crucibles and glass-blowing and handling tools, which could be transported easily, very little expensive equipment was used.

1. Goodwin, Memoranda Books, fos. 122 r, 183 r.

2. Ibid., fo. 224 r.

3. S.R.O., Childe Muniments, 10 q.

4. D.W. Crossley, 'The Performance of the Glass Industry in Sixteenth-Century England', Economic History Review, xxv (1972), 433. J.U. Nef, op.cit., i, 218-19.

5. J.U. Nef, op.cit., i, 219-20.

The movement up the hillside appears to have occurred, for a glass-house was in existence at Hopton Bank in the upper part of Hopton Wafers by the later years of the seventeenth century, or it was established soon afterwards. A map of Shropshire by Robert Morden, with additions by Edmund Gibson made in 1722 ¹, shows 'Glasshouse' as a place-name. It was situated close under Titterstone Clee obviously in the same situation as the present Glass House.

Coloured glass, and glass with red or blue or white flecks on a clear, darker, background of amber or green are said to have been produced in this glass-house. Among the items that are believed to have been made, there were mead jugs, jugs of various sizes and types, bottles and other vessels ². It is assumed that clearer glass for use in windows was made there also.

Little coal was used, however, by the new paper-making industry which was attracted to the area by the plentiful supplies of clear, hard, swift-running water, needed for making the pulp, that were provided by the streams that sprang from the Clee Hills. A paper-mill, which existed at Langley on Mill Brook in Milson parish before 1650 ³ was established, apparently, by Richard Sheppard who bequeathed it to his son John in 1659 ⁴, but there is little other evidence of its existence before 1700. It probably had a relatively small effect on the economy of the area for paper-mills were small and capital-intensive. Apart from the mill itself capital was invested in vats, troughs, a stamping-machine, a press, moulds and felt. Few workers were required ⁵ and there are no references to paper-workers in the parish register in the first half of the eighteenth century. Langley Mill probably supplied

1. W. Camden, Britannia, ed. Gibson, 4th edn. (1772).

2. Kidderminster Library, Ivens and Morton Mss., 11244, citing Percival MacIver, The Glass Collector, 2nd edn. (London, n.d.), pp.174, 188.

3. A.H. Shorter, Paper Making in the British Isles (Newton Abbot, 1971), p.19.

4. H.E. Forrest, 'Some Old Shropshire Houses and Their Owners', T.S.A.S., 4th ser., xi (1927-28), 90.

5. L.C. Lloyd, 'Paper-making in Shropshire 1656 1912', T.S.A.S., xlix (1938), 140. A.H. Shorter, op.cit., p.14.

some paper to the neighbourhood and sold the remainder to the large centres of population in nearby Worcestershire which in return supplied much of the raw materials such as linen rags that were required for making paper ¹.

4. THE POPULATION

The general course of demographic changes in the area, and the variations that occurred in different parishes, between roughly 1645 and 1720 are revealed by the nine year moving averages derived from the raw figures of baptisms, burials and marriages ². Reliable figures exist, from about the middle of the seventeenth century for the parishes of Bitterley, Burford, Cleobury Mortimer, Coreley, Hopton Wafers and Neen Savage, which between them contain more than three quarters of the area ³. The registers of Caynham and Greete are unreliable until about 1680 and the registers of Milson and Neen Sollars which begin in 1678 contain only the records of burials until 1708. The earliest extant entries for Hope Bagot begin in 1715 and later entries are defective from time to time.

The graphs produced from the figures provided by the registers that are reliable show that the level of population activities of all of the parishes whose vital figures were recorded before 1645 were, with the exception of Coreley, slow to recover. During the 1650s and 1660s the excess of baptisms over burials was relatively small and increases in the numbers of baptisms were accompanied closely by increases in the numbers of burials, except in Burford from the early years of the 1660s. The improvement spread to the other parishes, with the exception of Coreley, early in the 1670s and was most obvious during the 1680s, particularly in Cleobury Mortimer. Thereafter

1. L.C. Lloyd, art.cit., 143, 145.

2. See below, Figures 15, 16, 17, pp. 248, 249, 250.

3. See above, Figure 6, p. 32.

FIGURE 15

Population Movements 1645-1720: Bitterley and Burford.

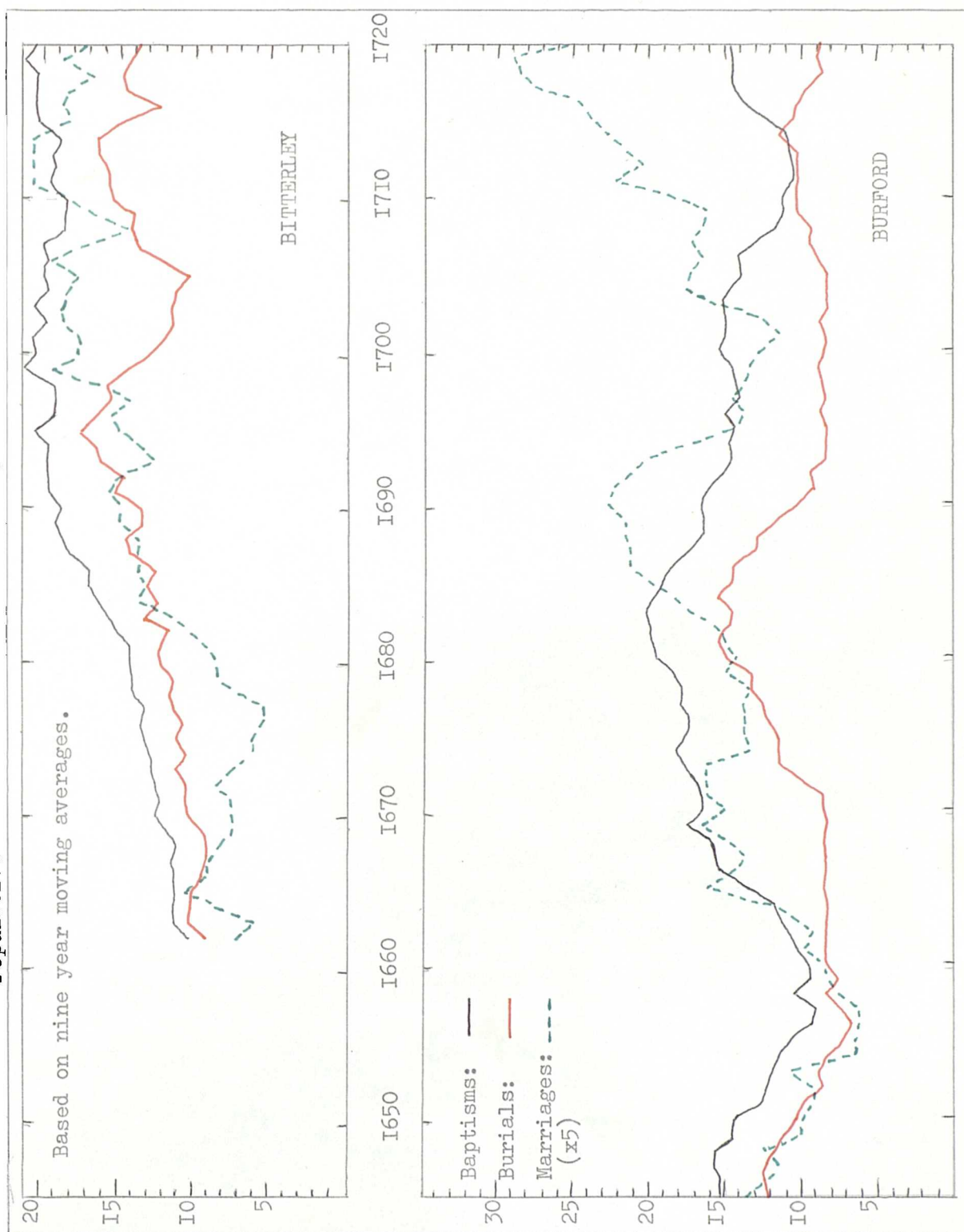


FIGURE 16

Population Movements 1645-1720 : Ne n Savage and Cleobury Mortimer.

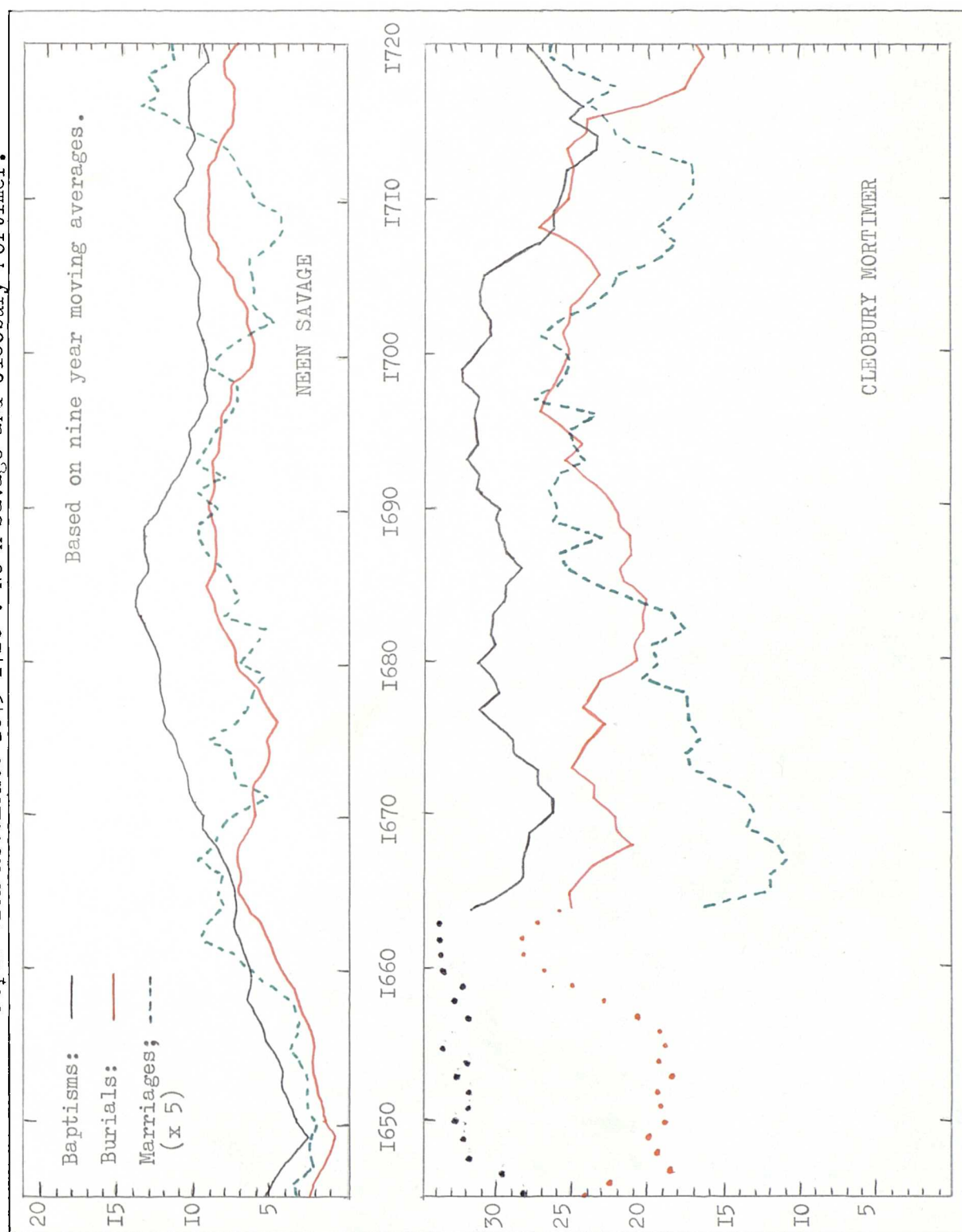
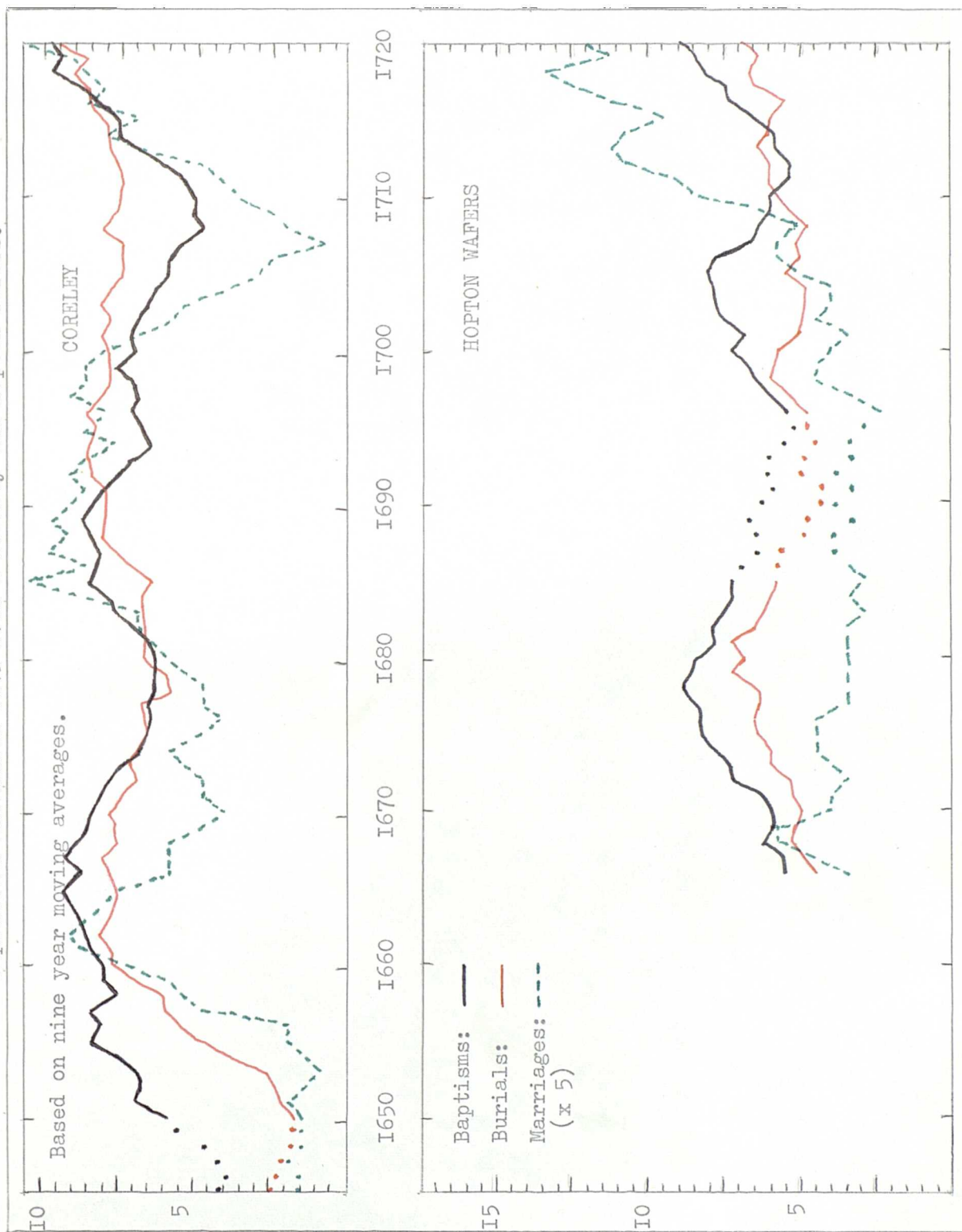


FIGURE 17

Population Movements 1645-1720 : Coreley and Hopton Wafers.



similar or declining numbers of baptisms associated in most parishes with increases in the number of deaths led up to a crisis in the first decade of the eighteenth century which was most severe in Burford, Cleobury, Hopton Wafers and, particularly, in Coreley. The crisis continued into the second decade of the century and was notable, mainly, for the large numbers of burials. These began to decrease before 1715 when increases in the number of marriages in all parishes followed by increases in the number of baptisms ensured that there was, once more, an excess of baptisms over burials of some significance.

The area as a whole clearly suffered between 1650 and 1720 from extensive periods of difficulty and hardship, relieved, from about 1670 to the 1690s, by a more prosperous period. In general there was an excess of baptisms over burials and population continued to increase, although the rate of increase was very much slower than it had been in the second half of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth century.

The moving averages are most useful when they are used to show the general movements of population in the area. Although they can draw attention to some of the differences that existed between parishes, they give very little indication of the total number of people involved and they conceal or exaggerate local aberrations in registrations and can, therefore, be deceptive. Moreover, they throw little light on the relationships that existed between the people they represent and the pressures of social and economic conditions and changes. To understand their significance more fully it is necessary, therefore, to study in detail the population movements in the individual parishes.

It is possible to produce estimates of population, similar to those made for earlier periods, for those parishes where the entries of baptisms and burials have survived. Such estimates are useful when no other guides are available, but they provide information for only some of the parishes and are less credible than the estimates that can be produced at times from the records

of the hearth-tax and from the religious returns commonly known as the Compton Census.

Two hearth-tax rolls for Shropshire, the assessment of Michaelmas 1662 ¹, and the return of Michaelmas 1672 ², are still in existence. The 1662 roll has suffered in places from a considerable amount of deterioration and the details for some of the townships in the area are impossible to decipher, while other townships appear to have been omitted altogether or rendered untraceable. As a result this roll does not provide a satisfactory basis for estimates of population. However, the 1672 roll can be used for this purpose for, although it has suffered damage to the parts dealing with Overs Hundred and many names are missing, it is possible in most cases to calculate the number of people referred to. Greater problems are caused by the practice, carried out in this roll, of entering for each parish or township only the names and details of those who had paid the tax and of consigning, without indicating the place of origin, the names of those who were not charged to a list at the end of the entries for each hundred which was entitled: 'Paupers discharged by Certificate within the said Hundred'. As a result the calculation of population totals, using the number of households as a basis, is rendered almost impossible, for the reconstitution of all of the original parish lists raises very serious problems and would be a lengthy, and possibly in some cases, a fruitless task. Instead it was decided to discover the likely proportion of people in the area who were discharged from payment of the tax and to apply this figure to the lists of those who paid the tax in each parish.

For the whole of Shropshire the number of those exempted from payment amounted to 23%. The number exempted in the whole of Overs Hundred amounted

1. P.R.O., E. 179/255/35.

2. P.R.O., E. 179/168/216. This roll was published in 1949 at Shrewsbury, edited by W. Watkins-Pitchford as 'The Shropshire Hearth-Tax Roll of 1672'.

to eighty four out of 319 persons, which was $26\frac{1}{3}\%$. For the southern part of Stottesdon Hundred a detailed study was made of the parish register entries of Coreley during the years from 1661 to 1686 and of all available deeds, rentals and other documents dated between 1660 and 1673 that were concerned with the parish. It was calculated from this that thirteen persons who were known to be householders in the parish had been exempted from the payment of the 1672 hearth-tax. They amounted to almost exactly 24% of the total number of householders. When the vicar of Cleobury Mortimer, Robert Goodwin, made a list of the people in the town of Cleobury for the purpose of collecting his Easter dues for 1672 it referred to eighty five separate persons and their dependents, if they had any ¹. The hearth-tax returns for the town, made within six months of this list, contained sixty four householders who were taxed. They included Goodwin himself, so it appears that twenty two householders, about $25\frac{1}{2}\%$ of the total, were exempted from the hearth-tax.

The calculations indicate that the number of householders who were discharged from paying the tax was higher in both Overs Hundred and in the southern part of Stottesdon Hundred than it was in Shropshire as a whole and reflects the relative poverty of the area. The calculations also indicate, to a lesser extent, that the lower areas of Burford and Cleobury Mortimer parishes, which dominated respectively Overs Hundred and southern Stottesdon had a higher proportion of exempt householders than the generally poorer but less clearly polarised upper parishes and townships. The differences are very small, however, and it appears reasonable to assume that the number of exempted households was about 25% in all parishes. The total number of households can then be calculated for each parish and a multiplier, the average number of persons in households, can be used to give an estimate of the total population in those parishes. The selection of this multiplier is obviously of great importance, for the number of people in households could

1. Goodwin, Memoranda Books, fo. 109 r.

vary from parish to parish according to the influences exerted by a large number of social and economic variables.

Robert Goodwin's list of the people from whom he considered he should receive Easter dues in 1672 indicates that in Cleobury town the closed, domesticated, nuclear family (the single-unit family household containing parents and children only) was predominant, although some households contained parents or other relatives of the householder, or of his wife, and three households contained a total of four servants. Goodwin's list for 1672 was relatively uninformative concerning the status of the additional members of several families, so it is impossible to assess the proportion of extended households. However, his list for 1664, which was much more carefully prepared reveals that one in twelve households included a mother or a father of the householders. If sisters and a 'kinswoman' are included the proportion is increased to one in nine.

Goodwin's figures for 1672 reveal an average household size of 2.13 persons, but his records do not provide a complete list of people, for he provides evidence indirectly that all children under seven years of age¹, all other children who were at school, and apprentices under seventeen years of age, were exempted from payment of the dues, and details concerning them were omitted as a result. A more detailed list was built up by studying the references that he made elsewhere to apprentices and to the children who attended his school. Neither group was numerous for apprenticeship was less common in Cleobury than in older towns such as Ludlow, and many of his pupils were under seven years of age. To discover the number of children under the age of seven all baptisms, less burials, referring to the householders that he had mentioned were traced in the parish registers over the period of seven years preceding Easter 1672. When these additional children were added to his list the average household size was about 3.5. Although some apprentices were

1. Goodwin, Memoranda Books, fo. 39 v.

overlooked because he had not mentioned them and some children whose parents had moved into the town within the past seven years had been baptised elsewhere, searches of his later accounts indicate that they were not numerous and that the average household size was consequently clearly less than four.

By contrast, in the areas outside the town which contained large farmsteads, and in other parts of the area where settlements were dispersed, the average size of households was increased by the presence of houses that teemed with life. At Reaside Farm Richard Walker lived with his wife, four sons, and at least one daughter, and three male servants and one female servant. Bransley Farmhouse was occupied by Thomas Pennell, his wife, two sons and a daughter and at least two servants, and Dudnell by Richard Baldwin and his wife, at least one of his adult sons with his own wife and family, three male servants and one female servant. At Heathhills the Widow Pountney lived with her son William and his wife, their children, one maid, John Malpas and Roger Pountney, tailor, and, as his own household accounts and other personal records show, Goodwin's household at the vicarage and, later, at Stone House contained himself, his wife and two children, a male servant, a maid, an assistant teacher or curate, several young boarders who attended his school and one or two adolescents who, if they were males, were being prepared for going up to Cambridge and, if they were females, were being 'well educated'. On May 23rd 1673 he noted that Mistress Hannah and Mistress Mary Bathurst 'came agayne to my howse' and added lists of the expenses that were to be added to their accounts, including $1/6^d$ each for hoods and 3^s spent by them 'att the fayre' ¹.

In other parts of the area where settlements had been made recently, and particularly where they could still be made, the sizes of households were much smaller on average. In the forest the Widow Worrall lived alone and her son John lived in another house with his family; and Jane Bishop, widow,

1. Goodwin, Memoranda Books, fo. 122 v.

lived with her daughter but her sons and other relatives lived in their own houses. The average household size in this part of Cleobury parish was clearly less than four as it was also, in the upper townships and parishes where settlements were still being made with little difficulty on the hill wastes.

After careful consideration of the different parts of the area it is estimated that the average, overall size of households was a little less than four and a quarter, and this figure has been used as a multiplier. Clearly calculations of population totals from hearth-tax records are fraught with many problems which can, at each stage, multiply the amount of error.

Calculations based on the Compton Census figures of 1676 are probably more reliable for although the figures present their own difficulties there is less likelihood of errors being multiplied. The figures from the census exist for all parishes in the area and if we assume that about 40% of the population was below the age of sixteen or seventeen and so multiply the recorded numbers of adults by ten and divide the results by six, estimates of total population that are suitable for general comparisons can be obtained (see Table 3).

The substantial agreement between the estimates for 1672 and 1676 adds confidence to the belief that they are reasonably accurate in spite of the uncertainties involved in the selection of multipliers.

The 1672 and 1676 population estimates for Burford, Cleobury Mortimer, Coreley and Neen Savage, those parishes for which earlier estimates have been made at various dates up to 1635/6, reveal, even after allowances are made for the inadequacies of the earlier estimates, that there had been a recovery from the disturbed period of the civil wars and that further population increases had occurred in the area. These increases varied from parish to parish and the large absolute increases in Burford and Coreley differed greatly in significance from the apparently large increase in Neen Savage which merely

TABLE 3
Population Estimates for 1672 and 1676

A. Hearth-Tax Returns for 1672

B. The Compton Census of 1676

<u>Parishes</u>	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
Bitterley	76 ¹	101	<u>429</u>	300	<u>500</u>
Burford	125	167	<u>710</u>	431	<u>718</u>
Caynham	- ²	-	-	312	<u>520</u>
Cleobury	125	167	<u>710</u>	430	<u>717</u>
Coreley	42	56	<u>238</u>	123	<u>205</u>
Greete	16	21	<u>89</u>	50	<u>83</u>
Hope Bagot	14	19	<u>81</u>	53	<u>88</u>
Hopton Wafers	33	44	<u>187</u>	97	<u>162</u>
Milson	17 ³	23	<u>98</u>	62	<u>103</u>
Neen Sollars	27 ³	36	<u>153</u>	98	<u>163</u>
Neen Savage	57	76	<u>323</u>	200	<u>333</u>
Silvington	17	23	<u>98</u>	42	<u>70</u>

Column 1 contains the number of householders who were taxed, Column 2 the total number of householders, including the estimated 25% who were not taxed, to the nearest whole number, and Column 3 the total estimated population, which was calculated by multiplying the numbers in Column 2 by 4.25.

Column 4 provides the total number of communicants and non-communicants, to the nearest or lower whole number, and Column 5 the estimated population totals, to the nearest whole number, which was obtained by multiplying the numbers in Column 4 by 10 over 6.

1. In 1672 Bitterley township was returned with Overs Hundred, Snitton township with Stottesdon Hundred and Henley, Middleton and Ledwyche townships with Munslow Hundred. The returns for other parts of the parish appear to have been included with nearby townships of Stanton Lacy parish, Munslow Hundred, so all households have not been discovered and this figure is, therefore, an under-estimate.

restored, in effect, the population levels attained late in the sixteenth and early in the seventeenth centuries, and from the very small increases in Cleobury Mortimer.

The population increase in Coreley, which amounted to more than 23% between 1635 and 1676, is reasonably accurate, for the 1635 estimate is based on a church lewn which gives a list of the houses in the parish. A study of the parish registers confirms that the population increases that had become apparent in the 1620s continued steadily until they were interrupted by the civil wars and subsequent disturbances, and that they had been resumed by the 1660s. These increases were related to greater mining activity in the parish as efforts were made to supplement the declining output of the Gutter seam outcrops at Catherton and to satisfy both the needs of the new furnace at Tilsop and the expanding market for coal in the area.

Although some families from Cleobury moved into the parish, natural population increases appear to have been more important than migration for the number of different surnames in the parish register increased very little from forty three between 1613 and 1622, to forty five between 1635 and 1644, and to fifty between 1661 and 1670. Natural increases could have been encouraged by the relative ease with which new houses were established, until about 1670, around the edge of the waste and in the waste itself by squatters. The lewn prepared in 1635 noted that there were thirty nine houses in the parish, but by 1672 as the hearth-tax returns reveal there were fifty five, an increase of 41% over thirty seven years. The actual increase might not have been as great as this for although the lewn of 1635 assessed ten out of the thirty nine houses at only a penny each because of the poverty of the occupants it is possible that other householders were in greater poverty and were living in what were no

(continued from Table 3)

2. Large parts of Caynham parish have been omitted from the returns.
3. The section of the roll concerned with the returns for Milson and Neen Sollars is very badly damaged. It has been estimated from appearances that it once contained 17 names relating to Milson and 27 relating to Neen Sollars.

more than hovels. Such dwellings were overlooked by the manor courts also, usually for a period of about twenty years, apart from the occasional imposition of nominal fines, until their existence was recognised by the granting or enforcing of a lease. Nevertheless there are indications that a large proportion of the additional houses had been built after 1635 for between 1662 and 1671 manorial control was extended by the issue of leases to the occupiers of several enclosures containing cottages. The scale of these activities was not repeated in later years, for further squatting was discouraged as much as possible, especially in Coreley ¹.

The large population increase and the greater dependence on mining made Coreley vulnerable to adverse economic conditions and, as a result, it suffered a longer and more severe period of hardship from the 1690s onwards than the other parishes in the area, with the possible exception of Hopton Wafers. This is illustrated by the graph based on nine year moving averages, although the situation shown there was not quite as bad as it appears, for during this period the burials of many people from the Tilsop, Nash and Knowle parts of Burford parish took place at Coreley and are recorded in its register. The number of different surnames found in the Coreley parish register between 1701 and 1711 was forty five, the same number as in 1635 to 1644, and five less than in 1661 to 1670, and the population total remained roughly the same or declined slightly between 1676 and 1720.

On the other hand, in Hopton Wafers and in parts of Bitterley and Caynham which also had large areas of hillside wastes, the building of cottages on those wastes was encouraged by local manor lords or landowners ² and large extensions in hillside settlements and increases in population took place late in the seventeenth century and early in the eighteenth century. Between 1661 to 1670 and 1701 to 1710 the number of different surnames in Hopton Wafers

1. See above, pp. 159-60.

2. See above, pp. 143-44, 149-52.

increased from fifty to sixty four, and in Bitterley they increased from ninety to 112 . The population of Hopton Wafers, which was about 162 in 1676 had reached, by estimate, about 243 in 1711 and clearly exceeded the population of Coreley which was a larger parish. Similar, but relatively smaller increases took place in Bitterley and Caynham parishes during the same period.

The increase in total population in Burford between 1635-36 and 1676 apparently amounted to 49%, but allowing for the distortion caused by the underestimation of the 1635-36 figure because of the use made of neighbouring churches by many Burford people the true increase was about 30%. The increase was associated, partly, with the movement of iron-smelting from the Cleobury district to Tilsop in the 1630s, greater activity at the Knowle limeworks, and the establishment of cottages in the upper parts of the parish and in their wastes at Tilsop, the Knowle and Whitton. It was associated, also, with changes in landholding and subsequent rises in agricultural prosperity that led both to the employment of larger numbers of servants and to the development of services and trades which provided for the new needs and tastes of the growing number of prosperous gentlemen and yeomen, although this had less impact in Burford than elsewhere because of the proximity of Tenbury. The increased importance of trades and services had already become apparent by the 1660s in the area centred on Cleobury Mortimer.

The entries in the parish register of Cleobury during the 1650s give the strong impression, even after allowances are made for under-registration, that the population of the parish had fallen considerably since 1635-36. Although Cleobury and its manorial lords probably suffered more than other parishes during and after the civil wars the ill-effects were soon overcome, as the resumption of work at the forges and increasing activity in the town during the 1650s reveals. On the other hand the movement of industrial activity to places outside the parish from the late 1630s, as the furnaces closed and as the easily mined ironstone of Catherton approached exhaustion clearly had long-term effects. Many people who lived in those parts of the parish most affected by the decline

of industrial activities moved into Hopton Wafers, Coreley and Burford parishes during that period. Small landholders who had been able to supplement agricultural incomes with the profits of haulage or of other industrial by-employments were among those affected. At the same time they, and other small landholders elsewhere, were subject to the influences of engrossing and of other agricultural changes, similar to those that had serious consequences in Burford until about 1590, and as some holdings expanded others were absorbed.

Between 1621 and 1630 the Cleobury parish register referred to 160 different surnames but these had decreased between 1661 and 1670 to 144. Of the names noted in the earlier list 50% did not appear in the second list which indicates that the population had been very unsettled during the interval.

The period of economic difficulty and readjustment extended over nearly thirty years for not until 1672 did the total population return to about the same levels that it had reached during the 1630s. The recovery which had begun to appear during the 1650s was restrained by high prices for food grains and for fuel and by very high infant mortality rates which exceeded 135 per thousand between 1661 and 1670. During the years of economic depression and agricultural change Cleobury Mortimer parish, particularly the town itself, where most of the infant deaths occurred, paid a very high penalty for the period of prosperity and the rapid expansion and overcrowding of population that had occurred in the early years of the seventeenth century.

The changes in social and economic patterns in the parish can be traced to some extent with the help of the entries in the parish register. From 1651 to 1657 and 1660 to 1670, when a combined total of 970 baptisms and burials were recorded in the parish register, and from 1654 to 1657 and 1660 to 1662, when fifty three marriages were recorded, the details of occupation or status of local people were given in 459, nearly 45% of the entries. If the seventy seven women described as widows or spinsters are subtracted 382, just over 37%, remain with a useful description or indication of the occupation or the main interest of the person concerned. Of these 121, about 32%, who were described

as gentleman, vicar, minister, yeoman or husbandman were landowners or landholders. Only six, less than 2%, were described as vagrant, wanderer or stranger, and the same number as labourer or servant, although other sources reveal that this group was numerous and many of those whose occupation was not described must have belonged to it ¹. The remainder of those described, 249, about 65%, were involved in trades, services and industries. Those involved in agricultural trades included millers, hemp-dressers, weavers, felt-makers, glovers, dyers, cord-wainers and tanners, and amounted to sixty one, 16% of the total. Those involved in services and businesses included an artist, butchers, carpenters, a Chandler, chapmen, a cook, grocers, innkeepers, masons, shoemakers, tailors and a wheel-wright, and amounted to 108, more than 28% of the total. The remainder, eighty, which was nearly 21%, were involved in industry. Of these, sixty, just over 15%, were concerned mainly with the iron industry and associated trades as forgers or as blacksmiths, nailers, scythe-smiths and, in the cases of six, as charcoal-burners, and the other twenty were engaged in other industries and included one ground collier, one brickmaker, sixteen glaziers and three pipe-makers. No ironstone miners were referred to in the register.

Although they make up a smaller proportion of the parish register entries, and are drawn from a much more extended period, these figures can be compared with similar entries made between 1622 and 1634 ² and can indicate the general course taken by social and economic life in the parish. They reveal that the agricultural industries had been maintained at about the level that they had reached earlier and that there had been a small decline in the trades based on the metal industry. This was greater than it appeared to be for the later figures for these trades included charcoal-burners. This group of workers, which was almost ignored in the earlier figures, could have been

1. See above, pp. 177, note 1, 254-56.

2. See above, pp. 110-113.

serving the needs of other industries and individuals at least part of the time. To a large extent the references to metal-workers were concerned with forgemen and were made between 1660 and 1670. While illustrating the recovery in the production of bar-iron, they reveal that fewer people were working in the metal finishing trades. The development of other industries, mainly glass-making and pipe-making, occurred to a large extent after 1660 also, and later records show that they continued to expand after 1670, although they never became very significant.

The most striking changes that had occurred in the parish since the 1630s were revealed by the large reduction in the numbers of those who were either landowners or landholders and by the increases both in those involved in services and trades, and also in those, mainly referred to elsewhere, who were landless labourers or servants. The engrossing of land which was directly responsible for some of the decreases in the number of holdings was followed by a period of greater agricultural prosperity based not on industry but on greater concentration on pastoral farming and on new crops which, by adding to the per capita income of the landed classes, increased their spending power. This encouraged some people to provide new services and others, who had previously worked for much of their time on their parcels of land around the town, to work full-time at their trades.

The housekeeping accounts, school records and other, incidental, references in the memoranda books of Robert Goodwin show that trades and services continued to expand after 1670 and that the increase in wealth and spending power provided higher living standards and led to other changes in social and economic life. Greater interest was shown in fairs at Ludlow, Tenbury and Bridgnorth and a wider variety of goods from outside the area such as silks, lace, holland and other textiles, as well as medicines, treacle, tobacco and other erstwhile luxuries, were supplied by local tradesmen, chapmen, packmen and Scotch travellers or pedlars. The increasing prosperity was marked also by the services provided by larger numbers of butchers, innkeepers, tailors and cooks,



Edw Foxe, Thomas Powys, Lord Clive.

July
177.

1. Snitton Hall
Bittercy.

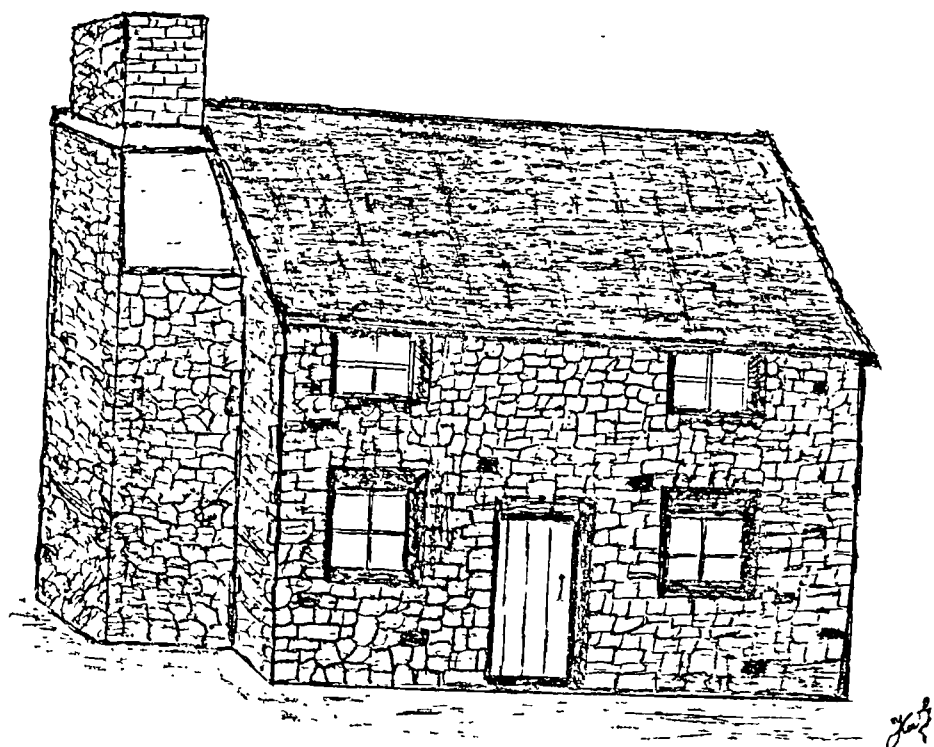


2. The Shear
Burford.

July
1777



3. Brookrow Cottage, Coreley.



4. Lutley Cottage, Doddington.

This cottage was built in the late 17th century or in the early 18th century but has been altered extensively since this sketch was made. Inside, a short moveable ladder provided access through a hole in the ceiling to the upper rooms.

and, throughout the area, by a considerable amount of building, rebuilding, or improvement of houses and farm buildings ¹, which employed masons, plasterers, sawyers, carpenters, thatchers and their 'servers', labourers and others ².

Also, there was a rapid expansion in the size of Goodwin's school as more people were able to afford the fees for at least the elementary stages of education. During the late 1650s and early 1660s the day boys attending the school were predominantly the children of large local landholders and rich townsmen and bailiffs but by the late 1660s the sons of some poorer men such as Christopher Gwyer, tailor, who paid part of the fees with services, were beginning to receive an education. By 1676, when Goodwin leased the George House to increase the accommodation available for his pupils, they included the sons of several tradesmen and craftsmen and the son of Samuel Leonard, a hammerman at the forge.

The population of Cleobury Mortimer, and of Neen Savage which followed a similar course, increased steadily into the early years of the eighteenth century without being subjected to severe fluctuations. The number of different surnames recorded in the Cleobury register between 1701 and 1710 had increased to 166 from 144 recorded between 1661 and 1670. The increase at Neen Savage during the same period was from sixty four to seventy two.

A general decline in economic activities caused by seven years of scarcity between 1693 and 1699 included a reduction in trade which was particularly noticeable in the iron industry. This decline was soon followed by a more general recession and then by a series of bad harvests between 1708 and 1710. By this time, as the increasing pressure on meadow and pasture land confirms, much of the area was heavily committed to pastoral farming and was far from self-sufficient in food grains. Moreover, the decrease, in most parishes, in the number of landholdings and the decrease in the opportunities

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1. See above, p. 165 and sketches 2, 3 and 4 on pp. 264, 265. Brookrow Cottage was altered or rebuilt by Edward and Elizabeth Weaver in 1682. In Nash the Hemm was rebuilt and extended during the same year by John and Elizabeth Stary. I am grateful to Mrs. Poulton and to Mr. and Mrs. Edward Brown for showing me these houses.
 2. Goodwin, Memoranda Books, fos. 122 r, 122 v, 141 r, 158 v, 159 r, 175 v, 176 r, 224 r, 237 r, 254 v, 331 v.

for agricultural employment, on the one hand, and the steady increase in the population of the area, on the other hand, had created a large class of landless people, as is illustrated by contemporary entries in the parish register of Burford.

From 12th August 1698 to 10th March 1706, when a combined total of 186 baptisms and burials were recorded, details of status or occupation were given in 162, over 87%, of the entries. After the seventeen women described as widows or spinsters are subtracted, 145, nearly 78% of the total entries, remain with a clear indication of the occupations of the people concerned. Of these landowners and landholders, including the Baron of Burford, two clerics and forty two yeomen accounted for roughly 31%. There were no references to husbandmen but labourers, including one servant and seven paupers, some of whom were described elsewhere as labourers, numbered eighty two, about $56\frac{1}{2}\%$ of the total. Agricultural trades and services, including millers, keepers, smiths, shoemakers, weavers and tailors, amounted to fifteen, about 10%, and three wanderers, just over 2, completed the list.

early 60% of the population of Burford was landless and becoming pauperised by the early eighteenth century. The situation in other lower and agriculturally richer parishes was similar. Clearly the changes in landholding patterns and land management, together with population increases, had caused drastic changes in social and economic life. The advent, a few years later, of the period of severe hardship revealed the vulnerability of wage-earners in the lower areas where space for new settlements was exhausted or closed, demand for farm labour was inelastic and industrial development was declining as in Burford, or was stationary as in Cleobury Mortimer.

Large numbers of workmen moved out of Burford's declining industrial areas at Tilsop and the Knowle, after the early years of the eighteenth century, into Coreley, Bitterley and Caynham. However, they did not escape from their difficulties, for those parishes, which were influenced by the general trade cycles through their involvement in the iron industry and by their inability to

feed themselves, were less resilient than they had been a century before and they suffered also. Hunger was followed by disease and at the end of 1710 the rector of Bitterley, Benjamin Marston, commented in the parish register: 'Annus Fatalis pro Morbo infectioso and Contagioso, Anglice, Small Pox'.

In Cleobury Mortimer, where population had increased slowly and had been absorbed to a large extent in trades, services and other employment, and where dependence on mining activities at Catherton had declined, there was less obvious distress than in the parishes subjected more closely to the vagaries of the market for iron. However, economic activity declined generally and the parish did not escape unscathed, for the infant mortality rate between 1701 and 1710 was eighty five per thousand. This was an improvement on the rate between 1661 and 1670 but it was still very high compared with Coreley where it was forty seven per thousand during the same years. In Hopton Wafers where very large increases in population had occurred since 1670 the rate was eighty per thousand.

The movement of landless people to upper parishes where they provided a reservoir of labour that contributed first to the revival and later to a great expansion in ironstone and coal-mining, was only one of the consequences of the period of severe hardship. The shortage of food crops and the rise in their prices encouraged a revival of arable farming in most parishes in the area and in many neighbouring parishes. The parishes and townships most affected, including Hope Bagot, Whitton and the parishes on, and beyond, the eastern slopes of Titterstone in the heart of the Clees, had several features in common. They were situated in areas least suited to arable farming and had not benefited from the adoption of new crops such as hops and fruit. The engrossing of land had been less actively pursued there than elsewhere and, as a result, they had retained a higher proportion of husbandmen and other small farmers than other parishes. By the early eighteenth century they had reached the stocking limits of their grazing land and had little or no land that could be cleared, and, in the cases of Hope Bagot and Whitton, they had lost their

grazing rights in the hillside waste ¹. In these circumstances more landholders were forced to supplement their incomes with the wages of mining or the profits of carriage but the more intensive use of the available land through an increase in the amount of arable farming was the only alternative that many small farmers had to loss of viability and the loss of their lands. The recovery of industrial activity in the upper parishes ² which attracted large numbers of wage-earners to new settlements on the hillside provided them with markets for surplus food and fodder crops.

1. See above, pp. 166-169.

2. See above, p. 227.